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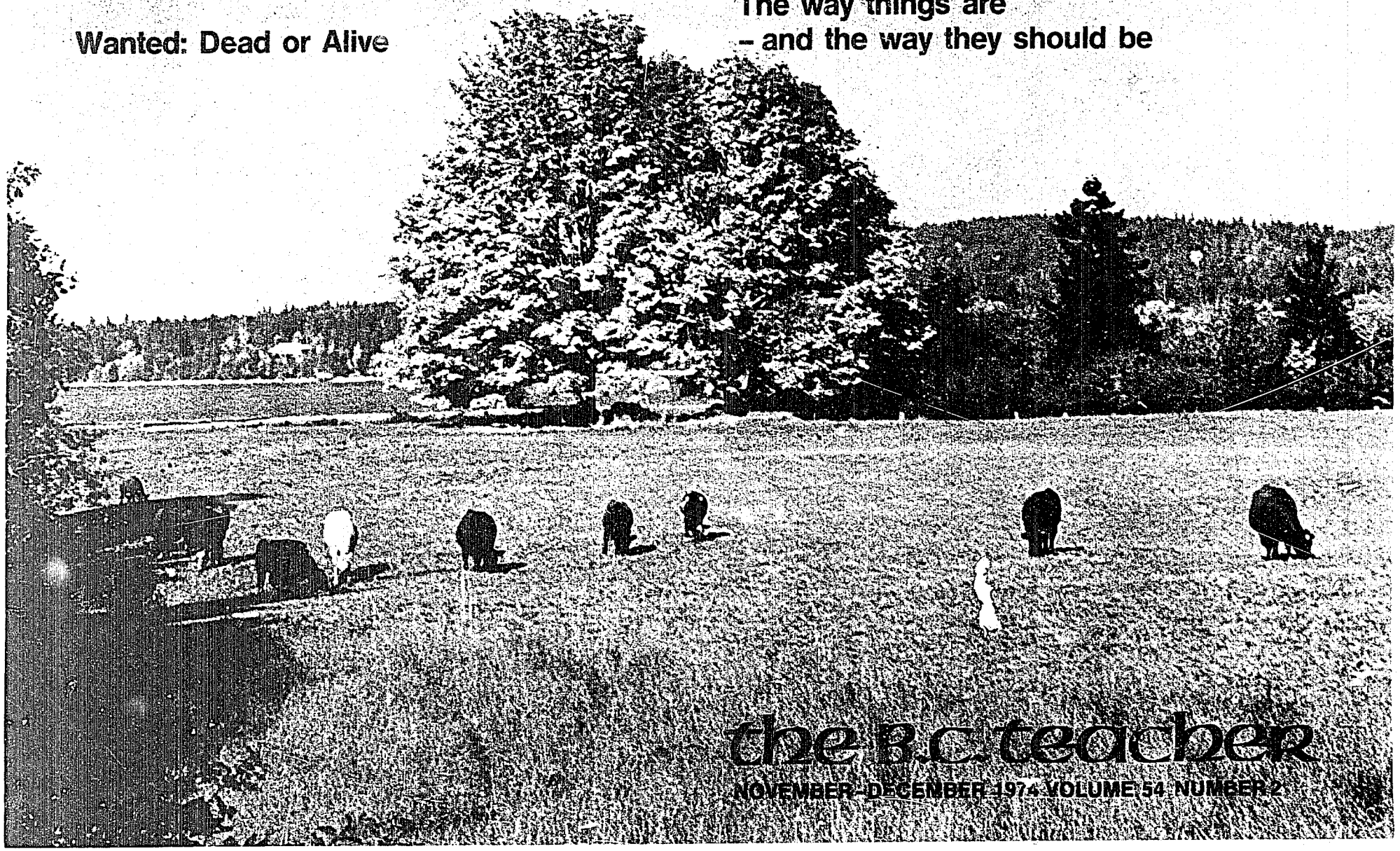

the B.C. teacher
NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 1974 VOLUME 54 NUMBER 2

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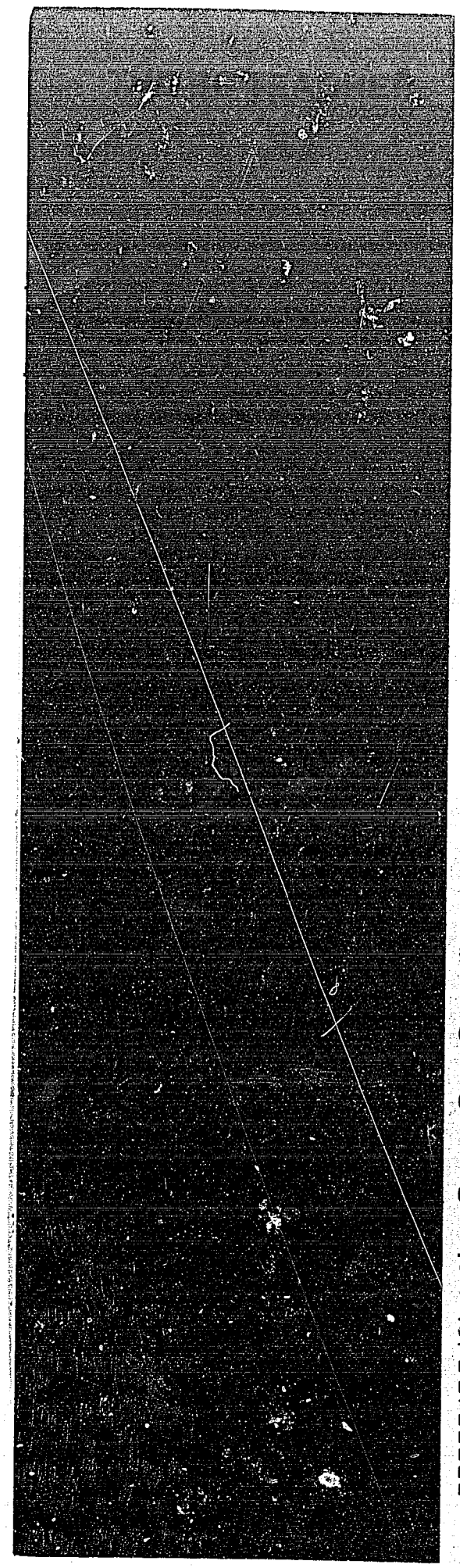

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COVER PICTURE
This pastoral scene was photographed near Fanny Bay, on the east coast of Vancouver Island, by Irvine Dawson. Mr. Dawson, principal of Victoria's Monterey Elementary School, is an accomplished photographer who has exhibited his work internationally.

PHOTO CREDITS
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from our readers

The 9 — 3 Teacher

Hooray for Ralph Wallace! As a parent of four children, not a teacher, who read the September-October issue, I should like to reply to his Reason No. 3, 'When it comes to my free time, my family comes before any students of this school.'

Surely some of these teachers must have children who participate in out-of-school activities, such as sports and community center courses. I wonder if they have ever given thought to where these *unpaid* coaches and community workers come from, or where their children would be if these people took the same attitude as some teachers.

In 18 years of marriage my husband has spent 15 years coaching soccer, football and baseball teams. Two of these teams were high school teams he was asked to assist because the teacher involved could get no help from his fellow teachers. These two teams alone occupied him for four years.

Our soccer and baseball coaches and executives are ordinary businessmen, lawyers, accountants and, most important of all, UBC students and young married men who have no children involved. Most of these people put in a 9 to 5 day and yet find time to run practices, games and meetings and to participate in fund-raising drives.

When our children complain that Mr. Jones isn't a very good coach, we always say, 'Maybe not, but at least he cares enough to give up his time for you.'

Women also participate by attending games, organizing phoning committees and scorekeeping at baseball games. Many of them have full-time jobs in addition to running a house.

If these people can find time after working a full day, is it too much to ask a teacher to give one hour or so to sponsor a club or coach a team and take a little pressure off the PE teacher?

To those teachers who do spend time with their students after 3 o'clock go my heartfelt thanks and the respect of our children.

D. Grant
Vancouver

Ralph Wallace's 'Comment' was well done.

I especially appreciated his timely article in view of the fact that our BCTF president has been traipsing around the province hawking 20-25% pay raises like a 19th century Dr. Good with his patent medicines that will cure all ills.

When I see local IWA mill workers choosing to work for a 60¢/hr pay decrease rather than get laid off, that's what I call responsibility.

Now I'd like to see a little responsibility among teaching 'union' men. Let's start doing a little more for less; rather than acting like demanding, selfish children continually doing less and asking for more.

Roger V. Heckrodt
Enderby

As one who has benefited from extracurricular involvement, I heartily applaud Ralph Wallace's article in the September-October issue.

Without appearing too presumptuous, I would like to add a fifth 'cop out' to his list: 'I've paid my dues.'

I'm sure anyone who has tried to solicit help for various reasons has heard this one before. It is perhaps the hardest form of irresponsibility to deal with. I have found that the very people who have 'paid their dues' and turned off have done so in the classroom as well.

I don't buy the argument that you get 'burned out' after years of putting in extra time with students. Some of the most successful classroom teachers I know attribute much of their success to habits and attitudes developed out of the classroom. These people are involved and still growing. They will continue to do so because teaching has never been 'just a job' and the school has never been a plant designed to turn out the societal cogs.

I for one don't waste much time with the 9-3 streakers and neither do the students — it really shows.

Barry Church
Vancouver

To be considered for publication, letters should be approximately 250 words long and must be accompanied by the name and address of the correspondent. Pseudonyms will be used if requested. Letters may be edited for clarity and length.

On Educational Change

Since I am a very vocal advocate of educational change, and since I have actually taught for a number of years in B.C., even though I now am a principal, I am not too sure in what position W. L. Melville's inane generality, 'the most vocal advocates of change in our school system have little knowledge of the ideals upon which our system is based', puts people like me. . .

Mr. Melville's invidious attempt to label all advocates of change as having little knowledge is hardly the type of counterpoint we need at this time. But then I suspect that Mr. Melville has in fact adopted a credo that attempts to destroy an opposing point of view by questioning the credibility of those who hold that particular point of view. Moreover, Mr. Melville's comment above implies that such advocates for change as Dewey, Bruner, Holt and Goodlad, among others who have called for change, are babbling morons and certainly should not be considered 'excellent sources on comparative education.'

Mr. Melville is guilty of further incredulously sloppy reasoning in stating that intelligent people should read many of the excellent sources on comparative education, but neglecting to name his 'intelligent sources.'

However, instead of continuing to attack Mr. Melville's pitiful cry for more power to people in authority, I should like to present an alternative point of view on the need for change.

Primitive societies are generally unconcerned with mass education; complex societies demand organized formal school experiences. In a primitive society—and I contend ours is one—only the privileged few or competitively able, are selected to receive instruction. In a complex society, which ours should become, it is hoped that we all be given an opportunity to progress in relation to

our abilities. A student or teacher should have equal opportunity, rather than those senseless identical experiences our system provides to children. . .

In a democracy—and I hope our schools become democracies—we have the freedom to *become*. If we accept that, we soon realize that we do not have to be content with the status quo. And that is really what Mr. Melville is arguing for. Preserve the status quo so that positions and status can be preserved, not by ability, but by decree.

If youth is to receive the best possible education, it is essential that teachers and supervisors—principals as well—keep pace with the tremendous advances made in institutions and in modern technology. Each society tends to measure the products of our educational system in terms of observable changes in behavior. G. W. Allport, in *Becoming: Basic Considerations for a Psychology of Personality,* noted that it is the identification, actualization and enhancing of the capabilities of the individual that are the basic motives of life in the individual.

If we continue to 'Band-Aid' instead of changing our present 19th century-factory model educational system, we are in fact denying education at all levels to all people.

C. Spiekermann
North Vancouver

I am quite frankly appalled that the article entitled 'What should we do with the school system' (September-October issue) was even accepted for publication much less given such prominence. A sadder collection of half truth, inane generalization, innuendo and paranoia mixed with the odd motherhood phrase I have never seen.

Surely a professional magazine can do better than this. This article is from an educational leader?

In the words of my nine-year old son—Yech!

J. H. Robertson
Victoria

TM — Religion In Schools?

I notice that a considerable amount of space in recent issues has been given over to the topic of transcendental meditation. This surprises me.

The comparison of gurus and popes, the implication that Christ practised TM, and the terminology used in letters from proponents of TM in the September-October issue all indicate the strongly religious connotations of the term transcendental meditation. The terminology I refer to includes terms like 'mystic philsosphy' and 'the universal mind' contained in letters from Jerry R. Bourasaw and Bob Halowski.

It therefore appears that bringing TM into the classroom would violate the neutrality that we are striving for. To those who object to the placing of TM in a category with religion, I would point out that, at the least, the specific philosophy that constitutes TM is in conflict with the religious teachings of thousands of homes. (I wish that elaboration on this point was not prohibited by the 250-word limit imposed on letter-writers.) On this basis alone, TM, like the highly speculative interpretation of scientific data known as the hypothesis of biological evolution (also antagonistic toward traditional Christian concepts taught in many homes and churches), does not really belong in the classroom.

I hope the open-mindedness toward their points of view called for in letters like those from the gentlemen named above is an objectivity that they also are willing to practise. When Mr. Halowski says, 'It behooves teachers to become familiar with meditation so that they may understand what draws millions of young people to it,' would he, for instance, in an effort to understand the Jesus Revolution, which has exerted a strong influence on young people throughout the world, be prepared to explore that relationship with Jesus that those drawn toward this movement insist lies at its center?

Henry Hiebert
Abbotsford

Did You Miss Something Today?

I have noticed feelings of frustration and guilt among teachers who try to keep on top of everything in their classrooms. Similar feelings have affected me when someone lets me in on something to which I have been completely oblivious.

Recently I completed a pilot study of child-activity in open and closed classrooms. Among the many changes in our public educational system in recent years one has been the establishment of large numbers of open area classrooms. In 1969 a Stanford University study found that 50% of all schools constructed during the previous three years had been of open design. This same trend is occurring in British Columbia where a study by Allen (1972) found that between May 1970 and September 1971 open areas increased from 169 to 299.

This evidence not only suggests that teachers need to be aware of appropriate teaching strategies, but perhaps more importantly, they should have an awareness of the impact that open area schooling has on children.

Very little research has been done that emphasizes direct student participation and opinion whether in or out of open area classrooms. In 1970 Adams and Biddle video-taped and coded activity changes of 20 children in mathematics and social studies. It was found to be as high as one activity change every five seconds or about 4,500 a day in this type of class. Considered over a wide range of subjects my study noted 5,400 activity changes a day for a group of similar size in an enclosed classroom. Such evidence of highly active classrooms underlines the need to find out what perceptions children have of their in-school experiences so that educators can more effectively organize for the benefit of the student.

The video-taped observations I made

Continued on page 62

We Shall Miss These Teachers

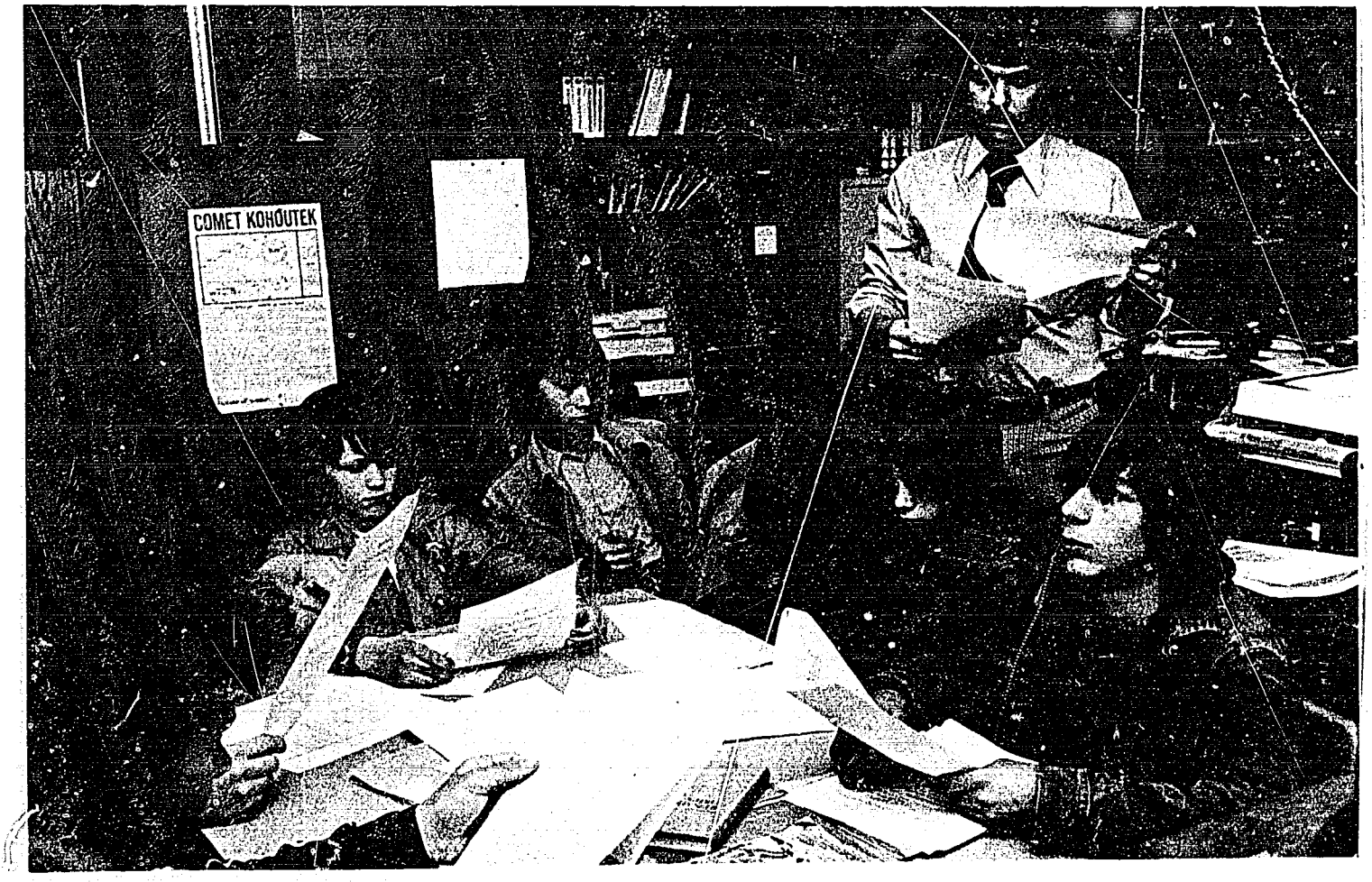
In Service	Last Taught In	Died
William A. J. Dorland	Nanaimo	August 8
Edward J. Maguire	Nelson	August 10
Helene M. (Gehr) Wisdom	Princeton	June 10
Retired	**Last Taught In**	**Died**
Walter C. Brynjolfson	Victoria	September 7
Euphemia G. (Ford) Lynn	Castlegar	August 29
John E. Sanders	Victoria	August 18
Correction:		
William Wesley Bride	Vancouver	July 8

a Costly Harvest

JOHN KUPP

Society can't afford the luxury of allowing each of us to do his/her own thing. It's time to return to schools as a preparation for reality.

The writer teaches at Sir Alexander Mackenzie Secondary School, Hagensborg.



■ For the last two decades education has been on the wrong track. Our school system today is riddled with defects, and is cheating people who really want to learn.

I propose to examine why, and to suggest that schools should prepare children to enter the world as it really is, not some Utopian vision of it.

It was not so long ago that Canada abandoned the British system of education and absorbed a system of educational philosophies supposedly developed by the American philosopher, Dewey.

The system the Canadians took over, however, was in fact developed by the 18th century savant, Rousseau.

By omitting the detours and the periphera of the latter's theories, one can capsulize the Frenchman's ideas in the following short sentence: Educate the masses that comprise humanity and they will become perfect specimens of the social and reasonable animal.

The fact that Rousseau, his contemporaries and many of his successors made messes of their own personal lives and thereby contradicted their own personal philosophies should not cause any undue concern — there has always existed an extremely wide gulf between preaching and practice, between theory and reality.

Interestingly, our modern times have made feasible the implementing of Rousseau's philosophy. The two prime factors that make this possible are finances and the existing social atmosphere.

IDEAS TOOK ROOT IN U.S.A.

The United States served as the most fertile breeding ground for the ideas surrounding the Age of Reason and its natural social consequences as exemplified by the French Revolution. These philosophies took hold with a tenacity bordering on the dogmatic. Recent developments, however, have slowly begun to foster some misgivings regarding their validity.

The enormous influx of immigrants into America between 1820 and 1860 made necessary the converting of this mass of humanity into American citizens within the shortest possible time. The assembly line system was therefore developed in education long before Henry Ford used it in the automobile industry.

Old World philosophies regarding education could not be duplicated, for they rested on the principles of selection and the existence of a class system. Neither of these principles could be relied upon by the United States because supposedly neither existed in this great new land of equality. As long as Western Europe, and in particular, Great Britain, remained the leader of the Western world and its incumbent civilization, American educational philosophies made negligible impact anywhere. Even in the United States, America's intelligensia turned their minds and eyes toward Europe.

This attitude changed drastically, however, when America became the prime world power. Europe was decaying politically and economically and was also exhausted from the effects of the two world wars. Simultaneously, American educational philosophy became important and effectual.

The early necessity of carving an existence out of a total wilderness tended to make the average American a very practical person. The dreamer, the philosopher and the scholar held a very minor position in a society that measured its values in terms of immediate success. This attitude, combined with other factors, created a society in which the general yardstick was and continues to be dollars and cents.

Education used the assembly line system long before Henry Ford.

The United States did, however, possess such fine institutions as Harvard and Yale, as well as a few others that were based on old European principles and that were continually strengthened by importing Old World intellects. The best American minds found their refuge in these institutions. This fact, however, had little impact on the development of educational influence except, perhaps, the creation of a great reverence for universities and professors.

America's practical attitude was encouraged by a burgeoning technology and industry responding to the needs created by the world wars. This, in turn, necessitated the breeding of an army of very practical scientists at the expense of those disciplines that had no immediate bearing on the American philosophy of instant success in life. The appearance of the Russian sputnik gave this trend an additional impetus.

All of these factors left their mark on the American system of education, in both the lower and the higher echelons. Industrial growth and its accompanying influence did force this system into mass production, but the greatest momentum was provided by the revival of one of the fundamental principles of American democracy — the 18th century notion of equality for all.

If one pursues the idea of social equality to its logical conclusion one will be forced to accept the idea of corresponding intellectual equality. If one looks around, however, it becomes clear that this is nonsense. The existing range from morons to geniuses includes all the varying degrees of intellect that occur in between. Moreover, each human being possesses some talent, but naturally this varies from person to person.

WHAT IS EDUCATION?

This fact has apparently not been grasped by modern educational philosophers. They have seized upon the notion of educational equality for all and, from all appearances, the philosophy is thriving. This leaves the educator with only one problem — the definition of what education is.

Is it a constant search for truth and knowledge, a refinement of the mind, or a scholarly exercise simply for the pleasure of expanding man's knowledge? Is it a constant effort toward the attaining of spiritual perfection, making man aware of his position in the universe and sharpening this awareness by a greater clarification of his rights and duties toward nature and his fellow man?

Or is it a means to an end, namely, the acquisition of wealth, position and influence? This question has remained a moot point to date. This is undoubtedly a blessing because the ultimate in education is the acquisition of the knowledge that one does not know everything or, even more accurately, one does not know anything. In this respect, those who are totally uneducated join hands with the true scholar.

For practical purposes, the idea has emerged that education is obtained only from those educational institutions constituted by the public. It follows, therefore, that everyone should be exposed to universities and schools that offer the widest possible range of subjects. The student can make his/her choice among those subjects based on the goals which he/she has set for him/herself. This educational supermarket idea has had remarkable consequences.

It was realized some time ago that this element of free choice, which would undoubtedly enhance every citizen's chances for success, could not be satisfied by the old country school or the

old village school. With an eye on the supermarkets and industrial plants, educators found their solution in the direction of large educational institutes that would enable everyone to browse to his/her liking and select the desired goods. Indecision would be and is assisted by counsellors who were specially trained to advertise those courses that had value for the future of the interested student.

INSTITUTIONS GREW RAPIDLY

Educational institutions explod·d in growth almost overnight. It therefore became necessary to implement the crash course. The world wars had already shown the way by which specialists could be trained within a short time to deal with emergency situations. Quality would eventually be added to quantity once the initial rush was over. Financing was an inconsequential problem dealt with through taxation. After all, wasn't the gross national product escalating daily? The taxpayer could envisage the great future at his offsprings' fingertips and wasn't expected to raise any objections to increased taxation. Various brochures consistently pointed out what matriculation plus a university degree meant with regard to future earning power.

It became necessary to cope with the invasion of those levels of learning that thus far had been restricted to selected students and teachers with demonstrated intellectual gifts. Methods were developed that made it possible to teach the dull, the average and the gifted simultaneously through uniform teaching methods by teachers trained for this very purpose. Within a relatively short period of time, therefore, the mass product, which was theoretically cheaply and solidly built, was released upon society.

The Rolls Royce of education, in the form of private schools, remained for those families whose finances made it feasible. These schools were to remain relatively obscure, however, and were not to make any demands on the public purse.

According to all the calculations, the net product of this entire philosophy would benefit society in an unprecedented fashion. Now, some decades later, it is possible to evaluate the harvest.

Canadian and American school boards, recently followed by a hesitant Western Europe, have built massive cement structures to which troop the young generation from distances of 2-25 miles. This conglomeration of students and its daily trek toward one central complex soon acquired all the characteristics of the city commuters: indifference, loss of personality, boredom. Moreover, by sheer numbers it created unsolvable problems of supervision and discipline. More serious was the fact that, with the expansion of the already large building complexes, these centers of education also acquired the aspects of the factory.

As the assembly line, the large school unit has as its greatest recommendation, efficiency. It is also completely impersonal.

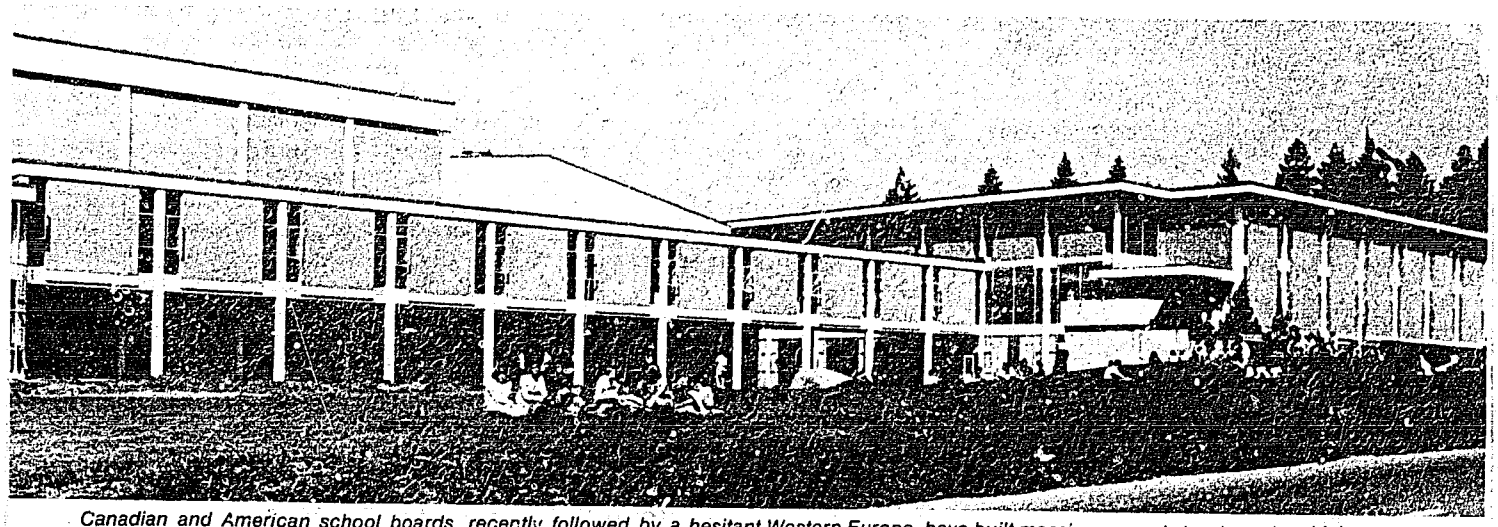
During the last few years the management of larger factories have devoted considerable attention to the fact that the assembly line system, despite all its efficiency, has led to indifference and even boredom among the workers. Loss of pride in one's own achievement, the complete submergence of his/her person in an impersonal atmosphere and other factors built a situation in which the quality of the final product of the factory suffered a serious decline, often undoing all the gains made by efficiency.

Despite all good intentions, the large school unit suffers the same consequences as the modern factory. The young student finds himself/herself in the same position as the factory worker — nothing more than a number or body necessary in the financial calculations for the upkeep of a large institution.

Wall-to-wall carpeting, an abundance of light and chrome, wide halls and other aspects of modern architecture cannot hide the fact that the student is only a very small part of a huge enterprise that expects him/her to be in attendance to gain an education, a word that has not the slightest meaning for most students, except perhaps as a means toward acquiring a job.

The student even lacks the stimulant that brings most workers to the assembly line — money. It is therefore small wonder that a student quickly loses interest and turns his/her attention to other matters that usually have nothing in common with the educational process.

Worse yet, youth looks for a leader. Finding none in the small army of teachers he/she meets during the time he/she is circulated in the educational mill of an institution and kept at a distance from the array of department heads, vice-principals, and principals hedged in by typists and secretaries, the student often finds a leader among the



Canadian and American school boards, recently followed by a hesitant Western Europe, have built massive cement structures to which troop young people from distances of 2-25 miles. This conglomeration of students and its daily trek toward one central complex soon acquired all the characteristics of city commuters: indifference, loss of personality, boredom.

University degrees became the order of the day, leading to political demands that all university education should be free and open to all.

most daring and strong of his/her immediate surroundings

In this manner the school gang is born and enjoys all the advantages the large school complexes offer to unruly characters. Lately, the student may even escape with some others in the world of drugs, sex or other distractions that promise more immediate satisfaction than an intangible education.

Despite all these short-comings of the modern education philosophy, some groups have welcomed the present system for their own reasons.

In the political world education has provided the same means of tactical evasion as the royal commission. For some time now it has served as a potential solver of all human problems. We have sex education, drug education, driver education, alcohol education and a host of other various 'disciplines.' All this education has engendered the expectation that once humans are enlightened about the various problems, they undoubtedly will be wiser and therefore better people.

Alas, the problems have not been educated away and keep growing. However, education served its purpose, in that decisions were postponed in the hope that the problems would solve themselves.

The same procedure was followed with the education of everyone who could be educated. It solved the problems of unemployment statistics, kept young men and women off the streets and the older generation occupied.

Whether education thus applied will serve a useful purpose is not yet certain. In the 19th century it worked when practised in an atmosphere of expectation that industrialization would form the cure-all of all human failings. Whether it will achieve the same success after the failure of pragmatic materialism remains to be seen.

Industry, trade and commerce have shown themselves enthusiastic about the new philosophy of education and jumped on the bandwagon of the 'new' system. Grade 12 soon became a requirement for obtaining a position, but soon even that standard became obsolete. University degrees became the order of the day, leading to political demands that all university education should be free and open to all. The type of degree carried by the applicant often did not serve as a deterrent to the obtaining of a position completely unrelated to the qualifications held. If education could make a person a better citizen, it would certainly guarantee his/her performance in any position he/she undertook.

Moreover, the various degrees served as a source of pride for the employer, who could then boast about the degrees his/her employees held. In fact, learning — or more aptly stated, the exposure to learning — added chrome to the car. It was essentially useless but certainly impressive. The educators had reached their goal. Positions formerly held by the marginally literate were now filled by 'educated' graduates of Grade 12 or of a university. The student who formerly abandoned school because of lack of interest or inability now found it necessary to spend even more time in school to obtain even the lowest position.

In the age before modern education, a student had virtually complete freedom of choice. If he/she were lazy or indifferent, he/she would patiently wait for the time when he/she reached school-leaving age. At that time he/she would assume a position at the lowest level as a general factotum. If he/she failed at this level, he/she could always become a hobo of sorts at his/her own expense and risk.

His/her search for sustenance was heavily encouraged by the fact that very few parents were prepared to cope with a 15- or 16-year-old dependent. The society of yesteryear was faced with larger families and smaller finances available to them than the family unit of today. People were therefore much more practical. No one could serve as a parasite, living on the family resources.

SCHOOLS SHED STUDENTS

If the student were interested in learning a craft, he/she would leave school as soon as possible to become an apprentice and learn the practical side of his/her interest before he/she became aware of the theory behind the craft. The schools would gradually shed their students except for those who remained to further their goals. These select few entered the universities to become scholars and professionals.

Unhappily, that situation is now a part of the shadowy past; it certainly does not fit into the present philosophy of education. It is interesting to note, however, the substitute modern education provided for the former procedure in its attempt to give the student a niche of his/her own choice.

If the world demands a certain level of

Continued on page 57

In embracing one educational fad after another

WE'VE OVERLOOKED HUMAN

Educational fads have kept teachers from focusing on their pupils. Instead of grasping at each new panacea, we should concentrate on how children grow and develop.

■ 'What's "in" this term?' my cynical teacher friend inquired.

'I remember away back 12 to 14 years ago when it was Bruner, the structure of the discipline, and the teaching of it in an intellectually honest manner.

'About 10 years ago, it was programmed learning—or was it programmed instruction? Then, about eight years ago, it was team teaching—or was it co-operative, or parallel teaching?

'After that, things really speeded up, and we had open areas, and next it was outdoor education and environmental education—I know that they were different, though I can't quite remember how. Then we had multidisciplinary studies and interdisciplinary studies—but I never knew what the difference was.

'Somewhere, humanizing—or was it humanistic—education, and also movement education rushed in. Last term, it was open classroom, or family grouping, or multigrade grouping. And for at least two terms now the educational innovators and soothsayers have been urging on us behavioral—or is it performance-stated—objectives and accountability.'

Before I could respond, my friend with the long memory continued, 'Is it really now the alternative education movement? Is that the new magic phrase, the most recent in what has become a never-ending series of supposed educational panaceas?'

I acknowledged that my friend was right, that the current educational periodicals, and those who travel the circuit speaking to conventions and workshops were now concentrating on the alternative education movement.

Later, I realized I had not really helped my friend. I should have indicated that these various 'movements,' 'trends,' 'changes,' 'switches'—call them what you want—are all diversionary fads, which have the unfortunate effect of preventing teachers from focusing directly on their pupils.

PUPILS THE CONSUMERS

The pupils are the consumers in, the reason for, education. Our attention as teachers should be constantly directed to how children grow and develop, not to the organizing or the production end of things in education.

From birth, the infant grows and develops naturally. Those charged with the care and the growth and development of the baby always concentrate on the consumer—the infant requires warmth, love, caring, and much handling and attention from concerned parents and other human beings. Given this warmth and love, the infant is encouraged to develop the motor skills of touching, handling, holding, and manipulating.

Given constant support, the growing infant begins to learn the socializing skills of sharing, co-operating, waiting and working together. Provided with successful experiences, the child starts to develop the intellectual skills of observing, listening, recording, comparing and contrasting, cataloguing and classifying, hypothesizing, predicting, and inferring. When given both a large number and a variety of real world objects in the immediate environment, the young child also commences to acquire the skill of decision-making.

When the child has the support of warm and loving adults, it learns that it must accept and live with the consequences of the decisions. In short, each child is building its own schema or patterns of understandings.

STRESS NATURAL GROWTH

The school must not interrupt, but accentuate the natural or human method of growth and development. Teachers must encourage their pupils to experiment and try out various ways of developing and extending their intellectual or thinking, and their socializing skills. This means that teachers must stand aside to permit their pupils to interact directly with real world objects.

As the pupils mature, they will move from an almost exclusive focus on real world objects to the world of ideas and symbols. As they mature further and enjoy decision-making experiences of increased significance, they will begin to

GROWTH

J. S. CHURCH

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concentrate of formulating—i.e., designing and testing—their own intellectual models. As the pupils do this, they will inevitably transcend the values and culture of their own home, neighborhood and peer environments. In other words, they will have new opportunities for valuing. The school will thus provide opportunities for the pupils to reinforce and to modify not only their own patterns of understandings, but also their own patterns of valuing.

PUPILS WILL DEVELOP

Teachers who do provide an exciting educational challenge for their pupils, by manipulating and rearranging real world objects, ideas and symbols to enable their pupils to extend their growth and development, will soon find that the natural curiosity of the pupils will lead them to investigate what they perceive to be their own very deep-seated problems. Inevitably, these are the great social and economic issues—urbanization, pollution, ecological balance, drug abuse, identification and alienation, threat of annihilation, etc.—that beset our world.

Mario D. Fantini, the high priest of the alternative education movement, has recently written that educational experiences 'run the entire gamut from student directed to teacher directed.'[1] Fantini persists: On the one end, there are alternatives that accord the learner considerable freedom to determine how he will learn, when, where, and with whom. On the other end these elements are predetermined by the school itself.[2]

There is a serious danger that Fantini is misdirecting teachers and the public concerning what and where the real or critical decisions should be made. Education is not served by giving parents, pupils, and their teachers a single selection from among alternative schools, or classrooms, or programs, or teaching-learning strategies. Such a decision is external to the educational process.

Education is life, and like life, it must provide endless sequences or different alternatives to help pupils to make decisions and then live with the consequences of those decisions. Such decisions constitute the warp and woof of the educational process. The school that believes it can predetermine what and how each pupil will learn, when, where, and with whom, is preventing, not promoting, education and human growth and development. Again, the school, or the school district, or the province, that makes such a claim must believe that there is a core of fixed knowledge that must be transmitted to each pupil.

But, as Brunowski advises in *The Atlantic Monthly,* 'there is no absolute knowledge,' and 'those who claim it, whether they are scientists or dogmatists, open the door to tragedy.'[3] He adds, 'all information is imperfect' and therefore teachers should treat all information 'with humility.'[4] Brunowski concludes that 'science is a very human form of knowledge' and that 'we are always at the brink of the known, for we always feel forward for what is to be hoped.'[5]

As teachers, we are frighteningly glib—we talk confidently about helping pupils to become independent and therefore lifelong learners. As my cynical teacher colleague reminds me, we rush headlong, blindly, and unthinkingly from one educational innovation to the next. As long as we do, what opportunities do we provide for our pupils to develop their decision-making skills, to become those independent and lifelong learners, and thus to participate in seeking the solution to various current social, economic and political problems?

BECOME DECISION-MAKERS

The hour for teachers to become decision-makers is now. This is the moment to apply the human growth and development model.

Teachers must focus on this model, not on a succession of so-called educational trend-panaceas. Apply the model, and we all—pupils and teachers—cease to be observers, and become active participants in promoting human growth and development, and thus in moving one step nearer to 'the brink of the known.'

References available on request.

Places for

A comprehensive review of a recent book that tries to close the gap between the way things are in schools and the way they really should be.

■ Theodore Sizer's new book* comes to British Columbians at a very appropriate time—when a campaign is under way to review and restructure our public school system, a campaign that inevitably and desirably will provoke a great deal of speculation about the need for and direction of school reform.

Places for Learning, Places for Joy can very usefully serve to guide and check our own thinking about change.

Sizer's thesis is that American schools have changed only marginally, if at all. A great deal has been added on. Opportunities have been provided for more and more people. Increasing size has brought complexity, and along with it new administrative problems countered with ad hoc administrative solutions. Substantially, however, little has changed. It has been a case of more and more of the same for more and more pupils.

SCHOOLS UNDER FIRE

There has been a great deal of criticism of the school—much of it well intended and pertinent—but only piecemeal remedies have been tried. Much money has been spent on so-called innovation to little demonstrable benefit. No one has offered a comprehensive, politic statement of what might be.

This is the gap that Sizer's book sets out to close—the gap between the way things actually are and the way they really ought to be with schools.

The major problem that any would-be school reformer has to face up to, Sizer suggests, is that the majority of people don't want fundamental change. 'Americans do not find their schools in crisis.' People are either dissatisfied or disinterested. 'Fundamental thinking is strong stuff for most parents and school boards.' Plainly it is strong stuff for most teachers too!

SYMPTOMS OF DISORDER

School disorders, as Sizer points out, are symptomatic of societal disorders. They spread from a concern for personal rights, racial equality or conduct rather than for educational program or process. Demands are political, not pedagogical.

American schools were created to serve, and continue to serve, basically conservative ends. They are purposefully traditional. Their fundamental role is to guard and reproduce the culture. If the schools are to be reformed, this basic purpose must be discarded. American schools are not 'mindless,' as some critics maintain; they are, rather, caught in the web of their own contradictions— contradictions between the rhetoric and the reality, the professed goals and the actual practice.

The would-be reformer must examine the rhetoric, the expectations and the reality if he hopes for fundamental change. This Sizer does, and rather effectively.

The rhetoric, he points out, is impressive. It can be traced back to Horace Mann, who intoned:

'I believe in the existence of a great, immutable principle of natural law, or natural ethics—a principle antecedent to all human institutions and incapable of being abrogated by any ordinances of man—a principle of divine origin, clearly legible in the ways of Providence as those ways are manifested in the order of nature and in the history of the race—which proves the *absolute right* of every human being that comes into the world to an education; and which, of course, proves the correlative duty of every government to see to it that means of education are provided for all.'

In rhetoric the schools do serve the interests of the individual. In expectation the needs of society as interpreted by the school have always come first. In practice, in any situation of tension between the interests of person and the demands of society the person has lost out.

THE NINE 'VERITIES'

The schools, Sizer insists, have operated in terms of nine 'verities,' statements taken as gospel truth when in fact they represent only conventional wisdom. These are:

- There is a national consensus on the general purpose of education, and the ways and means of achieving these purposes is clearly understood and in operation.
- Formal education is a Good Thing—the more you have, the better.
- This justifies compulsion.
- All children should go to the same kind of school.
- The role of the public school is to nurture a common culture—the melting pot function.
- Education must be locally controlled.
- Schools do not teach religion but do teach values.
- Schools and politics should be kept separate.
- Schools are to teach Johnny what Dad was taught and also prepare him for the future.

Sizer argues that we must give up these icons, this folk wisdom, and start putting our faith in scientific knowledge, of which there is much available and which can be added to by meaningful research.

Every human being needs three things, Sizer suggests:

- Individual *power*—'The maximum use

**Places for Learning, Places for Joy: Speculations on American School Reform*, by Theodore R. Sizer. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1973

Places

learning

C. D. OVANS

The writer was BCTF General Secretary until his retirement in 1973.

of his intellectual and physical faculties for pe[illegible] and corporate ends. He sh[illegible] to understand, to select, an[illegible] urposeful, deliberate ma[illegible]

- A sense of *agency*—'The personal style, assurance and self-control that allow him to act in both socially acceptable and personally meaningful ways.'
- *Joy*—'The fruit of aesthetic discipline, of faith and of commitment,' qualities that are the 'fruit of freedom,' freedom to express oneself in one's own way, so long as one does not interfere with the rights of others.

REDEFINE THE SCHOOLS

If these purposes are to be achieved, schools must be redefined. We should heed the verb, to school; not the noun, a place. In our culture the family, publications, the media (especially TV), programs like Outward Bound or potentially the Boy Scout or Girl Guide movements can function as schooling. Schooling should become 'the systematic activity of a community.'

Sizer proposes a system of academies coupled with 'collegia.' The concern of the academy would be 'power,' intellectual development. It would be highly structured, sequential, abstract, systematic and individualized. Attendance would be compulsory—but for not more than 15 hours a week—until age 15 (making possible small classes and ample time for teacher planning and preparation—a 15-hour-a-week instructional load). The aim would be to have every child attain power to a minimum level.

'Every modern man *must* discriminate if he and we are to survive in any kind of moral democracy.' Without the power to discriminate a person is assigned to slavery. 'He will be easily duped, imposed upon, misdirected for any manner of ends and will be prey to the designs of clever, unscrupulous leaders.'

The individual could continue to pursue academic studies after age 15 if he wished to do so.

Whereas the academy was concerned with formal lessons and studies individualized, the 'colleges' would concentrate on experience—simulated, vicarious and real—in a group setting. Children would come to know what they can do in association with others. The prime concern would be for self-concept, based on confidence and competence.

Academy and 'college' would be combined for all children up to age 10. After age 10 ideally these schools should be separated. Any 'school' (a free school is an extreme form of 'college') could apply to a community council elected for that purpose for accreditation as a college. The children and their parents would choose among many colleges, enlarging and enriching experiences through many kinds of activities and would have vouchers to pay for attendance at the college of their choice.

Payment for all education after age 15 would be through vouchers. Vouchers could be spent at any time during a person's life.

HOW WILL REFORM COME ABOUT?

How will significant, fundamental school reform come about? Sizer indicates several pre-conditions:

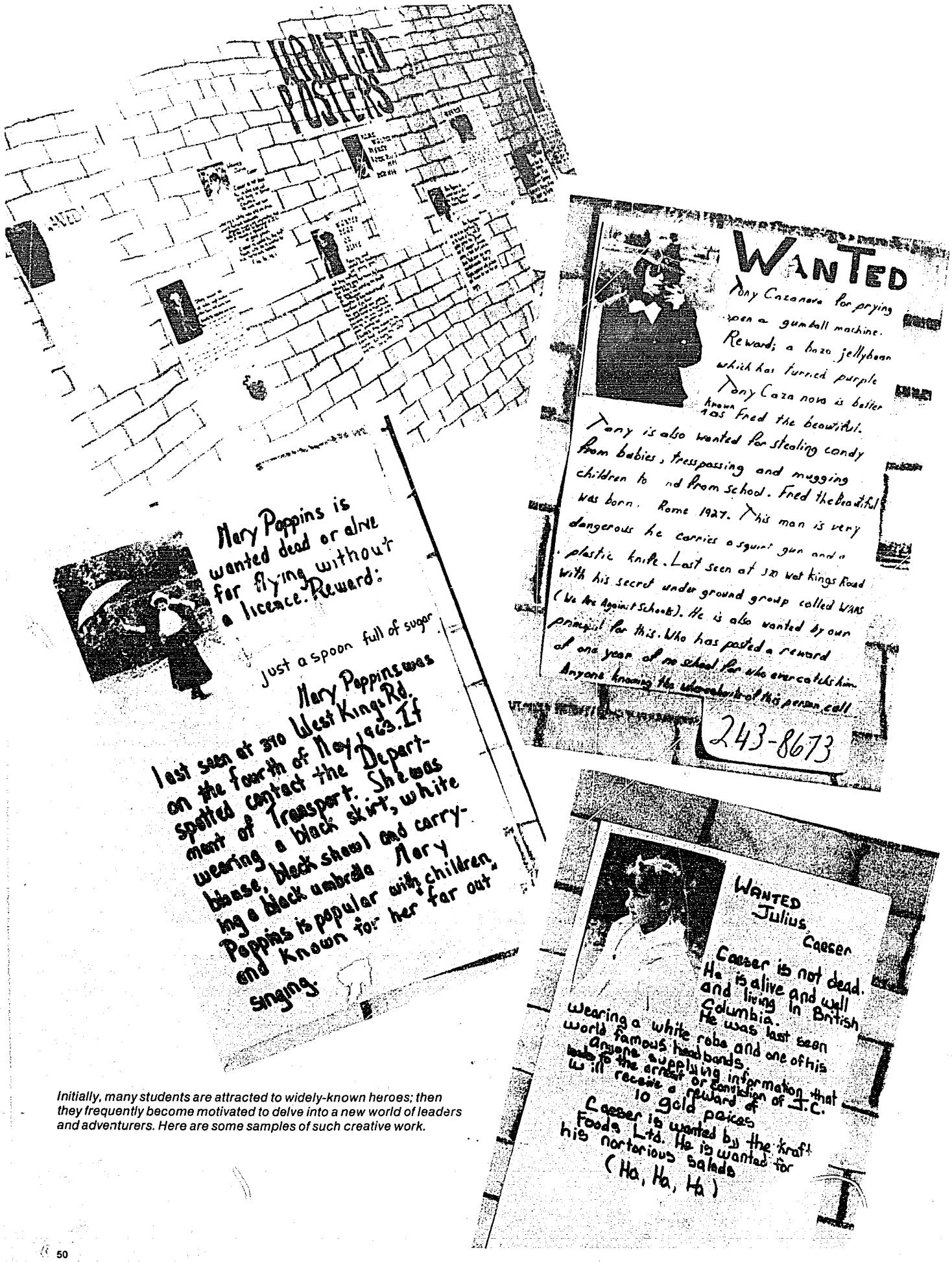
- There must be broad public agreement on purpose. Discussion and debate must focus on sharply focused issues related to purpose. (Class size could surely be one issue; school finance another.) People care about and get aroused over specifics.
- We must learn more about the process of learning and then apply what we have learned. How do children truly learn? We must quit running our schools on 'unintentional prejudice' or 'unexamined tradition.' There must be more study. Growth studies and intelligent research in particular are needed.
- Educators must rid their profession of 'delusory icons.'
- Teacher preparation will have to be reformed. The school system should be responsible for the craft of teaching. Teacher training should be carried on 'in actual teaching situations' in training centers within schools. (The British notion of the teacher center is perhaps applicable here.) The universities should concentrate on the relatively small corps of individuals who are actually leading the system—the 'master' teachers and the policy-makers.
- School politics will have to be approached realistically. Local control has to go. 'The dollar is the prime mover of institutions.' State and federal governments have the dollars. There should be state salary scales. Principals should choose their own staffs. All education outside the academy and the collegia should be financed by the federal authority.

Sizer insists that proposals for fundamental school reform be systematic and political. No doubt, as John Bremer kept insisting; structure is important. If and when structural weakness gives rise to problems, the intelligent response is to correct the weakness.

Social structures like schools, however, especially those developed over centuries, become inflexible, highly resistant to change. Institutions take on a life of their own and they die awfully hard. It becomes a political task of the first magnitude to kill one. Sometimes

Continued on page 56

for joy



Initially, many students are attracted to widely-known heroes; then they frequently become motivated to delve into a new world of leaders and adventurers. Here are some samples of such creative work.

WANTED

DEAD OR ALIVE

ALAN J. McCORMACK and GARY K. DOI

Dr. McCormack is a member of UBC's Faculty of Education and Mr. Doi, who is on educational leave this year, teaches in North Vancouver.

Put 33 'wanted' outlaws in one class? North Star Elementary School in North Vancouver did—with creative results.

■ You're in luck! The genie from your private magic lamp will grant you one wish — to wake tomorrow and *be* someone else. Who will you be? Howard Hughes? Raquel Welch? Or . . . how about Superman? The choice is all yours when you play Just Imagine.

First suggested by creativity-development specialist E. Paul Torrance,* Just Imagine activities are designed to engage children in open and creative thinking. For instance, one of Torrance's activities begins when children are shown an enticing drawing of a pond, complete with frogs, lily pads and insects. Children are invited to imagine becoming anything in the pond they want to be.

Happy frogs, surly alligators, and even tree roots become real as children warm to the characterization. The drama of life is enacted, complete with choreography, sound effects, and improvised music. Later, children draw some events they 'just imagine' might happen in the pond.

Why not invent your own Just Imagine activities? We did, building our version on children's natural inclination to hero-worship. For starters, we challenged students with these warm-up questions:

Just imagine you are a caveman enjoying Stone Age counterparts of 20th century life. You have all the modern comforts — a stone TV set, a telephone made from a conch shell, and even a pedal-powered automobile. What would this Flintstone type of life be like?

Just imagine you are an astronaut landing on a planet less advanced than ours. How would you inform the inhabitants about life on Earth?

Children never seem to tire of talking about 'being someone else' . . . especially when it involves their heroes. These mind journeys create a make-believe world for children — a world they escape to when they dream of breaking loose and breathing free. Here's a Just Imagine activity for children that can make those dreams come true!

WANTED POSTERS

Everyone can vividly recall those blood-splattered legends and daguerreotypes of glorious desperadoes like Black Bart and the star-crossed kid called Billy — outlaws who 'died with their boots on.' But did you know *Mary Poppins* was an outlaw?!

We didn't . . . until a student participating in the Wanted Posters project told us Miss Poppins had affected people's lives throughout the world and would have to pay for her crimes. To the child who 'became' Mary Poppins, she was a bad guy — wanted by the Federal Aviation Agency for flying without a license. And the reward for her capture? You guessed it . . . just a spoonful of sugar.

Since you probably haven't attempted to make a Wanted Poster lately, here's a short recipe:

1) You'll need a 14" x 20" piece of manilla paper for your poster.

2) Select one provocative 'wanted' candidate. (Any famous figure, real or fictional, will do.)

3) Include on your poster pertinent information such as 'crime committed' and 'reward offered.' (Season with a dash of vivid imagination.)

4) Make a 5" x 7" black and white photograph of yourself disguised as the 'wanted' outlaw, and mount the photo on your poster.

Children enjoy the imaginative dimensions of the Wanted Posters, especially dressing up in costumes — cleverly disguising themselves as sought-after villains. Using only a 36-exposure roll of film and a 35 mm camera, the students are individually photographed.

If darkroom facilities are available in the school and the students have had

*Torrance, E. Paul and R. E. Myers. *Creative Learning and Teaching*. Dodd, Mead and Company, New York, N.Y., 1971

Students of North Star converted the once-barren school hallway into a frontier jail facade. They created all the props, down to a life-like model of a sheriff on guard duty.

previous experiences with producing their own photographs, this activity is a natural as part of a unit on photography. It offers a challenging opportunity for all youngsters to participate in the printmaking process. Teachers who wish to avoid these complications, though, can have the exposed film processed inexpensively at a commercial photo-lab.

Some students have their private heroes of long standing, but for others selecting a suitable 'wanted' candidate is not an easy task. It involves a great deal of independent research using books, magazines, filmstrips — almost anything children can get their hands on. Initially, many are attracted to widely-known heroes; then they frequently become motivated to delve into a new world of leaders and adventurers.

To synthesize the information they have gathered, students may employ various techniques: (a) liberalizing the traditional usage of such words as 'wanted' and 'outlaw'; (b) understating and overstating attributes of their heroes; and (c) blending previously unrelated words, ideas and events.

These creative efforts can result in outlandish charges:

CHARLIE CHAPLIN: Wanted by Popular D. Mand for murder (people 'died laughing' at his movies).

BILLY THE KID: Wanted by Judge Code O.F. Ethics for hypocrisy (wearing a white vest in public).

JULIUS CAESAR: Wanted by Kraft Foods for producing a notorious salad.

Intrigued by this brand of fanciful thinking, classroom outlaws can shape and elaborate their ideas into final products — written descriptions of their heroes complete with lurid details of 'crimes,' 'reward' and 'last place sighted.' Thus, two practical skills — photography and creative writing — are integrated in construction of a Wanted Poster.

For a more elaborate activity, special effects can be included — advanced printing techniques, antiquing stains, drawings, poetry, and lighting arrangements. These add authenticity to the posters, and provide visual impact.

Can you just imagine a gallery of these Wanted Posters lining the walls of your school? The youngsters responsible for the accompanying photographs could! Not contented with just the bare bones of the idea, they converted the once-barren school hallway to a frontier jail facade.

All students from the class actively participated in designing, constructing and setting up props. This included such items as false fronts made from wallpaper, board sidewalks, poles and stakes for hitching posts, and even a life-like model of a sheriff on guard duty.

And, of course, lining the jailfront walls . . . a gallery of 33 Wanted Posters (now famous/infamous?).

Since then, students have suggested other ways to extend investigations — no-fail systems of capturing these 'outlaws,' producing a movie entitled *To Tell the Truth,* reports on penal systems in different countries, staging kangaroo courts, planning future confinements for prisoners, and debating contemporary issues on justice. Rumor has it that the students have recently promoted another project — a billboard-sized Wanted Poster of the teacher!

Don't you sometimes wish you could wake tomorrow and 'be someone else'?

The Middle School -a sensible alternative

GORDON H. SMITH

Children who are too old for elementary school but not mature enough for secondary school need a special environment.

They are the real misfits of British Columbia's schools.

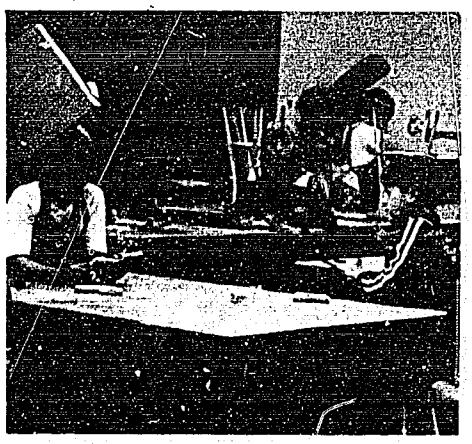
Too old for elementary schools and not mature enough for secondary schools, pre- and early adolescents are being bent to fit an educational system that does not work for them.

However, there is a place for them — the middle school. Designed specifically for 11- to 14-year-olds, middle schools in the United States have more than doubled every two years over the last decade.

I believe that elementary schools in B.C. contain too great a pupil difference in age (from five to possibly 14 years), in size (from just under three feet to just under six feet), in mental age, and in social maturity. Our Grade 6 and 7 students have far more in common with Grade 8 students than with kindergarten to Grade 5 pupils.

Before you dismiss the middle school as just another name for the junior secondary school, let me point out the difference as I see it. The junior secondary school is exactly what the title indicates. It is a junior edition of the senior secondary school with duplication of senior secondary curricula, with replicas of interscholastic athletics, and with copies of senior secondary school social events. On the other hand, the middle school is based on the unique needs of 11- to 14-year-old children — who they are, and how they grow and learn.

Some shortcomings of our junior secondary program are the breakdown of continuous progress, the unrealistic expectation of self-discipline for all Grade 8s, and the relatively large number of teachers of an eighth grade student. Among the inadequacies of the upper grades of our elementary schools are exposure to too few teachers, shortage of effective counselling and social development impaired by rules designed for primary pupils.



WHY A MIDDLE SCHOOL?

Rather than dwell on these negative factors, let us consider the positive rationale for the middle school.

By middle school, I refer to a separate organization between the elementary and the secondary school. It is an institution devoted to the education of children in the 11- to 14-year-old bracket and enrolling Grades 6 to 8. Because children now reach puberty at an earlier age, sixth grade pupils are better

The writer is vice-principal of Victoria's Lake Hill School.

grouped with seventh and eighth grade students. Grade 9s and 10s are better placed with Grade 11s and 12s.

In the middle school, it is easier to develop an organization, possibly nongraded, that would enable a smoother and more effective transition from elementary to secondary school. More emphasis could be placed on educational guidance specifically designed for pupils between the ages of 11 and 14. Innovations could be more readily introduced because a middle school is not bound by the traditions of an elementary or secondary school.

Perhaps the most persuasive argument for the middle school has to do with age and maturity. When dealing with children in the 11- to 14-year-old range, two phases of development are critical. They are preadolescence and adolescence. Although some individuals will have entered this first stage by the age of 11, the vast majority can be termed preadolescent by the time they are 12.

Two developmental tasks the preadolescent faces are freeing his personality structure and reorienting himself to his peer group. Using these tasks as a guide, we can determine certain characteristics common to preadolescents, although it should be remembered that these are generalizations.

PREADOLESCENT CHARACTERISTICS

One characteristic is restlessness. The preadolescent always seems to be on the move. He is shifting from one position to another, fidgeting with things, doing instead of thinking. Mood instability is another characteristic. The preadolescent girl or boy can shift rapidly from elation to despair with little or no evident reason.

Child-adult behavior is a third trait of this phase of development. While the preadolescent seems determined to prove that he is no longer a child, at times he reverts to playing the role of a little boy. Gang or clique formation is another feature of this age group.

The change from preadolescence to adolescence is gradual, with no sharp division. During adolescence, young people free themselves from their parents, acquire new attitudes toward sex, master new social and vocational skills, develop new self-images, and try new roles.

Common characteristics of adolescence can be determined through behavioral patterns. Since we are primarily concerned with the 11 to 14 age group, only traits of early adolescence apply. One feature is concerned with status. Although these young people live in a child-adult world, they desire the status of an adult. Another attribute is hero worship. Depending on the individual, the idols range from the 'rock' stars to the leading scorers in professional athletics.

Changes in conscience are another characteristic of adolescence. Young people develop behavioral patterns to meet new situations. The emerging adolescents attach a greater importance to social activities, both within their own peer group and with adults. All this leads to a clear pattern of needs for preadolescents and early adolescents.

Varied and demanding are the educational needs of 11- to 14-year-olds. They want to be participants rather than spectators — to be doing, not just watching and listening. Middle school age children need the opportunity to explore, to try new roles, and to work with other pupils in pairs and in small groups. They need to learn about themselves (their strong points and their weaknesses), to develop self-worth, to learn to set realistic goals, to succeed, to fail, to re-evaluate, and to try again.

They need to cultivate a positive attitude toward learning, an attitude that will accompany them beyond the classroom doors, in their careers, and throughout their lives. Middle school age students need to escape the female syndrome that has prevailed in their earlier school experience. They should grow up to learn that education isn't a sex-linked trait.

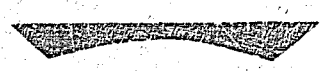
Eleven- to fourteen-year-olds require a chance to use their highly developed inquisitiveness to learn about the world in which they live through the classroom, television, the resource center, the laboratories, and meaningful field trips. These students need to become involved in their education.

SCHOOL NEEDS OWN PROGRAM

To best meet the educational needs of their students, each middle school should have its own particular program. Most books on middle schools outline a threefold program — personal development, skill subjects and content subjects. A personal development program should include physical education, health education, music, arts, crafts, and guidance stressing physical well being, conduct, attitudes, dress, mannerisms, and personal goals.

Skill subjects are those related to continued learning. Reading, writing, speaking, listening, using resource materials, organizing information, and solving problems are examples. Literature, mathematics, science, social studies and other fields of knowledge make up content subjects.

North Saanich School is a middle school. These pupils check their creative writing efforts with their teacher.



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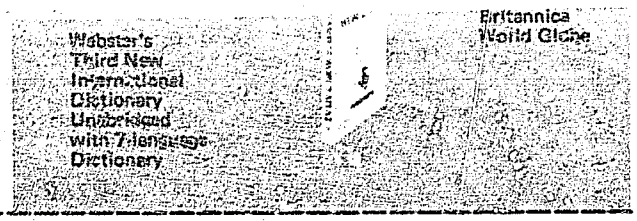

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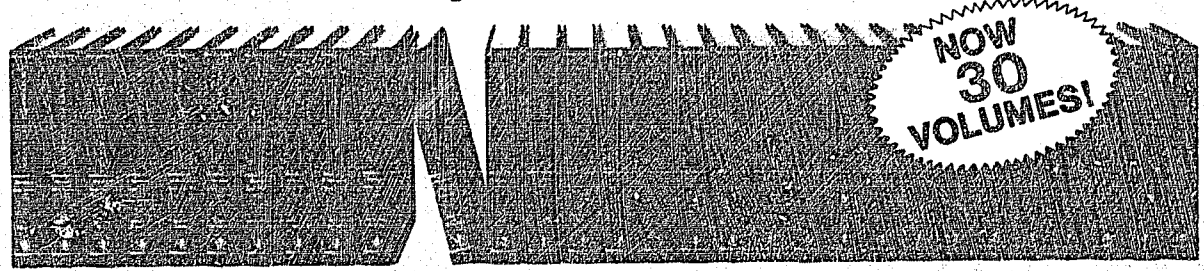

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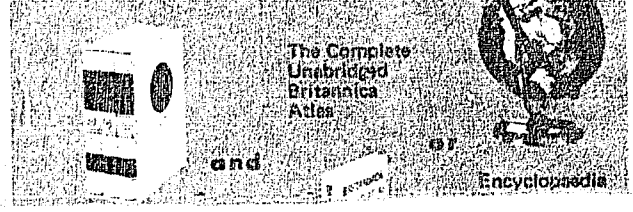


Just as elementary and secondary schools range from traditional to ultra-contemporary, middle schools differ greatly. Because most middle schools have been established recently, their programs tend to be contemporary and include one or more innovative schemes. Most middle schools employ some form of core program because it offers the best of two systems — the security offered by a homeroom teacher and the greater knowledge of a specialized teacher.

An example of core would have English and social studies taught by homeroom teacher A in a two-period block, while science and mathematics would be instructed by homeroom teacher B in the same time period. The classes would change rooms to receive the other two subjects, in addition to subjects taught by music, physical education and other specialists.

NO ONE PLAN SUPERIOR

Although many methods of grouping are used at all levels in North American school systems, research does not clearly indicate that any one plan is superior. Because of the flexibility of the middle school, however, a great variety of grouping methods is possible:

Homogeneous grouping of pupils for skill and/or content subjects;

Heterogeneous grouping by grades;

Heterogeneous grouping across grades and dividing into houses;

Non-graded or individualized programs;

Heterogeneous grouping for core subjects and homogeneous grouping for others;

Individualized programs for skill subjects and homogeneous grouping for personal development programs.

Because each plan offers certain advantages as well as shortcomings, the best method would depend on the particular needs of a school.

Many middle schools do not have team teaching programs, but most incorporate some aspects of team or co-operative teaching. It is a recognized fact that some teachers are unable to work effectively when teamed with other teachers, whether in an open area or in adjoining rooms. Team teaching takes planning and planning takes time. Unless time is made available for organizing materials, grouping pupils, discussing desired outcomes and evaluating, team teaching will be superficial and ineffective.

An example of an on-going system is Floyd Light Middle School in the David Douglas School District in Portland, Oregon. Seventh and eighth grade teaching teams operate in the science and mathematics periods. Teams in this school are able to meet frequently because the members are given the same scheduled preparation periods.

At the same time, students have more contact with each teacher. In Grade 7 and 8 language arts and social studies, for example, the Grade 7s are taught in three-period blocks, while the Grade 8s are taught in two-period blocks. Seventh and eighth grade block teachers have the same preparation time so meetings can also be arranged.

Portsmouth Middle School in the Portland School District employs differentiated staffing. In the spring of 1971, the students were divided into four houses of about 150 pupils each. Two of the houses contained fifth and sixth grade pupils, while the other two had seventh and eighth grade students. Each house had a co-ordinating teacher, four certified teachers, two interns, one instructional aide and two student teachers.

We are all familiar with the different roles that a teacher performs — classroom teaching, course planning, diagnosing and prescribing, small group or individual instructing, recording, preparing teaching aids, and so on. At Portsmouth, these different teaching roles were identified and people with specific skills were hired to fill them.

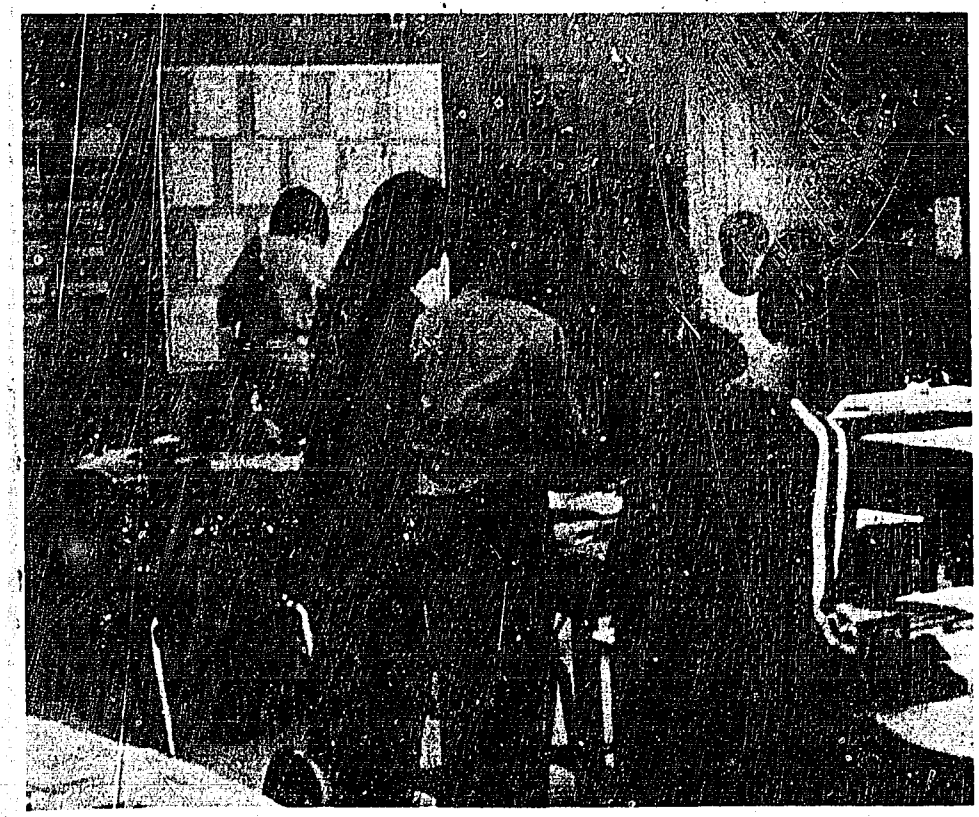
B.C HAS A MIDDLE SCHOOL

The division into elementary, junior secondary and senior secondary schools as recommended by the Royal Commission in 1960 has never been fully accepted in B.C. and there is little likelihood it ever will be. There are, for example, nearly as many junior-senior secondary schools as there are junior secondary and senior secondary schools added together. Their total enrollments are almost identical.

In other words, there are almost as many exceptions to the Royal Commission's recommendation as there are school districts adopting them. Certainly, the middle school could fit into the established pattern of elementary and junior-senior secondary schools that now exists in most areas of the province. In fact, a middle school has already been established in the Saanich School District.

Children from 11 to 14 years of age have unique characteristics and special needs that can be met only in a school specifically organized for their learning — a school for growing up — a middle school. An educational system incorporating the middle school is a sensible alternative to our present structure.

Bibliography available on request.



Programs tend to be contemporary and include innovative schemes. Here North Saanich pupils work in a learning activity center.

Places For Learning

Continued from page 49

nothing less than revolution will suffice.

Sizer is no revolutionary. His background (former dean of the Harvard Graduate School of Education) is administrative. He has had much experience reconciling divergent viewpoints and, as he himself admits, his instincts are conciliatory. It is not surprising that his proposals for reform are accommodating, too much so for my taste.

If, however, Sizer is right in his contention that people are smugly, complacently satisfied with schools as they are and that education has not been and can't be made a political issue, vested interests will decide the shape of things to come. What reform is politic may have to depend on what these vested interests will tolerate.

Vested interests in education are the faculties of education (it has been said that the greatest vested interest of all is the vested interest in knowledge, even if it's irrelevant knowledge), the administrators (I don't regard school principals as administrators) and the organized teaching profession (classroom teachers and school principals). Two developments are possible. One is a movement toward the development of teacher power. This has been much in evidence in recent years. It is a protective kind of instinct. Teacher power developed to offset administrative power. This is a legitimate exercise of power, but it is not very creative. (All power—administrative power and teacher power—tends to corrupt.) Who has power has nothing to do with fundamental school reform.

REFORM THE SCHOOL SYSTEM

I agree with Sizer that fundamental school reform is required and that bringing it about involves political decisions. It is not the right of professors of education, of school administrators or of teachers to make political decisions. It would, however, be quite within the right of these vested interest groups, or of individuals drawn from these groups, to start a movement, a political action movement, if anyone wants to call it that, having as its goal reform of the school system in the interests of human beings.

The time for restructuring is long overdue, a restructuring based on the only valid educational purpose, namely, development of human potential, using a technology that respects the educative rather than the schooling purpose.

Sizer suggests that the earlier progressive reform movements in education came to naught because 'There was never a core of realistic, sufficiently ruthless leaders to generate the necessary changes.' It has been my dream that teachers' organizations would provide the leadership, and that teacher power would be used ruthlessly if necessary, but positively and constructively to promote school reform.

(The BCTF class size campaign as now conceived, while perhaps necessary and desirable, does *not* represent fundamental reform. A 'class' is an administrative arrangement designed to deal with an administrative problem, how to sort out and classify large numbers of children. The challenge is to educate children, not sort them out into either large or small classes.)

Again quoting Sizer: 'Social reform—even reform of limited scope—requires popular will.' If teachers' organizations are to lead in the direction of fundamental school reform, they will need to start by developing a popular will for reform. To make this possible, teachers themselves must strengthen their own resolve.

SUMMER ACCOMMODATION ADVERTISEMENTS

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A Costly Harvest

Continued from page 45

education for even the menial positions, it is the duty and task of the educational institutions to ensure that the prerequisites for these positions are fulfilled. One may restrict numbers by selection. However, lack of selection will expand them. In the name of equal opportunity, selective examinations fell by the wayside. The greatest advantage of this new system was, and still is, the elimination of marking for teachers as well as last-minute cramming on the part of the students, with the accompanying nervous strain.

EASY COURSES CHOSEN

Any judgment heretofore rendered by the teacher, his superior or the parents became unnecessary. It should be added that this was welcomed by the majority since it relieved those involved of the responsibility for making decisions.

If curriculum choice became the exclusive jurisdiction of the student, he/she, with few exceptions, would take those courses that required the least effort. This was and is a perfectly natural phenomenon. This attitude of free choice would eliminate needless ill feeling and would maintain the personal integrity and freedom of the individual.

There would be some inequality in the standard itself, of course, since the choice of more difficult subjects would obviously result in increased knowledge for those who did make that choice. The end result, however, was that both types of students would get the same degree or diploma, and therefore the method was justifiable.

This procedure was followed in the universities, where Arts and Science often parted company, each going its own way. The demand for easy subjects combined with inability and/or unwillingness to learn on the part of some students created the need for vast networks of courses, half-courses, etc. The institutions therefore really became large supermarkets for 'learning' experiences. Even self-service became a reality. The impossibility of evaluating the students' progress or lack of it became a problem as the huge numbers swarmed into the institutions. Gadgets like take-home examinations and self-evaluation were therefore introduced.

In the past, students had been able to concentrate on their studies for five hours of each day. The student of the past, however, was much sturdier than his modern-day counterpart. Relaxation had to be added. Handicrafts, sports, music and other methods to enrich the body and the mind were introduced. These diversions had once been reserved for recess breaks and after school time. They now emerged as full-blown courses, to make the educational process as appetizing as possible. The consequences were formidable.

It is really no secret that one has to appear important and busily occupied even when there is no valid reason for being so. This is especially important for authorities. This can be done by the simple means of carrying around a mass of papers, by collecting assistants and other personnel, as well as by other means.

These various methods of camouflaging idleness have given rise to the famous Parkinson's Law. Any big business is plagued by a massive bureaucracy of administrative personnel and 'executives.' Government is infamous for this particular phenomenon. When education entered the big business league therefore, the above phenomenon became noticeable.

This new by-product of mass

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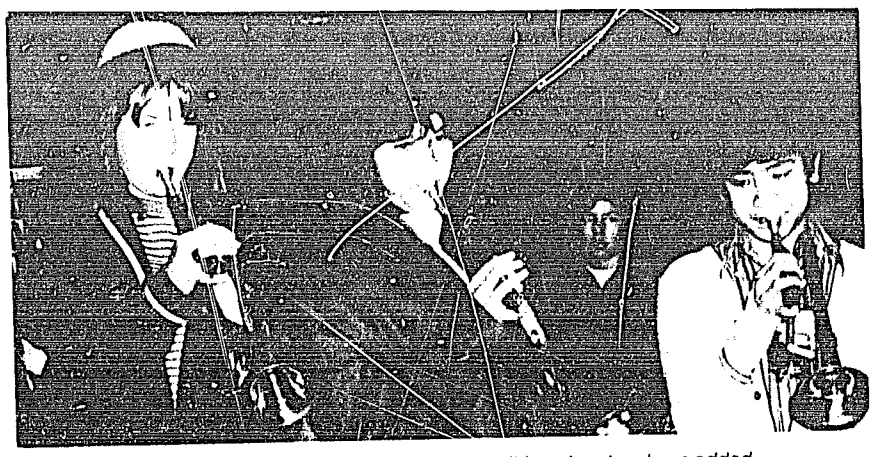
education had some effect on the taxpayer's pocket but at least the burgeoning administrative networks of the various institutions increased employment statistics.

The disaster of the new system did not lie with the taxpayers and their bottomless pocketbooks. The disaster clearly fell on the students, whose last ties with their teachers had already been corroded by increasing numbers. Close teacher-student relationships became a thing of the past, along with selection and other outdated principles.

Anyone who has ever watched secondary students walk into a class to be served a dose of whatever subject one can name, and then hurry on to another class, has witnessed the tragic breakdown of the teacher-student relationship that was and is so vital to the educational process. I must stress, however, that it is not just the student who has suffered. The teacher has also lost a very valuable part of his/her professional life.

A teacher has many judges — parents, the principal, the superintendent, other teachers, to name only a few. None, however, is more severe in his judgment than the student. A contact of five to six hours a day, 190 days a year, soon creates an awareness on the part of the student regarding the weaknesses of those people instructing him/her. The weaknesses of the teacher now can be adequately cloaked within the educational supermarket. If one wants to find shelter, a forest affords much more protection than a few trees. The forest is



To make the educational process as appetizing as possible, educators have added handicrafts, sports, music and other methods to enrich the mind and body.

offered by our present educational system.

Moreover, unionizing the staff has made it virtually impossible to remove deadwood. This unionization is also a direct result of the impersonalization of the educational process. The assembly line system is the quickest method to remove enthusiasm, personal involvement and pride in one's efforts. The general effect is that the masses remove the element of competition and the pace of the slowest is accepted and maintained.

There is, however, one redeeming feature to the new education system — the creation of the specialist. In the past, the instructor was required to teach many subjects in the small country or village schoolroom. Invariably, his knowledge in several areas would be limited or almost nonexistent. In secondary schools, it was common for the instructor to begin teaching chemistry immediately after his/her English literature class. This system has changed. Every instructor now has his field of specialization. (The exception to this rule, perhaps, is the primary grades.) The reason for this specialization, it is said, is that knowledge increases too quickly in this day and age for the average person to remain up to date in more than one discipline.

Diversions once reserved for recess breaks and after school time now emerge as full-blown courses. Organized sports have replaced many of the old-time 'pick-up' games.

TEXTBOOKS UNCHANGED

In the past, specialization became necessary after obtaining some fundamental knowledge, usually in the form of a B.A. or a B.Sc. This was the essential reason for the combining of the faculties of Arts and Science in most universities.

The content of most school texts has not changed drastically within the last four decades. This may seem amazing in light of recent changes and technological advances. It really is not so strange, because the basic prerequisite of any school text is and was that it dwell on generalities.

One may refer to a course as Modern Mathematics, but basically the content is the same — the same old algebra, geometry, etc., are dealt with. Perhaps terms are borrowed from universities and introduced at a lower level and the course is labeled 'New Math' but basically what is learned is the same. I won't dwell on the total abysmal failure of the 'New Math' at this point. Basically what the New Math was designed to do was to couch mathematics generally in more difficult terms, to prepare the student for his/her college entrance. For the untrained mind, which is definitely a characteristic of the elementary student, this perplexing terminology makes learning needlessly difficult. It has always been a principle of learning to proceed from the easy to the difficult.

Specialization in the schools, then, cannot really be considered relevant, for

it is something akin to constructing a house on sand. The student hasn't learned any generalities regarding the subject so why should he/she be exposed to a specialist? The only thing the student can possibly gain from this type of exposure is learning of a superficial type, which may succeed in giving him/her a temporary aura of importance.

There have been many complaints from countries that have adopted the modern educational system that their institutions are turning out a semi-literate product. Canada and the United States are leaders in this group.

'Remedial English' courses are taught in universities as well as in technical schools, yet English should have been thoroughly absorbed at the elementary level of education.

What is the point to specialization when the firm foundation of general knowledge is denied to the pupil during his/her most significant learning period, the elementary years?

So far I have discussed some of the concepts ignored when the educational 'spree' began two decades ago. One may consider my argument far-fetched, pessimistic, overdramatized, fallacious, unsound and so on. One cannot deny the facts, however, and they are blatantly obvious. Growing absenteeism, indifference, parental and student dissatisfaction and other factors clearly indicate that the present educational system is riddled with serious defects.

This has been recognized, and, as usual, educators came up with the answer. Students were given and are being given greater freedom and after some initial interest, the net result has been heightened indifference on the part of the students. What has been clearly demonstrated is that, just as in the past, most students care very little for education except as a means toward the

> The solutions to our problems are so simple that they may prove to be impossible.

end of wealth, position and influence.

In our present system, everyone is a judge because everyone has gone through the educational process. Everyone is qualified; everyone is an expert. This attitude can be amusing if one shrugs it off and merely reiterates, 'A little learning is a dangerous thing.'

We are not faced with anything amusing, however; we are faced with a disaster. It does not lie with the billions of dollars that have been wasted. The tragedy lies with those people who wanted to learn and were cheated of knowledge. Many of these people went ahead and learned anyway by using what was available and combining this with their inner resourcefulness. What has happened to many of them is the tragedy of unemployment and the even greater tragedy of entering their field only to find it overcrowded because of the minimization of standards. For these people, there exists not only the degradation of unemployment, but the prospect of never becoming employed in the field that generated their enthusiasm and hard work initially.

The pursuit of educational dreams has been made possible in these times of prosperity, and what we are reaping, to a large extent, is a harvest of nightmares. Critics of this article will undoubtedly state that criticism of any system is easy, and in this they are correct. I direct my final comments, therefore, at a potential solution.

The solutions to our present educational problems are so simple that they may prove to be impossible.

Despite appearances to the contrary, human society cannot suffer for long the luxury of having its members 'doing their own thing.' To make life tolerable, discipline — especially its product, self-discipline — is absolutely necessary, to avoid chaos for society and to give to the individual the strength of character so necessary for withstanding the unavoidable disappointments of life.

Free choice of subjects, freedom of attendance, elimination of examinations, learning at one's own speed and numerous other gadgets of modern education are the poorest preparation for a life that continuously makes greater demands on one's willpower and character.

They also create a poor foundation for life in a world in which a constantly growing bureaucracy and international corporations pay little attention to free choice, but have built an atmosphere of murderous political, industrial or commercial competition. One could always change society to fit the schools but this system could be effected only through dictatorship.

Therefore, let the schools be once more a preparation for reality. Give back to student and teacher their former personal relationship. Return the school building to the community where it belongs. Prevent the piling up of large numbers in ever larger school complexes.

The North American dream of using education as a tool for the betterment of mankind is fast turning into a nightmare. Why allow students to believe, as they progress through adolescence, that life is a Utopia? Why prepare them for something that will never be as long as humans remain what they are — highly imperfect beings?

From Our Readers

Continued from page 41

including the recess break, recorded an average of one activity change per pupil per minute for the entire day. That number increased four-fold over the recess break.

One might find it interesting to use the actual number of children in your own class to work out the activity changes in one day. However, if in the name of simplicity one rounds the class off to 35 pupils and the number of daily minutes to 300, the number of times children change their activities will be 35 X 300 or more than 10,000 times a day. Much of this study was done in a 200-student open area, which means roughly 30,000 to 60,000 activity changes a day. Consequently it is not at all surprising if the teachers miss something, feel tired at day's end or start to believe that activity centers are inevitable.

Harry Stephens
West Vancouver

From Project Canada to Project World

Project Canada helped my class of last year to understand the existence of other children in another place who were somehow linked to them by the word Canada. My split year 2-3 class in a rural Quesnel school exchanged with a split 2-3 class in Breslau, Ontario.

Last year's experience has led me to consider the possibility of a Project World . . . It's time for children to be introduced to the concept of the world as a social community.

Children can learn that a kinship of similar needs exists between them and every other child in every other land. All children play games, have holidays, need food, clothing, shelter and love, have families and live in communities. We teachers can note such differences as body characteristics, languages, climates, vegetation, food, and so on.

I'd welcome the establishment of a world-wide organization through which one teacher could obtain the address of another who was willing to have his/her class exchange art, letters, plants, voice recordings, rocks, photographs, postcards and whatever else the children want.

Language barriers might limit the program to English-speaking areas, at least during the project's infancy. However, I don't consider the problem of language insurmountable. Samples of different languages would reveal another aspect of culture. Communication through drawn pictures and photographs is possible. Perhaps translations could be arranged or a little of each other's language learned.

If you're interested in the possibilities of such a program, why not write to Canada UNICEF, 737 Church Street, Toronto M4W 2M8 to see if it can put a bug in an appropriate ear.

Vicki Lang
Quesnel

On Behavior Problems

In child rearing we may encounter problems that are a source of some discomfort. Modern family life is subject to accelerating change. Parental preoccupation with matters outside the home tends to a permissive environment within it.

A child's standards of behavior are formed early in life and are learned in the course of his/her day-to-day activities in home and community. Thus the child's standards are a reflection of those he/she perceives around him/her.

What are we to do with children whose classroom behavior is unacceptable? The teacher, acting on the parents' behalf, should be allowed to compel the child to comply with community standards of conduct. In some cases, the child is compliant, and a word of advice is enough to correct the situation. But some children are defiant or indifferent, and punishment is needed.

Some may object, insisting that in the process of classroom work the child should be persuaded to comply. But there is another problem. Misbehaving children learn more slowly than others. They interrupt others. We must work individually with misbehaving children to help them acquire self-discipline, which will help them throughout their lives.

William B. Ragan says, in *Modern Elementary Curriculum*, 'Children need to learn to face reality to understand their own strength and weakness . . . and to accept situations, which cannot be changed.'

In school, as in life, situations arise that cannot be changed. Children must learn to face this reality. Some critics may suggest that kindness and games can be used rather than force.

We may use the game as a joke to give the children a better mood for the day, but should not use it often or exchange it for teaching methods. It can change the educational process into spoon feeding, which doesn't support the learning system of a child and doesn't lead to the judgment of thinking.

In Grades 1 to 4 the child must be prepared for abstract thinking; otherwise we shall find he/she has a learning difficulty in later grades. If the child can't keep up to the speed of the learning activities, he/she will lose interest in school.

How can we assist the child's development in abstract thinking at an early age? We can use various memory exercises, give him/her an opportunity to distinguish good from bad, and gradually introduce him/her to the abstract world.

Great help can be found in art and music. Drawing from memory objects in daily use helps develop memory, writing ability and aesthetical feeling (judgment). In music, memorization of songs and simple analysis of music (recognizing the sounds of different musical instruments, rhythm, melody) are the best introduction to the abstract world.

Music helps the child in counting, reading, writing and influences the mood and aesthetical feeling of the child, awakening his/her creativity and judgment. If we can give the child a feeling of serious work, the result will satisfy not only the teacher, but the child too.

Zdenek Kriz
Kimberley

Substitute Teaching

After doing substitute teaching for 10 years, I have abandoned my work. I miss the pupils, but I don't miss the let-down feeling of wishing I could have done more with them. I certainly don't miss the time and expense of extra courses, but do miss the social contacts and stimulation of workshops, etc.

By now all teachers should have their substitute booklets ready. The teachers of lower levels should list groups, although they can't be expected to keep these up to date. Also list aide's duties and teaching class exchanges if any. I wish teachers could make use of these booklets also and then they would be available. Call in a substitute before you get behind and 'bogged down.'

Busy principals should try to find time to help substitutes find visual and audio equipment and tell them of exceptional rules to which pupils must adhere. Supervision would be easier.

It's nice to be going to the same place to work every day. I hope all substitutes feel much more secure and don't mind the adjustments they must make.

God bless the pupils, teachers and parents who showed appreciation for my efforts.

A sincere ex-teacher
Chilliwack

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devil's advocate

L.H.G.

PHILISTINES ALL . . .

The entire area of the fine arts in the school is peripheral and has long been so. This is not so much a reflection on the schools as it is on the state of contemporary values. For it tells a great deal about current Western technological culture.

To be specific, the relative weight given this study area in comparison with that given academic and other studies tells us that the arts are low hupersons on the totem pole in society's value hierarchy. They are considered almost frills, both economically and educationally speaking, and indeed have been called frills by many.

Nothing makes this more clear than the now defunct Chant Report, which placed them on the outermost circle in its diagram of concentric circles depicting the Report's school subject-value ratings.

In a society that reduces everything to profitability and the cash nexus, this is to be expected. English studies, it is hoped (though judging by the criticisms leveled at them, it must be a pious hope), provide skills of practical use in communication in the business and economic community. Mathematics and science provide skills that aid economic production and the construction of the machinery and the facilities in which production is carried on and by which products are moved to the market place. Industrial, community service and business-commercial studies serve the same end.

The social studies presumably give training in the social awareness required to participate socially and politically in an intelligent fashion in a technological society. Could that be why it is Leonard Cohen's considered judgment that:

'History is a needle for putting men
asleep,
anointed with the poison of all they
want to keep'?

But what economic ends do the fine arts provide? Except perhaps for drama in the form of movies and teleplays, profitability and cash advantage are hard to find unless one considers the popular music industry and the wheelers and dealers in objets d'art. In this respect our society bears a remarkable similarity to that of the ancient Romans.

How well are the fine arts productions of the Romans known? Scarcely at all, except for long-lasting, mundane roads and aqueducts, public buildings, massive sports forums and statues designed to commemorate their leaders and politicians. Their art, drama and music are negligible and their writings concerned largely with war chronology and social and political questions. True there is an Ovid here and a Lucretius and a Petronius there, but these are far from being the general rule.

AESTHETICS IGNORED

So with contemporary Western civilization. It is seen in the severe, unimaginative, utilitarian structures, such as the residential high rises and the skyscrapers and elongated, glass-box office complexes so characteristic of modern city developments. It is seen too in the lack of any thought given aesthetics in design of the surroundings of factories and other places of economic activity. After all, what profit is there in aesthetics?

No, aesthetics are not, by and large, a functional concern of the culture since they are not related to the culture's prime goals and objectives. The ugliness and blight that come in the wake of much industrial and urban development speak loudly of the insensitivity of our civilization to aesthetic values and to the lack of functional purpose in having such values.

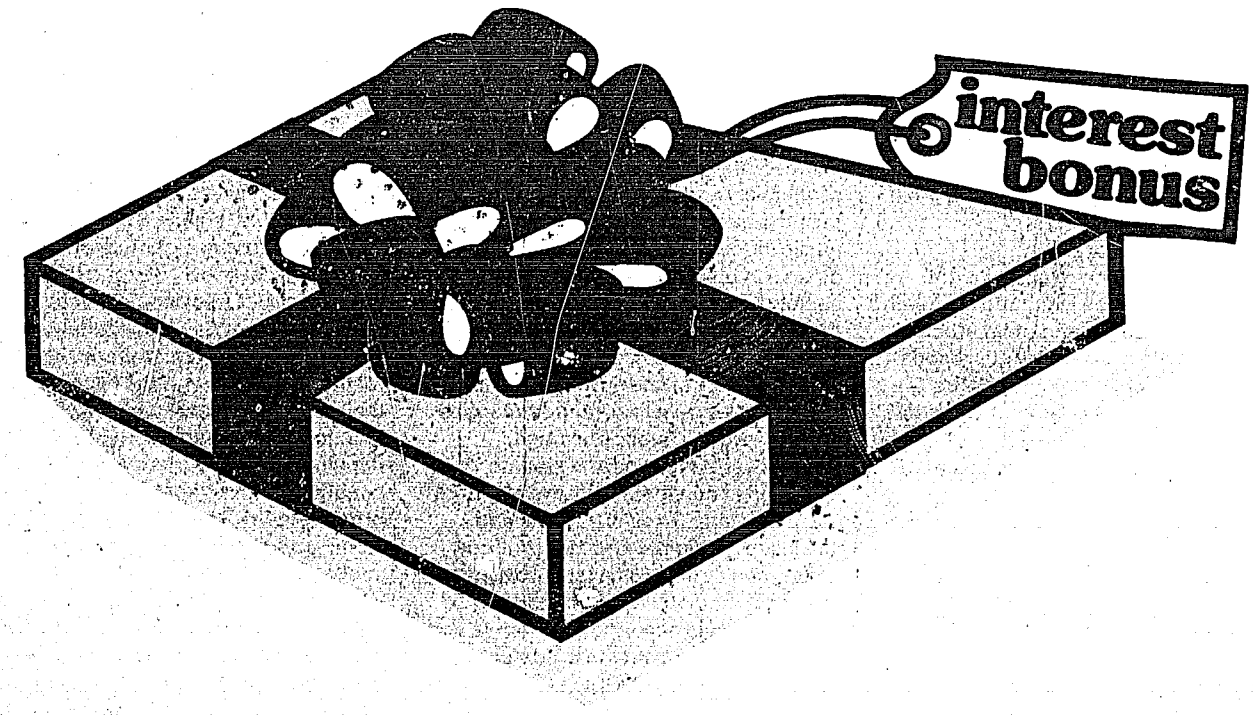
Tom Hill, a Seneca Indian from the Six Nations in Ontario, unconsciously states the Western approach to the valuation of aesthetics when he says, 'No records document how and when the Indian artist began manipulating European materials to produce Fine Art in the tradition of "Art for art's sake." Aboriginal art, until the advent of the European, had always been functional and part of his cultural life.'

WHAT WILL BE REMEMBERED?

When our civilization has had its day and is no more, what will be remembered of it? No doubt the ingenuity of its technological know-how and the massive structures and productive capabilities that have resulted — just as the Egyptians are remembered chiefly for their pyramids and the Romans for their roads and water-carrying technology. It is hardly likely to be remembered, as is Greece for the beauty of its architecture, the perfection of its sculpture, the timelessness of its literary productions and the depth of its intellectual speculation.

In such circumstances, how can the school hope to return the fine arts to a more central position in its subject-matter hierarchy? Certainly there is a creative impulse in the human soul. One can see its expression, particularly in recent years, in the resurgence of folk art — pottery, ceramics, painting, leatherwork and so on — among the general populace. The school can, of course, take advantage of this renewed interest. It cannot in itself, however, restore the functional role of aesthetics in the culture. This must come first from a reorientation of the value system in society.

January will be a very interesting month.



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Attempts of some school boards to encourage teachers to choose their own administrators have caused an unexpected consternation in educational ranks.

What at first seemed like a good idea has, in some schools, caused serious doubts and resentments.

The controversy over election vs selection of school administrative officials has achieved one purpose — it has unearthed some of the serious problems that lately, more than ever before, have begun to plague the teaching profession.

Teaching in recent years has suffered one of the highest drop-out rates of any profession, and the problems concerning selection of administrators seem to have shed some light on the reasons for an increasing dissatisfaction among career teachers.

CLARIFY ISSUES

The real issues involved in the educational controversy over election vs selection of department heads or school staffs need clarifying.

Whichever way the decision eventually goes, however many staff members or existing department heads are offended, dissatisfied or disappointed and whatever resentments develop and divide, one thing is obvious — something is wrong with the present system of 'promotion.'

Something is so wrong, in fact, that the problem will not be remedied even temporarily by allowing members of certain staffs to 'vote' for their department heads, subject to school board ratification or no.

Such a step will be a panacea about as effective as administering aspirin and hot lemon juice to a pneumonia victim. The disease is now so advanced that nothing short of radical medication will even come close to effecting a cure.

In the last 50 years or so, some significant changes have taken place in the field of teacher education and development. What was once a simple basic training in academic pedagogy has now become a legitimate field for the development of professional people.

Subject areas and attitudes have both taken dramatic new directions at the university level. More people with five to seven years of university education are going into teaching. The standard of individuals seeking teaching as a career is being rapidly upgraded. Even the Department of Education has established new and higher requirements for a basic teaching licence.

Unfortunately, despite all these highly professional growth and development programs, things have not changed much at the job level since Plato's time.

Young teachers, full of vim and vigor, fired with professional aspiration and ambition, spend the first seven or eight years of their professional lives gaining some measure of control over what must surely be one of the most subtle and demanding of professions. Many conscientious teachers, in fact, would claim that nobody ever completely masters even the basic classroom techniques in the sense that each day provides a completely new set of unique challenges.

Nevertheless, the young teacher after seven or eight years may begin to look around. He/she has a job he/she enjoys, but not one that he/she necessarily wishes to remain stuck in for the next 30 years. Classroom teaching, creative as it is, can eventually tire even the most energetic teacher when practised on a full-time day-to-day basis.

A walk along the corridor of any large, modern school provides a vision that suddenly becomes not a promise for the future, but a nightmare. Here is classroom after classroom with a group of students in seats, and a teacher behind a desk he/she has occupied for most of his/her adult life. Many older teachers, exhausted by the often excruciating personal demands of their profession, seem to be waiting for the end, either of the day, or of their careers. Surely this is not a vision of the future, thinks the young teacher. There must be more to the profession.

Unfortunately, at the moment, there is not. The only way out of the classroom, for even a short period of time, is by promotion, 'upward,' into an administrative position. These promotion positions create the illusion of executive success by paying a little extra and providing some relief from the day-to-day classroom workload. Depending upon the individual and his/her situation, the position may or may not provide the opportunity for some personal professional experimentation. All too often this is not the case.

Most individuals who find themselves positions as department heads or higher tend to cling to those positions as evidence of their personal and professional success, since such obvious evidence of success does not come easily or often in the classroom. In many cases administrators are unwilling to 'make waves' with new programs or experimental use of staff for fear of endangering their newly gained status. Thus, the system perpetuates itself in a kind of incestuous cycle.

PROMOTION DENOTES SUCCESS?

The basic problem then, to go back a step or two, is the original assumption that success in teaching must be linked with the idea of 'promotion' to a 'higher' position, either administrative or semi-administrative. This assumption is not evident in any other profession; other professionals devote their energies to the development of skills directly related to their profession. Doctors, lawyers, engineers and architects tend to seek professional advancement in a lateral direction, by specialization, rather than in a vertical direction by promotion. Administrative positions do not assume an artificial and distracting importance. They are not the end of the professional rainbow.

The writer teaches at New Westminster Secondary School.

Our young teacher, however, cannot look at the job from this point of view. To remain in a classroom for the rest of his/her life would mark him/her as one who 'never made it,' in the eyes of his/her ambitious professional brethren. He/she has no choice. There is only one way 'up' in the teaching profession — out of the classroom.

It is not surprising, then, that when a question relating to one of these 'up' positions arises, there is likely to be some heavy controversy. Promotion positions tend to be, for many teachers, the light at the end of the tunnel. Whether they realize it or not, those teachers who feel most strongly about the lack of availability of such positions tend to be those teachers who are beginning to recognize the frustrations of a profession in which there is nowhere to go — except up and out of the classroom.

Tragically, for the profession and the young of our society, these teachers are the very ones who should be provided with ways of staying in the classroom and doing what they do best — teaching children.

NEW KIND OF STAFFING

In the United States and to a much lesser degree in Canada, experiments are being conducted with an administrative technique called Differentiated Staffing. Significantly enough, the library at the University of B.C. yields only about a dozen entries on the topic in various educational journals, and most of these pertain to schools in the United States.

Basically, Differentiated staffing seeks to overcome the vertical concept, which has plagued the teaching profession since its inception as a profession.

Differentiated staffing attempts to reduce school function positions to a lateral network, so that one area or function carries very little more status than another. The position of department head does not exist in this system, but various staff members may, depending upon their qualifications, experience and interests, rotate through positions related to program co-ordination or curriculum development. Relief from classroom duties is provided for the implementation of these other functions. Having spent a semester or so in research, the teacher can return to the classroom.

Senior administrative positions under the differentiated system tend to be reached much as under existing systems. Experienced teachers who see administration as a challenging and specialized field apply for positions. The difference is that these people are not seeking administrative posts as status jobs or as ways up and out of the classroom grind, but as areas of specialization. Thus, the move tends to be lateral rather than vertical. The teacher who chooses to remain in the classroom and make that his/her speciality does not regard him/herself as having failed in his/her ambition, personally or professionally.

One problem that differentiated staffing experiments have not solved is the one relating to financial reward. Like it or not, our society tends to equate professional advancement with increased salary. There is a certain logical rationale behind this. As a person becomes more valuable (in the sense that he/she has unique skills and abilities), he/she should be rewarded for his/her contributions. In teaching, however, one field of specialization (department head, administrative assistant) does not necessarily bespeak a higher level of skill or contribution than that of classroom teacher. Perhaps it should — but often it doesn't.

Nevertheless, promotion positions are regarded as a rung up the ladder and are rewarded accordingly — if artificially.

Classroom teachers, under the present system, can look forward to only 12 years of assured financial improvement, followed by a lifetime of financial 'stability.' The problem is that in an age of rapid social growth accompanied by an inflationary cost of living, assured financial stability is not what most people seek. It is no longer any assurance for the future. Again, promotion up into administrative positions, scarce as they are, becomes a professional goal.

Subsequently, when we discuss some of the issues in the teaching profession today, it might be of value to consider some of the deeper dissatisfactions that underlie surface controversies.

TEACHERS IN VERTICAL TUNNEL

Whether or not department heads are elected or selected is not the gut issue. The real problem is the fact that classroom teachers are caught in a frustrating vertical tunnel. Perhaps some school districts will soon do some research into the real organizational problems facing them in regard to staff disposition and utilization. That research might include investigating ways and means of doing away with the archaic upward promotion system now existing, and replacing it with a lateral staff structure similar to those being set up with differentiated staffing programs.

If the quality of education in a district is to be improved, 'people utilization' might be the answer. Hundreds of thousands of dollars can be spent on equipment, but this equipment is still only an aid to the basic teacher-pupil relationship. It is this relationship that produces the real results in any educational program, and to help the pupil, we should find ways to help the teacher.

New directions need new incentives. The potential incentives in teaching already exist — but right now they are sadly misdirected.

new books

C. D. NELSON

NOT LONG AGO . . .

I came across a book called, *What to Do when There's Nothing to Do,* a rather pleasant and interesting guide for mothers of preschool youngsters, offering several suggestions for games and pastimes to occupy said small fry's time. As a kind of paraphrase of that title, I am considering, *What to Write About when There's Nothing to Write About,* as a manifestation of that well known editor's malady 'inspirationis nonexistus.' Perhaps the unseasonable good weather has something to do with it. Maybe it is the realization that this page will henceforth appear five times a year instead of eight and for some idiotic reason I imagine that each word I write must be utterly significant, timeless and memorable. Who am I kidding?

ONE RESULT . . .

of our truncated schedule might be that we present longer and juicier book reviews. In any case, we shall try to make the best use of this space, with your help, naturally! We have a couple of ideas in the mill concerning the scope of materials reviewed here and you can expect some changes during this year.

OUR NOMINATION . . .

for the most disastrous cliché of the year is, 'The pen is mightier than the sword,' especially if you have a faulty space bar on your typewriter.
—C. D. Nelson.

BIOLOGY

Inquiries into Biology: The Cell, by H. M. Lang, E. G. Palfrey and E. L. R. Van Nieuwenhove. Macmillan of Canada, c1974. Paper, $2.75

Looking for a supplementary laboratory manual for your Biology 12 program? This relatively short (45 pages including an excellent glossary) work consisting of laboratory exercises may be of help to both teacher and student, especially while considering cell structure and function. For instance in Chapter 5 (Cells — through the electron microscope), one finds micrographs of the various organelles and a description of their formation and function. Diagrams are used extensively; one of the better diagrams shows the formation and fate of lysosomes, step by step. How material is prepared for electron microscopy is also presented.

In terms of the physiology of cells, a laboratory exercise on osmosis as well as one on the determination of the osmotic concentration of solutes in a plant cell may be found in this manual.

In spite of its size, this thin book is divided into six chapters, each with its own laboratory exercises (inquiries). Chapter 1 serves as an introduction to the cell, and Inquiry 1 stresses the relationship of surface area to volume in an object. Chapter 2 has inquiries oriented around diffusion rates, osmosis, and the effect of the environment on the permeability of membranes may be found. Active transport, phagocytosis and pinocytosis are explained very well, complete with examples.

Chapters 3, 4 and 5 deal with cytology, and the presentation of cell structure is particularly well done. Mitosis, and how it differs in plant and animal cells, is the core of the inquiries in Chapter 6. At the end of each chapter are questions to test the student's understanding, as well as suggested research problems that can be investigated.

The format of each inquiry is very well organized; each inquiry has a list of materials required and all procedure instructions are in a numbered, step by step, sequence. *The Cell* is attractively bound as a paperback.
—John M. Wheelock

Inquiries into Biology: What is Life? by H.M. Lang, E. G. Palfrey and E. L. R. Van Nieuwenhove. Macmillan of Canada, c1974. $2.75

Unlike *The Cell,* above, *What is Life?* is oriented to the needs of junior secondary students. It is a very well prepared laboratory manual with activities (inquiries) that can be implemented in Science 8 and Science 9. Such topics as the characteristics of living and non-living things, the basic techniques involved in using the compound microscope, and the relationship of energy to life might possibly be enriched by the use of this laboratory manual supplementary to the prescribed textbooks.

What is Life?, although not a lengthy manual (44 pages, including a very useful glossary), comprises five chapters. Chapter 1 deals with the characteristics of living things, while Chapter 2 contains laboratory exercises on microscope technique and the structural organization of living things. Chapters 3, 4 and 5 are possibly the most useful for teaching purposes, for some of the laboratory activities in these chapters are very worth-while. The theme of Chapter 3 is the chemical structure of living things (Inquiry 7: How Do the Sizes of Typical Organic Molecules Compare with Those of Inorganic Molecules?), while the inquiries of Chapter 4 investigate the relationship of energy to life (Inquiry 9: How Much Energy Does a Particular Food Contain?), in which the students actually make an improvised combustion calorimeter from laboratory glassware and aluminum foil. In Chapter 4 an ecological approach to energy is taken as energy flow within the ecosystem is the theme of Inquiry 10.

Possibly the most important chapter of laboratory inquiries in this manual is Chapter 5, entitled 'The Science of Biology.' The inquiries in this chapter are oriented to the recognition and solving of biological problems. Pasteur's experiment in disproving 'spontaneous generation' is modified in Inquiry 11, 'What is the Origin of Micro-organisms?'

Each of the chapters in this laboratory manual is followed by general questions plus suggested research problems for the more ambitious students.—John M. Wheelock

CANADIAN ENGLISH

Modern Canadian English Usage, by M. H. Scargill. McClelland & Stewart, c1974. $5.95

Would most Canadians say, 'At a quarter to six I was worn out and lying in bed but Milly, after she had drank a coffee, snuck out and dove into the pool behind the house.'? Or would they say, 'At a quarter before six I was wore out and laying in bed but Milly, after she had drunk a coffee, sneaked out and dived into the pool back of the house.'?

In his new book Dr. Scargill, a noted linguistician in Victoria, after surveying some 15,000 students and parents across Canada, has published the findings and indicates that most Canadians would say the former.

This very readable book reveals the directions in which Canadian English is drifting under pressures from the majority of its speakers. The work, which covers morphology, pronunciation, spelling and vocabulary, is largely descriptive and generally withholds itself from judgments. It discloses, however, a surprising generation gap in the speakers of the language, with youngsters, curiously enough, preserving archaic forms rejected by their parents. It also presents problems for a teacher, much of whose work may be prescriptive. How sensible is it, for instance, to insist upon a student writing, 'Whom did you see?' when today 80% of

Canadians say, 'Who did you see?' and when tomorrow 90% of them will say it?

As Sapir predicted and Dr. Scargill confirms, the majority is determining the forms of the language, and not the conservative few. Every speaker is enfranchised to cast his (Dr. Scargill records 'his' not 'their' as dominant) vote in the settlement of linguistic issues and, as he further notes, that vote is cast in response to extremely subtle, though often unconscious, needs. Whatever the outcome, it certainly looks like (76%) as if (24%) tomorrow's English will be different than (72%) from (25%) to (3%) today's.

—Geoffrey Hargreaves

CANADIAN LITERATURE — POETRY

4 Montreal Poets—Peter van Toorn, Marc Plourde, Arty Gold, Richard Sommer $2.50

The Climb, by Anne Scott $2.00

Snowglobe, by Sunyata Maclean $2.00

Naked as My Clay, by John McCombe Reynolds $3.00

Blue Is the Colour of Death, by Dorothy Farmiloe $2.00

All published in limited editions by Fiddlehead Poetry Books (Fred Cogswill, c/o Department of English, UNB) at Fredericton, N.B. c1973

Canadian talent should be encouraged; more and more English teachers are utilizing Canadian materials and attempting to develop in students a consciousness of their own literary heritage. However, these five, the last three very slim, paperback volumes of poetry are expensive additions to such a swelling number of similar books that it becomes difficult to distinguish one from another.

While I preferred the first two titles, all the books contained some good material and vivid fresh imagery. Many of the ideas were too obscure or too personal to communicate to the average reader and many poems failed to produce any real impact. Some English departments building up collections of Canadian literature in their study resource centers might care to add these titles.

—Julia O'Neill

EDUCATION — PHILOSOPHY

Learning for Tomorrow: The Role of the Future in Education. Alvin Toffler, ed. Random House, Toronto, c1974. Paperback, $2.95

In 16 chapters, various futurists-educators and social scientists sketch the major components of future-oriented educational programs required *now*. The pace of societal change accelerates unrelentingly and causes fundamental discontinuities with the past. Future-focused educational programs must therefore stress not merely the building of a positive esteem in each student, but of a future-focused role image, the nourishing of strong warm interpersonal relationships and the urgency of releasing students from the unreal world of the isolated classroom into the real community for grappling with the gargantuan issues that now beset the inhabitants of this troubled air-space ship — our little world.

This book may have limited appeal to conservatively minded teachers. It rejects traditional goals and conventional methods. It pleads for group social action by highly sensitized and socially conscious students.

It will appeal more to those teachers who have become convinced that revolutionary changes must now be undertaken if schools are to return to relevance and excitement for students and teachers. At the same time, it includes very little that has not been said before; but it is a useful compact reference. One can pick and choose the route — a strategy, by the way, essential for effective learning. One can delve and put down, and return again and again.

I, for example, went from Toffler's own chapter to that by the always reliable futurists, the Shanes, and then to one by the only Canadian author, Benjamin D. Singer, who wrote on FFRI.

And what's that? It's future-focused role image.

Perhaps you should pry into this volume. It could 'catch' you as a reference to complement, if not replace, that tired old encyclopedia or almanac. — J. S. Church

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Western Spectrum '74. Donald Dawson, ed. Guidance Centre, Faculty of Education, University of Toronto, c1974. $2.00, paper

This fills a long-felt need in providing a concise, clear set of data, often-tabulated, about educational opportunities in Western Canada. It includes useful cross-references, and indicates where fuller information can be obtained. Incidentally, the use of named reference personnel will act as a guarantee of accuracy of information.

As the first of this type of handbook, it is natural that further trueing up will be needed. A few details, for example, are already out of date. The fact that the booklet is printed on newsprint paper suggests that an effort will be made to revise it annually. The author is to be commended for his industry in assembling such a comprehensive collection of information.—Philip J. Kitley

FRENCH

Connaissance du français, by Pierre Maubrey. Scott, Foresman (Can. Agt. Gage), c1973. $7.65

According to the author, the approach of this text has been proved successful with hundreds of students at Georgetown University. What is this approach?

Starting with the premise that the presentation of vocabulary and grammar at the secondary school level 'leaves students with a rather vague comprehension of the linguistic picture,' the author 'focuses on the principles of modern descriptive linguistics whose function is to describe the mechanics of the language, its organization, its characteristics, and its use in everyday life. Reference to grammatical norms or rules is kept to a minimum . . . and whenever new structures are introduced, illustrative examples or patterns immediately follow. Students are expected to examine carefully the examples in order to arrive at an understanding of the position and handling of segments (morphological resources) within French sentences. In doing the exercises . . . they will apply these patterns toward developing their knowledge of both oral and written French, while maintaining a constant awareness of contrasts between French and English. Its success, however,

depends mostly on the instructor's ability and willingness to comply with the book's carefully staged, progressive build-up of comprehensive vocabulary and grammar study.' Now read this paragraph over again.

See! No grammar, no rules. Just 'descriptive linguistics' describing the 'mechanics,' and, 'by the time students have completed Lesson 12, they should be familiar with sentences like: —C'est à lui qu'on n'aurait jamais dû en donner si on en avait eu. — whose components have been all descriptively presented in the first half of the text.' Talk about its use in everyday life!

Rest assured: the French in the text is beautifully authentic, the grammar — pardon me, structure — is well explained and documented, the exercises r , so, 'le lexique' good, so maybe it is I who shouldn't have read the promises and claims of the preface after seeing 'The Colleges' report on TV (I sure missed the % Canadian content).

As for me, I may be able, but certainly not willing to comply with the text, as much as it deserves to be respected for its contents. There is no wonder cure. So move over, fellow French teachers, who 'leave students with a rather vague comprehension of the linguistic picture.'—Konrad Schamberger

IN BRIEF

As space will allow, here are some other items that have crossed my desk within the last few months. The first, *The Music Lover's Pocket Book*, an opus by Harry Dexter and Raymond Tobin, and perpetrated by Crescendo Pub. of Boston but originally from England in 1960, and still listed in the Gage current catalog, should have been suppressed at birth. It is intended as a reference on music and composers but close inspection reveals a curious miscellany of scraps of musical information more suited to a game of trivia. There are no illustrations. If you still care, the price is $2.95.

As the resident Freebie Freak of the Cowichan Valley, let me commend to you two titles acquired recently: the first is the new 17th Biennial edition of an old standby, *Free and Inexpensive Learning Materials*, published by Division of Surveys & Field Services, George Peabody College for Teachers, Nashville, Tenn. 37203, at $3.50. I like this collection because all the items listed in it have been recommended after evaluation by Peabody staff members: there are no pigs-in-pokes here. It is also indexed. The second title is new to me — *A Library of 1,500 Free Pamphlets*, published by Dale E. Shaffer, Library Consultant, 437 Jennings Ave., Salem, Ohio 44460. It sells for $3.95, came out in 1974, is subject arranged and has a separate index of source addresses. I have written away for several items listed; I shall let you know in a future issue what quality they are. —C.D. Nelsen

resources center

For your professional information needs, contact the Resources Center, B.C. Teachers' Federation, 105 - 2235 Burrard Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6J 3H9. Phone: 731-8121. Hours: Monday-Friday, 9-5; Saturday, 9-1.

The materials listed, plus many others, are available on loan.

ANDERSON, CHUCK
The electric journalist; an introduction to video. New York, Praeger, 1973. 136 p. PN1992.75/A5

BECK, HELEN LOUISE
Don't push me, I'm no computer; how pressures to 'achieve' harm pre-school children. New York, McGraw-Hill, 1973. 171 p. LB1140.2/B42

BROMMER, GERALD F.
Drawing: ideas, materials, and techniques. Worcester, Mass., Davis, 1972. 144 p. NC730/B65

BROWN, ROGER WILLIAM
A first language; the early stages. Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1973. 437 p. LB1139/L3B7

BYRD, ELDON A.
How things work; practical guide for teaching scientific and technical principles. West Nyack, N.Y., Parker, 1973. 231 p. Q181/B99

CAREER GUIDANCE FOR A NEW AGE
Edited by Henry Borow. Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1973. 348 p. HF5381/C268

CHILD ART; THE BEGINNINGS OF SELF-AFFIRMATION
By Herbert Read and others. Edited by Hilda P. Lewis. Berkeley, Calif., Diablo Press, 1973. 105 p. BF723/D7C6

HAWLEY, ROBERT C.
Human values in the classroom: teaching for personal and social growth. Amherst, Mass., Education Research Associates, 1973. 138 p. BF778/H38

HIGGINS, JON L.
Mathematics teaching and learning. Worthington, Ohio, C. A. Jones, 1973. 228 p. QA11/H53

HOLT, MICHAEL and ZOLTAN DIENES
Let's play math. New York, Walker, 1973. 184 p. QA95/H64

MOORE, CAROLYN C.
Why don't we do something different? Mathematical activities for the elementary grades. Boston, Prindle, Weber & Schmidt, 1973. 168 p. QA135.5/M62

RUGHLIS, HYMAN
Guidelines to education of nonreaders. Brooklyn, BookLab, 1973. 159 p. LB1050.5/R82

RUSSELL, HELEN ROSS
Ten-minute field trips; using the school grounds for environmental studies a teachers guide. Chicago, Ill., J. G. Ferguson Pub. Co., 1973. 175 p. QH53/R78

SWIERKOS, MARION I. and CATHERINE G. MORSE
Industrial arts for the elementary classroom. Peoria, Ill., C. A. Bennett, 1973. 375 p. LB594/S93

TOFFLER, ALVIN, ed.
Learning for tomorrow; the role of the future in education. New York, Vintage Books, 1974. 421 p. LA209.2/T57

comment

I DIDN'T READ IT

VITO CIANCI

■ For the past year, a growing pile of *The B.C. Teacher* sat, sampled but largely unread, on my bookshelf. Lately I had a spell of housecleaning (bookshelf division) and I thought it might be instructive to go through the year's copies and find out why I didn't read them.

Over a period of several days I read the lot; skip-reading some parts, reading some sections thoroughly, re-reading others, and I think I know why I don't read *The B.C. Teacher* very much. It is simply that too much of the writing is dull, lifeless, wordy, filled with pedagogical jargon and lacking in showmanship, or what professionals call 'pizazz.'

I was reminded of a conversation I had with a young fellow-teacher (both of us were in our first year of teaching) one evening while walking down the PGE railway track in a wilderness area in the Cariboo. Said he, in all seriousness, 'Do you think it is consistent with the dignity of our position to let the section-foreman here call me by my first name?'

DIGNITY VS CLARITY

I don't remember what I said, but it seems to me that here is an attitude that colors much of education writing. The writers are more concerned with maintaining the dignity (?) of their position and their self-image than in communicating their ideas in clear, concise and readable prose.

'Learning Versus Entertainment' by E. H. Volkart in the September-October issue is a good example of this attitude. The author's theme (that the schools are making education easy and pleasurable at the expense of substance) is developed in 5,500 inflated words. In beating my way through this underbrush of involved and repetitive language (the word cognitive is used 36 times), I decided to do some editing, and was able to reduce the whole article to just over 500 words without really interfering with the author's basic idea.

READERS ARE KNOWLEDGEABLE

Writers on education might remember that many of their readers are knowledgeable characters, often with more experience in the classroom than they have had. They might also remember the story of the small boy who, in writing a thank-you note to a relative for a book received at Christmas, said 'Thank you for the book about the kangaroo. It tells me more about the kangaroo than I care to know.' That's the way I feel about most education books, magazines and scholarly articles. They all tell me more about the topic than I care to know.

I get turned off by pages and pages of great slabs of solid type, complete with footnotes and bibliography. An exhaustive treatment of a subject more often than not results in an exhausted reader. I like shorter treatments, outlines or notes that allow me to fill in the gaps for myself or to enlarge on the ideas presented to me. I want to participate, not be hit on the head with a lot of jargon.

There are times, too, when I get the feeling that a lot of this stuff is written under pressure of the 'publish or perish' racket, and not because the writer is really interested in communicating a new or exciting idea.

I enjoyed reading articles written by classroom teachers reporting on actual projects ('Extended Classroom for Fraser Lake'); deeply-felt comments beautifully written ('Or Not To Read'); items with a light touch ('Absolutely Mad Inventions'); off-beat ideas ('Try Role-playing with Your Class').

'Let's Concentrate on Learning Goals,' 'The Free and Happy Student,' 'Freedom and Democracy in Reforming the Public Schools,' 'Education and Change' are a few examples of writing I find stuffy, pedantic and cliché-ridden. ('The most important person in the school is the pupil, not the teacher.' What else is new?)

Then there is the elaborate restatement of the well-known or obvious ('The Student as Subversive,' 'What's Really Happening To Us?'). There is padded trivia or weak humor ('From Atlantic to Pacific') and the vague abstraction or woolly generality ('Finders and Toddlers').

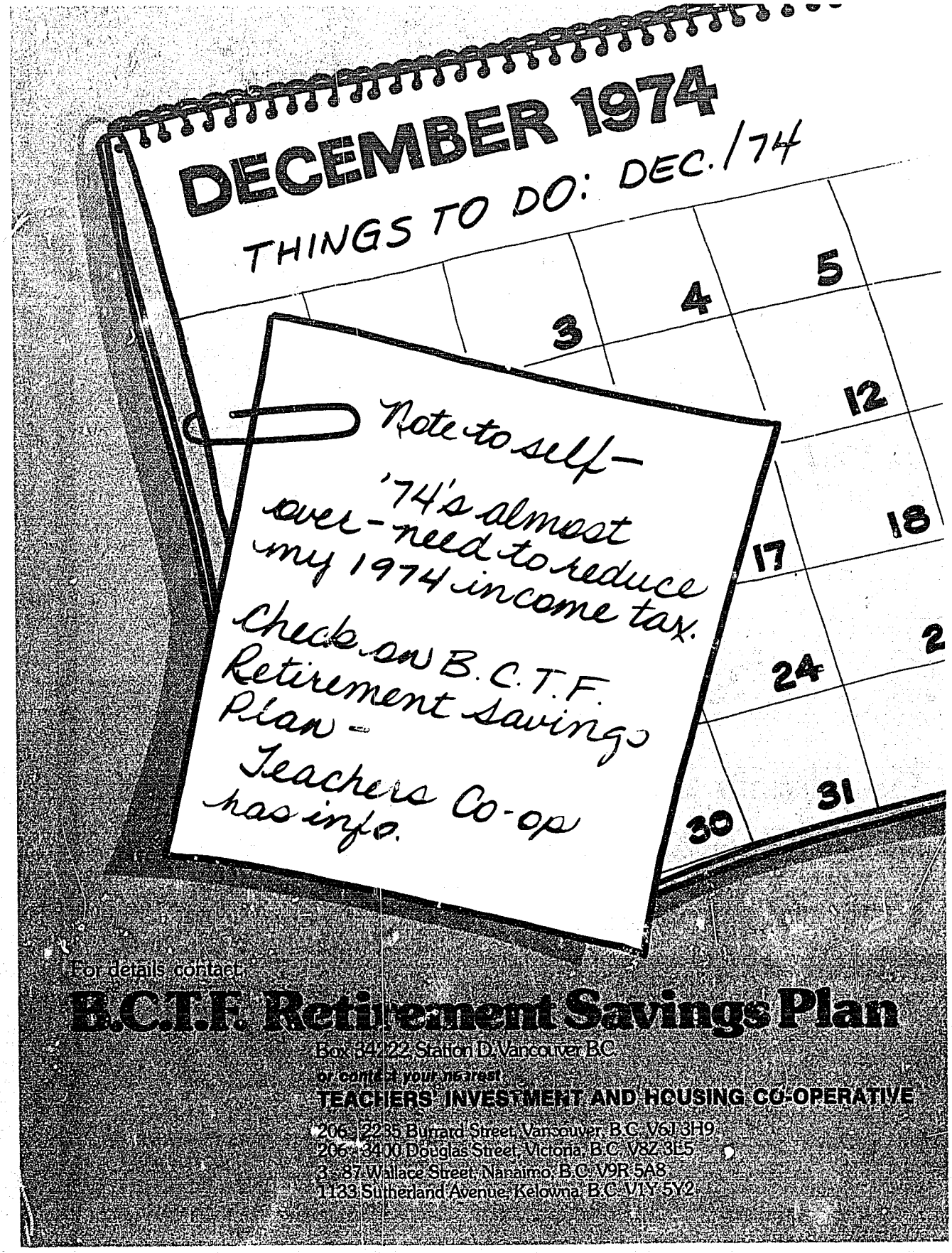
SOME WRITE WELL

That there is no need for the irritating characteristics of education writing I have mentioned is proved by the work of many writers who present new and exciting points of view with clarity, brevity and precision. They are more interested in writing about specific topics than in putting on a pompous pedagogical front. Among such writers are John Holt, James Herndon (*How to Survive in Your Native Land*), Haim Ginott and Robert Paul Smith.

In a class by himself I place the English writer W. R. Niblett, whose ideas might be considered old hat these days, but whose work I find constantly inspiring and a source of delight.

Some day I should like to see an issue of *The B.C. Teacher* in which all articles were limited to about 1,000 words. I feel that short snappy pieces set up in the usual eye-catching and pleasing typographical layouts, plus the beautiful covers, would attract and hold readers.

Mr. Cianci, now retired from teaching in Victoria, wrote the 'Quotes and Comments' section of this magazine for several years.


DECEMBER 1974
THINGS TO DO: DEC./74
Note to self—
'74's almost over—need to reduce my 1974 income tax.
Check on B.C.T.F. Retirement Savings Plan—Teachers Co-op has info.
3
4
5
12
17
18
24
30
31
For details contact
B.C.T.F. Retirement Savings Plan
Box 3422 Station D, Vancouver B.C.
or contact your nearest
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