

# Teacher

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## Opening day Provincial education scenes vary *by Nancy Hinds*

**T**eachers are in a class by themselves" goes the adage. Each fall marks a new beginning, an opportunity to start fresh, buoyed by past successes and unencumbered by former troubles. Teachers in B.C. enter school with a familiar anticipation for a good year. Harvey Weiner, Canadian Teachers' Federation, claims, "Teachers across Canada generally still do enjoy teaching and would like to do it more effectively, unfettered by the continual problems and interruptions they face." Teachers in B.C. want to get on with the job of teaching.

During spring school visits, BCTF President Ken Novakowski heard teachers repeatedly identify four things important to them as professionals. Teachers want to be treated fairly, no special rules. They want stability, an end to sudden changes without prior consultation, and a gradual, orderly process of implementation with the full involvement of the profession. Teachers want resources and concrete material, and support to do their job well. Teachers in B.C. have felt unappreciated too long. They are asking for respect for what they do, for their contribution to society, for their contribution to human lives.

A French immersion teacher from Quebec captures this sentiment in his resignation letter to a Lower Mainland school district. "Since my early days in French immersion (ten years ago), the program has greatly expanded and grown. Unfortunately, the district hasn't maintained the original levels of support and services for its teachers. As a result, working conditions have deteriorated. For instance, I wasn't given the usual preparation time to create a new course, the immersion staff

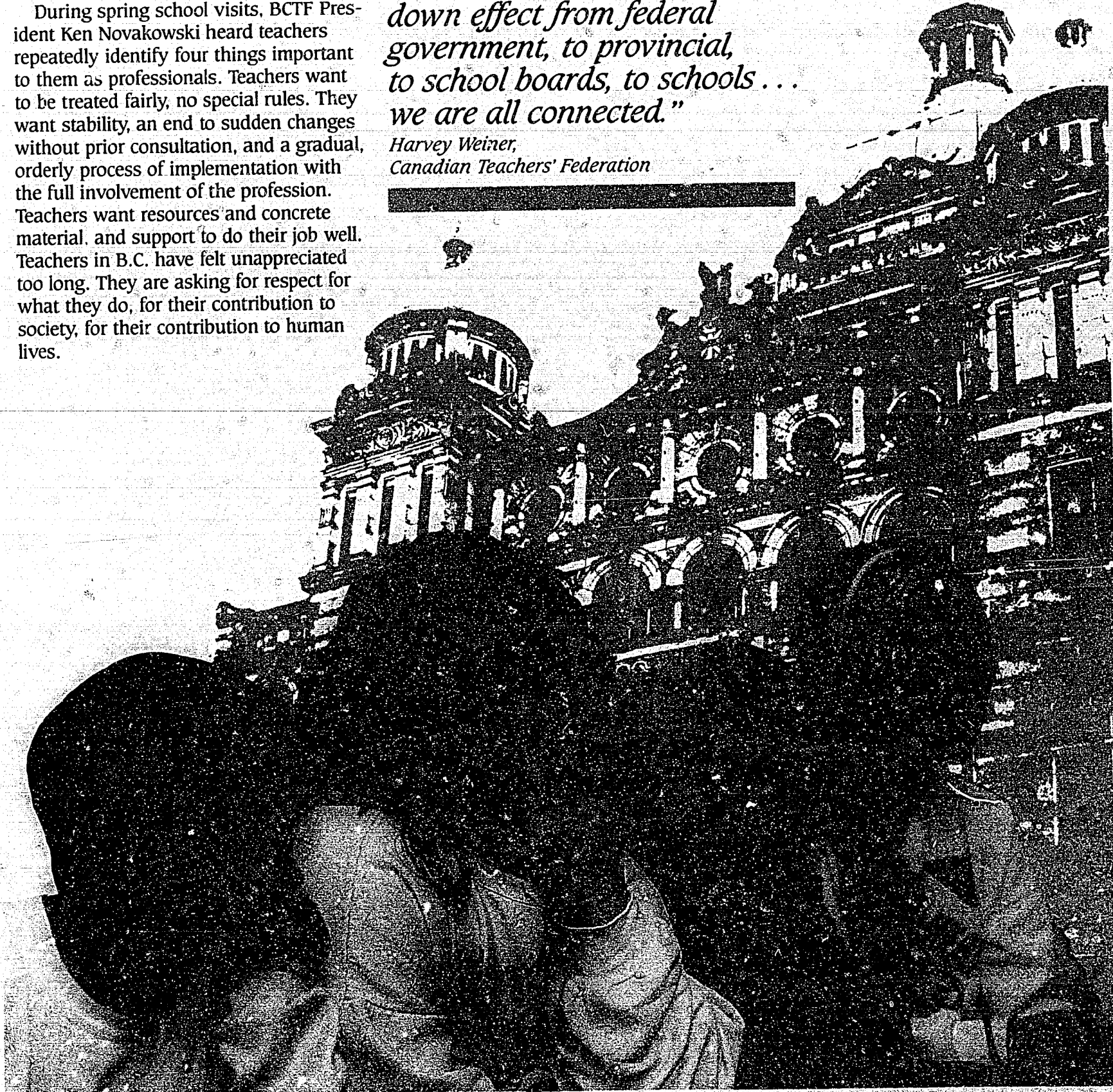
assistant position has been eliminated, and learning assistance no longer exists in our school....This province seems to be particularly unaware of the needs of teachers who attempt to provide a meaningful education for their students."

This gap between what B.C. teachers want, and what they are experiencing, has to be addressed. It is no longer okay for teachers to be the shock absorbers of society, of the school system. Coping. Making do, with one hand tied behind their backs. Worrying is not good enough.

See "Provinces" page 6

*"There is also a trickle down effect from federal government, to provincial, to school boards, to schools... we are all connected."*

Harvey Weiner,  
Canadian Teachers' Federation





## Homophobia is/is not our professional concern

After reading your article "Addressing the invisible minority facing homophobia," April/May issue, I was amazed at how some educators and journalists have become adept at using, or should I say twisting, language to suit their point of view.

How can one say that the fear of gays and lesbians is *irrational* when it is common knowledge that the AIDS epidemic we all must guard against was introduced to society by homosexuals:

"It is true that the majority of cases in North America are still homosexual. That is because AIDS first entered our population via the gay community. But it is already in the process of spreading to the general population in North America. AIDS is not simply a disease of high-risk groups. It is a human disease. We are all potentially at risk." (*David Suzuki Talks about AIDS*, page 13)

An individual who has the HIV virus or AIDS should be treated with sympathy and given the same treatment one assigns to other people with serious illnesses. But to use such grey language as was in your article: "People find themselves sexually attracted to others in adolescence" rather than "People find themselves sexually attracted to members of the opposite sex in adolescence" is to misrepresent the natural feelings of the vast majority of adolescents. As an intermediate teacher for the past 20 years, I can most certainly vouch for the fact that the majority of my students were and still are attracted to members of the opposite sex!

The Health and Life Skills programs developed in recent years are of tremendous value in addressing the sensitive issue of childhood sexuality and other previously "untaught" topics. I trust these will continue but not be used by individuals such as you to advocate that everyone has the right to *do what feels right* rather than to *do what is right*.

**Ron Raible**  
Maple Ridge

I read with hope your article "Addressing the invisible minority facing homophobia." As a teacher in my 40s and a lesbian, I have long felt the need for more education for my colleagues on this issue. We all try to treat our students equally; yet some remarks, often meant in jest or even in kindness, hurt those students and colleagues who have been born with an attraction to the same sex. If we can, all be considerate and encouraging of all lifestyles and acknowledge all love as magical and wonderful, we will have a better workplace and a safer world. Homosexuals (the 10% of our population) are normal people who lead productive lives, are as diverse as heterosexuals, and are as non-threatening to our society.

I, for one, enjoy my full life with my woman partner, who has brought so much love and companionship in my life. *Name withheld.*

Congratulations on "A day without homophobia," June 1991, by Michael Wicks. As he says, "people who feel devalued devalue all around them," and the waste in human spirit is enormous.

The BCTF is to be congratulated on giving leadership in this area, and my experience of my former colleagues makes me sure there is a great deal of support for making "school a safe place in which gay and lesbian children can grow up...valued as human beings."

**Robin Taylor**  
Retired B.C. teacher

I would like to comment on the article "Addressing the invisible minority - facing homophobia" in the April/May issue. *Homophobia* is defined as an unnatural fear of homosexuality. In reality, there is nothing more natural than to oppose unnatural and harmful practices. I agree that we need to foster acceptance of the homosexual community as people and treat them with respect and dignity as we do any group. But I object to homosexuals' going after public endorsement for their lifestyle, particularly in the classroom.

As well, their quote of 10% as an estimate of the homosexual population is very inaccurate and used often by groups such as GALE (Gay and Lesbian Educators). Conservative estimates are in the 1-2% range, not 4%. I reject and am appalled by a group such as this trying to legitimize their lifestyle to our young people, a lifestyle a majority of society rejects as unnatural. I am also upset that the BCTF sees fit to give them this platform. It is not a positive comment on the wide range of issues that our federation involves itself in without the approval of many teachers.

**H. Whittemire**  
Victoria

I believe that a person's sexual orientation is a personal matter, but I do not believe that it is the role of the school counsellor to "provide a place and time to explore the meaning of homosexual tendencies" or, "to provide someone to be a role model," or "to provide access to resources of all kinds including gay organizations and speakers," as stated in your June 1991 edition of *Teacher* (BCTF's official newsmagazine).

Some of our readers by now will be accusing me of being homophobic, of having an irrational fear of lesbian or gay people. But such is not the case — I do have friends and acquaintances whose sexual orientation is different from mine. That is not the point.

The point is that I believe schools, and counsellors, have enough to do without crusading for almost every social cause that comes along. The system cannot be all things to all people.

**Peter Johnson**  
Campbell River

I am responding to the article in June 1991, concerning "A day without homophobia." I question whether homophobia is such a problem that it should be dealt with in the newsmagazine *Teacher*. Is this really in the same realm as the child-abuse issue? Under whose authority and expertise is homophobia recognized as a medical disease? Is being born gay really validated by personal life experiences? This article raises many unanswered questions and unfounded solutions.

There seems to be an attempt to give acceptance to and condone homosexuality by wrapping oneself in the virtuous flag of openness and tolerance. One is perceived as a bigot or narrow-minded if one is not open to an alternate lifestyle. The next step in this process could then be an embracing of homosexuality.

I have no acrimony toward the homosexual as a person, but I do not agree with homosexuality as a responsible alternate lifestyle, and I would not condone it for any of my students.

**Karl Klein**  
Campbell River

## Alive and well

To all those either mourning or celebrating my demise, as reported recently in *Teacher* and the *RTA Bulletin*, I am happy to announce that I was not present at the event. In fact, I have so little enthusiasm for the whole affair that I have decided to postpone it until the middle of the next century. I hope this

will not disrupt the plans of those who have already arranged to send condolences. In any case, I will be pleased to accept any flowers that have not yet wilted.

**Agnes Stewart**  
Surrey

(Editor's note: Apologies to Agnes Stewart. In the future, *Teacher* plans to print the last district taught in for the "Teachers Remembered" column.)

## Canada post responds to rural dignity

In response to Sandra Groepler's letter in your June edition, I would like to clarify a few points regarding Canada Post's rural conversion program.

The so-called "non-partisan" Rural Dignity group that Groepler is asking you to support, is 80% funded by a union of postmasters and assistants more interested in saving membership than in serving the public.

Contrary to Groepler's claim, Canada Post does not intend to shut down all federal post offices by 1996. As a matter of fact, there will always be a mix of corporate and retail postal outlets. This mix helps us better serve our customers by providing additional access to postal products and services.

Rural Canadians have had to cope with many changes — the local school closing, the banks moving to larger centres, the trains no longer stopping — but Canada Post has made a business decision to remain in rural communities, building on our 100-year-old partnership with local business. I think the facts speak louder than words.

Since the rural conversion program began in 1987, Canada Post has very successfully converted more than 1,000 offices to retail postal outlets. In a total of 17,200 locations, customers can access postal products and services. This is more than that offered by all the banks and trust companies combined. Of this total, 70% are operated by private enterprise.

Our customers are telling us they like the way we are providing postal service. Surveys conducted yearly since 1988 by Decima and Gallup show that more than 90% of the rural Canadians they talked to are satisfied with conversions and retail postal services offered through the local business in their community.

I think you will agree that the corporation is committed to its mandate of providing accessible, affordable postal service to all Canadians, and the majority of customers appreciate the way we are conducting our business.

**Deborah Saucier**  
National Media Relations  
Canada Post

## Stikine in trading-card mania game

In his article, "Trading Card Mania May Trigger Curriculum Change," T. Evers-Chance hints that students caught up in the trading-card mania currently sweeping the province may prompt the ministry to drop Consumer Education 10. It will be, if it hasn't already been, rendered obsolete by these wheeling and dealing kids who Evers-Chance says are well ahead of the curriculum.

The author states that "It is expected that the three students in the province who do not collect cards, two of whom live in the Stikine, would take consumer education by correspondence."

This is not true, and we in the Stikine feel we must put the record straight. There is only one student in the Stikine who doesn't collect cards but she does have one of the most comprehensive collections of truckers' caps north of Highway 16. We recently traded the other student (and

his slightly dog-eared Honus Wagner) to a southern district for three guidance counsellors, two industrial education teachers, and a speech pathologist.

**Martin Blakesley**  
Atlin

## T. Evers-Chance meets match

The recent prose pieces of T. Evers-Chance in the *Teacher* newsmagazine have been as entertaining as watching three bear cubs frolicking in a park (could that be the old West Side grounds?), as clever as a ditty by a Big Apple journalist (Ernest ...er, Franklin P. Adams comes to mind), and as error-free as a 6-4-3 double play (ah ha, I knew that name sounded familiar!).

There is no question these essays lead the league in light reading and belong in the Hall of Fame (of *Teacher* musings), unlike three Chicago hoods I know — two of whom were light hitting and only one of whom ever led the league in their specialty.

Ah, if only I could write — or play the infield — like the esteemed T. Evers-Chance!

**H. Steinfeldt**

A former teacher, currently working for a local school athletic association.

## Letters to the editor

Letters to Readers write (*Teacher* newsmagazine, 2235 Burrard Street, Vancouver, BC V6J 3H9) may be edited for reasons of legality, taste, brevity, and clarity. To be considered for publication, they must be signed, and include the writer's home address, school district, and a telephone number (which will not be published) so authorship may be verified.

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2235 Burrard Street  
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(604) 731-8121 or  
(toll-free) 1-800-663-9163  
Fax 731-4810

Editor  
Nancy Hinds  
Editorial Assistant  
Helen Kolisnek

Editorial workgroup  
Judith Blakeston  
Sam Fillipoff  
Kit Krieger  
Ken Novakowski  
Phyllis Westhara  
Ray Worley

Copy editor  
Debby Stagg

Design consultant  
Betty Sommerville

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## History on Israel set straight

I was greatly perturbed upon reading your latest edition of *Teacher*. Naturally, there are mixed reactions on the BCTF Middle East Curriculum.

Confusion always exists where there is ignorance, and the last place you will find factual information is in the daily newspapers. Most people are both historically and biblically ignorant on the subject of the Middle East.

Fact 1: No Arab nation has ever existed in Israel.

Fact 2: There has always been the presence of Jews in their land, far exceeding the number of Arabs.

Fact 3: Archaeological digs have unearthed ancient Jewish villages, Roman amphitheatres and ruins, and Canaanite temple remains, that prove the Jews' presence, among others.

Fact 4: When the Jews were returning to their homeland, Arab immigration increased in order to thwart the Jewish presence. This was particularly noticeable after the 1967 war against Israel.

Fact 5: The Turks controlled Israel for 400 years in absentia. They had administered the final coup de grace to Israel, cutting down most of the trees. The Jews have removed the malarial swamps, planted five million trees per year, washed the salt from land surrounding the Dead Sea, and made the land habitable as formerly. The desert blooms, and all this done by hard-working Jews who love and care for their land.

Fact 6: Israel was a sovereign nation in the land of Canaan for 2,000 years before the Babylonians, Medes and Persians, Greeks, Romans, Byzantines, Arabs, Crusaders, Mamluks, and lastly Turks conquered the land. The land was systematically destroyed by each successive incursion. None became a nation until the rebirth of Israel in May 1948.

Fact 6: England was given trusteeship by the League of Nations, and the Treaty of Sevres, ratified by Congress. Despite the Balfour Agreement, England treacherously ceded 70% of Israeli territory to King Abdullah to create Trans Jordan, now Jordan.

Israel has consistently relinquished her territory in her desire for peace. Consider the UN Partition Plan, Geneva Conference, Rogers Plan, Camp David Accord, etc. None has ever resulted in peace for Israel. The Arabs are determined to drive Israel into the sea.

Fortunately, Israel is in her land to stay, despite the machinations of the nations. Long live Israel!

**G.V. Allen**

A Gentle, Retired Burnaby teacher

## "Sun" education reporter says "thanks"

A note of thanks to everyone who helped me over the last four years while I was education reporter at the *Vancouver Sun*.

I'm off to Montreal now, to do a one-year exchange at the *Montreal Gazette*. But I couldn't leave without expressing my appreciation to the dozens of teachers and BCTF staff who have spent hours with me, explaining the latest issue, sometimes at ungodly hours of the night.

Some of you I didn't even get to meet in person, although we might have talked almost daily for several weeks. Others welcomed me into their classrooms for what must have seemed like hours of unnerving scrutiny. All of you — explaining the local labour situation or a social studies program, showing me your classroom or talking to me at a conference — were tremendously open and helpful. I couldn't have done my job without that.

**Frances Bula**  
Vancouver Sun reporter on leave

## BCTF distinguished by CUSO (Canadian University Students Overseas)



(Left to right), President Ken Novakowski receives CUSO award for BCTF's international programs from Governor General, His Excellency Ray Hnatyshyn, at a Rideau Hall Ceremony in Ottawa in June.

A special CUSO 30th Anniversary Award went to the B.C. Teachers' Federation for its "exceptional dedication to the cause of international development, particularly in southern Africa."

The federation was selected for the award because of its partnership with CUSO in international education. Specific program initiatives of the BCTF Global Education Project, assistance to schools and teachers in southern Africa, and the W.R. Long International Solidarity Fund, which funds education projects throughout the Third World.

The Global Education Project is completing its second year of providing workshops, materials, and projects that help B.C. teachers achieve a global perspective in their teaching.

When Stephen Lewis, former Canadian ambassador to the United Nations,

addressed the BCTF's AGM in April, he acknowledged the valuable leadership of BCTF internationally. "Things don't bring tears to my eyes easily these days, but I was really moved as I read what your International Solidarity Fund Committee is doing," said Lewis. "I spend a big chunk of my life moving back and forth from the continent of Africa for UNICEF. What this committee is doing is attempting to bridge the unbridgeable gulf between the north and the south, which is so unhealthily, cataclysmically developed."

BCTF international funding for projects has concentrated in Latin America, the Philippines, and southern Africa. The latter was singled out for recognition by CUSO. Projects in southern Africa have included preparation of teachers of English in Namibia, programs for war-traumatized children in Mozambique, support for the teachers' union in Zimbabwe, and aid to the victims of apartheid in South Africa.

The federation stands proud of its tributes to children and fellow teachers in the developing world.

## 75th Anniversary quiz TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE



BRITISH COLUMBIA  
TEACHERS' FEDERATION

1. Name the four women who have served as president of the BCTF.
2. Who was William R. Long and how is he memorialized by the BCTF?
3. What do the following acronyms stand for? (a) FAR (b) TQS (c) TPAC (d) LPAC

4. Name the minister of education who abolished corporal punishment in the public school system.

5. With what national labour body was the BCTF affiliated between 1943 and 1956?

6. In what year did B.C. teachers join the three-day provincial strike of public sector workers?

7. What do the following people have in common, in addition to having been president of the BCTF: John Sutherland, L. John Prior, Jim Killeen, Pat Brady?

8. What actions did B.C. teachers take in March 1971 to support retired teachers?

9. In what year did the AGM establish the Status of Women Program?

10. What are the three founding principles of the BCTF?

See Answers "75th quiz" page 14

## CTF convention sets national teacher agenda

Delegates to the '91 AGM of the CTF debated and updated a wide variety of policies on diverse topics such as free trade, AIDS, bilingualism and biculturalism, French second-language education, collective bargaining, part-time teaching, poverty, and the goals of education.

Delegates adopted a major policy statement on sexuality education outlining the joint responsibilities of teachers and parents in educating students about this important aspect of human life. The policy statement calls for demonstrating respect of all students and a student's sexual orientation. (In B.C., the long-awaited "Learning for Living" curriculum will be introduced this fall.)

In addition, delegates went on record against violence against women and children in the world, and directed the CTF to carry that message to the national and international levels, particularly to call on the World Confederation of Organizations of the Teaching Profession (WCOTP) to convene a special general session on this critical issue when it meets in Stockholm in August 1992.

Allan McDonald, from the Northwest Territories, was installed as CTF president. High priorities for his two-year term include Canadian unity and the Constitution, the Council of Ministers' National Indicators Program, child abuse, the underfunding of education in Canada, Francophone services, and the promotion of women's issues.

Kitty O'Callaghan, Vancouver teacher, became CTF past president and returns to classroom teaching this fall. In her closing remarks at the AGM, O'Callaghan challenged all Canadian teachers: "Now is not the time to relax. The coming year will see this country making constitutional decisions that will affect us for years, perhaps even generations to come. CTF must be an active participant in the debate. To do less would be a betrayal of those that we seek to educate — the children of Canada."

## Feeling a squeeze? B.C. September enrolment up by 17,500

The following districts have projected enrolment increases of: Central Coast 374; Nisga'a 481; Stikine 447; Kettle Valley 561; Vancouver Island West 850; Keremeos 706; Arrow Lakes 750; Princeton 762; Agassiz 787; Lake Cowichan 951; Queen Charlotte 992; Lillooet 930; North Thompson 1,004; Fort Nelson 1,030; Windermere 1,218; South Cariboo 1,263; Grand Forks 1,358; Golden 1,350; Armstrong 1,584.

What are the combined ministry grants to these 19 school districts? Approximately \$122 million, yet, new funding for the entire school system, including new Year 2000 implementation money, is only \$200 million total for next year. After funding the enrolment increase there isn't much left.

Source: Ministry of Education Table #1558A, Forecasts.



October 26 day

ENOUGH IS  
ENOUGH!Victims of our  
government

by Shirley Carr

There is a certain malaise that has gripped our nation in recent months. A proud people, with a strong work ethic, we have always shown a caring and compassion for those less fortunate. But suddenly, it's as if we have become a nation of victims...victimized by our own government.

Canadian products were once sold in cities around the world, but lately our industrial plants have been closing in Canada and reopening in the Southern United States or Mexico. Hundreds of thousands of Canadian jobs have vanished. They have melted like ice on a summer sidewalk.

Organized labour — and indeed citizens from coast to coast — are saying *Enough is Enough*.

Here's what we are saying in union halls and town meetings, and if you think for a moment you may find yourself agreeing with it: If the Conservative government is serious about reducing the deficit they should start making corporations and the wealthy in Canada pay their fair share of taxes. There is something wrong when a national government always seems to put the interests of large corporations and the wealthy before the interests of working people.

Did you know that in 1987, 118,162 profitable corporations with \$25 billion in profits paid no tax?

I talk to Canadians from all walks of life almost every day and they tell me that they don't like what's happened to our country.

They don't like it when the Conservative government's corporate agenda of deficit reduction and high interest rates hurts them, their friends and even the chances for their children to get jobs.

The phrase "Enough is Enough" has become a rallying-cry all across Canada. Some people are wearing buttons on their lapels with those words emblazoned for all to read.

These people are saying it's time to bring fairness back into our society. They say that when senior government executives — like the Governor of the Bank of Canada — get wage increases just days before the finance minister freezes the pay cheques of average government workers, it simply isn't fair.

That's just one reason more and more Canadians are saying "Enough is Enough" and are telling politicians that they aren't going to remain a nation of victims. We are fighting back.

This October 26, all across our nation there will be rallies and gatherings of like-minded Canadians.

Join us. It is time our government heard us all say loudly "Enough is Enough" if we stand together they will have to listen.

We will not be a nation of victims. We can fight back. We can send them a message.

Shirley Carr is the president of the 2.2 million member Canadian Labour Congress.

Contact your local labour council for information on B.C. events.

Committee  
vacancies

Vacancies exist on the following committees. Curriculum vitae are available from your local association office or the BCTF.

Committee of Ombudspersons:  
Okanagan/Central Mainland

The purpose of this committee is to ensure that no member is the victim of decisions made within the organization for which no established appeal procedure is available. Further details regarding the work of the committee and election procedures can be found on page 71 of the *Members' Guide to the BCTF*.

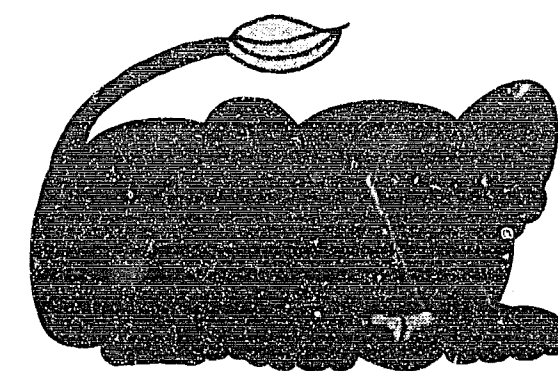
Election will take place at the October 25-26 RA. Deadline for applications is October 18, 1991.

Professional Development  
Advisory Committee:  
South Okanagan  
East Kootenay

This committee advises the Executive Committee on professional matters such as educational issues, policies and leadership, curriculum assessment, development and evaluation, professional development funding and control; and acts in an advisory capacity to stimulate local and regional professional development.

Appointment will be at the October 31/November 1 Executive Committee meeting. Deadline for applications is October 11, 1991.

Send completed curriculum vitae forms to Berniece Stuart, BCTF.

Fall fatigue setting in?  
Be happy, don't move

In today's workaholic world, we might do well to consider that laziness is natural and is shared by nearly all species. Field biologists engaged in a new specialty known as time budget analysis are discovering that the great majority of creatures spend most of their time doing nothing at all.

• "A lion can lie in the same spot, without budging, for 12 hours at a stretch," says Anne Pusey, zoologist with the University of Minnesota. "They're active on their feet maybe two or three hours a day." In that brief time they are likely to be hunting or devouring their prey. A lion can eat as much as 30kg (almost 70 lbs.) of meat in one sitting, Ms. Pusey said.

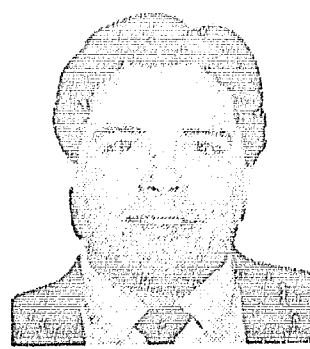
• Many species of monkeys sit around as much as three-quarters of the day as well as sleeping 12 hours at night.

• Hummingbirds are the world's most vigorous and energy-intensive fliers — when they are flying. But the birds spend 80% of their day perched and motionless.

• The sloth, found in Central and South America, hangs by its long limbs sleeping 15 hours a day and moving so infrequently that two species of algae grow on its coat and between its claws. This behavior allows it to stay inconspicuous to predators. Even the fungal coat serves as a camouflage.

Source: Copyright 1991 by The New York Times Company. Reprinted by permission.

## LEGAL BRIEFS



by Randy Noonan

Good summer for  
Langley teachers

In a world of labour arbitration, any day you get a winning decision from an arbitrator is a good day. The Langley Teachers' Association was on the receiving end of two winning awards this summer. The first clarified a disputed clause in the collective agreement dealing with the jurisdiction of a referee, and the second illustrated that a deal is a deal.

The formal arbitration procedure is not the only mechanism for resolving disputes arising under a collective agreement. Rather, the *Industrial Relations Act* states that a collective agreement must provide for settling disputes "by arbitration or another method agreed to by the parties." It is not uncommon for alternative dispute resolution devices to be included in an agreement. *Troubleshooter*, *Referee*, or *Mediator* investigation and reports are examples of alternate methods. The outcomes of those methods may be either binding or non-binding, as the parties agree. Those methods may apply to all disputes under a collective agreement or only to certain kinds of disputes. The parties decide in bargaining.

Furthermore, where arbitration is the method the parties choose, the procedure of the arbitration may be negotiated. An increasing number of teacher contracts now provide for *expedited arbitration*, designed to bring disputes to a resolution quickly. More about expedited arbitrations later.

Alternatives to regular arbitration avoid the usual delays and expense associated with arbitration. It is not unusual for arbitrations to take up to a year to be heard.

and to cost many thousands of dollars in arbitrators' and counsel fees.

The Langley School District and the Langley Teachers' Association negotiated a provision calling for a *referee* to settle class-size disputes that could not be resolved by teacher and principal. The referee's duties are to investigate the difference, define the issue in the difference, and make a written decision to resolve the difference within 15 teaching days of receipt of the referral.

A dispute arose between the LTA and the school district over the authority of the referee. The teachers' association argued that all class-size disputes could be determined by the referee. The association was anxious that class-size disputes be determined quickly and that the scope of the referee not be narrowed. The school district, on the other hand, argued that only disputes about simple class size limits could be decided by the referee and that more complicated matters, particularly mainstreaming and integration, could be decided only by full-blown arbitration in which "complex processes dealing with the identification and placement of special needs students" would be explained through evidence of expert witnesses and the administration.

The issue was referred to arbitration, and Arbitrator Vince Ready issued his award in July. Ready agreed with arguments of the teachers' association, which was represented by Allan Black. He said:

"...the referee...is not restricted in any way to resolving only class-size disputes. In my view, it makes good labour relations sense to have disputes arising under the class-size article — particularly disputes that relate to class sizes and the class-size relationships with mainstreaming, integration, and staffing formula — dealt with under one dispute resolution mechanism."

By this decision, the LTA may now refer to a referee for a quick, less expensive resolution to all disputes relating to class size and its relation to mainstreaming, integration, and staffing formulas. The advantage is that teacher rights under the collective agreement may be enforced more easily and in a more timely manner.

The Langley Teachers' Association was celebrating the Ready decision when Arbitrator Don Munroe issued his decision in an arbitration he had heard in April.

The Munroe decision had to do with a clause in the 1988-1990 collective agreement between School District 35 (Langley) and the LTA. When that agreement was negotiated, the parties agreed that the school board would, for the 1989-90 school year, "allocate funding for 35 additional enrolling classroom teachers designated to reduce class size." The 35 teachers were to be over and above the number required for student growth in the district and were to be hired into specially targeted areas: K-3, including split classes; secondary English and socials; and workshop and lab-oriented courses.

A further provision in the collective agreement called for the parties to establish an implementation committee to ensure that the additional teachers, hired to reduce class size, were allocated to achieve that objective.

The above is the deal agreed to. The school board went wrong when it decided to ignore the processes set up.

The district added to its global budget the amount of money required to hire 35 additional enrolling teachers. However, the board unilaterally decided to allocate the money to schools through its usual budgeting practices, rather than through the collective agreement deal. It took all the extra money set aside and distributed it among all the schools in the district on a weighted formula based primarily on the number of students in each school. It then left to the school administrators the decision on spending that money.

Some schools used the money to hire additional enrolling teachers in targeted areas. Others, however, used the money to hire into non-targeted areas or, in some cases, to purchase supplies. A committee that subsequently reviewed allocation and spending concluded that only 29 additional teachers were hired and that not all of those were in targeted areas.

At the arbitration, the school board claimed it had fulfilled its duties by allocating money for 35 additional teachers. After that, it said, it just followed its own decentralized model of staffing, allowing decisions at the school level.

Munroe decided that that was not good enough. The school board breached the collective agreement by not following all the terms of the deal. It was not only to allocate money, but, through the joint implementation committee, ensure that the money was spent to hire teachers in targeted areas.

Yes, a deal is a deal. The board was not entitled to unilaterally change the structure of the deal after it allocated money. Munroe referred the matter back to the parties to try to agree on the appropriate means to remedy the breach. If they cannot agree, Munroe may be called on to answer that question.

Randy Noonan is a BCTF staff lawyer.

What do I  
want from my  
school  
administrative  
officer?

I expect my administrative officer to be a colleague who respects me as a professional, who respects my decisions and feelings regarding my job and related duties. I want the AO to provide support in a number of ways.

Help to provide the materials, time, and services I need to do my job; stay up-to-date on educational issues; be a liaison with board and represent the staff's views on issues; hold frequent parent-information meetings; be highly visible around the school (visit classrooms frequently as a participant, join us on field trips); be enthusiastic and willing to help me try new ideas and methods; lead by example; and be firm and fair with students.

The AO should stay in touch with the teacher within himself/herself.  
Pamjit Armstrong, Kamloops



I would like my administrative officer to:

- encourage the integrity and professionalism inherent in the teaching profession.
- work in a collegial and collaborative fashion.
- display educational leadership in the teaching profession.
- support teachers who wish to take risks, and continue this support in the face of both success and failure.
- support at the district level his/her staff and their decisions.
- ensure that the parents and community are part of the educational process, and allow time for this process to occur between the staff and these groups.
- encourage and mentor the staff to assume positions of leadership in the school district and federation.
- refuse to take on projects that the staff are not ready to undertake.
- ensure that the staff are able to attend professional development activities and ensure that time is available for those staff members to share the experiences with their colleagues.
- live by the premise that we are educating the whole child, and that all three goals (human, social, and intellectual) are equally important in the school.
- acknowledge that new teachers and those attempting new curriculum and programs need extra support and try a variety of ways to give that support.

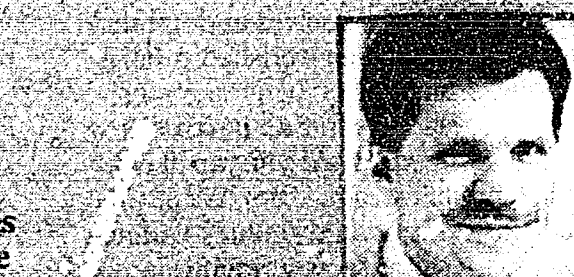
A ball cap, a fedora, and a beanie — I want them all.  
Kathy Goetz, Courtenay

I want a person who can comfortably, with humor and dignity, wear three hats: *Generic parent*. This individual is polite and patient, encouraging and consistent, tolerant and judicious. This person deals with staff and students affectionately, and at arm's length.

*Business manager*. This AO is both concerned and active in advocating for decent facilities, space, class size, safety, and the mental health of workers and clients; manifested in a school-wide discipline plan.

*Colleague*. The hat of a friend and colleague is worn by one who supports me, trusts, and encourages me, practises shared decision making, and co-operates in the planning and execution of events and programs in my school.

A ball cap, a fedora, and a beanie — I want them all.  
Kathy Goetz, Courtenay



In Nanaimo's recent 15.5 day strike, NDIA members walked the picket line, while administrative officers crossed teachers' picket lines, continued to work in "closed" schools, collected their salaries and attended board-called meetings and briefings. In some cases, AOs brought coffee and donuts to picketing teachers.

Teachers were fighting for improvements in the schools to benefit students, teachers, and AOs. Improved class size

and mainstreaming language benefit all who deliver educational services.

During our strike it became clear that school-based AOs are entrenched in the management structure. Senior-level management regularly updated school-based AOs. The Nanaimo Administrators' Association refused to hear the teachers' point of view. AOs in Vancouver claimed they were neutral; their actions, as an association, showed otherwise.

I don't want school-based AOs to simply be lower-level management acting as agents for the board. Rather, I want AOs to be advocates for students and teachers in the schools.

AOs cannot remain neutral; they have a moral and an ethical duty to take a stance that improves learning conditions of students in the schools.

I expect more than coffee and donuts from my school administrative officers.  
Robert Whiteley, Nanaimo



An effective administrative officer (AO) sets a positive tone in the school, is highly visible, well known in the school and in the community. An effective AO has good conflict-resolution, or, *industrial*, and interpersonal skills. A teacher is an autonomous professional who requires the support of this decisive, professional administrator.

As a strong leader in professional development the AO encourages and supports the growth of staff members, also provides positive verbal, written, and financial support for innovative teaching. The administrator recognizes that what is going on in the classroom is more important than what happens in the office and that an AO is also a teacher.

An administrative officer will also recognize that the contributions of teachers active in their locals and the BCTF are valuable to the educational climate of the school and the profession.  
Val Windsor, Delta



I want from my school AO is what I have had for the past four years: support.

It is important that I have support in terms of back-up with students and parents. It means I can do my job.

I need support when I'm trying something new, or feeling discouraged about something that is happening in the classroom. Encouragement goes a long way, and it should go both ways.

Support for the teacher is important when the administrator deals with the organizational matters of budget, class size and composition, equipment and materials.

An effective AO respects my professional judgment, but is also able to give advice based on experience.

I feel great working in a school where I know my efforts are valued, and I value the people I work with.  
Connie Wood, Peace River, North







## College of Teachers

### College issues certificates

Under the terms of the *Teaching Profession Act*, all individuals who held a valid teaching certificate on December 31, 1987, issued pursuant to the *School Act* to teach in the public schools of B.C., automatically became members of the B.C. College of Teachers.

This June, approximately 36,500 permanent professional and standard teaching certificates, as well as any interim professional or standard certificates issued by the ministry, were issued and mailed. A smaller certification and mailing will take place later in the year to persons who hold a Ministry of Education certificate in Elementary Basic, Permanent First Class, and Instructor's Diploma (secondary).

Around 2,500 certificates have been returned by Canada Post because people either moved or did not claim their certificate at their postal outlet. If you should have received a certificate but did not receive one, please contact the college office. If you have not advised the college of a change in address, please submit the change in writing. On receiving an updated address the college will mail certificates that have been returned.

The certificates are issued in the OFFICIAL names recorded on an individual's certification record. The college will allow a six-month period (until December 31, 1991) during which a member may request that a new certificate be issued if he/she has undergone a legal change of name. For re-issue, a member must:

- forward a written request,
- return the original certificate to the college, and
- provide the college with a copy of a legal change-of-name document.

### Data-base on teacher education

SFU and the B.C. College of Teachers, are compiling a data base of research in teacher education. It will provide teachers with electronically accessible information in reflective teaching, action research, collaboration, induction/mentoring, teacher research, and professional development.

Of the thousand references entered into the data base, 45% are 1990 or 1991 papers. Of the 1,000 entries, 700 hard-copy articles are stored at SFU.

Hard-copy papers will be mailed for a fee, or they can be read without charge at SFU. It is hoped the data base will be electronically accessible during the late fall of 1991. Enquiries from teachers are welcome any time.

Additional relevant B.C. teacher research is welcome. If you would like to contribute a paper to the data base, or if you would like more information, contact Charlie Naylor at SFU's Faculty of Education, Burnaby, B.C. V5A 1S6. Telephone 291-4948, Fax 291-3203.

### Pocket calendar goofs

The list of College Councillors in the 1991-92 BCTF Appointment Calendar is not the current one. Please amend your list to show the following:

<b>North Coast</b> Elizabeth Bitterlich S: 559-8822 H: 559-4229	<b>North</b> Stewart Savard S: 774-2738 H: 774-3322
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**East Kootenay**  
Joyce McLeod  
S: 342-9213  
H: 342-9667

## Teacher education review on home stretch

Once certificated, we give little thought to teacher education beyond telling our favorite practicum horror story or launching into a litany of complaints about our initial teaching experience.

For the past two-and-a-half years, the College of Teachers has been doing just the opposite. It has been conducting a thorough review of teacher-education programs at the three public universities in B.C. Similarly, the BCTF has been consulting members of the profession, reviewing policy, and thinking about future teacher-education needs as it prepared its response to the college.

Both reports, now public, will be the subject of discussion and debate over the next few months. The College of Teachers' report (written by researcher Jim Bowman) will be the focus of a forum on teacher education in early November, followed by final recommendations to the College Council. BCTF's draft position paper will be considered at the fall RA, at the end of October, in preparation for a final submission to the college.

Now is your last chance to read, reflect, and recommend what you think teacher education should be in British Columbia. This kind of a review happens only once in a career.

For copies of the reports and further information, contact Rick Beardsley, Professional Development, BCTF.

### Central Issues

#### Expansion of teacher education programs

The teaching population is renewing itself as increasing numbers reach retirement age. The teaching force will be almost completely replaced by early in the next decade. At the same time, enrolment is increasing. Who are the young teachers? What kind of academic and professional preparation will they have? What will they need?

#### Teacher education as part of a continuum

Pre-service education cannot prepare new teachers for every eventuality in teaching. Teacher education should be considered part of a continuum of life long learning that goes from pre-service preparation to beginning teacher support and, ultimately, to ongoing professional development. How is this continuum made a reality and given coherence?

#### Directions in professional practice

Teaching, in many respects, has changed and is changing, not only from Year 2000 initiatives, but more important, from initiatives of teachers themselves. Teaching is becoming more of a collaborative enterprise where teachers work together and with others to create educational programs. There is attention to reflective practice where the fundamental purposes and values of public education are considered in guiding teaching practice. There is concern for seeing teaching as an ethical practice, with special attention to student/teacher relationships and the needs of a pluralistic society. How can teacher-education programs prepare new teachers for these directions? How much should be left to ongoing professional development?

#### Roles of practising teachers in teacher education

Teacher education is increasingly seen as a collaborative enterprise where teachers play prominent roles, not only as sponsor teachers and faculty associates, but also in the governance of teacher education. How these roles can be actualized and given due recognition is open for consideration.

— Rick Beardsley

by Larry Kuehn

Everyone all heard the announcement by the South African government that apartheid is over, that the laws have been changed. But is apartheid really finished?

Eight of us sat around a table in the principal's office at Cape Town High School one day in late July. Three of us were part of an international teacher-union delegation — one from Ghana, one from Sweden, and one, me, from Canada. Four were officers of the new non-racial teacher union created in October 1990, about the same time the law was changed to allow black students into white schools — if more than 80% of the parents agreed. The eighth person was the man who worked in the office — the school principal.

The school of 320 secondary school students is several decades old, but more luxurious than any standard secondary school I have run across in Canada.

The principal complained to us about the cutbacks hitting that and other white schools. The government has started providing funding only for the basic program and building maintenance, he said. The cost of keeping up the swimming pool now has to be covered by voluntary fees collected from parents. Even the water to keep the double soccer field green has to be paid for from the \$160 annual contributions of parents in this white area that he described as less affluent.

Two hours later — and only a few kilometres away — we were stepping over smelly, garbage-strewn streams, colored by green slime. We were walking between squatter shacks, on our way to the school that serves the children in this informal housing area of a black township.

*The "white" school of 320 secondary school students is several decades old, but more luxurious than any standard secondary school I have run across in Canada.*

Stuck in the middle of a sea of rough-board-and-plastic shacks and meandering slimy streams are a half-dozen sheet-metal containers, about the size of a trailer on a Safeway truck, but not as high. These randomly placed metal boxes make up the school's buildings.

The young black man who serves as principal of the school doesn't have to worry about the government not paying to maintain a pool or playing fields.

He worries that the state will not even pay the teachers. His is an informal school, created by the people who live in the shack community. To pay the teachers, these people with dirt floors and windowless sheds take up a collection to give what they can afford so the teachers get paid something. Many of these people have an annual income amounting to little more than the pool and field fees for the white school we had visited.

As we walked up to one of the container classrooms, we watched a house being built next door. Four walls were already up — recycled, cardboard-thin pieces of particle board — more solid than many of the other houses around. The woman builder was moving a shovelful of damp dirt through the doorless opening to finish packing down an even dirt floor. The entire house was the size of the king-sized bed in my hotel room only a few kilometres away in downtown

*His is an "informal" school, created by the people who live in the shack community. To pay the teachers, these people with dirt floors and windowless sheds take up a collection.*



Cape Town. At least eight of these houses could fit into the office of the principal of the white school we'd visited.

When we stepped into the classroom with its metal walls, ceiling, and floor, we found a room packed with young children. The school has about 500 students and 11 teachers, a ratio of only slightly better than 50 to 1. Fortunately for breathing room, not everyone shows up every day in these classrooms that rattle in the rain and steam up in the summer heat.

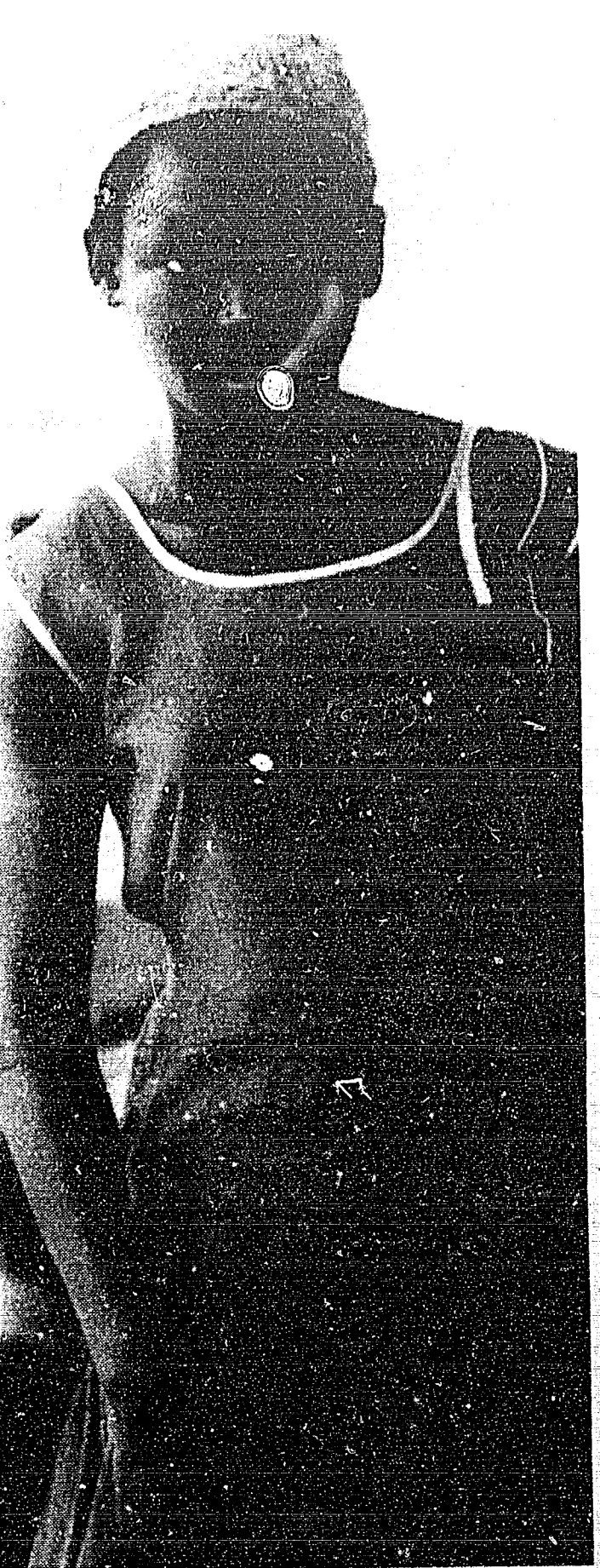
The white school, in contrast, had 320 students and 22 teachers.

Now that apartheid is officially dead, the child from the metal box classroom — in theory — can attend Cape Town High School.

Cape Town High is one of first of the new open schools. A school is declared open after a vote by the parents. At least 90% must take part in the vote, and at least 80% of those must say yes. Then a white school can be opened to all races. Cape Town High parents voted yes by more than 90% October 31, 1990.

With that decision, the fortunes of the school turned around. It had been a school about to die. It had lost seven teachers the year before because of declining enrolments. At that rate, it would have joined the scores of schools closing every year because white South Africans aren't having enough children to keep them populated.

# After apartheid



The principal acknowledged that more than one factor led to opening the school to all races. "Liberal" Cape Town, he said, had always felt that apartheid is morally wrong. But also, parents simply didn't want their neighborhood school to close.

So Cape Town High is on an upswing, with about one-quarter of its students being from apartheid's three categories for people who are not classified as white, with students in the first year of high school being about 50-50 white and non-white.

How is it working out?

Absolutely no racially based incidents, the principal claimed. I wish we could have checked this perception with some of the students.

Many of the new students are doing well, he said, especially those who transferred from private schools, the only schools that had been racially integrated. Annual tuition for the private schools is \$1500, so only a tiny number of the black population could afford to give their children that opportunity.

The students having the most academic difficulty, he told us, are those from the black townships. These students are not, almost certainly, the students from the metal container schools. Rather, they are from the more established black schools where the government does provide buildings and pay teachers, like the school we visited in the township of Langa.

After the squatter school, the Langa building looked impressive, with its freshly constructed brick wing of classrooms that even include labs with science tables — but without beakers or chemicals or other equipment, leaving students to read science, rather than experiment.

The June exams were being held at

*South African education is undergoing change. Apartheid is so firmly embedded in the country's social fabric that it could take decades to reverse the pattern for black youth.*

McNeil, Paton, CIDA photos.

Langa when we visited in late July — weeks late because the students had stayed away from school in June protesting lack of textbooks.

The Cape Town High principal acknowledged that just maybe students who came to his institution from schools like Langa had not had the opportunity to gain the same background as the white students or those who had been at the elite private schools.

My question about funding brought a patient response from the principal. I quoted the statistics that 10 times as much per capita was spent on a white child as a black child in South Africa. When a black student goes to what had been a white school, does the school qualify for the higher level of grant on their behalf?

There is no per pupil grant, he told me. The differential appears because white schools have lower pupil-teacher ratios, white teachers have more university education and are paid more, and white schools have more expensive facilities to maintain.

In other words, the white schools have had all the advantages, even if they haven't been based on a system of per pupil grants. And now at the same time that other racial groups are moving into white schools, funding is being cut back. This decline is likely to encourage white parents who can afford it to send their children to private schools, creating the potential for a new form of apartheid by social class.

So is apartheid dead? No.

The apartheid laws may have been eliminated, but the apartheid reality has been so firmly built into the social structures — especially in education — that breaking the patterns built over the past 40 years could take decades.

The black mother building a squatter's shack and sending her child to a metal container classroom, has no more chance today of switching her child to the better quality schooling at Cape Town High than she did before State President De Klerk announced the official demise of the apartheid laws.

*The black mother building a squatter's shack . . . has no more chance today of switching her child to the better quality open schooling at Cape Town High, than she did before De Klerk announced the official demise of the apartheid laws.*

Eighteen different education ministries still exist, each responsible for a different group determined by race. Until a single system exists and at least as much is spent on the black child currently in the squatter school as on the child at Cape Town High, the apartheid system will continue.

Larry Kuehn is director of the Research and Technology Division of the B.C. Teachers' Federation. He visited South Africa as part of a Canadian Teachers' Federation delegation during July and August.

## "New" in race relations and multicultural education

### • Lesson Aid project

It's time to clear out your desk drawers and filing cabinets. Teacher-tested materials (lesson aids) used to promote multicultural awareness and understanding are being assembled for wider distribution.

According to Sam Fillipoff, BCTF race relations co-ordinator, "B.C. teachers have produced many excellent teaching aids that have never had wide circulation." A new project funded by the Secretary of State, aims to correct that situation. Materials will be collected, adjudicated, catalogued, replicated, and distributed so that more teachers have access to *what works* in multicultural education and improving race relations with students.

An inventory of material will be available through the BCTF Lesson Aids Service in spring 1992.

If you have materials, please contact Sam Fillipoff at the BCTF.

### • Race relations leadership camps move to B.C. interior

A good idea is moving north. Successful "Multicultural and Race Relations Camps for Secondary Students," held for several years in Lower Mainland school districts, will be available to 13 central and northern B.C. districts this year. Thanks to a Secretary of State grant, students in Burns Lake, Cariboo-Chilcotin, Fort Nelson, Kamloops, Lillooet, Nechako, Nicola Valley, North Thompson, Peace River South, Peace River North, Prince George, Quesnel, and South Cariboo, will now have the opportunity to attend the residential camps and experience first hand the importance of racial tolerance. This north central region is rich in a multiplicity of languages, cultures, and customs, and the need to strengthen multicultural understanding is equally strong.

The camp teaches understanding and practical skill in positive race relations. Before returning to their home school, campers organize a plan to help fellow students develop positive attitudes toward the cultural richness of their community — they become leaders in their school community.

The project is fully supported by the BCTF Program Against Racism contacts in the region. Nate Bello, Toni Friesen, Granville Johnson, Sharon Kelly, and Oliver Mott plan to build local district interest in the camps. Janice Walling, from School District 26, North Thompson, will serve as co-ordinator.

For further information on this exciting opportunity, contact Sam Fillipoff at the BCTF.



# Voices that wonder

## ANOTHER IN A SERIES OF TEACHING STORIES

ne of the activities in that first year I taught Grade 4 stands out in my mind: the field trip to our outdoor education centre for a pond study. I recall the excitement of the children on the bus and their exuberance. I recall the laughter and hyperactivity of children emotionally charged and ready to go. I recall wondering, "Why did I do this?"

I tried to get the attention of 28 excited children for last minute directions. When we reached McQueen Lake, our guide, Mrs. Knight, quietly instructed the students to watch, listen, and take heed where they stepped. If they *looked carefully* they would be able to see that many creatures were observing them. "A thousand eyes," she had told them. The boys and girls were attentive, and motivated to complete the pond study. It is the memory of the children's *shining eyes and the wonder in their voices I remember most* as they discovered creatures they had only seen in pictures. How can one touch a picture and get a sense of the insect or creature? We collected tadpoles and other creatures. We had a good day.

She was waiting for us, my Grade 4 students and me, standing quietly, as the doors of our orange school bus flapped open, and laughing, shouting kids exploded into the sunshine. The children gravitated to her as do spilled pins to a magnet.

Mrs. Knight looked down on the children from her six-foot height but did not seem to dominate. She seemed to blend with the kids and the woods behind her. She wore clothes that were warm and seemed to partake of the naturalness that surrounded her. Her brown trousers and grey knit sweater and cap smelled as they should, of pine needles and fir branches.

I remember trudging up to her, struggling with my backpack loaded with my lunch, plastic bags for garbage or against rain, other odds and ends, and the inevitable supply of worksheets for our science unit. I looked up at her and introduced myself. "Welcome," she said.

Until then, she had been a quiet voice at the end of the telephone line arranging the details of our trip. There she stood.

Her eyes were what my son calls *smiley eyes*, eyes that fold up around the edges. Her eyes, dark brown, didn't miss much either. Her skin, brown from the sun, was faintly etched with laugh lines curving slightly around her gentle voice.

Before we moved off down the trail, Mrs. Knight began to speak quietly to the children, and they listened. She told them

to watch, listen, and take heed where they stepped. If they looked carefully, they would be able to see that there were many creatures looking at them.

As the children walked, quietly now, down the smooth parallel-tracked old logging road, they peered about them, eyes intent on seeing creatures, penetrating shadows. It seemed to me that some looked with adventure, some with eagerness, and some with a little fear.

Mrs. Knight walked ahead stopping occasionally to point out a squirrel talking above us, its nest, and winter storage cache. She pointed out an old disintegrated stump that a bear had batted apart searching for grubs, gashes in the bark of certain poplars where deer had sharpened their antlers, small dead-grass tunnels that mice had made under the snow spread over the ground like veins in a hand. She seemed to see everything in this, her world, and yet each time she stopped and spoke, it was as if she had made the discovery for the first time. There was wonder in her voice.

The road led out onto a grassy knoll on which bright blue lupin blossomed. Off to our left, the outdoor picnic or eating area stood, and as we crested the gentle rise, cat-tails came into view on the far side, then the calm flat water of the pond and on the near side, the weathered log dock that projected into the water in a U shape.

The children were eager to begin the pond study, so out came the nets, plastic containers, magnifying glasses, and other paraphernalia necessary for pond study. I thought. Initially I just let the children see what they could find and let them get their feet wet, which they did. Later in the day, as time began to move more quickly, I remember going around to each student and admonishing them to complete their worksheets and record their observations.

But I remember Mrs. Knight, so quietly unobtrusive and yet so present that day. She did not seem to notice the worksheets I had brought. Her interest lay in being at the water's edge or on the dock or seated on the grass, always surrounded by children. She had an accepting air about her, and I think she loved those children. As the day drew to a close for us, she never became any less accepting, her eyes *shined*, and her voice was warm. She didn't wear out.

It was time for me and the children to leave, but it is the memory of the shining eyes and the wonder in their voices I remember most as they looked and touched and discovered. As I remember this day, Mrs. Knight and her world, and these little people, my students, I hope my eyes shine.

The phrases *shining eyes* and *wonder in their voices*, leap from the page. What does it mean to have eyes that shine and voices that wonder?

I remember well the feelings I had when planning the science unit for Grade 4 students. There were feelings of adequacy. I had determined objectives and aims, and had planned activities that would help me realize those aims. There was comfort in this and a sense of getting much done. There were also feelings of frustration when it came to evaluation of objectives not realized and activities not completed. I was very busy. As I recall though, not once did all my work, busyness, and doing bring that brightness to the faces of the children.

These words, *brightness* or *shining*, come from the Greek word *skia*, which means to glimmer; it involves the contrast of shadow and shimmer. This contrast parallels in my mind the journey we took that day. We had travelled from the city on our orange bus, a place, Chief Dan George suggests, where "people walk

without seeing the tears in each other's eyes" (George, 1982) We found ourselves on a dark trail that gradually grew brighter until we came out upon our grassy knoll. Perhaps for me to see again that shining is to lead the children through the contrasting shadows to the brightness of that sun.

Mrs. Knight was our guide and so led us through the shadows. I remember she stepped back as we came into the light cast by the sun. We did not step through her shadow. At times, I think I may have etched upon the ground a large shadow with all my instrumentalist ways, and stood with my back to the sun. Occasionally, the children would step out from the shadow only to be pulled back, and this could be a tragedy, for they may well think, "for what is the sun to them but a caster of shadows?" (Gibran, 1923)

But if I walk with my students, our shadows behind us, then surely it can be said of us,

"But you who walk facing the sun  
What images drawn on the earth can hold you?"

(Gibran, 1923)

In reflection, I wonder, why I did not see this picture before. Perhaps it is a condition of blindness, a way of not seeing that prevented me from understanding. As the prophet Jeremiah said to his people, "Hear this now O foolish people without understanding, Who have eyes and see not And who have ears and hear not."

(Jeremiah 5:21)

I saw that day; yet I did not see it. In remembering, I have seen it again, and in the many moments of returning, have seen it again and again, a picture that becomes increasingly rich the more often it is viewed. Understanding increases; it does not arrive.

What does all this say to me, Norm Spohr, the teacher? Perhaps it is hinted at by Gibran, who says,

"The teacher who walks in the shadow of the temple, among his followers, gives not of his wisdom, but rather of his faith and lovingness."

(1923)

This is of great importance for me — to bring to the world my children. I feel that the lovingness and care that I as a being-who-teaches share grant me the authority to enter that world. And it is I who learned as teacher following the directions of our guide, Mrs. Knight, who said to look carefully — with a look full of care. To neglect this may be to overlook, or step without care, and become one who has eyes but cannot see.

When I come together with my children again, I know my curriculum will be different because I will be different, just for having remembered.

What was the leading out of the children for Mrs. Knight? Where did she take them? I think it is a place where there could be no worksheets to complete, nothing to still the movement, nothing to deaden the soul. As, and nothing to dull the vivid and beautiful. She took them not just to a pond or a grassy sunlit knoll or a dock, but rather to the threshold of her world and theirs. Stepping back, she bade them enter, and they did, touching, looking, hearing, and discovering until their eyes shone with the wonder of it all. Is this not the truth of pedagogy?

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Gibran, K., *The Prophet*: Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1976.  
*The Holy Bible*: Thomas Nelson Publishers, New York, 1983.

Norm Spohr, a teacher-librarian at R.L. Clemison School, Kamloops, has taught Grades 2 to 7. A graduate of SFU's teacher-education program, he recently completed his M.Ed. program at the University of Victoria.

# IS TEACHING WORTH IT?

## A true fairy tale

by Jack Wainwright

I like to work with my hands because I get instant feedback and the gratification of a job done. Not so in teaching. Oh yes, I got my share of special thank-yous from grateful students, parents, and staff during my 36 years in education, and I cherished every one of them. But nothing compares with the thank-you I got just a few months before I retired in 1989.

My wife and I had looked at a lot of motorhomes in preparation for retirement travel and we knew what we wanted. But it seemed no one was putting it all together in one unit. We went to the Cloverdale RV show, and there it was...all the features we wanted, quality workmanship, and storage galore!

The salesman said, "Would you like to meet the builder? He's here."

We said we would and waited...and waited. Just as we turned to go, the builder appeared and asked, "Are you a teacher?"

"Yes," I replied, "does it show that much?"

"Did you teach at Laura Secord?"

"Yes."

"I am Terry Mayall."

"Terry?" I mused. "TERRY" I blurted, "You got a B in my science class at Christmas, an A at Easter, and an A in June! Best marks you ever got in school!"

"Yes," he said, "I've thought a lot about you."

"Well that's a coincidence," I said, "because I've thought about you too and wondered how you made out. You were my right-hand manager in that Grade 6 science room. Migawd, that has to be 25 years ago."

"1963," he said "the year Kennedy was assassinated; and jumped back to his previous comment. "I mean I really have thought a lot about you, because if it weren't for you, I don't know where I'd be today."

I just looked at him incredulously, and he went on to relate his story.

"I couldn't read," he confided, "and you didn't teach me to read. I didn't learn to read until I was 27, but you took me aside one day and told me... Don't let anyone ever tell you that you are stupid or lazy, because you are not! And that comment stayed with me and carried me through some very rough times."

I remember doing that. Terry's marks from the other teachers were dismally low except in math and their comments were their interpretation of his efforts in an era before learning disabilities were a part of our vocabulary. Learning assistance centres were not even a dream. A few enlightened teachers were trying to help by giving remedial reading, but not at that school. There was no research to guide them anyway.

I had been trying to teach as much hands-on science as I could. By the time Terry got into my class, I was teaching all the intermediate science, had converted a classroom into a science centre, and was in desperate need of student monitors to keep the whole thing from collapsing around my ears. Terry responded to my call for help and was the most faithful helper a teacher could hope for. At one point he took total charge of all 14 aquariums and terrariums. And a marvellous thing happened. Terry's deep involvement and talent for creative problem solving and our hands-on teaching meshed. Terry excelled verbally and, by Christmas he'd scored a B on our written science tests! If I had been more astute, that observation at that time might have had profound significance for learning. But apart from mentioning it to a few, I forgot about it as I rose to meet the next educational challenge of the day.

Terry continued with his story. "All the other teachers had me convinced that I was stupid and lazy. I was kicked out of three high schools for bad behavior. I got a job making fibreglass boats and learned the trade."

To make a long story short, Terry not only learned the fibreglassing trade, but he excelled and introduced innovations. From Europe he brought back an idea for a new foaming technique. Realizing its potential, he and two others started a B.C. company to build travel trailers. It was a successful and innovative business, but several years into production they had a disastrous fire that burned 11 completed units, destroyed their tools, and killed an employee. They had no insurance. They rebuilt, but it wasn't the same. When a partner offered to buy him out, Terry sold.

He had money, but no outlet for his abilities. The agreement of sale prevented his starting a competing business, so he started building motorhomes. And we met him a year and a half later at Cloverdale, smitten with his product.

"I feel I owe you a lot," he said, "and I'd like to show it."

He did!

His old teacher now works as a volunteer for him, writing his RV newsletter and working on an RV handbook...and he proudly drives a "top-of-the-line" 28' Oakland motorhome.

Even in the short time since we renewed acquaintances, Terry's star continues to rise. He is a hands-on manager, as astute businessman, and a talented, creative craftsman. Well past earning his first million, he has just bought back his original trailer company, so he is the sole owner of both companies, and he also has part interest in a third manufacturing venture.

Have no doubt, Terry can now read. Even the fine print!

Jack Wainwright retired from the Vancouver School District after 36 years as teacher and administrator.

## POEM



## Did I miss anything?

(Question frequently asked by students after missing a class)

Nothing. When we realized you weren't here we sat with our hands folded on our desks in silence, for the full two hours

Everything. I gave an exam worth 40% of the grade for this term and assigned some reading due today on which I'm about to hand out a quiz worth 50%

Nothing. None of the content of this course has value or meaning. Take as many days off as you like: any activities we undertake as a class I assure you will not matter either to you or me and are without purpose

Everything. A few minutes after we began last time a shaft of light descended and an angel or other heavenly being appeared and revealed to us what each woman or man must do to attain divine wisdom in this life and the hereafter. This is the last time the class will meet before we disperse to bring this good news to all people on earth

Nothing. When you are not present how could something significant occur?

Everything. Contained in this classroom is a microcosm of human existence assembled for you to query and examine and ponder. This is not the only place such an opportunity has been gathered but it was one place and you weren't here

— Tom Wayman

Source: Update, Newsletter of the B.C. English Teachers' Association, Summer 1991.



# Longest teaching strike in B.C. history ends

## Peace River North settlement

by Al Cornes



## Stepping back in time: A TEACHER RECOLLECTS

by Margaret Little

Peace River North teachers reached a contract settlement, 102 days into the longest teachers' strike in provincial history. The strike, which started May 8, 1991, resulted in teachers' achieving a mainstream agreement consistent with other agreements won throughout the province.

The settlement:

- wage increase of 7% in each of two years (compound 14.49%)
- maternity leave (sub plan), 75% top-up for the UI period
- prohibitions on contracting
- regular work year with a maximum of 195 days inclusive of five non-instructional days, one year-end day, and three early dismissal days
- class-size numbers in contract
- 80-minutes-a-week preparation time (up from 60 minutes a week)
- additional resources for mainstreaming
- language improvements regarding posting and filling
- increase in professional development funds (now \$182 per teacher)
- professional autonomy clause
- exclusions clause to restrict the removal of teaching positions from the teacher bargaining unit.

In all, the new contract has 65 new or revised clauses.

A tentative agreement was reached on August 17, following a week of activities under mediator Allan Hope.

The dispute marked several firsts in government intervention in teacher negotiations. Aside from being the longest dispute, it was the first time the Minister of Labour has appointed an Industrial Inquiry Commissioner under the authority of the Industrial Relations Act. It was the first time teachers were ordered by government to take a final-offer vote. It was also the first time the Minister of Labour has threatened to impose a 40-day cooling-off period (in this case, if the strike were not resolved by the beginning of the new school year).

"It is noteworthy that we were able to negotiate a settlement," PRNTA President Ellen Ellis said. "It was much more productive for us to talk than to have a settlement imposed."

"PRNTA members were most appreciative of the substantial show of moral and financial support from colleagues," said Ellis. Local presidents were regular visitors to picket lines throughout the spring.

In addition to the \$40/day strike pay provided by the BCTF, local associations and the BCTF raised more than \$1500 per teacher to help PRNTA members endure the economic hardship imposed by the strike. The federation also gave teachers \$5000 interest-free loans.

Al Cornes is director of the BCTF's Bargaining and Member Services Division.

It was as if I had stepped back in time as I entered my room the last week of August. The date on the blackboard gave the clue to my absence. Everything was just as I had left it on that fateful afternoon of May 7, 1991. Desks and chairs were lined up in their rows, eagerly awaiting the laughter of children returning to the classroom. My desk, with neat piles of papers, an open daybook, a favorite book, pens and pencils, and mementos of the day, had an air of readiness.

As I prepared for a new school year, my mind turned over the events leading to the longest teacher strike in B.C.'s history.

*Vince Ready clearly said this was a recognition strike. Where did this leave our teachers who were asking for an agreement comparable to, no more, no less, than those of their colleagues in the rest of the province? It left us out on the picket line for too many days.*

An overwhelming vote to begin the strike by the Peace River North Teachers' Association was held on May 7. As I picked my heart up out of my boots and started to put the final touches in motion, I knew that we were ready. It was time to confront the board; 13 frustrating months of bargaining was more than enough.

Waiting for hours while the board discussed the issues, bargaining on week-ends or after school hours, and presenting our side of the issues only to have the board tell us no, had gone on far too long. Our team had worked but to no avail. Now was the time for the rest of the membership to help shoulder the load, the burden, the responsibility!

Walking over to a hot and crowded room where the trustees were managing SD #60, questions loomed in my mind. How would the board react? Would we have the support of the community? Would we have the support of our teachers? How many of our teachers would cross our own picket line? How would we cope?

When Ellen Ellis, our president, delivered her speech telling the board that we would be on strike the next morning, there were looks of astonishment, apprehension, and bewilderment. "How dare those teachers do that to us!" Gazing around the room at my colleagues, I could see and feel the determination to work toward a fair collective agreement.

Why was this district in such a turmoil? Vince Ready clearly said this was a recognition strike. Where did this leave our teachers who were asking for an agreement comparable to, no more, no less, those of their colleagues in the rest of the province? It left us out on the picket line for too many days. The end of June came and went. The strike continued. Not only did we have the record for the longest strike in B.C., but we were nearing the record for Canada. Why would the board not settle with us? This question was foremost in everyone's mind.

Was it because the board believed the membership was divided? Was it due to the political agenda and the aspirations of some trustees? Was it about management's fear of losing power?

Was it our trustees' refusal to accept that teachers have gained the right to bargain beyond salaries and bonuses?

Fundamental differences in philosophy were evident in the following trustee comments.

"Managers are to manage, teachers are to teach, and maintenance workers are to maintain. You have missed the window of opportunity. Trust us, we have always taken care of your concerns, and we will continue to give you what you are worth. We must maintain the ability to pay and the ability to manage."

Throughout the entire strike, emotions were dealt a heavy blow. The eternal waiting for the board to call and make us another offer or just wondering what they would do next was stressful. Time after time, we waited for the board. It seemed that the board had all the time in the

world. While we sat and waited; children waited, the members of the public waited.

The "first final offer" given to the media, the public, and the teachers on the line before our bargaining team had perused it was rejected by a sea of hands. Still the board would not accept the fact that we had rejected their fair offer, and they began to complain that the teachers' union had been undemocratic and had not seriously considered the offer. Although the overwhelming majority of teachers repudiated the offer, a small but vocal group of teachers encouraged trustees to believe that the union did not have the support of its members.

Time passed as we continued to walk the lines getting tanned or sunburned, becoming fit from the power walking or adding pounds from all the good food delivered daily. Although the stress of the strike was always there, it was a time for laughter, playing games, practising culinary arts, and writing for our newspaper, *The Picket Times*. We actually had time to talk and share plans. Our horizons were expanded as we learned more about each other and formed new friendships.

Our members waited impatiently, knowing that the end of the school year was getting closer. Feelings ran very high.

Those on the picket line knew that the small group of members who crossed the picket line every day would benefit from our efforts. It seemed as if we were being betrayed.

Summer days of relaxation, rejuvenation and peace were not to be in 1991. Decima Research Company disturbed

*"Managers are to manage, teachers are to teach, and maintenance workers are to maintain. . . . Trust us, we have always taken care of your concerns, and we will continue to give you what you are worth."*

Peace River North trustee

everyone with their famous survey; asking loaded questions that favored the board's position. Teachers were angry, disillusioned, and afraid. How would the board use the results, and would there be any repercussions against the teachers who spoke out against the actions of the board? Would the stress never end? Why would the board not accept the recommendations given by the Industrial Inquiry Commissioner?

As summer dragged on, the community remained divided. Some people were hostile; some supportive. Harsh words were said, feelings hurt. Only time will tell the effect of the strike on all segments of our community. The encouragement from our colleagues around the province, from the BCTF staff, from our community, and from each other helped us to remain strong.

On August 16, we had been on strike for 100 days. An Industrial Inquiry Commission had been appointed. We waited. On August 17, the settlement was reached.

Teachers in Fort St. John had struggled for a collective agreement. Feelings of anger, bitterness, betrayal, despair, and frustration ran deep. Remaining are feelings of pride and unity; yet there is no going back to the good old days. On September 3, schools reopened, and the rebuilding began.

Margaret Little teaches at Bert Ambrose Elementary School. Fort St. John and was the local strike co-ordinator.

## Province-wide teacher bargaining myths

by Ken Novakowski

Province-wide teacher bargaining, said former premier Bill Vander Zalm just over a year ago, would be imposed if one-third of the school boards asked for it. We don't know if he was unclear about democracy, was playing politics with education, or is just weak in math.

B.C.'s school trustees didn't ask for provincial bargaining. Nor did the teachers. But Education Minister Stan Hagen's June 7 central-bargaining announcement shows that this government intends to continue Vander Zalm-style disruption of B.C.'s education system.

Support for centralized bargaining is based on five myths.

### Myth #1

**Local bargaining for teachers is a new, unproven experiment from 1987**

Wrong. In B.C., teachers have always bargained directly with their employers, the local school boards. The *School Act* set out a system of district-by-district salary negotiations that has been followed for more than 50 years. What changed in 1987 was that teachers finally got the right to bargain working conditions, a right other employees have had for decades.

### Myth #2

**Teacher contracts have sent education costs skyrocketing**

Wrong again. Since 1989, the provincial government has had total control of what it spends on education and on what school boards spend. All teacher contracts have been negotiated within the absolute budget caps imposed by Victoria. B.C. currently spends a smaller portion of its

gross provincial product on public-school operating budgets than it did in 1982 (3.4% in 1982 versus 3.1% in 1990).

### Myth #3

**School boards have given away the farm in local contracts**

Hardly. A typical B.C. teacher earns about \$8,000 less than his/her Ontario counterpart. Beginning teachers in this province earn less than base-rate forestry workers or bus drivers. B.C.'s pupil-teacher ratios are by no means the best in the country, and other contract failures like due-process protection and seniority rights are found in teacher agreements in all provinces. The *gold plated* teacher contract is pure fiction.

### Myth #4

**The BCTF has the resources to outgun isolated school boards**

Nonsense. The typical school board, with public funds at its disposal, has a management team that includes a \$100,000 a year superintendent, a top-ranking secretary-treasurer, a full-time industrial relations director, and other administrative officers. Many boards hire paid negotiators, often lawyers who are specialists in labour law and negotiation. The B.C. School Trustees Association provides information and bargaining advice from central office.

The typical teacher bargaining team is composed of classroom teachers, and is led by a classroom teacher who is temporarily released from teaching duties to work for the local. This team gets help from a BCTF staff person who is also trained as a teacher, not a labour specialist. Teachers from all locals communicate with each other, directly and through their federation, and provide one another with information and moral support. In terms of local bargaining autonomy and the potential for central co-ordination, both sides play by the same rules.

the same time, he ordered the board to reduce teachers' pay, effective September, to the June 1990 rate — a cut of about 14% from the negotiated rate.

In September, the Mission Teachers' Union will consider escalating job action, and the local's challenge to Lien's right to interfere with the contract is expected to be heard by the B.C. Court of Appeal in the early fall.

### New rule targets "safe" locals

Just prior to Lien's action, Finance Minister John Jansen had unveiled a significant amendment to the Bill 82 guidelines, claiming "equal treatment" was needed for districts where contracts were settled before Vander Zalm's January 29 speech. The new rule says that not only are those districts subject to "regular" Bill 82 control in the next round of bargaining, but the difference between the negotiated settlements and Bill 82 levels in 1990-91 contracts will be subtracted as well. In other words, the locals that have not directly faced Bill 82 cutbacks this year will get double punishment next round. The effect of this rule is likely to reduce Bill 82 increases for those locals to less than half the current rate of inflation.

### Clawback and regulations in Mission

On July 22, Bill 82 Commissioner Ed Lien made history by overpowering Mission teachers under the Bill 82 regulations. Taking unprecedented action (never used in five years of the old CSP and never before used under Bill 82) Lien issued compulsory, unilateral orders to the employer to cut compensation. Lien immediately used the sweeping powers to demand that School District 75 claw back up to \$1,000 from the pay of every Mission teacher by the middle of October. At

### Myth #5

**Local bargaining has created disruption**

Check the facts. Teachers were given full collective-bargaining rights only four years ago. After just one round of bargaining, the government rewrote the *School Act*. That meant that teachers and boards had to go back to square one and negotiate their foundation agreements all over again. Next, the government changed the rules for education funding. Then it was Bill 79, which everyone accurately predicted would do nothing but disrupt bargaining. This spring the government passed the infamous Bill 82, once again changing the rules in midstream. Because it allows a bureaucrat to tear up contracts already signed, Bill 82 makes the achievement of any agreement difficult.

If there has been disruption, it has been caused by the provincial government.

Remarkably, in spite of the meddling and confusion the government has introduced in the bargaining process, there has been little disruption to the education we deliver to our students. On average, a student in B.C. has lost less than 0.7 of a day per year since 1987 because of lock-outs and strikes.

Provincial bargaining has the potential to exaggerate the impact of any strike. We recently witnessed a protracted dispute in Peace River North, where the school board took extreme positions on issues every other district had resolved.

It would be a serious error to punish the 74 school districts that did achieve mutually satisfactory agreements for the misdeeds of one school board chair who was clearly out of touch. A stalemate created by such an attitude at the provincial level would result in a dispute affecting every community in the province.

Provincial bargaining is no remedy; if anything, it is a recipe for expanded conflict.

Ken Novakowski is BCTF president.

submissions that the contracts should be approved, and in spite of their sworn statement of "ability to pay." In at least one case, Lien appears to be trying to reject a contract settled before the Vander Zalm speech. Locals around the province have held firm, totally boycotting Lien's office, and refusing to renegotiate their original agreements.

### Vancouver claims Lien biased

When Bill 82 Commissioner Lien sought to judge the Vancouver Teachers' Federation contract, VTF promptly filed court papers, pointing out the public press statements in which Lien seemed to reject the contract before the ink was dry, and before he had even been appointed commissioner or had heard any evidence. The case is likely to go to B.C. Supreme Court in September 1991.

### Opposition everywhere

In July, BCTF asked all Social Credit leadership candidates for their position on Bill 82. Three of the five (McCarthy, Couvelier, and Jacobsen) distanced themselves from it, and a fourth (Crandall) wrote Lien seeking approval of the contract in his district. Only Premier Johnston backed Vander Zalm's law, claiming it was a service to education. Meanwhile the chilling impact of Bill 82 on health-sector negotiations is becoming more apparent, and the opposition from that quarter gives a taste of what is to come in all public services if Bill 82 is not undone by the political process.

### Buying Pension Service

If you are returning from a leave of absence in 1991, you have until December 31, 1992, to purchase that leave time.

If you returned to work from a leave in 1990, you have until December 31, 1991, to purchase leave time.

The cost of purchasing the leave is double your normal pension contribution. If interest earnings are excluded, you will get your money back via increased pension in about 12 years of retirement. As well, the purchase is tax deductible. Watch this column for a future article on tax deductions for purchased service.

If you are on maternity leave covered by the Employment Standards Act, i.e., 18 to 24 weeks, you may purchase that maternity leave with payment of normal contributions. The amount of service you may purchase is limited to 20 months, exclusive of service purchased for maternity leaves (single contributions).

To purchase service contact the Superannuation Commission, at 548 Michigan Street, Victoria, BC, V3V 4R5, telephone: 1-800-663-8823 (toll free), 387-1002 (main switchboard.)

### Last chance for Ontario teachers

If you are an ex-Ontario teacher teaching in B.C., you have until December 31, 1991, to arrange with the Ontario Superannuation Commission to reinstate pension service. Only service in that province for which a refund was received may be reinstated. If a refund was not taken, your service remains in place in Ontario and may be transferred to B.C. at retirement.

Is reinstatement worthwhile? Generally it is, as double your contributions and interest will be transferred to B.C. to purchase additional pension. Where else can you double your money so easily?

To reinstate refunded service, contact Teachers' Superannuation Commission, 400-5650 Yonge Street, Toronto, ON M2M 4H5.

### Pensions: Everyone can join

All part-time and substitute teachers can participate in the Teachers' Pension Plan.

If you teach half-time or more each day of the month, or teach 10 or more days in a month, or five or more days in a bi-weekly pay system, you will be automatically enrolled in the plan. You will continue to be enrolled, and pension deductions made from your salary, as long as you are employed in that particular school district, no matter how few days you may work in subsequent months.

If you are subbing or working less than half time, you may voluntarily enrol in the pension plan. Your school board office has the enrolment forms. Once enrolled in a particular school district, you remain enrolled as long as you are employed by that district. You do not need to enrol each year, but you cannot cancel your enrolment.

Why should you enrol in the pension plan? A registered pension plan is the best method to save for your retirement. And you will eventually retire! Your contributions to the plan are tax deductible and are more than matched by your employer. If you developed your own retirement savings plan, it would need to earn a very high rate of interest (20% or more) to compensate for the loss of employer contributions.

Currently, you need 100 months of contributory service to be eligible for a pension — retirement, disability, or survivor







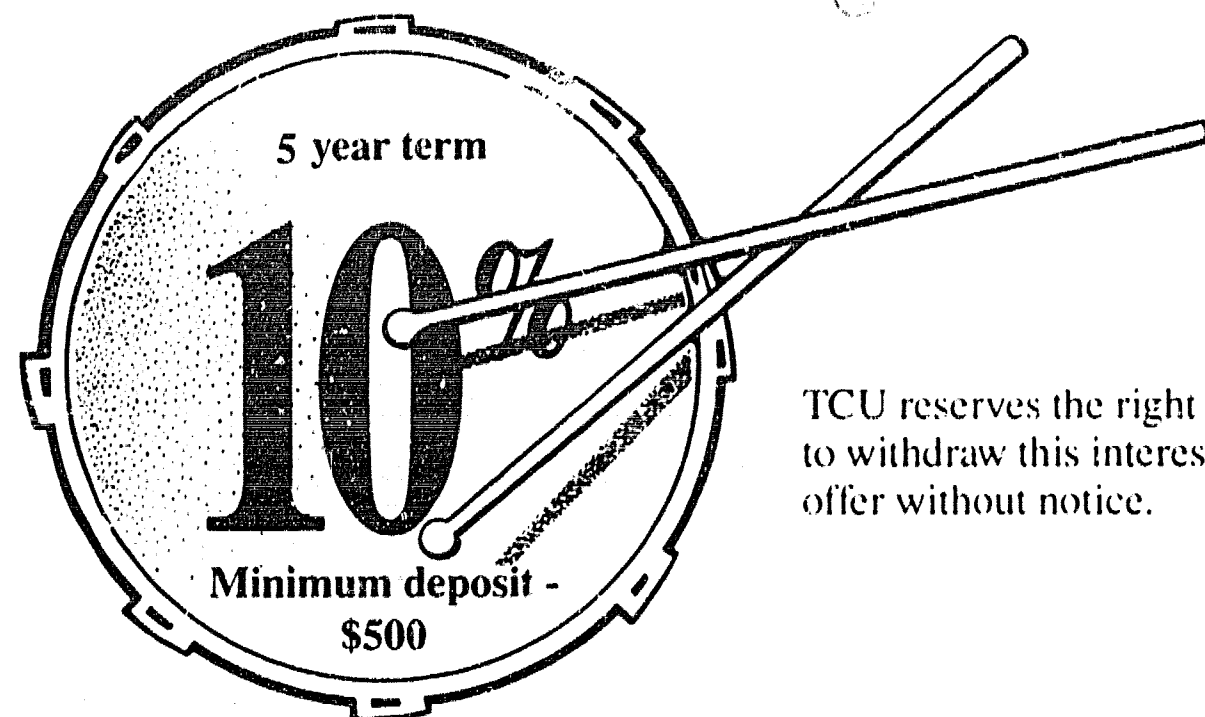
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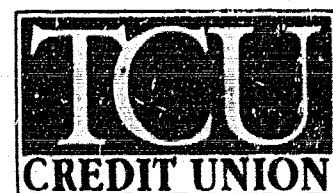
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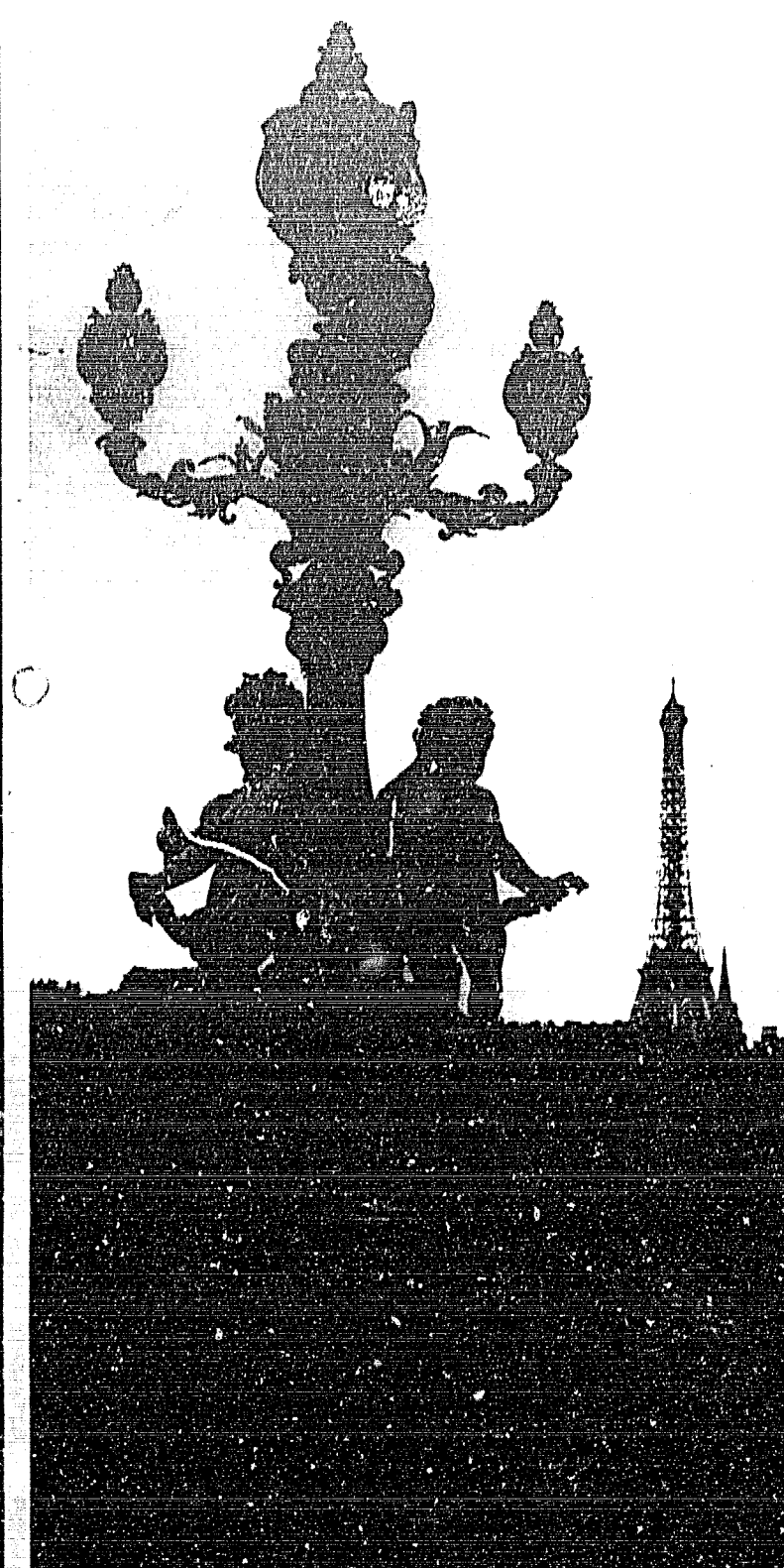
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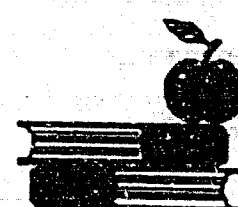
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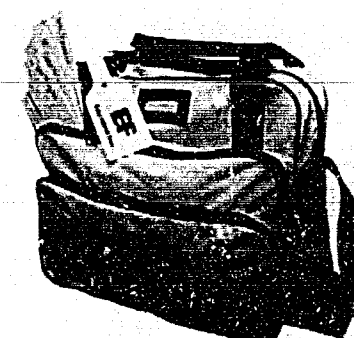
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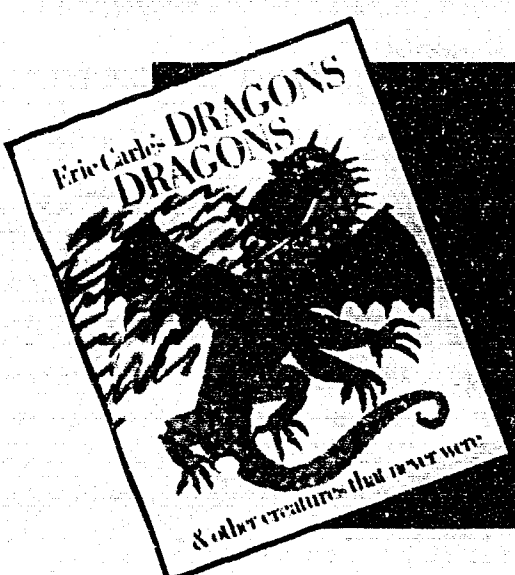
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# BCTF summer school draws rave reviews

Unlissfully unaware that torrential rain would wash out the last week of the summer vacation, more than 450 local teacher leaders convened at the University of B.C. during the week of August 18-24 for the 75th Anniversary BCTF Summer Leadership Conference.

The multi-faceted program attested to the wide scope of teacher concerns in the complex educational environment of the '90s. Delegates chose from a menu that included offerings such as conflict resolution, strategic planning, grievance handling, anti-racist education, writing for teacher leaders, issues in mainstreaming, situational leadership, intensive training for local professional development chairpersons, and much more.

Program offerings provided introductory level workshops for first-time summer conference attendees and advanced level workshops for people like Powell River's Pauline Galinski, who

marked her 18th consecutive year as a delegate.

Summer conference kicked off on Sunday with two-day training sessions for rookie local presidents and local election co-ordinators. The focus of Tuesday's session was mobilizing teacher involvement in the provincial election. Delegates attended a forum at which NDP leader Mike Harcourt and Liberal leader Gordon Wilson vied for teacher support (Premier Johnston declined the BCTF invitation). The delegates had an opportunity to meet dozens of NDP and Liberal (again Socreds declined our invitations) delegates at a noon-hour barbeque.

Hundreds of teachers marched outside the North Vancouver waterfront office of Wage Control Czar Ed Lien to protest the salary clawback in Mission. Sandra Howes, president of the Mission Teachers' Union warned colleagues that Mission teachers were only the first group of teachers to feel the effect of the commissioner's arbitrary and sweeping powers. "You are next," said Howes, whose school board had honored the collective agreement with its teachers, in defiance of an order from Lien.

Summer conference gives teacher leaders a focus to the new year. It provides opportunities to focus on both provincial concerns, such as the election and labour affiliation, and personal, professional goals. Summer conference is an opportunity to build skills, stretch the boundaries of our thinking, celebrate the achievements of the past year, target priorities for the year ahead, renew old acquaintances, and make new friends.

Above all, summer conference builds teachers' confidence through a commitment to co-operative and collective action in areas of professional development, economic welfare, and social responsibility.

— Kit Krieger

(Top to Bottom) Delegates with Sylvia Rayer, Bargaining staff; Vito Barbuto and Larry French (Ontario) with Anita Hagen; Heidi Archibald as Miss Spratt; Angela Schira, Ken Novakowski, Dan Blake, and David Yorke at candidates' lunch; Sandra Howes, Mission Teachers' Union president at Lien rally.

Eagle and Kuehn photos

## Poll results confirm support for education

The public supports local autonomy, and free collective bargaining between teachers and school boards. Sixty-six percent (66%) agreed that "it's unfair to change the rules after the process of collective bargaining has been completed," and they supported the repeal of Bill 82. Eighty-two percent (82%) said that teachers in B.C. should have the same full collective bargaining rights as other teacher groups in Canada, and 53% believe that teachers should retain the right to strike. Seventy-three percent (73%) said local

school boards should have more authority to make educational decisions because they have the best understanding of the needs of their district.

Consistent with results of previous polls, 57% of respondents said that the provincial government should increase spending on education, 34% said spending should remain the same, and only 2% said education spending should be reduced. Sixty percent (60%) said they were personally willing to pay higher taxes to maintain or improve the quality of education.

When asked how reliable individuals or groups were as a source of accurate information about education, teachers received high ratings. "Very reliable" or "fairly reliable" ratings were given to a teacher at your local school (67%); your local school board (65%); your local school principal (62%); the BCTF (56%); NDP leader Harcourt (54%); Premier Johnston (50%); the news media (46%); and Education Minister Hagen (39%).

A sample of this size is considered accurate to within +/- 3.1% to the 95% confidence level.

poll of 1000 B.C. residents conducted for the BCTF in June, showed that the public is not impressed with the government's management of public education. Fifty-six percent (56%) of respondents expressed concern about the confrontation in the education system and held the Social Credit government primarily responsible for it.