

CORE & PLAP CORE & PLAP COE
CORE & PLAP CORE & PLAP COE



Teachers get shiny red apples?
Well teachers don't get them no more.
They've taken the fruit from the apple
And left us to chew on the core!

They say it was Eve's picking apples
That led to God's wrath and much more.
If she got all that for one apple,
McGeer should get his for one core!

Let's teach the core
To one and all
Those skills are fundamental
Make an elective of happiness
It's really incidental.

the B.C. teacher
MAY-JUNE 1977 VOLUME 56 NUMBER 5

GET WITH IT

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Viewpoint:

"Language Patterns (Revised) is a mainstream program"

Jack Booth has taught language arts in all levels 1-8. For three years, he was a language arts consultant in Hamilton. Then, from '74-'76, he contributed to the Language Patterns revision. Since '76, he has been General Editor of Holt's forthcoming 4-6 language arts program. All along, he has taught courses and conducted workshops across North America.



Q: Jack, what should a language arts program offer?

JB: Any resource, whether it's a program, a book, a workshop, or the neighbour's philosophy, should help the teacher set up an effective environment. If we want kids to become more adept at the language arts, we have to give them legitimate opportunities to read, write, listen, and speak. The teacher can be a "tour guide" in this environment, helping the children to explore language. A program should help create this environment.

Q: How does Language Patterns help this environment develop?

JB: An active language arts classroom has to give children opportunities to receive and give language. Basically, there are four angles, or support systems, that create these opportunities: reading to kids to show them that books are interesting, friendly, and worth getting into; recording and sharing experiences and thoughts to show that language is for communicating; free choice reading for amusement, knowledge, or plain old recreation; a continuous development of skills and knowledge of how language works. The Language Patterns components offer materials and suggestions for each of these support systems.

Q: Are these components built around a lock-step approach?

JB: When you're involved with kids, nothing can be lock-step. A teacher shouldn't have to "follow" a program. A program should back up and support the teacher in going where he or she wants to go. Each teacher has a personal style, each class is different, each child is different. A program has to be flexible. Language Patterns is a mainstream program that offers more material than a teacher could possibly use with every child. It is meant as a resource pool for the teacher to use what he or she feels is appropriate.

Q: Within this flexibility, does Language Patterns offer any guidelines or pacing suggestions?

JB: Of course. Language Patterns has a structure and is spiral in its approach. The child on the first day of level 1 is different from the child on the last day of level 3. Accordingly, Language Patterns varies its stress, and offers different types of activities as the child progresses.

Q: Why the emphasis on word attack skills in level 1?

JB: The fluent reader uses many techniques to unlock an unfamiliar page: sight words, context clues, picture clues, prediction, and "sounding out". Most of these techniques develop through experience. However, research indicates that the beginning reader can be helped by some instruction in sound-letter relationships. Language Patterns provides practice in this "decoding", mainly at the beginning of level 1. As the beginning reader moves towards becoming a fluent reader, the emphasis changes. The materials in Language Patterns reflect this development.

Q: Can children move from this primary program to another program at the junior level?

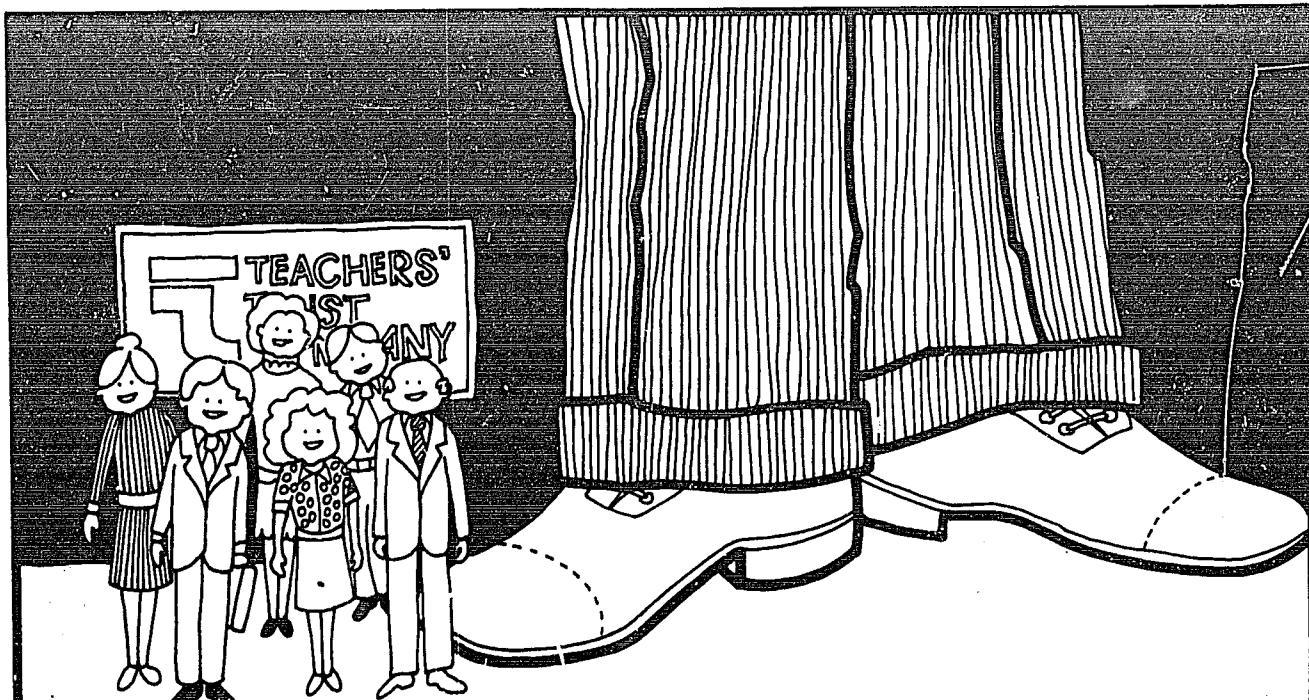
JB: School systems all over the world recognize that the child in the primary division is different from the child in the junior division. In the junior division, there are different needs. So, different styles and materials are required. The child who has been successful in the "primary chunk" of education, should be able to move comfortably into any "junior chunk". However, with regard to these differences, Holt is preparing a program to meet the needs and requirements of the child in the junior division.

**Give every child
a sound start in language arts.**

Language Patterns (Revised)

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The proposals of the Minister of Education concerning a core curriculum have aroused in both teachers and the public concern for the educational system of British Columbia. Our magazine this month presents several articles on the topic. The photograph of Dr. McGeer was supplied by the Office of the Minister. We appreciate that courtesy. The other photograph was supplied by A. D. MacPhail, Provincial Educational Media Centre.

The verses are reprinted, with permission, from *Nexus*, the newsletter of the Alberni District Teachers' Association.

PHOTO CREDITS

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Ex 77-6

From our readers

Craigdarroch Field Trips

Every year there are scores of school field trips to Craigdarroch Castle in Victoria. The students are most welcome, and seem to enjoy visits to the old Dunsmuir home very much.

As a teacher and a member of the executive of the Castle Society, I have been asked by our president to advise all teachers who are planning visits to write to the Castle prior to arriving. Advise the day and time, and number in the party. This will be of great help to the attendants. Address: The Castle Society, P.O. Box 147, Victoria, B.C. V8W 2M6.

There is no charge, but a donation box is available. All contributions are put to excellent use in maintenance and restoration of the building.

G. D. Stevens
Victoria

Information On Pipelines

In an advertisement in the March-April issue, Canadian Arctic Gas Pipelines Limited (CAGPL) offered to send to teachers and schools an 18-page booklet on its proposed Mackenzie Valley pipeline. CAGPL is one of the applicants currently being heard by the National Energy Board (NEB).

Recent press announcements have indicated that the findings of the Berger Commission are expected to be published in early May. The NEB hearing is expected to end in May as well. The Prime Minister has said that he expects to be able to make an announcement on the issue in September. In the meantime, the importance of Canadians' being well informed on the pipeline proposals, which may well be critical to the future of Canada, cannot be overstressed.

During the past three years a considerable number of individuals and organizations have spoken in opposition to a Mackenzie Valley pipeline and some have presented briefs to the NEB. Prominent among these is the Committee for an Independent Canada (CIC) — the only citizen group that has consistently attended and participated in the lengthy NEB hearing. The CIC does not believe that the CAGPL or Foothills Pipelines Limited applications provide long-term solutions for the meeting of

Canada's future natural gas needs.

Space does not permit presentation of arguments against the proposed pipeline, but a series of brief statements by Bruce Willson, National Chairman of the CIC, are considered to provide reason enough to believe that the applications of both CAGPL and Foothills should be rejected.

Bruce Willson is a Canadian, born in Edmonton. Between 1962 and 1974 he was successively President of Canadian Western Natural Gas and North-West Utilities Limited, Calgary; of Canadian

Bechtel Limited, and of Union Gas Limited, Chatham.

Interested teachers may obtain copies of Mr. Willson's comments on Energy Supply and Canadian Nationalism, his testimony on behalf of the CIC to the NEB, and other information on CIC briefs and publications by writing to P.O. Box 324, Nanaimo, B.C. V9R 5L3, or to the National Office of the Committee for an Independent Canada, 46 Elgin Street, Suite 48, Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5K6.

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Quesnel
Prince Rupert

Died

December 19
January 14
February 26

Retired

Edward Davies
Beulah Elderkin
James Herd
Ellen C. (Craig) Hunter
Abraham Isaac
Edward Fleming Miller
Charles Mitton
Ethel Moody
Dorothy (Campbell) Peck
Kathleen (Clift) Smith
Kathleen (House) Weeks

Last Taught In

Trail
Cranbrook
Vancouver
Vancouver
Abbotsford
North Vancouver
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Vancouver
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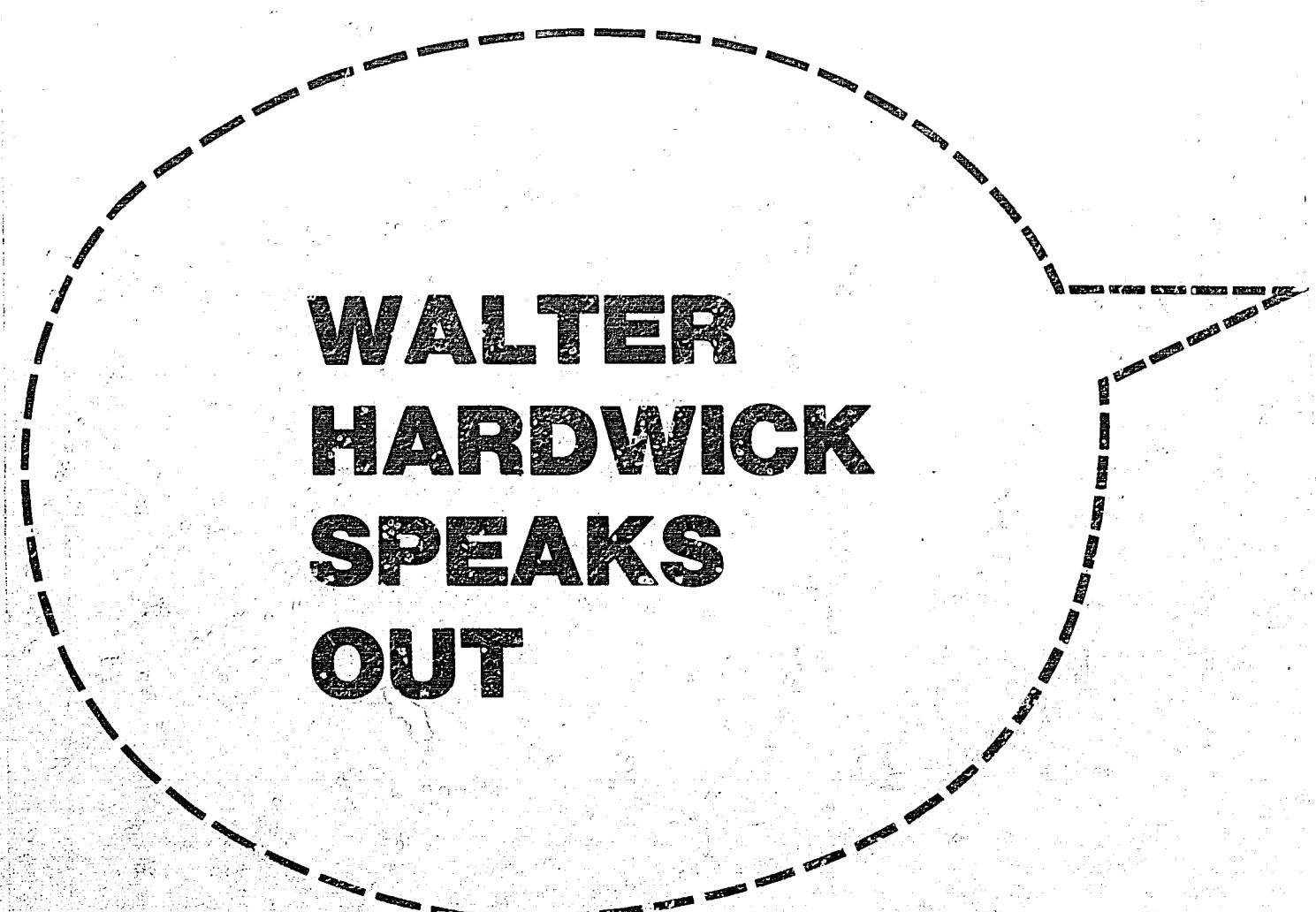
Died

February 18
February 15
February 11
January 24
February 17
April 1
March 7
February 27
December 2
February 16
February 24

MORE RETIREMENTS

The Commissioner of Teachers' Pensions has supplied another listing of retirements. Most of these teachers retired at the end of December, a few retired earlier. We wish these teachers every happiness in the future.

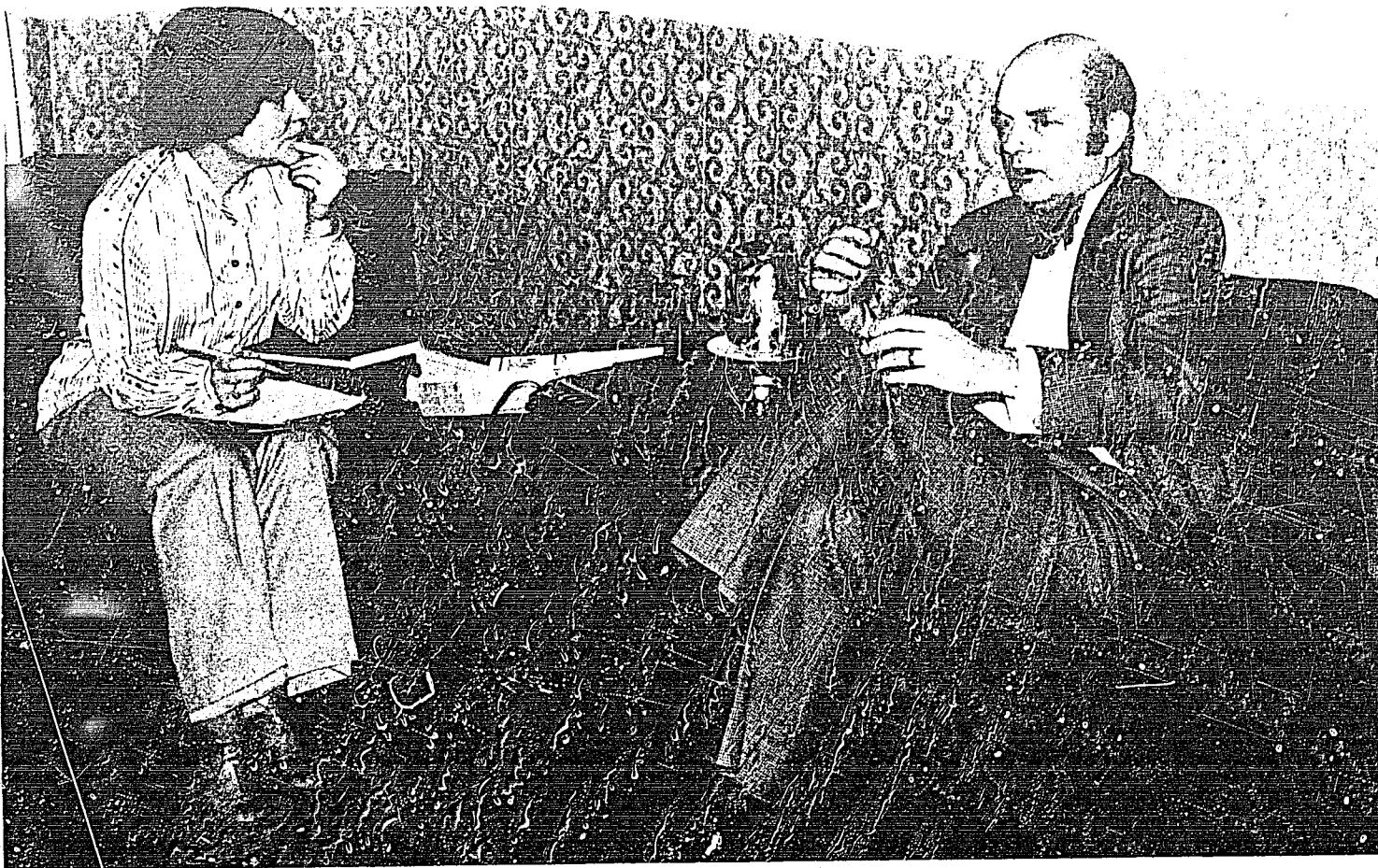
Helen Armstrong, Hope
Florence D. Bennett, Burnaby
Anna E. Billingsley, Vancouver
Margaret Butler, Victoria
Angus Campbell, Nanaimo
Gladys Carey, Vancouver
Daniel Cronin, Langley
Herbert E. Danquah, Tsawwassen
Vern James Drew, Courtenay
Mildred Flock, Coquitlam
Frances Belle Foan, Chilliwack
Franklin Foster, North Vancouver
Evelyn Gienatz, Delta
Audrey V. Gubbe, Abbotsford
Nora Hamilton, Vancouver
Agnes Henning, Surrey
Jessie M. Hoffman, Delta
Douglas Haig Inglis, Vancouver
Patricia Lamont, Vancouver
Frances McLean, Delta
Florence E. Lechner, Castlegar
Bernard Lennox, Sooke
Georgina B. Meehan, Vancouver
John S. Michell, Shuswap
Kathleen Mitchell, Surrey
Mary Anthe McKenzie, Surrey
Marjorie McMillan, Victoria
Amelrose Saunders, Vancouver
Dorothy Seeger, North Vancouver
Laurence S. Smith, Forme
Beatrice Rose Stidston, Vancouver
Claudine Taylor, Williams Lake
David F. Todd, Prince George
Douglas Todd, West Vancouver
Marjorie Evans Wright, Coquitlam
Dorothy Louise Yard, Trail



WALTER HARDWICK SPEAKS OUT

HEATHER HARRIS

**A teacher, a tape recorder and the Deputy
Minister of Education. The result?
A provocative interview.**



Could you put CORE in some sort of framework for us?

One of the things we should recognize is that part of the discussion of CORE came from the move of the government, in 1972, to start a process of decentralization of decision-making in education.

I think it was a proper move. It was certainly recognizing an increased professional ability on the part of teachers.

But, if you are going to decentralize, there still have to be some things that everyone has. The document, if you look at it, basically said that this was an attempt to identify the skills and knowledge to which every child who went through school should presumably be exposed.

It said that some of the children will have these skills and knowledge perhaps before the grade levels that were specified in the document and that for some others it will take a longer time, but that in the years between seven and 15 in which a child, by the Public Schools Act, is the responsibility of the school system, those are the kinds of things we should expect him/her to get.

As you know, it was developed — as many of our things are developed — by

groups of teachers and trustees who used their best judgment and their experience to indicate what they think are important things.

One of the problems of dealing with panels is that a panel is, in part, constrained by the membership of the panel. It doesn't reflect the community at large. So when you go into a process in which items that you include are identified with a panel, the next step is to test it more widely to see how people respond to the various items, in this particular case learning outcomes.

The booklet was produced and about 185,000 copies were distributed across the province with the request that teachers, trustees, parents and even senior students who had been through the school system comment on the appropriateness of the basic subject areas as well as the learning outcomes.

This was a deliberate attempt on our part to get it into as many hands as possible. We've done that; and the material is coming back to us in terms of the tear-offs from the back of the booklets and, in many cases, detailed letters and briefs from people who want to talk of general things and, in some cases, specific things.

My job is to advocate, recommend and argue for, but it is not my job to decide.

This would be moving into the area of specific things. In Vancouver we are dealing with the BUILD program — Building Unity Into Language Development — in addition to CORE and PLAP. We have a high bilingualism ratio in Vancouver. I ask you the same question that I'm asking the BUILD people: what components are in CORE and BUILD to accommodate this bilingualism?

I'm concerned particularly with elementary school children and I'd like to introduce a medical opinion or viewpoint, that being Dr. Wilder Penfield's as expressed in his article on 'The Superiority of the Bilingual Brain.'

The article suggests that if a child is bilingual by the age of 12, the child not only has an advantage in ease in learning other languages, but there is also significant evidence of better general performance in other departments of education. If this is a truism, are CORE and BUILD designed to accommodate this advantage?

Well, for one thing, I don't think the Ministry itself is doing anything about investigation of medical aspects of things. You have to remember that the Ministry officials are very, very few in number and that most of the work in curriculum matters has been done by teachers who have been seconded to the Ministry for periods of time.

On the question of bilingual individuals, the Grade 4 reading assessment test last year indicated that something over 15 percent of the children who wrote those tests came from homes in which English was not the first language, so what you are saying about Vancouver is not uncommon throughout the province.

Communities like Kitimat, for instance, have a far greater percentage of their children coming from homes in which English is not the first language.

How is CORE addressing this bilingual component?

I don't know much about BUILD.

That's something that Vancouver had started before we were involved. I might say that they're spending very much more money on that than we have spent on all the CORE activities because so much of what we've been doing has been decentralized into the community.

I guess I would have to say that I think that the Ministry's view would be that children need an English language facility because that is the major language of our culture and economy. I guess I would have to look to the



universities and the special education people to deal with the kind of topic you've raised. I'm personally anxious that people have a second language facility — I'm talking about English as a second language in that case.

You may have noticed in the papers that we've recently commissioned the University of British Columbia's language institute to develop a program of English as a second language to be put on television and aimed particularly at mothers who are housebound, of whom there are many in the community. They should have basic English support.

The bilingualism aspect was what caught my eye when I started to read that Penfield article, but the point that stayed with me was the idea that bilingual agility in a child's brain could positively affect other areas of education also. I guess I wanted to know if we were using the high bilingual rate in our school children to advantage.

The questions you raise are ones that obviously need exploration, but I really haven't any firm answers for you. We'd look to the universities, for that kind of investigation because the average classroom teacher and government official do not have the time to address themselves to that kind of task.

Continuing with a medical viewpoint — It has been suggested by studies going on in France, and recently in Canada at York University and in Saskatchewan, that there is a direct correlation between physical fitness and learning. If these studies bear any weight, why isn't fitness the 'core' of CORE?

There isn't a daily fitness program for school children in the province. Some districts are experimenting — Abbotsford has a very active fitness program at the present time. I suspect the areas of fitness and physical education are some of the more controversial areas of curriculum in B.C.

A new committee has been struck and John Lowther is bringing it together to deal with that area. I must say that I haven't any clear notions of where to go in that area.

I don't know about the literature that indicates the correlation between fitness and improved classroom learning. I'm not surprised that such things would exist, but, again, how you bring such things into policy is what you're asking.

There are districts that are experimenting. I guess my view is that if some districts have clear ideas of what they should do, they should go ahead and do it. We should monitor them and get some control groups to see what kind of performance we can see.

If there is strong evidence and people are prepared to do it, we would be quite prepared to entertain that kind of suggestion at the Ministry level. If we found through checking it out that there were some substantial benefits to be gained by doing some work in it, we would then probably commission some work.

There is no certainty on the part of the Ministry where we should be on it. If we can start to zero in on things that have some tangible benefits, we look to do something about it.

You've talked about suspension in terms of the schools' responsibility to children. What about parents' responsibility in the field of education?

I think there are hundreds of parents who are still very interested in their youngsters and their progress in school. I'm one of those people who believe that the school is strongest when there is very active parent involvement.

I grew up in a home in which the father was a school principal who very much believed in the involvement of parents. From a teacher's point of view, if you know you have the support of parents, you can do many more things than you can't. If the parent understands the

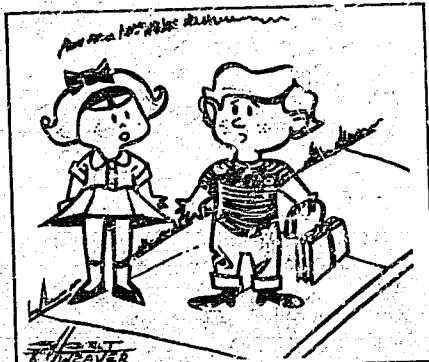
processes of the school, that parent is more able to deal with homework or informal discussion of things related to what is going on in school.

I think there are schools in which this kind of dialog is continuing and is broadly based. But I suspect that in the majority of the schools, the teachers have become defensive; withdrawn, in fact, from parental involvement in some cases. The parents, with increasing numbers of mothers working, and with the mobility that exists in many family groups, and so forth, are often cut off from that kind of dialog and that kind of involvement.

The child's education is poorer because of it. What do you do about this?

One of the things I would hope is that the CORE curriculum discussions, by bringing parents into the schools and classrooms, would be the beginning of a dialog. Many teachers have meetings with parents at reporting time and I think that's good.

It's a difficult job when the family unit is less stable than it was perhaps a generation ago for that kind of support to build.



'I can't do anything right in kindergarten; I failed milk.'

Is it too sweeping a generalization to say parents are more concerned with how a child is behaving than with what the child is learning?

I think it depends on the school. If it is a school with a substantial number of ESL students, many of the parents may be unfamiliar with schools. They don't have the language facilities and don't know what schools are doing, so perhaps the easy question to ask is 'Is he a good boy?' or 'Is she a good girl?'

If you are in a school area of, say, upper middle class income and many professional people, you have lots of questions to ask.

If you look at the literature in the United States on Operation Headstart and things of that nature, the thing that comes out over and over again, is that many times you have to teach the

parents because they had unsatisfactory school experiences. They experienced schools in other places and parts of the world.

In some of the post-secondary work we're doing we're finding the majority of people in this province have relatively few years of schooling and adult basic education. The basic education that we're talking about, at the junior secondary level, is not something the majority of adults have had in this province.

So they ask you 'Is Johnny a good boy?' Maybe you have to or maybe the school has to teach some of the parents before they are able to give that kind of support. I don't think many people have thought some of that through.

I think you're probably right.

Some Americans have: those who have been worrying about ghetto schools and felt that by pouring money down the school drain they could accomplish things. They found that things weren't happening, so they started to dig further. This is one of the areas to which they allude.

A question that's been asked regarding PLAP — Is it to assess children or teachers?

Neither. Programs:

Frances Worledge wrote an article for *VESTA News* in which she suggested that the letters stand for Put Learning Above Politics. She addressed the question of education in the political sphere.

When the PLAP tests ran last year, they were invisible. They ran this year and we've had comments like 'Well, I wish Dr. McGeer wouldn't bring his politics into the classroom.' I hope that when they run next February they will be invisible again.

The political visibility has got to do with public discussion and community awareness. The simple fact of the matter is the assessment program was initiated and funded under Mrs. Dailly's jurisdiction. I've just accepted the fact that this has been politically visible and that's the reality for this year.

I think it's worth doing and I think the benefits from the Ministry's point of view are considerable. It does allow us to speak with some confidence to the Legislature when we're trying to justify funds for education.

It does allow us to indicate where there are weaknesses and strengths within curriculum at a provincial level. It allows us on a systematic basis from time to

time, to test some hypotheses.

You recall that last year we asked kids about how much TV they watched. That was because a lot of people are concerned about the implications of TV. What the result showed, if you recall, was that too much TV produced a decline in performance.



You've used the words 'civilian control' regarding education.

Well, simply, the way education has been operating for 110 years in this province is that the Legislature has the authority for what is taught. The school districts have authority over what buildings are built and who is hired. In the final analysis, I believe the community does make these decisions.

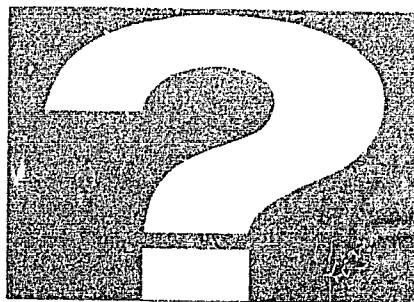
I take the view that it is my job to advocate, recommend and argue for, but it is not my job to decide. I think we are all in that position when it comes to the broad picture of things. At the local classroom level a teacher has a lot of decisions to make in the broad context of how the material is used for the purposes of having the children learn — what kinds of testing programs, what kinds of modes of instruction, and so forth.

I think those are appropriate decisions to be made at the classroom level by the people who are professionally trained. They cannot be legislated.

But if you should be spending a lot of time on language arts, or if you should have English or French or music or art or whatever the things are, and the basic nature of learning materials — in the final analysis, the people who pay for it and the people who use the products of the educational system have some things to say.

They say them through their elected representatives, both at the provincial level and at the school district level — and, like it or lump it, that is part of the democratic system!

What's so new about **CORE** and **PLAP?**



WILLIAM A. BRUNEAU

Most aspects of what passes for Socred educational policy, under both Bennett regimes, give one the feeling of *déjà-vu*. But recently, Dr. McGeer's industrious recycling of the past has attained a new and high level of intensity.

Within the space of a year, the Minister has (1) mounted a province-wide system of paper-and-pencil tests in several subject areas (the system has been dubbed PLAP, acronym for Provincial Learning Assessment Programme); and (2) attempted to identify those skills and knowledge essential to a child's eventual success in 'the world.' These skills and knowledge are labeled collectively 'CORE' subjects, and shall be taught as the Core Curriculum in the public schools — if the Minister prevails.

This list of Socred policy-moves excludes the government's activities in higher, adult and technical education, some of which are probably far more important in the long run than CORE and PLAP. This article, however, focuses only on PLAP and CORE.

The strange thing about PLAP, especially at its inception, was the

As early as 1904 people were calling for a return to the core. This writer attempts to provide perspective to the controversy about curriculum and testing.

similarity between its purposes and the aims of the old reading-and-intelligence tests of the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s.

A HIDDEN AGENDA

Most Canadians born before 1945 have written the Metropolitan Standardized test of linguistic and arithmetic attainment. Almost as many have some experience with modified Stanford-Binet intelligence scales (modified to permit examination of whole classrooms of children at once). During the inter-War period, especially, but also until the late 1950s, tests of these kinds were supposed to help teachers spot individual differences.

Occasionally, the tests actually did help teachers discover a pupil's unsuspected strengths or weaknesses. Unfortunately, tests were occasionally used to do more than that. Some misled teachers *actually passed and failed* pupils on the basis of their IQ scores. Others did likewise with the Metropolitan tests.

This was close to unprofessional, since none of these tests could pretend

to be accurate. And obviously, some 'bright' children might do badly in school, while some 'dullards' did reasonably well. The tests lent themselves to abuse.

Even if they were not always abused, these tests raised another question: just what was being tested in these mass assessments? Was it memory? Was it a set of learnings that only urban, middle-class WASPs could have? Was it some special cluster of conceptual skills, identifiably related to academic success? Or was it a combination of all these?

And no matter what was being tested, others pointed out, surely it was worth asking how children acquired their knowledge: what kind of atmosphere did they work in? Were they undergoing some sort of inculcation, instead of an education?

The proponents of testing never bothered to respond to these questions, and the movement lost a good deal of momentum during the 1950s. Looking back, it now appears that testing became

popular for another, hidden reason.

In the growing, urbanizing and consolidating schools of the period 1930-1950, some efficient method of labeling children for administrative purposes (e.g., streaming) needed to be found. Ministers of Education, superintendents and principals were delighted to learn of tests that would do the job.

Significantly, the tests often confirmed what teachers suspected about children all along. Recent studies of the testing movement show that teachers' suspicions about a child's abilities were often based on prejudicial views about the child's background (chiefly economic, social class background).

Perhaps tests helped to reinforce the tendency of schools to keep professional children professional, while laborers' children left school early for farm and mill — half-convinced of their 'low intelligence.' Perhaps tests were just too convenient to give up.

To summarize, the aims of the old testing movement were diagnostic at best, or at worst a subtle means of conserving the social order.

Dr. McGeer's PLAP assessments share all the weaknesses of the old tests.

FROM PLAP TO CORE

According to Deputy Minister Hardwick, one of PLAP's early results showed that English courses in Grades 4 and 12 are as effective now as they were a decade ago. But nobody has ever attempted a B.C.-wide assessment of English learning before, unless we count the quite different Metropolitan tests of yesteryear.

To what standards of performance, then, is the Deputy Minister referring? Nobody seems to know.

In spite of this vagueness, Minister McGeer has pressed on from PLAP to CORE (even before the PLAP results are in). The CORE curriculum is to constitute the mandatory, base learning of every public school student from Grade 1 to Grade 12 beginning 1978.

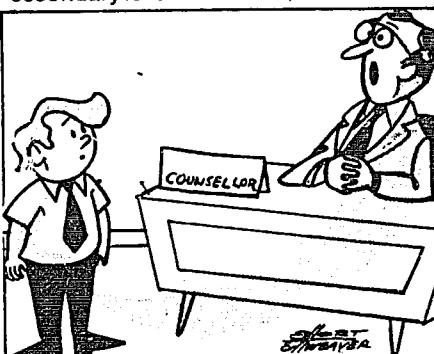
How Dr. McGeer and his helpers arrived at the list of learnings in CORE is unknown. One thing is known: no one in the Ministry bothered to look carefully at the many previous attempts to establish core curricula in B.C.

CORES OF YESTERYEAR

Early 20th century examples of 'core curricula' for B.C. schools are easy to come by. In 1904, for instance, Agnes Dearie Cameron, a Victoria teacher, argued publicly and influentially for a return 'to the core' and the end of

'applied and popular' learning in the schools. During the 1920s, the appearance of 'progressive education' changed the content of the core somewhat.

The Depression and post-War periods witnessed a slow diversification of subject offerings at both elementary and secondary levels. However, the



'Think of it this way ... with your marks, if you were a car you'd be recalled.'

culmination of the entire movement came with the Chant Royal Commission on Education (1960). S. N. F. Chant recommended a system of high school studies that gave clear preference to history, English and mathematics.

These were the 'intellectually demanding' core of the high school, requiring powers of abstraction and argument not needed elsewhere in the school. Elementary school studies were supposed to be refashioned to reflect the same 'insight.' Chant's report was a bewildering, although sometimes innovative, assessment of education.

Few British Columbians were all that pleased with the Chant Report. Businessmen thought that vocational education received less than its due, even though Chant recommended more spending on education for schools of all types. Working people rightly pointed out that their lives required as much hard reasoning and analysis as did the academics.'

Nevertheless, the Sacred government of W. A. C. Bennett adopted most of the provisions of the Report. A possible reason: the Report required no change whatsoever in the cozy arrangement under which the school helped to link children's socio-economic background to their eventual careers. Nor did it necessitate many bureaucratic renovations. The government could appear to be engaged actively in educational reform — while in fact doing nothing of social importance.

S. N. F. Chant at least tried to rationalize his choices for the core curriculum. The new CORE is without rationale, a curricular Lady Godiva.

THE 'NEW'CORE

The CORE is just a reasonably detailed list of learning outcomes that Ministry officials believe 'fundamental or basic to the education of all children and youth within the province' (*What Should Our Children be Learning: Goals of the Core Curriculum*. Victoria: Department of Education, 1976, p. 4.).

The learnings are grouped under six headings: language; measurement and computation; scientific approach; cultural and physical heritage; analysis, research, study and problem solving; healthful living. More specific goals, arranged by grade level, appear under each heading.

Some examples:

LANGUAGE

(for Grs. 11-12)

- B.14 to outline and write multi-paragraph compositions for purposes such as describing, informing and persuading
B.15 a specialized writing vocabulary sufficient for subject areas being studied.

CULTURAL AND PHYSICAL HERITAGE

(for Grs. 8-10)

- J.7 the major climatic, vegetative and geographic features of the world and their influence on population
J.8 about the major turning points in western history such as the Renaissance, the Reformation, the Industrial Revolution, the two World Wars . . .

SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE FOR HEALTHFUL LIVING

(for Grs. 4-6)

- M.5 build upon small motor activity skills by participating in a variety of activities such as painting, paper sculpting, weaving and playing music . . .

In a moment, I shall comment on these examples. But first, it will be worth while to look at the response of the BCTF to CORE. No other organization has so much to lose under CORE and PLAP as the BCTF.

THE BCTF FIGHTS CORE

So far, the BCTF has been critical of the implication in CORE that all children are alike, can and should learn the same things at the same time at the same rate. Teachers fear that PLAP, if continued, would become standardized tests that would force gifted children into mediocrity, and push less-gifted children

CORE is the brain child of civil servants who have had a stranglehold on education since 1952.

from one experience of failure to another.

Interestingly, they took an almost opposite approach 17 years ago at the time of the Chant Report. C. D. Ovans, BCTF general secretary of the time, tried to show that children had more in common than Chant realized; that separating the core subjects from the rest was to deny students an essential experience of 'community.'

In 1977, however, teachers believe that *they themselves* are under attack, not just a 'system' or its indolent pupils. For teachers have led the public, more than any other group has done, to believe in the importance of recognizing pupils' individual differences in the classroom. A BCTF brochure (*Are CORE and PLAP Bad for Children?*, published February 1977) stated the Federation view:

'The BCTF favors constant upgrading of the competence of teachers and believes that a great deal of time and money should be spent on professional development . . . but it opposes forcing teachers to become technicians by allowing centrally imposed tests and curricula to dictate teaching methods. It is common knowledge that standardized tests originating outside the classroom cause teachers to "teach the test."'

The BCTF may have jumped the gun here: no one is sure (yet) that the horrors of 'centrally imposed' Departmental examinations, Grade 1 to Grade 12, are about to be revived in B.C. However, given the Minister's fondness for measurements of all kinds, a revival is possible.

The BCTF may have made a serious mistake in missing the other retrograde features of CORE and PLAP. Its theory may be that the public will better understand its opposition to CORE if the BCTF attack is focused on one theme only.

But surely the points made earlier about the objectives and weaknesses of the old testing movement are just as relevant now as ever. On top of all the old criticisms, CORE is riddled with odd, new priorities among subjects, and ignores the difference between product

and process. Perhaps these latter weaknesses will be brought out later on in the BCTF campaign. Let me clarify each of them a bit.

STRANGE PRIORITIES

Please take a moment to re-read Goal M.5 above. "about small motor activity. A 'the only opportunity children learn about art and music is during musical education.

The work of a century, the efforts of innumerable parents and teachers, all working to give the study of the arts an honorable place in the public school curriculum — all this is reduced to a minor part of the PE curriculum in Grades 4, 5 and 6. Strange priorities!

There are plenty of other instances, but even this single example suggests the tendency of the CORE to overplay gross behavioral learnings at the expense of aesthetic and conceptual reasoning.

PRODUCT AND PROCESS

Take another moment to re-read J.7 and J.8, above.

For decades, geography and history teachers have been trying to down-play the old emphasis on the memorization of facts and of procedures (how to read a map, how to decipher a graph). That emphasis meant, in the bad old days, that very few public school students emerged from their history and geography classes really excited by their studies.

Teachers have been anxious, especially since about 1957, to emphasize that history and geography are the study of man in his context, that we solve human problems often by *making inferences* from facts, by *using* facts to explain the complex and immensely varied reasons people have for acting as they do.

History and geography teachers now think of facts as *means* to an end; the real business of teaching is about the forms of reason and argument appropriate to these disciplines.

CORE is all about facts, about outcomes. It is not concerned with how we get to the outcomes, how we reason, how we argue, how we explain. CORE is

content with description, not very concerned with explanation. One wonders if good teachers will remain in a profession burdened with goals of this kind.

Goals B.14 and B.15, which should be all about reasoning and the forms of good argument, instead mutter on about technicalities and mechanics. The rest of CORE, all 30 pages, follows suit.

A BARREN CORE

The CORE is barren when it comes to the great social issues of our time.

There is little here about Canada's treatment of ethnic minorities; about the question of our natural resources and ownership thereof; about the matter of a political system closely related to the activities and interests of an elite; justice, for women, children, men; just compensation for the mass of artificially unemployed persons ground down by poverty in every region of the country.

There is little to recommend CORE. In fact, its consequences are likely to be negative in the short and the long run. It is the brainchild of a generation of civil servants in the Department of Education who have had a stranglehold on education in this province since 1952. What can be done to lessen the impact of CORE?

Using the good offices of our MLAs, and corresponding directly with the Minister of Education, we must push for at least the following changes:

(1) The Ministry must recognize that the curriculum of the public school could be a sensitive device for looking at the critical social problems of our time. The school is not politically and socially neutral; therefore, children and their teachers need to be acquainted not only with the broad social issues facing Canadians, but also with the political and social uses to which their schools are typically put. To do otherwise is to be dishonest. This is a call for political education in the schools.

(2) The priorities among subjects implied in the CORE must be revised. The arts, for instance, should be restored to their place of honor.

(3) Emphases on the forms of reasoning appropriate to the disciplines, on explanation and analysis, on rational discussion in an open classroom — these should replace the present emphasis on factual and behavioral outcomes.

As the CORE curriculum's details are released, let us hope these changes are part of its content.

The writer is a member of UBC's Faculty of Education. He teaches History of Education.

Will the Grade 12 placement exams improve standards?

**NO,
says this
Vancouver principal.**

NORMAN ORNES

■The Grade 12 placement tests deal with standards of English usage.

But what standards are meant? The standards of all secondary students? Of students attempting to enter post-secondary institutions? Of those studying at post-secondary institutions? Of those graduating from post-secondary institutions?

And the test descriptions suggest that only some aspects of the English curriculum will be assessed.

The test is *not* a reflection of basic competence in English usage skills. It is *not* how well you can communicate, but how well you can communicate on a selected topic in a limited time.

The word 'standards' is an 'in' word today. It is used frequently, but too often without clarity.

A standard is something by which measurements, assessments, evaluations, judgments may be made.

Judgments may be made absolutely by comparison with an absolute standard — weight, length, temperature — or relatively by comparison with a widely accepted standard; Rolls Royce advertisements, the U.S. dollar or average tables, for example.

In education standards of English performance are really in the eyes and ears of the beholder — in the mind of the evaluator. They are not open and visible

or widely accepted by all.

There is no hesitation, for example, in challenging anyone to produce a clear statement of required standards, or even expected standards, of English usage performance for students entering, studying at, or graduating from any post-secondary institution.

Because no standards are stated, it is very difficult to know what standards we are talking about or even discuss them sensibly or productively. Indeed, it may well be that some standards may be too high, too low, or just right.

It is very difficult, too, to explain to the very talented students, and their parents, whose mother tongue is not English just why and how they did not get a scholarship even though they were admitted to university and even though they did well on scholarship examinations.

Should we question the propriety of having schools at all levels demand the same fluency in English from immigrant students as from native-born students? Our national government has admitted them to Canada: should they be denied further educational opportunities just because they do not do well on a written test of some English usage skills?

Are they to be doomed to a restricted future just because of a current

weakness in language fluency? Is not the key question really about succeeding in college or university courses or in work rather than passing an initial screening barrier?

We are not afraid of standards as long as they are appropriate and are made clear and visible to all. Students and teachers are entitled to know expectations. If they are not known, how can we expect them to be achieved or even pursued?

When standards have been stated and achieved, then perhaps we should consider raising them.

Why are there no stated standards — for and by universities, for and by governments?

Perhaps the task of stating them is too difficult and of marginal utility and economy.

Perhaps the task is too difficult a political problem, because of the necessity to do something about not achieving standards, as well as about what to do with the below-standard products.

WE DEAL WITH PEOPLE

We must remember that we are dealing with people, not with inanimate throw-away objects.

Since the previous Social Credit government did away with final examinations there have been almost no external benchmarks by which teachers could make program judgments. At the same time there have been a considerable revision of curriculum, an infusion of new teachers and an expansion of facilities — indeed, a development of new communities and schools.

We seem to be heading now toward a multiplicity of measuring devices, but there are still no standards developed. We have such things as the composition screening test for scholarship students; PLAP, CLAP and Project BUILD; the ERIBC Placement Exam. Where is the leadership, the co-ordination in all this? Why could there not be one exam that could serve many purposes?

All these tests may indeed improve performance levels in those skills represented in the tests — at the expense of a broader range of skills. This will happen because students and teachers will, naturally, place more emphasis on those examinable aspects at the expense of the broader, not-so-easily-testable scope of English curricula.

And what about the peculiar position of UBC with respect to the placement test concept? On one hand it is seeking

the placement test rather aggressively and almost simultaneously, on the other hand, it has announced the end of 'remedial' classes.

None of the tests cover the English curriculum: none state the minimum standard. They do not reflect basic competence in English language skills.

It is not how well you can communicate, only how well you can read and express yourself in writing in a limited time. And this covers only a small part of the K-12 English curriculum.

Such tests as those enumerated above conflict with classroom activities. They are very expensive to administer. They encourage students not to take them seriously, for they have little individual significance. They do not bar entry. They are not used for marks or teaching.

All they do is classify some students as less than satisfactory (according to some invisible and not widely accepted standard) in English — a great encourager and motivator for freshmen! In many ways, such tests are not only non-productive, they are counter-productive.

Is post-secondary education really only for those who achieve a certain mark in written English that can be demonstrated by such a test? Does the same standard apply to international students as applies to local students? Does the same standard apply to appointment and retention of faculty?

WHOSE FAULT IS IT?

If first-year students in English do not perform to the satisfaction of some of their professors, whose fault is it? Is it that of the secondary schools, whose programs were strongly influenced by college and university personnel, whose staff was predominantly trained at local universities? Is it the fault of the registrar who lowered admission standards (CP to P)? Is it the fault of first-year instruction or the validity of first-year marking? Is it the fault of the provincial government that provides inadequate funding?

It is likely that a majority of the Grade 12 students now in the province will not write the placement test. Therefore it is more than likely that it will have little, if any, impact on provincial standards.

Incidentally, it is not clear whether or not the test will be required of all entering post-secondary students or just those from B.C. secondary schools. Nor is it clear if it will apply to students of private schools, or out-of-province students or foreign students.*

*Newspaper advertisements suggest that it is now required of all first-year students.

It is possible to improve 'standards' immediately by admitting only first class students. We know that, so why the charade about placement tests? We must remember, though, that that kind of activity will also lower the general educational level of our population — to the detriment of us all.

It is ironic that one of the major — and perhaps the most outspoken and most influential — sources of concern for standards is the only body that accepts no external determination of standards for itself (all under the guise of academic freedom).

Would those outspoken critics advocate as strongly that their efforts be evaluated by, say, a test developed by a third party and then marked by experienced secondary school teachers of English or by newspaper editors or by just ordinary members of the public, most of whom communicate quite effectively?

THE CAUSE IS POLITICAL

The cause of the problem about standards is more than likely political. The solution certainly seems to be political.

The whole question of poor standards is political gamesmanship, with little real value for improving the English language usage skills of B.C. students in elementary, secondary or post-secondary institutions.

It is a pining for the good old days (that really were not that good and cannot, even must not, return) when only a few could go on to post-secondary education.

What are the alternatives for students? Fail them? Terminate further education for the undesirables? Increase the ranks of the unemployed? Slash budgets and lay off personnel of post-secondary institutions whose enrollment will be radically curtailed?

Or do all of us pull together at all levels for the benefit of students?

We must remind ourselves regularly that secondary schools do not exist only to prepare people for entering post-secondary institutions. Or to write placement or entrance examinations. College or university professors of English should not be able to erect standards of English performance not widely accepted that effectively bar students from further education and at the same time deny society the benefit of their gifts.

The writer is principal of Vancouver's Eric Hamber Secondary School. The article is adapted from an address made in a panel discussion at the annual meeting of the B.C. Council for Leadership in Education March 10-12, 1977.

The letters received as a result of the BCTF's advertising campaign about the Ministry of Education's proposed core curriculum should not necessarily be interpreted as a valid and reliable sampling.

It is possible, for example, that teachers who were opposed to the 'contents' of the advertising, or who were concerned because of failure to consult or to poll members prior to the inauguration of the campaign, were more likely to write than were those who were either neutral or supportive of the intent of the advertising campaign.

Conversely, it is probable that a greater number of the public who had concerns about the Ministry's proposals felt the need to write to the BCTF than did those who were in agreement with the proposals.

Despite the foregoing qualifications, it is obvious that a very large majority of teachers and public agree with the Ministry's intent to identify a provincial core curriculum and hence were opposed to and/or critical of the BCTF's advertising campaign.

Here are some comments, both supportive and negative, that came in.

COMMENTS ON CORE / PLAP

'I am equally fearful of Dr. McGeer's comment that regardless of what the BCTF says or does, the Core Curriculum will be in effect in September 1977. We have been invited by Dr. McGeer to respond to Core Curriculum proposals, yet the questions and comments of responsible, concerned teachers will go unheeded.'

'What parents, teachers and students can look forward to, if history is to teach us anything, is more teaching for examinations, a new overriding emphasis on order and discipline; more labeling of children; more bureaucracy; much less concern for student participation at every level of schooling; less individualized instruction; more rote learning; little, if any, attempt to develop curricula to meet the (varying) needs of children; more spot tests; and classroom upon classroom of children sitting in straight rows.'

'Many teachers have felt for some time that a positive statement of direction from the Ministry of Education was long overdue.'

'A curriculum built around specific, measurable core material which is to be evaluated on a province-wide basis

REACTIONS TO CORE AND PLAP

would benefit from a reasonable core curriculum.'

ON 'ESSENTIAL EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES'

'Authors, root out the weeds of insinuation and plant the perennials of aspiration and I will labor alongside you for the causes of education.'

'We must give leadership, yes, but a wholesale attack on the social order of the province is not representative of my view of one of the tasks of the BCTF.'

'We of . . . staff, feel that there should be great concern on the part of teachers that such a radical political piece of writing should influence principles of teaching. The political ideology in which these principles are written we find intolerable.'

'We recommend, most strongly, that any further work on this working paper be aborted and that the paper, as it now stands, be scrapped.' (Another staff voiced a similar request; at least two individual members who responded voiced a similar request.)

'This booklet is controversial, but I for one am glad that the ideas have at least come into the open for general exposure and consideration, the theme of work ethic and social values are long overdue for consideration by educators — shocking or not.'

'I agree the thought here is noble but how an educational institution can bring about any equalization in a mobile, rapidly changing society is another question.'

'This document does not speak for me nor for many of this province's good teachers! I strongly object to it.'

'How could PDAC be so naive as to expect that (a) teachers would accept and/or support the ideological framework within which EEE is written, and (b) the schools are in any position to alter the societal and political system, whatever we perceive it to be.'

'. . . We repeat that core curriculum is not an issue — the content and process involved are issues and will continue to be . . . if only one recommendation were to be made by this group, it would be: Please delay implementation . . . until September 1978, in order that major concerns can be resolved.'

■'The Place That is Different' — the term coined by the founding father of Naramata, J. M. Robinson — is as apt today as it was 70 years ago. The lovely little Okanagan lakeshore town of Naramata is unique, and its community and school traditions are worth recording.

In my few years of teaching in the Naramata Public School (or, as it is now properly called, Naramata Elementary), I was struck by the close interaction of school and community and by the lively continuance of traditions dating back several generations.

The past is a part of the present — history seems alive within those tall old school walls. And in every special event the old customs are an important part. There are too few places left where this sense of the past and feeling for tradition is continued, within a framework of close harmony between school and community.

James Lowell said, 'History is clarified experience.' Let me pass on to you, then, some of the experiences related to me by former students and teachers of the Naramata School, and my own experiences of community-school tradition.

There are many school children today whose family names have been associated with the Naramata School since its beginnings in 1912. When one old man visited the school, he found many students who were grandchildren of his old school chums.

Let me sidetrack for a moment, to tell about the old man's visit . . . I was busy teaching my primary class one ordinary day last spring, when I saw a curious

THE OF TRA IN THE THA DFFF

Since its beginning in 1912, Naramata School has always been something special. A former teacher there fondly recalls some of the highlights of the school and the village.

elderly face peering through the open door. In a whimsical but loud voice, he said, 'Yes, there's the old place where we used to have fire drill. There used to be some windows down at that end.' as he indicated one end of the classroom, 'and the teacher would lower a big thick rope. First the girls would go down the rope, then us boys would follow. That was our fire drill.'

For the rest of that morning our old visitor thoroughly enjoyed himself in

relating many an interesting recollection of his days as a pupil in that same school 60 years earlier. The children were a captive audience, many thrilling to hear of the grandpas or uncles, and others, who were woven into the tales. The 'education' of that day was so much more than I would be giving them, and was typical of the Naramata School experience.

Along with the nearby city of Penticton (Pen-tak-tin — A Place to Stay Forever),

*Left: May Day Royalty, in 1976, was brought to the cer
Below: Villagers cleared the site for the new school in
Right: May Day Royalty of 1924 is pictured here with e*



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BOND EDITHION PLACE IT IS FERTILE

HEATHER GLEBE

the village of Naramata offers a rare combination of beautiful setting, incomparable climate, a stable industry of fruit farming and a warm community feeling.

A newspaper writer of 1912, in describing Naramata as a desirable place to live, wrote: 'There is a difference between a roost and a home. Environment is a trifling consideration to the former; to the latter, it is everything — specially when there is a family. The

kind of neighbors you have and the general tone of the community have much to do with the making of that boy of yours, and your happiness generally.'

Only six years after J. M. Robinson had established a model town across the lake from his earlier-built community of Summerland, it was reported, in 1912, 'A good public school with an attendance of 50 furnishes elementary education.'

The community people helped to clear and prepare this same (and present)

school site, over 60 years ago. The tradition of community backing for the Naramata School was already established.

The school was built on a solid foundation, which provided two basement 'playrooms' — one for the boys and one for the girls. Each of these rooms (just this year used as classrooms) had a pot-bellied stove in the middle and rough benches around the sides. One pioneer I talked with has many memories of time spent in the school basement in the 1920s.

He said all the pupils used to eat their lunches there, with rows of lard pails along the bench. The kids used to toast their bread on the stove. He remembers when some older boys let their bread burn on the red-hot stove; it created such a bad smell through the air vents that the teacher had to let the classes go for the afternoon.

He also recalls little school concerts and community dances held in those basement rooms. To use his words: 'Everybody would be there, you know. All the children would dance, and the old women, and the old men would sit and smoke their pipes. And the men would sneak out — they'd have a flask or bottle hidden, you see. It was a real social deal. Oh, them were quite the times.'

Another story that reminded me of the close link between school and community in Naramata is that of the apples in the school basement.

'In the fall when it was getting freezing they had no cold storage in the packing house. The packing house was the livelihood of the community, so they'd store the apples at the school. They'd *Continued on page 168*

ceremonies in traditional fashion.
1913.
entourage.



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The Lass with a liking for words



Barbara

Our walking dictionary; finder of right word(s); edits when it's needed; wants to know 'what's new' in three seconds flat; always says 'no,' but never keeps you waiting; always pleasant; we will miss her.

From Personnel and Administrative Services

Barbara often edited my written statements. Two words were often changed: 'that' and 'which.' Finally I asked Barbara how to determine the correct word. She hasn't taught for many years, but in five minutes I learned what I had not learned in 12 years of traditional grammar in school.

From Bill Broadley

In spite of stress and strain, Barb has retained her equanimity, and done so with rare grace. Her recent service as recording secretary to our executive committee provides its own testament.

From Bob Buzzo

Many people in the Federation over the years have not realized what a tremendous contribution Barbara has made in all facets of the Federation's communications program. I'll match Barb against any copy editor in Canada.

From Ken Aitchison

I never met anyone who took more pride in a publication. To her every issue, even after many years, might have been the first, and every word had to be as perfect as she could make it.

From Pearl Muir, Alberta Teachers' Association

Those among us at CTF who have known Barb Macfarlane hate to see her retire. She has always been a staunch supporter of the national goals toward which we strive. May the most she wants in her retirement be the least she gets.

Maurice Bourque, Canadian Teachers' Federation

I recall that Barbara was a very active and respected member of our BCTF Public Relations Committee while she was teaching and it was through this interest that she came into Federation work. The same effectiveness and dedication have characterized her service as a staff member.

From Stan Evans

An interview with Barbara Macfarlane,
retiring Associate Editor of *The B.C.
Teacher*.

PAT DENHOFF

»The BCTF staff is lazy! Rather than slip up to the Resources Center and look up an English term in Fowler or a fact in the Encyclopedia, they just pick up the phone.

'Barb, can you tell me . . .?' is the usual way of putting the question.

The Barb referred to is, of course, A. Barbara Macfarlane, Associate Editor of *The B.C. Teacher*, whose association with the magazine spans a 41-year period.

On June 3 Barbara Macfarlane leaves the BCTF administrative staff. During her 22 years as Associate Editor of the magazine she has built up a reputation, not just among staff, but among her peers in journalism and educators in the field, as an expert in the English language.

The reason Barbara has acquired such a reputation and is held in such high regard by those who know her work is that the excellence of the magazine she helps edit speaks for her.

The fact that a Scot by origin is an expert in the English language is not unusual. Barbara shares the widely held Scottish opinion that everything English could do with a bit of tidying up and she makes her contribution simply by insisting the language is properly written.

Barbara joined the staff of the BCTF in July 1954. Almost twenty years earlier she had been employed by Dr. Norman F. Black, correspondence instructor for the Department of Education, and volunteer editor of *The B.C. Teacher*.

She joined the BCTF staff as assistant to Stan Evans, assistant general secretary, and assisted Mr. Evans both with the magazine and in the field of public relations.

Born of Canadian parents overseas in London, England, July 21, 1917, she was brought to Canada in January of 1919. She obtained her public school education in Edmonton, in Yorkton, Saskatchewan, and in Vancouver,

graduating with her senior matriculation from Kitsilano Senior High School in 1934.

A student of the depression, her journey toward her ultimate goal of a university education took all the will and stubborn determination her nature could muster.

She trained first as a stenographer and after a brief stint with Dr. Black became a stenographer with the Technical Branch, Department of Education, for which she worked from September 1937 to August 1947. The following month she became a student at Vancouver Normal School. In September of 1948 she became a teacher at Renfrew School in the Vancouver elementary system.

She was on her way! By June 1953, she had 'put by' enough to take her to Queen's University where she obtained her degree in April of 1954.

Her association with the BCTF had already taken strong roots. From September 1949 to June 1953, she served as staff rep for Renfrew school for a year and on the Public Relations Committee of VESTA. During that period she became a member of the BCTF PR Committee and for two years was chairperson of the BCTF Education Week Committee.

Being associate editor of *The B.C. Teacher* was only one of Barbara Macfarlane's many services to the Federation. She edited specialist group publications, many papers and briefs published by the Federation, the Teachers' Calendar; assisted in the assembling of the Member's Guide; was Ken Aitchison's right hand and the lady-in-the-know to everyone else in the Federation.

Being one of those shy Scots, whose pride in themselves is usually evident only in their carriage and their solicitude for others, Barbara Macfarlane relied on her work to speak for her.

It did. In fact, it shouted her excellence both as a person and as an editor.

Barbara, your association with *The B.C. Teacher* spans a period of 41 years. You have been called by the present editor of *The B.C. Teacher*, Ken Aitchison, 'the best copy editor in Canada.'

Oh, I don't know about that!

I understand that when you joined the BCTF staff in July 1954 and were appointed office assistant and associate editor of *The B.C. Teacher*, you wanted to increase your knowledge of English to produce the finest educational magazine in Canada?

I think you're imputing motives to me! We have always been great readers in our family. It goes back a long way and I guess I grew up with a liking for words.

My father, in his latter days, did a bit of free-lance writing and he was clever with words. He used to write us jingle letters when we were children. He taught for a little while in his youth, and my mother had been a trained teacher. My grandfather was a Presbyterian minister, with all that that implies in the way of languages and reading. My other grandfather was something of an experimental farmer.

How did you happen to come onto the staff at the BCTF?

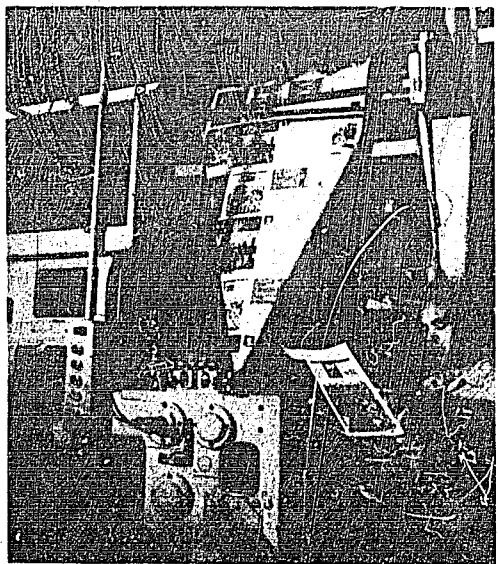
It started with being a member of the Vancouver Elementary School Teachers' Association, as a staff rep for my school in my second year of teaching. The year after that I became involved with the executive of VESTA as the editor of its small newspaper of the day.

And this is where it all began?

Well, I was on the Public Relations Committee of VESTA about 1950.

What got you interested in VESTA and in the BCTF?

Automatic membership had become a fact in 1947 and as a teacher you took an interest. I wasn't at all unique in this. Charlie Bayley, later of the Vancouver School Board, was a member of the PR committee at the same time and he and I and Phyllis Grantham (who had been at Normal with me) all ended up on the PR committee together. We all went to the BCTF PR Committee for some reason I have now forgotten, but I stayed with the



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PR Committee.

From there it began to build. The BCTF, in a year or so, needed a chairperson for the Education Week Committee, and having had two years of experience in PR work, I accepted the job and did that for two years.

Barb, how many were on staff when you joined?

On senior staff there were Charlie Ovans, the general secretary, Stan Evans, the assistant general secretary, and Allan Spragge, executive assistant. I was the office assistant.

Barb, to go back to something we discussed earlier--your fantastic command and knowledge of the English language, and the roots of the language—I'd like you to tell us a bit about the relevant books you have collected and the study of etymology that you have made, and what provoked this. Was it doing the magazine?

No, not really. I still buy books when I think, 'Oh, that would make a dandy reference.'

I think a lot of people don't appreciate the research that goes into editing a piece for a magazine. When a story comes in with a statement that a certain city is in Angola, if you're not absolutely positive, you go down to the resources center and look it up. How do you account for this dedication to accuracy? I think my original interest in English and languages started it.

What do you consider the most important qualities in a copy editor?
I think a good knowledge of formal English. Structure is really important: knowledge of where punctuation belongs; knowledge of the form of a sentence. When I went to school, we were on what was called the academic program, and we were well trained in sentence structure.

I take it, then, that you are not as much against Dr. McGeer's contention, or that of Dr. Wisenthal of UBC, that students be drilled in a good basic knowledge of the English language as is the Federation?

I wouldn't have said it just that way, because times have changed, people have changed, society has changed; but for an editor, particularly, an ability to express oneself in lucid English is very important. Everybody should have a good command of the English language. It is our language.

Agreed, this country is a bilingual country and I wish my French were better. It was better when I was a child than it ever has been since, although I can still read a certain amount of French.

The structure of the French language is very precise. The structure of Latin is very precise, and this carried over to the way we were taught English.

This brings to mind the manner in which the English used in *The B.C. Teacher* has changed over the years during which you have been associate editor. Who would have thought 20 years ago that in *The B.C. Teacher* of today 'dialogue' would be spelled 'dialog'?

Well . . . once the BCTF had a committee on spelling reform . . .

And this was how it was reformed?
There are one or two words from that original list that I still don't spell the committee's way. But some of them I find quite acceptable.

This amazes me. As a purist of language, which you are . . .
Purists have to move with the times.

Barb, which is more important: the correct formal use of language or the communication of ideas therein?
I think there's a mix. The communication of ideas of course takes precedence, but it should be done properly—because if the language in which you're conveying your message is sloppy, the message won't get across.

I've noticed this about you. When you have been editing a story where it has been a choice between flavor and the absolutely correct English, you have opted for flavor. You would never spoil the flavor of a story by being too much of a purist.

I don't think anyone should be too pedantic.

Barb, when editing a story some editors feel one should 'clean it up,' meaning correct the English. What is your feeling on this?

Glaring errors, of course. It depends. If it were a speech—well, one can say things with intonation, accent and stress that get the message across, but that message is lost in writing. The person who is being quoted may have said something with a touch of a laugh in the voice and has said it wrongly, and you know it was said that way intentionally, but in print it's dead—then perhaps I'd correct it.

I often think that even the people in the BCTF, and that includes members of the staff as well as the elected officials, don't really appreciate what goes into the production of a magazine. Do you agree?

Yes, I do. I think there are simply too many facets of publishing for someone who is not involved to grasp. There is everything from selection of material, research, editing, advertising, make-up, graphics, selection of covers, proofing galleys, page proofs and finally blue lines (the final proofs)—and then, after three proofreading sessions, you open the finished product and find a typo on the third page!

***The B.C. Teacher* has won more than its share of awards from the Educational Press Association of America. What areas have these awards covered?**
We have won a fair number, I must admit. We have won some for features, layout, columns, and for editorials in the days when we ran editorials.

Who are some of the outstanding authors whose writings have appeared in *The B.C. Teacher*?

Well, there was Maurice Gibbons, who wrote the Eustace Prim stories, which were very funny. And Laurence Peter (author of *The Peter Principle* and other books) was a B.C. teacher; we printed several pieces by him away back. By and large, the most successful pieces we have run have been by our own members.

Do you think the time will come when a teachers' magazine as such will be phased out and the type of tabloid that is put out as a newsletter will become the major teacher publication? Or do you see a different type of publication replacing the journal-magazine—whatever?

As long as we're print-oriented, it will probably always be a budget item for the association.

What do you feel is the most important reason for retaining a teachers' magazine?

Its permanency, I think. It is important—for people to check back on.

A historical record?

Yes. It's a historical record of the changes in the profession; the way people think in the profession; the topics that are of interest to the profession. If you don't have print, how are you going

Continued on page 173

The Bond of Tradition

Continued from page 163

come in with the trucks and the horses and they'd put thousands of boxes of apples in the boys' and girls' sides of the basement. So all the kids would steal apples all the time.

'They left enough room to let the janitor bring in his wheelbarrow of coal. The kids would sit in this long alley and eat their lunch. That's something to remember!'

The school basement was also the setting for 'Whoopie Parties' in the 1920s, I was told. The older kids really broke loose in dancing and dressing in the craze of the times — boys in blue denim pants with an inset for flared bottoms, and girls with their stockings rolled. Some of the boys were 'tough, and they'd have their flasks.' There were always chaperones — 'grouchy old guys from the school board' — to help the teacher handle things.

The school board was closely linked with the daily life of the school. According to a very old lady who was secretary of the school board from about 1920 to 1922, they bought the school books, hired teachers and paid part of their salaries — all with a budget of \$5,000. A former schoolboy of those days remembers when a prominent member of the school board died, and the school was closed for the day. All the children went to the graveyard; and he remembers the teacher crying.

Another interesting aspect of the link

Festivities include a community tug-of-war. Here fathers and sons pull against mothers and daughters.



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between past and present and involvement of community is the school buses. In a small rural school busing has been important from the earliest days. One pioneer told me of probably the first 'school bus,' about 1923. An older boy, Stuart Allen, drove the kids down to the village from the farms on the benches in his own truck. His father had died and he had missed a few years of school, so he was old enough to drive. Later, Stuart used a Ford touring car; and then an old 1922 Model T Ford became the 'official' school bus.

I was told: 'Four men would lift an old canvas-covered frame onto a fruit truck, and it was used as a school bus. On the days when there was no school and in the summer, they'd lift the cover off and use it for fruit.'

About 1926 they bought an old Fisher truck, with two-wheeled brakes. There was chicken wire on the windows, which were covered with canvas for winter. All the kids were 'shoved in there like prisoners,' sitting on seats of slabs of wood with their backs against the wall.

According to one old fellow, there was a place about two feet square on the back of the truck, where the 'bad kids' had to ride. He also told me of how the driver, 'Jiggles,' got his name.

The bus driver, Jerry Williams, was always called Jiggles Williams because of the rough ride. In those days the roads were just wagon trails. When it snowed they had to use horses to pull the bus up hills, or when it got stuck. An old man, Dave Good, was paid to keep a team

ready in the winter. It was awful cold riding in the back of that truck, but we'd get warm helping to push the bus up the hills or in the snow.

'In 1926 a great big fellow, Bill Lynch, came from England; he had no work so he used to ride on the school bus for weight. He must have weighed 300 pounds. He had to shift to the back and so on, and get out and help push.'

Sometimes Bill Lynch would relieve the janitor, as well. In the past the role of janitor was a very important one, for he had to keep up the wood and coal supply to the furnace during the day, and handle things if the water froze in the winter.

JANITOR 'HAD TO BE THERE'

When this happened, I am told, a fellow would come with a team, bringing barrels of water. The kids would go out with their lard pails and get their own water. The janitor had to be there 'pretty well all the time. He practically lived there.' One well-remembered janitor of the Naramata School was an old man named Mr. Smith.

'He was a terrific guy. If the kids scraped their knuckles or got sick, he was like a father. He would give us candy, or if you forgot your lunch, he'd give you part of his. He'd help the teachers, and he was a little bit of everything. Everybody knew he was Number One man. Mr. Smith had a blind wife. She used to sit down by the pot-bellied stove all day, and put more coal in or make him some tea.'

'Anyone who went to the Naramata School from the '20s well into the '40s would remember Old Man Smith. He's buried up there in the cemetery. And he's got great-grandchildren still in the school today!'

The school custodian of today lives only a block away from the school, and has seen his own children through their schooling there over the years.

The community resources have always been a strong support behind the Naramata School. For example, in the earlier days, when the teacher was sick or unable to go to school, other townspeople would take over. (Today, capable parents are still called in to substitute when necessary.) A former pup of the late 1920s recalls two of these early community 'teachers':

'You know that big Bill Lynch who rode the school buses and helped Mr. Smith . . . well, he was quite the interesting fellow. He'd been in the Coldstream Guards in the Boer War, and also in World War I. When the teacher was sick

he used to come in to amuse the kids with all kinds of interesting stories. He'd done a lot of things, that man.

'Another one who came in was a friend of the teacher's, Mrs. Harman. She came to Naramata from England, to marry a guy she'd met in the war. She came dressed like a queen, in the latest hairdos and fashions of London. She had worked in Buckingham Palace, that lady. She used to tell us about King George V and all the Royal Family.'

Even within the curriculum of the Naramata School, community resources have played an important part, especially in the arts. The village has an uncommon

abundance of talent and experience among its population of about 1,000.

There are craftsmen doing everything from expert fly-tying to weaving, and there are two commercially licenced crafts and ceramics shops in the village. The Naramata Community Choir has been growing steadily in renown over the last 15 years, giving inspiration and guidance to the lively school music groups.

In some years, an exciting drama program has been offered by interested people outside the school. Because of this generous sharing of their knowledge and experience, talented townspeople

have enriched the education of Naramata school children over the years.

The community has always been behind school projects, according to a retired Naramata teacher of 24 years. Parents seem to care about their kids and the school. Whenever parent help was needed — in donations of home baking, for instance — there was always a big response. In my own experience, we of the staff could always count on any number of parent or community helpers for various reasons. The Women's Auxiliary (an organization dating back to Naramata's earliest days) faithfully

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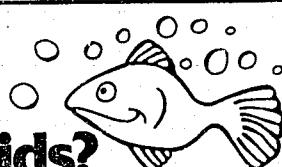
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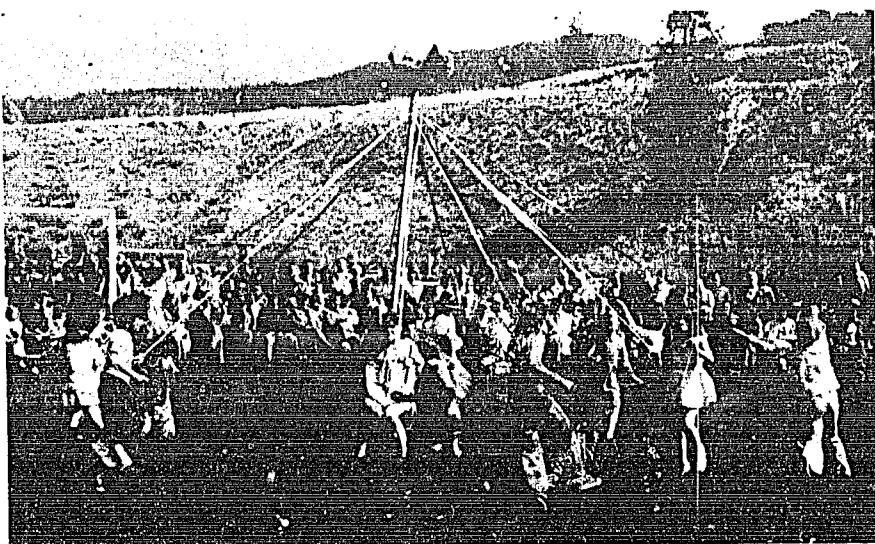
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Here is Maypole dancing as it has been done for more than 50 years in Naramata.

provides concessions for the school sports day, year after year.

A group of parents recently spent many hours in making a large number of math games and learning aids for use in the school; a donation of a valuable collection that will be appreciated for years to come. Today may not be much different from the days of a school boy of the 1930s:

'Everything seemed to be built around the school. The school was kind of a grapevine for the community. Everyone had gone there or their kids were there. If anyone was sick or had a problem, they'd get help — everybody helped everybody else.'

I have been impressed by the way the whole village seems to turn out for such school-sponsored special events as choir concerts, talent shows, or the annual Christmas concert. The little Christmas concerts held on the stage of the school gym are much the same as the old concerts in the basement. Even many older folks and young people who

have no direct involvement in the school are present to applaud the children's efforts.

Christmas concerts have been held every year except for two or three years, according to Mrs. Verna Kennedy, the teacher for many years. But the interesting fact is that when the school didn't sponsor the traditional concert, the community took over. There were still Christmas concerts those years, with all the children taking part, the women bringing food and the fathers building props — all held in the Community Hall.

The Naramata School Christmas concerts are still a main event of the season for children, families and visitors. Children today greet Santa Claus with as much excitement as their grandparents or even great-grandparents did. To crown the evening, they crowd around Santa to receive their box of Cracker Jacks — a simple custom dating back as far as anyone can remember.

The one event of the year in which school and community are most united in a continuance of an old tradition — the event that inspired me to write this article — is the Naramata May Day celebrations. Everyone I've spoken to who has been a student, teacher, parent or friend of the school loves to recall all the excitement and color of the festivities.

As a primary teacher in the school I was moved by the spontaneous enthusiasm of the children in anticipation of their parts in the May Day. Long before we teachers have begun seriously planning for the event, the children are excitedly discussing it all. They look forward to their part just as their parents did, or their grandparents, and before long it will be as their great-grandparents did.

The day's activities include a parade of children led by the May Queen and her attendants, who are brought in by a classy horse-drawn rig complete with genuine harness bells and a top-hatted driver in coattails (himself a pioneer of the earliest May Days). The crowning ceremonies and presentations follow; then the primary children display their Maypole dances.

The dancing is usually followed up by a call to any older members of the crowd who once danced as children to come and give it another try. There is never any lack of response among the audience, and it proves hilarious to the children to watch their older brothers, parents or grandparents confusedly try to remember how they once wound their ribbons so gracefully around the Maypole.

The big day continues with costume and bicycle contests, a barbecue lunch, sports events and family races, and winds up with a tug-of-war and free ice cream for all the kids. All this takes place in the lovely lakeshore Manitou Park. These grounds are also the setting for various crafts tables, bake sales, chance games, etc., organized by the Women's Institute.

In the evening everyone from 3 to 90 attends the family dance. It thrills me to take part in the elegant but casual 'Grand March' begun and led by the little Queen of the May and her father, and to watch the ranks swell with familiar faces, old and young.

The events at a Naramata May Day have changed very little in the past 54 years. The first May Queen was crowned in 1923.

An article written in 1925 describes the typical early May Day events:

'The orchestra struck up as the head of the procession came in sight. First came the herald with trumpets, and in tabard and full regalia. Then came six of the bonniest bright-eyed little girls you could see. They were dressed in white and decorated with garlands and flowers. Next followed the Queen . . . attended by two maids of honour. The Queen's train was carried by two pages dressed in sky blue and silver.'

'Behind the Queen came John Bull, got up in orthodox fashion — high hat, black stock, with the Union Jack as waistcoat and wearing top boots. With him walked "Canada" (wearing a colourful Maple Leaf gown), and the dances followed. The Boy Scouts formed the Queen's escort.'

This British-type pageantry is well remembered by oldtimers, as it was

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pretty exciting to them as youngsters. One recalls being a proud page, carrying the Queen's train — he wore pale blue bloomers, black stockings and big brimmed hat with a huge ostrich plume. The Britannia affair had been introduced by a teacher from England, Beryl Coates, and it continued until depression years.

To get back to the story of the 1925 May Day . . . following were the crowning ceremonies, Maypole dances, songs, sports and competitions (including 'jack knife races').

'Now 5 p.m. approached and many an elderly face said "What about tea?" It made its appearance in due course . . . and the eatables were fine — in fact, all enjoyed them.

The evening finished with a dance in the hall, always welcomed by the young. Up to 3 a.m. cars were heard taking home the May Day visitors, all no doubt tired but highly pleased.

'So ended another of our merry May Day celebrations. These celebrations have become quite a feature. We are again favoured by the visits of numerous Summerland and Penticton friends . . . There was a great and merry crowd on the grounds and the weather was ideal.'

All the school children were involved in the early May Days. Until the 1960s the whole morning's program was handled

by the school, and included skits, songs, etc., by each class, as well as the parade, crowning ceremonies and Maypole. Then in 1964 events were moved from the school grounds to the park, because of the large crowd; and the program gradually came more under community sponsorship.

But the two ladies who work hardest with the children today have no trouble in arousing enthusiasm for the school's part. Mrs. Verna Kennedy, a retired teacher who has helped with Naramata May Days for close to three decades, and a present teacher, Mrs. Betty Berry, herself a former May Queen, parent and teacher of other Royalty, arrange for the annual election by the children of a Queen of the May from among the Grade 6 girls. Out on the same school lawns used for three generations 'they train the little ones in their Maypole dances and escorting parade for the Queen and Princesses.'

A headline in a Penticton newspaper of May 1964 read: 'Tradition Continues as Naramata May Queen Crowned' — a title even more apt for a 1977 news item. The writer of that 1964 article mentions 'a sense of history was in the minds of many of the spectators' and 'some of the pioneers were watching their grandchildren take part, others recalled

dancing around the Maypole themselves as children.' Three generations were represented, the article claimed, for instance, a princess to the May Queen of that year was granddaughter of the young 'John Bull' of 40 years earlier.

And so now, still 13 years later, Naramata's May Day festivities are even more meaningful as a continuing custom. History seems alive in the traditions of school and community carried on without fanfare in the village of Naramata.

We hear constantly of how fast the world is changing, how great is the generation gap, how today's child is a different child from yesterday's. But in a place where the past is a living integral part of the present — in the family, community and school — where is all the stress of change?

To see good things carried on over the years, especially in the bond between school and community, is very refreshing. Such a faith in the past gives appreciation for the present and hope for the future.

I truly found Naramata 'The Place That Is Different,' but I hope there are also other places 'different' in this beautiful way. *Q.E.D.*

The writer now lives in Penticton.

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The Lass . . .

Continued from page 173

to know what happened?

As for the magazine's being a status symbol, I suppose one could say that a good-looking magazine is a symbol of the organization. Also what's in the magazine is a symbol.

It's often been said that *The B.C. Teacher* seems to anticipate events, both political and professional. I'm thinking now, as an example, of your March-April issue, which carried the Quebec story.

That was Ken's doing.

Who is the one with this special sixth sense?

That's Ken.

What's been most fun, Barb, in doing the magazine?

Oh, the people. The people in the Federation and the people outside the Federation one comes in contact with through the magazine.

What's been the highlight, Barb, of these past 22 years?

Highlight? I don't know—it's all been pretty exciting.

The covers! You've never mentioned the covers in this interview and I've always felt you just delighted in those covers. Oh yes. They have changed over the years too.

Which was your favorite series?

I think, looking back, the ones done by teacher-artists; that is, active teachers who were painting. They were beautiful, some of those paintings. The next best, in my opinion, and the most interesting, were the series by the students from all grades.

Barb, we haven't as yet discussed the duties of the Editorial Board. What are they, precisely?

These people are advisory to the editor. If the editor feels he wants advice on any topic, particularly content, he consults the Editorial Board. He asks them to evaluate each year's set of issues and at the time covers are being chosen, they help with that selection.

Then, every so often, we ask the teachers for their ideas—we have a survey of our readers—and from their ideas we also adapt.

What will you miss most, Barb?
The people.

You hear around the office when you ask about Barb Macfarlane, as I have done, the most amazing things! Kindnesses done for people in the building, teachers in the field, the Federation as a whole that maybe only one or two people know about. Over the years you've gathered a following of people who highly respect you not only as a professional, but as an individual, because you do things for people without ever saying anything about it.

I always say 'no' first!

Well, in the end you always say 'yes,' Barb. I don't know whether that's good for a lady or not!

When you move over to the Island, what do you plan to do?
First, I have to get my house and garden in order so I can leave it to do what I hope to do, which is to travel a bit. Scotland first, of course.

Well, I'm sure I speak for everyone in the Federation when I say . . . how does one say in Scottish 'best luck, fair weather'?
I don't really know. The only thing I can think of is 'Lang may your lum reek.'

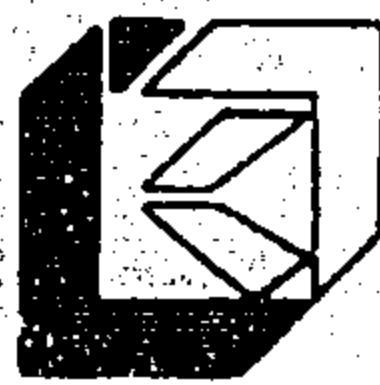


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A new series of Canadian mathematics tests published by the Guidance Centre in co-operation with the Research Centre of the Ottawa Board of Education. Each test examines a single topic. Individual and class record sheets for diagnostic use in identifying strengths and weaknesses.

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Test 5: Multiplication and Division with Fractions

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A number of seminars have been tentatively scheduled. For a list of these courses and for a detailed guide to graduate work in English, *A Handbook for Graduate Students*, please apply to Dr. David S. Thatcher, Graduate Director, Department of English.

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After nearly 20 years of specializing in teaching the primary grades in many districts in B.C., I have taken several years off to be with my teenagers.

I've been pondering why so much of the hard work being done by both pupils and teachers is failing to produce desired results, particularly in the areas of written language and arithmetical skills.

From this perspective, the deeply troubling conclusion I've drawn is *not* that we are teaching too little — but that we are teaching *too much too soon*, and too haphazardly. We are bombarding our primary children, scattergun style, with a confusion of concepts that are sometimes premature, according to research — Piaget's, for instance.

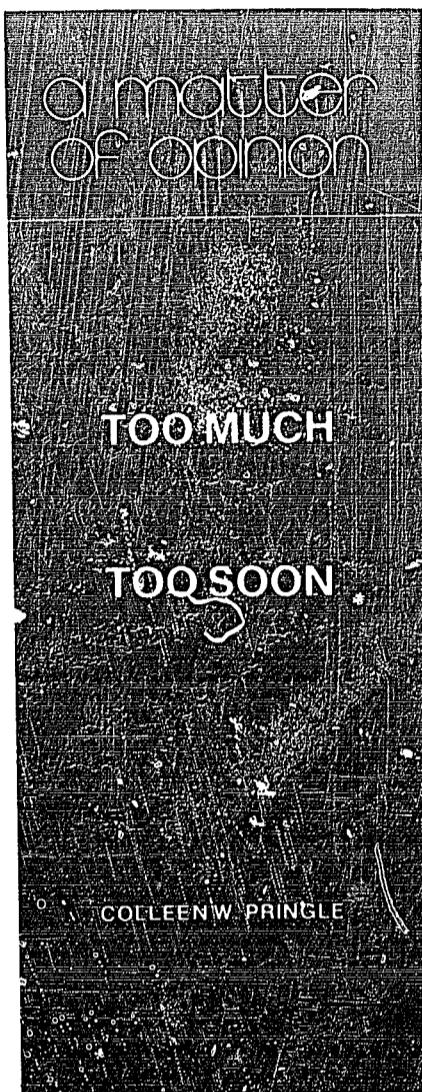
We are introducing so much that mastery of essential 'basic' learning is made extremely difficult. Because mastery is incomplete, valuable time must be taken from subsequent grades to determine what skills are lacking and then to reteach. The time lost to testing and reteaching, coupled with the poor progress a pupil makes before his/her point of mastery is established (sometimes months), represents a major barrier to progress.

The failure to provide a selective, orderly, systematic progression in the teaching of necessary concepts is also causing great damage. The primary years cry out for a cessation of this 'scattergun' approach, which is failing to give our pupils the skills necessary for expressing themselves in writing, for solving mathematical problems and for unlocking and spelling words.

What we are doing is not only inefficient in the extreme, wasteful of time, energy and money, but also, even more regrettably, is damaging to a child's interest in and love of learning.

The first year, especially, is woefully out of balance with its crushing weight of prescribed reading and mathematical concepts. A case in point: Six-year-olds are currently being taught the apostrophe 's', the possessive 's' and plural 's'. What results is a massive confusion that shows up later in secondary students who use 's' to pluralize.

A reasonable basic requirement for first year would be the skill of writing a simple sentence, remembering to start it



with a capital letter and to end it with a period. Many secondary students seem unable to perform this rudimentary task. I believe that very little else in punctuation should be taught in the first year, otherwise, I fear, mastery of this essential skill will be jeopardized.

Another case in point is the introduction of the long vowel sounds in Grade 1. Until 1964 this was considered second year material. In my experience, only the upper third of the average class of beginners can master both the long and short vowel sounds. I firmly believe the attempt to teach beginners mastery of the long vowels is made at the expense of mastery of the consonant and short vowel sounds.

In many classrooms 75% of the time is spent in an exhausting, futile struggle to cover too much ground.

Four years later teachers are still trying to teach roughly the same material in reading. Why? Because concentration on mastery of a carefully selected, limited 'core' of material did not take place earlier in stages carefully

consistent with the mental maturity of pupils.

In the mathematics program the concept of place value (tens and ones) is now taught in the first year, as is change-making up to one dollar. Piaget's research shows that these concepts are most easily grasped between ages seven and eight. Surely it is unwise to spend time on these difficult concepts when the average six-year-old must struggle to learn the combinations to 10.

I have strongly held, also, that the balance of mental vs physical activity for all children (but especially young children) is greatly in need of correction. The needs of their bodies for regular daily exercise, fresh air and movement are being gravely shortchanged.

Again, research proves that the mind functions best in a body that has fresh air and exercise. Furthermore, there is, in my opinion, a direct connection between the desk-bound child and the school vandal. Energy suppressed, instead of being expended productively during the day, bursts all too often into delinquent behavior.

I firmly believe that the sadly inadequate standard of physical fitness in Canada starts right in our primary classrooms. The unwise dependence on the once or twice a week 'gym period' instead of a regular daily exercise period outdoors or in the classroom causes a good deal of the trouble.

Too often only a few of the children in a class are continuously active in gym or game periods. We could learn a lot from the many other countries where all children engage in worth-while projects, such as gardening and carpentry plus nearly an hour of exercise daily.

Finally, I believe a careful look must be taken at the sheer weight of material that is being introduced. Are we sacrificing quality for quantity, competence for superficial exposure? Are we making use of the excellent research that exists to help us determine when certain concepts are most readily learned so that the present great waste of teacher and pupil effort can be avoided?

I am deeply troubled about the answers I have made to these questions. I leave them with you, hoping that they will serve some productive purpose in the effort to establish a core curriculum. *o*

The writer, a former teacher, lives in Vernon.

new books

C. D. NELSON



O TO BE IN ENGLAND . . .

now that April's here (at this writing, that is). Having spent 22 days in that fair country over the Spring break, Easter weekend, and extra days, I wish to report that England seems to be thriving, despite a rather negative press, and already full of tourists. If any of my readers is planning a trip there this summer, here is some free advice I gladly offer:

1. fly direct, avoiding the horrendous confusion of Toronto airport;
2. bring your own soap, face cloth, paper and plastic bags for purchases (they seldom supply them), and twice as much money as you thought you might need (prices are high);
3. also bring your own favorite bathroom tissue if you value your anatomy;
4. have your films processed while there — much cheaper.

MEMORANDUM . . .

From: Superintendent
To: Assistant Superintendent

Next Thursday at 10:30 a.m. Halley's Comet will appear over this area. This is an event which occurs only once every 75 years. Call the school principals and have them assemble their teachers and classes on the athletic fields and explain

this phenomenon to them. If it rains then cancel the day's observation and have classes meet in the auditorium to see a film about the comet.

MEMORANDUM . . .

From: Assistant Superintendent
To: School Principals
By order of the Superintendent of Schools next Thursday at 10:30, Halley's Comet will appear over your athletic field. If it rains cancel the day's classes and report to the auditorium with your teachers and classes where you will show films, a phenomenal event which occurs every 75 years.

MEMORANDUM . . .

From: School Principal
To: All staff
By order of the phenomenal Superintendent of Schools at 10:30 next Thursday Halley's Comet will appear in the auditorium. In case of rain over the athletic field the Superintendent will give another order, something which occurs only every 75 years.

TEACHERS TO STUDENTS . . .
Next Thursday at 10:30 the Superintendent of Schools will appear in our school auditorium with Halley's Comet, something which occurs every

75 years. If it rains the Superintendent will cancel the comet and order us out to our phenomenal athletic field.

STUDENTS TO PARENTS . . .

When it rains next Thursday at 10:30 over the school athletic field the phenomenal 75-year-old Superintendent of Schools will cancel all classes and appear before the whole school in the auditorium accompanied by Bill Halley and the Comets.

HAVE A GOOD SUMMER . . .

— C. D. Nelson

EDUCATION

Reviews of National Policies for Education, Canada. Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, Paris, 1976. \$9.00

This Report has three parts. Part one is the report of the five external examiners — four from Europe, and one from the United States

Accommodation Available

FOR RENT OR EXCHANGE for a house in Victoria July/August, a new 2 bedroom house overlooking Okanagan Lake. P.O. Box 1224, Vernon: 545-1950

FOR RENT — Fully furnished 1½ bedroom apart, spacious, Peaceful quiet setting, ½ block Lougheed Mall, 5 mins. from SFU. \$230/mo including utilities. Available July 1 - Sept. 1 #110-9344 Cameron St., Bby V3J 1L9 or 936-7905 after 6 p.m.

RENT — July 2 - August 19. Fully furn. 1 BR suite, close to Jericho and UBC. Ref. reqd; \$475 for period (utilities incl.). Phone or write M. Northrop, 3623 W. 3rd Ave., Vancouver V6R 1M1; 738-3994

FURNISHED 3 bed. home 1 mile to university, beach, shopping. Park-like setting. Summer session \$700. All utilities. Min. care. Ph. 592-9144 Victoria.

DUPLEX FOR RENT — July-Aug. SxS. Central location; 2 beds; fully furnished; yard & garage. Rent \$360/mo. Carolyn Bridal, 129 W. 16th Ave.; 874-0743 (after 4) or Eric Hamber Sec. Sch. 241-9361

FOR RENT — small 2-bedroom house with tiny study. Quiet garden, pleasant view. 15 min. SFU; 30 min UBC. Beginning of July to mid-August. Phone 291-9319

FOR RENT — in Okanagan. Three bedroom house. July 2-23. Phone 494-1337 or write Box 428, Summerland.

FOR RENT — 3 bdrm furnished house. Near shopping, buses, etc. Available June 25 - August 27, 1977. Family preferred. \$450 per month. 2980 E. 56 Ave., Vancouver V5S 2A4; 435-9621

FOR RENT — White Rock house, superb ocean view, large family home, minutes to beach, 4 bedrooms plus. 45 minutes to UBC, SFU or Western Wash. for summer school session \$500. 1435 Kerfoot Rd., V4B 3L7; 536-3960

SUBLLET — 3-room apartment. July, August & September. Kerrisdale area. Phone 263-9662

FURNISHED HOME — 2 bedrooms & den; near university. Available end of June. 2923 W. 30th Ave., Vancouver V6L 1Z3; 263-7535

FURNISHED HOME — available July 1 to middle of Aug. (summer school); 5 bedrooms & den; close to UBC. \$600 for 6 weeks. 3374 East Blvd., Vancouver V6J 4A7; 732-7848

OWNER WILL SHARE home (near Park Royal) for summer in return for minimal rent and some garden maintenance. 980 Wildwood Lane, West Vanc. V7S 2H8; 922-7253

FOR RENT to reliable couple. Two bedroom home in Kelowna, half block from Okanagan Lake. Large lot, fireplace, hardwood floors, comfortable furnishings and large library. Includes sailboat. Available July 15 - August 15. \$400. Contact J. Shinnick, 764-7010 or write 558 Radest Rd., Kelowna.

VICTORIA HOUSE to rent; 2-3 bedrooms, plus study. Oak Bay, close to all facilities, easy biking distance to UVic. Yard fenced for small children or pets. 7 weeks \$800, everything included. G. Nordstrom, 1429 Monterey, Victoria V8S 4V9

2-BDRM DUPLEX near UBC. Available July, August. \$375 per month. Apply R. Schidlo, 4576 W. 6th Ave., Vancouver; 224-1174

FOR RENT — July/Aug. 3 bed 10-yr-old home fully furn. in Coquitlam, near SFU. \$400 per mo. 936-6884

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SEAFRONT downstairs 2 bdrm apt. Private dock. Dishwasher, w. to w. on beautiful Long Hbr., Saltspring Is. Avail. July & Aug. by week or month. No teenagers. Reasonable. Cunningham, Box 434, Ganges; 537-2308

ATTRACTIVE 3-bedroom home in Pitt Meadows area available for rent July and August. \$350 per month. Call 465-8525

WATERFRONT HOME for summer rental. Sechelt Peninsula. Avail. June through August. \$175 per week. 4822 Portland St., Burnaby V5J 2P5; 434-3777

HOUSE FOR RENT for UVic summer session, Oak Bay. Phone 592-0795

— who visited Canadian educational institutions throughout June 1975. Part two is a summary of the confrontation meeting — trust Europeans to be intellectually honest — held between the five external examiners and 19 Canadian educational leaders — Ministers of Education and provincial and federal public servants — in Paris, December 9-10, 1975. Part three is the Background Report on the state of education in Canada as prepared by the Canadian authorities.

This is exciting reading. The examiners display, apart from what appears to be one serious contradiction, an amazing insight into the state of Canadian education. The contradiction is unfortunate. Early in their Report, the External Examiners comment that educational development in Canada has proceeded on a fragmented, piecemeal fashion with no clearly defined national goals to guide the educational ship of state. They add that 'Canadian education policy may be one of the least "politicized" in the world.'

In Appendix B, the Examiners develop a brilliant description of how the industrial organization for delivering educational services has become the 'ideal model to aim for.' Classroom teachers are effectively made dependent on external experts, be they psychologists, social workers, district staff, principals, counsellors or librarians. In self-defence, classroom teachers seek to become subject matter specialists and hence, within a school, isolated from each other, they are incapable, because of the application of the division of labor, of judging 'their own functions as they relate to the total process.'

They are placed at the bottom of the decision-making pyramid, and all important decisions concerning the particular program required for each child are taken without consulting the teacher or the pupil. The teacher is confined to spending his/her time with a succession of pupils and 'to delivering pre-programmed teacher behaviors.' Pupils are placed in the milieu of large insensitive, impersonal institutions, and they quickly find that 'milieu to be extremely competitive.' The PE program is cited as one example.

This industrial model of organizing educational services has, in fact, become the national goal of education of Canada.

Brilliant also is the analysis by the External Examiners of what they perceive to be education in Canada, frequently in marked contrast to what it is said to be by the Canadian educational authorities.

Examples follow: 'the predominance of power in policy-making (and in many cases in administration) lies with the Ministry of Education — putting aside all protestations by Ministry officials that this is not so'; the 'numerous protestations that the decisions of the Ministry are never heard about at the grassroots (parents and teachers voice this complaint), and fulminations against apparently arbitrary decisions made by the Ministry, over everyone's head'; the lack of encouragement to community school developments; the lack of acknowledgment of the 'tireless fundamental work' of 'teachers and their organizations'; the active campaign to bar students from active participation in key decisions by emasculating student 'collectives' or councils.

Almost by way of emphasizing the great power that is wielded by the Ministries, the Canadian education authorities freely acknowledged at the confrontation meeting that no consultation with the various interest groups in education had taken place as their own Background Report had been prepared. Indeed the decision, they announced, 'was a very deliberate one.'

If the B.C. reader is still dubious, consider the process by which a core curriculum that 'must be taught' has been identified; the limited opportunity for public and teacher response to what has been identified; the testing procedure to promote its implementation. Finally, remember the almost indecent haste of the Ministry to implement for tertiary institutions, a placement examination.

Truly, those who have visited us briefly have given us a beacon that, if we teachers join together with the public, could lead us from the night of this present educational desert. — John S. Church

2-3 BEDROOM HOUSE for rent — July 3 - Aug. 28. Close to beach and shopping areas in West Vancouver. Rec room and fenced garden. Knowles, 1243 Duchess Ave., W., Van V7T 1H3; 922-2746

FOR RENT — New 2-bdrm house. Near everything— shopping, lake, universities and downtown Vancouver. \$500 for July & August! Please enquire before June 24, 1977. Write Harry Rinnan, 3469 Garden Drive, Vancouver VSN 4Y6; 876-1979

SUMMER SUBLET — July 1. View 1 bdrm in hi-rise nr Pk Royal. Pool, sauna, parking. #908-2012 Fullerton, N. Van; ph 922-8294 eves.

FOR RENT — W. Van furnished 3 bedroom home during July and August. Please write D. Parks, 1263 Haywood Ave., W. Vancouver V7T JV2; 922-9891

FOR RENT — July 3 to August 13. Furnished 3-bedroom house in Kamloops. Fenced back yard on quiet cul-de-sac near downtown. \$400 including utilities. Contact A. K. Simpson, 1376 Dominion Cres., Kamloops, 374-1666

SUBLET — July, August; 1 bdrm apt Kits. nr UBC, beach, downtown. Furnished (Kg size bed — linen not supplied). Sauna. \$250/mo. Ref. reqd. Write H. MacKay, 2324 W. 1st; #1001, Van. V6K 1G3; 732-6960

LARGE, well furnished 3 bedroom house, fenced garden, color TV, dishwasher, 10 min to UBC. Albury, 3149 W. 15th Ave., Vancouver V6K 3A7. Avail July/Aug. \$500/mo.

FOR RENT in July — Cabin in Okanagan on waterfront. \$120/week. Mrs. Edna Haskins, #1202-7281 Cambie St., Van. V6P 3H4; 321-2409

CHILDREN'S MAGAZINES

Ahoi, An Atlantic Magazine for Children. Published by the Junior League of Halifax, P.O. Box 3380, Halifax South Post Office, Halifax.

This new periodical has much going for it. It is Canadian without being packaged in the Maple Leaf. There are articles written by adults for children; there are art and written contributions by children; there are things for children to do — crosswords and other exercises. The illustrations are numerous and catching. The contact advisor is a well-known Canadian educator, Paul Robinson, Atlantic Institute of Education, and formerly curriculum director in the Yukon.

Teachers and teacher-librarians will welcome this magazine, suitable for the late primary and early intermediate grades. It is to appear four times each year. The cost is \$4.00 a year or \$1.00 an issue. — John S. Church

ENVIRONMENT

People and Pollution, by William Addison. Gage, Toronto, 1977. \$2.20

This second volume — to complement Phil Harrison's *What's Urban Geography* — in the Gage Urban Studies Series will meet diverse purposes. It could be a reference for the teacher of geography, of science, of ecological studies, of environmental education as he/she plans lessons. It could be a reading moriograph for senior secondary school and junior college students in any of the aforementioned areas. The booklet is sufficiently flexible to permit teacher and/or student to advance as far as he/she may wish to proceed without becoming overwhelmed by technical terminology.

Seven student studies challenge the student to assess the current state of air, water and land pollution. As one who has an integral

APARTMENT for sublet during July and August. It includes pool, whirlpool, sauna, billiard room and other amenities. Situated beside Burnaby Mountain golf course and 5 minutes from SFU. Contact D. Bourassa before June 15 at 298-1733; 306B, 7374 Halifax St., Burnaby

SUMMER RENTAL — Fully f'm 2 bdrm bungalow in Burnaby equidistant SFU and UBC. Avail July 1 - Sept. 1. \$300/mo. util incl. Apply with refs to C. Christensen, 5655 Portland St., Burnaby V5J 2K7 or phone 437-9252

Long term

FURNISHED APARTMENT FOR SUBLET — in lovely Rockland area of Victoria. Quaint 1 bdrm apt. in old lodge is available from Sept. 77 through Dec. 77. 5 min. to UVic, town, beaches. Enjoy large sunny rooms and enormous lawns. \$310/mo. References required. #3-750 Pemberton Rd., Victoria, V8S 1R3; 595-3578

FOR RENT by retired teacher for school year 77-78 or longer. view home near Second Narrows Bridge; 2 bedrooms main floor, 1 down; 2 baths, deck, 2 fireplaces, 2 kitchens, washer and drier, fridge, stove, furniture all required. \$525 per month (negotiable). References please. G. R. Leonard, 1148 Cloverley, North Vancouver V7L 1N6; 987-6398

FOR RENT — Sept. 1 '77 - Apr. 1 '78. Furnished 3 bed. 2 bath, dbl garage, sun deck, view, garden care, adults. References. \$575 per mo. 1971 Normanby Cres., West Van V7S 1K6; 926-1933

TEACHING in S.D. 46 next year? Waterfront home available Sept. to June. Reasonable rent to responsible adults. 4122 Portland St., Burnaby V5J 2P5; 434-3777

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personal stake in the future of the spaceship, earth, the student is invited to examine and to act on a variety of possible solutions. Diagrams and illustrations reinforce the presentation.

This diverse purpose, flexible and topical study should, therefore, be a welcome addition to Canadian students and teachers. It may help us to stop 'fouling our nests.'

—John S. Church

RESOURCES

After Survival: A Teacher's Guide to Canadian Resources, by Paul Robinson, Peter Martin Associates, Toronto, 1977. \$8.95

- Given that in the social studies (history, geography), only 26% of learning materials are Canadian, in music 6%, in the arts 8%, in literature 27% and in health absolutely nothing;
- Given that the major market in sales of Canadian titles is to schools, where Canadian books make up 32% of the business, but that only 3% of these books are produced by Canadian-owned publishers;
- Given that the irony that Le Conseil Supérieur du Livre (the Quebec equivalent of the Canadian Book Sellers Association) has found a distributor for French-Canadian books in the United States, but not yet in Anglophone Canada;
- Given that the 'problem' in Canadian education has always been to provide the teacher, the librarian and the curriculum

specialist with ready access to the necessary sources of information;

- Given that the author, born in Truro, Nova Scotia, acknowledges that 'much of what is presently in use in schools reflects a middle-class, sexist bias, particularly in reading' . . . which leads to 'the more subtle evil . . . the inculcation of stereotypes,' (p. 12);
- Given that the writer confirms that 'Canada does consist of something more than downtown Toronto,' (p. 311-312);
- Given that the author emphasizes that curriculum materials must meet not only the bilingual framework, but must also be representative of different economic classes and various cultural and ethnic groups, and carry attributes that will encourage all to grow in awareness and understanding of all the peoples of Canada;

Paul Robinson has to succeed. He does. What he has done is to provide approximately 3,000 titles of Canadian textbooks, periodicals, films and recordings arranged thematically and organized under 25 curriculum subjects from art, biology and business to sociology and vocational as reference for busy teachers and librarians, from K to 12.

There is thus tasty meat or refreshing dessert for hungry teachers and librarians to devour and to savor. But there is more — the gravy is rich and spicy, or the cream is lavishly thick and loaded with calories, depending on which course the teacher-reader selects.

The incredibly boring litany of school subject chapter-headings — Economics, Law, Physics — are salvaged by such titles as

'Getting Started is Half the Fun,' 'Ukrainians and Other Unknown Canadians' and 'Ruminations and Projections.' Counselling is, as many harassed classroom teachers will readily testify, 'an omnibus category' to cover 'either a multitude of sins or a shower of blessings' (p. 59). Other delightful sentences abound.

For example, 'history is a male preserve. Men write it and men live it — Laura Secord, and her cow, and Nellie McClung, notwithstanding,' or, 'until recently, it was impossible to puncture the myth of the weak, inferior woman waiting behind the scenes while the men went about making history' (p. 240). But two pages later, 'from the Chanak Affair of 1922 to Lester B. Pearson's involvement in Suez in 1956, to official government reactions to the death of Salvador Allende in 1973, Canada's international affairs constitute a secret well-guarded from most students.'

Robinson pleads for sweeping changes to bring the preschool child of today into the 21st century. 'The education of students who are secure in their own sense of identity and who are prepared to live in that world hinges largely on the willingness of the Canadian education system to move with uncustomary rapidity.' (p. 317)

Robinson's small volume provides one hesitating step toward the major educational revolution required, if Canada is indeed to survive *After Survival*. And if so, let's hope that Robinson will feel compelled to update and that then he will have many new titles to add.

—John S. Church

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ANNUAL BCAMT SUMMER WORKSHOP — Tues. and Wed. August 30, 31, 1977 at Killarney Sec. School, Vancouver, B.C. Topics of interest K-12. Registration: \$22.00 (before June 30, 1977); \$24.00 on Site; \$10.00 Students. Cheques payable to Linda Shortreed, 4651-202nd St., Langley V3A 3J2.

comment

TO DO — TO KNOW — TO BE

BERNARD C. GILLIE

Much, if not all, of education seems to be summed up in the infinitives of our title.

For centuries we have struggled with multiplicity of activities designed to make sure that future generations will be able to do more — to know more and to be better — than those of the past. The theory seems to be that if only mankind can be made to strive for these goals, things will be better in a tried and troubled world.

There seems to be considerable evidence — still inconclusive, we'll agree — that in the doing and knowing we've enjoyed considerable success — witness signs of 'progress' and 'development' on every hand, albeit looking somewhat shop worn right now.

The business of 'being better' is a different story, sadly lacking much encouragement even for the most undaunted optimist.

As educators, we have flitted from one of these objectives to another over the years in what I liken to an endless gavotte, replete with sour notes and discords throughout a monotonous tune that changes continually and yet remains maddeningly familiar.

We 'learn by doing' only to find that

apparently nobody 'knows' anything, so along comes a different beat with the accent on 'knowledge and understanding,' which soon has everyone except the brilliant out of step and at each other's throats.

The cry goes up for more 'harmony — close harmony' — so we all leap on the new theme — bandwagon, if you prefer — and beat out the social adjustment 'motif' to the veritable exclusion of earlier efforts.

So it goes, back and forth, up and down, round and round, but always with disproportionate emphasis on one or other of the three — to do — to know — to be. A ball — a band and no master of ceremonies.

Professional success in all this seems to be measured in terms of one's ability to predict which way the music will go next — a subtle kind of musical chairs in which there are always a few of us who manage to move the wrong way and get counted out.

There are, of course, always a few wise old 'birds' who get tired enough or wise enough, just to stand still. Interestingly, but not surprisingly, they turn out to be in step just about as frequently as the rest.

By now you're saying, 'What is all this

nonsense about, anyway?' Just this — Having done my share of trying to keep in step with our western world's educational gavotte, including 'going left' when I should have 'gone right' on some memorable occasions, I have now taken to resting in the balcony, content to tap a foot now and then when the music becomes familiar.

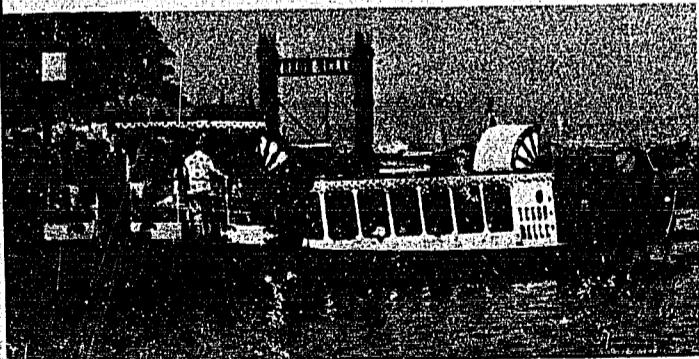
For what it's worth, fellow revelers, this weary world shows unmistakable signs of dancing off once more to a new measure — new only to newcomers at the ball. Call it 'back to basics,' 'return to reason' or 'forever fundamentals,' it's really very old, very shopworn, and very disappointing.

I know, I've been through it all several times already and it always ended the same way. Most of the dancers who might have enjoyed themselves and made the 'affair' a pleasant place, were bored silly and left for the bar! Those who were left turned the gavotte into a war dance for they could do a few things, knew a great deal but had precious little idea of how to be better.

Could it be that some day the morning sun will rise on an empty floor?

Mr. Gillie, a BCTF past president, is executive director of L.E.A.R.N.

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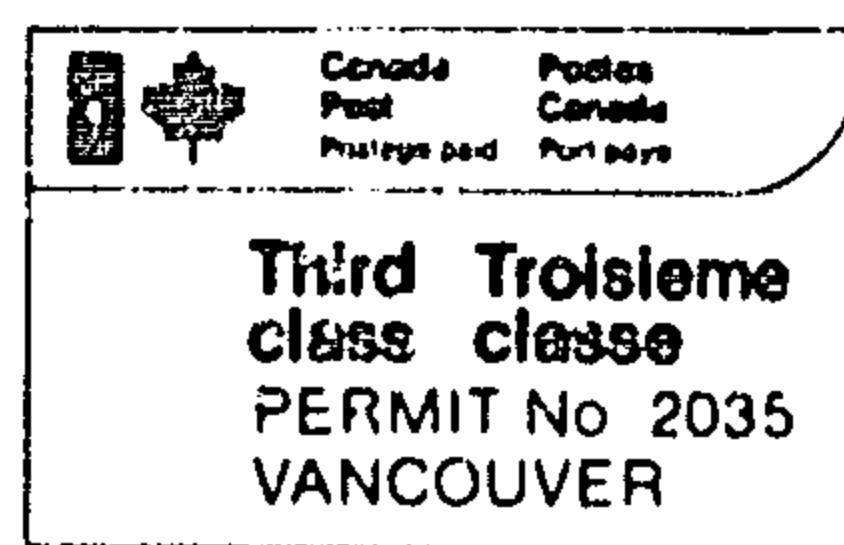
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