

# Censorship found prevalent in schools

Censorship, while not a rampant epidemic, is far more prevalent in B.C. schools than is publicly known, a teacher-librarian's survey has found.

There is a significant incidence, following complaints, of books being removed from library shelves, put on restricted circulation and of "offensive" portions of text being altered or blacked-

out, Diana Poole of Chilliwack Senior Secondary School discovered in surveying schools and school districts throughout the province. The research, first such conducted in B.C., was a master of education thesis project at the University of B.C.

But Poole concluded that a major reason why there has not been the same

extent of public controversies over school materials in B.C. as have occurred in other jurisdictions in recent years is the alarming amount of "self-censorship" by the ministry, teachers and teacher-librarians.

"People often don't choose what I consider literature that teenagers should be reading because they're concerned

with the community reaction," Poole said in an interview. "They would rather choose something vacuous, dull and safe than something challenging and controversial."

Poole modified a questionnaire used earlier in the U.S. by the National Council of Teachers of English and distributed *See "Children" page 3*

## BCTF Newsletter

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### A basis for action

#### **McMurphy welcomes reports' broad plan to curb child abuse**

BCTF President Elsie McMurphy has welcomed two new reports on counter-acting child abuse in schools but has expressed concerns about recommendations which could infringe on teachers' rights to privacy.

The two reports, one by a B.C. School Trustees Association-initiated task force (which included BCTF representative Jacquie Worboys) and the other by the education ministry, were released at a joint news conference on September 25.

McMurphy particularly praised the task force effort as an example of what can be achieved when all parties involved in education work toward the common objective: the benefit of children.

"I hope the report will direct the attention of all agencies to some of the problems that children, and those who work with children, face in today's society," she said. "It establishes a firm base on which all agencies concerned can build stronger and more effective policies and practices for the protection of children."

But McMurphy expressed strong reservations about recommendations that:

*See "Teachers" page 2*

### **Quality education at stake October 22**



*Restoring public education is the goal, as the Education Audit (see election supplement page 2A) reveals how four years of "restraint" has wreaked system-wide havoc.*

*— John Berson photo.*

### **Teachers urged to make**

## **Education the election issue**

Teachers are being urged to involve voters in a debate about education in the current election so that the next government will be under public pressure to give the school system a higher priority.

BCTF President Elsie McMurphy issued the call to the federation following the announcement of a provincial election to be held on October 22.

Noting that the results of the Education Audit analyzed so far had revealed "a shocking picture of damage to virtually every area and every level of the school system" caused by four years of government cutbacks, McMurphy said the election would be "one of the most critical in the history of B.C. education."

She said she viewed the election campaign as an opportunity for teachers to become actively involved in the democratic process for the benefit of public education.

"I hope that teachers will work to get out the vote, work with candidates and contribute money to the candidate or party of their choice," she said. "I particularly hope that they will ensure that their concerns, and the public's concerns, about education will become one of the foremost issues in this election."

The kinds of concerns that need to be brought out, McMurphy said, are "the

frustration teachers feel in not being able to meet the needs of their students" due to large classes, shortages and inadequacies in supplies, materials and textbooks. Voters must also be made aware, she said, of how unequal treatment in bargaining and professional rights contributes to teachers' declining morale.

McMurphy pointed out that through the "Campaign for Change" the federation is seeking commitments from the parties to:

- inaugurate a consultative process that properly involves the BCTF as the representative of teachers in curriculum and all other professional matters;
- implement the recommendations of the bargaining and professional rights report;
- return full autonomy to school boards;
- provide funds from general revenue to rebuild the public school system and ensure it is properly funded for the future;
- and develop effective programs to address social issues, such as sexism and racism, in the school system.

"I hope that teachers will facilitate a discussion of education with the public, as well as with the leaders and the candi-

dates, so that the concerns of the public will be made more visible," said McMurphy. "In this way, whatever party is in power after the election will have to do something — they will not be able to simply talk about a study of education problems."

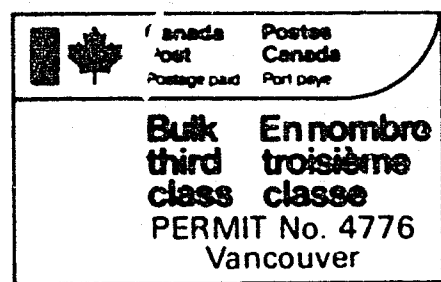
She said the "system needs an immediate injection of funds" and teachers urgently need access to the same rights as other employee groups.

McMurphy emphasized that she was not suggesting that the necessary funds be cut from other social ministries — health or human resources — but that as a minimum education receive the same average budget increase as other ministries.

She also reminded members that in pursuing implementation of the bargaining and professional rights report teachers have a strong case to make, as the issue is equal rights.

"What we need to point out is that what teachers are seeking is a *choice* — a choice of either voluntary arbitration or withdrawal of services as a way of resolving disputes," she said. "Even more important than that, we have to remind the public that what teachers are seeking is mandated professional responsibility."

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





# Teachers' rights must not be infringed

From page 1

• the Privacy Act be amended to allow police to release information concerning an investigation of a school board employee;

• police be directed to notify a school superintendent if an employee is being investigated or has been charged with a child abuse offence.

"We don't want teachers' careers to be destroyed on the basis of one unfounded allegation," said McMurphy in objecting to these proposals.

She welcomed the suggestion that an independent provincial agency be established to respond to requests regarding criminal record checks of prospective school board employees, provided that safeguards necessary to ensure confidentiality were respected.

## Court rules Bill 35 can't be used to single out teacher for firing

The B.C. Supreme Court has held that Bill 35 can't be used to single out teachers for firing where there is no need for lay-offs.

The decision, issued by Madam Justice Mary Southin September 2, effectively overturns the decision of government-appointed arbitrator Louis Lindholm which had upheld the firing of West Van teacher Roger Callow by School District 45. The judge found that the arbitrator did not properly apply Bill 35 and that his decision was so erroneous as to be "patently unreasonable."

Noting that Bill 35 only sanctioned layoffs due to factors such as budget and staff reductions, Justice Southin held that "a layoff must be as a result of, or by reason of, one of those factors; a layoff cannot be imposed simply because one of the factors exists . . . There is nothing in the award from which I could infer that [the arbitrator] ever asked himself whether the true reason for laying off Mr. Callow was any of the factors."

She then added: "From all this, I conclude that an arbitrator who instructed himself properly could reasonably have

She also expressed disappointment at Education Minister Tony Brummet's recent statement that he might have trouble finding the money for abuse-prevention courses at every grade level and prevention training programs for teachers. "We've got parents' groups out having hot dog sales so they can buy abuse-prevention kits," she said. "Does this mean school districts that have been struggling to bring in abuse-prevention programs still might not get any financial help from Victoria?"

The education ministry's report, which was prepared by two lawyers, and the task force report, which was prepared by representatives of trustees, teachers, public employees, school superintendents and the ministries of education, social services, health and attorney-general, overlapped in many areas. The

determined that the board used the new act for an improper purpose; i.e., he could reasonably have held that the layoff was not 'due to' any of the factors but due to the board's desire to terminate this man who was a trouble to it."

BCTF President Elsie McMurphy welcomed the decision. "Above all, the judge stresses that 'a teacher has a right to the protection of the procedures for termination' in the School Act," McMurphy said. "I hope no board tries to finess those procedures by using Bill 35. I'm glad the judge has made it clear that layoffs can't be used as a pretext for singling out people."

McMurphy noted that Bill 35 powers which were invoked by the West Van board have been replaced by negotiated seniority agreements in virtually all districts.

She said she hopes the West Van board will not drag out the case and will "move quickly to reinstate Mr. Callow to his teaching duties."

However, the West Vancouver School Board announced September 15 that it may attempt to appeal the decision.

task force report included recommendations that:

• a comprehensive data base on child abuse spanning all government ministries be developed;

• guidelines be developed to help employees understand what constitutes inappropriate or illegal touching;

• the School Act be amended so there is no automatic reinstatement of a teacher acquitted of child abuse while ensuring an appeal procedure if reinstatement is refused;

• removal of the B.C. Evidence Act requirement for corroboration of the unsworn evidence of a child;

• investigation of the possibility of applications to teacher training programs including questions about criminal records and outstanding charges;

• school boards consider a policy of automatic criminal checks on prospective employees;

• proper prevention programs be mandated and implemented at all school levels;

• in-service programs on detection, investigation and treatment be implemented for school board employees.

In pointing out the value of the reports as a starting point for preventive action, McMurphy stressed that child abuse was a societal problem reflected only in a minor way in schools.

"Abuse in schools is a very, very small part of the abuse that goes on in society," she said. "Recent reports suggest that 83 per cent of the abusers of children are primary care givers (such as parents and relatives)."

## Poll supports spending increase for schools

A public opinion poll shows that 73 per cent of Lower Mainland residents want the provincial government to promote "recovery" of the school system by increasing funding.

A higher proportion — 82.5 per cent — favours the Ministry of Education consulting with trustees, teachers and parents before making major decisions about public schools.

The results come from a Marktrend survey of 503 randomly selected Lower Mainland residents commissioned in part by the Vancouver Elementary School Teachers' Association.

## Freedom to Read Week focusses on fighting censorship pressures

Canada's third annual Freedom to Read Week will be held October 19-26, 1986. Teachers are urged to plan discussions of censorship during the week. Classroom kits are available for \$5 prepaid (including postage) from the Book and Periodical Development Council, Suite 200, 34 Ross Street, Toronto, Ontario M5T 1Z9.

## 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.

MEMBER: EDPRESS

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ISSN 0709-9800

## Project Overseas I 1987

Sponsored by Canadian Teachers' Federation and member organizations

Each year about 75 Canadian teachers are chosen to spend their summer without salary working on CTF Project Overseas assisting teachers in Africa, the Caribbean, Asia and the South Pacific.

Administrative, travel and living expenses are borne by the Canadian Teachers' Federation, member teacher organizations and the Canadian International Development Agency.

Requirements for selection are: membership in a provincial or territorial organization which is a member of CTF, an appropriate teachers' certificate, minimum five years teaching experience in Canada, Canadian citizenship, excellent health, and evidence of flexibility and mature judgement.

Deadline for applications is November 14, 1986. Further information and application forms are available from Judy Davis at the BCTF.

## BCTF joins group seeking gov't aid for Co-op investors

The BCTF has decided to participate in a committee seeking contributions from government toward recovery of funds lost by investors in the Teachers' Investment and Housing Co-operative.

A joint committee of interested bodies, the group is to have representation as well from the B.C. Retired Teachers' Association, the Alberta Teachers Association, the Manitoba Teachers Society and Discovery Trust, which took over the assets of the Co-op following its financial failure. Discovery Trust has agreed to underwrite expenses of the committee up to \$25,000.

The committee will investigate the feasibility and methods by which the governments of B.C., Alberta, Manitoba and the federal government could be approached to contribute to a recovery of funds. The Executive Committee made the decision at its September meeting.

At press time, Consumer and Corporate Affairs Minister Elwood Veitch announced that the superintendent of cooperatives would conduct an investigation into the failure of the Co-op.

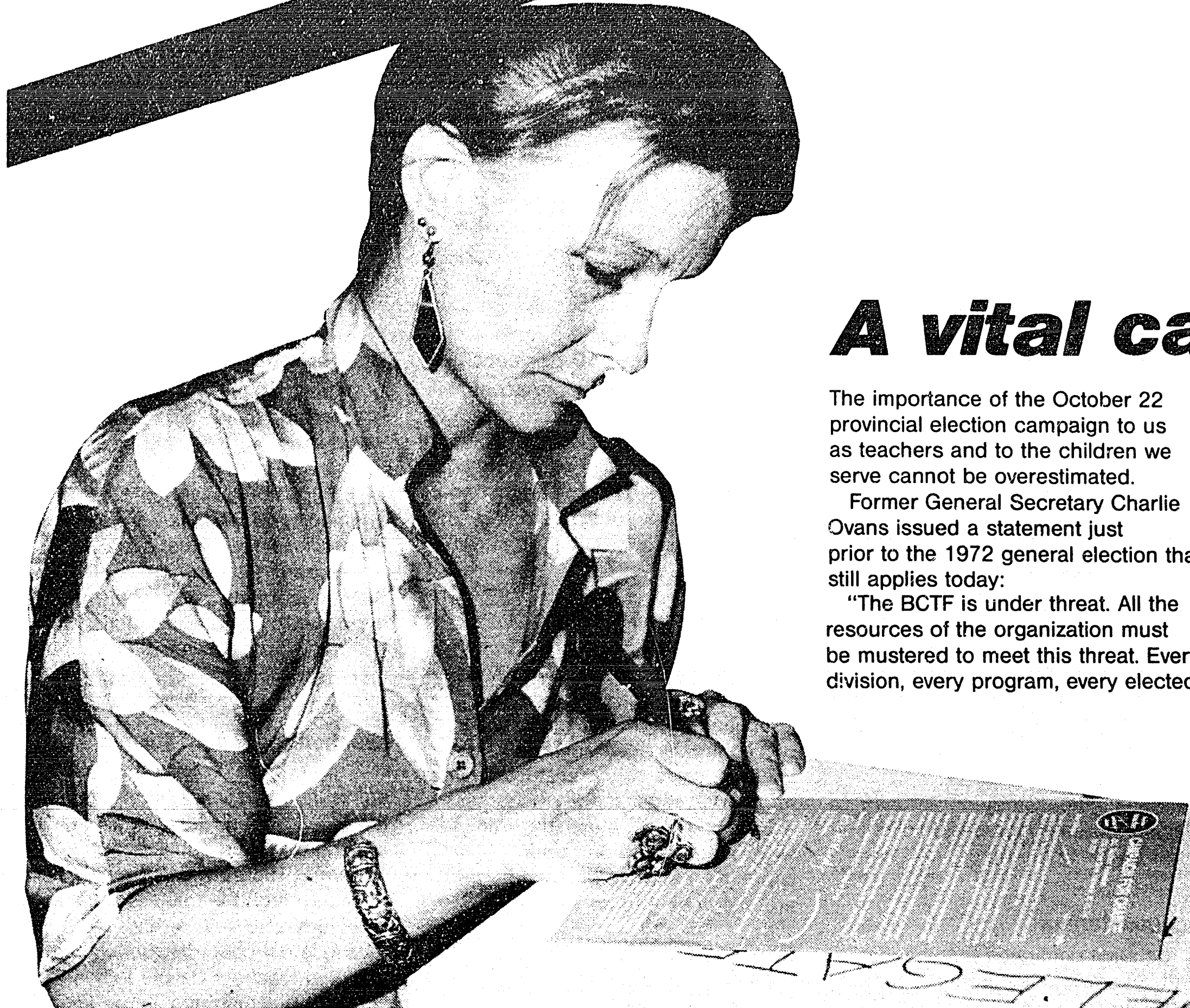
## Lesson Aids awards set

Awards of \$500 are available from the Lesson Aids Service through its 1987 Materials Development Fund for the development of curriculum materials and microcomputer software.

Information and application forms may be obtained by contacting the BCTF Lesson Aids Service, 2235 Burrard Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6J 3H9, or by telephoning 731-8121 or toll-free 1-800-663-9163. Deadline for applications is December 31, 1986. All projects are to be completed by August 31, 1987.

# Campaign for Change

... get involved



## A vital campaign

The importance of the October 22 provincial election campaign to us as teachers and to the children we serve cannot be overestimated.

Former General Secretary Charlie Ovens issued a statement just prior to the 1972 general election that still applies today:

"The BCTF is under threat. All the resources of the organization must be mustered to meet this threat. Every division, every program, every elected

officer, every staff member must make [a] contribution toward the survival of the organization . . .

"Maintenance activities . . . must continue. All other activities should be suspended.

"If we lose our right to bargain collectively, obviously we do not need staff or programs to conduct collective bargaining. If we lose our right or capacity to influence education decision making, obviously we need neither PD staff nor PD programs."

I hope that this special newsletter supplement will put the issues in perspective and encourage all of us to make whatever effort we can, personal or financial, in the time between now and election day.

Alan Crawford  
First Vice-President

# Make education the issue

This *Newsletter* reminds us again of the issues in education. We expect candidates and parties to address them. These are not just teacher

issues. We know that our aspirations for a recovered and improved education system have powerful public support. The most recent information we have is the Marktrend poll just completed for the Vancouver Elementary School Teachers' Association. It shows 73 per cent of lower mainland residents favoring more provincial funding for educational recovery and 82.5 per cent in favor of ministry consultation with teachers, parents and trustees before any major decisions are made about schools.

Premier Bill Vander Zalm, after meeting with the BCTF on September 12 said, "I can't go promising more money," and, "What they are seeking is nowhere near what we can provide." In funding, the BCTF seeks a return to 1982 levels, adjusted for inflation. This is no demand for massive, extra, special funds, but a recognition that, whether or not a government proceeds with systematic

study of the school system, basic needs must be met now.

On this issue, the premier is not in tune with what the public wants

and what the system needs. He has said that he agrees with the restraint program but disagrees with the way it was promoted. He does not believe

## What you can do

Activities you could undertake (if you haven't already!):

1. Make sure your staff has a meeting to review the Campaign for Change. (What is it? Ask your staff rep.)
2. Fill out the pink Campaign for Change envelope, follow through and work for the party of your choice.
3. Encourage your colleagues to work on the election.
4. Remind your colleagues to make sure they are on the voters' list.
5. Raise the education issue:
  - Talk to your friends, neighbours and the parents of your students.
  - Let the candidates know your concerns; call and write to them; raise the issues at all-candidates meetings; raise the issues at your political party, community and other local meetings.
  - Write letters or articles for your local newspapers.
6. Encourage your local association to:
  - Phone all teachers and encourage them to work in the election.
  - Use the Education Audit and WLC survey results to increase public awareness of educational issues.
  - Call a meeting with adjacent local associations and interested candidates to release and discuss Education Audit and WLC results.

This is a special four-page supplement of the *BCTF Newsletter* designed to encourage members to support pro-education candidates in the October 22 provincial election. The copy was prepared by the federation's political action work group and Education Audit staff.

## Retirement seminars planned

The BCTF and the Retired Teachers' Association are again presenting free retirement planning seminars. Interested teachers are urged to clip and save the following schedule.

### School district

Nelson, Castlegar, Arrow Lakes, Trail, Grand Forks

Prince Rupert, Queen Charlotte Islands

Smithers, Kitimat, Terrace, Nisgaha

Fernie, Cranbrook, Kimberley, Windermere, North Columbia, Creston Valley

Kettle Valley, Southern Okanagan, Penticton, Keremeos, Princeton, Kelowna, Summerland

Comox, Campbell River, Vancouver Island West, Vancouver Island North

Teachers living in Metro Vancouver area including Howe Sound, Maple Ridge and Langley  
(Please choose the location closest to you)

Hope, Chilliwack, Abbotsford, Mission, Agassiz-Harrison

Cowichan, Lake Cowichan, Nanaimo, Mount Arrowsmith, Alberni, Victoria, Sooke, Saanich, Gulf Islands

### Site and time

**Castlegar** — October 25, 1986  
Hi-Arrow Arms — 09:30-16:30

**Prince Rupert** — October 30, 1986  
Crest Motor Inn — 16:30-22:00

**Terrace** — November 1, 1986  
Terrace Hotel — 09:30-16:30

**Cranbrook** — November 15, 1986  
Inn of the South — 09:30-16:30

**Kelowna** — November 22, 1986  
Capri Hotel — 09:30-16:30

**Campbell River** — December 6, 1986  
Anchor Inn — 09:30-16:30

**Richmond** — January 31, 1987  
Airport Inn Resort — 09:00-16:00

**Burnaby** — February 7, 1987  
Sheraton-Villa — 09:00-16:00

**Surrey** — February 14, 1987  
Surrey Inn — 09:00-16:00

**Chilliwack** — February 28, 1987  
Best Western Rainbow Country Inn — 09:30-16:30

**Nanaimo** — March 7, 1987  
Tally-Ho Island Inns — 09:30-16:30

**Victoria** — March 28, 1987  
Harbour Towers — 09:30-16:30



# Campaign for Change

... talk to your colleagues



## Education Audit finds:

# "Restraint" wreaked havoc

The impact of provincial government "restraint" on public education has been profound and pervasive. This is the basic finding of the BCTF education audit. Cutbacks have not simply hit one area but have wreaked havoc throughout the system. What emerges is a pattern of damage that will take years to repair. The following are capsule highlights from the education audit report.

### Teachers cut faster than enrolment

Although declining enrollment is sometimes given as a reason for cutting teachers, in fact the number of teachers has dropped at a rate of three times the number of students between 1981 and 1985. During this period of time student enrollment declined by 3.66 per cent, the teaching force by 11.12 per cent.

### Funding by pizza sales

The following comment illustrates the fact that some districts did not have enough money to fund basic programs in the 1985-1986 school year:

"In our district the total allotment for Foods was used up by May 1. Therefore teachers sold pizzas and other things at lunch to raise funds to run the program rather than have students pay the extra until the end of the year."

### Morale takes a beating

Nearly 80 per cent of the respondents to a provincial teacher survey conducted in the spring of 1986 stated that teacher morale in their school had declined. In a separate study done in the Cariboo Chilcotin district, more than half of the teachers surveyed, including two-thirds of the secondary teachers, stated that they would leave teaching if they had a feasible alternative.

### Textbook spending inadequate

The amount that the government has allocated to school districts for textbooks for 1986-1987, \$14.9 million, is only two-thirds of what is needed to meet the Ministry of Education's own stated requirement of \$22.45 million for this year.

2A/OCTOBER 2, 1986

### Business gets the breaks

During the four years 1985-89, corporations and businesses will pay nearly \$800 million less in property taxes, from which school funding is drawn, according to the Ministry of Finance's *Financial and Economic Review*. These reductions, which are to continue into the future, will be achieved through cuts of \$85 million in 1985/86, \$169 million in 1986/87, \$261 million in 1987/88 and \$277 million in 1988/89.

In 1986/87 non-residential property tax revenues dropped by 13 per cent from the year before. In the same time period, residential tax revenues increased by 16 per cent, placing a greater burden of school taxes on the homeowner.

### School staffing

The audit confirmed that the main staff cuts have come from the ranks of teachers and school support staff.

From 1982-85, the number of teaching staff has been cut by 8.6 per cent, while vice-principals have been reduced by 25 per cent and principals by 3 per cent. Among support staff, school clerical workers have been cut by 14 per cent, teacher aides by 19 per cent, library aides by 20.6 per cent, custodians by 14 per cent and maintenance staff by 16.35 per cent.

### Real incomes cut 10 per cent

After taking inflation into account, B.C. teachers have lost 10.5 per cent in real wages since the provincial government's restraint program began in 1982. This is largely a result of the wage controls established under the Compensation Stabilization Program.

### User fees rampant

The majority of school districts charge user fees for courses such as Home Economics, Industrial Education, Art, Computer Science, Business Education and P.E. 12. In addition, some school districts charge for a much wider range of courses, such as Biology, Chemistry, French, Law, Band and Kindergarten. Graduation and student activity fees are often charged as well.

### Bonanza for private schools

Between 1982 and 1985, the per pupil funding from provincial government general revenue increased by 5 per cent for public school students and by 32 per cent for private school students.

### Dropout rate alarming

An internal Ministry of Education study done in 1985 shows that 35 to 40 per cent of all students drop out of school before completing grade 12.

### Budget reductions

The actual number of dollars spent to operate B.C.'s public schools was less in the 1985/86 fiscal year than it was in 1982 — \$1.588 billion in 1982; \$1.564 billion in 1985/86. In addition to this, inflation has eroded even this expenditure level. Between 1981 and 1986/87 school district operating budgets have increased by 21.3 per cent. By June 1987 the cost of living will have increased by just under 43 per cent.

### Teachers now fund-raisers

A study done by Simon Fraser university researchers shows that of the \$14.8 million raised in private funding for B.C.'s public school system in 1983/84, \$12.1 million was raised through fees and fund raising. The study also shows that fund raising is not cost effective, as the time that teachers devote to this activity costs as much as the funds procured.

### Gov't limit: 100 computers

The number of microcomputers in B.C. schools has increased dramatically in the past three years from a total of about 3,000 to 12,000.

But no great thanks are due the provincial government — whose largesse has provided only 100 of that 12,000. School fund-raising projects and reductions in other areas of school board budgets have provided the money for this great leap forward. Despite Victoria's niggardliness, B.C. school boards, parents and teachers have placed computers in schools at a rate higher than in seven other provinces.

### PTR upward bound

In 1983 the government set a target to force the provincial PTR back up to the 1975-76 level of 19.14 pupils per teacher. But it decreed that special education — growing phenomenally with "mainstreaming" — would not be cut back. The result: teacher layoffs, overcrowded classes, reductions in programs, services and libraries. In 1985-86 the PTR was 18.05.

BCTF NEWSLETTER SUPPLEMENT

# Campaign for Change

... work for your party



## Commitments to education sought

THE BCTF is seeking five major commitments from the political parties:

### 1. A Consultative Process

A consultative process that properly involves the BCTF as the representative of teachers in curriculum, professional and all other matters at the provincial level.

### 2. Bargaining and Professional Rights

Implementation of the recommendations of the bargaining and professional rights report.

### 3. Full Autonomy

A return to full autonomy for school boards.

### 4. Funds

Funds from general revenue to rebuild the public school system and to provide for a properly funded education system for the future.

### 5. Social Issues

The development of effective programs to address the problems related to social issues such as sexism and racism, in all aspects of the school system.

## How the parties responded to our five issues\*



We will enter into discussions with your federation on how to expand the influence of teachers in the professional aspects of your chosen career.

We find it unacceptable that teachers in B.C. do not share the same bargaining rights as their colleagues in the rest of Canada. This is a situation that will receive the immediate attention of a B.C. Liberal government.

A Liberal government will move quickly to remove legislation which unfairly and unnecessarily limits the autonomy of school boards.

The most important issue to be addressed would be a stable, predictable, and fair funding formula for the financing of public education.

We would strike a broadly representative Task Force to conduct a thorough review of the public education system. We would also examine programs for the needs of all special children.

### Social Credit

The Social Credit Party did not give a similar point-by-point reply to our questions, but BCTF President Elsie McMurphy did receive a letter from B.C. Social Credit Party President Hope Wotherspoon which said:

BCTF NEWSLETTER SUPPLEMENT



We propose open-agenda, intense consultations within the BCTF, the BCSTA and the government to develop a pragmatic reform package. We pledge no unilateral government action on matters affecting teachers.

Our policy is full collective bargaining for teachers. How to implement will be the subject of early consultations.

Many, if not most, important decisions are best made locally. Transforming a centralized Victoria-controlled system into a responsive, democratic and locally controlled system will be the subject of early consultations.

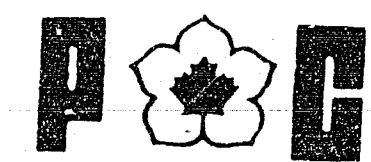
We shall aim to restore services to the level of 1982 after negotiation with school, college and university communities. School boards will have budget authority and the ability to tax local industrial, commercial and residential property.

We believe the major objectives of the curriculum should include:

- a strong sense of the interests and rights of all human beings;
- a commitment to peace, human rights and social justice.

In response to your letter of June 26th, the B.C. Social Credit Party, under the new leadership of Premier Vander Zalm, will continue to give education a high priority.

I am giving the questions in your letter careful consideration and will respond to you in the near future.



A meaningful consultative climate involving educators, trustees, parents and the community at large should be given every encouragement.

The Compensation Stabilization Act should be repealed and full collective bargaining should be restored on a province-wide basis. Consideration should be given to bargaining initiatives such as final offer settlement.

Increased school board authority over budget priorities and local initiatives must be restored. A greater balance between local control and centralized authority must be immediately pursued.

A greater share of education funding must be provided from provincial revenues so that the percentage burden on homeowners and individual businesses can be lessened over time.

Equal access to educational opportunities regardless of race, sex, marital status or socio-ethnic background must be assured. This can best happen through the social science courses of public education at every level.

\*SOURCE: Summary of information submitted by the parties June 6, 1986.

3A/OCTOBER 2, 1986



# Campaign for Change

... canvass door-to-door



## A record in education to remember

### 1982, January

"Restraint" born in a cabinet/bureaucrats' conference at Schooner Cove

### 1982, February 18

Bill Bennett announces Public Service Restraint Act

### 1982, April 30

Education Interim Finance Act receives royal assent

### 1982, June 9

Bill Vander Zalm says: "I would personally stack a youngster who has received an education in an independent school against my own or any others who had received an education in a public school. I would wager anyone here that chances are, by and large, that the level and type of education they received would be far superior in those independent schools."

### 1982, June

Compensation Stabilization Act — Ed Peck arrives

### 1982, August 26

On becoming Education Minister Vander Zalm says: "I hope to become the best minister for education this province ever had."

### 1982, August 30

New Education Minister Bill Vander Zalm: "I don't believe we're getting good value (for the money spent on education)."

### 1982, September

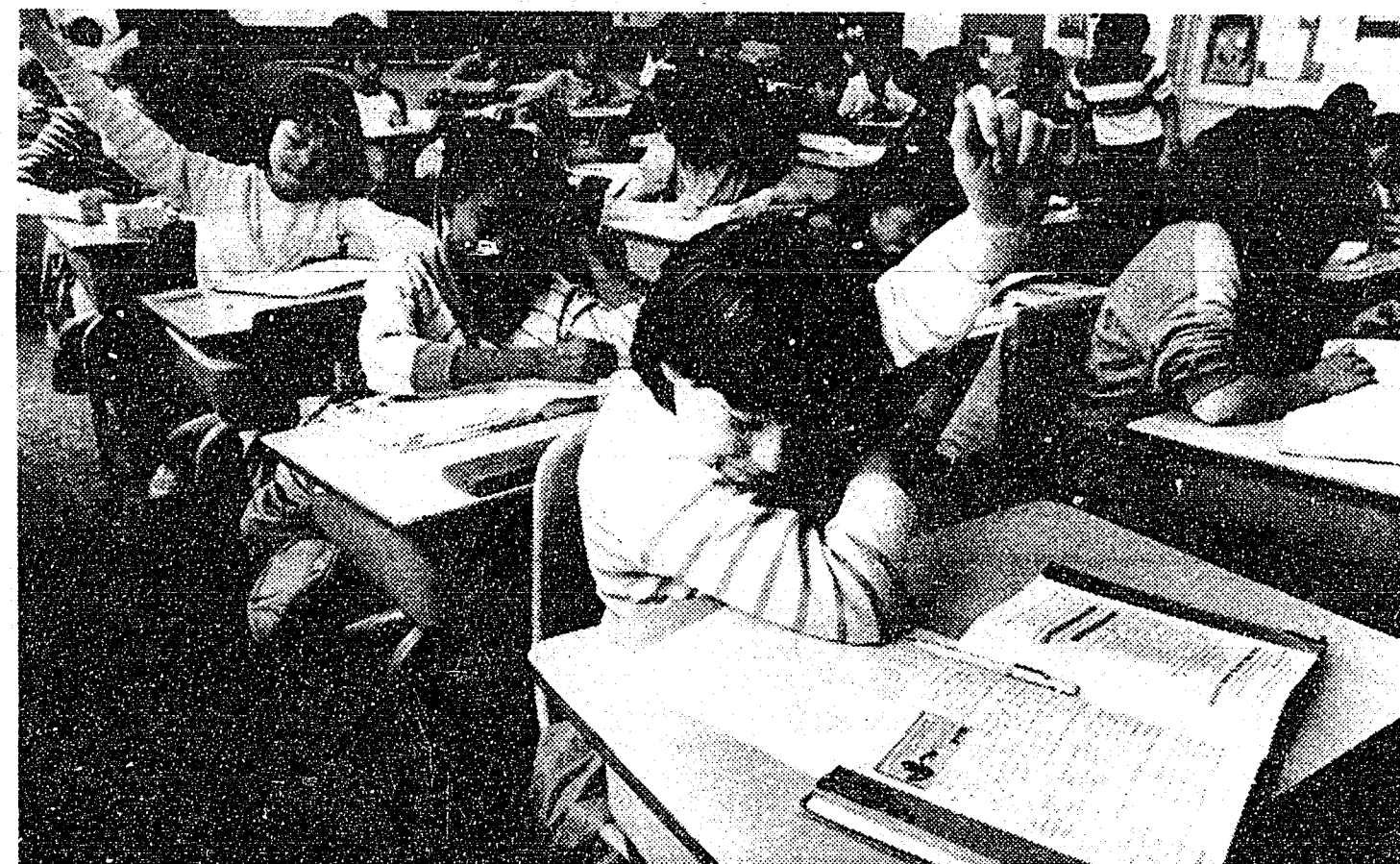
Vander Zalm quoted in the *Vancouver Province*: "Education in B.C. is very expensive, not too productive and a relatively easy row to hoe..."

### 1982, October

A Vander Zalm letter to all teachers: "We have a good education system in B.C. and a lot of dedicated people, such as you and your colleagues, have made it what it is and what it will continue to be."

### 1982, October

Bill 89: shut school system down for six days, reduced salaries 3 per cent, removed six non-instructional days. Two weeks before Vander Zalm called the idea of school closures "not a solution, but an abdication of responsibility."



What's at stake is the opportunity for our children to receive quality education and preparation for a fast-changing world.

### 1983, June 1

After a meeting with new Education Minister Jack Heinrich, BCTF President Larry Kuehn reported to the RA that Heinrich had shown "a real awareness of the scene of disorder" left by Vander Zalm and that Heinrich spoke of reconstructing relations between the government and teachers. Heinrich intended to communicate directly rather than use the news media.

### 1983, July 7

Bill 3 (dismissal "without cause"), Bill 6 (centralized control of education finances), Bill 11 (CSP — "ability to pay"), Bill 24 (appointed college boards), plus 24 other draconian measures were introduced.

### 1984, January

Bill Vander Zalm, quoted in the December '83/January '84 issue of the magazine *Easy Living*: "I say that I was really the founder of restraint eight years ago."

### 1986, September 12

Premier Vander Zalm says to reporters after meeting with BCTF officers: "I can't go promising more money... What it is they are seeking is certainly nowhere near what it is we can provide." And: "I do know that in many areas throughout North America and the world class sizes are larger than what we have them here and they're doing pretty well by it."

### 1986, September 16

Vander Zalm knocks the Bennett regime saying: "There was too much emphasis placed on the whole issue of restraint. I think it could have been done without all the fanfare, without all the promotion..."

### 1983, April 14

Vander Zalm resigns. On taking a "sabbatical" from politics, his news release states: "I will support and am proud of the programs, projects and policies of the government of which I have been privileged to be a member... for the past eight years."

# Make education the issue Oct. 22

## Staff "self-censorship" claimed at fault

## Children denied challenging literature

From page 1

it to 300 teacher-librarians in B.C. She received 111 completed surveys, a return rate of 37 per cent.

Of these, 63 (or 57 per cent) had received complaints about materials within the last five years and 43 (43 per cent) had not.

Complaints were focussed largely on the teenage problem novel, but not exclusively. Poole reported in the BCTLA's *The Bookmark*. Books by teenage problem novel writers Judy Blume, Robbie Branson, Constance Green, Ann Head and Norma Klein were frequently cited, but so were the works of Maurice Sendak, Raymond Briggs and Mordecai Richler — even the overuse of the Bible was questioned by one non-Christian family. Titles "one least expects" were attacked, she said, while many of the expected ones were not.

Eighty-eight books received a total of 98 complaints which, ranked by frequency, included:

- sexual references, including nudity, teenage pregnancy, birth control and incest;
- obscene, or "filthy", language, ranging from the four-letter word describing the sex act to the term, "slut";
- overly violent, or frightening, descriptions and illustrations;
- concerns on the effect of children's behaviour of books describing drugs, attacking the moral values of parents or being disrespectful of parents and people in authority;
- books deemed inappropriate to the grade level.

More than half of the objectors were parents, most often mothers, with the next major group being teachers, teacher-librarians and principals. The action most frequently called for (in 92 per cent of the cases) was removal of the material

from classroom or library. "In one case," Poole noted, "a group of teachers removed Harlequin romances from the library (without the permission of the teacher-librarian) because they objected to the series as being sexist."

The teacher-librarian usually (in 51 cases or 54 per cent) decided the response to book complaints, Poole found. The principal made the decision

in 11 cases, while a joint decision of principal and teacher-librarian was made in 18 cases. "It is interesting to note," she added, "that a school review committee which consisted not only of educators but of parents and members of the community was used in one incidence and the book was retained."

The survey showed that in 40 cases there was no censorship; the request that

the offensive material be removed was denied, but in three cases an alternate assignment was given to students.

In 61 cases the books were censored either by removing them from the recommended list, classroom use, the library or by altering them in some way, Poole found. In three cases the text was altered: black markers were used to remove "offensive" words and whole lines in one incidence, while in the other words were changed to make them more "acceptable."

A separate questionnaire to school superintendents reinforced the findings of the teacher-librarian survey.

"I think that what this shows is that as teachers we're too complacent about censorship, but what is worse we're also participating in it," said Poole. "That is more insidious than having books challenged by parents and having controversy in the newspaper."

She suggested that because of teacher-librarians' "self-censorship" a lot of good contemporary teenage literature, that deals realistically with the experiences and concerns of young people, is not being stocked. A number of teacher-librarians admitted this, Poole said, pointing to such comments written on the survey form as, "If the principal would let me, I would..." or "It's too risky a book to put out..." and so on.

What is needed, Poole argued, is for all school districts (she cited Vancouver, Prince George and Vernon as good models) to develop defensible selection procedures and equitable challenge processes.

Barb Hall, BCTLA president, said, in an interview, that she did not believe censorship was a serious problem in B.C. schools. "Our association," she said, "is very happy with what we can stock in our libraries."



Diana Poole, Chilliwack Senior Secondary School teacher-librarian, considers a copy of Margaret Laurence's *The Diviners*, a novel which has often been attacked for school use.

## Letters

### Principal urges BCTF practise its preaching on "true consultation"

Your lead story "Teachers want true consultation" in the September 4th issue of the *BCTF Newsletter* leads me to have hope and then despair over our future as a strong federation if Elsie McMurphy's address to the Summer Conference delegates is an accurate indication of the direction of the federation.

One has hope that we as a federation will practise what we preach. You quote Elsie:

*Surely we have to move beyond the insecure, inferiority-complex style of government where anyone who disagrees is a bad British Columbian, to a recognition that consultation requires, in a democratic society, two important processes: the encouragement of opposition to the government and the involvement of key participants in the formulation of decisions, not just the implementation.*

Can we hope that we will recognize this type of consultation within our own federation? Can we hope that we will move beyond the insecure, inferiority-complex style of federation where anyone who disagrees is a bad member, to a recognition that consultation requires, in a democratic society, two important processes: the encouragement of opposition to the federation and the involvement of key participants in the formulation of decisions, not just the implementation?

Elsie McMurphy has described not only the plight of the federation with respect to the government but also the plight of the administrators with respect

to the federation. Surely we as the federation can practise that consultation which we preach. I hope that this will be the case.

One is led to hope to see that Elsie recognizes the vulnerability of principals in the federation and believes, as do they, that the principals belong in the federation. I hope that this is an indication of her desire to consult with them and help resolve the difficulties facing them as a result of present federation policy.

However, I am led to despair when I see Elsie state:

*I urge the B.C. Principals and Vice-Principals' Association and individual administrators to make their positions clear, through their local associations and the BCTF...*

I despair, not at the encouragement to make our position clear, but at the suggestion that this should be done through the BCTF. How can any individual administrator's position be clear if it is subjected to the scrutiny of the federation? Surely, we as a federation are strong enough to tolerate individual dissenting opinion. Surely our positions on any item are strong enough to withstand dissenting opinion. If not, how valid are such positions. Must we legislate silence and censure dissenting opinion?

I recognize my vulnerability as an administrator. I hope that my federation will do the same and resolve satisfactorily the difficulties I face in my effort to meet my responsibilities as an administrator amidst contradicting federation policy.

George Buckley  
Principal  
Terry Fox Senior Secondary  
Coquitlam

### BCTF does practise what it preaches, replies president

Why does Mr. Buckley "despair?"

Not only will we "practise what we preach" — we do! The report of the Task Force on the Membership of Principals in the BCTF underlines the fact that the democratic processes (formal and informal) of the federation are equally available to principals.

Members who disagree are not "bad members." Opposition is encouraged,

key participants are involved. For example, the BCPVA president was consulted prior to the selection of members of the above-mentioned task force and provision has been made for the BCPVA to participate in the discussion of that report at the next BCTF Executive Committee meeting and at the Representative Assembly.

I cannot say that Mr. Buckley does not hold the perception that principals are vulnerable, but the facts do not substantiate his concerns. It is to be hoped that

See "Unity" page 4

## Gainers boycott urged

The BCTF Labour Affairs Advisory Committee urges members to join in the boycott of Gainers meat products.

The committee is calling for the action, endorsed this summer by the CTF board of directors, in support of the United Food and Commercial Workers International Union whose legal strike against Gainers in Edmonton has been disrupted by strike-breakers.

Teachers are urged not to buy the following products marked with the government inspection number 18B, which identifies them as originating from Gainers Edmonton plant:

- Swift's Pacon — Premium, Lazy Maple, Sugar Plum, Capital, Eversweet, Royal Breakfast, Sunny Morning, I.G.A.;
- Other bacon — Superior, Freirich, Royale, Capital, H.R.I., Hickory House, Food Services, Holiday, Sunshine, Denver, Royal Breakfast, Sierra, Armour, Alberta Gold;
- Hams — Homesteader, Superior Dinner Hams, Captain Cabin, Royale, Superior Cottage Roll, Alberta Gold, Lazy Maple;
- Meatloaf — Superior (Red or Gold Label);
- Smoked meats — Premium Corned Beef Brisket, Royale Pork, Superior Porks;
- Party sticks/smoked meats — Superior, Alberta Gold;
- Thin sliced meats Safeway, Royale;
- Wieners — Firebrand Pork, Firebrand Beef, Smokies, Alberta Gold, Superior, Premium;
- Smoked hams — Superior, Sugar Plum;
- Rings — Superior Blood Sausage, Fine and Coarse, Garlic and Bolo;
- Bolo — Superior and Salami;
- Others — Magic Pantry.



# Langley teachers Rise for Rights

Lynne Macdonald  
Bargaining Division

Langley teachers are in a struggle that will ultimately affect other B.C. teachers.

They began their *R.I.S.E.* (Report, Instruct, Supervise and Evaluate — the only activities currently being carried out by Langley teachers) *for Rights* campaign September 2 because of the school board's consistent refusal for many years to negotiate due process clauses on matters such as hiring, transfer or evaluation into contract. A fair salary increase was subsequently added as a demand in the job action, the teachers currently being without a contract, the school board having refused to implement the "final and binding" arbitrated award of 3.4 per cent. (Although re-opening last year's contract and putting some of the money on grid June 30 in order to evade "Peck's guideline" is a clear option, a similar agreement having been approved by the Commissioner for

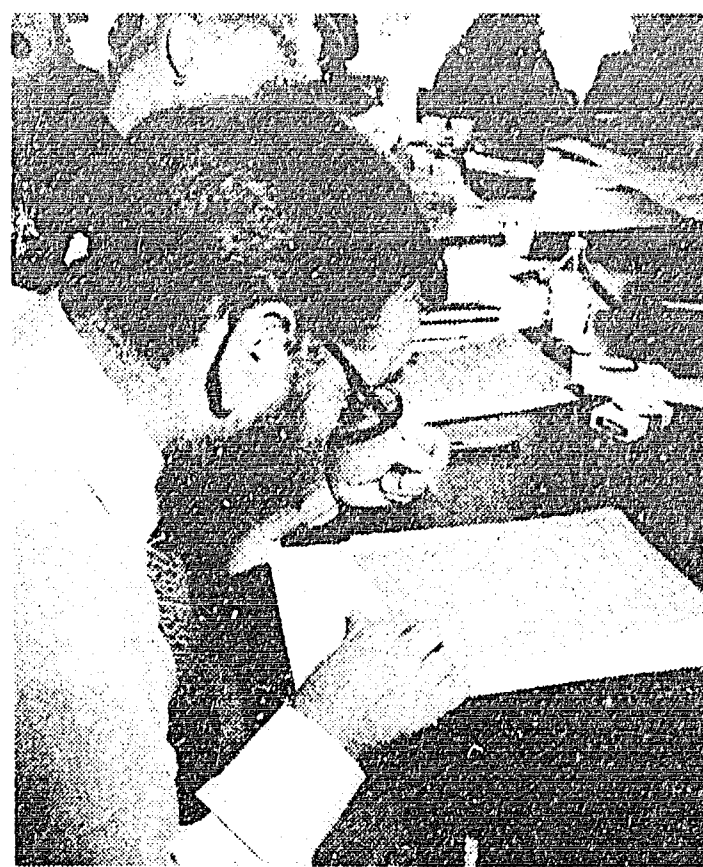
Maple Ridge, the Langley School Board remains steadfastly at 1.5 per cent.)

By all accounts, the *R.I.S.E. for Rights* campaign is strong and growing stronger every day. After trying every other possible tactic from "Blue Days" to rallies at the board office, Langley teachers are firmly resolved to support this campaign until they receive fair treatment.

Barb Parrott, LTA president, says: "Teachers in Langley will no longer accept less than fair treatment and due process. Other teachers have transfer or evaluation clauses. The *R.I.S.E. for Rights* campaign is the only means Langley teachers have of attempting to bring the Langley School Board into the mainstream of teacher bargaining in B.C. — and, as everyone knows, that's not asking a great deal!"

Messages of support should be sent to Langley by either local associations or individuals. The Langley teachers' vic-

tory will be our chance to make similar or further gains next spring.



Langley teachers sign up to participate in the Campaign for Change.

## "Report Card" fails gov't education policy

Elaine Jacobson  
Education Audit

At the 1986 Annual General Meeting delegates were given report cards and were asked to use them to grade their own teaching situations with regard to a number of topics such as "class size," "prep time provided" and "availability of textbooks." Delegates were also asked to grade the attitudes of the provincial government and school boards toward education, and to state what they felt were the best and worst aspects of being a public school teacher today.

Report cards were then made available to local associations to use as a part of their local Education Audit. Over

20,000 cards were ordered and distributed in the majority of districts in the province.

There were several trends which were similar in both the AGM survey and the local association studies. Overwhelmingly, respondents rated the attitude of the provincial government toward education and teachers a very solid "U." Some comments indicated that even this mark was too high. The rating of school boards was mixed, depending upon the district surveyed. The majority of the "best" comments were similar: the best aspect of being a public school teacher today is the opportunity to do worthwhile work with children and young people. The most common "worst" comment reflected the frustration that teachers feel because cutbacks in education funding and the assault of the provincial government on teachers is pre-

venting them from doing their jobs well.

Local associations were able to use the report cards to identify areas of concern in their own districts. They found that concerns of elementary schools often differed from those of secondary schools. In elementary, dissatisfaction was expressed particularly with regard to class size, supervision duties, lack of prep time, inadequate counselling services and irregular computer instruction. Secondary teachers cited textbook inadequacies, lack of clerical staff support, and buildings and maintenance as being of concern. Both elementary and secondary expressed unhappiness with the availability of supplies, funds for field trips and funds and release time for professional development activities.

Several local associations are planning to take up these concerns with their school boards and the public this fall.

### Unity needed now

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the task force report will assist us in dealing with his perceptions.

In my speech at the summer conference, I quoted federation policy that principals and vice-principals should be members of the BCTF with the same rights and obligations as other members and gave significant play to this policy, the wisdom of it, and our need to pull together — particularly at this time. The process I suggested, and which Mr. Buckley quotes, is one that *must* be followed where PSAs are concerned (see procedure statement 33.04, concerning PSA actions), and *should* be followed where individuals are concerned, in order to encourage and ensure, as Mr. Buckley points out, that both opposition and involvement can occur within our federation. It is not a question of tolerance of dissent within the federation, it is a question of strength and unity of purpose when dealing with outside bodies.

Elsie McMurphy  
President, BCTF

## Election stalls bargaining plans

George North  
Director, Bargaining Division

The provincial election has temporarily halted a series of team-building meetings organized by the BCTF Bargaining Division to help establish local processes for objective setting and strategy development for 1987-88 contract bargaining. A key purpose of the meetings was to assure local input to the provincial bargaining conference slated for November 28-29 at the Delta River Inn. Local presidents and bargaining chairpersons are invited to attend as delegates at BCTF expense; also participating will be members of the Executive Committee and the provincial Bargaining Committee.

The 20 or so local team building meetings held prior to the September 27-28 weekend have been judged generally successful by participants. Among the more useful activities have been a review of 1986-87 bargaining successes and failures, strengths and weaknesses and particularly local agreement analysis. The latter exercise has helped point up contract deficiencies and focus on steps necessary to improve agreements in key areas.

The election call has also forced postponement of those WLC zone meetings scheduled on or before October 22 but as is the case with the local meetings, they are being rescheduled wherever possible.

In the meantime, bargaining division staff will continue to provide essential services, including collecting and processing information collected on the WLC class size and working conditions surveys.

Some progress in settling 1986-87 agreements was reported at press time but three districts, Merritt, Langley, and Abbotsford, were still involved in job action in an effort to resolve their disputes. In addition, a recorded \$638,000 budget surplus in the Terrace School District has added impetus to the local's efforts to achieve a salary and working conditions settlement.

Also remaining unresolved are Central Okanagan (1.5 per cent arbitration award), Golden (3 per cent), Fort Nelson (2.5 per cent), North Thompson (1.1 per cent), Kitimat (1.3 per cent) and Prince Rupert (.4 per cent).

## Vacancies

**Ombudsperson:** Vancouver Island There is a vacancy for a Vancouver Island representative on the Committee of Ombudspersons. Please check the policy regarding the Ombudservice on page 72 of the *Members' Guide to the BCTF* paying special attention to policies 24.02(e) and (f).

Nominations for BCTF members interested in serving as ombudspersons should be submitted by LARS from the locals within the area by **October 31**. The election is scheduled for the November 7-8 RA.

### Federation Appeals Board

Just a reminder of the October 27 deadline. Details were in the September 4 *Newsletter*.

### G.A. Fergusson Memorial Award Trustees

Four BCTF members are sought to serve three-year terms as G.A. Fergusson Memorial Award Trustees. The five trustees meet each spring prior to the Annual General Meeting to review nominations and to name the recipient of the annual award. Deadline for applications is **November 10**; appointments are scheduled for the November 14-15 Executive Committee meeting.

Applications for all of these committee vacancies must be submitted on BCTF curriculum vitae forms. Forms and more information are available from Jacquie Boyer at the BCTF office.

## New tax rules set for salary deferral plans

Bruce Watson

Income Security

Prior to the proroguing of parliament, the federal Minister of Finance tabled amended legislation and draft rules governing salary deferral arrangements.

Although the legislation must again be presented to the new parliament in October, it is anticipated that the amendments will also be re-introduced.

Under the amending legislation, there is no longer any tax advantage in deferring salary after June 30, 1986 into a deferred salary retirement plan. Any monies previously deferred will remain tax-sheltered until they are paid out within the terms of the agreement between the school boards and the participants.

Tax deferral is still permitted when an employee defers current salary into a self-funded leave of absence arrangement. Again there are new draft rules governing the deferred salary leave plans which associations and boards must meet to make the plans acceptable to Revenue Canada. Full details have been sent to all associations and boards.

Since the February 1986 budget first announced possible changes in the salary deferral arrangement, the federation and many local associations and boards have made numerous submissions to the Minister of Finance, to members of parliament from B.C. and to the provincial government to exclude the deferred salary retirement plans from the new rules. Although these submissions were unsuccessful, the leave plans were excluded and to this extent a significant benefit for teachers was retained.

## ELP gets \$6,000 help

The BCTF will give the End Legislated Poverty coalition a \$6,000 Community Outreach grant to assist its programs in combatting poverty. The Executive Committee made the decision at its September meeting. Last year the federation assisted ELP in publishing a teaching resource unit, "Poverty in B.C."

### Are you getting your Newsletter?

Address errors can be costly — please help us keep up-to-date.

**All members:** If your home address has changed, or if we don't have it correctly, please give us your proper address:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Social insurance number \_\_\_\_\_

Home address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

**Staff-reps:** Please inform us of any changes in numbers needed at your school.

Please return this coupon to: Member Records, B.C. Teachers' Federation, 2235 Burrard Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6J 3H9.