the B.C. teacher

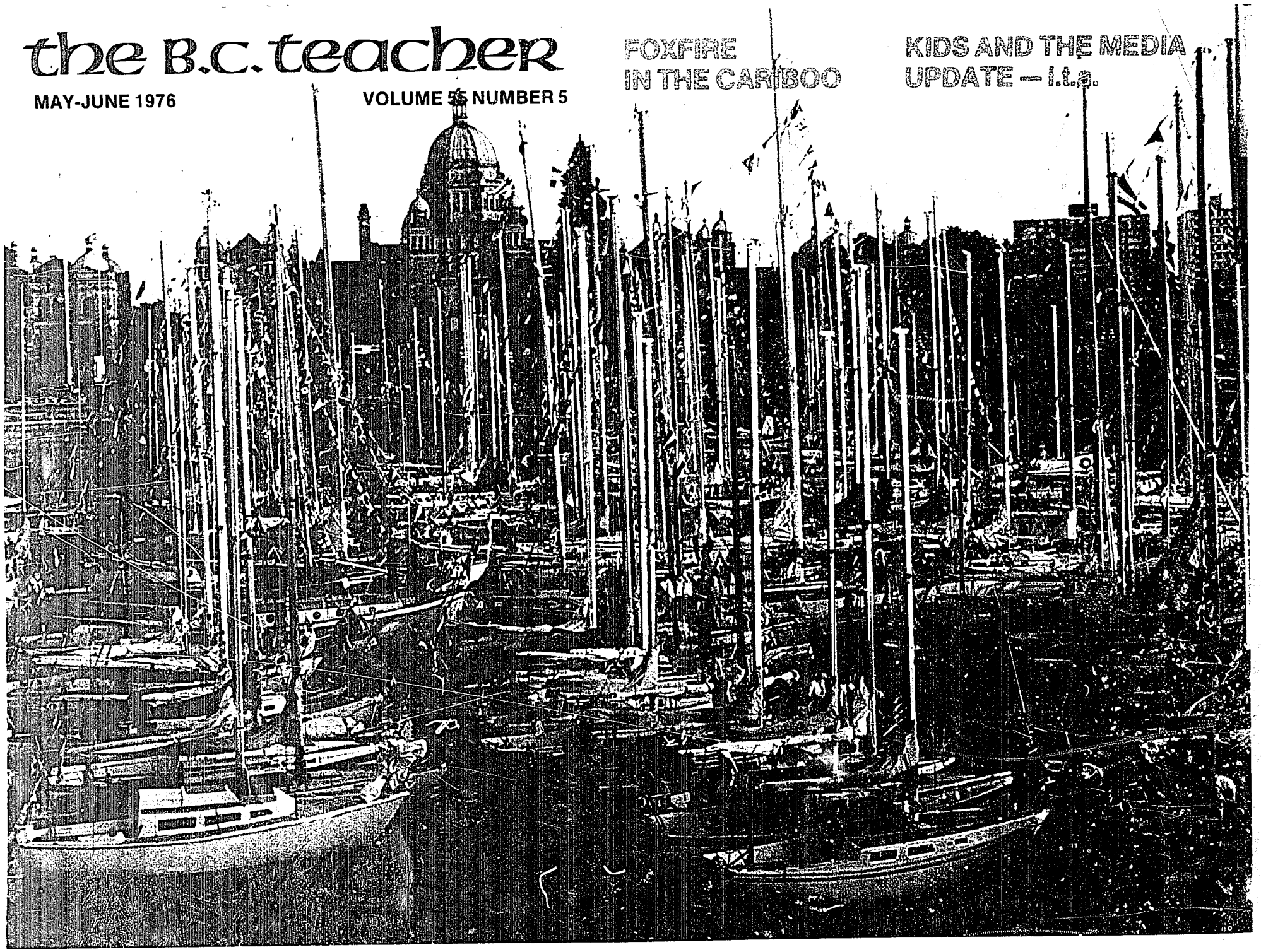
MAY-JUNE 1976

VOLUME 55 NUMBER 5

FOXFIRE IN THE CARIBOO

KIDS AND THE MEDIA

UPDATE — i.t.a.



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COVER PICTURE
'Night before Swiftsure, Inner Harbor, Victoria' was photographed by the late Irvine Dawson, who was principal of Victoria's Monterey Elementary School. The Swiftsure Race is an annual event, covering 136.8 miles from Victoria to Swiftsure Bank and back.

PHOTO CREDITS
Pp.150, 153—Kinga Biro; p.152—Craig MacCulloch; pp.156, 157—Ron Denman; pp.159-161—supplied by author; p.165— supplied by Frank Parrotta; p.168—supplied by author.

from our readers

Hazel's Help Appreciated

What a pleasant surprise it was to open my magazine and find an interesting article on such an interesting educator as Hazel Huckvale. The writer of the piece obviously knows Hazel very well.

I first met Hazel in 1969 when I went to Williams Lake as a brand new teacher. She was on the staff of my first school. After two years of teacher training I thought I was fully prepared for my job. After the first few weeks I found out differently!

But thanks to a friendly staff and especially thanks to Marie Sharp and Hazel Huckvale, I learned to be a teacher that year. Whether it was a question regarding curriculum or discipline, Hazel was always available with her good practical advice.

Those of us who knew Hazel were pleased when her ability was recognized and she was made principal of Glendale. This too was long before the days of women's lib!

I have since followed Hazel's career with interest and I wish her continued success with her community school and all future endeavors.

Irene Deschene
Duncan

Government Bookstore Has New Procedures

The Information Canada Bookstore in Vancouver would like to explain the ramifications of the federal government's cutbacks in December 1975 as they affect its operations.

Information Canada consisted of two sections, the bookstores and the inquiries service. The bookstores supply priced publications originating from federal government departments, together with selected publications issued by the United Nations and its supporting agencies, publications originating from the Governments of Australia and New Zealand, and from the Province of Quebec.

The inquiries section of Information Canada provided data on federal government programs and services, as well as carrying stocks of free publications for interested parties. The inquiries service has been shut down permanently and the free publications carried on our premises now must be obtained through their issuing departments in Ottawa if the branch offices of the particular departments on the coast do not carry stocks.

The publishing section of Information Canada, together with the bookstores, has been transferred to the Department of Supply and Services. Our name is now officially 'Canadian Government Bookstore.'

We hope that our customers will not be affected by the changeover. If catalogs on our publications are desired, please write for complimentary copies, as well as for any information you require on priced publications.

Roslyn Dixon
Assistant Manager
Canadian Government Bookstore
800 Granville Street
Vancouver, B.C. V6Z 1K4

To be considered for publication, letters should be approximately 300 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.

Evans Interview Enjoyed

I have just finished reading your interview with Stan Evans (Jan.-Feb.). It's a finely sensitive piece of writing, well tuned to the man.

Congratulations.

Terry M. Mullen
Executive Director
Joint Board of Teacher Education
Vancouver

New Canadian Magazine

I am a local teacher. Last year I started a new publication known as the *Canadian Short Story Magazine*. The intent behind the magazine is to provide an outlet for Canadian talent both student and adult. This effort is non-profit.

The magazine was well received and reviewed. *The Educational Digest*, Toronto, in its October issue states: 'The stories are of a consistently high quality, and the magazine is carefully planned and attractively packaged.' Other reviews have been equally enthusiastic.

Anyone interested in subscribing to this publication is invited to write the undersigned for further information.

Louis Burke, Editor
Canadian Short Story Magazine
Box 263,
Lethbridge, Alta.

An Outstanding Teacher

On April 15 I had the privilege of spending two hours with retired teacher George W. MacKenzie on his 103rd birthday. At the time of his retirement in 1938 I taught across the hall from him in Kitsilano High School.

Although his subject was mathematics, this was not the most important thing his students learned

WE SHALL MISS THESE TEACHERS

In Service	Last Taught In	Died
Evelyn (Bedard) Beaton	Nelson	August 21
Terence Bickerton	Langley	January 10
Viola Ruth (Young) Calder	Burnaby	August 24
Robert Bennet Malcolm	West Vancouver	November 29
Thirza Eleanor (Sopp) Smith	Nanaimo	January 27

Retired	Last Taught In	Died
Elizabeth J. (Nairn) Akers	West Vancouver	February 22
Jean (Dunnett) Bruening	Barriere	January 24
Margaret Cameron	Vancouver	January 7
Leslie Cantell	Castlegar	February 5
Mildred Clark	Oliver	January 7
Agnes O. (McLernan) Crichton	Qualicum	February 11
Helen C. J. (Ferguson) Dixon	Quesnel	February 20
Harold Warren Maclaren	Peace River S.	November 13
John G. Parker	Nanaimo	February 9
Evelyn A. Robinson	Vancouver	January 31

from him. He loved teaching and always believed the best about everyone. His kindliness, sympathy, deep understanding and honesty of thought and action endeared him to all who had the good fortune to be in his classes.

He had begun his teaching career at the age of 19 in Cape Breton and continued for 46 years. He kept young in spirit throughout and at the age of 60 took up skiing on Grouse Mountain.

He was and is an ornament to the teaching profession — a truly great man, an inspiration to his students and fellow teachers. We salute him!

O. M. Sanford
White Rock

Hear! Hear! . . .

Hear! Hear! Mr. Jacobi!

Every time *The B.C. Teacher* soils my post box, I am enraged that *my* dues (without my consent) are spent for such drivel and pap!

Bravo, too, for J. Lentsch who objects, as do I, to the BCTF policy opposing tax support for private schools. It's selfish, narrow minded and small.

As for the quality of education in B.C., I have rarely encountered such a shameful and incredible lack.

Ken Jon Booth
Prince Rupert

THESE TEACHERS HAVE RETIRED

The BCTF has received from the Superannuation Commissioner a supplementary list of teachers who have retired since January 1, 1976. We wish for the teachers listed below a happy future.

Rufus Redmond Earle, Maple Ridge
Dorothy Louise Edgcumbe, Vancouver
Jean Wallace Ferguson, UBC
Jack Boyard Fisher, Maple Ridge
Lyle Fraser, North Vancouver
Doris A. Gilbert, Vancouver
Jessie E. Graham, Mission
Roberta Hay, University Hill
Douglas Hibberd, Courtenay
Marold Laverne Johnson, West Vancouver
Alan Edward Jones, Victoria
Norma Joyce, Peace River South
Maurice E. Linnell, Victoria
Lloyd Douglas MacKenzie, Vancouver
Ross D. Magwood, New Westminster
Margaret Louise Mould, West Vancouver
Muriel B. Mould, Burns Lake
Dorothy L. Palmarche, Vancouver
Onaugh V. Painter, Victoria
Grant M. Paterson, Victoria
Denis Robert Stubbs, Cowichan
Ernest Edmund Teagle, Sooke
Irene Mae Tracey, Abbotsford
Derek Hickman Tye, West Vancouver
Florence B. Vey, UBC
Ivy Madeleine Wagner, Courtenay
Isabella M. Wright, Vancouver

A NEW GRIP ON THE LINES

Ken Meville is citizen of the year at 100 Mile House. No wonder! During the past two years he has lassoed the support of local artisans in reviving almost lost skills and crafts of the Cariboo for his students.

PAT DENHOFF

The writer is an editorial assistant in the BCTF Communications Division.

When physical education teacher Ken Meville, of Peter Skene Ogden Secondary School at 100 Mile House, was injured in an accident in 1973 he had to change his specialty.

He spent the ensuing year working with students as a learning assistant in career counselling and job training. This experience opened up a whole new sphere for him.

He thought about the students he had taught in the Cariboo during the previous nine years. He thought about the kind of education they were receiving and the kind of education he believed they should be receiving.

He came to two conclusions. He would actively teach in the Cariboo again and he would teach the students the subjects they most needed, and wanted, to learn.

He tested his idea first on the students he counselled, then took it to the ranchers and craftsmen of the area.

He was convinced.

'The most important thing in education in the Cariboo right now is to meet the kids where they're at' is the firm conviction of the 34-year-old, energetic, thoughtful teacher who turned an accident into a victory by producing an innovative, creative program of education that does just that.

He set about designing three courses attuned to the life style of the majority of students in Ogden School, and proceeded to sell his program to the administrators. Not much selling was needed. From principal Marvin Scott through to the district's school board, Meville's philosophy paralleled that of the administration.

The three courses he designed were Foxfire, agriculture and forestry.

All concerned agreed that if such a program were to be undertaken, Ken Meville was the teacher to introduce it.

Meville is not only a teacher. His spread — 62 acres of land four miles east of 100 Mile House along Horse Lake road — has become the 'experimental farm' for his courses. Meville has turned his farm, which lies well above the accepted agriculturally viable level at 3,200 feet, into a true testing ground for grain and forage crops, coaxing their growth from the thin veneer of glacially derived soil of the Cariboo highlands.

With his wife, Ken has constructed the beautifully crafted log cabin in which they live with their two sons.

He is accepted by the ranching community as 'one of us.' And during his 11 years in the Cariboo he has become completely familiar with the mystique that shrouds the rugged, rolling hills and forest of B.C.'s interior plateau, which has challenged the imagination of the 'land people' since the Overlanders first trekked along that engineering marvel — the Cariboo trail — in the 1860s.

Last September the three courses got under way.

FOXFIRE—A PRACTICAL COURSE

Originally Foxfire was set up as an experimental program. Patterned after the American program, which is based on an academic English course on hinterland survival, Meville decided to incorporate the practical aspects of the 'living off the land' philosophy in the program.

'We felt these aspects were being missed in our curriculum in this area because a lot of our students live this kind of life and those who don't would like to.'

To set up the program Meville recruited old-timers and other well respected artisans in the district to teach the skills to students. The response was overwhelming.

Trappers, guides, craftsmen throughout the district, who normally wouldn't look up to mumble a four-letter reply to a Lower Mainland holiday visitor, suddenly liked the idea of transmitting their crafts to the younger generation of their home territory.

From guides and trappers students have learned how to dress wild animals, to make use of fur and flesh alike.

'They skinned a bear. They gutted a bear. They cut up a bear. They cut up a moose. They made jerky,' reports Meville, describing the process by which beef is preserved by cutting it into strips that are cured by drying them in the sun.

Some old-timers came to the school to teach their skills; others preferred students to come, two or three at a time, to their homes, where they felt more comfortable talking and instructing, surrounded by the tools and trophies of their trade.

The schoolyard has become the center for the program. It is there Foxfire students have built a smoke house under the careful direction of local volunteers assisted by Meville, and have learned to smoke both fish and meat.

Craftsmen from the district came to teach youngsters to hew logs and notch them to dovetail into weather-proof cabins. Students have learned to split shakes, and to shake roofs.

The two log cabins are being built of peeler cores, rather than logs, because these are provided free by the mill. Peeler cores are what is left over after the lathe trims off the veneer for making plywood.

'Later on when we have snow problems we'll do models for a very practical thing called an outhouse. We'll install septic tanks. In fact, we'll do the whole shelter thing. Regardless of weather we are going to complete those log cabins.

'It's a bit artificial, but it does give students the fundamentals of log craft,' Meville says.

Foxfire, Meville explains, goes back to the basic needs of people — shelter, food and water — and how to get them.

It projects into areas of production of food, preparation of food and storage.

'Food is a big aspect,' Meville says. 'People nowadays think everything comes in cellophane wrappers.'

Both these students have an axe to grind.
They're ready to hew logs and someone's shouting, 'Hey, Good-looking.'

Meville metaphorically unwraps the cellophane that has blinded youth to the processes leading to food production.

'For example, the students have shot wild ducks, plucked them, gutted them, and then prepared them in different dishes.

'This takes care of students who haven't been exposed to the natural processes of production of food in agriculture and processing even on a small scale.

'They do everything pretty well from scratch. For example, they do root cellar construction and learn the various ways of preserving food — drying, storing and canning.'

The class had obtained an old wood-burning stove, which is used in a lean-to they have built in the outdoor cooking area. Not just Foxfire students use the facility. It has become a multi-use area; the cross country skiing class plans to use it for cook-outs, and all courses in physical education and guidance use it to instruct survival units.

Co-operation among the local industries has been 'tremendous' says Meville, and is particularly evident in the course in forestry. One of the most popular classes, it boasts 41 students, not because Marvin Scott wants it that way, but because Meville just can't say 'no.'

'We have had fantastic co-operation from the forest industry around here. Professional foresters have been sent over to give instruction and to provide field trips. And the industry has even offered a short course in heavy duty equipment in the future.'

FORESTRY — TO SUIT LOCAL NEEDS

The forestry course, at the senior secondary level, was not new to B.C. schools. Meville wrote to other centers in the province for information on the courses offered in their schools. After studying other local courses he went to pulp mills in the area and the Forestry Service to collect information. A trial course was then designed.

Throughout the pilot period sections of the course were tried and evaluated; if they were not successful, they were dropped and new sections written. Eventually the course was refined to meet the needs and desires of the students enrolled, but evaluation is an on-going process.

'A lot of students want careers in forestry either at the faller, bucker or loaderman level locally, or would like a course that would prepare them to go on to BCIT or UBC and proceed at the professional level.

'Previously we shoved an academic program at youngsters that really didn't give them what they need, that had nothing to do with the way they lived or their aspirations or life styles. Now there seems to be a feeling in the Cariboo that "no, this has been the wrong way to go." We must be realistic about what they want in life.'

Meville says educators have been 'very unrealistic in education, because we've lost a lot of our fundamental purposes for doing things and this fits in with everything that's a problem in the country today.

'We should be providing an education that kids can make use of year after year — maybe not as a way of making a living, but just as a hobby part of their life.'

Explaining the difference between the culture of the Cariboo and that of the Lower Mainland, he says, 'Youngsters in the Cariboo are not as sophisticated as those in large cities. They're not exposed to the panic that evolves in a city situation where a timetable pressure really exerts itself on kids.'

'The amazing thing here is their response to guest speakers. They will pin adults down,' and the questions they want answered, according to Meville, are:

'What do I need to get this job and hold it?'

'What happened to the lumber market?'

Much of the philosophy for the courses has been developed from the salty wisdom of the old-timers who teach them.

Students love listening to the remarks of people like Max Searle (whom Meville describes as 'trapper extraordinaire, homesteader, faller, hunter') as he talks about the axe he's just shown them how to 'edge.' 'She won't shave, not quite but purt near.'

Kenneth Higgins (Mahood Falls rancher and former big game guide) inspires their respect, too, with such homilies as: 'Some folks go at life just as if they were trying to push a logging chain uphill, and they're just about as successful.'

AGRICULTURE FOR THE CARIBOO

The agriculture course, which has attracted 32 to 35 students a class, is in many ways an extension of the Foxfire class.

It centers on the production of food — particularly in the Cariboo.

'You see, the Cariboo is unique,' Meville explains. 'We're above the 3,000 foot level — a lot of the Cariboo — which makes us nonagricultural. And yet people insist on trying to do things in agriculture here. So we'd better smarten up fast and find out ways of doing it — if we're going to make a living at it.

'Of course, ranching has always been a big thing, but there are other things that can be done.'

There is an urgency about developing methods of land use at this altitude, because of the number of young people

who plan to establish themselves in the area. The trend to the city has been reversed and the Cariboo is now being invaded by back-to-the-land proponents between 20 and 50 years of age.

'There are a number of young people who have this back-to-the-land urge, but they have absolutely no skills. They're going into it blindly and getting badly bruised.

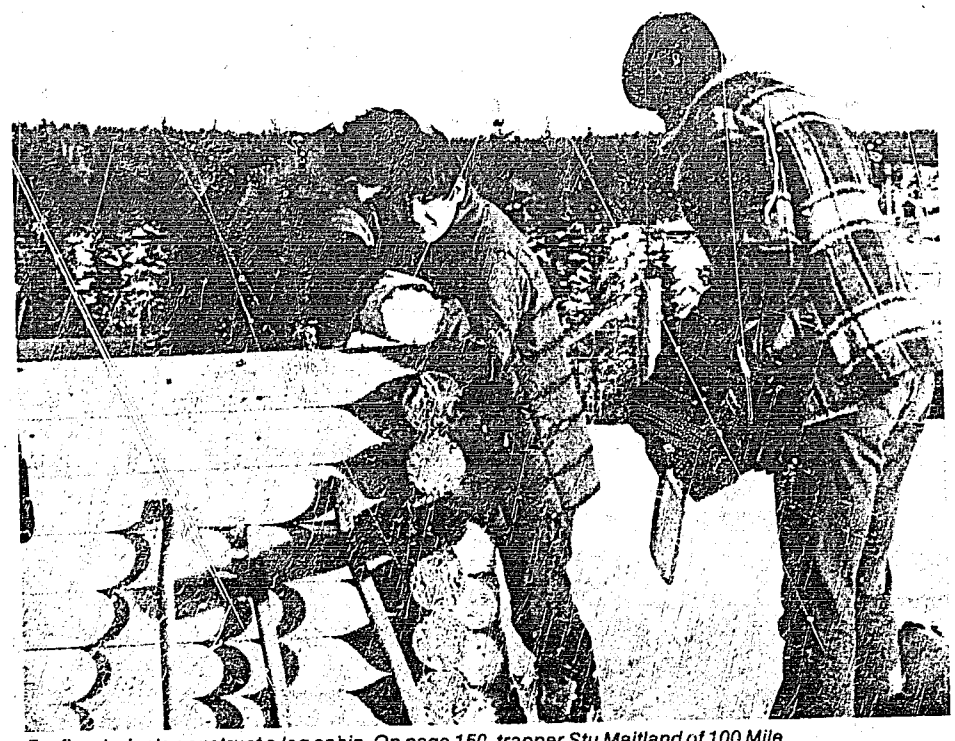
'They don't have the basic skills necessary to live off the land or the knowledge of the country they're living in.

'They can do English, French and math and everything else, but they can't do what they need to do to make even a weak attempt at returning to what is really a very simple way of life.

'Kids from the ranches have it, of course. But many come from ranchettes — children of parents who have bought five acres up here to "get away from it all."'

The course designed for the students has now attracted many of the parents.

'These people have bought cattle and horses — they own five acres of land and the livestock are in a lot of trouble because the people raising them don't understand what they're doing. So suddenly this class has become an "open" class, and we have adults driving in from all over the area to study along with their children.'



Foxfire students construct a log cabin. On page 150, trapper Stu Maitland of 100 Mile House demonstrates the art of broad axing to the Foxfire class.

Kim Van Tine and Cindy Johnson enjoy the 'spoils' of a Foxfire session on building campfires and outdoor cookery.

To date the course has concentrated on experimenting in forage crops and grain crops. In the compound (also on school land) built by Foxfire students, the agriculture classes are involved in planting test plots.

'We're doing some really interesting experiments in forage crops and grain crops out there in the compound. We're planting test plots for fall rye, winter wheat and some of the newer, early strains of oats. Everyone feels you can't grow grain in the Cariboo because of frost problems and altitude. But various old-timers, again using natural local skills, have done it for years here and there.

'The price of grain in agriculture now — to import it — is not practical. If we could use some of these miracle strains in the grain revolution and make them work in the Cariboo . . .

'There is no experimental farm at this altitude that we know of in British Columbia because it's considered just a hopeless case. But, as you know, in large portions of the world there are thousands of people who live above 3,000 feet and live very well.'

Meville recently learned about an interesting experiment being conducted at the 7,000 foot level in New Mexico in an all-weather greenhouse production unit. He is eager to duplicate these experiments and has been promised facilities by the federal Department of Agriculture — when funds are available.

Because most of Meville's students plan to remain in the Cariboo, he is dedicated to providing them with as complete a basic course as possible.

When his students had constructed corrals, they informed him that they wanted to form a cattle company. He backed a bank loan so they could purchase a few head of cattle, which they raised, experimenting and researching as the cattle grew to maturity. One of these steers has been slaughtered at the school and completely processed by the students without adult supervision.

The courses have presented many surprise elements, not the least of which is the number of female students who are taking them. Of the 30 students in the Foxfire class, 50 percent are female. In agriculture the ratio is 60/40, and of the 41 students in forestry, five are female.

For Meville, who likes to think of himself as a 'traditionalist,' the courses have provided a whole new perspective on education — one of involvement. Not just by student and teacher, but by student, teacher and the public. He recognizes the desire of the public to contribute more than just tax money to education.

'Education needs all the help it can get. When members of the community have assisted in some way, in some program going on in the school, suddenly they feel, "Gee, this is *my* school. I've taught in it."'

Victoria has more junior secondary schools than any other school district.

In 1974 I did a research study[1] on the city's junior secondary schools and found, to my surprise, that parents, teachers, students and administrators were very satisfied with those schools.

My study attempted to examine the junior secondary schools as perceived by the four groups mentioned above, to identify and assess problem areas, and to make recommendations for improving this type of schooling.

This article summarizes and condenses the study. I think you will be as interested as I was in the findings.

There is a sort of professional mystique that holds that the junior secondary years represent the most difficult and demanding period in the educational cycle, for all parties concerned.

If this belief is shared, junior secondary schools operate under some sort of stigma or cloud. A demimonde inhabited by denizens who are neither elementary fish nor secondary fowl.

This is where the discipline problems are most frequent, where the endocrine storms of adolescence rage most furiously, where the awesome transition is made from the hypothetically warm supportive environment of the child-centered elementary school to the hypothetically harsh impersonality of the subject-centered secondary system.

In any event there seems to be some agreement that junior secondary schooling is a transitional phase between the more general, more custodial and more child-centered emphases of the elementary years and the more specialist, more terminal and more subject-centered emphases of the senior secondary school.

A major function of these transitional years is supposed to be that of 'exploration'; the student is expected to explore different areas and aspects of the curriculum, to begin assuming personal responsibility not only for his behavior, attitudes and values, but also for making career and program choices that may affect his entire life. Somewhere, too, along this way he passes that point at which school attendance ceases to be compulsory.

Moreover, these years are ones that Whitehead has characterized as being particularly susceptible to romanticism[2] and, as any educator, parent, or simply adult with a good memory can aver, they represent a period of life that at times is 'difficult.' Deep moods and storms of emotion are not unknown, energy and vitality levels can fluctuate widely, and coming to grips with the world of maturity can be a reluctant and rebellious enterprise.

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

The parties concerned with the junior secondary schools fell into four groups: parents, teachers, students and administrators. In total this population amounted to approximately 17,000 people. The four groups were randomly sampled for both questionnaire and in-depth interview procedures.

Among the student population Grade 10 pupils only were elected on the ground that these students would not

The writer is an associate professor in the Faculty of Education at the University of Victoria.

The Junior Secondary School is alive, fairly well, and living in Victoria

CHRISTOPHER HODGKINSON

Junior secondary schools are in a mess, right? Wrong—at least in Victoria.

only be more mature in their responses, but would also be fitted to pass a valid judgment upon the system by virtue of just having progressed through it. They would therefore have a unique perspective and one of special intimacy and recency.

For the purpose of the study administrators were defined as principals of the schools studied together with the assistant superintendents for administration and for curriculum. Vice-principals were considered as belonging to the teacher group.

Rates of return of the questionnaire instrument for students, teachers, parents and administrators were 73%, 86%, 68% and 83% respectively. The interview material was collected with a near 100% rate of return, even from subjects who refused to respond to the questionnaire. Most interviews were conducted on a face-to-face basis in the home or school setting. It seems reasonable to state, therefore, that the data assembled permit generalization to the population studied.

It was hypothesized that evaluations of the junior secondary school system would vary differentially between the four groups. In addition to this main hypothesis some 50 exploratory questions were developed in the structure of the research instrument.

GENERAL LEVEL OF SATISFACTION

The major question had to do with the perceived level of adequacy of the junior secondary schools. Interviewed respondents were asked about the *status quo* and their perceptions are summarized in Table 1.

The interviewed sample was also questioned as to the perceived merits and defects of the junior secondary school and these responses are summarized in Table 2.

The division of opinion and perception proved to be interesting. By and large, though the analysis is complex, students and administrators tended to unite in perceiving the *status quo* as favorable (the major break in these ranks is on the issue of discipline: the administrators perceived a serious problem, the students did not), while teachers and parents formed the other more or less united front. This basic division held up in the statistical analysis of the questionnaire returns.

All parties perceived the quality of instruction and the variety and scope of the curriculum as being very positive. Indeed, with regard to teaching it can be said that, by and large, the teachers were admired, respected and liked. Teacher

Table 1
PERCEPTION OF ADEQUACY OF JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS

	Teachers	Students	Parents	Administrators
Status quo is good	30%	59%	31%	64%
Status quo is satisfactory with reservations	26%	8%	17%	0%
Status quo is not satisfactory	44%	33%	52%	36%

relations took prominence of place among the strengths of the system as perceived by students. The curriculum also ranked high and libraries took pride of place over peer group relationships.

From the standpoint of the system's most important clientele it would be hard to mount any devastating critique of the schools! Indeed, perhaps we more senior citizens who write and ponder such reports as this might well refresh our vision from the side of youth. The tenor of the times conditions us toward a critical or jaundiced orientation, to a reflex prejudice against the *status quo* and 'the system.' There was little trace of such biases in the student sample interviewed.

On the negative side, however, a substantial proportion of parents and teachers were concerned about declining standards of literacy, about ability to calculate and about student attitudes, values and motivations. Many teachers were dissatisfied with the preparation children receive in the elementary schools, and all groups felt that the train g of junior secondary teachers should be improved.

GENERAL FINDINGS

The general findings of the study can be condensed and summarized as follows:

There is a broad range of perceptions about the junior secondary school that discriminates between the groups studied.

This spectrum can be conceptualized in various ways, as ranging from permissive, person-oriented, progressive, etc., at one extreme to authoritarian, work-oriented, conservative, etc., at the other. It should be noted, however, that all these terms are not only value-saturated, but are semantically obscure and politically divisive.

Within this spectrum of opinion students tend toward one extreme and parents toward the other.

The classical generation gap is revealed.

Within this spectrum of opinion administrators tend to align themselves with students and teachers with parents.

This rather sharp division was unexpected and contradicts the conservative stereotype of educational administrators. The rather close alliance of teacher-parent perceptions was also somewhat unexpected and has implications for policy-making when it is thought important that parental values be taken into consideration.

The students and administrators are the most, and the parents and teachers the least, satisfied with the general performance of the schools.

Table 2

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS

STRENGTHS

Teachers	Students	Parents	Administrators
Quality of instruction (and teachers)	Teachers and teacher relations	Quality of instruction (and teachers)	Curriculum (variety and scope)
Curriculum (variety and scope)	Extraschool activities	Curriculum (variety and scope)	Teachers and instruction
Students	Curriculum (variety)	Good intentions (they try hard)	Students
Student-teacher relations	Status quo (general present arrangements)		Facilities
Academic content (for better students)	Physical education and sports		
	Libraries		
	Peer group relations		
	Freedom and flexibility		

WEAKNESSES

Teachers	Students	Parents	Administrators
Defective preparation in elementary schools	Curriculum	Low standards ('fun' orientation)	Curriculum
Disciplinary problems	Teachers and teaching	Student attitudes	Students (attitudes and aptitudes)
Student motivation and aptitude	Electives (all non-academic)	Incompetent teachers	Grade placement
Poor teacher preparation and training	Rules and regulations	Counselling	Teacher training
General climate of permissiveness	Overemphasis on physical education	Overemphasis on sports and competition	Community relations
Lack of 'alternative schools'	French	Failure to teach literacy	Impersonality
The place of academic content	Extracurriculum (not enough dances)	Inadequate trades preparation	
Lack of moral or values education	Too academic	Lack of teacher-parent contact	
Poor administration		Citizenship (neglected)	
		American texts	
		Teacher training	
		French (too much)	
		Curriculum (too rigid)	
		Administrators	
		Elementary preparation	

A substantial proportion of parents and teachers are concerned about declining standards of literacy, numeracy and student attitudes, values and motivation.

A substantial proportion of teachers are concerned about the productivity and performance of the elementary school system.

A substantial body of adult opinion is concerned about a perceived decline in morality and confusion in social and juvenile values.

Notwithstanding these negative perceptions, the level of dissatisfaction is relative to the context, and a balanced judgment would indicate that the overall consensus is one of approbation.

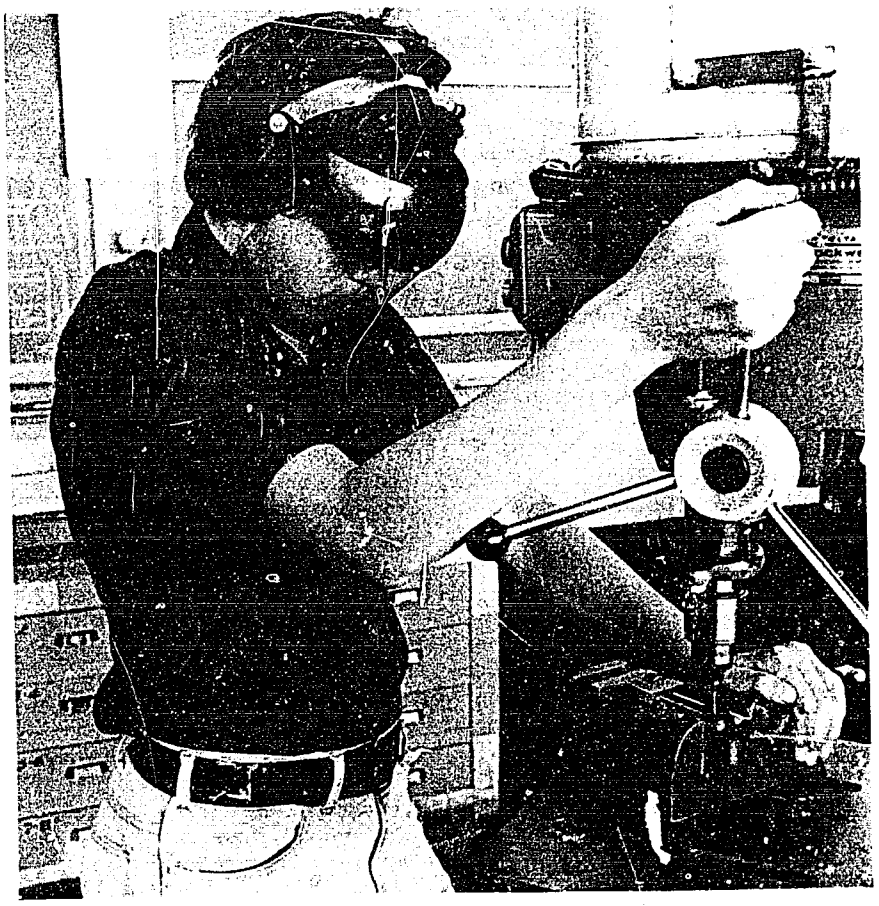
The mass of students like their teachers and appreciate the status quo.

There is a widespread consensus that the exploratory function of the junior secondary program is being adequately fulfilled.

This is surprising in that much conventional criticism is to the effect that this is precisely the function that is *not*

Reading music is a basic skill for these students.

On the other hand, the sound of music to this student is the drill.



being fulfilled. There was a minority concern among students, however, that most of the program electives are of a nonacademic rather than an academic nature.

There is a general adult consensus that a discipline problem of some gravity exists.

A view not generally subscribed by students, but where it was perceived by them it was attributed to permissiveness on the part of teachers.

All groups expressed some perception of deficiencies in teacher training for this level of the public schools.

The major strengths of the junior secondary schools lie in the quality of teachers, teaching and curriculum.

All parties expressed appreciation of the difficulty of the teaching task at this level and admiration for the professional teaching staff. The balanced judgment and affection of students for their teachers was particularly noteworthy. And very gratifying!

There is a perceived need, especially by students and parents, for better articulation of the schools with the field of work and employment.

A sizeable proportion of the parent and student communities look upon this level of schooling as terminal, at least in

Continued on page 170

The Canada Connection

The last of a five-part series on Delbrook Secondary School's 1974-75 project Travel Beat: Canada. **This month our travelers come home through Hong Kong and Siberia.**

the long way home . . .

C. K. WILLIAMS

■The midnight sky of Hong Kong harbor glowed in a colorful display of pyrotechnics accompanied by a cacophony of sound — blaring auto horns, deep-throated ships' whistles, sirens and joyous shouts of 'Happy New Year.' 1975 had arrived and *Travel Beat: Canada* began its sixth month of travel, filming and, of course, relating 'The Canada Story.'

As Rodney Bruce McCarrell and I stood on the deck of the Ocean Terminals, the colony's fabulous arrival-departure pier for cruise ships, overlooking the dazzling lights of Victoria City, the Peak and Hong Kong Island, our thoughts naturally turned homeward and to the future of our expedition. Here we were, celebrating 16 hours before Vancouverites would greet the same new year.

We had left the heat of Perth, Western Australia, where Aussie students were beginning their summer vacation, and had flown to Singapore for a three-day Christmas break. We landed amid one of 'The Lion City's' frequent equatorial downpours.

The Christmas spirit was very much alive in this former trading post of the East India Company, a predominantly non-Christian country (Singagpore today is completely independent of Malaysia). Images of Santa Claus, Christmas trees and decorations were everywhere.

Now we were completing the holiday season in Hong Kong, preparing for our return to Canada the long way—via Siberia and England. And it was here we completed all arrangements for the journey—one I had long dreamed of taking . . . especially in mid-winter!

As usual, we lost no time in contacting the Department of Education and renewing an acquaintance with the Assistant Director of Secondary Education, Robert Cameron.

This young Scot had come out to the Far East while in the British Army during the rehabilitation of Hong Kong after the Japanese surrender. He was so attracted by the educational challenge in the colony that he returned as a civilian to teach, to administer and finally to become Assistant Director.

During our 2½-week stay in Hong Kong we visited a cross-section of schools — public, private and the unique roof-top schools. It was staggering to realize that over 40% of the colony's 4.2 million people are under the age of 15, and that approximately 98% of school-age children attend regular schools, run by the government, by churches and some by private organizations, including Communist Chinese schools.

In Hong Kong we found no free, compulsory education. Fees for public schools range from $1 to $7 Cdn a month. Parents must provide both books and uniforms; therefore it was often difficult for parents to find school accommodation they could afford.

As in most of South East Asia, many schools operate on a shift system — the first running from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and the second from 1:00 to 6:00 p.m. There are also evening schools.

Because there are no regional boundaries to which students must adhere, they attend the school of their parents' financial choice — and it may be located many miles from home. It was nothing to see students carrying their books and briefcases on buses or even the harbor ferries late into the evenings.

Unfortunately, many students drop out at the age of 13 or 14 to work — discouraged by lack of school accommodation, lack of funds and support from parents who too often don't encourage their children to stay in school. They would rather have the children work to earn money to help pay the family food bill or the rent.

There are also those parents who desperately want their children to have an education and sacrifice in every way to make it possible. Many such parents never had the opportunity themselves and are willing to work almost around the clock — for precious little, often going without the necessities of life themselves to keep their children in school.

With the possible exception of the private schools for European children, we were much impressed by the clean-cut appearance students, by their manners, by their respectfulness, but above all by their sincere desire to learn and get ahead. There seemed no need to worry about 'school spirit'; it was there.

BILINGUALISM STARTS EARLY

In most schools instruction was in English; in others it was completely in Chinese; in yet others both languages were used. Here was certainly a step in creating bilingualism among the younger generation.

Greater emphasis is now being put on technical schools and colleges, even using automated 'teaching machines.' The philosophy of Harold Schmidt, of Concordia Lutheran School, seems to reflect the problems facing Hong Kong youth.

'Much of the current thinking among Hong Kong's youth tends to look down in a degrading way on factory or industrial work or other common labor. Our schools have the responsibility of helping youth develop attitudes that recognize the value and dignity of all forms of honest human labor, and that show a genuine respect for the laborer as a fellow human being making a constructive contribution to society's needs. Once the right attitudes are there, it will help in the total outlook of Hong Kong's future.'

By far the most fascinating visits were those we made to the roof-top schools. These are soon to be a thing of the past, to be absorbed by the public school system as funds and space become available.

They were established in the roof-top 'penthouses' of the first mass of six- or seven-story concrete complexes known as resettlement estates for the masses of refugees slipping across the border of mainland China.

Built in 1954, these estates are real examples of communal living, for about 2,500 people reside in each block, generally in one-room units, with no private washrooms, bathrooms, elevators or central heating. The one-room 'apartment' in these original structures consisted of a 10 ft. by 12 ft. cubicle to house five adults or two adults and up to six children! Rents vary between $3 and $6 Cdn. The average monthly income of these low-income families came to $45 Cdn.

It is no wonder that these families cannot afford to send their children to public schools. Hence the need for subsidized schooling at the kindergarten and primary levels. The subsidization has come from various churches, the Hong Kong Christian Services, World Service, and other sources.

The very latest buildings in the Resettlement Estate program are vast 12- to 15-story structures, with private facilities, elevators, built-in basement marketplaces and playgrounds for the children. But no roof-top schools, for these buildings are for the lower middle-income bracket, the rents ranging from $6 to $12 Cdn.

All of these resettlement complexes are easily identified by the long, horizontal poles of washing hanging out to dry. There just isn't any other place to dry bedding and laundry. Each building becomes colorfully festooned with what have commonly been called the 'flags of Hong Kong.'

Our hostess for a look at the roof-top schools was a small, fragile, silver-haired woman whose appearance belies her 70-odd years. Mrs. Vyvyan Donnithorne, missionary and director of the West China Evangelistic Band, which she and her late husband had organized in 1939, was enthusiastic about the work her small group of teachers was doing.

She had chosen to visit the Shek Kip Mei resettlement area of Kowloon, which happened to be the first such resettlement estate developed in 1954 after a disastrous Christmas Eve fire in this former squatter area that made 50,000 people homeless in one night.

We labored up the concrete steps to the sixth floor, passing elderly and middle-aged housewives doing their communal ironing with old flat irons — right out in the open hallway, amid the dank odors of raw, damp concrete. Once on the top floor, Mrs. Donnithorne introduced us to a charming young teacher who lined up two rows of meticulously dressed 7- and 8-year-olds to entertain us with songs.

'I can't begin to tell you,' said Mrs. Donnithorne, 'what tremendous work these Chinese teachers are doing for us. Without them, we simply couldn't carry on.

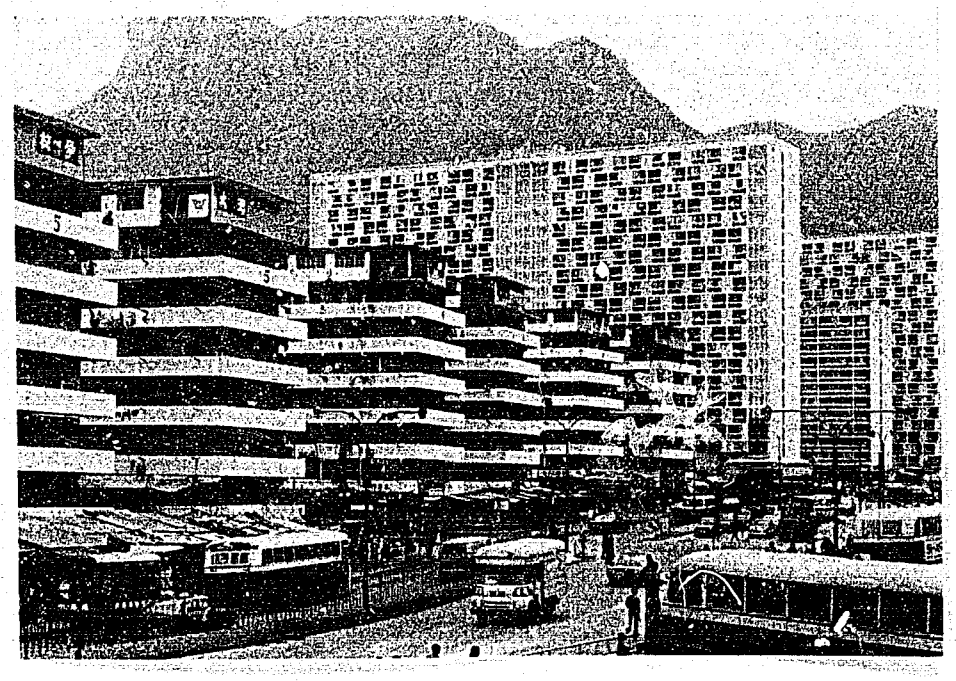
'We have six full-time teachers in each of our two blocks, four student teachers and two evangelical workers. Four teachers have living quarters right here in the block and are therefore on the job at all times.'

The young teacher motioned us to look into a small drab side-room. There sat a youngster about nine years old, studiously making Chinese characters in his notebook with a newly-sharpened pencil.

'That's not by any means an unusual sight,' she said. 'They'll work under any condition if it means a little more schooling.'

At her insistence, we accompanied Mrs. Donnithorne on one of her weekly

A contrast . . . the old and new Resettlement Estates, Kowloon, Hong Kong.



Children of the kindergarten class at a roof-top school at Kowloon, Hong Kong.

visits to the 'Walled City.' This is, in essence, an eight-square-block area of slums in the heart of Kowloon, on the mainland portion of Hong Kong and within three blocks of the screaming jets at Kai Tak Airport.

When this area was given over to the British, this small fortress city was left under the jurisdiction of the then mandarin government, with a magistrate in charge. Eventually the magistrate left, and any semblance of law and order quickly vanished. At that time, the walled city was probably the only city in the world without some organized government. Today, control is gradually being assumed by the present government, and only recently have members of the Hong Kong Police Force been allowed in.

Walking through the dark narrow passageways, Mrs. Donnithorne always had a friendly, cheery greeting for the gaunt, haggard people who work and live in this seemingly subterranean hell. It is impossible to imaging such a dreary, depressing place . . . its narrow alleyways hardly wide enough for two people to pass. No sanitation and, often, no piped water.

At our feet as we picked our way precariously through these narrow chasms were open sewers and drainage. The stench was at times unbelievable. Here people actually worked, lived and raised children.

'The garbage and slops are thrown into these open trenches along the pitch-dark alleys. A few years ago the dead were just piled beside the latrines for daily pickup,' remarked Mrs. Donnithorne. 'This is the secluded habitat of thieves, gamblers, prostitutes, dope add[illegible] the desperately poor.'

Yet t[illegible]oman still supervises the sc[illegible] her late husband establis[illegible]e top three floors of an eight-story converted concrete structure looming from the depths of the Walled City. She walks unafraid.

Rodney Bruce asked Mrs. Donnithorne if hers was a rewarding job.

'Rewarding?' she exclaimed. 'I should say it is. These children are more than anxious for every bit of education they can get.'

We both realized we were witnessing yet another aspect of education, certainly one that required true devotion. With the aid of world-wide donations and the devotion of such outstanding people as Vyvyan Donnithorne and her staff of young teachers, the work of rehabilitation goes on.

This has not been the tourist approach to Hong Kong, but if future visitors want to see the humanitarian, behind-the-scenes social work and special education being undertaken for the underprivileged, the handicapped, the sick, they should contact the Hong Kong Christian Services in the YMCA (Kowloon), two blocks from the Star Ferry Terminal. The visitations are free.

As our JAL flight lifted off the runway at Kai Tak, we took with us two weeks of vivid impressions that will remain with us for some time to come. We now had a date to keep with a Russian ship in Yokohama.

Our one week in Japan allowed no time for school visitations, but we enjoyed to the full the hospitality we received.

At Yokohama we boarded the yacht-like M.S. Baikal for the 2½-day voyage to Nakhodka, 35 miles east of Vladivostok. Fortunately the seas behaved as temperatures dipped noticeably at the northern end of Honshu and across the Sea of Japan. The bitter winter monsoons blowing from the heart of Siberia carried the occasional snow squall.

The sun shone through a cold milky sky, however, as our vessel edged its way through harbor ice at Nakhodka, the seaport for foreign shipping that was created after the closure of Vladivostok to foreigners in 1955, One consolation — no sign of snow on the barren windswept hills around the port.

With a minimum of customs delay, toques in place, ski jackets and Cowichan Indian sweaters zipped to the top, we proceeded by bus to what turned out to be the 'boat train' that would take us on the 15-hour overnight trip to Khabarovsk to join the daily Trans-Siberian Express that originates in Vladivostok.

FANTASTIC TRAIN TRIP

What a fantastic first-class sleeping car! Brass fixtures, mahogany paneling, chandeliers, thick carpet, red velvet upholstery, complete with semi-private facilities. Most certainly a pre-revolution vintage car!

At noon the next day, after a two-hour stop in Khabarovsk, we boarded a more austere, clean and very functional first-class Trans-Siberian coach (built in East Germany in 1971) along with 12 other non-Russians . . . Australians, New Zealanders, Germans, Japanese, Americans. Most of these people were going straight through to Moscow, a 7½-day trip.

I strongly recommend that prospective travelers break their trip at any number of centers en route and allow two or three days in each. I had arranged three-day stops at both Irkutsk and Novosibirsk.

It was hard to imagine that on that double-tracked line at any one time there were 16 Trans-Siberian Express trains of 14 cars each (eight in each direction) as well as local passenger trains and freights (passing eastbound at what sometimes seemed like 10-minute intervals).

There is no better place to be a part of Russian life than on a train . . . hence the fun of wandering through the six-berth hard-class section, where men lounge in their track suits and women make sandwiches from food bought at kiosks on the station platforms.

Each of the sleeping cars is in the charge of a conductor — usually a woman. Her many duties are

complicated in winter by her having to stoke the small furnace at one end of the car, which supplies heat by ducts to the rest of the car. Although there are 95 stations along the route, only at the longer 15-minute stops does she replenish her coal supply from scuttles on the station platform.

When that is done, she uses a hatchet, ice pick and hot water bag to clear away the build-up of ice and snow around the washroom outlets beneath the car. All this in 15 minutes, day and night for 7½ days!

Once aboard, the conductor must make sure the fire is going under the hot water urn, for she will soon be around to your compartment with a glass of hot chai (tea), at no charge.

The dining car menu is in English as well as Russian, so all one needs to do is point to the desired item; the items marked with a price may or may not be available, however. The quality of the meals was generally good, but variety left much to be desired. Most Russians seemed to enjoy borsch, beefsteak and eggs, chicken and wine three times a day, including breakfast!

We were met with nothing but kindness, albeit some curiosity, the entire time. Even a limited knowledge of Russian would have helped us, for the people were so anxious to communicate with us and we with them. We exhausted our sign language and pidgin English, to say nothing of developing the greatest skill in charades. The trip is not designed for everyone; it's mainly for the young at heart and the adventurous who can take things as they come.

Note the carved shutters of the log Isbah at Irkutsk, Siberia. The 'wooden villages' of Siberia belie the impression of sterility Westerners have of the vast northland of the Soviet Union.

The snow-covered, rolling hills of Siberia were covered with great stands of birch, poplar and various evergreens, punctuated by collective farms and 'wooden villages.' Many houses sported TV antennas. Occasionally tremendous bridges carried us over such frozen expanses as the Amur, Ob and Yenesei rivers. Many of the smaller rivers became winter highways as lines of truck traffic moved from village to village.

The Siberian countryside was not unlike that of Quebec or Ontario. Canada's prairies in winter look far more inhospitable.

Our six days in Irkutsk and Novosibirsk were most worth-while. There we enjoyed the opera, a regular circus as well as an ice circus. Again we met people who were much concerned about our well-being in the clear but chilly (-20°F) weather. They didn't realize how warm ski jackets, Cowichan Indian sweaters and Siberian fur hats could be.

WE'RE ALMOST HOME

After five fascinating days in Moscow, a two-day rail journey brought us to Ostende, Belgium. Then two weeks in southern England, by air to Toronto and to Ottawa for a brief visit to the Parliament Buildings and our local M.P. — we were almost home. But not before another three-day rail trip.

In all we had crossed four continents by rail, driven 18,000 miles and completed a circuit of 52,000 miles!

What did we achieve by it all? Frankly, not as much as we had hoped. But we are richer by several thousand slides, several boxes of source materials, books, pamphlets and many artifacts. Above all, we are richer in wonderful memories and innumerable contacts.

Through our school contacts we hope in the very near future to establish all sorts of educational exchanges in the form of teaching aids, texts, tapes, pictures, culture artifacts and possibly even a limited exchange of students.

The student-to-student approach went well, if only we had been able to sustain the arrangement financially for a longer period. The Commonwealth Institute in London showed extreme interest in the idea of student involvement in 'The Canada Story.'

As a final word, my thanks go to John C. Lee and Rodney Bruce McCarrell for being excellent ambassadors of their country and their school.

Food for

It is becoming more and more clear how physical growth, general health and perhaps more importantly, mental development, is closely related to eating habits.

As a teacher, it is important for you to be aware that the eating patterns of the children in your class can affect their learning ability and behaviour.

Teaching nutrition and good eating habits may well be one of the most valuable contributions you can make in preparing your students for life.

It is the belief of the B.C. Dairy Foundation that, if in their early years, students are provided with sound nutrition knowledge, it will carry into the home and stay with them for life.

As an aid to improving the eating habits and nutrition knowledge of B.C. children, the B.C. Dairy Foundation conducts "Big Ideas"—free nutrition education workshops for the teachers of children from Kindergarten to grade seven. During the last two years more than 2,500 have attended.

thought.

"Big Ideas" in Nutrition Education consists of two workshop programs, one designed for Primary teachers and one for Intermediate teachers. Each program is based on four behavioral objectives appropriate for students at either the Primary or Intermediate level.

The workshops provide teachers with:

1. **a practical background in good nutrition.**
2. **a program of classroom teaching/learning activities—fun ways to integrate nutrition into the present curriculum.**
3. **lesson plans and all the necessary basic visual teaching aids (designed to age groups) for use in classroom activities.**

The education program and the techniques used have been tested and shown to be effective in both the U.S.A. and Canada. The workshops last four hours and are most successful when scheduled for Professional days. We invite all K-7 teachers to participate in our nutrition education program.

For more information please contact any one of our nutrition educators.

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THE B.C. DAIRY FOUNDATION

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Phone 294-3775

A handful of teachers are struggling to convince people of the urgent need for media courses.

There's a telephone, radio and television set in almost every home in British Columbia, and enough programmed material, old movies and newscasts to occupy the average mind for about two hours a day.

There are about 550,000 children registered in the province's schools, but fewer than two percent of them receive any education about the media that exercise such a powerful influence on their lives.

The great majority of our children, when they reach the tender age of six, embark on an incredibly long trek through Canadian culture that takes up much of their youth and precipitates more than a few into premature middle age. How many of them get the chance, as they grow into adulthood, to understand media?

Our children should be trained to be as skillful in understanding the language of the screen as they are with the language of print. We have a need for 'mediacy' in much the same way as we need to be literate.

We, or at least our children, should be as adept at using cameras, telephones and tape-recorders as we are with words, and as alive to the con games of commercial television as we can be to the inanities of cheap magazines and bad novels.

The provincial education system would be doing its students a great service if it recognized that an essential function of school is to prepare children for the unnerving and overwhelming world of electronic communication.

During the past two years I studied the state of media courses in B.C. What follows are some of the main findings of that study.

Close examination of what goes on in B.C. schools reveals some interesting things about media courses and the people who teach them. In 1965 only one school in the province offered its students the chance to study modern media; by 1972 that number had risen to 35; today there are 82 media courses in 31 school districts, involving approximately 10,000 children.

On paper that seems to be a considerable advance, yet media courses still involve only two percent of the children in this province.

Furthermore, most of the schools offering media courses are in affluent urban and suburban areas.

How have the province's media teachers fared in their attempts to introduce media and machines into education? Contrary to what is often assumed, they have fared extremely well — in fact the 48 teachers in the province who admit to having no formal university qualifications in audio-visual education have fared no worse than their colleagues who have formal course experience.

In elementary and junior secondary schools there is a common approach to media courses; the untrained teachers run most of the pure media courses and the trained teachers integrate audio-visual media with traditional programs. Many media courses are closely linked to language arts, drama and social studies programs in elementary and junior secondary schools, and 8mm film is the most commonly used medium. Interestingly, teachers who lack university training in media use film the least and photography and video the most.

There is an explanation for this

The writer is a member of the Faculty of Education at the Univeristy of Victoria.

Above, camera enthusiast 'shoots' drama class production. At right, she studies the film she took of the play.

History, drama and media blend into the perfect mix for a learning experience.

apparent difference in method of the teacher who has university training in media and the teacher who has not. Seventy-five percent of the media teachers in B.C. who have *not* done university media courses *have* been trained — often very thoroughly — by the National Film Board, whose approach to media is somewhat different from that of a professional school of education.

What are media courses like? Lord Selkirk Demonstration School in Vancouver provides the most complete picture of what is possible in the field of modern media. Its name alone indicates why it would be heavily endowed and possess an inventory of audio-visual equipment that is the envy of most university media departments.

What is most interesting about this school is the way in which its library staff have integrated audio-visual media into the library system, and defined a librarian's role in terms of all resources rather than just books. Librarians are seen as people who design school library programs, stating objectives, organizing and evaluating; they plan instructional programs, and are constantly available to anticipate, to answer, to prod, to question, to excite, to encourage, to stimulate pupils as they use the library for recreational and exploratory reading, viewing, listening, etc., and for individual and group projects.

SOURCES OF FILMS

At other elementary schools, many different kinds of media classes are conducted. At Windermere Elementary School television programs are utilized where possible to supplement existing courses in all subjects. This school has obviously found a considerable number of sources for film and tapes, including the BCTF, MacMillan Bloedel, Shell and the Department of Forestry. It is worth noting here that there are more than 70,000 films and tapes available from such companies and departments in Canada.

At Kent Elementary School in Agassiz the media program, under the direction of John Winstanley, "evolved from a play therapy group in order to help children work in a group and produce a group project, i.e., the finished film. The children concerned had social and emotional problems, and had great difficulty working with each other . . . filmmaking and videotape were used as motivation. Petty differences and argument diminished as the children became involved with the program, and as a result a good film was produced, and the children derived a great deal of satisfaction from the experience."

The extensiveness of elementary school media programs is evident in the program at the Arthur Stevenson Elementary School in Kamloops, which offered until recently a three-month course incorporating camera techniques, filming, script-writing, analysis of action, acting, editing, sound tracks and basic animation. The school is currently involved in a photography program.

CREATIVE DRAMA

Another interesting use of media is at Hellings Elementary School in Delta, where film production was used as part of a creative drama course and where teacher George Lenz is currently exploring video production with his students — another example of the emphasis placed on integration of all media within personal experiences.

Media courses in many junior secondary schools are very well developed. At Delview in Delta, there are courses in animation and graphics communication and plans are being made for the students to begin television production next year. At Central Junior Secondary School in Dawson Creek, films and video tapes are being used as part of math, English, social studies and industrial education programs. At a considerable number of other schools, courses in film and television production have been developed as part of regular programs — as, for example, at J. N. Burnett School in Richmond.

At Brocklehurst Junior Secondary School in Kamloops, each student may elect one of five communications courses (cinema, journalism, communications, speech, photography) and, upon successful completion, elect to take two more courses in the same field. This is one of the most extensive programs in the province.

At Hugh McRoberts Junior Secondary School in Richmond, a graphic arts course was in operation for three years, and incorporated 8mm filmmaking and animation. The school had an entry in the B.C. Amateur Filmmaking Festival recently. Currently, under the direction of Richard Kaczor, the school offers students the opportunity to discuss the social and aesthetic characteristics of television and film.

It is still a source of wonder to some educators why such comprehensive courses as these are not part of every school program. Fewer than 40% of this country's people regularly read books, and time spent on newspapers rarely exceeds a quarter of an hour a day. Yet in spite of a national average of over two hours a day television viewing per person, including children, the vast majority of schools and school boards completely ignore the teaching of media comprehension.

What sorts of problems do media teachers have? Strangely enough, lack of equipment is not nearly as much of a problem as might be expected — an indication perhaps that some principals and school boards have responded rapidly to the needs of successful media programs, and that many district resource centers and ETV studios are increasingly well equipped. When compared to media teachers' complaints of lack of support from colleagues, all other problems appear to be relatively minor ones.

In the elementary schools the only significant problem experienced by those teachers without any formal training was a lack of equipment — a factor that could conceivably be linked to their own knowledge. Indeed, some untrained elementary school teachers listed their own lack of training as their major problem. It is perhaps worth noting that these problems were hardly mentioned by the trained teacher.

At the junior secondary level the main problem is a lack of money. Many of the media teachers in the senior secondary schools are well-trained and experienced and in charge of fairly sophisticated systems (seven secondary schools in the province have their own television studios; many others have easy access to closed-circuit television and several school districts have well-equipped and lively ETV centers), and with these people, equipment problems, while ever-present, were not rated a major hindrance to activities.

NFB HIGHLY RATED

Perhaps the most interesting point to emerge from the study concerns the relationship between media teachers and the various organizations and institutions within the province that are either directly linked to the education system, or are primarily concerned with media, like the National Film Board and the CBC. Most intriguing of all is the way the National Film Board is so highly rated by most media teachers.

Elementary school teachers indicated that, in general, they received more constructive support from the National Film Board in the form of films, magazines, and, in some cases, course advice, workshops and visits, than they did from any other source, including their own media centers. The lowest rating the NFB received — from university-trained senior secondary

teachers — was the equivalent of 'Fair' — which alone put it ahead of most school boards, many district resource centers, the elephantine CBC and the Department of Education.

Both local school boards and the Department of Education are seen by many media teachers as obstacles to the development of media courses and activity in the province. The major area for complaint about the Department of Education was its overall ineffectiveness — the unreliability of film delivery, lack of service to rural schools, and the age of some of its films.

One cannot, of course, really blame anyone whose dominant experience of electronic media comprises the meaningless, directionless images that flit across most of our television screens each day, for exercising caution when asked to finance a school media course. It may be, in fact, that the CBC and other television stations must share responsibility for the presence in this country of an attitude toward media that regards it largely as trite, patronizing and vulgar, and that, naturally enough, has difficulty going along with any attempts to entice innocent children into that shallow, noisy commercial game called television.

If, for example, it were part of the Canadian heritage that television viewers had available a continuous source of all that is best in cinema and video, instead of all that is worst, it might well be, as in several European countries, that the nation as a whole would develop a love of the arts and crafts and language of the screen, rather than a contempt for it.

In such an atmosphere it is inconceivable that a handful of teachers would be struggling to convince a province, and a country, of the urgency of teaching our children to understand media.

The Bullock Report says take another look at i.t.a.

A British Government Commission reports that 'the best way to learn to read in traditional orthography is to learn to read in the initial teaching alphabet.'

JOHN DOWNING

The writer, currently in Britain, is a professor in the University of Victoria's Faculty of Education. He has written for the magazine previously.

A very important government report on education in England was published in February of this year, the first such report to be devoted to the teaching of reading and related language arts.

The actual title is *A Language for Life*,* but its popular name will be The Bullock Report after the chairperson of the Commission, Sir Alan Bullock, F.B.A., a Vice-Chancellor of Oxford University. His committee included many 'stars' of the world of reading and the teaching of English: Professor J.N. Britton, W.K. Gardner, D. Mackay, Professor J.E. Merritt, Vera Southgate, Professor J. Wrigley, and others.

The report is very wide ranging, covering the whole field of reading education and instruction in English from the preschool stage to the college level. Because many teachers in B.C. use i.t.a. to teach the beginning of reading and writing, I have chosen this aspect for discussion in this article.

THE COMPLEXITY OF ENGLISH

Early in its report the Bullock Committee establishes that English orthography is very complex, and that this complexity causes serious difficulties for beginning readers:

'Of much greater importance in this matter of establishing relationships

* *Department of Education and Science, A Language for Life* (The Bullock Report). London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1975, 609 pages, price five pounds.

between letters and sounds is the fact that there is no simple correspondence between the 26 letter and the 44 phonemes. If one were intent on constructing a writing system from scratch the obvious course would be to aim at a one-to-one correspondence between phonemes and graphemes, the grapheme being any letter or combination of letters which represents a single phoneme. Some idea of the ways in which written English falls short of this alphabetic ideal may be seen in the following examples:

(i) one home comes women of or to do

(ii) aisle height eye I phial ice high island buy guide sty rhyme

'In the first example a single letter is seen to take on eight different values in different contexts. In the second a single phoneme is spelled in 12 different ways, and indeed other spelling could be added if less common words were included, e.g. ind*ict*' (pp. 85-86).

The Bullock Report goes on to cite other evidence of the special difficulties of learning to read in English. For example, the study by Berdianski, Cronnel and Koehler (1969), which 'examined the 6,092 two-syllable words among the 9,000 words in the comprehension vocabularies of a group of six to nine year old children. They recorded 211 different spellings for the phonemes in these words, and these required 166 rules to govern their use. Over 10 per cent of the words still had to be left aside as "exceptions". Sixty of these rules applied to consonants, which are usually thought to be "regular" ' (p. 86).

What is the effect of all this complexity? The Bullock Committee's conclusion from the research evidence is that 'we must emphasize that this level of decoding *is* of particular importance in the early stages of learning to read, and the complexity of English spelling patterns does appear to retard progress' (p. 87). How can this special difficulty in learning to read English be overcome?

'THE BEST WAY . . . IS . . . i.t.a.'

The above subtitle is an accurate abbreviation of the Bullock Committee's reply to the question at the end of the previous paragraph. These are the details:

'. . . we have already noted the bewildering complexities of the English spelling system, and it is self-evident that a simplification of the relationship between sound and spellings must make it much easier for a child to make progress in the early stages. If there are fewer items to be learned this alone must reduce the time required, and if there are fewer ambiguities there will be less confusion. All this is amply confirmed by research. Following a careful review of the evidence the authors of the Schools Council Report on i.t.a. came to this conclusion:

"There is no evidence whatsoever for the belief that the best way to learn to read in traditional orthography is to learn to read in traditional orthography. It would appear that *the best way to learn to read in traditional orthography is to learn to read in the initial teaching alphabet*" ' (p. 110 italics added).

This conclusion may seem rather long winded to someone who is not familiar with the chief feature of education in England — the local autonomy of each individual state school. Each school is free to choose the instructional methods and materials its principal and teachers believe are best for the boys and girls in their school. Hence a school using books printed in t.o. (traditional orthography) must be doing so because its teaching staff believes that t.o. is best. But the research evidence proves them wrong. On the other hand the belief that i.t.a. is best *is* supported by the evidence of research.

The Bullock Committee accepts the

evidence from the Schools Council survey of the research. All the many scientific investigations conducted have shown conclusively that t.o. is an important cause of difficulty and disability in reading. Therefore, teaching reading with books printed in t.o. is hazardous to children. On the other hand, Sir James Pitman's Initial Teaching Alphabet has been found to raise standards of reading and writing and to cut down the incidence of reading failure by a substantial proportion.

For example, the Bullock Report states: 'Children tend to learn quickly how to spell in i.t.a. and they then have ready access to almost every word in their spoken vocabulary. The value of this for language experience activities is obvious. When groups of t.o. and i.t.a. children were matched in the British experiments, the writing produced by the latter was of consistently higher quality' (pp. 111-112).

Anxieties over the transition from i.t.a. to t.o. in reading, writing and spelling have proved unfounded in research and actual practice. The Bullock Report states that 'there is no evidence of adverse side effects at a later stage' (p. 112).

NEGATIVE ATTITUDES TOWARD i.t.a.

Despite the wealth of evidence demonstrating that 'the best way' to protect children against the hazardous complexities of t.o. is to use i.t.a. for initial instruction, negative anti-i.t.a. attitudes persist in the teaching profession. The Bullock Report recognizes this fact: 'The general reaction of many teachers to i.t.a. (the initial teaching alphabet) has been rather negative, and only 10 per cent of our sample schools containing infants were using the medium' (p. 110).

There was even disagreement among the members of the Bullock Committee itself. Thus they say: 'As a Committee we are not unanimous on the value of i.t.a.' (p. 112). Nevertheless, all members of the Bullock Committee put their signatures to the whole Report, which includes all the quotations given in this article.

TAKE ANOTHER LOOK AT i.t.a.

The Schools Council Report made the interesting observation that there was a correlation between attitudes toward i.t.a. and actual experience of i.t.a. in the classroom. The most positive attitudes were held by teachers who had tried i.t.a. The most negative attitudes were held by 'experts' who had never seen i.t.a. in use.

The Bullock Committee, in keeping with the British tradition of local autonomy in education, and on the basis of all the research evidence favoring i.t.a., recommends that 'schools which choose to adopt it should be given every support' (p. 112). But of even greater importance is the Bullock Report's call for professional fair-mindedness in this matter:

'We also feel that teachers should examine the question of i.t.a. on its merits. We hope they will make their own objective assessment of the various arguments for and against, and not accept the tendentious statements that are still made by some of its advocates and opponents' (p. 112).

These two conclusions seem appropriate for i.t.a. in B.C. too. Are the B.C. schools that have chosen to adopt i.t.a. being *given every support?* For example, when will the B.C. Department of Education place i.t.a. materials on the officially approved list? Will more B.C. university professors of education and elementary school principals look beyond tendentious pro and con statements and examine the research evidence more objectively?

Junior Secondary Schools

Continued from page 157

the sense that youth will leave public schooling temporarily for a shorter or longer sojourn in the work force. The existence of regional colleges with their 're-entry' facilities was sometimes quoted as justification for this attitude.

Adult and youth constituencies have cross purposes and divergent priorities for the junior secondary schools.

The former rank learning skills and general intellectual development first, while the latter are more concerned about career preparation.

There is no substantial level of dissatisfaction with the accomplishment of official purposes.

Despite cross purposes and despite pockets and areas of dissatisfaction the general consensus was that officially stated goals were being attained. Analysis of data on this and other isssues did, however, show up major divergencies of perception between parents and their children.

Literacy and work skills are perceived as the curricular areas most in need of stress.

More emphasis was suggested in these areas and, relatively, less in the areas of art, music and French.

Subject to specific critiques the status quo *is approved.*

A surprising finding if the conventional wisdom is accepted. A logically defensible alternative is that the Greater Victoria junior secondary schools are uniquely superior.

The *modus operandi* was also vindicated; e.g., students approve of grading and attendance practices. Some strenuous criticisms were offered by parents and teachers with regard to permissiveness and lack of standards and there was a discernible back-to-the-strap movement. Again, arguments were made in favor of streaming procedures, more academic programs, more special education, etc., but the overall weight and mood of opinion was one of approbation and general satisfaction.

It should be noted, of course, that these findings are encapsulated and heaviiy concentrated. For full validity of interpretation they need to be considered in the context of the unabridged report. Nevertheless, they may be of interest to professionals as they stand, and they are substantiated by the statistical data.

EDUCATION IS DIFFICULT TO ASSESS

The educational enterprise is peculiar. Unlike commercial undertakings, it is difficult to assess in terms of an underlying objective reality and process that can be quantified and reduced to periodic balance sheets and statements of profit and loss. Its content is subtle, intangible, protean; its processes are not understood. They are reached for but not grasped.

Its goals are elusive and sometimes delusive. Its raw material is a flow of bodies that can indeed be arrayed and counted and classified, but its field of action is the mind. And that is subjective, private, personal, phenomenological, and not so susceptible to easy manipulation, Professor Skinner and others notwithstanding.[3]

This study sought to assess the state of educational reality in the junior secondary years of public education in Greater Victoria, circa 1974. It probed the perceptions of the chief contributors to this reality and it found that these perceptions and the purposes that underlie them were crossed and mixed.

Divisions of opinion were discovered, some of them running deep, some of them trivial. Yet, for all the cross perceptions and cross purposes, the data show an overriding consensus and, *mirabile dictu,* an overriding satisfaction.

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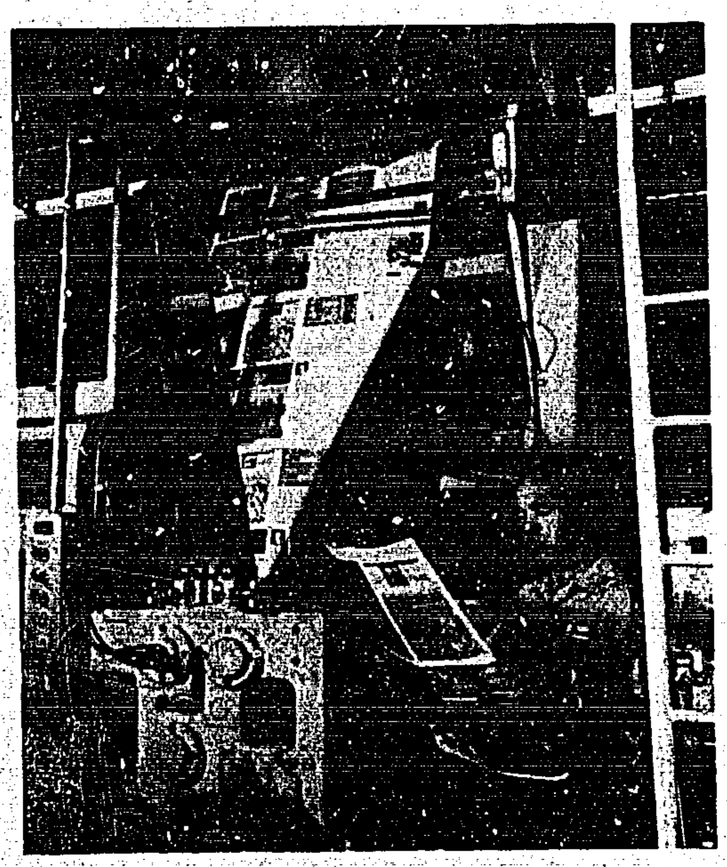

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devil's advocate

L.H.G.

Last issue this column discussed the new teacher education program for native Indian teachers. This month's column continues that discussion.

WILL IT SUCCEED?

■ Will British Columbia's new teacher-training program for native Indians succeed in its goals? And if it does, will this assist in increasing both the school retention rates and the achievement levels of Indian children?

It is, of course, a bit too early to tell. Certainly there are preliminary indications that the training aspects of the program may succeed. Fifty-five students enrolled in September 1974. As of February 1975, only four had dropped out. Last fall, 40 of the original 55 registered for their second year. In addition, 45 new student teachers enrolled for the first year of the program.

The course is a four-year one, the final two years of which are to be spent in academic work at the university. The real test of the program's holding power will come in these latter years, particularly in the final one.

More importantly, while one must give full credit to those initiating the program, there seems to be a sort of tunnel vision on the part of the whites who, in the final analysis, have overall supervision over the program's organization and content.

It seems that what is contemplated is to add a group of thoroughly 'acculturated' Indian teachers to the province's pool of fully qualified teachers. 'They will be fully certificated to teach *in any school* in the province,' states Dr. Art More, of UBC's Faculty of Education, under whose general supervision the program is operating.

While this may help those individuals who manage to forsake their own distinct heritage and philosophical outlook, it may not prove that beneficial to Indian children as a whole.

One gains the impression that even Dr. More is dimly aware of this. 'The toughest thing is to help them retain their Indian-ness and their culture and also to give them the professional skills that white society demands of its teachers,' he points out.

One would think that a basic aim of the whole exercise would be to give them professional skills needed to be effective teachers for their own native youngsters. The idea of Indian teachers trained to teach Indians from the background of their own history, culture and value system seems somehow to have been lost in the shuffle.

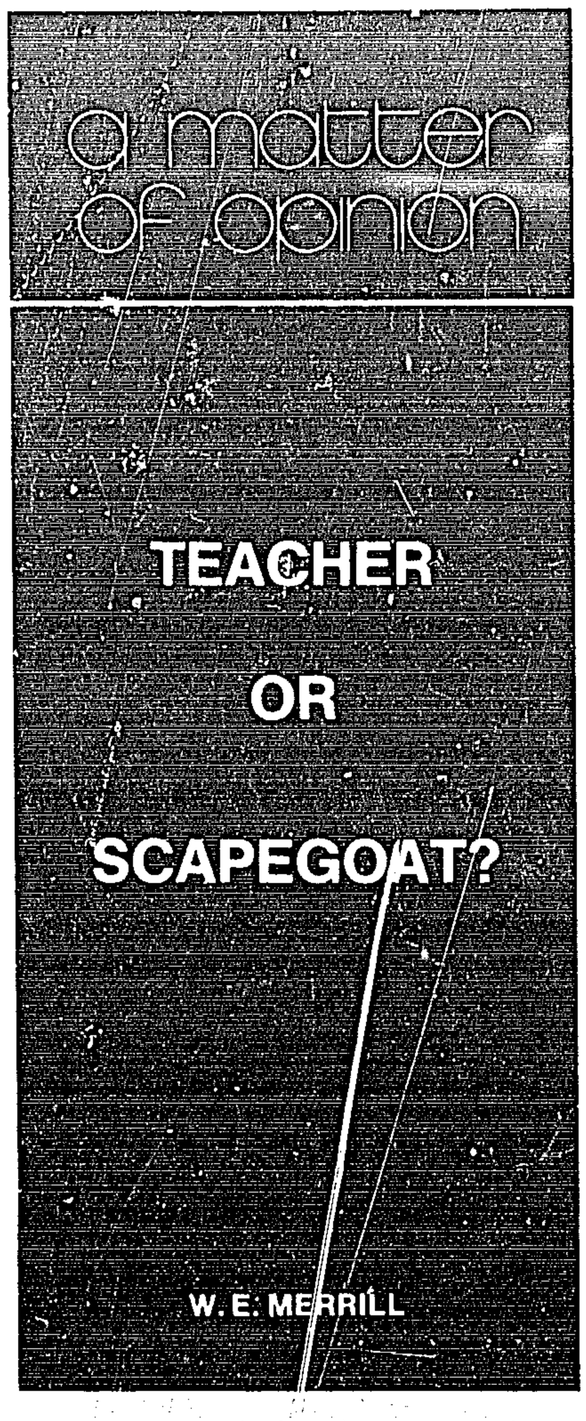
The truth of the matter is that equality is being equated with sameness. What is being stated is that Indian teachers cannot be equal to white teachers unless they become interchangeable with white teachers.

But how can they become interchangeable without losing their Indian-ness and culture and donning white attitudes and values in the process? As James Wah-Shee, president of the Indian Brotherhood of the Northwest Territories, put it recently. 'The most basic right of any democracy is the right . . . to stand up and name the world in terms of one's own experiences and traditions' and not in terms of someone else's.

Other problems are likely to arise. How are Indian teachers to be assigned to instruction of Indian children, even assuming school boards prove sufficiently enlightened to hire them in the first place?

Are Indian pupils to be segregated within the school for the purpose? Or are they to be withdrawn from regular classes for a scheduled portion of each school day? Or will they remain scattered among a sea of white children who happen to be taught by an Indian teacher?

The establishment of Indian school districts with Indian school boards and Indian-run schools under their jurisdiction may be the answer to such problems. A precedent has been set, which may prove a model for other Indian communities, in the establishment of the Nishga school district in northern B.C. The experiment bears watching.



■ The annual spasm in the universities over matriculates' illiteracy is with us again.

This occasions a flurry in the press; a variety of attacks on the schools; and, if the government feels flush, a conference among teachers, of teachers, teachers of English, and deans of education, to see what can be done.

Nothing of significance, of course, ever is. Strident calls for a return to sentence diagramming and corporal punishment exhaust both patience and analysis.

Meanwhile, illiteracy grows, not because of poor teaching, but because it pays. We invest more of our wealth in developing and sustaining illiteracy than in eradicating it. We even agree that private money spent to generate it be tax deductible.

The vehicle for this, of course, is advertising-public relations. The language crafts of these professions have been permitted to dominate virtually the entire stream of mass-consumed public language, including school texts and other teaching materials.

And these crafts are the crafts of illiteracy. Their specific research and development goals focus on ways to convert the language into a device to elicit behavior without conveying information.

This aspect of advertising-public relations, the technical craft, the evolution of manipulative technique, passes by most of us unnoticed. We might be amused at the crude hokum of razor blade demonstrations on sandpaper, or the irrelevancy in using the star of a high-rating TV detective series to push a variant of ASA.

GOVERNING ETHICS REVEALED

But this is only the surface. It reveals the governing ethics, but not the available sophistication. Hokum is pursued at deeper levels of subtlety and abstraction, aimed at more diffuse and long-range effect.

For example, the recent change by the world's largest oil company from its historic and familiar name to another, carefully tested for its public impact. The name change was followed by a massive advertising campaign telling of the historic accomplishments of this company from the earliest days of petroleum pioneering to the present, with no mention at all of the previous identity. This was a clear attempt to rewrite the history of the company, omitting all the anti-trust prosecutions and robber-baron reputation.

Another example, equally political but aimed differently, involves a recent venture by a large forest products firm. Some six pages of text and pictures appeared as an advertisement in national magazines, and was also put up in booklets that appeared in the schools.

This material was an illustrated essay on modern forest management,' presumably as applied by the company. The presence of one word in the text, easily overlooked by any but the fanatically wary, left the question open as to how much of the company's actual management policy is predicated upon the described principles.

Thus the reader is given a bit of information about the biology of conifers, and is left with the quite false impression that he has been told something about company policy.

This is not to say that the company is mismanaging forests. It is only to say that its use of language creates an impression without conveying information, and leaves the public in a predicament that is somewhat worse than ignorance.

All this has come to be expected in the world of commerce, but the public may not yet generally recognize the extent to which the same agencies are employed by government, political parties, churches, schools, anyone or any organization with money and an interest in using their wiles to manipulate public information and opinion.

Nor is the public generally aware of the close historical, organizational and technical ties between advertising and psychological warfare. For at least a generation they have shared technique, personnel and purpose.

As children come gradually to sense this ambience of corruption, what could be expected but cynicism, generalized cynicism, about adult attempts to inform them? When adults are obviously cynical about informing themselves and each other?

The radical change in the children that I feel over the last 25 years is the onset of this cynicism, a tendency among both 'good' students and 'poor' students to play school as an empty game. They may play it well or sloppily, but the emptiness is the same.

The youngster is increasingly rare who will admit to seeing value *per se* in anything done as school work. School is apparently rarely seen as a place where one acquires important information. For that, one talks to peers. But since the level of information among peers is atrocious, the basis upon which youngsters act is thin soup indeed.

This information vacuum is not being filled from other sources. Television, including news and documentaries; films and video tapes at school; movies; radio; these are all perceived as entertainment. This is hardly surprising, since media producers perceive them as entertainment also.

One measure of this is the stunning salaries commanded by those who know how to make a television news show sufficiently entertaining to challenge Walter Cronkite's ratings. In such an endeavor, of course, journalism takes pot luck.

PLAYING THE SCHOOL GAME

In a word, kids are tending to remain illiterate because they see no compelling reason to take the printed word seriously, except as needed to play the school game as long as they are determined, coerced or able to stick it. Perhaps they tend to stick it until (1) they see some more engaging way to spend their time, or (2) they get so sloppy in their game playing that they wash out.

A large but undeterminable number become so demoralized by these repellent choices that they retreat into the safer havens of physical and mental disability. That this group is not larger

The writer is secondary hospital and home visiting teacher in Nanaimo.

testifies to the resiliency and strength of children.

If the foregoing has validity, and to me it has over the years become glaringly apparent, certain formidable implications present themselves.

The first is that youngsters do not take seriously the efforts of adults to educate them because the adults don't take those efforts seriously either. If we did, we should not have allowed the wholesale corruption of language to happen. We should not have allowed the main channels of information available to us all to become vehicles for hypes, under the general direction of those whose professional skill and interest is in withholding information for pay.

In the schools we try to teach arithmetic and other mathematics, the language of numbers, one of the richest and most powerful aspects of our inheritance. Pitted against us is the advertising industry, inventing and selling ways to use numbers to confuse and subvert meaning.

WE TRY TO TEACH LITERACY

We try to teach literacy, the mother tongue, the conveyor of culture and values, of tradition and identity. Pitted against us is the advertising industry, inventing and selling ways to corrupt and pervert the language into a weapon that can be turned against a 'target population' (their term, not mine).

For every dollar we spend in teaching the real language to our children, we spend scores if not hundreds in perverting it. If the children reduce their involvement with language to 'like wow,' and anaesthetize their senses with bubble-gum rock, maybe they are seeking survival strategies with rather acute intuition.

Second, and the necessary corollary of the first, the situation cannot be altered very much by bringing back the strap, diagramming sentences or otherwise tinkering with the school alone. The adults who run the schools are part of the adult world that has condoned and co-operated in the perversion of the language and the available streams of information.

To become worthy of being taken seriously we shall have to be actively committed to cleaning up our own act. We shall have to reject the PR notion of image in our own lives and once more get concerned with substance.

We shall have to stop accepting the corruption of our mother tongue as necessary to economic well-being and orderly politics.

We shall have to use whatever individual and collective clout we can muster to organize opposition to those forces in the adult world that stifle life opportunities and compel cynicism and distrust.

I think it highly likely that any substantial commitment by the teaching profession to these goals, regardless of immediate successes or failures, can do more to earn reciprocal commitments to learning on the part of students than any amount of psycho-therapy or curriculum juggling.

Such commitment, however, would entail overt acts and risk, and what should these acts be? I cannot say. I can only suggest, as far as my thinking has gone, with no pretense of certainty or exhaustion of possibilities.

First, I suggest that all commercially prepared teaching materials be subjected to searching review in our professional literature. The preparation, publication and marketing of school textbooks is probably already irretrievably corrupted, but until the bulk of them can be phased out, teachers and students should at least have access to competent reviews. Any hint of this being seriously undertaken should strike terror in the hearts of authors, publishers and promoters.

THE SUBTLE HYPE

Films and all kinds of instructional programs should receive the same treatment, with special emphasis on those provided free by some agency with a propaganda axe to grind. The possibility of the subtle hype, of pawning off elaborate commercials as documentaries, is awesome and should be systematically attacked.

Industry pays thousands of dollars a page to get advertisements in national magazines, and we then accept the same ads free as instructional materials in the schools, and don't charge a cent. These things are no doubt potentially useful in the schools, but we should at least group them on a shelf clearly labeled 'industrial propaganda.'

Outside the school, we should be using the available political and judicial channels to attack those forces that undermine the work we are commissioned to do in the schools.

For example, it might be possible, through our professional organizations, to bring class-action law suits on behalf of novice language learners to enjoin the development and use of syntactical and numerical devices designed to subvert meaning.

Or, if we are to believe our Public Health people that malnutrition, contributed to by heavy advertising of junk foods, damages children, perhaps we might seek judicial injunction against such advertising.

AVENUES OF CHILD ADVOCACY

Other promising avenues of child advocacy will no doubt occur to others, as will objections to those suggested here. But it seems to me that the prospect of winning such actions immediately should not be a consideration in whether or not to initiate them. That should turn on the question, would it be in the interests of children and the real purposes of the school if they could be won?

It has become a cliché to observe that industrial society is increasingly inter-related in all its parts. But the effect on the school is real, cliché or not.

To a steadily increasing degree, forces and agencies outside the school affect and define what goes on inside. If we, teachers with direct responsibility for the experiences of children under our care, are to exercise influence commensurate with that responsibility, we must participate in the control of those outside agencies as they touch the school.

Otherwise our teaching role will continue to decline in proportion to the growth of our role as scapegoats. And I, for one, believe that I shall have earned my horns.

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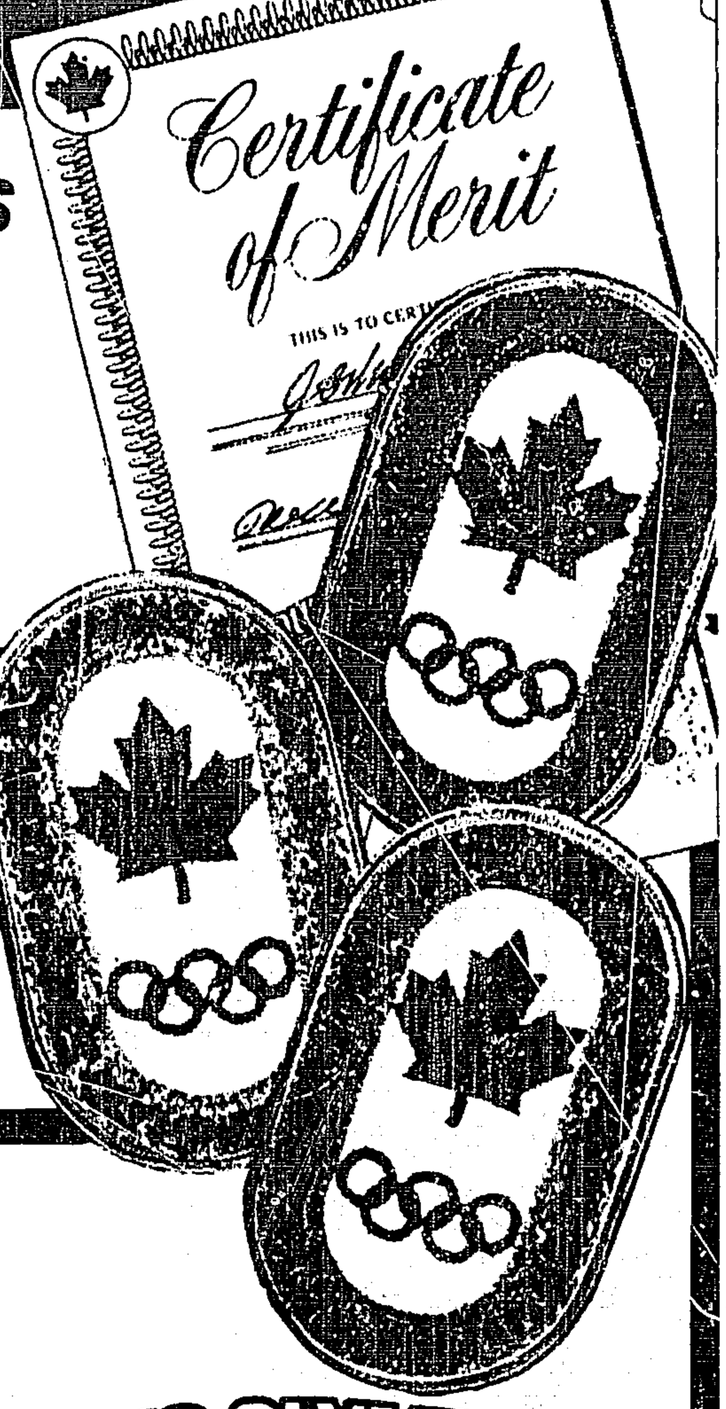

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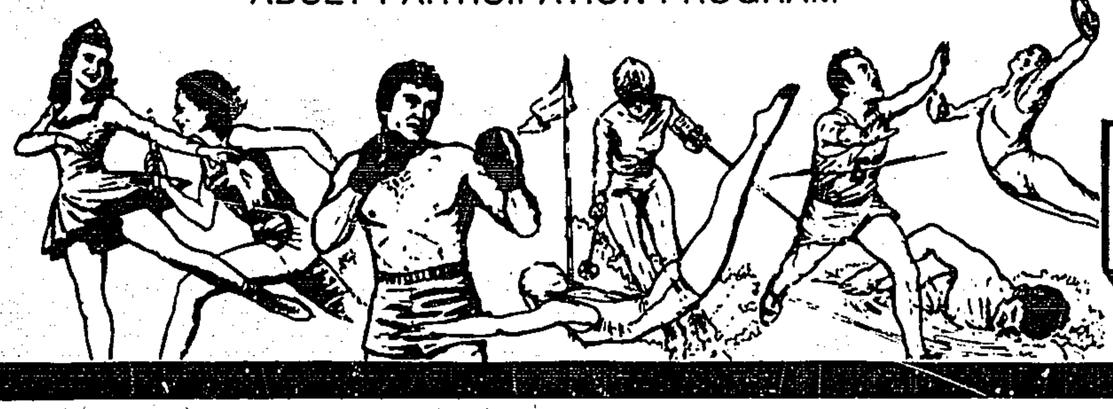

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C. D. NELSON

TIME OUT . . .

is being called at this writing because my school is closed by a strike of non-teaching personnel. No students are in evidence, but they will probably be back for one hour a day to receive and return assignments. Eerie silence is our lot; gone is the hustle-and-bustle of a normal school situation. Teaching staff is, by turns, relieved, puzzled, bored, anxious and frustrated.

One thing is sure — work in a school library goes on as usual; in fact, it seems to be the one place where the work is never caught up. There is always one more letter to write, more books to order, more shelves to scan for discards, and so on.

PERHAPS SOME OF US . . .

have learned a valuable lesson here: the place Time has in our lives and work — just how important or unimportant is it? When our accustomed routine is suddenly disrupted by the unexpected event, what do we do with our time? As a confirmed biblionut, I offer a guaranteed way to use up unstructured time: catch up on your reading!

CONSUMER NOTE . . .

A manufacturer received this note from a customer:

'Dear Sir: I drank four cans of your Rogers corn syrup and my feet ain't no better than they was before.'

SUMMER'S COMIN' — ENJOY.
— C. D. Nelson

A CLUTCH OF JUVENILE READING

You've Come a Long Way, Sybil MacIntosh, by Charlotte Herman. Ill. Trina S. Hyman O'Hara. Van Nostrand Reinhold. Library binding. $4.75.

Reviewed by several year 7 girls, this book was liked for its amusing presentation of good manners. As one said, it 'explained like a story that makes it easy to understand.' The girls suggested that a year 4 and 5 group would enjoy the book if it were used as a teaching device. It is aptly illustrated and has been taken out often by girls from years 8 to 11.

Mystery of Disaster Island, by Ann Rivkin. Scholastic Tab, 1975. Paperback. $1.00

A good British Columbia story. Mystery and scoundrels, treasure and ancient buildings vie with well described island life. A few glaring inaccuracies don't detract too much (bark roof for shakes!) and the too-clever children over-ruling their dumb parents do annoy the adult reader. However, year 5 to 7 students enjoyed the book. Recommended.

See You Later, Alligator, by Norma M. Charles. Ill. Carol Moran. Scholastic Tab, 1974. Paper. $1.30.

Having a very light story line, this is a picture book; yet the pictures are very effective. They are done in dot format (pointella) that can be used as an art idea. Years K to 2 loved the story and pictures so much that I recommend a hardback edition. The paper would not last long in any primary class.

Prescription Z, by F. W. Tamminga. Ill. Robert Goheen. Scholastic Tab, 1974. Paper. $1.00

A fascinating science-fiction type of setting to learn all about bees. It would take a special interest, or could be used as a base for a project. Well researched, and made palatable by its approach, yet the moralistic 'lesson' may offend.

Dan Fatch (and other stories of pioneering in the West), by Magnus Bjornson. Ill. Alan Danial. Scholastic Tab, 1974. Paper. $1.00

The format of the printing detracts greatly from this story. It is set in paragraphs separated from each other and started from the margin — even conversation. The effect is to give a jerky reading style to an already rather dull expository piece of writing. Not recommended.

All reviewed by Joan Punnett

BIOLOGY

Action Biology, by Stanley L. Weinberg and Herbert J. Stoltze. Allyn and Bacon, c1974. (Can. Agt. Macmillan) $11.00

Action Biology is a text-laboratory manual that holds great promise to those teaching students with learning disabilities in junior secondary grades or those who wish to offer an enriched science program in their elementary schools. The student's manual consists of seven units; Keeping Alive (includes the circulatory system, pH and buffers, and cell respiration), Food, The Invisible World, Ecology, Doing Their Thing (includes such activities as a frog dissection and 'Drugs and the Water Flea'), Children and Ancestors (genetics) and reproduction. These units can be taught in any order.

The 'Action Biology' program, for which *Action Biology* is the student's manual, consists of short, episodic chapters to neutralize poor motivation and short attention spans possessed by some students. Each chapter within a unit requires from one to three days' class time to complete, and activities vary greatly. Continuity between activities is de-emphasized so that students constantly get a fresh start.

The program emphasizes activities rather than textbook study and de-emphasizes reading as a prerequisite for learning. Through these science activities, the authors claim students improve their skills in reading, word usage and mathematics. The student's manual has an easy reading level with minimal technical vocabulary and short sentences. Phonetic pronunciation of technical terms is provided at the beginning of each chapter.

The 'Action Biology' program provides evaluation in terms of behavioral performance. Questions can be discussed orally, in writing, or through role-playing. The student's manual is visually instructive, as numerous illustrations are used which graphically convey the message. This program of study can be used in a traditional classroom or in a self-paced individualized learning program.

The *Teacher's Guide* for the program is very useful in that it provides behavioral objectives, teaching tips and a list of required materials (as well as how to prepare chemical solutions) for each lab activity. Also, within the *Teacher's Guide* all worksheet answers are provided as well as answers to questions within the text of the student's manual.

Action Biology may be purchased as one complete hard-covered volume (452 pages), or each of the seven units may be purchased separately as a paperback booklet.

The virtues of this program of study seem very obvious when one examines the student's manual and the teacher's manual. The presentation of some very interesting, and rather complex, topics in a very uncomplicated manner is achieved. However, some of the topics are of an advanced caliber and it is questionable if they should be included in such a publication.

I refer specifically to Activity 4, Unit 1 entitled, 'What's a Buffer?', in which the students are involved in a pH and buffer action activity. First, students are working with dilute hydrochloric acid, which means very strict supervision by the instructor during this

activity. The second undesirable feature of this specific activity is that students are working prematurely with chemicals; before, in some cases, any formal introduction to chemistry has been given. — John M. Wheelock

EDUCATION

A Matrix for Modern Education, by John Bremer. McClelland and Stewart, Toronto, 1975. $5.95

Here is epic tragedy. Throughout these pages — 'the public learning of John Bremer' — stands his constant hero, Socrates. John Bremer grows in group ability, in social intelligence, and becomes the teacher-leader through introjection — he becomes a model to his followers — before he too in January 1974 must drink the fatal cup of hemlock offered by a misunderstanding majority of public and the profession of this province.

Here are happy and pained reminiscences. The school must cease to be a factory place whose time, space, subject matter and social and administrative structures interfere with student learning.

Open education starts from closure at the point of origin of student learning. A closed system of education focuses on closure at the point of behaviorally defined intended outcomes. 'It is hard to imagine anything less educationally useful than reading scores.' The student must be supported to perform as an artist, not treated as raw material.

The basic skills are communication — listening and speaking, long before reading and writing, and television and film viewing — managerial and political skills. They are the skills of persuasion, community and co-operation. 'Nothing else matters except changing the totality of the system of education in which we work.' 'I wish we had compulsory education . . . not compulsory attendance.'

The language is exquisitely simple, beautiful metaphors flow into delicate similes. There is the invariable balance — the structure and unstructure, the order and the disorder — the Socratic question, the jest, the nuances.

One can feel the hand outstretched, the stroking of the flapping tie, the twinkling eyes, the momentary mischievous play on the words of the questioner.

Here is possible promise. Unlike Socrates, Bremer does return and thus in these pages he suggests one possible way of implementing public learning — the Parkway Program and the open university are repeated and 'A Proposal for British Columbia' is outlined.

Here are several picayunes; perhaps jealousies in some cases. Why does this purest of linguists misuse *myself* for *me* (p. 154)? The cynics may claim that this new volume aggregates from the 1973 booklet, *On Educational Change,* and the two works already alluded to.

This Canadian nationalist, having read this Toronto-published book, has to question the wisdom of including, in the Parkway Program section, references to the unique features of American life, American society and American heritage.

How does our scholar-universalist author and proponent of group learning reconcile his noble sentiments with giving 'new meaning to self-reliance and individualism?' Why include verbatim his 'original letter (of January 1969) sent to all city high school students,' and the partial list of co-operating agencies?'

Here is a need, a request. John Bremer has a message for all B.C. teachers in most pages, and at the end, he defines the BCTF role in his 'Proposal.' In the process of reading, your own learning will be renewed and that is the logos of the volume. — J. S. Church

HORTICULTURE

History of Fruit Growing and Handling in the U.S.A. and Canada . . . 1860 to 1972. Regatta City Press, Kelowna, c1976. $16.95.

This is an unusual publication. Although it has been prepared under the auspices of the American Pomological Society, which has its headquarters in Pennsylvania, the book is edited by Dr. Upshall, an Ontario horticulturalist, and the general co-ordinator (who seems to be the driving spirit behind the production) is also Canadian — none other than the well-known Dr. D. V. Fisher, who was for many years the Director of the Summerland Research Station in the Okanagan Valley. No doubt because of this Canadian input, the book has been printed and published in Kelowna — quite a major undertaking for the Regatta City Press.

It is impossible to do justice to this publication in a brief review. The history is the result of 12 years' research, and contains contributions from more than a hundred fruit scientists. And somehow all this is crowded into 350 pages of narrowly spaced lines (55 to a page!) and small print.

The first section, which deals with the general history of fruit growing in the U.S.A. and Canada, consists of 57 articles from 57 different states and provinces, written by more than 50 different contributors. As one might

Accommodation Available

FOR RENT–July-August, 3458 West 34th Avenue, Vancouver. Fully furnished house, close to bus lines and UBC. Couple preferred. $400/mo. Write to C. Wood at above address.

HOUSE TO RENT–in Delta July 1-August 28. 3-bdrm. fireplace. Large garden, barbecue, etc. 20 mins. from UBC, 10 mins. to the beach. Small payment in return for looking after two small dogs and a garden. Write or phone D. Leach, 5375 River Rd., Delta: 946-1072.

FOR RENT–House, 2 bdrms., fully equipped. 10 mins. from UBC; for Summer Session. $95 a week. Phone 266-4482.

FOR RENT–Large modern fully-furnished 1-bedroom apartment Marpole-Oakridge district Vancouver during July-August. Power, telephone (local calls) and color TV included. $315/month. Write D. Bunyan, #405 - 591 W. 57th Ave., Vancouver V6P 1R9.

SUMMER MONTHS–fully furnished, 2 yrs. old; Richmond; split; 3 bdrms, 2 full bathrms; close to shopping, playground, community center and bus lines. Rent to be negotiated. No pets. Teachers or family only. A. Whitty, 521 Merganser Dr., Richmond; 274-9834.

TEACHER'S HOUSE–available from June 15 to Aug. 15 or Sept. 1; only 15 min. from UBC. Lovely quiet 59th & Granville area. Fully furnished, washer, dryer, dishwasher, etc.; 3 bedrms., 2 bathrms. Nr. shopping and community center. No pets. Teachers preferred. Refs. $400/mo. A. Whitty, 521 Merganser Dr., Richmond; 274-9834.

FOR RENT–3-bedroom furnished, separate townhouse, yard, pool, sauna, for Summer Sessions UBC or SFU. Rent negotiable. J. Mosher, #58 - 303 Williams Rd., Richmond; 277-8471.

SUBLET–from July 1 to Aug. 20. Fully furn. 1 BR. apt. Pool, lg. deck, parking. Kerrisdale. Direct bus to UBC. References and damage deposit. 2 adults. $475 for period. Write M. Riddle, #207 - 6450 E. Blvd., Vancouver V6M 3V9; 263-4810.

N. VAN CHALET HOME–July 6-Aug. 6. Spacious 3 BR., 2½ bath, furnished. Walk to tennis and Lynn Canyon Park. Direct bus to Van. Family only, no pets. Refs, rent and damage dep. in advance. $480 includes utilities. 4153 Hoskins Rd., 985-6255.

FOR RENT–June, July, Aug., 1 bedroom apt in Vancouver; 4th & Alma area; semi-furnished. Ph. 228-0558 or write Mr. G. Muir, R.R.#2, Courtenay, B.C.

NEAR UBC GATES–young quiet female owner shares her nice, spacious house for SS with congenial people. References. Phone 224-6009 between 6-7 p.m.

FOR RENT (Summer Session)–3 bedroom home, rec. room, fenced yard. Five minutes to UBC and beach. Close to shopping. Prefer family. Phone 731-2204 or write Roy Lemon, 3156 West 12th Ave., Vancouver V6K 2R7.

JULY and AUGUST–fully furn. suite for rent. Quiet and aesthetically pleasing location. 7 mins. UBC. $70/week (min. 6 wks; max. 8 wks). Please contact D. Gray, #132 - 3755 W. 6th, Vancouver; 224-9227.

SUMMER RENTAL–July 1-Aug. 31; large 2 bdrm. house, semi-furnished, big fenced yard in Nanaimo, B.C. $190/mo. 753-0934 or S. Hughes, 39 Milton, Nanaimo.

FOR RENT–fully furnished 1-bedrm. suite; July 1-August 15. $170. Contact Anna Klinka, #204 - 1337 Saunders St., Victoria V9A 4Y3; 383-7271.

FOR RENT–July and August; 2-bedroom furnished West Van cottage on excellent swimming beach. Phone 921-9588.

FREE ACCOMMODATION–offered single teacher July 1-Aug. 15 in secluded North Van. house in return for care of animals. 1491 Chamberlain Dr., North Vancouver; 980-0900.

LARGE CONDOMINIUM–2 BR., furnished, fireplace, view, western exposure, balcony, sauna; pets permitted; 1 block from transportation and all facilities. June 15-Sept. 11. Rent negotiable. #303 - 1610 Chesterfield Ave., N. Vancouver; 980-1330.

FOR RENT–July 1-August 31, 1 bedroom fully furnished apartment with balcony and view. Includes indoor pool and sauna. 20 mins. from SFU. $285/mo. includes utilities. Apt. 101 - 102 Agnes St., New Westminster; 524-8771.

TO RENT–July and August; 3-bedrm. furnished house in Coquitlam; 20 mins. SFU. $100/week, includes all utilities. No pets. Contact Mr. D. McManus, c/o Burnaby Central Sr. Sec., 4939 Canada Way, Burnaby, B.C.

QUIET 1-BEDROOM furnished suite, color TV, dishwasher. 10 min. from UBC, controlled entrance; July and August at $205 per month, incl. heat and light. Refs. reqd. Phone before viewing 266-6801. #211 - 8667 Hudson St., Vancouver.

FOR RENT–July and part or all Aug.; S. Granville; lovely 3-bdrm. 2 bathrm. home; secluded garden; nr. two bus lines. Refs. $375/mo; utils extra. 1170 West King Edward, Vancouver, V6H 1Z6; 738-6481.

WESTERN WASH. STATE COL. SUMMER? Wanted–a female to share my 2-bedroom, 60x12 ft. mobile home. 3 miles from campus. Only $125/6 wks.; $180/9 wks. Cook own food. Miss Ann Bayfield, 2325 Oneida Dr., Coquitlam V3J 7A7; 985-3181 (days), 937-7278 (eves).

FOR SUMMER SESSION–fully furnished, 3-bedrm. house; near UBC. $600 for period, utils. extra; care of our gentle cat. G. Semail, 3805 W. 15th Ave., Vancouver; 224-3962.

HOUSE TO RENT–in Langley, July 1-Aug. 31. 3-bedrm., fireplace, nice yard. 40 min. to UBC, 30 min. to SFU, 35 min. to WWU, 10 min. to beach. No pets. References required. Lawn & cat need loving care. $250/mo. M. Wright, 3497 - 198A St., Langley; 534-8805.

THREE BEDROOM HOME in South Langley, easy access to Deas Freeway and #401. Available July and August. Contact D. Neumann, 20135 - 40A Avenue, Langley; 534-2072.

FOR RENT–July at Kelowna, fully furnished home; 3 bedrooms and den on quiet cul-de-sac; family only; no pets. Deposit and references in advance. 1925 Carruthers St., Kelowna.

ON SHUSWAP LAKE–for rent – rustic cabin $75/week. For further details, write B. Mitchell, R.R.#1, Tappen V0E 2X0.

FOR RENT–June 21-July 31, 3-bedroom house at 4,000 feet with birds and squirrels for neighbors. Write Bud Muffly, General Delivery, Rossland.

SUBLET N. VAN.–furn. 1-bdrm. apt in highrise on river nr. Park Royal. 10 min. downtown. Pool, sauna, parking. July 1 - Aug. 31. Refs. reqd. L. Medland, #908 - 2012 Fullerton, N. Van.; 922-8294 (eves.), 987-7178 (days).

SUMMER RENTAL–House, 2 bedrms. + bed couch in study; quiet residential street Capilano Highlands. SFU 45 min.; UBC 30 min.; public transportation, nr. Stanley Park. References; reasonable rental. Write C. I. Burns, 3638 Lorraine Ave., North Vancouver V7R 4B8; 985-0338.

2-BEDROOM furnished apartment, Kitsilano area; July and August; 10 min. UBC by car; 2 blocks from beach; $250/mo. A. Schueler Segura, #204 - 2277 W. 2nd Ave., Vancouver; 738-4263.

expect, there is a certain amount of overlapping of information. There are also a few interesting omissions.

Following are sections dealing with a century of research in fruit growing and fruit handling in the U.S.A. and another section dealing with similar researches in Canada.

Section number five deals with the hundred years of development in control of orchard insect pests and diseases. Although it is rather technical in places, I found this part of the book particularly interesting.

One would think that the foregoing would be sufficient, but there follows a full bibliography of pomological literature published in the U.S.A. and Canada, and a detailed history of the development of the North American Pomological Society since its founding in 1848.

This book is not something to read in an evening, but it is a masterpiece of condensed information for the fruit grower or scientist who wishes to look back over his shoulder. At a price of $16.95 it sounds expensive — until you glance inside. Then you discover that fruit scientists are apparently as good at concentrating their history as they are at concentrating their fruit juices.
— Denis R. Stubbs

REFERENCE

The People's Almanac, by David Wallechinsky and Irving Wallace. Doubleday, c1975. Soft covers $5.86

When you hear the word 'almanac,' what image forms in your mind? Something terribly statistical, authoritative, tabular and dull. Mind you, we need things like *Whitaker's, World Almanac and Book of Facts, Information Please*, and even *Poor Richard's*, for their various kinds of expertise. But by and large, these are not very readable times are they?

Now comes something new in the genre. Doubleday has just published an almanac that differs from the more familiar ones in the following ways:

— it is a reference book to be read for pleasure;
— it provides in-depth material on selective topics rather than endless, dry, bare-bones dates and figures;
— it attempts to go beyond often repeated, unchallenged data and offer the behind-the-scenes, frequently omitted truths;
— it . . . breaks a few molds, creates original forms, and gives alternative information from what you've always accepted as complete.

The foregoing is a rough paraphrase from the introduction, which is appealingly titled, 'Hello people.' The table of contents itemizes the several sections in most lively style, and the topics range widely from famous predictions, countries, history, money, war and disasters, to travel, the media, the arts, science, family life, religions and unexplained phenomena. A veritable feast for those of serendipitous persuasion.

There are several sections of colored maps, which are not too well done if you are looking for cartographic excellence, and numerous pages of illustrations showing photographs and cartoons of the famous and infamous in history. For the price, this 1,481-page book is an excellent buy for your library or home. For the browser it ranks with *Guinness* or *Brewer*. I recommend it most heartily. — C. D. Nelson

RAINBOW LODGE—Take a Chilcotin Holiday! Ultra modern cabins in beautiful lake setting close to Tweedsmuir Park. Write Nimpo Lake, B.C. or phone Williams Lake radio operator.

NAPILI SHORES, Maui —deluxe studio apt. with full kitchen facilities, rent for $175 per wk. or $600 per mo. for two. Write Mrs. B. Sanders, 1724 Fedoruk Road, Richmond, B.C. or phone 278-1403.

WAIKIKI, HAWAII—Nicely furnished one-bedroom suite for rent. Terrific view, close to beach, shopping, golf. Reasonable rates. Adults. Mrs. J. M. Burnett, 2743 East 51st Avenue, Vancouver V5S 1P9; 321-0075.

LONG TERM

FOR RENT—3-bedrm. furnished home, Capilano N.V., available July or August for approx. 6 months. $450/mo. Refs. D. Cannell, 936 Wavertree Rd., N. Vancouver; 988-5992.

FULLY FURNISHED 3-B.R. house; 10 min. to UBC, Kerrisdale, quiet street, garden. $350/mo.; for 1976-1977 university year. G. N. Cull, 6369 McCleery St., Vancouver V6N 1G5.

HOUSE FOR RENT—Campbell River, from July 76 to August 77; 2 bedrms. upstairs, 1 downstairs; semi-furnished and close to downtown. Good condition. References reqd. No young children. $275/mo. Mr. and Mrs. Borelli, 132 McLean St., Campbell River; 287-8231 or (work) 923-4251.

4 BDRM. HOUSE TO LEASE Vancouver—July 1, 1976 'til August 31, 1977 — 1 year, 13 mnths. or 14 mnths. 10 mins. to UBC. $600/month. 266-9802.

FOR RENT—from Sept. 1, 1 yr. old furnished apartment across from Univ. of Victoria at 1870 McKenzie Ave. Contact 1835 - 13th Ave., Prince George; 564-6165.

Accommodation Wanted

TORONTO FAMILY with 3 children requires furnished accommodation in Vancouver for 6-7 weeks this summer. Pool preferred. Home exchange would be ideal if family accommodation is required in Toronto. Ron Walenius, 88 Owen Blvd., Willowdale, Ont.; 416-225-5698.

IN ABBOTSFORD AREA—quiet couple with two children, non-smokers, wish to rent and caretake a house in the Abbotsford area during Summer Session. Will mow lawns and look after gardens and pets. Contact Kerry Wilson 853-6920.

WANTED TO RENT—a 2 bed-sitting room from July 5-Aug. 15 near UBC. Phone 530-2966, 530-5404.

Miscellaneous

TEACHERS—Your students can write Presley, Anka, Robert Redford, Osmonds, Lee Majors, Carol Burnett, Elton John. Over 100 celebrity addresses. Send for 1975-76 edition: 'Celebrity Booklet.' Box 6001, Station 'F', Hamilton, Ontario L9C 5S2 together with $1.00 (plus $.25 for handling and postage).

SUMMER VACATION: Have you considered horseback riding and camping in the Rocky Mountains near Banff, Alberta? Eight 6-day trips are planned for the summer of 1976. For brochure write to: TRAIL RIDERS OF THE CANADIAN ROCKIES, Box 6742, Station "D", Calgary, Alberta T2P 2E6.

CANADIAN CAMPING TOURS Come with us on a camping holiday. Travel the Alaska Highway and sail the Inside Passage, 22 days $495. Hike in the Rockies of Banff National Park, 12 days $219. Canoe the Churchill River in Northern Saskatchewan, 12 days $382. All inclusive. Flexible itineraries. Shared activities. Friendly atmosphere. It's all in our '76 brochure. Write to: CANADIAN CAMPING TOURS, 250a One Palliser Sq., Calgary, Alberta T2G 0P6.

REUNION—all Staff and Students who taught or graduated from the 100 Mile Junior-Senior Secondary School during the years 1960-1972—to be held on the weekend of July 31-August 1. For further information, please contact: Reunion, General Delivery, 100 Mile House V0K 2E0.

PRIMARY TEACHERS: Want proved and workable suggestions for class activities, games and ideas? Write for Bulletins No. 222 Coloured Cousins, No. 219 Tips No. 226 Family Bulletins $1.50 each or 3 for $4.00. Please specify bulletins required and mail to MaRo Progressive Learning Systems, Box 42, Dept BC, Richmond Hill, Ontario L4C 4Y2.

WESTCAN INTERNATIONAL TREKS, pioneers of discriminating travel, offer group involved expeditions where travel is still an education and a very personal experience. Looking for something different away from the tourist traps? Join us this summer to Iceland, Persia, Russia, Africa, Alaska, South America. 'Adventure Travel Centre,' 9004-112 Street, Edmonton, 439-1222.

SIX WEEKS TURKEY, PERSIA: archaeology, history, exploration in the steps of Alexander. Colorful tribes, classical sites, beaches, on three seas. July 2, $735. **SIX WEEKS SCANDINAVIA, RUSSIA:** Scandinavia, extensive Russia, Odessa, Black Sea resorts. July 12, $650. Tours ex London inclusive food, equipment, transportation. Westcan International Treks, 9004-112 Street, Edmonton, 439-1222.

FOUR-WEEK AFRICA HISTORY TOUR: East Africa, game preserves, Indian Ocean beaches, canoeing, Kilimanjaro climbing, July 2, 16, $975. **FOUR-WEEK ICELAND EXPEDITION**, backwoods exploration, volcanoes, glaciers, hot springs, July 12, $600. **EXTENSIVE EUROPE—SOUTH AMERICA TOURS** ex London inclusive food, accommodation, equipment, transportation. Westcan International Treks, 9004-112 Street, Edmonton, 439-1222.

For Sale

TEACHERS' COLONY—I have five lots of land on Savary Island priced at $6,000 each. I will sell these to teachers at $100 down and $100 per month. Joe McNeil, teacher, 272-4189 (Calgary).

FOR SALE—½-acre, flat lot, sandy beach, on Osoyoos Lake, U.S.A. Only $150 a foot! Contact Stuart Fraleigh, 1503 Juniper St., Williams Lake; 392-5267.

MUST SELL—LAKEFRONT RECREATION LOT. Approx. ¼-acre on N. Pender Island with water, sewer & hydro. Very open to offers. E. VanBergen, 6036 Falaise St., Duncan; 746-6576.

TEACHER'S HOME FOR SALE NEAR KELOWNA—1-year-old split level, 1½ bathrm 3-bedrm home with more than 1100 sq. ft. Situated on 70 x 125 treed and landscaped lot, on west side Lake Okanagan. Just 5 mins drive from lake; 15 mins from Last Mountain Ski Resort. Full Price $51,900. Write P.O. Box 846, Westbank or phone 768-4633.

Index 1975-76

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