



*the* **BC** *teacher*

SEPT.-OCT. 1979 VOL. 47

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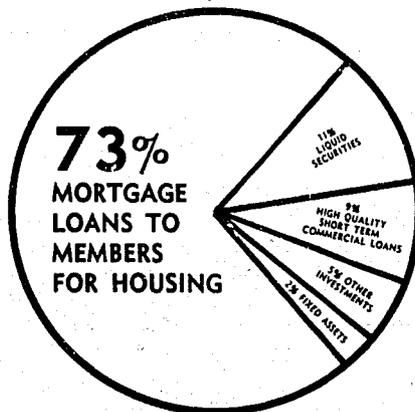
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# the BC teacher

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**PAGE 6**

BCTF Commission on Education

**PAGE 7**

A New Approach to Staff Utilization *D. B. MacKenzie*

**PAGE 10**

The Credibility Gap in Education *Lorill Hanney*

**PAGE 12**

The Teacher and Formal School Organization—  
Where Should We Go? *R. J. Carter*

**PAGE 20**

Presidential Priorities *R. M. Buzza*

**PAGE 22**

The Expertise of the Teacher *C. D. Ovans*

**PAGE 33**

Let's Have Teacher-Centered Schools *N. E. Nelson*

**PAGE 5**

The Editor Comments

**PAGE 42**

Quotes and Comments *Vito Cianci*

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**COVER PICTURE**

Sandy Harris, a student of Prince George Senior Secondary School, says of her painting: 'Often one is intrigued by simple objects in life and is caused to react to them in some way. Such occasions move some people to singing, some to speaking, others to photography or writing. I find myself wanting to paint as an expression of my feelings and experiences. This particular stump aroused in me a desire to paint as I saw it while hiking near Banff, Alberta. I used wet on wet watercolor, wet on wax, and wet on dry to bring out the detail of the wrinkled old stump standing alone but protected among its younger, stronger, and softer surroundings.'

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## **BEDSORES ON THE SLEEPING GIANT**

A Guest Editorial

R. M. Buzza, BCTF President

'EDUCATION, THE SLEEPING GIANT in the B.C. bed, has bed sores. Are we prepared to turn him over?'

In discussing unity, Sir Ronald Gould quotes Sheridan as stating that if all the fleas in his bed were of one mind they could push him out of bed. If we had the unity of purpose of Sheridan's fleas, we should long since have roused the sleeping giant and put him on his feet. It's obvious that we teachers are not of one mind. Nor should we be—on everything. Unity and consensus are not synonyms, nor should they be thought of as such.

Any malaise affecting our society is inevitably reflected in our schools. In fact, the choice between chicken and egg, cause and effect, is never a simple one . . . nor is it necessarily significant. The magnitude of the task facing those of us who teach, on behalf of all of us who would learn, has a significance that beggars description. Many of us need help. To those among us who don't, turn on your lights so that we who work in ignorance may seek you out and bow low.

What of these sores on our sleeping giant? Are they minor blemishes which will heal rapidly when exposed to the air? Even exposing them to the air would be a major task; bureaucratic giants are difficult to move.

Or are they deeper than that . . . pus-filled, perhaps? Perhaps beyond the scope of modern medicine to treat? Is his sleep a healthy one—the nap of the innocent; or does it have an element of the coma to it that is unhealthy? We who teach and learn, for learn we must, have a responsibility to ourselves and to society to assess constantly our treatment of the giant for whom we have a direct and inescapable responsibility—for his sake, for ours, and for the sake of those who will follow both of us.

We cannot make this assessment, have our dialog, in a vacuum. But we can start and have started the discussion and already it's a healthy, significant one, as those who were at the Summer Conference in Prince George with our Commission on Education will freely attest.

Our findings, through our commissioners and those others in society who feel a responsibility in this matter—and surely this bars none—will have implications for our whole organization. For if we have created in the B.C. Teachers' Federation a compulsory bureaucracy which is not immediately responsive to our

needs as classroom 'facilitators' of learning,' we have created a monster. We should disband the organization under such circumstances.

I commend to all members their responsibility to assist our Commission in its work. □

### **Things Are Changing**

WE ARE ENTERING our forty-seventh year of publication with a new cover series and a new look.

Our covers this year will feature artwork by students in the secondary schools of our province. The selections were made by the B.C. Art Teachers' Association from the many works submitted last spring.

Our new look involves the shape, the paper, the cover stock and the printing process we are using this year. Our page is a little longer and slightly narrower than those of recent years. The change was made in consultation with the editors of the teachers' magazines in the other western provinces—which will also use the new page size. This change should make it easier to obtain advertising for the four magazines.

To satisfy many requests received over the years, we have changed to a non-glossy paper. No longer will our pages fight back at you! The use of this new paper was made possible by a change to the offset printing process (we used letterpress before). We could not make the change earlier for two reasons: it took our printer about four years of investigation to find a suitable stock (the paper companies simply did not produce until recently what we were looking for) and we had to wait until we reached our present circulation (22,500 copies) before the offset process became financially possible.

The new process has also resulted in our adopting a self-cover, i.e., the cover is printed on the same paper as the rest of the magazine. This change, also not feasible until now, will reduce the cost of the covers.

The new process offers us several advantages, not the least of which will be the use of more illustrations. We hope to bring you more and better pictures.

These are the first really major changes we have made since our September-October 1961 issue, when we adopted the 8½" x 11" page and four-color covers. We hope this year's changes will improve the magazine as much as, if not more than, those made in 1961.



## **BCTF COMMISSION ON EDUCATION**

The B.C. Teachers' Federation has established a Commission on Education 'To stimulate and provoke a study and debate within the teaching profession in British Columbia of major educational issues, in the hope that out of such study and debate will emerge guidelines for the future design of education.'

D. B. MacKenzie, former Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Schools for Vancouver, has been appointed chairman of the Commission. The other Commissioners are Mrs. L. Hanney, Intermediate Supervisor for Burnaby, and R. J. Carter, Vice-principal of Point Grey Secondary School.

Each of the Commissioners was invited to speak to the BCTF Summer Conference at Prince George, despite the fact that they had not yet had an opportunity to discuss the issues together or to hear from teachers. (They had had only one meeting before the Prince George Conference.) Accordingly they could not report any conclusions and could speak only as individuals. They decided to be provocative — and they were!

The three articles which follow are the papers the Commissioners presented to the Summer Conference. They do not, remember, represent conclusions reached by the Commission. Indeed, the Commission is not likely to arrive at any conclusions before the end of this school year.

Local associations are urged to establish study groups or committees to consider issues related to:

- (a) purposes and objectives in education;
- (b) the need for change in the existing school system;

- (c) directions for change that seem likely to produce quality education, particularly as related to the curriculum, the provision of necessary and desirable resources for the promotion of teaching and learning, school organization and school administration;

- (d) implications for the teaching profession concerning teacher preparation, continuing education of teachers and deployment of teachers, that arise from any suggested design for quality education in the future.

The Commission will be pleased to receive briefs from local associations, school staffs, groups of teachers or individuals, and will arrange hearings at which such briefs may be discussed.

# A NEW APPROACH TO STAFF UTILIZATION

D. B. MacKENZIE

## WHY SHOULD TEACHERS WASTE THEIR TIME ON NON-PROFESSIONAL TASKS?

MUCH HAS BEEN SAID and written by educators, and by others outside the profession, about change in the world around us and about need for change within the school system.

A few years ago Martin Mayer, one of the first and most outspoken advocates of needed changes, stated that one of the most difficult tasks ahead is to 'yank' the schools out of the 19th century and into the 20th century.<sup>1</sup>

More recently W. J. Hartrick, in his article on 'Research in Education—a Perspective,' referred to this problem again when he pointed out the alarming gap between knowledge and practice in education and tried to analyze why the teaching profession and those related to it refuse or are unable to move into the 20th century.<sup>2</sup>

Another worried critic, Melvin Tumin, has stated that schools are in urgent need of reappraisal and that a fundamental change in our thinking regarding students, curriculum and teachers should be our first task. He claims that schools have been quite inadequate in a number of basic tasks they have been assigned or have assumed.<sup>3</sup>

More specifically Tumin points out the following sad and serious areas of failure in the education of all pupils regardless of their so-called native capacities: (1) the acquisition of a satisfying self-image; (2) a capacity to live with differences; (3) a vital interest in participation as citizens; (4) sound emotional development; (5) a continuing refinement of tastes and sensibilities.

Jack R. Gibbs, of the Western Behavioral Sciences

Institute in California, claims that we are preparing children for life, but a life that is leaving us, for a world that was, for a society of the past. He claims that our present educational system tends to fit people to live in a culture where organizational forms are inherited from the medieval church and from the military—a vertical hierarchy with prescribed role responsibilities and delegated authority.<sup>4</sup>

According to Gibbs our present organization form and operation do not provide education for growth, authenticity, humanness and creativity. They do not develop the Judeo-Christian ethics of love, honesty, faith. They do not develop a climate for research, inquiry, scholarship, contemplation, learning. They do not encourage co-operation, group planning, team building, and other forms of group effort.

Although he admits that we are caught in forces of upheaval and change, he is cautiously optimistic. He sees signs of growth, a restlessness within the school system and demands for change. He sees the beginning of a 'quiet revolution,' the development of a new philosophy and practice, more suited to the type of society we are trying to become.

Carl R. Rogers, also of the Western Behavioral Sciences Institute, claims that only a tremendous change in the basic direction of education can meet the needs of today's culture, that the goal of education must be to develop a society in which people can live comfortably with change, that the capacity to face new

*Mr. MacKenzie, chairman of the Commission on Education, retired from his position as Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Schools in Vancouver in June 1967.*



Bob Dearin, Windermere, left, and Adam Robertson, Creston, right, discussed educational systems with Ivor Lancaster, of Australia, at the Summer Conference.

situations is more important than the ability to know and repeat the old.<sup>5</sup>

He also maintains that a way must be found to develop within the schools a climate conducive to personal growth, a climate in which innovation is not frightening, a climate in which creative capacities of teachers and students are encouraged rather than stifled.

And his vital point—in my estimation—a way must be found to develop a climate in which the emphasis is on self-directed learning and not upon teaching.

Of course the thinking behind those statements is really not new. We have privately admitted many of these ills for as long as we can remember. We know that, if we are honest, we must admit that many pupils in our classes are neglected. As someone said, 'Undereducated and miseducated, they are all too anxious to close the door on school forever.'

One could go on and on summarizing views of thoughtful, forward-looking men and women, who have taken the time to analyze or assess the present educational scene and who have spoken out about the urgent need for change in the philosophy and practice within our schools. Nowhere in contemporary educational literature have I found any educator who, after careful research or assessment of the present situation, has come out in favor of maintaining the status quo.

But neither have I found a simple, easily workable plan that can be quickly and effectively implemented to facilitate the desirable changes.

There is, however, considerable agreement about many of the basic changes needed. For example, most teachers and educators will agree that:

(1) Every pupil should have at least twelve years of free education of a type that will best develop his inherent abilities to the fullest and which will develop desirable habits, attitudes, and a self-concept with which the pupil will be happy to live.

(2) Each pupil should progress in this development at an optimum rate, suited to his individual successes

and without public comparison to other pupils in the class or school.

Using these two desirable developments as examples, how should we go about the task of ensuring universal acceptance and implementation? Without providing a tutor for each child, how do we accomplish these changes?

I am not sure that anyone has all the answers to our problems, but I hope to obtain from the combined experience and advice of the profession some of the answers that will help achieve a workable plan for implementing desirable changes.

The first step is to analyze why teachers are not accomplishing these desirable objectives now. The answer to this may be simple and obvious. The teacher has not had the time to analyze each child's individual needs and to plan and implement an individual program for each child.

Individual assessment and planning for each child involves a better and more time-consuming system of evaluation than we are now using. The 1967 Yearbook of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development states: "The going system of evaluation, which has largely drifted into the service of marking and grading and crediting, must be replaced by a system dedicated to the fundamental needs of the learner and teacher as well as those of the curriculum designer and policy maker."<sup>6</sup>

#### Education Should Lead to Better Teaching

This Yearbook is dedicated to a plan for using evaluation as a positive force toward better teaching, better learning and a better balanced curriculum. The Yearbook points out that in our modern world cybernation is beginning to play a very important part. One of the essential features of cybernation is a plan or arrangement for feedback, built into the machine, to gather data from what the machine has done and what has happened as a result of what has been done. The machine uses the feedback information to make

necessary adjustments before proceeding with the next operation.

This, of course, is what is needed in the classroom—diagnostic evaluation of each child's progress so that there will be a feedback to the teacher that will influence the individual program and experiences to be set up for the particular child. And just as important is a constant feedback to the pupil. Five criteria for satisfactory evaluation feedback were listed:

- (1) Evaluation must facilitate self-evaluation.
- (2) Evaluation must encompass every objective valued by the school.
- (3) Evaluation must facilitate learning and teaching.
- (4) Evaluation must produce records appropriate to the purpose for which records are essential.
- (5) Evaluation must provide continuing feedback into the larger questions of curriculum development and educational policy.

As a result of this feedback 'every teacher would soon be teaching with greater precision, because he would be getting data constantly on what was "working" and what was not, what was already mastered and what remained to be learned. The ideal of "diagnostic teaching" would be close to fulfillment. Meanwhile the student himself would be channelling his own efforts with greater precision for he, too, would have a clear sense of direction.'

A dream? I think not. I sincerely believe this is possible and practical, if we can give the professional teacher the time needed.

Why hasn't the teacher adequate time for proper individual evaluation, feedback, planning and implementation of programs suited to the individuals in the classroom? Because he is bogged down with countless tasks that are in no way related to his many years of professional study and training. We must find some way to relieve the teacher of those tasks that can be done by personnel who have not had the years of study required of a professionally certified teacher. This in turn would give the teacher: time to work with individuals, time to assess the progress and needs of individuals, time to help each child develop an acceptable self-concept, and time to facilitate feedback to curriculum makers.

The medical profession and the hospitals are years ahead of educational institutions in restricting the use of professionally trained staff to those tasks that cannot be undertaken by various classifications of non-professionals. How different this is and how sensible compared to the old practice when nurses were used to scrub floors, walls and bedpans.

In the teaching profession, however, the professionally trained staff are still doing the same non-professional busy-work that teachers have been saddled with for as long as I can remember. Is it not reasonable that a professional teacher should be able to plan and direct an educational program for a group of pupils by delegating to non-professionals some of the routine, repetitive and time-consuming tasks that are now taking up so much of his time? If doctors and nurses can assess and delegate, why not professionally qualified teachers?

One question that will come to mind immediately will be concerned with costs. In my opinion costs should not be an insurmountable roadblock. There are several different classifications of non-professionals that should be considered as aides, depending on the use envisaged and the background of training required. Professional staff would be occupied full-time with duties that can be undertaken only by professionals, and would be paid on a professional level. Non-professionals used would carry out other duties and would receive compensation according to the level of education and training required to carry out their assigned duties. Classification of non-professionals might be as follows:

- (1) Interns or teachers-in-training. (Possibly we should also include here teachers with less than professional certification.)
- (2) Staff assistants (markers, stenographers, clerks, technicians).
- (3) Volunteer service from the community. (Several cities report very favorably on the advantages of involving parents and willing citizens in the work and activities of the school.)
- (4) Student aides.

We should also bear in mind that there are valuable aids of the hardware type, such as listening posts, that can play an important part not only in individualizing instruction but also in freeing the professional teacher for other duties.

#### How Can Staff Be Better Utilized?

My hope is that you will give serious and searching thought to the implications and details involved in a possible change in staff utilization. Many of the answers needed will depend upon your advice and your experience. I have listed below some questions for which answers are needed.

- (1) At the various levels (kindergarten, primary, intermediate, junior secondary, senior secondary) what specific time-consuming tasks could be performed by non-professionals under the supervision of professional staff?
- (2) Of the tasks listed in answer to Question 1, which could be handled satisfactorily by non-professionals of the various categories (1, 2, 3, or 4 above)?
- (3) If you were given the responsibility for employing professional and non-professional staff for an elementary school of one hundred pupils per grade, what would be a reasonable distribution of staff and how should they be utilized?

There are too many student casualties at all educational levels. This is uneconomic and seriously damaging to the students concerned. We must find ways to remedy the situation and move our schools out of the past into the world of today and tomorrow.

Better staff utilization would be a worth-while beginning, if, as a result, we can give the professionally trained teachers: time to work with individuals, time to assess the progress and needs of individuals, time to help each child develop an acceptable self-concept, and time to facilitate feedback to curriculum makers. □

*References available on request.*

# THE CREDIBILITY

THE KEY ISSUE IN EDUCATION today, as I see it, is the wide gap between what the present knowledge of child development and the learning process indicates we should be doing and what we *are* doing in the schools.

The first point to consider is the purpose of education—what are we trying to accomplish? In our western Christian society, we believe in the dignity and worth of every human being. We therefore accept that 'each individual is due an equal opportunity to develop *his* abilities fully.'<sup>1</sup> We are committed to provide for each individual the maximum possible development of his unique self so that he may be a fully functioning member of society. Social scientists describe a fully functioning person as a 'truly healthy, adequate, self-actualizing person.' To develop this kind of person, then, is our goal.

The next question is, 'What is the nature of a truly adequate, fully functioning person?' and further, 'How does he develop this nature?' Arthur Combs in his article 'A Perceptual View of the Adequate Personality'<sup>2</sup> lists four basic characteristics common to adequate persons. Because his observations have vital significance for teachers, I shall outline them briefly.

The first and most important characteristic of an adequate person is a positive view of self. He sees himself as capable of dealing with life. (This is not to be confused with a self-report. People who tell you how capable and important they are usually are basically inadequate.) With a positive self-concept he expects to be successful, so has courage to face new situations. With a high degree of respect for his own individuality, he is less disturbed by criticism. He feels liked, wanted, accepted, worthy and able. 'It is the people who see themselves as unliked, unwanted, unworthy, unimportant or unable who fill our jails, our mental hospitals and our institutions.'<sup>3</sup>

Having a positive view of self is much like having money in the bank. It provides a kind of security that permits the owner a freedom that he could not have

*Mrs. Hanney has long been active in BCTF affairs. She is Intermediate Supervisor in Burnaby.*

# GAP IN EDUCATION

LORILL HANNEY

otherwise. With a positive view of self one can risk taking chances; one does not have to be afraid of what is new and different. A sturdy ship can venture farther from port. Just so, an adequate person can launch himself without fear into the new, the untried and the unknown. This permits him to be creative, original and spontaneous.<sup>4</sup>

How do we develop a self-concept? A self-concept is learned. We learn who we are and what we are by the experiences we have, by the way we are treated as we grow up. The only way we feel that we are liked, wanted, acceptable and able is by having been liked, wanted, acceptable and successful. We don't learn by being told, only through the experiences of being treated as though we were. To produce a positive self, it is necessary to provide experiences that teach individuals that they are positive people. We learn we are able, not from failure, but from success. The best guarantee that a person will deal with failure effectively is to have been successful in the past.

The implications for teachers are obvious and vital. If we are to help our students develop as fully functioning members of society, we must be concerned with positive self-concepts.

Before someone states that this is not the role of the schools, that our job is to teach subject matter, let me say whether we want to or not, we are building self-concepts. We are affecting each child's concepts of self daily. Every school experience affects each child. It builds up a credit or deficit in his security bank. It is not a question of whether or not this should be part of our job; we are doing it, consciously or unconsciously. Our responsibility is to see that the self-con-

cept effects of the child's experiences in the school are positive, not negative. Are we doing what we should to help children develop a positive self-concept? Are there conditions that hinder our role?

What about the child who is working at his level to his capacity daily and receives E's on his report card? What ideas is he developing about himself?

What about the Grade 7 pupil who is struggling with the literature of the basic reader, *Beckoning Trails*, even though his instructional reading level is about 5.5, because we have to 'get him ready for Grade 8' (and he has paid his rental money). What ideas is he gaining about himself?

Let me tell you about Bobby. Bobby was an elementary school 'drop-out' in Grade 6. His home life left much to be desired. The children lived in constant fear the welfare agencies would separate the family of seven children. Bobby's teacher was a conscientious hard-working type. He had all his pupils in the Grade 6 basic reader. Assignments were given from the texts in social studies and science. Because Bobby's instructional reading level at that time was about the Grade 4 level, he was hopelessly lost and gradually withdrew from the situation. His daily work was never finished. He had continual detentions. He never completed his homework. As a result he had a straight 'E' report card and 'unsatisfactory' in attitude and work habits.

Bobby not only felt 'I am not able,' he began to have a strong feeling of 'I am no good.' He was put on an individualized program at his level. Bobby had ability but, by this time, he had lost confidence in himself. It takes a long time to rebuild a credit balance of positive feelings.

Are there other Bobby's in our schools?

#### Identification With Others Is Learned

Are we as concerned as we should be with the development of *each* child's positive self-concept? Are we working toward the removal of all conditions that hinder our role?

The second common characteristic of an adequate person is his capacity for identification with others. Because he has a feeling for others, he has a high degree of responsible, trustworthy behavior. He has a respect for the dignity and rights of others. He is 'other-centered' as opposed to 'self-centered.'

How is this developed? It, too, is a learned concept. We learn to have a feeling for others, an identification with others by having satisfying, successful experiences with other people. The school situation affords one of the greatest opportunities for children to interact with many others.

Do we ensure continuing opportunities for children to work co-operatively together—planning, working and evaluating? Growth in responsibility and trustworthy behavior comes only from being trusted and having opportunities to develop responsibility.

Do we plan for and evaluate each child's growth in responsible behavior?

How conducive to satisfying group projects are periods of 40 or 50 minutes when children must clean up at the bell and leave for the next subject and the next teacher?

How flexible are the physical arrangements of our classrooms?

Are we giving each child the many opportunities he needs to develop a sense of identification with others?

The third characteristic defined by Combs is an 'openness to experience and acceptance.' The adequate person who views himself positively and is able to identify with others sees no threat in new experiences. He is capable of change and adjustment. Feeling no fear or threat, he can behave more intelligently and thus more effectively. He has a realistic view of himself, and can see the value of personal growth in new experiences.

Accurate concepts of oneself are the essential bases for growth. We learn to accept ourselves by being accepted. Children need assistance to feel positively about themselves first, then with this 'bank-credit' they can accept honest information about themselves. The child who feels unwanted or unable cannot be accurate in self-assessment. He has nothing to go on. He needs the teacher's unconditional acceptance, acceptance as a *person*. He must learn from being accepted and being respected to accept and respect himself.

How well do we rate here? Do you believe it is the unloved, unwanted, the unable that are given our unconditional acceptance?

Ashley Montague, speaking at the Association for Childhood Education International conference in Portland in 1964, said 'the supreme treason is to fail the dependent human being when he is most in need of you.' And again, 'the developing human being must not be failed in the sustenance and support he expects and has a right to inherit. When the parents fail, the child should know teachers will make up for their failures insofar as possible.'

The fourth and last characteristic is that the truly adequate person must be well informed. He must have a broad field of understandings on which he can draw to live effectively.

Learning, to be effective, must produce some change in the behavior of the learner. It is not an accumulation of facts. There must be personal meaning involved so the individual will act on the information when the appropriate time comes.

Knowledge doesn't guarantee use—if there is no behavior change, there is no learning. As Don Parker puts it in *Schooling for Individual Excellence*, 'if possession of knowledge guaranteed use, our jails would be considerably less crowded.'<sup>5</sup> Learning is affected by our self-concept, by our openness to experience and by our ability to identify with others. Learning, then, is an individual thing—an involvement of self. What a child brings to the learning situation, how involved he becomes, determines his learning response. In any learning situation there will be a wide variety in the meanings each person holds.

A student needs not only exposure to ideas but many opportunities to explore and discover *personal* meanings.

How much learning occurs when we 'lecture at' a

Continued on page 41

## THE TEACHER AND SCHOOL ORGANIZATION WHERE SHOULD WE GO?

*Educational changes will be made by teachers or there will be no changes. The most effective means of change is to have individuals in groups interact to change each other. But our school organization is inadequate to promote change in that way.*

MRS. HANNEY HAS INTRODUCED the problem of the gap which exists between what we know and what we are doing; Mr. MacKenzie has focussed on a particular aspect of the gap, staff utilization; I hope to raise some questions concerning the method of closing the gap.

Implicit in the purpose of the Commission is the need to consider the method of change. As I sat with a friend at one of the many conferences we all attend throughout a year, the speaker made a point which we had both heard many times before. We agreed with the point; it was valid, backed by evidence, and not currently in general use in our school system. Whispered in my ear was the comment, 'When are we going to move from the talking phase to the action phase of this so-called revolution?' A simple question, but one which contains the kernel of the problem facing us. There was a speaker imploring us to change to a new and exciting method while using the very method he was deploring. We have failed to translate the meaning of what we are saying should happen in education to the very processes by which we hope to effect that change.

The mountains of material which have been produced and distributed on the subject of 'what to change' have been more than adequate. In fact, I must admit to a certain amount of weariness when reading article after article imploring us to change. We spend literally hundreds of hours listening to speeches and

*Mr. Carter, vice-principal of Point Grey Secondary School, Vancouver, has been active in BCTF work for some years.*

discussing the relative merits of the latest innovations, but most of the participants are unable to use the knowledge because they know nothing about the process of changing people. Here we deny the very principle we are attempting to communicate. We are arming our people with the facts and failing to consider the process of change necessary to implement the facts.

The most persistent frustration confronting those attempting to change the face of education is the inability to change people. Our educational system has never before been faced with the problem of change that has arisen in the last decade. Literature is sparse. University research has been concerned with 'what to' rather than 'how to.' School personnel have been too involved in the techniques of the innovations to spend time considering the problem. There seems to be a broad consensus concerning the direction of change, but absolutely no idea of how to get there.

It is our responsibility to work out the details before we can implement the principles of change. We have ignored the problem of changing people and are consequently failing in our efforts to effect fundamental change.

Teachers' organizations—consciously or unconsciously—are beginning to uncover the tip of this iceberg. Teachers' magazines all over Canada are stressing the need for increased participation by teachers in educational planning and decision-making. However, because such words as 'militancy' are being used, I



Teachers working on curriculum revision committees exemplify that kind of study so necessary for creative answers to the educational revolution.

should like to examine the basis of their motivation. It seems that desire for power, rather than a desire to effect solid educational change, may be involved. Let's go back to what evidence we have on the nature of innovation.

I believe there are two poles in the discussion. The first represents the 'like-Topsy-it-grew' school which we seem to be following currently; the second is a concept of planned change. City planning is an example. As a city grows, or deteriorates with age, it is necessary to adopt a plan that meets the needs of all the people in the community. So it is with education; as we grow (I would parallel this with the increasing responsibility being placed on the schools) and as our methods become outmoded and fail to fit the needs of the community we serve, it becomes necessary to develop a plan.

Education in B.C. is like a city without a plan. We have hundreds of organizations and individuals attempting to achieve a goal that lacks a plan of implementation. We are trusting in a non-existent fairy to make the translation from idea to action. Like cities without a plan, we are becoming lost in the details. Planned change is our only hope. The first step is to study the nature of planned change.

Although the literature on the topic is sparse, there are three basic steps involved in effective change:

1. Diagnosis of the problems (consulting). We are currently reaching a reasonable level here. One rarely finds dissent when talking of the need for change.
2. Internalization of prerequisite skills (training). Here lies the core of our current failure. Most of us know little or nothing about how to move people to accept and believe in the agreed-upon changes.
3. Evaluation (research). Little effort is being made to evaluate the small number of changes taking place today.<sup>1</sup>

Effective change seems to depend upon those implementing the change. If we hope to avoid new wine

in old wineskins, we must go beyond change by fiat. Structures must be created which allow for those involved in change to internalize the essence of the change and not to deal with the technique alone. Too often decision for change has come from above and has left the teachers scrambling for implementation techniques without consideration of the principles underlying the order.

An example from my experience is team teaching. Some school boards have decided that team teaching should be instituted in one or more of their schools. In a number of cases schools have been built which have incorporated spaces designed for team teaching. These are beautiful buildings, the pride of the local districts. In two cases within my experience, these flexible spaces have yet to be used. The staff hired to use the spaces were given no opportunity to be involved in the planning. Correctly, I feel, they have not used them because they have not internalized the goals underlying the technique of team teaching. Without teacher involvement in the planning and implementation, the technique was doomed to failure.

It appears, then, that Step 2—internalization of the prerequisite skills, or training—is crucial. Most training methods rely heavily on group processes. The reasons are clear. Learning, particularly of an emotional and attitudinal nature, is facilitated by group membership. Group conditions can be set up that represent in a realistic sense the underlying dynamics of the actual organizational setting in which change is to be made. 'Change processes need to be concerned with altering both the forces within an individual and the forces in the organizational situation surrounding the individual.'<sup>2</sup>

#### Current School Organization Is Inadequate

If, then, the most effective means of change is to have individuals in groups interact to change each other, our current school organization is inadequate. In the final analysis teachers must effect the changes. If they are not an integral part of the whole process, the change will be less effective, if not ineffective. If the individual must be ready to change, the organizational structure of the system must be ready to modify as the need arises. It is here, in the complex inter-relationship of the individual, the group, and the organizational bureaucracies of our school systems that the greatest problems exist.

As individual teachers and professional groups realize that the heart of professionalism rests with decision-making in the area of the technical competence of the teacher, conflict with the bureaucratic structure of our school systems has increased. Symptoms of this are occurring in B.C. Increasing militancy in such matters as class size, province-wide exams, working conditions and school design are examples.

The trend today is toward local autonomy, which is being transferred to the classroom teacher. Yet with increased autonomy, the teacher increases his chances of conflict with the bureaucracy. In a bureaucratic structure the individual does not need to understand the goals of the organization; he need only understand the system of rules applying to his specific task. When increased responsibility is given to teachers, the pro-

professionals, four distinct areas of conflict arise:

1. professionals resist bureaucratic rules;
2. professionals reject bureaucratic standards;
3. professionals resist bureaucratic supervision;
4. professionals render only conditional loyalty to the bureaucracy.<sup>3</sup>

Let us examine each a little more fully; and apply the concepts to our school system.

1. In the past our profession has been guilty of accepting the rules of our school organization without reference to the profession's norms. As we gain freedom, we must work to modify the rules of the organization to meet the norms established by the profession.

2. Too often we have accepted the standards of the school system we work in rather than used our profession as the reference point. Two examples of how rapidly this occurs come to us from the United States. An eastern teacher-training school established a forward-looking training program which included the latest techniques and a strong sense of standards in its trainees. When enrollment dropped, the school's officials realized that the school systems were not accepting their graduates who had a different set of values. The school dropped the program. Another teacher-training institution has theorized that the only way to prevent its graduates from adopting the standards of the bureaucratic system into which they move is to have them attached to a school as a colony, with all supervision and guidance coming from the teacher-training establishment for the first two years. Put succinctly—we sell out early!

3. As teachers become increasingly aware that their right to make decisions on matters concerning learning is based on their superior competence in their field, they become less willing to accept authority from above. Some schools, while giving their teachers increased responsibility, have also increased supervision. Resistance is inevitable.

4. Conflict may arise because the professional teacher has only conditional loyalty to the bureaucratic structure. Standards and norms derived from out-

side the structure mean that loyalty to peers and routes to advancement through recognition given by peers take precedence over the organization.

How does this affect the task of the BCCTF? How does this affect the role of the individual teacher? We have two choices.

First, we may increase the tempo of the struggle with the bureaucracy and fight with it on an issue-by-issue basis, thus winning through struggle a victory for the profession. Second, we may look for new structures which will allow full professional freedom in areas of developed competence, while recognizing the need for some form of organizational structure. Of the two, I prefer the second. Here we would have to grapple with the fundamental issues. The responsibility for developing professional competence would rest with the Federation. If we are to minimize the conflict during this period of educational change, new structures must be found for the running of our schools. One of the purposes of the Commission will be to examine potential organizational patterns.

This brings me to one of the many unresolved dilemmas. We have heard that groups are the best means of having an individual internalize attitudinal changes necessary to bring about fundamental changes. My whole concept of the importance of all types of groups was re-oriented recently by a talk given at UBC by Dr. H. Tussman, head of the Political Philosophy Department at Berkeley. His topic was 'Is Individualism in Jeopardy?' His opening statement was, 'I certainly hope so!' He pointed out that we are the product of groups—family, church, school, and a multitude of more or less highly structured organizations. This attitude was further supported by H. A. Simon, quoted by Dr. John MacDonald, in an article 'Decisions and Educational Decisions':

'The rational individual is, and must be, an organized and institutionalized individual . . . the individual must in his decision be subject to the influence of the organized group in which he participates.'<sup>4</sup>

Simon characterizes the individual as a singularly

Delegates to the Summer Conference came from all parts of the province. From left to right in this picture are Margaret Smith, Nanaimo; John Young, Campbell River; John Anderson, Trail; and Art Benzer, Trail.



unimpressive figure, who acquires dignity and worth, and the ability to solve problems, solely through membership in organizations. A decision is rational only if it fulfils the goal of the organization.

But what has happened to the professional individual, to the increasing autonomy of the individual teacher? Will not this emphasis upon group action make change a matter of wishy-washy compromise? Historically, organizations have striven to maintain the status quo. This is a natural outgrowth of the reward system inherent in any bureaucratic structure. Promotion is based upon the individual's demonstrating the norms and standards of the system. Deviation from the pattern can only be interpreted as non-rational behavior not worthy of reward or promotion.

#### Two Groups Come Into Conflict

It is necessary at this point to make a distinction between two types of groups. Earlier I outlined an interacting type of group which was based on the premise of the individual's changing the group and the group's changing the individual. Each respected the value and importance of the other. Here the group could be described as one in which the members are genuinely free to determine the best possible path of action. A group of teachers studying and discussing the possibility of team teaching, with the *real* power to make a decision on the matter, would characterize the group. (Too often, unfortunately, teachers are either unable or unwilling to prepare themselves to make an intelligent decision.) A second group would be the bureaucracy. While not demonstrating any of the characteristics of group maturity, the bureaucracy is often thought of as the paternal leader and the professionals as the dutiful flock. Conflict between the organization and the professionals has been outlined earlier, but we tend too often to ignore the teachers who refuse to accept their professional responsibility and default to the organization.

In an attempt to resolve this conflict between the individual—the true decision-making group—and the bureaucratic group, we must turn to another concept of the individual in the decision-making process. G. L. S. Shackle takes a position opposite to that of Simon. He sees decision-making as a problem of 'the individual faced with uncertainty, and describes him as autonomous and self-determining, the only source of stability in a swirling universe of doubt.'<sup>5</sup> Shackle regards men as being necessarily and inevitably creative. Their creativeness springs from their having to make decisions under uncertainty, and thus act in novel and unpredictable ways.<sup>6</sup> He then draws the conclusion that, if the individual operates by edict from above within the bureaucratic structure, chances for creative innovation are severely reduced.

This seems to indicate that innovation (or change) and a highly structural bureaucracy cannot exist side by side. Here is the crucial hurdle which must be jumped if we are to achieve significant change. Intrinsic uncertainty is a natural part of any system which grants to its members any significant degree of freedom for decision-making. The organization, however, constantly refers to such words as 'rational,' 'stable,' 'consensus'

and other standards which seem to be the opposite of creative innovation.

A model from automation may help to focus on the difference between the positions of Simon and Shackle. Man seems to want two things from machines—subservience and intelligence. The more we get of one, the less we get of the other. The more like humans computers become, the more unpredictable and 'creative' their decision-making. A Swiss scientist recently asked a computer to tell him whether to keep a watch that was broken or one that lost five seconds every 24 hours. The computer chose the broken watch because it was correct twice every 24 hours while the watch that was running slow was correct only once every two years. Professionals given the freedom to make decisions may well come up with that kind of answer. We may have to reorient our thinking to accept the 'broken watch' answers if we are to gain the creative solutions based upon intelligent study so necessary to the educational revolution.

The authors I have read conclude, without reservation, that teachers must take over in their area of professional competence. This concept is basic to our thinking and much more fundamental than the issue-by-issue approach upon which we are currently embarked. I hope that a great deal of time will be spent studying the shifting relationships that are occurring in such haphazard fashion today.

The task of this paper was to provoke discussion. To do this I should like to draw a series of assumptions based on the paper and to state the conclusions as questions for discussion by teachers throughout the province.

#### Assumptions:

1. The free, decision-making group is crucial to effective change.
2. The individual must be free to make his own decision in matters in which he is professionally competent.
3. As teachers have become increasingly competent, decision-making powers to match that competence have not been granted.
4. As teachers are granted more freedom in decision-making, we are heading for increasing conflict with the bureaucracy.
5. We have failed to study the dynamics of change.

#### Conclusions:

1. How do we resolve the conflict between the professional and the bureaucracy?
2. What is the responsibility of our professional organization in assisting this move to increasing autonomy?
3. What new structures do you envisage as a means of resolution?
4. Where has the profession failed to meet increasing responsibility for decision-making?
5. Where has the bureaucracy failed to recognize the importance of the professional in decision-making?

I hope these questions will generate discussions which will produce further questions and statements which the Commission may study. □

References available on request.

# WCOTP IN VANCOUVER



Abourahmane Cisse, of Senegal, presented the report of the Resolutions Committee. He was one of several delegates who wore their national dress when speaking to the assembly.

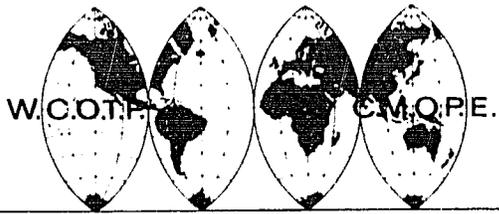


Loa Thorarinson, a Burnaby teacher, and John Thompson, Deputy Secretary-General of WCOTP, pose with one of the special WCOTP flags designed and made by students at the Burnaby Vocational School. The flags decorated the streets of downtown Vancouver during the assembly. They will be sent to Dublin for use at next year's assembly.



Sir Ronald Gould, President of WCOTP and one of its driving forces, chaired the assembly. An outstanding orator, he delivered a powerful presidential address, a portion of which will appear in next month's issue. Sir Ronald has been re-elected President every two years since WCOTP was founded in 1952. He is General Secretary of the National Union of Teachers of England and Wales.

Members of the delegation from the Philippines wore national dress to the opening session, and were particularly impressive. The group was one of the largest of the overseas delegations. ◆



*Canada Welcomes You*

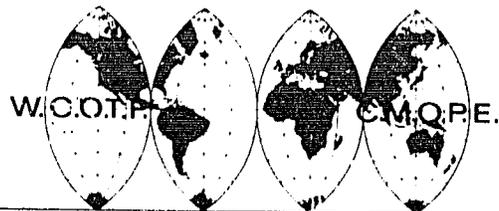


Sixty-one countries were represented at the assembly. The delegations were seated alphabetically; these were the delegates at the first table. In the background are some of the flags of the 94 member countries of WCOTP.



The delegates from Ghana wore brightly colored robes, and were a favorite subject of the press photographers who covered the assembly. They helped to make the assembly one of the most colorful meetings ever held in Vancouver.





Canada Welcomes You



E. J. Broome (right), Deputy Mayor of Vancouver, presented Sir Ronald Gould with a special proclamation in which the city proclaimed the week of the assembly World Education Week in Vancouver.

The Australian delegation followed the proceedings with more than usual interest, because the 1970 assembly will be held in Sydney. In the background are the four booths in which interpreters provided simultaneous translation into English, French, Spanish and Japanese.



A very special visitor to the assembly was Herbert Huntley, who was President of the Canadian Teachers' Federation in 1923. Now 88, Mr. Huntley has not lost his interest in education and in the work of teachers' organizations. He praised the work of teachers' organizations in recent years in improving teaching and learning conditions and in raising the salaries of teachers.

◆ Helen Aitchison (your editor's wife) and BCTF First Vice-President Tom Hutchison posed with delegates from Malaysia, Indonesia and Korea.



Two little North American girls were impressed by the teachers from overseas. Left to right are: C. Kwafu Penrose, Ghana; Rev. J. Harold Conway, President of the Canadian Teachers' Federation; Dr. Louise Yim, Korea; Mrs. Thelma Pyne, Jamaica; Joseph D. Derkyi, Ghana. Admiring them are Kathy Standa (left), of Pennsylvania, and Debbie Nason, of Ottawa.



Most members of the Japanese delegation depended a great deal on the translation service. The excellence of that service enabled everyone attending the assembly to follow all speakers with ease, no matter what language was spoken.



The assembly was a teachers' United Nations. The delegates made extensive use of the simultaneous translation provided for them.

The delegates were treated to a typically Canadian ice show, featuring figure skating, hockey and curling. An excellent reception, sponsored by the B.C. School Trustees Association, followed.



Betty Redmond, First Vice-president of the Canadian Teachers' Federation, presented Sir Ronald Gould with an ookpik, the souvenir CTF gave to all the delegates and observers.

## **PRESIDENTIAL PRIORITIES**

THE PRESIDENT OF THE B.C. Teachers' Federation is chairman of the Professional Relations Commission which has the function of attempting to resolve within the professional family disputes of the kind that, if left unattended, could result in serious ethics or tenure cases. He is, with First Vice-president Tom Hutchison, co-chairman of the Commission on Intolerable Teaching Conditions, the group which will deal with '40-and-over' situations. He is also a member of the Board of Directors and vice-president of the recently incorporated Educational Research Institute of B.C., which includes as members UBC, UVIC, SFU, NDU, the Council of Public Instruction, the B.C. Parent-Teacher Federation, the Vancouver School Board, the B.C. School Trustees Association and the BCTF. Further, he is a member ex officio of all other BCTF committees, standing and ad hoc.

Beyond these responsibilities are others which are at least as significant. From these I have chosen four which will be given priority this year.

### **Preparation for Major Meetings**

The Executive Committee met 14 times last year. These were Saturday and Sunday meetings which began at 9:00 a.m. and often lasted beyond the dinner hour. This group acts as the Board of Directors for an 18,000-member, \$1,500,000-a-year organization which has as employees some 14 administrative and 60 non-administrative staff.

The responsibilities of the Executive Committee are extensive: advisory committees or sections involving members of the BCTF can take no action outside the members of the committee or section except with the approval of the Executive Committee; the committee hears appeals from decisions of the Board of Admissions and Review; the committee has the power to appoint, fix the remuneration of, and dismiss the

General Secretary or any other member of the staff; the committee also has the power to refuse membership, terminate membership, suspend membership, or reprimand any member who in its opinion has been guilty of conduct prejudicial to the interests of the BCTF.

All members of this committee have been elected by their fellow teachers at a general meeting of the BCTF. In theory they represent the best possible persons for this office.

The Representative Assembly exercises budgetary control, acts as an appeal board concerning Executive Committee decisions pertaining to the Code of Ethics or Board of Admissions and Review, may authorize or prohibit any proposal of the Executive Committee for action which is contrary to, or beyond the scope of, BCTF policy, and may reprimand or suspend for cause any local or provincial specialist association.

As the one Executive Committee member free from teaching duties for the year, the president has the distinct and definite responsibility, with the assistance of staff, to prepare carefully the agendas for Executive Committee and Representative Assembly meetings. He must know what should be on the agenda and what can legitimately be left off it. He should have sufficient background on all items to ensure that logical questions have been anticipated in the presentation of material—the illogical ones we accept as inevitable—to facilitate the business. As chairman for both groups, he has a responsibility beyond that of any other individual for ensuring that the combined experience of all present is brought to bear effectively on items of major concern.

Obviously, time will be allotted in the presidential year for agenda preparation.

### **Selective Travel**

Large urban local associations have problems different in many respects from those of smaller outlying associations. These problems are often a reflection of size and specialization. Problems of communication and co-ordination within an organization of 1,000 or more are at least as significant as problems of communication and co-ordination between the local and the provincial organizations—particularly in the decentralized system we support.

There have in the past been as many as four visits to an outlying area or district that may have fewer than 50 teachers. Such visits are worth while and perform a useful function.

This year, however, I should like to keep such visits to a minimum, so that I may work more closely with the large urban local associations. I hope to meet frequently with the executive committees of these associations, or with staffs within them, with a view to getting a better understanding of some of the problems they face so that I can, in turn, through our provincial organization, help develop solutions for these problems.

I have already had the pleasure of meeting with the staff representatives of the Vancouver Elementary School Teachers' Association and with the counsellors of the Vancouver Secondary School Teachers' Association.

I shall, of course, be looking forward to invitations from other than 'large' associations—and I am not sure what 'large' means—and have, in fact, with Commissioner Don MacKenzie, already planned with representatives in the East and West Kootenays a week-long tour in that area in October.

Obviously, such visits must be carefully scheduled so that full use is made of the time of all concerned. Occasionally the president may have to indicate to a local association when he is available for a meeting, and, if the time is not convenient for the association, it may well be that the president will have to forgo a meeting during this particular term of office.

As indicated in the *BCTF Newsletter*, I am not a table decoration; if I am invited anywhere, I expect my time to be well spent.

#### Class Size

To date we have established only one real measure of intolerability: a regular class of 40 or more students. We have taken a clear-cut stand on this issue; we have seen the results already.

But we are asking for 25 students per teacher in primary grades and 30 pupils per teacher in Grades 4 to 7 for grant purposes, with an improvement at the rate of two a year until these objectives have been attained, and for a change at the secondary level which will provide a 20 to 1 total student-staff ratio for schools enrolling between 251 and 500 pupils and 22 to 1 for schools for 501 and over. Naturally, I shall do everything I can to see that these objectives are attained.

Coupled with attaining these objectives is the responsibility for us to know what we are going to do with those in our charge when we do attain these objectives. Essentially we must look within our own resources for the answer to this problem—not only within our own resources, but within ourselves. We have a magnificent statement of curriculum development principles to which we subscribe. We are a very long way, for a number of very good reasons, from actually putting these principles into wide-scale practice. So one of my main objectives as your president this year will be not only to help attain the goals we have clearly set out in our representations to government for changes in the pupil-teacher ratio for grant purposes, but also to try to help bridge the gap between what we say we should like to do and what we actually do in many of our classrooms. It follows, therefore, that I shall assist the Commission on Education, of which Messrs MacKenzie and Carter and Mrs. Hanney are members, in every way possible.

We often look without for solutions to our problems; for many of them, we must look within. We must be prepared, on a continuing basis, to evaluate what we are doing, compare it with what we want to do, and then find means of bridging the gap between the two.

#### AGM Policy Implementation

Our Annual General Meeting is sovereign within our organization—as it should be. It follows that the president has a responsibility to see that AGM policy is implemented where possible. That this is a widely shared responsibility detracts not one whit from it as



President Bob Buzza will preside at many meetings during his year in office. The official opening of the new wing of the B.C. Teachers' Building was the first such occasion.

a responsibility of the president. It may mean heading a delegation to Victoria or elsewhere, or visiting a large number of local associations about a particular topic, or helping in the preparation of documentation with respect to one item or another, of having meetings with the press, radio and TV, or meeting with MLA's or MP's, or arranging meetings with such other significant groups with a common interest in the problem as the B.C. School Trustees Association, the B.C. Parent-Teacher Federation, and so forth. Like my predecessors, all of this I am prepared to do.

I am very little in sympathy with someone who damns out of hand a member of this organization, or any other, for what he may read or hear somewhere on a second-hand basis. Members are aware that they can phone the BCTF collect on any matter of urgent concern to them. I should not expect to find us reacting to what we think someone may have said or written without giving the individual the opportunity of indicating his point of view in full.

To summarize: the president has a responsibility for the preparation for major meetings, for selective travel as a representative of the organization, for assisting in every way possible with our class-size campaign, and for doing what he can to see that AGM policy is implemented.

My purpose in summarizing these four responsibilities is to indicate that they are a hard core. They will take priority over appearances at conventions or elsewhere where nothing is expected but sitting up in front of people and looking happy.

Like most of those I have met, I find my personal satisfactions in more significant ways. □

# THE EXPERTISE OF THE TEACHER

C. D. OVANS

SIR RONALD GOULD, in his presidential address to the WCOTF assembly in Vancouver, listed three criteria which any occupational group would have to satisfy to be professional: (1) a strong organization, substantially self-governing; (2) a united group, marked by professional solidarity; (3) a knowledge of the theory and practice of the calling—possessing both culture and expert knowledge in some special direction.

In terms of these criteria he concluded that teaching was not yet a profession, but was on its way to becoming one.

I intend to examine more fully than did Sir Ronald the third of these professional characteristics, as it applies to teaching—the teacher as expert.

I found myself thinking as Sir Ronald spoke that the expertise of the interpreters in action at the Assembly was readily definable. Obviously they had to be masters of several languages. Obviously they had to be broadly educated so they could interpret at any meeting regardless of the topics under consideration, which could be professional, philosophical, scientific or political. Obviously they had to possess certain highly developed skills—intense, prolonged powers of concentration, ability to project the feeling as well as the meaning of the speaker, ability completely to submerge self so as to project faithfully the thinking of the speaker no matter how unacceptable the thinking might be to the interpreter.

It would take a brave man indeed to place himself in the interpreter's box without special training and preparation for the exercise. And yet the same person, possessing a good knowledge of a foreign language and not daring to act as interpreter, would likely be entirely willing to try teaching the language. Is this because there is no expertise involved in being a teacher or is it that the expertise involved is not obvious, causing fools to rush in where only angels would fear to tread?

In what is the teacher expert? Is it in subject matter? Very rarely is a teacher rated an expert in a subject-matter field. I can recall only one teacher widely recognized as an expert in his subject—a tea-

*This is the text of an address by the BCTF's General Secretary to the delegates at the Summer Conference in Prince George.*

cher of mathematics at old King Edward, long retired, who was commonly consulted by newspapers on mathematical topics. True subject-matter experts are normally found only in universities and as a rule they are expected to have doctoral degrees. In any event, does not being an expert in history make one a historian, not a teacher? A teacher is not necessarily an expert in a subject-matter field.

We could also say that teachers of such skills or crafts as typing or metalwork are not necessarily experts. A teacher of typing good enough in typing to hold a job in a commercial office would, I suspect, be a rare bird. As for shop teachers, I was told some time ago that the tradesmen-instructors of Burnaby Vocational School tend to place themselves in a caste above that to which they feel the trainers of shop teachers belong on the grounds that they, not the teachers, are the real experts in their crafts.

Is the teacher an expert in pedagogy? At best teachers in B.C., even in the five-year B.Ed. (Secondary) program, are exposed to only one year of professional training. During this period they get some exposure to the so-called foundations of education—psychology, philosophy and sociology plus a little about school administration and methodology. Is it not a very limited expertise if it can be acquired in one year?

Let us try asking the question, 'In what is a teacher expert?' in another way. Let us ask, 'What is the sine qua non of success in teaching?' I wonder if you will agree with my observation that the 'without which nothing' mark of teaching success, at least as judged by those who hire and fire teachers, is classroom management and pupil control. Unquestionably this is an area in which teachers become experts.

There is another still too commonly accepted mark of teaching success that I wish to illustrate through the story of a very good ex-teacher friend who left the profession about 15 years ago to enter the more lucrative field of business. The last time I stopped to see him he insisted I go home with him for dinner. Also visiting in the home at the time was his daughter-in-law, a teacher. It was in June and it had just become known that a younger brother had failed to get recommended in several subjects.

The daughter-in-law had the usual instant answer to this kind of problem—if only teachers were more competent, if only all teachers were as good as her father-in-law was when he taught her years ago! Why, if you were in his class you just had to work and the work was so well organized you could not help passing!

You will see from her description that my friend had been a real expert in classroom management and control. The students were made to work and the work was well organized for them. You will have noted also that he was a real expert in getting his students through examinations. This was wherein he was a real

honest-to-goodness expert—in teaching for examinations. He was a past master in anticipating what questions or kinds of questions would appear on the examination paper. But before we give in to the impulse to belittle him for having developed this kind of expertise, let us not forget that his students and their parents liked and respected him for it and his principal and superintendent always assigned him high rankings.

And still today, at the secondary school level at any rate, any teacher who keeps good control and who regularly gets his students through examinations is judged successful.

This is hardly the kind of expertise that makes for professionalism, is it? Yet, unfortunately, it is all the school system expects of teachers.

The Report of the Parent Royal Commission on Education in Quebec was in parts quite critical of teachers. At the same time, the commissioners carefully noted that teachers had more than nobly risen to the expectations held for them. It is not the fault of teachers if expectations are set too low.

I am sure most teachers in B.C., the great majority perhaps, rise above minimum expectations and function professionally. Yet we are held back as a professional group so long as professional levels of performance and of attitude are not *required* of us. About ten years ago, when the BCTF slogan in the salary campaign was 'Professional Pay for Professional Service,' I was challenged by a school trustee spokesman in these terms. 'That's all very well. I agree that some teachers, perhaps even most teachers, render a profes-

sional service, but all don't. Until all teachers are required to be professional, you can't demand professional-level pay.'

By the same token, we are not likely to be able to keep untrained or ill-trained people out of teaching until all teachers are required to function professionally.

Let us now examine the question, 'In what should teachers be required to be experts?'

To answer this question we must appear to digress for a moment and examine some pairs of words to make sure we are aware of some important distinctions between them. These pairs of words are: education and schooling, educator and schoolmaster, and teaching and learning.

What is education? One dictionary definition is 'the development of the special and general abilities of the mind.'

What is schooling? One dictionary definition is 'instruction, education or training esp. when received in a school.'

Professor Marc Belth, of Queens College, New York City University, suggests that it is useful to distinguish between education and schooling by considering schooling as training. Training can be defined as 'developing or forming the habits, thoughts, or behavior of a child (or other person) by discipline and instruction.' Education he limits to thinking, to the development in man of the ability to think and the power to use thought processes in coping with his environment.

He has written an important book called *Education*

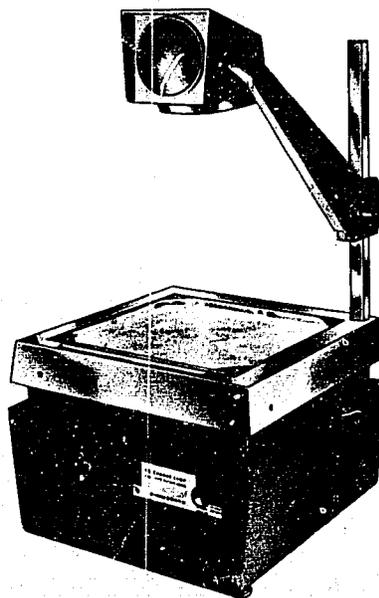
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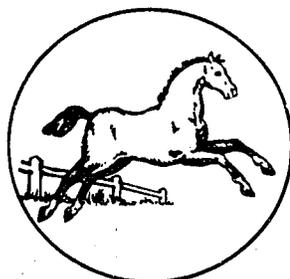
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- A American Library Association, The Booklist
  - BE ALA, Basic Book Collection for Elementary Grades
  - BJ ALA, Basic Book Collection for Junior High Schools
  - CS Child Study Association booklists
  - H Horn Book
  - LJ Library Journal and School Library Journal
  - TE National Council of Teachers of English booklists
  - WH H. W. Wilson, Children's Catalog
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as a Discipline. The concern of education is for the kind of thinking that is particular to other disciplines—an analysis of the kind of thinking pertaining to philosophy as distinct from, say, the kind of thinking that pertains to mathematics or science. The task of the educator becomes that of developing in man, on the basis of his expert knowledge about thinking, the power to think mathematically, scientifically, historically or philosophically.

You can see from this that there is in this approach a basis for establishing the unity which Sir Ronald insists is required of a professional group. All teachers, as educators, would share a common concern—the development of the intellect—and possess a common body of special knowledge, knowledge about thinking and the ways of developing in others powers of thinking.

It is said that it is rationality that distinguishes man from animals. A Russian educational psychologist claims that, unlike animals, man has the capacity to develop in his nervous system a 'second signaling system' so that he is not dependent upon what his senses tell him directly about his environment. Through language man can symbolize his concrete experience, forming abstractions which he can then act on directly using a process we call thinking. Education is the development of this second signaling system.

Again, if we accept this proposition, teachers would have to acquire a body of expert knowledge about thinking. Included might well be some knowledge about the physiology of the nervous system, of stages of mental development in children and of the process of language development as basic to thought. All this, too, would be basic knowledge required of all teachers as educators.

#### Teachers Are Expert in Schooling

If Belth and the Russian psychologist are right, it must be admitted that to the extent that teachers are expert at all, they are expert in schooling; i.e., in training, instructing and disciplining, not in education. They are schoolmasters, not educators.

Teaching and learning, while obviously related, are distinct processes.

Carl Rogers, an American psychiatrist who has interested himself in the problem of mental health in schools, has argued that the word 'teach' and its derivatives should almost be dropped from our vocabulary in favor of 'learn.'

When you stop to think about it, we want to learn, but we don't want to be taught until we ourselves are interested in learning. When my daughter was about ten years old, we took her on a motor trip across the U.S.A. As a teacher, I was determined to make sure that full advantage was taken of the trip to make of it a truly educational experience for my daughter. In particular, here, I thought, was an opportunity for her to learn some geography first hand instead of through textbooks. The teaching lasted almost but not quite as far as the Rockies. By then every time I opened my mouth to bring a geographical feature to her attention I was met with an increasingly vehement response: 'Dad, you're trying to teach me again.'

Someone has said, 'You can't teach anybody any-

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thing; you can only help him learn.' Certainly learning is a very individual thing.

It can easily happen in teaching that the only one who has learned anything is the teacher. Most beginners find this out after they have given their first test after completing, they thought, the first unit in a course of studies. You will have heard it said, 'If you really want to learn something, teach it.'

Learning is beginning to take its rightful place in the school system. The teacher today is coming to be regarded as a facilitator of learning, not as an imparter of knowledge—as Sir Alec Clegg put it in the December 1966 and January 1967 issues of this magazine, as a 'fire lighter' rather than a 'pot filler.'

After observing children and teachers at work using Elementary Science Study programs which feature learning through discovery rather than didactic teaching, the editors of the *ESS Newsletter* observed that, as seen by the children, the teacher is a person who:

- is not too busy to listen to your ideas
- helps you find exciting things to do, and then lets you do them
- helps keep others from bothering you when you want to think
- gets excited with you about your ideas and your discoveries
- encourages you to work on different problems, without ruining it by telling you the answers all the time
- is a helper when you need an extra pair of hands and all others are busy
- helps you realize what you have learned

This kind of teaching is impossible, of course, when classes are too large.

Each of the observations implies that the teacher felt it was critical that through their school experiences the children come to see themselves as able persons; able to think for themselves, able to work co-operatively with others, and able to learn new things. This the teacher did, not by directing the children's efforts, but by facilitating them. To us, this lesson helpfully illumines a response to the question, 'What is teaching all about?' It implies that teaching is facilitating a child's search for adequacy as he interacts with his environment.

There is nothing contradictory about this view of teaching and the Belth or Russian contention that the legitimate concern of education is the development of the intellect. To facilitate a child's search for adequacy a teacher will have to help him develop skills. The most important of these skills will be mental skills—thinking skills, including skills in manipulating symbols, especially words and numbers. These skills will be developed through exposing children to activities (learning is an active process) in which they will be stimulated through their senses (seeing, feeling, smelling, hearing, handling) to the point that mental processes (describing, classifying, explaining, interpreting, imagining, generalizing) are invoked.

Does this not suggest areas in which teachers should be expert? Would they not need to become experts in devising activities appropriate to the stage of mental development the pupils have reached, in selecting and making use of appropriate materials to facilitate

## Staff Requirements for Department of National Defence Dependants Schools Europe 1968-70

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Nominations for the 1968-70 term must be received by the Director of Dependants Education before 1 December, 1967. Most school boards nominate teachers as a form of recognition for exemplary service rendered and it is hoped that this policy will continue.

Dear Teacher

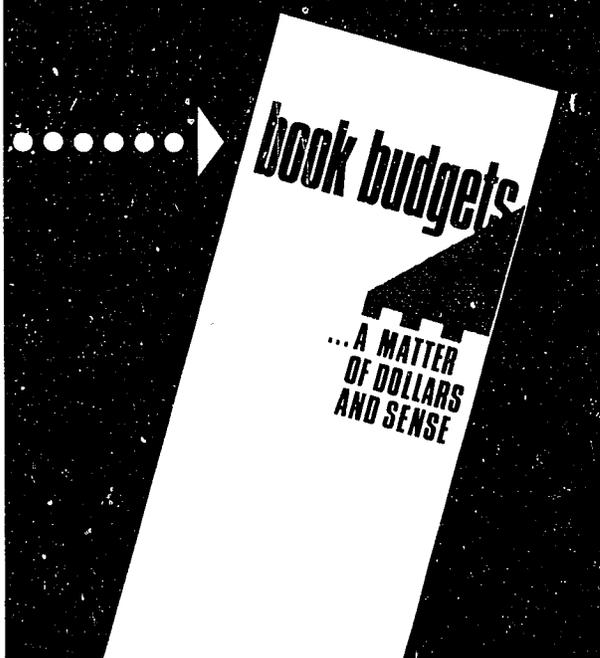
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the kind of learning the teacher intends to promote, in encouraging and assisting the pupils to master the learning tasks and to know when he has mastered them?

In this kind of learning situation would disciplining be a problem?

What has been said so far about learning is, by and large, more appropriate to the elementary school. At the secondary school level there is a place for receptive learning, at least so argues—very convincingly, I think—Dr. Ausabel of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. Reading his book, *Learning Theory and Classroom Practice*, made me feel very ignorant about the learning process involved even in the study of formal subject matter.

What particularly impressed me, however, was his insistence on the need for teachers to have available to them some meaningful learning theory. Teachers are apt to say of their preparation program, 'It's all too theoretical, it's ivory-tower stuff; it's quite divorced from the reality of the classroom.'

The criticism may be valid, but, if so, it is a criticism of what has been given them masquerading as theory, for there is nothing more practical than theory. Without it practice has to be unguided and intuitive, not deliberate and reasoned. 'He who practises an art without theory,' said one writer, 'is a dabbler, not an artist.' In the same way, he who attempts to practise teaching without theory is a muddler, not a professional.

Teachers must, and I am sure soon will, have available to them a body of specialized knowledge about learning theory which will make them truly expert in a professional sense. It is not their fault they do not have this knowledge today. They have not been given it in their teacher preparation programs.

I have suggested that teachers need to develop expertise in educating rather than in schooling, and in learning rather than in teaching and that becoming experts in learning will involve acquisition of a learning theory seen and appreciated as meaningful to teachers so that it will affect classroom practice.

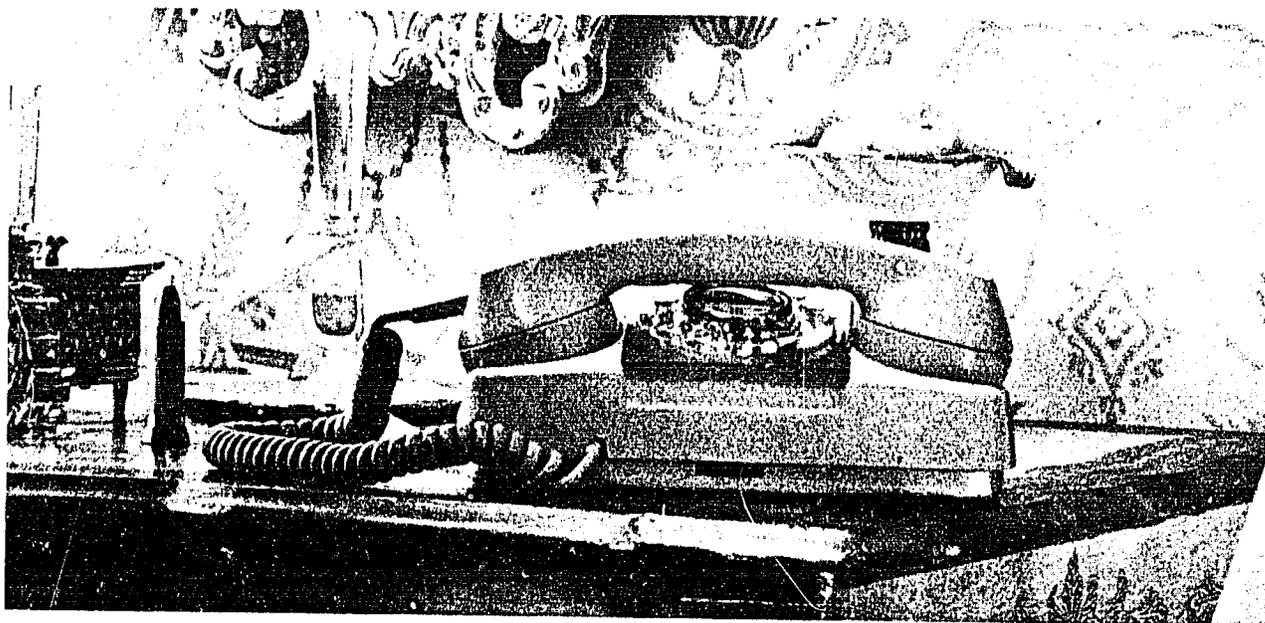
It is rapidly becoming imperative that this kind of expertise be developed.

Education is said to be the key for social and economic progress and for individual fulfillment. This is true, but this progress and this fulfillment will not happen merely by keeping youngsters longer in school, by establishing new kinds of schools or by devising more programs within existing schools.

The proof of this contention can be seen today in the U.S.A.—the country with the most highly developed school system in the world. Paul Goodman, the American sociologist, claims that more than 50% of Americans today are separated from their society. They are unemployed or unemployable, chronic welfare cases, mentally disturbed, criminals, delinquents, beatniks or hippies—some menacing, some harmful only to themselves—protesters and escapists. Certainly, even though his contention may be exaggerated, we are all aware of riots, burning and looting that have scarred large urban society in the U.S.A.

The social progress that is possible through educa-

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tion will come about only if the schools stop emphasizing schooling and start educating, when teachers in turn become educators more than schoolmasters, and school principals become educational leaders rather than headmasters.

An American university student, in a little volume containing critical essays about society and education (*To Make a Difference*, edited by Dr. Otto Butz, San Francisco State College), has written: 'I would say my education began when I started to change my general outlook and to think more for myself. This means that what I call my education started after about eleven years of public school, that schooling having had virtually nothing to do with the beginnings of my real education.' What a condemnation of the schools he attended! How can there be social, individual or economic progress through education, if education is delayed until university? Shall education be the preserve of the privileged few?

The same student goes on, optimistically, 'If present trends continue, it will be education for the full development of total human beings—people who will be informed, capable of thinking and creating and sensitive to the issues of our times.'

But his optimism is in respect to education at the college level. In today's complex, ever-changing society every man needs education, not just schooling. Education must begin with first entry to school.

Another student, who, incidentally, intends to become a teacher, writes in the same volume: 'In science we have believed and hence we have achieved. What now remains is to extend logical faith beyond science. We need to humbly recognize that man has not yet been seen in the fullness of his being, that there is a Reality about him that has so far escaped us. In order to develop the potentialities of man we must put faith in man.'

To this I say amen. Let us also, as teachers, put our faith in ourselves because we too are Man. We have the same potentiality for learning and development as our pupils. Let us put our faith in ourselves that we can acquire the expertise to become educators, not just schoolmasters.

The fact that teachers in our province have recently launched their own Commission on Education, through which they are prepared to take a critical look at themselves and their practice, as well as the existing school system, shows that they have faith in their collective ability to bring about improvement in education.

It shows also a willingness to heed Sir Ronald Gould's admonition that they cannot spare blood, sweat and tears in advancing themselves professionally. To blood, sweat and tears they are adding their own money—\$15,000 worth in the first year of the Commission.

I suspect that, in the beginning at least, most of the blood and the sweat will be shed by the three Commissioners. The tears, let us hope, will be tears of joy to come when the work of the Commission is ended and we can take pride in ourselves for our daring and foresight and our vision in taking direct action on our own toward the improvement of education. □

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## TEACHER-CENTERED SCHOOLS

N. E. NELSON

WE MUST RECOGNIZE that we live in a rapidly changing world—a world in which, moreover, the rate of change is also rapidly increasing. Unfortunately, this change does not take place uniformly in all sections of our society. If we think in terms of the different environments of which our society is composed, we will recognize at once that the educational environment is changing much more slowly than either the economic or social environments.

Let us look briefly at these three areas of change. Surely I need not stress the economic changes that are taking place in today's society. We have all heard statistics relating to the growing effects of automation and cybernation on the world of work. We have heard, too, the disquieting thought that perhaps we should not be educating to produce a working society, since work is rapidly becoming obsolete in so many fields. Two or three years ago, Dr. H. S. Broudy of the University of Illinois suggested that B.C.'s vocationally-oriented streaming system was excellent preparation for the world of 1940.

Writing in *Saturday Review*, Robert Maynard Hutchins points to the absurdity of educating for marketable skills which are rapidly losing their market value. He says, 'What education can and should do is help people become human. The object of education is not *manpower* but *manhood*. . . . We can now make the transition from a working to a *learning* world.'

So much has been written and said on this area of change that I would be wasting your time to dwell on it at too great a length. If it is true, however, that, as a top official of General Electric put it, 'Computers . . . will make up your grocery list, remind you of appointments and anniversaries, take care of your finances, pay your bills, write your cheques, figure out your income tax, and answer your telephone . . . in fact carry out every function except that of reproduction,' it is also true that modern technology is substituting not only for the muscles of men but also for their minds. If this be the case, our 1940-oriented education system is rapidly becoming obsolete.

The other rapidly changing environment is the social environment. Most teachers are guided by the value system which got us safely through the Depression and through the last World War. Most of us still think in terms of the Freudian concepts of adjustment, the Dale Carnegie approach to social relationships and the Protestant ethic with respect to morality.

*N. E. Nelson, BCTF Second Vice-president, addressed the delegates to the Summer Conference. This is his text.*

But consider the world from the point of view of the young person of today. As one speaker put it in a paper delivered to North Vancouver teachers, 'These young adults have never known a pre-TV world; they have more money, more leisure than previous generations, their cars have propelled them into a world that we did not meet until we were mature. They have learned by the age of six what it took us twice as long to learn in our day. In Marshall McLuhan's words, "the adolescents wear all mankind as their skin." In other words, they know through the media of TV and radio the instant anything of note happens anywhere in the world. They partook of Kennedy's assassination, trembled over the Cuban crisis at the very moment they and we neared nuclear destruction.

'As a result of their early knowledgeability they no longer tend to look up to their teachers as oracles; they demand involvement and participation in the affairs of the school.'

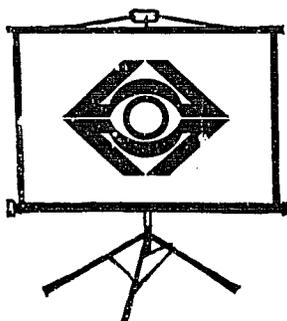
These students who have been plunged into the world's problems in depth by TV (one half-hour in tortured Viet Nam, followed by a half-hour in race-torn Detroit) come to school accustomed to considering human problems from the core of their complexities and without extensive preparation—only to crawl snail-like through the ponderous sequences of narrowly defined, out-dated and separated courses.

Is it any wonder the young adults of today are beginning to question the values of our generation? We see this questioning everywhere, in the universities, in the so-called 'hippie movement,' the New Left, and, closer to us, in the secondary schools, particularly in the senior grades. Those of us who have teenage children see it unmistakably at first hand in them and in their friends, and we can learn a great deal from them.

Thus we see rapid changes taking place in the economic and social environments, and the educational environment lagging sadly behind.

Yet there are hopeful signs, for change is occurring in education, too. There are signs that there is a quiet revolution going on in educational thought—or perhaps it is premature to call it a *revolution*, since very few have so far sprung to the barricades. We see around us new ideas, innovations which reflect the changes taking place elsewhere in our society. Two of these changes are the increased stress on the individualization of instruction and the changing concept of the role of the teacher.

One thing is certain; the educational changes are not keeping pace with economic and social changes.



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There are many interesting things going on in AV generally and we'll be showing you some of them regularly in the illustrations on the right of this page.

Our own people at Audio-Visual Systems\*, technical men, management, sales and dealers will be supplying the material. But if you've got an item you feel will be of interest to AV people we'd be delighted to have it.

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### "BEHIND THE SCREEN"

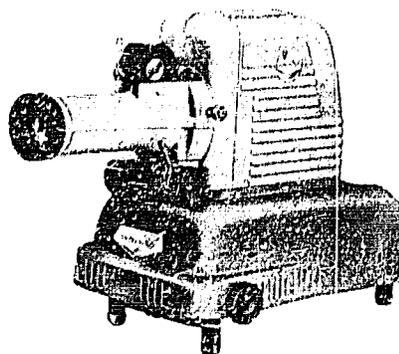
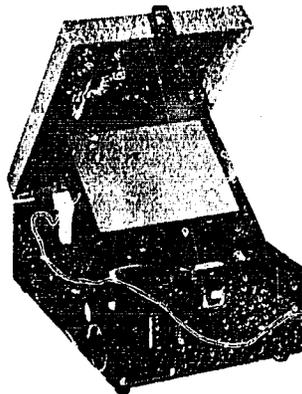
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Perhaps the first duty of educators everywhere is to ask why. Obviously the overriding reason is money. There is no discernible profit in education so, in our business society, businessmen tend to dissociate themselves almost completely from education. Yet look at the billions that are spent without question on technology, for research, on test projects and the like. No wonder technology advances faster than education!

If our society would reflect the same concern in its budget for education as it does in industrial and military budgets, the cultural gap would close much more rapidly.

If we glance in even the most cursory manner at the history of educational thought, we shall recognize that in educational philosophy the pendulum has swung, customarily, from the traditional subject-centered point of view to the progressive or child-centered point of view. There was the classical 17th century system which marked the educated gentleman. Then came Rousseau and his *Emile* in the 18th century, and with him a new progressive concept of the child as a young adult with all the entitlements and dignities of adulthood. Then back swung the pendulum to the traditional subject-centeredness of the Victorian era; then a return to child-centeredness with Dewey and the progressive, experience-oriented 'learn-by-doing' schools. Then, of course, came Sputnik and the frantic scramble back to the subject. Now we have continuous progress, individualization of learning, centering our attention once more on the child.

I believe that we educators can contribute most to the achievement of effective teaching and learning

conditions in our schools by refusing to be fascinated any longer by the hypnotic swing of the pendulum between the two extremes of subject-centered and child-centered education. It is now possible, and indeed imperative, for us to think in terms of a teacher-centered philosophy.

This does not mean that we are any the less concerned for the child. On the contrary, teacher-centeredness in education is the surest guarantee that the child will be the ultimate recipient of all educational benefits.

I know it is difficult to envisage, under present circumstances, an educational system in which prime attention is focussed on the teacher—difficult to envisage because the teacher has been the forgotten man for so many years that no one really listens to him any more unless he speaks through a powerful organization.

Whenever the experts have concerned themselves with improving the subjects or adjusting the child, they did so without particular reference to the person most essential to any quality educational system, the teacher. For years curricula were revised secretly and announced suddenly, without consultation with the teachers who had to use them. Even now, although we have a voice, final control lies with the Department of Education.

Studies have been made of the gifted child, the slow learner, the normal child, the abnormal child, individual differences in children ad nauseam and, as a result, teachers took courses for credit in these various studies. Then they went out into the school system to become ciphers, transfer record numbers, swamped by

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The person appointed to this position will be a successful professional educator with a firm commitment to the importance of teaching as a profession. In making the appointment, consideration will be given to such factors as scholarship, experience and attainments in education and other fields, and skills in the field of human relations. Further information regarding the position and the necessary qualifications for it may be had on request from the secretary of the Selection Committee.

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impossible work loads and endless trivia.

In time, teachers became so much a product of this system that, although, generally speaking, they want to bring about innovations, to change the old, outmoded ways of doing things, to end the frustrations which so often accompany teaching, they don't know where to start. This is no reflection on the teacher; it is, rather, a reflection on the educational system which makes it so difficult for teachers to break the mold.

Now a new fresh wind is stirring education. We hear more and more about innovations in thinking, about the learning processes, about student self-directed learning, large group techniques, paraprofessional aides, and so on.

One such innovation, for example, is suggested by Dr. Carl Rogers, who examines the learning process and comes up with what he calls 'experiential learning.' By experiential learning Dr. Rogers means that learning must form a part of a child's experience as he finds himself in a situation wherein he is face to face with a problem that is meaningful to him—a problem to which he wants to find a solution. The child is at the center of the learning process, not the teacher. But the teacher is the key figure in initiating understanding. He is the facilitator of learning rather than the impartor of knowledge. It is almost paradoxical that, as the teacher becomes a less dominating figure in the classroom, at the same time he becomes a far more important factor in the learning process.

There is more to Rogers' theory than is suggested here. It is one of the promising theories now being advanced. What we must concern ourselves with, and guard against, however, is the tendency of our educational system to absorb innovations as they come along without itself undergoing any really significant change. And so long as the teacher is relegated to a subordinate role in our educational structure, so long will innovations be defeated by the weight of tradition.

Bob Buzza, our president, recently said: 'Our concern is with the short term and long term future. The Chant Report was limited to suggesting changes in a school system which was taken as being basically sound. Our concern is with the total fabric—not just with patching up a garment that still has to be worn for some time to come. We are concerned with an ideal to work to, and therefore wish to look beyond the immediately practicable.'

It may be that the ideal for which we are looking—the long term future, that is—is a rebuilding of education toward a teacher-centered point of view. If learning is to be facilitated, the educational structure must be organized to accommodate the teacher to a greater extent than is now the case.

The teacher must have time to teach; he must have equipment and materials to work with; he must have space in which to work; he must have opportunity for study; he must, himself, have an understanding of his true role as a teacher and he must have the prestige that will give others confidence in him and give him confidence in himself. Only then will education be in the hands of the true professionals and the gap between theory and practice narrowed.

If we start with this premise, we can see the role of

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the principal, the local association and the BCTF more clearly. Their greatest concern must be to help the teacher to realize his destiny by helping to free him from the shackles which now hold him, by working toward those conditions which will allow him to be more effective. Those conditions include:

1. The creation of conditions under which he can function effectively in his new role.
2. An understanding of, and a willingness by the teacher to accept, his new role as teacher.
3. An understanding and acceptance among administrators, superintendents, school boards, government officials and the public generally of his new role.

We shall, of course, hear the stout upstanders, the nay-sayers, saying, 'But this is impossible! It is too idealistic, too sweeping, too revolutionary, too costly.'

I agree. One cannot start anything that will necessitate an uprooting of traditional practice and expect that it will be accepted and instituted holus-bolus. Just as the ripples from a stone thrown into a pool radiate outward, so do sweeping changes begin in a small way. We must first throw a few stones into the pool.

For the short term we must think in terms of experimental situations to show that this philosophy works. We must set up pilot projects, in selected schools if necessary, to create the conditions I have described.

### A New and Exciting Philosophy Is Possible

There is at present a willingness to experiment. If such projects could be shown to work, and to work well, we could expect the gradual growth of a new and exciting teacher-centered educational philosophy.

Such a pilot project is suggested by the National Education Association's 'Time to Teach Project of the Department of Classroom Teachers.' The plan, briefly, is to bring about educational reform within a district by setting up a committee which involves teachers in decision-making regarding school policies. Teachers, administrators and superintendents would work toward a common goal—to free the teacher to provide time for teacher-student interpersonal relationships which could result in the pursuit of educational goals that are meaningful to both students and teachers. They start with a frank evaluation of present practices, they set up criteria for better practices and they clear the way for teachers to choose alternative courses of action. The NEA plan, in effect, provides teachers with an opportunity to take a leading part in determining how practice can be improved at the local level.

NEA also provides resource materials for such pilot projects. It has published a book, *Innovations*, which contains much of the research done in attempting to determine high-priority use of the teacher's time. We cannot begin such projects immediately, however, for our Commission has just begun its deliberations. It would be premature to set up a project which might have far-reaching implications before the commissioners have had an opportunity to study all possibilities.

What can we do in the year ahead? We shall, of course, continue the class-size campaign at both the elementary and secondary levels.

But we cannot continue to demand better teaching



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- to advance the goals of this organization by recommending imaginative, effective courses of action to be taken by an elected Provincial Executive, to which he is directly responsible.
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conditions without examining more closely our own parallel responsibilities for improving the quality of the services we provide.

Whatever the long range plans we decide to pursue, we can be sure that they will involve a greater responsibility for the teacher. Let us, therefore, begin to stress, through our Professional Development Division, discussions on the nature of learning, on the changing role of the teacher, and so on—in other words, add to our in-service program.

At the same time, in anticipation of the setting up of pilot projects, we might consider developing a greater spirit of self-evaluation throughout the profession. Most of the criticism of educational practice comes from outside the teaching ranks. It is time we began to examine our own practices—after all, we are the ones most qualified to do so. As Malcolm Provus, director of the Time to Teach Project, says: 'Only when educators themselves, whether teachers or administrators, see a need for change in terms of the inadequacy of their own behavior will they willingly turn to a vast research literature in order to solve practicable problems in the public schools. Teachers and administrators alike must recognize that a candid assessment of their own personal-professional problems is the only realistic starting point for constructive change.'

Is it true, for example, that many of our schools are operated from the point of view of administrative expediency rather than concern with learning?

### The Gap Grows Wider Daily

The gap between things as they are in the schools and as they are in the world outside grows wider daily. If the gap between educational change and socio-economic change is to be closed before the entire educational structure as we know it becomes completely discredited in the eyes of our young people, we must translate theory into practice far more quickly than we are now doing.

The way to do this is to trust the teacher, to place both theory and practice within his charge, to make the practitioner the instrument of change, so that, ultimately, we shall have a far more flexible school system, a system which can adapt more readily to the changing needs of our society. We cannot think in terms of a single panacea for all educational distresses; change is too rapid for that to be possible any longer. We must, instead, envisage a flexible system which will adjust continuously to changing conditions.

And when the day comes that we have a truly teacher-centered educational system, on that day we shall have reached the state of professionalism of which Sir Ronald Gould spoke at the recent WCOTF assembly—a state of professionalism which 'will not fall like manna from Heaven, nor from some benevolent government. Neither the gods nor government can give teachers professional status, for it is not a gift at all; it is earned, not bestowed.'

If we can prove to the world that teachers can accept the true responsibilities of the great profession they serve, if we can prove that to allow the teacher more self-direction is ultimately to help the child, we shall at last have earned the right to call ourselves true professionals and to rejoice in the rewards of our calling. □

## The Credibility Gap

Continued from page 11

class in which each child has a different perceptual background?

How well can we know our Grade 5 child and his unique learning problems when he is one of 150 children to whom we are teaching social studies?

How much time is there to explore ideas and develop personal meanings between the 10:05 and 10:55 bell? How much time is there to integrate learning?

I have taken a brief look at some significant facts stated by social scientists. They raise basic issues for education that I believe we should be considering. Let's think about what happens to the *child* as he goes through our school system. If we teach the subject matter of each grade to all children, we are teaching only 'to whom it may concern.'

If we attempt to teach each child at his own level and then use a common evaluation measurement to label him A, B, C, D or E, in the process some children leave the elementary school believing they are not worthy and unable to achieve—so why try? We have pushed them out, but they can't leave. As soon as possible they 'drop out.' Others have coasted along and got the idea they can get by with little effort and never really learn the satisfaction of a real challenge faced and conquered by their own efforts. We are closing doors to self-realization in both cases.

One more thought. Are we headed in the right direction? The trend toward subject specialities in the elementary schools with the concomitant increase in departmentalization—will this help or hinder each child to develop a positive view of self? What about the 'stiffening of the curriculum'; the tendency to teach more and more concepts in the early grades to prepare them for upgraded curricula in the higher grades. What effect does this have?

Should one level of learning be organized and evaluated as preparation for the next? Is the elementary school merely a preparation for secondary school? Are these tendencies consistent with the pursuit of our goal of 'the maximum possible development of *each unique individual*'?

What do *you* think? □

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QUOTES AND COMMENTS

VITO CIANCI



EVERY TEACHER OF ENGLISH has had the experience of being asked by some harassed student, 'Why do we have to write this?' I wonder sometimes, do professional writers ask themselves the same question, in slightly different form? Do they ask, 'Why do I have to write this?'

Even the occasional note-maker (me, for example) asks himself that bothersome question from time to time. And, as a teacher of English, I complicate things for myself by asking a variation of the student's question, 'Why do I make them write this?' The longer I think about these two questions, the harder it seems to find an acceptable answer.

One obvious answer is that it is undeniably pleasing to the ego to see one's stuff and name in print,

but in the long run this is a dubious sort of satisfaction, and may even be dangerous.

For a teacher, there is certainly a satisfaction in seeing some of his students developing into competent writers. He can even flatter himself that he has had something to do with the process (although I am never really sure about this).

Writing this particular section of the magazine often reminds me of a game I used to play with a group

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I was involved with when I was a student at the school of art. This group was made up of art students, university students, some student nurses and a few musicians, a lively and stimulating lot.

We used to relax from our varied labors in a sort of restaurant-cum-speakeasy-cum-dance pavilion called The Blue Goose, where in discreetly curtained cubicles surrounding a minute dance floor we ate sparingly, drank surreptitiously and talked endlessly on a variety of Lofty Topics.

Some of us were partial to steamed clams, and as we ate them, we occasionally flipped the empty shells out and over the top of the booth, and then sat back to listen for repercussions. 'I shot an arrow in the air...' sort of thing.

Expressions of indignation could, and did, come from any direction, and only the threat of being bounced stopped the game.

I'm reminded of that feeling of anticipation once in a while when I put out some idea of mine in this space. I throw it out, and then sit back to wait for repercussions. It

strikes me that perhaps this is the best justification for writing anything, the putting out of an idea, and then waiting for someone to take it up and argue about it, or examine it, or take it all apart.

In one of my notebooks this morning I found a quotation from an unknown source which I think covers the situation very neatly:

'I do not believe that I have the right or the qualifications to tell other people what to think. I believe that the exchange of opinions for consideration is one of the greatest privileges of being a human being. I believe that as you grow—if you grow—these opinions will be under constant change.'

An editorial writer in the British magazine *Art and Industry* offered this variation on the same general idea: 'Allowing the printed word to pass without challenge is a loss to both reader and writer.'

I feel that the attitude expressed in these two quotations is justification enough for writing, in the magazine, or in the classroom, especially since there is implied an active participation by the reader. □

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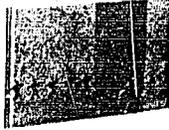
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