

# RA backs increment action

Stepped up action in support of locals seeking payment of full increments has been pledged by the B.C. Teachers' Federation.

Prefacing a series of motions passed at its September 27-28 meeting, the BCTF Representative Assembly offered its "support and appreciation on behalf of all teachers to those local associations taking actions to achieve contract settle-

ments that include payment of full increments."

In taking this position, the BCTF executive increments subcommittee pointed out that members involved in "instruction only" campaigns "are carrying out actions on behalf of all teachers." It went on to say that "loss of increments strikes at basic contract and established practices and hits directly at teachers entitled

to increments." Moreover, it tries "to force tradeoffs between needed salary increases and payment of increments due teachers from the day they are hired."

Concretely, the Representative Assembly:

- urged local associations to adopt policies that will have the effect of boycotting school districts where full incre-

ments are not being paid:

- a. non-participation in inter-district, extracurricular activities;
- b. non-participation of BCTF members in board-initiated PD activities in districts where full increments are not paid;

- called on local associations to communicate any support actions or policies

See "Job" page 3

## BCTF Newsletter

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### Non-payment of increments is "theft"

Non-payment of salary increments by school boards is contract-stripping and "plain, straightforward theft," BCTF president Pat Clarke told the Fall Representative Assembly.

He said teachers must resist the non-payment because to acquiesce would be to encourage school boards to suspend other benefits such as medical premium payments, PD funds, sick leave, insurance benefits and pensions.

As Clarke spoke, seven B.C. school districts were still refusing to pay increments — career progress payments — to their junior teachers. The seven were Vancouver and Cowichan (both under government trusteeship), Grand Forks, Maple Ridge, Peace River North, Qualicum and Sooke. Eleven other districts had threatened to withhold increments but had changed their minds, in several cases after teachers responded by boycotting extracurricular and PD activities.

Clarke likened the boards' non-payment of contracted increments to a

See "Demand" page 3



Barrie MacFadden, VESTA first vice-president (centre), flanked by DESC coordinator Chris Taulu (left) and CDTA President David Denyer (right), announced formation of commission to investigate dissolution of Vancouver and Cowichan school boards to be headed by (far right) Dr. Norman Robinson. See story page 2.

### Spending-revenue balanced

## Cuts ease budget squeeze

The BCTF has avoided a financial crisis this year by cutting its planned expenditures to meet anticipated revenues.

In an unprecedented exercise on September 27-28, the Representative Assembly trimmed \$1,374,480 from the 1985-86 budget.

In doing so, the RA accepted almost all the recommendations of the Executive Committee, making its own further cuts of only \$2,165. Reductions were made in non-staff items in all BCTF divisions, the major cuts being made in allocation for grants, committee and task force meetings, printing and distribution.

BCTF President Pat Clarke, in introducing the executive's budget recommendations, pointed out that the financial squeeze had largely been precipitated by declining revenues from a reduced membership. He said that in the economic circumstances teachers are now in, increasing the fee was not

considered an acceptable option, particularly since there is concern that the membership may decline further.

Clarke said that, having ruled out staff layoffs in favour of reductions by attrition, the executive found that it had little room to manoeuvre in its cuts, as more than half the budget goes to salaries. In effect, he said, the executive had to cut \$1 million from \$5 million available,

rather than from the entire budget of about \$11 million.

He emphasized that no single body within the federation should be blamed for the financial problems as they are the product of the difficult times the organization has been going through recently.

"It's been very difficult over the past few years to ascertain what are the feder-

See "B.C. Teacher" page 2

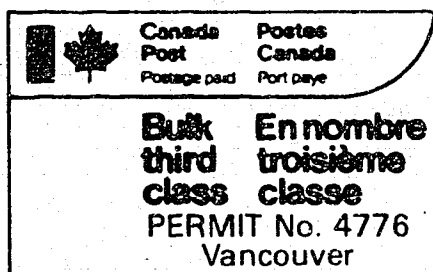
## BCTF joins ILO protest

The B.C. Teachers' Federation has joined 14 public sector unions in urging the International Labour Organization to condemn the B.C. government's "unfair and discriminatory legislation" that denies public employees their collective bargaining rights.

The public employee organizations,

representing a combined total of 175,600 members, filed a joint complaint to the ILO Freedom of Association Committee on September 13, 1985, calling on the ILO to declare B.C.'s permanent wage control program to be in violation of international labor conventions.

See "ILO" page 8



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



## Education Week time to showcase schools

Four metro municipalities have officially proclaimed the week of **October 21-26** to be "Support Public Education Week."

They are Vancouver, North Vancouver, West Vancouver and Coquitlam.

This is the latest indication of the growing public involvement in the week-long, province-wide event, organized by the Defend Education Services Coalition to promote a more positive environment for public education.

BCTF First Vice-President Elsie McMurphy told the fall RA that the many activities being organized in schools and communities are designed to not only reveal "the ravages that our students' learning conditions have suffered" from government cutbacks, but also to "showcase all the positive experiences and achievements of our public schools."

The DESC campaign will aim particularly at publicizing the need for greater investment in education, for smaller classes, and for greater public involvement and local autonomy.

Here are some of the events planned:

- DESC plans to start the metro campaign with a mayor's breakfast on Monday, October 21;

- Metro Education Association will stage a panel/slide show on Thursday, October 24, at Douglas College on the theme, "Getting education ready for 2001;"

- Vancouver Community College's Langara campus employees will run a public ballot during the week on the government's educational performance;

- And at Courtenay an "Educational Fair" will be held.

For information on events in your area, contact your local association.

## Burnaby contract requires substitutes to be members

All substitute teachers working in Burnaby must now be members of the BCTF as a condition of employment.

This is a new contractual agreement negotiated between the Burnaby Teachers' Association and the Burnaby School Board during the last round of bargaining.

Substitute teachers who are BCTF members must also join a local association. It is expected that many subs who work in Burnaby will join the BTA, although a substitute may also work in another district and choose to be a member of that association.

## Business education PSA honours retiring teacher

Vancouver secondary teacher **Mrs. Gerry York** has capped an outstanding career by winning the B.C. Business Education Association's highest honour in her retirement year.

The business PSA conferred the Sheila E. Cameron Award on Mrs. York at the association's annual conference, just as she was about to retire as business education department head at Templeton Secondary School. She was cited for assisting her colleagues with workshops, preparing ESL materials and helping develop a word processing training manual.

The association also named six outstanding business education teachers as winners of BCBEA Regional Teaching Awards. They are: **Mrs. Betty Willing**, Port Alberni District Secondary School, Port Alberni; **Fred Brown**, Kitsilano Secondary School, Vancouver; **Steve Swenson**, Semiahmoo Senior Secondary School, Delta; **Al Christie**, A. L. Fortune Secondary School, Enderby; **Ms. Joanne Montgomery**, 100 Mile House; and **Hugh Power**, Caledonia Senior Secondary School, Terrace.

2/OCTOBER 9, 1985

## Inquiry launched into school board dissolution

Vancouver and Cowichan teachers and parent associations have launched a Commission of Inquiry into the effects of the government-ordered dissolution of the Vancouver and Cowichan school boards.

Dr. Norman Robinson, a former school trustee and currently a consultant and professor of educational administration at Simon Fraser University has been appointed to act as Commissioner.

"Our democratic rights to have elected trustees making decisions that affect our school system have been removed," said VESTA First Vice-President Barrie MacFadden, explaining the reasons for the inquiry at a recent news conference. "The current system does not work. There is a disastrous lack of communication, individual contact and public input. We can't just let our democratic rights slip away."

Cowichan District Teachers' Association president David Denyer said there was a fear that the two communities would adapt to having a government-appointed trustee run their school boards.

"Unless we keep the issue out there in the forefront — the issue of rights and a duly-elected board — then there is a danger that the kind of control that we're now under will be taken as being the norm in time," said Denyer.

Endorsed by both the Vancouver elementary and secondary teachers' associations, the Vancouver parent representatives, the Cowichan teachers' association and the Cowichan Home/School Association, the Commission of Inquiry will hold public hearings in Vancouver and Cowichan in the early part of October. The commission findings will be reported on October 30.

## B.C. Teacher suspension nixed

From page 1

ation's real costs," said Clarke. "Over the last three years many programs have been suspended or put on hold due to various emergencies. Committees have not met, grants have been altered or have not been granted. For various reasons the Reserve Fund was used extensively to cover costs for what were in effect emergencies, meaning we weren't using operating revenues. It was difficult to get an accurate picture of what we actually needed to run our regular programs. The fee was increased over those years on a fairly consistent basis and that increased revenue offset the declining membership we were experiencing. This is the first year in several — and this is why this is happening — that we had a more or less normal operation last year in terms of our operating budget. We also had no increase in fee and we had a declining membership. So the three of those have combined to present us with the reality that has eluded us in the past — that our revenues aren't meeting our expenditures. Period."

While the Representative Assembly accepted most of the executive's proposed cuts, making only relatively small changes, GRs dug in their heels against cutting the Professional Development Division's peace education program, which would save \$38,247, and suspending for one-year publication of that division's magazine, the *B.C. Teacher*, for a saving of \$84,470.

On peace education, a number of GRs defended the program, emphasizing that the federation was providing leadership on a vital issue and that it should not be cut back. It also pointed out that the budget figures before the assembly did

not give a clear enough picture of the federation's total effort and that there may be some way of providing the service in a more efficient manner. The RA referred the peace education recommendation back to the executive for reconsideration.

The proposal to suspend the *B.C. Teacher* provoked considerable debate. Executive members defended the proposed cut as a reluctant move, but one of the hard decisions made in trying to bring spending in line with revenues.

Jim Bowman, director of the BCTF Government Division, called for retention of the magazine as "the most visible symbol" of the professional side of the BCTF. He pointed out that less than one-third of the federation's \$1.1 million expenditures on printing and distribution goes to the major publications, while two-thirds is accounted for by minutes, reports, memoranda and other material — "the blizzard of paper" that the federation inflicts on staff and members. Noting that a basic cut of 15 per cent is to be made in all printing and distribution programs, Bowman suggested that the cut be increased to 23 per cent and the savings devoted to retaining the magazine.

Supporting this position, Doug Smart (Prince George) argued that to support the executive's recommendation the RA would not be suspending the publication but killing it and that such a decision would "most profoundly affect the nature of this organization."

In the end, the RA decided to restore the budget for the *B.C. Teacher* and that "the costs be recovered from further reductions in printing and/or raising additional revenue."

## BCTF Newsletter

BRITISH COLUMBIA TEACHERS' FEDERATION  
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CLIVE COCKING Editor

The *BCTF Newsletter* is published by the B.C. Teachers' Federation pursuant to policy statement 36.26 in the *Members' Guide to the BCTF*. The 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 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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## Top three B.C. students all public school grads

Public school graduates have won all three of B.C.'s Academic Medals for Excellence awarded by the Ministry of Education in 1985.

Russell Wvong, who graduated from Pitt Meadows Secondary School with a 95.7 percent average in physics, algebra and French in the Grade 12 provincial scholarship competition, won the Gold Medal as the top student in the province.

Peter McCorquodale, who graduated from Handsworth Secondary School in North Vancouver with a 95.3 percent average in physics, history and algebra, won the silver medal.

Another North Vancouver student, Ian Culling, won the bronze medal, graduating from Carson Graham Secondary School with a 95 percent average in biology, algebra and physics.

In addition to their medals, the top three each receive \$2,000 scholarships from the province. The provincial scholarship is awarded to the top 20 students in the province, all but five of whom were public school graduates this year.

## PSAs to become active in community relations

The federation's provincial specialist associations will become active in local communities across B.C. to carry the professional opinion of teachers to the public.

The PSA Council, in a recent meeting, responded positively to last April's call from the AGM for the PSAs to become involved in a community-relations program.

Tony Flanders, head of CQ Research, which recently conducted a public opinion poll for the BCTF, said the time was right for such a program.

"Teachers have the opportunity right now to mobilize public opinion in support of schools," Flanders said. "But you must seize the moment."

Flanders reported that opinion polls over the last five years show that a favorable consensus regarding public schools has developed among parents, non-parents and teachers. When teachers say they believe education is entering a new era and that a public commission is needed to chart new directions, said Flanders, 85 per cent of the public support them. When teachers say government policies are damaging education, 78 per cent of British Columbians agree.

The community relations program is intended to demonstrate that teachers possess specialized knowledge that can benefit parents and others in the community. The program might involve development of brochures and workshops for parents on how to help their child learn to read, for example, or on how to support a child through the difficult period of adolescence.

A joint committee composed of two representatives from the PSA Council, Peter McCue and Gordon Moffatt, and two representatives from the Professional Development Advisory Committee, Bob Taverner and Keith Southworth, are currently developing the program.

## For the record

It was incorrectly reported in the last *BCTF Newsletter* (September 10, 1985) that Prince George was among the districts "facing denial of increments this fall . . ." Local president Pat Brady reports that the school board is expected to pay increments. The board is, however, challenging the re-arbitrated, six-month award of 1.26 per cent (originally 2.8 per cent) and the 2 per cent 12-month award, alleging inability to pay in both cases in submissions to the Compensation Stabilization Commissioner.

## Job actions on increments to be backed

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to locals involved in increment disputes and to their school boards;

- called on the provincial government to instruct its appointed trustees in Cowichan and Vancouver to settle the increment issue by paying full increments to teachers in those districts;

- urged locals not receiving full increments by September 30 to conduct a membership vote on withdrawal of services.

In direct support of this recommendation, the RA authorized use of the Reserve Fund to finance the cost of job actions. In the case of withdrawal of services, the meeting voted that strike pay commence on the first rather than the third day of withdrawal of services.

At press time, local actions had brought about settlement of the increment issue in at least half of the associations whose members came back to school in September facing loss of these experience progress payments. Victoria and Surrey are the two most recent cases of "instruction only" positions that brought a change in board position. In the latter case, CSP commissioner Peck reversed his refusal to allow payment of increments until the six-month contract was settled. In Victoria's case, the 18-month contract was settled at 1.3 per cent effective November 1, 1985 with full increments. Actions or threatened actions have brought settlements in Mission, Kitimat, New Westminster, Cranbrook, Vancouver Island North and other districts.

Remaining unresolved as of October 1 were Qualicum (scheduled to resume negotiations), Sooke (conducting some talks), Maple Ridge, and Cowichan, all of them engaged in some phase of "instruction only" campaigns. In the Cowichan case, settlement was prevented when the official trustee attempted to remove the seniority/severance clause from contract in return for payment of increments.

Other locals still in increment difficulties are North Peace, Grand Forks, and Vancouver, where half increments are being paid. Strong support has come

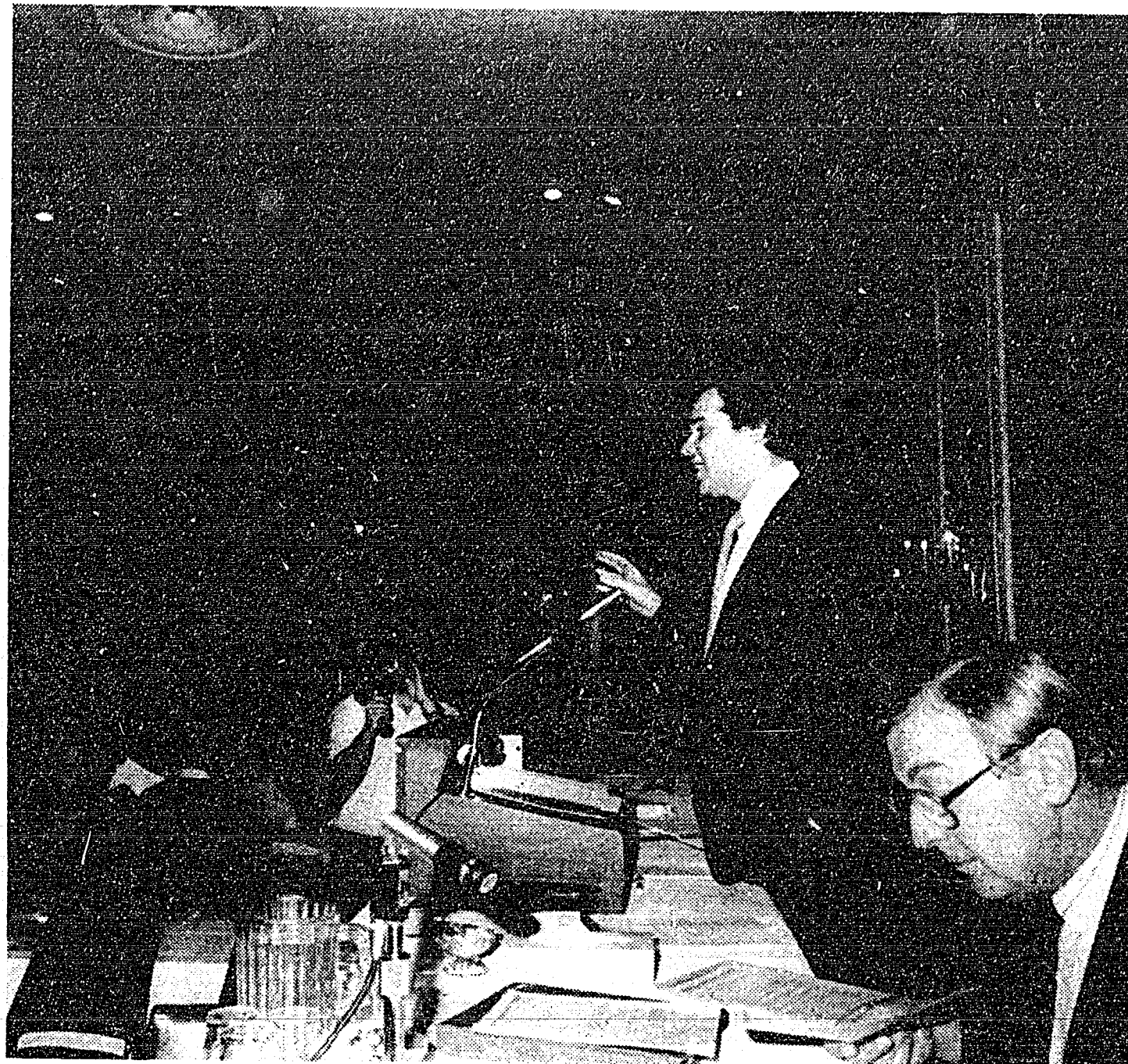
from locals not directly affected — in messages to locals and school boards. Zone meetings are expected to consider support actions.

Local associations where increments are not an issue but where 1985-86 contract terms remain unsettled include Revelstoke, Prince George, Burnaby, Hope and Chilliwack. Agassiz-Harrison and South Okanagan are awaiting zonal figures on which their settlements are based.

The unfairness of not paying increments has brought strong media reaction in support of teachers. The Vancouver *Province*, in particular, editorially, declared that, "The salary increments to which school teachers are entitled should be paid — with no ifs, ands or buts." It concluded that "It's about time

Victoria recognized that its restraint on education has gone far enough. The resumption of increment payments would be a good start on the road back to education sanity."

Province columnist Crawford Kilian in a recent article noted that "If a board paid a teacher the way other qualified journeymen are paid, it could cost an additional \$80,000 over the teacher's career. So the increment system saves taxpayers money, at the teachers' expense." Boards refusing to pay teachers increments, he charged, are "cheating teachers twice over — first by the increment system, and then by refusing to honor the system. That refusal has put teachers in the slightly odd position of fighting to be cheated only once, in the fine old traditional way."



BCTF President Pat Clarke outlines for GRs the serious precedent for further contract-stripping posed by the non-payment of increments

## Demand for commission grows

From page 1

customer buying furniture and appliances on a time-payment scheme, making the agreed payments for a few months, then unilaterally changing the repayment plan. The store proprietor would be entitled to charge the customer with theft, Clarke said. The increments issue, he said, is a time-payment plan that the government (through the school boards) has welched on.

Clarke said he looked for an end to government cutbacks in education, perhaps during the current school year. But he warned that this would not mean "an avalanche of funds" for education: "That would be too close to an admission of guilt by the government." And he anticipated that the government would continue to squeeze teachers' salaries, their aim apparently being to achieve the lowest teacher salaries in Canada.

But he said the government's Gallup poll, conducted for the "Let's Talk About Schools" exercise, had confirmed what BCTF polls have consistently shown; that there is substantial public support for teacher positions, and that most British Columbians feel restraint in education has gone too far.

"Let's Talk About Schools," with its highly critical report, has rebounded against the government, Clarke said. He said that Education Minister Jack Heinrich is "like a kid at summer camp who has just figured out he short-sheeted his own bed."

Clarke said the "Let's Talk About Schools" report has only fueled the drive for a full-dress public commission on education. The BCTF has been trying to organize such a commission and to enlist the participation of other major stakeholders in education, for the last year. This effort has been a difficult one, he said, because the government opposes a

commission and some other key players are reluctant to participate without government involvement.

However, he said, the BCTF would press on; the commission must be launched soon. "For our part, we will not countenance delay," Clarke said. "We will not wait and wait for one party to give the green light."

## October 18 is Person Day

Marian Dodds

Coordinator, Status of Women  
Spanning the library wall was a series of black-and-white prints of famous people spelling out the word, PEOPLE. Nice idea, I thought and, as the teachers participating in the workshop were working individually, I began to examine the pictures more closely. Of the 74 people represented, four were women. Of these four, one was Golda Meir, one was Indira Gandhi, one was Marilyn Monroe and one was a famous man's wife hanging on his arm.

Now, it would be unreasonable of me to assume that the teacher who put up this display consciously planned to give the message that the overwhelming majority of people are men. After all, he or she exists in a world where the media rarely gives even 20 per cent coverage to

52 per cent of the population. And after all, it has only been 56 years since the Privy Council in England overruled a Supreme Court of Canada decision that "women were not persons." Since 1929, October 18 has been celebrated as "Person's Day" and recognition is given to the 13 years of struggle which it took the "Alberta Five" — Nellie McClung, Emily Murphy, Irene Parlyb, Henrietta Muir Edwards and Louise McKinney — to achieve personhood for Canadian women.

October 18 then is an appropriate day for B.C. teachers to scrutinize the walls of their classrooms, hallways and classrooms for non-verbal messages about the role of females in our society. It is also an ideal opportunity to have a dialogue with students about this significant but rarely mentioned event in Canadian history.

## Conference brings education inquiry a step closer

Another step was taken toward the possible establishment of a commission on education on September 21 when 160 teachers, trustees, parents and board officials attended a Vancouver conference to explore the idea.

"Setting Course: British Columbia education into the next century" was the title of the one-day conference sponsored by the Education Review Group, which is made up of the B.C. School Trustees Association, the B.C. Teachers' Federation, the College-Institute Educators' Association, the B.C. Home and School Federation, the B.C. Federation of Labour and the Canadian Federation of Students.

Conference chairperson Dr. Roy Bentley, a University of B.C. professor of education, set the tone in reviewing the significance of past B.C. education commissions, the need for a new commission and the value of consensus in moving from discussion to policy to action. Helene Minishka, president of the B.C. Home and School Federation, similarly called for groups to come together — "a war in education is just plain unacceptable" — and urged all participants to join the ERG. Keynote speaker Dr. Hugh Stevenson, academic vice-president of the University of Western Ontario, stressed the need to place a study of B.C.'s educational future in a wider social, national and international context.

A series of small group sessions produced suggestions on how the commission might operate and what areas it might study. The Education Review Group will use this material as a basis for the next step in discussions.

Dr. Elmer Froese, Burnaby superintendent of Schools, summed up the conference with a call for all parties to join together in proceeding with the commission.

Later, BCTF President Pat Clarke described as "critical" the discussions that are to lead up to the next ERG meeting on October 10. "It is absolutely imperative that we have a thoroughgoing public discussion of public education in this school year," he said. "In order to accomplish that, we must begin soon — there have been too many delays and false starts. The BCTF remains committed to an education review now."

## BCTF urges Ottawa end hidden support for South Africa

The B.C. Teachers' Federation will urge the federal government to take strong measures to eliminate Canadian complicity in perpetuating white minority rule in South Africa.

The RA adopted a recommendation from the executive calling on Ottawa to adopt policies and enact legislation to:

- prohibit all further Canadian investments and loans to the Republic of South Africa and Namibia;
- ban all trade between Canada and South Africa/Namibia;
- require corporations operating in Canada to divest themselves of any South African interests;
- cease all business relations with corporations dealing with the Republic of South Africa and Namibia;
- and require all provincial governments to adopt the same or similar policies.

The executive endorsed the motion as it was pointed out that teachers have a role to play in fostering human rights and ending discrimination and racism.



"How can one react to such gross calumny?"

## Open letter to an open-liner

**Dear Mr. Gary Bannerman:**

I have just finished reading a verbatim transcript of part of your CKNW radio program of August 22, 1985. At one point in that broadcast you said:

"The amount of money spent on teachers on public school education over the past decade in British Columbia has gone up by staggering dimensions. There has been a roll-back in the last year, year-and-a-half. We've had declining school populations, fewer students, the ability of the taxpayer to pay in recession was not what it was in 1979, but if you take a 10-year graph, it's not only that the public has been generous to the school system, it is staggering how much the school system has continued to take bigger and bigger pieces of the pie for ever less in terms of productivity. By any definition, they take more and give less, and in the last year-and-a-half there has been, for the first time in 20 years, any kind of a curtailment, but the curtailment has been so tiny compared to the staggering increase of the last 10 years and the amount of money that has gone into public education. Staggering. And it's taxpayers' money and I don't understand why people aren't hostile. You wouldn't shop at a grocery store that produced what our education system does."

You used so many "staggerings" in that brief tirade that I thought I had better check to see what had occasioned the word and the repetition. Using statistics supplied by the provincial government, I found that the total operating public school budget (that's all the money from both local and provincial sources) has gone from \$674.4 million in 1975 to \$1,563.9 million in 1985. That's an increase of some 131.9 per cent. So you were correct; that is, indeed, staggering.

But then I got to thinking about what hasn't gone up more than 100 per cent in the past decade, and I was hard put to come up with a thing. So I thought that the most reasonable comparison I could make would be to compare that increase in the cost of education with the increase in the provincial government's budget. After all, government as a whole is supposed to be a public service, as is the education system. Well, what superlatives can one use to top "staggering"? For lo and behold, the provincial budget has gone from \$2,639 millions in 1975 to \$9,056 millions in 1985. That's an increase of 243 per cent. So it would seem by that eminently fair measure that the

education system has been dealt with relatively parsimoniously.

You were correct about the decline in the number of students. They have dropped 10 per cent, from 525,344 in 1975 to 472,264 in 1984. And at that point in your broadcast you were obviously contemptuous of the system getting "more for less".

Yet only a minute later you said this in response to a caller:

"Well, on this note, I might say a word for the teachers because I think that you are touching on a broader issue of our times in society and there isn't the parental situations that used to exist in the past. Is it families that have broken up ... like we couldn't imagine 20 or 30 years ago and the pressure is put on the teachers to be everything: baby-sitter, teacher, parent, guardian, lawmaker. For the few hours a day the child is in school, the teacher is supposed to solve every other problem that exists in that child's life. And I think an awful lot of the responsibility goes back to the parents but also the community in which we live and these changing social times and I don't think we've really addressed, what are we doing to the victims of changing times? And in this issue, I think far too much pressure is put on teachers."

I think you gave some very good reasons why teachers worry about the number of children they have in their classes and why they request specialist help with some of the problems children bring to school. If you had noted that it was provincial policy during the past decade to integrate children with disabilities and special needs into the mainstream of school life, then your statement would have been even more telling. But if you really believe what you said about the complex pressures placed by society on teachers, you can't be contemptuous of the increase in teachers while the number of students declined.

What I've written up to now could be regarded as a simple academic rebuttal. But there's much more to your comments than misplaced logic and the lack of elementary research. You said, and I repeat: "You wouldn't shop at a grocery store that produced what our education system does." How can one react to such a gross calumny? Why should you be licensed to feed your biases to the public? You are condemning the accomplishments of half a million kids and the competence of thirty thousand teachers with one sweeping generalization.

There are many hundreds of teachers that I know, neither sinners nor Solomons, who toil at their craft with diligence and a caring for children that reflects nothing but dignity on their teaching. I know dozens of students that could eat you alive, Mr. Bannerman, when it comes to intellectual pursuits, and if this broadcast is a fair sample of your work they wouldn't have to stir too many of their brain cells to do it.

Yet once again you win the prize for inconsistency, because later in the program a caller says, "I would just like to say that we have some very excellent students today ..." and you responded, "Sure do."

But I thought "you wouldn't shop at a grocery store that produced what our education system does." And then a minute later this is what you say about those people who run those grocery stores where you wouldn't shop:

"So I ended up sitting with a dozen men who were all teachers, full-time and I made up my mind that ... I wasn't going to say a word because I wanted to hear what the scuttlebutt was. It was summer; I mean, they weren't really working. I wanted to hear what kind of scuttlebutt really goes on between these guys when they are having a good time. And I listened to them and boy, they talked education for four hours and I never heard a word of politics, not a word, and there wasn't a word about budget. It was a word about 'How many computers in your school?' and 'How is this working out?' and 'What the kids are doing.' So it left me with the impression at that meeting — and it always is true when I meet with teachers as professionals, as groups — it seems to be so totally contradictory to everything that comes out of the B.C. Teachers' Federation that I wonder what does this federation really represent and why do the teachers put up with it if, in fact, it is contrary to their real aims and pursuits."

It was all a bit baffling, this leaping from vilification to pleasant anecdote, until I realized that it is an inevitable consequence for a mind where prejudices jostle with homilies for attention and that lacks a consistent philosophical position buttressed by some objective research.

If your target is the profligate school system, then you damn and blast everybody in it. If your target is the nasty BCTF, then you discredit them by suggesting that teachers are pretty good folk

and would be even better if it weren't for their organization.

That organization sits around, you stated, "discussing how to get more money all the time", except, of course, when they're "marching in protest rallies and putting up Solidarity signs." How did you find out so much about the federation? To the best of my knowledge you've never been in the building where I and others work, and though we do spend most of our time talking, it's rarely about money. We do have a branch of our organization that is paid to deal with money matters so that those teachers you met can talk about kids and computers instead of having to line up, cap in hand, while Mr. Peck doles out their allowance. Why don't you shut your mike off for a while and come and see for yourself what else we do, such as providing a half a million dollars for a Commission on Education, the professional development workshops we sponsor, or the staff we hire to help combat racism, or the professional journals that we publish, or the assistance we provide to Third World teachers, or the many, many things we do that cost teachers their hard-earned money but don't help them earn any more. Or are you only interested in us in connection with the trigger words of strike/protest/money. Perhaps you might find that we are not quite the money-grubbing ogres that we are made out to be by you and that comic-opera lot in Victoria.

I am tempted to sign off this letter in scorn or anger for I am sick of uninformed comments on education. We have come a very long way in the struggle to provide decent schooling for all our children and when I reflect on the drill-instruction-learning-through-fear classrooms of the 1930s that I sat in as a child I can only wonder at the progress we have made and be thankful for it.

But it is a shame to waste scorn and anger on a fellow-educator — for that is what you are. Anyone who attempts to inform people in some of structured way is an educator. Not in the legal sense, of course, but in a descriptive and ethical sense.

I understand that your broadcasts reach tens of thousands of citizens in this province and no doubt many of them are influenced by what you say. You have tremendous opportunities to stage debates about some of the real issues facing the public education system as — like society itself — it struggles to come to terms with the demands of a new industrial age when it was designed to respond to an old and rapidly disappearing one. Our system of education needs a profound examination of what it is and a projection of what it might become in the years ahead. It may well be that such an inquiry will demonstrate that schools as we know them, teaching as we know it, and the present curriculum are all inappropriate to the age we live in. That is a risk that teachers, through their federation, are prepared to take and people like you should support us in our quest.

However, you should not cease to be wary of what the BCTF is up to, or the Ministry of Education, nor school boards, nor any bodies that govern people's lives in whole or in part. Our political system is healthier when we treasure our freedom to be critical and oppose the actions of those in authority.

But with the awesome right that you have, to broadcast your views far and wide, goes or ought to go the responsibility to get your facts straight and to be fair-minded in your critical commentary. With this particular broadcast, at least, you failed to do that.

*Yours truly,  
Jim Bowman*

*Director, BCTF Government Division*

## Trustees to feel sting of parent revolt

A parent revolt is brewing throughout B.C. against continued school cutbacks.

And a lot of incumbent school trustees are going to feel the wrath of parents in the November school board elections.

That is the conclusion of Chris Taulu, parent coordinator with the Defend Education Services Coalition, who has been criss-crossing the province since January helping concerned parents organize in their communities.

"Parents are absolutely angry," Chris Taulu said in a recent interview. "The one thing I hear from parents everywhere is that the teachers have to be hired back on. They want teachers for their kids."

Complaints of class sizes of 35 to 40 students are widespread, she said. In Vancouver, parents are complaining of classes ranging up to 38 students. Parents are up in arms in Dawson Creek where a teacher has just been laid off despite class sizes already ranging up to 40 and where the board, sitting on a \$700,000 surplus, prefers to spend money on a shower for their jogging superintendent. In Golden, where a school has been closed, class sizes are "enormous" and in Fort Nelson, where an elementary school has also been closed, parents are upset that children in grades 5-7 have to walk miles through freezing weather to another school in a bad part of town.

"In Cranbrook, Castlegar, Nelson, Trail — everywhere I'm hearing the same complaints about classes being too big," said Taulu. "In Abbotsford, the board is even turning kindergarten children away — 20 to 30 have been denied access."

In addition, she said she is hearing a lot of parent outrage everywhere about split classes. "If you want one single issue that makes parents more angry than any other, it's split classes," she said. "I hear it all the time in every district I go into."

The impact of the budget cutbacks, Taulu said, "has finally got through to nearly every district, children are starting to suffer and parents are really angry."

Chris Taulu became active in education several years ago out of concern whether her daughter's special needs were being addressed. She became

involved with Vancouver's school parent consultative committees and with Julie Bower of Nanaimo and other like-minded parents formed a loose provincial coalition, Parents for Better Education. About a year ago, Wes Knapp of the BCTF Professional Development Division encouraged her to take her idea for a full-time parent coordinator to DESC, where it was welcomed and she has since logged thousands of miles assisting parents in every district in organizing.

Taulu regards Vancouver's school consultative committee system as a model for involving parents in education decision-making. Established under school board policy, the system gives parents representation at the school level and at the district level on school board committees. While it was intended to function with a democratically-elected school board, she acknowledges that it at least gives parents access to put pressure

on the government-appointed trustee, Allan Stables.

The BCTF, and teachers as a whole, have "changed dramatically," she said, in becoming more receptive to having parents involved in education. But principals still tend to be resistant.

When parents are given factual information about current education issues, she said, they are more likely to become supportive of the teaching profession's aims for quality education. As an example, she said, Vancouver teachers approached the district parent reps on the increments issue, explained what it was all about and asked for support: they got it because the parents understood what was at stake.

Taulu said she has found that what parent groups need more than anything else is good factual information in language they can understand — not propaganda. In addition to learning the

facts of current problems, she said parents need to be educated on the basics of the public school system, such as roles and responsibilities, and education finance.

"They don't know anything about the fiscal framework, or how an ordinary budget works, or who is who," she said. "They don't realize that the superintendent is supposed to answer to the trustees — trustees don't even know that in many cases."

She pointed out that the Dawson Creek parent protest really gathered steam recently when parents learned that while a teacher was being laid off and class sizes were increasing the district was running a \$700,000 surplus, whereas Fort St. John had more teachers and smaller classes and no surplus. Parents did not need to be told, she said, that the Dawson Creek school board had its priorities wrong.

Taulu said she has been dismayed to learn of the extent to which school matters in very many districts are dictated by superintendents and officials, with trustees, often kept in ignorance, confined to rubber-stamping decisions of the bureaucracy, while the public is almost completely denied information and access.

"I would say that in most districts the school boards hold closed meetings," Taulu said. She noted that parents and teachers are getting particularly frustrated with this in the east and west Kootenays and the Okanagan. "In Dawson Creek, the parents told me that you sit out in a cold hall and the trustees call you in to speak on the issue and then you must leave while they debate what you have said."

This frustration, Taulu said, is producing a large number of new, progressive candidates from the parent networks who will be running for election to school boards right across the province this fall. She cited Castlegar, Nelson, Trail, Cranbrook, Campbell River, Port McNeil and Dawson Creek.

"If we're successful in November," she said, "a lot of school boards are going to be changed from ultra-conservative to progressive with these candidates."



*Chris Taulu, DESC parent coordinator (left), and Monica Simmons, Vancouver school consultative committee chairperson (right), enter the school board office to monitor actions of government-appointed trustee.*

### RA adopts recommendations

## Greater professional role for teachers endorsed

Teachers should be given a greater role as professionals in deciding matters of educational policy and practice, the Representative Assembly has decided.

This increased involvement should take place at the provincial, district and school levels. In schools a collegial model of decision-making should be followed.

This is the effect of the fall RA's adoption of the professional responsibility recommendations of the BCTF Bargaining and Professional Rights Task Force. GRs gave their approval on the basis of some wording modifications in recommendations 2, 3(B) and 4(B), as printed in the task force report.

The task force's proposals provoked considerable discussion, particularly the recommended shift to a collegial approach to decisions at the school level, including selection of principals.

Joyce Anderson, BCPVPA president, told the assembly that if the recommendations were enacted as presented, principals would face the "serious dilemma" of either "acting at great variance with BCTF policy" or operating "in

conflict with the Minister of education and their employers."

She said administrators were critical because the recommendations totally ignore the role and responsibilities of the principal, fail to provide clear lines of authority and accountability through the collegial approach and are silent on the means of ensuring teacher competence. On behalf of administrators, Anderson urged that the recommendations be referred back to the task force for further consideration.

Mike Gregory, task force chairperson, pointed out that the views of administrators had been received and considered by the task force before making its recommendations. But he emphasized that the task force was recommending changes in traditional roles: "What we are talking about is the collegial decision-making model. It's deliberately written that way."

There was also considerable debate concerning a section of recommendation 4(B) which called for the School Act to be amended to allow school staff to participate in the selection of principals.

Discussion focussed on an amendment added by the Executive Committee calling for an electoral process to be used in the selection of principals. The task force proposed that the RA delete the executive's addition.

Marion Runcie, executive member at large, defended the executive's change in wording, pointing out that it reflected 1979 AGM policy that the School Act be amended to allow school staff to use an electoral process to choose administrators.

Arguing for deletion, task force member Jim MacFarlan, said the essence of the issue was whether the process for selecting administrators would be changed from an essentially autocratic one to a democratic one. "Those of us in large secondary schools find that the process of electing administrators is unworkable, unreasonable and in fact is not necessarily the most democratic process," he said, "and may in fact lead to a more faulted process than the one we have at the present time."

In the end, the RA deleted the executive's call for an electoral process and

accepted the task force's recommendation, which would have the effect of a school staff committee representative participating in the selection of administrators.

In addition to this, the recommendations approved by the RA call for school staff committees to establish school policies on pupil placement and programming, teacher timetables and the school instructional program. As another highlight, the recommendations call for teachers at the provincial level to have a greater say in teacher education and certification.

The next step in the process of consideration of the Bargaining and Professional Rights Task Force report is for the January RA to discuss the remaining sections which deal with the adoption process, consequent policy revision and the "strategies for implementation" recommendation. The whole report, with any modifications, will be presented to the 1986 AGM for final approval.

Beyond that, the ultimate step is to secure legislative changes from the provincial government.

**OCTOBER 9, 1985/5**

### *BCGEU study exposes impact of cuts*

The impact of government cutbacks on social services has been dramatically documented in an 80-page study produced by the B.C. Government Employees' Union.

Based on statements from employees directly involved in providing services, *A Promise Broken* tells of huge caseloads resulting from extensive layoffs, striking at services to the "province's families, elderly, handicapped and poor. Fired staff included social workers, child care workers, including 226 family support workers, psychologists, child abuse team workers and others."

Services have been cut or eliminated in the Family Support Worker Program, the Vancouver Child Abuse teams, several transition houses, the James Bay Victoria Resources Board, the Rentals-man's office, the Human Rights Commission, the Apartment Workers' Program, Legal Aid and others. "The vast majority of these services employed people who

worked directly with children," the report points out. "They assisted children with emotional and social problems at school and in the street. They provided support, counselling and guidance to families in crisis. They uncovered in non-threatening ways countless cases of sexual abuse and sought to prevent those cases from developing."

In direct terms, the study reveals, that 165 staff at over 20 lower mainland group homes and treatment centres for children unsuitable for foster care were fired.

One of the biggest blows to children was termination two years ago of the Family Support Worker Program which provided care and guidance for children within their own homes and communities. The program supported families in crisis (parents with poor parenting skills, physical or mental problems, or children with behavioral problems), families with developmentally handicapped children

by teaching socialization skills, and families in other ways to prevent children from being taken into care by the superintendent of family and children's services. Its loss has been devastating to social workers and their clients and can only be reversed with reinstatement of "an adequate system of support services including family support workers and child abuse teams. ..."

The report cites examples of the effect of the government starving social services in support of the mentally and physically handicapped, transition house, and contracting out of services at the expense of those receiving them. The horror stories are there to read but so are the solutions. In the words of the study, "we believe that a more committed and responsive system of social services is essential to restore British Columbia to its past enjoyment of prosperity and social integrity."



## President clarifies selection of administrators' task force

A letter from Gerry Powlik in the September issue of the *BCTF Newsletter* requires some clarification of statements made regarding my role in the process of naming members to serve on the task force on principals.

The principals' PSA was involved in a consideration of the applicants. Together with the president of the PSA I reviewed a list of applicants and we developed a short list of names we felt would be mutually agreeable. I reminded the president of the PSA repeatedly that I could not guarantee the Executive Committee's decision on the matter. Membership on task forces and committees is the express responsibility of the Executive Committee. Short lists are advisory only. The Executive Committee has an obligation to consider all applications for task force membership. Executive committees have in the past, used short lists on a piecemeal basis; not all names put forward have been selected. Finally, I pointed out that the decision at the Executive Committee is by secret ballot over which I, of course, had no control. As it turned out the group selected contained only one person (out of five) whom the PSA had suggested would not be acceptable to them. Three of the five are school administrators and, at the suggestion of the PSA, one of those three is a vice-principal.

I have met with the principals' association zone rep council on this matter and have outlined this process in detail. While I guaranteed involvement of the PSA, which occurred, I at no time guaranteed a process which would insure a certain membership on the task force. In fact, I repeatedly stated I could not guarantee that because of the process set out in federation policy and by-laws.

I am confident that all of those members named to the task force will do a creditable job. As the task force stands now it represents a broad cross-section of opinion on the general issue of principals' membership in the BCTF. The B.C. Principals' and Vice-Principals' Association has been communicating on a regular basis with the task force and is being kept informed of its deliberations. In my view, the conduct of the task force has been entirely credible to date and any subjective evaluation of the individuals involved does not seem to be a correct way in which to determine the credibility of the task force. As the hackneyed saying goes — the proof is in the pudding. At this point it behooves all of us to help the task force do the best work it can, not cast aspersions on it before it has had an opportunity to start its work.

Pat Clarke  
BCTF President

## Task force on principals confident in its membership

The Task Force on the Membership of Principals in the BCTF read with some dismay the letter from the past-president of the British Columbia Principals' and Vice-Principals' Association published in the September issue of the *BCTF Newsletter*. The members of the task force were and are aware of the selection process employed by the Executive Committee.

The task force feels it unfortunate that the BCPVPA has concerns about the process, since the implication is that the members of the task force may not be impartial and that its findings will be tainted.

I would like to assure members, be they members of the BCPVPA or not, that the task force is completely comfortable with its membership and is sincerely working to find a solution acceptable to all.

Colin Scott, Chairperson  
Task Force on the Membership  
of Principals in the BCTF

## Teachers for Life lobbied CTF on abortion law

We were disappointed to note that there was not a report of the Canadian Teachers' Federation Annual General Meeting in the September 10 *BCTF Newsletter*. Because of this omission we desire to let the teachers of B.C. know that the motion regarding the decriminalization of abortion presented by BCTF failed.

A letter from headquarters of CTF may be of interest to the readers of this newsletter. It states: "I wish to inform you that following debate the delegates to the Annual General Meeting of CTF passed a motion to postpone indefinitely the resolution presented by the British

Columbia Teachers' Federation with respect to decriminalization of abortion. Therefore, no action will be taken on the BCTF resolution."

We further desire to let it be known that prior to the national meeting our organization, B.C. Teachers for Life, sent letters to every provincial delegation and the president-elect, Mr. Frank Garrity, letting them know that the teachers of British Columbia do not support the resolution put forth in our name. We feel that our efforts were rewarded. We wish to thank all teachers who supported us in our endeavor and in our national victory.

There is much yet to be done for the abortion policies, though rejected by CTF, are still on our books. Until these policies and their accompanying philosophy are deleted there will not be unity within the B.C. Teachers' Federation.

Lila O. Stanford  
Retired teacher  
President, B.C. Teachers for Life  
Langley

## School safety programs win awards

Students and staff from 74 secondary and elementary schools province-wide have won awards and recognition for innovative traffic safety activities.

The annual Traffic Safety Award program, co-sponsored by ICBC and the Ministry of Attorney General, encourages students, teachers and parents to become involved in school and community traffic safety projects. This year's award winning activities include: the Challenge '85 Project, promoting seat belt use among 13 to 17-year-olds; Springtime Anti-Drinking and Driving Enforcement Campaign; traffic safety

surveys, questionnaires and bicycle safety activities.

Program awards of \$350 will go to 34 elementary schools and 24 secondary school traffic safety committees. All award winners will receive five-year perpetual plaques to display for the coming year. A further 16 schools will receive recognition awards of \$50 for entries which showed special merit but did not meet all requirements for a full award.

All cash awards are to be used in the schools for educational purposes.

## Access

# Lesson Aids offers unique curriculum service

This fall the many teachers who have undergone course changes and re-assignment and the ever-increasing number of substitute teachers are relying on the services of the BCTF Lesson Aids Service.

The Lesson Aids Service is the BCTF's publication service. It is a unique service which has now been duplicated by three other provincial teachers' federations.

The Lesson Aids Service provides teachers with support in curriculum development and materials exchange. It operates on the basis of teachers sharing innovative, ready-to-use curriculum materials they have developed for use in their classrooms. Although the majority of lesson aids are voluntarily submitted by individual teachers, PSAs and school districts, the service also distributes materials from non-profit government and community agencies. All materials submitted for consideration are screened. Selected materials are edited for content and grammar, then typeset and printed and sold at cost.

There are approximately 700 different lesson aids ranging in size from one-page lesson plans to large curriculum packages, covering K-12 in most subject areas. The service also handles slide sets, audio tapes, game boards, and microcomputer software

programs. Each September, updated lesson aid catalogues are mailed to B.C. public schools. For a more complete preview of materials, sets of display binders, which include sample pages of all lesson aids, are available on loan to schools for professional days, workshops and conferences.

Many schools subscribe to the Updated Service. Schools that purchase

a complete set of lesson aids (elementary or secondary) may have the set kept up-to-date as new materials are developed.

The Lesson Aids Service provides financial support for curriculum designers through the Materials Development Fund, which offers awards to teachers who develop innovative curriculum packages. Applications to

the award fund are accepted from September to the end of December each year.

The Microcomputer Centre, a teacher drop-in centre in operation since 1982, provides teachers with access to an Apple II Plus microcomputer with two disk drives and a printer. Teachers may use the microcomputer for computer familiarization, programming and software preview.

Course changes, teaching innovations and individualization create a heavy demand for classroom materials. To keep the Lesson Aids Service operating, a continuous supply of new materials must be made available. Teachers are encouraged to contribute materials that they have written and which have proven useful in their classrooms.

The Lesson Aids staff welcome inquiries regarding specific resources and will provide assistance to teachers who are interested in curriculum development and materials exchange. Teachers may place lesson aid orders by mail (orders are processed on the day received) or in person, the display room is open weekdays from 09:00 to 16:00 and on Saturdays from 09:00 to 12:00. All teachers are invited to make use of this unique and useful service.

Sandy Godard  
Coordinator, Lesson Aids



Sandy Godard, Lesson Aids coordinator (right, background), and clerk Connie Jung review some new curriculum materials.

# Policy seeks new, just evaluation process

The BCTF's new policy on summative evaluation of teachers is designed to ensure that justice and due process prevail in the evaluation of teachers.

Members are urged to become familiar with the policy and local associations are urged to become active in establishing good evaluation practice in their districts.

Adopted by the 1985 AGM, the new policy grew out of three years' work by the Teacher Personnel Committee in consultation with the B.C. Principals' and Vice-Principals' Association and executive members of the Association of British Columbia School Superintendents. The new policy is number 1.B.01

and is found on page 22 of the *Member's Guide to the BCTF*.

The new policy recognizes that summative evaluation through teaching reports is legally required and the policy is consistent with the process outlined in the *Administrative Handbook*.

Good practice, according to the policy calls for agreement between the teacher and the evaluator on the process and the criteria upon which the evaluation is to be based. This agreement should be made at a planning conference which would become the first step in the evaluation process and which should involve discussion of programs, the criteria upon which performance will be

judged and planning how and when data will be gathered.

Where weaknesses in performance are observed by the evaluator, the policy calls for establishment of a plan of assistance which should provide for reasonable time and resources to amend faulty practice. Resources might include demonstration lessons, consultation and collegial observation and feedback. At a mutually agreed time the evaluator would resume the evaluation process. Weaknesses that have been overcome should not be reflected in the final report.

When the data has been gathered, through an adequate number of observations, the evaluator then prepares a draft report which is given to the teacher. Before the final report is typed and filed, the teacher and the evaluator should reach agreement on the accuracy of the report and should attempt to reconcile any differences of opinion.

If at any point in the summative evaluation process a dispute arises between the teacher and the evaluator, they are encouraged "to seek the assistance of a mutually acceptable third party or parties to resolve the dispute." Due process is essential to the integrity of the process; however, a principal can be required to complete a summative evaluation in spite of an unresolved dispute.

Where there are serious disputes over judgments made in the teaching report, it may be necessary for an independent evaluation to be carried out by a mutually acceptable third party. As well, the teacher has a right to submit a written commentary which would be attached to and filed with all copies of a disputed report. The commentary would point out where the teacher differs with judgments contained in the report, and where disagreements concerning the factual content have occurred.

The policy sets out the criteria for the content of a written report. Judgments made should be adequately substantiated and be in direct relation to the accepted criteria. The report should confine itself to those aspects of the teaching and learning situation which "can reasonably be expected to be the teacher's responsibility and over which the teacher has control." The report should account for unusual circumstances, and such things as extra-curricular and BCTF activities should not be included.

The Teacher Personnel Committee and the Teacher Personnel Services Division of the BCTF believe that a well-planned process for carrying out summative evaluation of teaching performance will make the process a more satisfactory one for all involved. The BCTF and local associations have a role to play in establishing good practice by raising the awareness of both teachers and principals of what good practice is as well as providing assistance when disputes arise.

## Computer education conference seeks papers

IMPACT '86, a conference on computers in education to be held at the University of Victoria on May 15-18, 1986, is seeking presentations from classroom teachers.

The fifth annual UVic conference on this theme, the meeting will explore effective and creative uses of computers in the classroom.

Teachers interested in making presentations (submission deadline is November 15, 1985) are urged to contact: IMPACT '86 Program Committee, Education Extension, University of Victoria, Box 1700, Victoria, B.C. V8W 2Y2.

OCTOBER 9, 1985/7

## Pension plan deductions

# Teachers may have greater tax exemptions

The May 1985 federal budget contained proposals on the tax deductibility of pension plan contributions for service after 1985. Details are not available as the proposals have not been approved by parliament. Since it appears the present tax provisions will continue for pre-1986 service, the following information may be of use to you.

The British Columbia Teachers' Federation has received professional tax advice that suggests that teachers have greater scope to claim income tax exemptions for pension contributions in respect to pre-1986 service than had previously been thought possible. This advice should be of interest to teachers who would like to make voluntary contributions to the Teachers' Pension Plan beyond the current \$3,500 annual income tax exemption for current service contributions.

For many years there has been a special provision in the Income Tax Act that gives teachers the right to claim annual deductions from taxable income of up to \$3,500 for pension contributions made in respect of a year of past service, whether or not the teacher had made contributions to the pension plan in that prior year. Taxpayers who are not teachers are effectively restricted to contributing no more than \$3,500 per year on a tax deductible basis in respect of both current service and a year of past service during which they were a pension plan contributor. For teachers, however, it seems that up to

\$7,000 may be contributed on a tax deductible basis each year — that is, an extra \$3,500 in respect to pre-1986 service.

Until recently, the special broadening provision which applies only to teachers has been generally interpreted as permitting teachers to claim income tax exemptions for up to \$3,500 for each year of past service as a contributor when reinstating a previous refund under a particular teacher's pension plan, when making contributions for leave of absence and when purchasing military or other service permitted by the pension plan.

As a result of the tax advice received, the federation now believes that the special exemptions for teachers make it possible for teachers to claim, in addition to the exemption for normal current service contributions, exemption for up to \$3,500 for voluntary contributions to the Teachers' Pension Plan for pre-1986 service. This extra \$3,500 would include contributions for reinstatement, leave of absence and purchase of service permitted by the pension plan. It appears that in his/her second and all subsequent years of employment, a teacher could claim income tax exemptions for up to \$3,500 in respect of current service and up to \$3,500 in voluntary contributions in respect of past service during the preceding calendar year while he/she was a contributor to the pension plan. Again only pre-1986 service would be eligible for past service contributions. These are the maximum deductible amounts.

However, if the contribution is for reinstatement, leaves of absence or purchase of past service permitted by the pension plan and the required amount is in excess of \$3,500, the excess can be carried forward to the next and subsequent tax years.

Teachers who have been contributing to an RRSP should be aware that by seeking deductions for past service contributions they could affect the tax deductibility of their RRSP contributions. This could happen because the tax deductibility of RRSP contributions is restricted to the lesser of \$3,500 or 20 per cent of the teacher's income, minus the amount of all deductible current and past service contributions to the Teachers' Pension Plan.

The federation has decided to advise you of this opinion in view of its possible significance for your financial planning. We emphasize, however, that this interpretation is from a consulting legal firm and has not been confirmed by Revenue Canada. As with many other income tax matters it is up to the individual teacher to decide whether or not to seek exemptions for voluntary past service contributions under this approach.

If you decide to make voluntary contributions to the Teachers' Pension Plan in respect of past service, payments should be made to the Superannuation Commission at 544 Michigan Street, Victoria, B.C. V8V 4R5, clearly marked as "Voluntary contributions for past service for

credit to the account of \_\_\_\_\_, SIN \_\_\_\_\_."

The commission will give you a receipt for the money which you could then file with your tax return.

The voluntary contributions will be retained in a separate account in the pension plan and, at present, will accrue interest at an annual fluctuating rate of not less than 6 per cent.

Under the present teachers' pension plan at time of retirement — and at that time only — you will be given the option of (a) taking a refund of the amount to your credit in your voluntary account from which income tax will be withheld or (b), transferring the amount to an RRSP with no income tax being withheld or (c) requesting the commission to convert the amount to an annuity which will then be added to your monthly teacher pension. However, you should note that an annuity provided through your voluntary contributions is not indexed.

In deciding whether to make a voluntary contribution to the pension plan for past service, consideration should also be given to the benefits of the Deferred Salary Retirement Plan in those districts which have negotiated this plan for their members.

All inquiries regarding the above are to be directed to the Department of National Revenue or your accountant. The BCTF and the Superannuation Commission are not in a position to give income tax advice.

— FJC/BCW

## Public believes cutbacks hurt university quality

A public opinion poll commissioned by the B.C. Confederation of University Faculty Associations reveals that most Lower Mainland residents see government restraint measures as a threat to the quality of education provided at the province's universities.

More than two-thirds (67 per cent) of Lower Mainland residents either "strongly agreed" (40 per cent) or "somewhat agreed" (27 per cent) with a statement that "the quality of education at B.C. universities is being threatened as a result of the present government's cutbacks."

Architect of the poll was Prof. Gary Mauser, of SFU's faculty of business administration. He designed the questionnaire, established the sampling method, identified the target population and did the survey analysis. Mauser hired United Communications Research to conduct the interviews in late July.

The survey sample included 506

people living in the GVRD who were 19 years or older and who had lived in B.C. for a year or more. The sample contained 43 per cent men and 57 per cent women.

A total of 93 per cent of those polled agreed that any B.C. resident who is qualified to go to university should be able to do so regardless of family income.

Almost three-quarters (73 per cent) of those surveyed believe that a university education is beneficial. At the same time, almost two-thirds (62 per cent) believe that the quality of education in B.C. is either "somewhat" or "a lot worse" now than it was three years ago.

The survey shows "widespread dissatisfaction" with B.C. government priorities concerning the funding for universities. More than 70 per cent of the survey respondents disagreed with the B.C. government decision to allocate less money to universities; 52 per cent "strongly disagreed," while 20 per cent "somewhat disagreed."



## Vacancies

### Committee of Ombudspersons

There is still a vacancy for an Ombudsperson in the North Central/Peace River/North Coast area. The election for this position will be held at the February RA. Nominations for BCTF members willing to serve as ombudspersons should be submitted by GRs from the locals within the area by **January 15**. Further information relating to the Ombudservice can be found on page 60 of the Members' Guide.

### G.A. Fergusson Memorial Award Trustees

Three BCTF members are sought to serve three-year terms as G.A. Fergusson Memorial Award Trustees. The five trustees meet each year prior to the Annual General Meeting to review nominations and to name the recipient of the annual award. Deadline for applications is **November 27**, with appointments scheduled for the December EC meeting.

### Committee to Improve the Teaching of English

Two BCTF representatives are required — one intermediate teacher and one junior secondary teacher. CITE was formed in 1981 to bring together representatives from the school system and the universities to improve the teaching of English. Deadline for applications is **October 30**, with appointments scheduled for the November EC meeting.

### Arts in Education Council

One BCTF representative and one alternate are required. The council's purpose is to get public acceptance for arts education throughout the educational spectrum and throughout the province. Applicants should be interested in promoting arts education, but need not be specialists, and should be familiar with BCTF policies and structures. Responsibilities are to attend meetings of the council, submit reports to the BCTF, support actions of the committee which are consistent with BCTF policy, and make recommendations for BCTF policies or actions. Deadline is **October 30**.

Applications for any of the above vacancies should be submitted on BCTF curriculum vitae forms. For information or forms, please contact Jacque Boyer at the BCTF office.



*Representatives of the 15 unions who signed the joint public sector complaint to the ILO include: (left to right) Pat Clarke (BCTF), Mike Dumler (CUPE BC), Vincent Gregory (AUCE-6), Anne Harvey (OTEU), David Cadman (VMREU), Patricia Williams (AUCE-2), Nora Paton (B.C. Nurses' Union), John Shields (BCGEU), Jim Jarmson (Workers' Compensation Board Employees' Union), Jack Campbell (Health Sciences Association), Les Corlett (WCBEU), John Waters (College-Institute Educators Association), Bill MacDonald (Hospital Employees Union). Not pictured — Geoff Holter (Professional Employees' Association), Dwight Wenham (Union of Psychiatric Nurses), Lee Cochran (Ferry and Marine Workers).*

## ILO mission urged to visit B.C.

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The complaint was presented by the B.C. Government Employees' Union president John Shields at the same time as the Canadian Labour Congress and the Canadian Teachers' Federation submitted similar briefs, protesting restrictive legislation in other jurisdictions as well as B.C. The CTF complaint, presented through the World Confederation of Organizations of the Teaching Profession, gave special emphasis to the B.C. case.

The new protests about the B.C. legislation were timed to coincide with the visit to Canada of an ILO "study mission" charged with examining complaints about public sector labor relations in Newfoundland, Ontario and Alberta, but — despite earlier complaints — not B.C. One of the main aims of the joint B.C. presentation is to get the ILO to send a team to conduct a first-hand investigation in B.C.

BCTF First Vice-President Elsie McMurray travelled to Ottawa to present the B.C. aspect of the CTF complaint to the ILO mission, headed by U.K. legal scholar Sir John Wood.

In presenting the CLC/National Union of Provincial Government Employees' brief, Shirley Carr, CLC Secretary-Treasurer, told the ILO committee that Canadian trade unionists were disappointed that the committee was not going to B.C.

"To try and absorb something as complex as public sector labor relations in Canada without examining the situation in British Columbia is akin to

studying the history of English literature without reading Shakespeare," she said. "The reason that you will not be going to British Columbia is purely and simply because the provincial government there doesn't want you. It is the contention of the CLC and NUPGE that the government of British Columbia is simply manipulating the ILO complaint procedures to avoid being formally asked by the ILO to permit this mission to come to their province to investigate what I can only describe as the rapidly deteriorating public sector labor relations which exist there."

The briefs argue that the B.C. government's wage control program violates the International Labour Organization's Convention 87 (Concerning Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize). As the key to that program, the Compensation Stabilization Act is attacked for eliminating free collective bargaining, discriminating against public employees and imposing a permanent wage control scheme.

The joint B.C. complaint presented these central points of condemnation of the Compensation Stabilization Act:

- free collective bargaining has been replaced by "the arbitrary decisions of a government-appointed official" as the CSP commissioner is empowered to review all voluntary agreements and to set the terms of public sector compensation;

- the legislation is "unfair and discriminatory" as it applies only to public sector workers;

- the arbitrary limits on allowable public sector compensation have been steadily revised downward since the plan's inception in 1982 so that "they currently permit a wage freeze at best and may result in imposed pay cuts of up to 5 per cent;"

- should any employees qualify for an increase, the employer's "ability to pay" (which the brief said should be "more appropriately termed 'unwillingness to pay'") is given paramount consideration in whether an increase is awarded;

- originally to be in force only two years, the time limitation was removed in the fall of 1983 extending the wage control program indefinitely and Premier Bill Bennett said in July 1985 that the program is permanent.

"We submit that the elimination of free collective bargaining rights under CSP is, as such, a clear violation of international standards," said the B.C. brief. "We say that the prospect of that system as a permanent feature of public workers' lives in British Columbia cries out for condemnation."

The brief also pointed out that in response to previous complaints by the BCTF and the B.C. Government Employees' Union, the Freedom of Association Committee of the ILO had con-

demned other pieces of the B.C. government's wage control and restraint legislation as "not consistent with the principles of freedom of association" and "not in conformity with the principles of voluntary collective bargaining."

While noting that they suffer under the same legislative restriction as other public employees, the CTF brief emphasized that "B.C. teachers have, as well, been subject to special laws which further remove normal bargaining rights from teachers specifically."

The CTF pointed to two further restrictions:

- "The fact that superadded to the wage control program is a system of central governmental setting of the budgets of local school boards with whom teachers attempt to negotiate. The combination of these matters has rendered the rights to bargain, in the words of one respected neutral, 'a mockery.'"

- "The fact that the School Act restricts the scope of bargaining to salaries and related monetary matters. Teachers have access to neither the right to strike nor to arbitration to obtain any non-salary matters. Teachers in British Columbia are thus unable to effectively conduct collective negotiations on the many other terms and conditions of their employment and in this regard are at the whim of their employers."

The employee groups that signed the joint B.C. complaint are: Association of University and College Employees (locals 2 and 6), B.C. Ferry and Marine Workers' Union, B.C. Government Employees' Union, B.C. Nurses Union, B.C. Teachers' Federation, College-Institute Educators' Association of B.C., Canadian Union of Public Employees' Union, Office and Technical Employees' Union, Professional Employees' Association, Union of Psychiatric Nurses, Vancouver Municipal and Regional Employees' Union, Workers' Compensation Board Employees' Union.

### Cesar Chavez speaks at farmworkers benefit

On October 19, Cesar Chavez, president of the United Farmworkers of America, will be the guest of honor at a benefit dinner and dance sponsored by the Canadian Farmworkers Union. The event is aimed at raising funds for the CFU to continue its struggle against the injustices suffered by farmworkers in wages, working conditions, health and safety standards, and organizing activities. Also features a home-cooked Indian dinner and traditional Punjabi Bhangara dancing. Tickets are \$10 (\$7.00 students/unemployed) and may be obtained by calling the CFU office, 430-6055.

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