

# CANADIAN THESES ON MICROFICHE

## THÈSES CANADIENNES SUR MICROFICHE



National Library of Canada  
Collections Development Branch

Canadian Theses on  
Microfiche Service

Ottawa, Canada  
K1A 0N4

Bibliothèque nationale du Canada  
Direction du développement des collections

Service des thèses canadiennes  
sur microfiche

### NOTICE

The quality of this microfiche is heavily dependent upon the quality of the original thesis submitted for microfilming. Every effort has been made to ensure the highest quality of reproduction possible.

If pages are missing, contact the university which granted the degree.

Some pages may have indistinct print especially if the original pages were typed with a poor typewriter ribbon or if the university sent us an inferior photocopy.

Previously copyrighted materials (journal articles, published tests, etc.) are not filmed.

Reproduction in full or in part of this film is governed by the Canadian Copyright Act, R.S.C. 1970, c. C-30. Please read the authorization forms which accompany this thesis.

### AVIS

La qualité de cette microfiche dépend grandement de la qualité de la thèse soumise au microfilmage. Nous avons tout fait pour assurer une qualité supérieure de reproduction.

S'il manque des pages, veuillez communiquer avec l'université qui a conféré le grade.

La qualité d'impression de certaines pages peut laisser à désirer, surtout si les pages originales ont été dactylographiées à l'aide d'un ruban usé ou si l'université nous a fait parvenir une photocopie de qualité inférieure.

Les documents qui font déjà l'objet d'un droit d'auteur (articles de revue, examens publiés, etc.) ne sont pas microfilmés.

La reproduction, même partielle, de ce microfilm est soumise à la Loi canadienne sur le droit d'auteur, SRC 1970, c. C-30. Veuillez prendre connaissance des formules d'autorisation qui accompagnent cette thèse.

THIS DISSERTATION  
HAS BEEN MICROFILMED  
EXACTLY AS RECEIVED

LA THÈSE A ÉTÉ  
MICROFILMÉE TELLE QUE  
NOUS L'AVONS REÇUE

Canada

O-315-20345-5



National Library of Canada

Bibliothèque nationale du Canada

CANADIAN THESES ON MICROFICHE

THÈSES CANADIENNES SUR MICROFICHE

68252

NAME OF AUTHOR/NOM DE L'AUTEUR Susan E. Debeck

TITLE OF THESIS/TITRE DE LA THÈSE Who's News, What's News In Education: A Content Analysis of Newspaper Articles Featuring Bill Vander Zalm, Minister of Education in British Columbia, 1982-1983

UNIVERSITY/UNIVERSITÉ Simon Fraser University

DEGREE FOR WHICH THESIS WAS PRESENTED/GRÂDE POUR LEQUEL CETTE THÈSE FUT PRÉSENTÉE Master of Arts (Education)

YEAR THIS DEGREE CONFERRED/ANNÉE D'OBTENTION DE CE GRADE 1985

NAME OF SUPERVISOR/NOM DU DIRECTEUR DE THÈSE Dr. P. Coleman, Associate Professor

Permission is hereby granted to the NATIONAL LIBRARY OF CANADA to microfilm this thesis and to lend or sell copies of the film.

*L'autorisation est, par la présente, accordée à la BIBLIOTHÈQUE NATIONALE DU CANADA de microfilmer cette thèse et de prêter ou de vendre des exemplaires du film.*

The author reserves other publication rights, and neither the thesis nor extensive extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's written permission.

*L'auteur se réserve les autres droits de publication; ni la thèse ni de longs extraits de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans l'autorisation écrite de l'auteur.*

DATED/DATE Dec. 6/1984 SIGNED/SIGNÉ \_\_\_\_\_

PERMANENT ADDRESS/RÉSIDENCE P \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

WHO'S NEWS, WHAT'S NEWS IN EDUCATION:  
A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF NEWSPAPER ARTICLES FEATURING BILL VANDER ZALM,  
MINISTER OF EDUCATION IN BRITISH COLUMBIA, 1982-1983

by

Susan E. DeBeck

B.Ed., University of British Columbia, 1971

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT  
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF  
MASTER OF ARTS (EDUCATION)

in the Faculty  
of  
Education

© Susan DeBeck 1984

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

December 1984

All rights reserved. This thesis may not be  
reproduced in whole or in part, by photocopy  
or other means, without permission of the author.

APPROVAL

Name: Susan Elizabeth DeBeck  
Degree: Master of Arts (Education)  
Title of Thesis: Who's News, What's News In Education:  
A Content Analysis of Newspaper Articles Featuring  
Examining Committee Bill Vander Zalm, Minister of Education in  
British Columbia, 1982-1983.  
Chairperson: R. W. Marx

---

P. Coleman  
Senior Supervisor

---

T. O'Shea  
Assistant Professor

---

N. Robinson  
Associate Professor  
Faculty of Education  
Simon Fraser University  
External Examiner

Date approved

Dec 6, 1984

PARTIAL COPYRIGHT LICENSE

I hereby grant to Simon Fraser University the right to lend my thesis, project or extended essay (the title of which is shown below) to users of the Simon Fraser University Library, and to make partial or single copies only for such users or in response to a request from the library of any other university, or other educational institution, on its own behalf or for one of its users. I further agree that permission for multiple copying of this work for scholarly purposes may be granted by me or the Dean of Graduate Studies. It is understood that copying or publication of this work for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission.

Title of Thesis/Project/Extended Essay

Who's News, What's News In Education: A Content Analysis of Newspaper

Articles Featuring Bill Vander Zalm, Minister of Education in British

Columbia, 1982-1983

Author: \_\_\_\_\_

(signature)

Susan E. Debeck

(name)

Dec. 6 / 1984

(date)

## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to analyze all newspaper articles appearing in the two Vancouver dailies, The Sun and The Province, for the eight month period during which Bill Vander Zalm was Minister of Education in British Columbia. By method of content analysis, the study sought to discover the major issues and sources speaking on issues, to compare the content of The Sun and The Province to speculate as to why Bill Vander Zalm received such attention in the newspaper and to suggest possible implications for this newspaper coverage with regard to public perceptions of education.

Issues dealt with in the two papers were similar with the theme of restraint appearing in 72% of the articles. The issues of layoffs/job security and rollbacks/salaries received the next most attention, strongly reflecting the interests of teachers whose salaries accounted for approximately 70% of education spending. Except for curriculum, major issues were complex and interrelated.

News has a social role in that it attends to the institutions as they are reflected by their leaders. It uses as its sources of information officials with power and responsibility in these institutions. Bill Vander Zalm, the Minister of Education; Larry Kuehn, the President of the British Columbia Teachers Federation; and

Gary Begin, the President of the British Columbia School Trustees Association were the most frequently used sources in both newspapers, emphasizing the importance of these three institutions in provincial education. These three major sources polarized on issues in predictable ways providing a continuity in the reporting of complex, interrelated issues.

The newspaper is a business which prints what appeals to the audience. This appeal is determined in part by the prominence of persons involved and whether the events are important and have elements of conflict or deal with the unusual or unique rather than the normal. Bill Vander Zalm brought many issues forward for public consideration through the media because his actions and ideas conformed to what is considered newsworthy.

Because of the ahistorical, event orientation of the news, linkages between events and issues do not appear, making it difficult for the public to understand and analyze issues. Institutional sources are used to provide information on education issues and little investigative reporting is made. The result is that the public is provided with a limited and distorted view of issues in public education in B. C.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Knowledge should be a refreshing and vitalizing force. It becomes so through stimulating intercourse with congenial friends with whom one holds discussion and practices application of truths of life.

### The I Ching

Many have shared in my learning during this Masters Program. I have these people to thank for guiding and supporting me to this finish:

Professors Ted Aoki, Peter Coleman, Dianne Common, Tom O'Shea, and Norman Robinson, who taught me in the Faculty of Education at Simon Fraser University, with special thanks to Peter Coleman and Tom O'Shea for caring about the ideas and writing in this thesis;

Martin Laba, Assistant Professor in the Department of Communications, Faculty of Interdisciplinary Studies at Simon Fraser University, whose knowledge of media and suggestions of sources aided me greatly in determining the literature relevant to this study;

Fellow students and friends: Sheila Borman, Betty DeBeck, Mary Rose DeAtley, Linda LaRocque, Linda MacDougall, Nigel Macklin, the moose, Elaine Perry, and Susan Rungta who encouraged me by their faith and interest;

The Vancouver School Board, in particular, Chuck Gosbee of the Communications Department who allowed me generous access to their newspaper clipping files;

Shirley Heap, who transformed this work into its finished manuscript.



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Approval Page . . . . .	ii
Abstract . . . . .	iii
Acknowledgements . . . . .	v
Table of Contents . . . . .	vi
List of Tables . . . . .	ix
List of Figures . . . . .	x
 Chapter	
I. Introduction . . . . .	1
Statement of the Problem . . . . .	3
Significance of the Study . . . . .	4
Limitations of the Study . . . . .	6
II. The Functions of Newspapers in Society . . . . .	7
The Informational Role of the Newspaper . . . . .	7
Characteristics of News . . . . .	8
The Reporter's Objective View . . . . .	11
The Effect of Newspapers on Public Opinion . . . . .	13
Socio-political Role of the Press . . . . .	15
Maintenance of Social Order . . . . .	16
Freedom of the Press . . . . .	18
News as Business . . . . .	19
The Public's Watchdog on Government . . . . .	22
Political Image Making and Agenda Setting . . . . .	25
People, Press and Government . . . . .	27
Summary . . . . .	30
III. Methodology . . . . .	32
The Sample . . . . .	32
Source of Sample . . . . .	34
The Sample Size . . . . .	36
The Writers . . . . .	38
News Articles . . . . .	38
Editorials . . . . .	41
Columnists . . . . .	42

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

Chapter	Page
III. (Continued)	
Letters to the Editor . . . . .	42
Special Interest Groups . . . . .	44
BCTF - British Columbia Teachers' Federation. . . . .	46
BCSTA - British Columbia School Trustees Association. . . . .	49
Coding System . . . . .	50
Coding for News Articles. . . . .	51
Coding for Editorials, Columns, Letters to the Editor . . . . .	52
Content Analysis. . . . .	53
Preliminary Analysis - Classification Categories. . . . .	55
Definitions of Issue Categories . . . . .	58
Secondary Analysis. . . . .	63
IV. Preliminary Findings. . . . .	68
Issues in Education . . . . .	71
Front Page Headlines. . . . .	76
Chronicle of Front Page Articles. . . . .	79
Sources - Quotes in the News. . . . .	84
Leads in the News Story . . . . .	87
Summary . . . . .	89
V. Sources . . . . .	91
Interaction of Major Sources. . . . .	91
The News Appeal of Vander Zalm. . . . .	97
VI. Issues. . . . .	119
The Complexity of Issues. . . . .	119
Issues. . . . .	125
Restraint . . . . .	126
Layoffs/Job Security. . . . .	140
Rollbacks/Salaries. . . . .	147
Collective Bargaining . . . . .	154
Teacher Action/Strikes. . . . .	159
School Board Autonomy . . . . .	164
Restraint Effects on Students and Program . . . . .	168
Curriculum/Standards. . . . .	172

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

Chapter	Page
VI. (Continued)	
The School Act. . . . .	172
Non-teaching Layoffs. . . . .	182
School Board Administrative Costs . . . . .	184
Teacher Evaluation. . . . .	186
Vander Zalm Personal/Political Style . . . . .	190
Private Schools . . . . .	190
Discipline. . . . .	192
School Closure. . . . .	194
Parent Involvement. . . . .	195
VII. Implications for the Public's Perception of Education . .	201
Sources - Presenters of Education Information . . . . .	202
Issues - The Framework for Education Information. . . . .	207
Newspapers - The Public's Agent for Education Information . . . . .	211
Summary . . . . .	218
Appendix. . . . .	221
References. . . . .	238

LIST OF TABLES

	Page
Table 3-1. Weekly Average Circulation of <u>The Sun</u> and <u>The Province</u> (1982) . . . . .	35
Table 3-2. The Sample Size by Article Type . . . . .	37
Table 3-3. News Article Reporters. . . . .	40
Table 3-4. Columnists. . . . .	43
Table 3-5. Writers to the Editor . . . . .	45
Table 4-1. Issues in Education - News Articles . . . . .	72
Table 4-2. Issues in Education - Commentaries. . . . .	73
Table 4-3. Issues Indicated in Front Page Headlines - <u>The Sun</u> . . . . .	77
Table 4-4. Issues Indicated in Front Page Headlines - <u>The Province</u> . . . . .	78
Table 4-5. Sources Cited in News Articles. . . . .	85
Table 4-6. Personalities/Organizations Juxtaposed in the Leads of News Articles. . . . .	88
Table 6-1. Intersection of Issues in News Articles - <u>The Sun</u> . . . . .	122
Table 6-2. Intersection of Issues in News Articles - <u>The Province</u> . . . . .	123

LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
Figure 6-1. Network of Issue Interrelationships . . . . .	124

## Chapter I

### Introduction

Bill Vander Zalm hit the stage on August 11, 1982 in a starring role when he was appointed Minister of Education for British Columbia. He captured his audience for eight months and then resigned, leaving the ministry on May 6, 1983, the day of the provincial election.

The stage is the newspaper, specifically, in this study, the coverage given to Vander Zalm in the two Vancouver dailies, The Sun and The Province. During his time in office, his name was mentioned in 350 of 615 (57%) Sun and Province newspaper articles on public education as totalled in the clipping service at the Vancouver School Board. In 1983, Bill Bennett, the Premier of British Columbia; Larry Kuehn, the president of the British Columbia Teachers' Federation; and Jack Heinrich, the Minister of Education for the last eight months of the year, each made headlines in these papers eight times. Bill Vander Zalm, the Minister of Education for only four months in 1983 made 38 headlines within that time.

The large volume of articles featuring Vander Zalm has relevance to education. "What are the sources of information you use to judge the quality of schools in your local community; that is, where do you get your information about schools?" (Gallup, 1983, p. 42). Responses to this question, asked in the Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes toward the Public Schools, identified the newspaper as the best source

of information. Such a response draws the newspaper into the realm of inquiry for educators.

Vander Zalm was news in education. His views, policies, and directions became the framework on which information on education was built. When personality is given large publicity, there will be an increase in public importance attached to issues (Seymour-Ure, 1973). In Schramm's study the presence of a well known name in association with a particular news item enhanced the recall of the item (cited in Hiebert, Ungurait, & Bohn, 1982). An audience scans the communication for cues in headlines, position on page, association with pictures, names, and words that attract attention, and chooses the article on the basis of these cues. Personality is an important cue. Furthermore, people who appear in the newspaper and the ideas they present are bestowed with high credibility by the newspaper readers (Winston, 1973).

Research on media effects indicates the newspaper is not a major contributor to change in opinions and attitudes (Klapper, 1963; McQuail, 1977). However, newspapers are an important source of information about education. In the sense editors and reporters select what issues are news and whose views are important, it has an agenda-setting capacity (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). The study focuses on the ramifications of this capacity of newspapers.

### Statement of the Problem

Newspapers are an important source of information on education for the public. The fact that education news has focused attention on a politician is the beginning point of this inquiry, as it attempts to give some explanation why Vander Zalm, as Minister of Education, in his efforts to govern the education system received such media attention. To gain an understanding of this, the study analyzed the issues reported in relation to the Minister of Education and the sources (persons) presenting views on these issues.

This study consists of a content analysis of all newspaper articles featuring Vander Zalm including news stories, editorials, columnists, and letters to the editor, appearing in The Sun and The Province during the eight month period in which he was the Minister of Education in British Columbia.

Specifically, the purpose of this study is to analyse the content of newspaper articles of The Sun and The Province featuring the Minister of Education, Bill Vander Zalm, in order to answer these questions:

1. What are the major issues presented?
2. What sources are selected to give views on these issues?
3. What are the differences in content between The Sun and The Province?



4. Why did Vander Zalm, as Minister of Education, receive attention in the news?
5. What are the implications of this newspaper coverage with regards to the public's perception of education?

#### Significance of the Study

Newspapers and periodicals, especially the former, have two possible uses in educational research. One they influence education and educational policy decision and often reflect the values and attitudes of many citizens. As such they can be analyzed for their educational content..... Two, newspapers maintain files that are useful sources of data... thus they can be of considerable assistance to an investigator studying school systems and their problems. (Kerlinger, 1964, p. 542).

Twenty years have past since this comment was made on newspapers as an untapped source of data in educational research. A search of the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) data base, which provides an overview of most current education research, exposed the continuing absence of newspapers as a source in educational investigation. No studies were found in an ERIC computer search using the descriptors: newspapers, editorials, headlines, content analysis, analysis, and educational practice.

Although newspapers have not gained credibility as a data source in educational research, educational institutions recognize the importance of the newspaper. Both the British Columbia Teachers'

Federation, and the Vancouver School Board have newspaper clipping services. The Vancouver School Board maintains a clipping service because it provides a public record of what has happened and the means to analyze how schools and education issues are being perceived and reported (Gosbee, 1984).

This study has significance in three ways. First, it recognizes that the newspaper is an important data source in educational research and sets out some of the elements to be considered in news analysis. Secondly, it establishes the necessity to avoid simple stimulus-response models in the relation between what is written in the newspaper and the formation of public opinion, and it places media effects into the broader socio-political context in which educational views are formed.

Thirdly, although education generally connotes learning, teaching, schools, and students, this study points to the fact that a significant amount of the public attention drawn to education by the media is devoted to the political issues of education, in particular, finance. Educators cannot ignore the political exigencies in education particularly at a time when interest groups can form powerful political lobbies. This study points to some of the dynamic involved in the politics of education and the media involvement in it.

### Limitations of the Study

The articles selected for the study met only one criterion: the presence of Vander Zalm's name. Because 43% of the education news in the two papers studied was not analysed in this study, the findings cannot be considered to represent all education news.

Because the analysis examined only one Minister of Education at a particular period of time, the data cannot be generalized to political coverage in education. Coverage will vary with the time, party in power, person in the position of Minister of Education, and external factors such as economics. As there are no other studies of this kind, it is not possible to draw parallels or show differences.

The study attempts to show what kind of information the public receives on the political aspects of education but does not attempt to determine how media affects the public or public opinion, nor does it attempt to evaluate Vander Zalm's performance as a Minister of Education.

Only two newspapers, owned by the same company were compared, so conclusions as to similarities and differences in the two papers cannot be generalized to other papers.

## Chapter II

### The Functions of Newspapers in Society

#### The Informational Role of the Newspaper

People have a need for information, to know if their world is threatened or secure, to know what events are on the horizon. The means by which people have obtained this information has become more sophisticated as technology has advanced. A combination of technology, changing economic conditions, and mass public education made the newspaper flourish in North America. In 1833, Benjamin Day began to publish the New York Sun (DeFleur & Ball-Rokeach, 1975). Instead of limiting news to social and political events of importance, he entertained his readers with human interest stories, shocking disasters, and crimes. The circulation climbed to 8000 in six months and by 1837 had soared to 30 000. The newspaper became the first medium of communication with a genuinely mass character, reaching a large public in a short period of time.

The success of newspapers appealed to the advertisers who thought circulation was an index of anticipated sales. An important fact of the newspaper business was established: the publisher prints what appeals to the audience so they will buy the newspaper. Large circulation brings with it advertising revenue.

The arrival of radio and television as rival technologies in the news business has displaced a lot of the newspaper revenue source but

of the three news media, the newspapers still have the largest advertising income (Atwan, Orton, & Vesterman, 1982, p. 9). Although radio and television are the fastest ways of getting the news, the newspaper maintains its appeal in comprehensiveness, by providing greater depth and analysis of issues, and interpretive reports. By a visual survey of the paper, readers can know the comparative importance of news items (front page stories are important), can control what they read and when they read it.

#### Characteristics of News

Audience appeal is an important criterion in assessing newsworthiness, so news selection depends on both the importance of and the interest in the event. News importance depends on proximity, people want to read about events close to them; prominence, the more widely known the participant, the more newsworthy the happening; and consequences, the more widespread the effects, the greater the reader interest (Hiebert et al., 1982, p. 126).

Particular characteristics of news writing are aimed at making news interesting. Events are personalized, that is they center on individuals rather than just events. (Jamieson & Campbell, 1983). The knowns of news are the stars that attract audience attention so the great majority of news stories are about known people, for the most part in official positions. The unknowns in the news have been categorized by Gans (1979) into five types: protesters, victims,

violators of laws, participants in unusual activities, and aggregates. "The Unknowns who appear in the news are, by most criteria, an unrepresentative lot and most ordinary people never come into the news" (p. 23).

News is made dramatic by emphasizing conflict (Jamieson & Campbell, 1983). The drama of a story frequently begins by an inciting action which disrupts normal activities and sets up two opposing sides.

News is an occurrence, an event (Tuchman, 1978). An event is easy to communicate and is more likely to have story making potential. An idea or slow evolving process is not reportable unless it can be pegged to an event, even if a staged event such as a news conference or speech.

News reports the odd, the unusual, the unique rather than the normal. Because the role of the media is to entertain as well as to inform, "the dull, the routine, the unexciting is seldom seen as news" (Wicker, 1978, p. 44).

News stories are linked to current issues in the news giving a sense of continuity to the news. Personalities are also a link to this sense of continuity in the news coverage.

Schramm categorized news as immediate reward and delay reward (cited in Hiebert et al., 1982). Immediate reward news provides instant satisfaction by including elements of conflict, novelty, notoriety, or familiarity. Crime, accidents, sports, social events

fall into this category. Reading this news requires little concentration and appeals to our emotions. Delayed reward news includes information about public affairs, economic matters, science, and education. The consequences of this news, which requires a conscious effort to read, reflect on the political and social systems rather than on individuals. Schramm concluded that consumers give more time and attention to immediate reward news. The consequence of this is that immediate reward elements are worked into as much writing as possible.

Bagdikian (1969), a journalist and critic of his profession, noted that in a highly complex and changing world, the rigidities embedded in the craft of journalism make it an inadequate information system. Reporters stick to their cherished notion of a story and do not account for the fact that change does not necessarily arise from a single event or even a chain of centered events. Many forces act to create change and the news fails to add them up so that even the well informed do not know what is going on. Because of the highly specialized kinds of knowledge needed to understand what lies outside our immediate sphere of interest and competence, Bagdikian further suggested journalists "be in touch with the world of scholarship and social action" (p. 13).

### The Reporter's Objective View

The objective view of journalists maintains that they uphold the principles of their profession in their reporting by writing news accurately, representing a fair balance of arguments on issues and maintaining an objectivity by attributing facts and opinions to authoritative sources.

This view has been subject to criticism. Even newswriters find it difficult to distinguish between fact (news stories) and interpretation (editorials, columnists).

My question "How is objective reporting different from news analysis?" was the most difficult to answer.... the local news editor tackled the question... he said: "news analysis implies value judgments. Straight news has no value judgements whatsoever... You can't eliminate the label "news analysis" and say anything.... the key point is the number and degree of value judgments undocumented at the time. (Tuchman, 1978, p. 99).

The journalists' own jargon, "story", referring to news, suggests a teller capturing an audience. What facts are chosen and how they are presented implies interpretation on the part of the reporter. Quotation marks are used as proof of supposed objectivity. However, reporters can get others to say what they, as reporters, think. This goes undetected as long as a professional fact finding procedure is followed. Journalists cannot operate without values even if unconscious values. These values determine which events become news.



If a news story deals with activities which are generally considered undesirable and whose description contain negative connotations, then the story implicitly expresses a value about what is desirable. In the process, the news also assumes a consensus about values that may not exist, for it reminds the audience of values that are being violated and assumed that the audience shares these values. (Gans, 1979, p. 40)

Gans (1979) identifies eight enduring values in the news in the United States:

1. ethnocentrism, judging others by the extent to which they live up to American practices and values;
2. altruistic democracy, indicating how democracy should perform in the public interest by concentrating on deviations such as conflict, protests, and bureaucratic malfunction;
3. responsible capitalism, co-operating economically for the increased prosperity of all;
4. small-town pastoralism, dealing with the virtue of smallness and faults of bigness such as big government, big labour, big business;
5. individualism, preserving freedom of the individual against nation and society;
6. moderatism, discouraging violation of the law and dominant values, including political values;
7. social order, emphasizing the desire for social order

by attending to stories of social disorder and the concern with the restoration of order;

8. leadership, maintaining social order through competent leadership by focusing on the leader's daily official activities, and personal and psychological qualities.

#### The Effect of Newspapers on Public Opinion

Because of the extraordinary appeal of mass media, they were assumed to have power to shape opinion and behavior. Research on mass media dating from its early development before 1940 through to 1960 concentrated on attitude change in individuals (Winston, 1973, p. 21). Assuming attitude change as a criterion of influence, sociologists assessed how a particular message influenced change in previously held opinions or attitudes. The mass media did not emerge as major contributors to change in opinions (McQuail, 1977). Klapper (1963) summarizing the research stated: "Mass communication does not serve as a necessary and sufficient cause of audience effects but rather functions through a nexus of mediating factors" (p. 14).

Media have the power to change opinions on unimportant issues, which accounts for the success of advertising, but not on important issues such as political beliefs. Winston (1973) suggests it is fortunate that the audience effects remain unpredictable because it reduces the possibility of social engineering through the media. However, the media can engineer an advantage on new issues; by having

the first word, they can become the given attitude (Winston, 1973).

Given that research suggests the media do not emerge as major contributors to change in opinion, it is of interest to consider again the question: "What are the sources of information you use to judge the quality of schools in your local community; that is where do you get your information about the schools?" (Gallup, 1983, p. 42).

One cannot assume from this question, a relation between what is presented in the newspapers and opinions that people hold on the public schools. The media may not directly be a major contributor to change of opinion. They can be a source of information but this is generally used to reinforce the opinions of the reader.

There is a correlation between the facts people know about an issue and their opinions, but individuals will know and believe more facts congenial to their opinion than facts uncongenial (Smith, 1968). Information can be presented to the reader but what facts are retained is determined by the opinions of the reader.

People remember material which supports their own point of view better than they remember material which attacks their point of view... people who are exposed to communications with which they are unsympathetic not uncommonly distort the contents so they end up perceiving the message as though it supported their own point of view. (Klapper, 1963, p. 27)

Opinion is formed within a social context; small intimate groups of family, friends and co-workers are the primary generators of attitudes and opinions. People of like opinions seek each other out

as companions. Although media may not have a direct effect on people's attitudes, an interplay of mass media and personal contact appears to have an influence. The two-step flow of communication centers on the opinion leader, whose ideas have personal influence in the group.

Opinion leaders tend to be both more generally exposed to the mass media and more specifically exposed to the content most closely associated with their leadership. Presumably, this increased exposure then becomes a component... of the influence which such influentials transmit to others. (Katz & Lazarsfeld, 1955, p. 316)

Belief in the power of the media is not discounted by research, although expectations and approaches have changed as a result.

Research approaches now:

Take a longer time span, pay more attention to people in their social context, look at what people know rather than at their attitudes and opinions, take account of the uses and motives of the audience member as mediating any effect, look at structures of belief and opinion and social behavior rather than individual cases, take more notice of the content whose effects are being studied. (McQuail, 1977, p. 74)

#### Socio-political Role of the Press

The press serves as "the keeper of society's values" (Tebbel, 1974, p. 267). Each society affects and controls the press as it does all its social institutions. In fact, the press has been charged with the maintenance of social order. "Every organized society that ever

there was has had some form of journalism, to keep itself functioning" (Brucker, 1973, p. 20). That socio-political values are reflected in the press is apparent in the communist-capitalist dichotomy. The capitalist claims the communist paper is not free because it is subject to government control, and the communist claims the capitalist paper is not free because it is not public property and has a capitalist bias. Each point of view represents a particular set of values. The media reflects the power relations and ideological structure of society by drawing on values and assumptions which are most popular.

#### Maintenance of Social Order

News imposes a social order on the world by having news events occur at some locations and not at others and using some people as sources and not others.

With some over simplification, it would be fair to say that news [in United States] supports the social order of public, business, and professional, upper-middle class, middle-aged, and white male sectors of society. Because the news emphasizes people over groups, it pays little attention to the institutionalized social order, except as reflected in its leaders... the news deals with the most powerful officials in the most powerful agencies. (Gans, 1979, p. 61)

Perhaps because the journalists of The Sun and The Province are themselves members of a union, but also because of the strength of the union movement generally in British Columbia, the news of these papers

centers not only on the public, business, and professional upper-middle class, but also on officials of powerful unions. Unions have become part of the institutionalized social order.

News occurs routinely at centralized institutions. Reporters assume readers are concerned with the activities of these organizations and by reporting on them reinforce their public image. Officials in positions of responsibility and authority are the sources of information for these institutions. As Tuchman (1978) says, "Today's news net is intended for big fish" (p. 21). Big fish can supply journalists with reliable information, easily and efficiently and "make their point concisely and preferably dramatically" (Gans, 1979, p. 131). Because journalists are expected to deliver the latest news to their audience, news becomes significant if it is efficient. Investigative journalism involving unknown sources is too time consuming and costly to be the mainstay of news. Reporters must obtain the most reliable information possible from the fewest number of sources, as quickly and inexpensively as possible.

That people with power serve as sources has consequences on the information news people uncover. Governments have secrets; bureaucracies have preserving mechanisms.

Power is also exercised when A devotes energies to creating or reinforcing social and political values and institutional practices that limit the scope of the political process to public consideration of only those issues which are comparatively innocuous to A. (Bachrach & Baratz, 1970, p. 7)

Institutional leaders are going to protect their interests and maintain the established order. The maintenance of social order and the desire to maintain it is a strong value in the news (Gans, 1979) as evidenced by the attention given threats to various kinds of order and measures to restore that order as well as routine stories on activities of leading public figures.

Tuchman (1978) argued that news protects the social order not only by its reporting on institutions with the powerful as sources but also by the manner in which news is reported, because it eschews analysis by emphasizing the concrete, contingent, present time orientation and avoids making linkages between events. "But, as ideology, news blocks inquiry by preventing an analytic understanding through which social actors can work to understand their own fate" (p. 180). The complexity of events, together with an ahistorical presentation prevents the structuring of issues. It is difficult for readers to get a complete picture. Hecht puts it well: "Trying to determine what is going on in the world by reading the newspaper is like trying to tell the time by watching the second hand of a clock" as cited by MacLean, 1981, p. 147).

### Freedom of the Press

The Anglo-American tradition of "free press" grew out of the 17th century writings of John Milton. He wrote in 1644, Aeropagitica: A speech for the liberty of unlicensed printing:

And though all the winds of doctrine were let loose to play upon the earth, so Truth be in the field, we do injuriously by licensing and prohibiting to misdoubt her strength. Let her and falsehood grapple: who ever knew Truth put to the worst in a free and open encounter? Her confuting is the best and surest suppressing. (Milton, 1961, p. 45)

That the unrestricted competition of ideas and opinions, free from government control, was the best guarantee of truth became a principle for the survival of democracy. In Canada, The Charter of Rights and Freedoms declares as a fundamental right to all: "Freedom of thought, belief, opinion, and expression including, freedom of the press and other media of communications" (Canada Act, 1982, S2).

The paradox of the "free press" concept, with the press as watchdog of democracy, is that out of it grew a private enterprise press, a profitable business. The ideal of a press, free from government control, was that it would allow a free marketplace of ideas. However, the press as business may not provide the forum of ideas and opinions that the "free press" ideal espoused.

#### News as Business

News is not considered a communal resource but a commodity produced and belonging to the press. As a commodity, it is inherently subject to monopolization. As R. K. Thomson, the principal owner of Canada's largest newspaper chain, put it: "I buy newspapers to make money to buy more newspapers to make more money" (Thomson, 1977, p. 47). The Thomson chain has a circulation of 2.4 million. Southam,



the owner of the two papers in this study, The Sun and The Province, is the second largest newspaper chain with a circulation of 1.26 million concentrated in the ownership of 14 large urban dailies. Southam also controls Coles, the largest book retailer in Canada (Duthie, 1984). Together, these two chains control 58% of Canadian newspaper circulation.

The concentration of newspaper ownership affects the kind of reporting the public receives. As Liebling (1961) so aptly put it: "Freedom of the press belongs to those who own one" (p. 30). The issue of corporate concentration in Canada was investigated by a Royal Commission (1977). In the report, "The Newspaper and Freedom of Information", it states how ownership can affect content:

[Owners] easily influence the general orientation of a newspaper and can thereby influence news content in many ways. Thus, through selection of managers at the supervisory level, the choice of editorial writers and journalists, monetary and intangible rewards, biased guidelines and direct intervention, owners can considerably influence the handling of news. (p. 1)

Conflict of interest can result in censoring that which does not promote another of their monopoly interests or publishing that which does. An example of this seems to occur in an article appearing in The Province entitled, "Bawdy Bard bit bounces back into school book" (PF8). A deletion in the school edition of Shakespeare's Macbeth was now being printed back into new copies. Perhaps this was a note on the liberalization of censorship in secondary curriculum. The fact

that Coles, owned by Southam, was mentioned in the article four times suggests another interest.

In future, B. C. pupils using a Coles edition of Macbeth for grade 11 students will get an unexpurgated version -- including a passage dealing with the effects of alcohol on sexual appetite and performance. "We will be adding the debatable 'missing' text in any future productions," Coles President W. E. Ardell told the Minister of Education Bill Vander Zalm in a letter. (PF8)

If another company had published the edition of Macbeth, it is questionable whether the issue would have received such coverage.

Although chain takeovers of newspapers could improve the quality of reporting because they have more resources at their disposal, evidence is that independently owned papers have more news, more staff written stories, fewer less expensive, wire service stories, lower advertising and newstand rates (MacLean, 1981). Chain ownership rather than increasing the potential for better reporting, appears to diminish it.

Rather than fostering the forum of ideas espoused by the "free press" ideal, news as business has diminished competition of ideas and opinions. Newspapers must attract and hold a large audience to be profitable so they express the views and values most widely accepted. Radical views are not voiced, thus limiting the press as a resource of political and social ideals.

The conclusion is, then, that although it had been manifest to everybody that political, social, economic, and cultural interests, values and opinions have appeared to become more and more disparate, and this disparity more and more organized, the kind of opinions and attitudes and values and, above all, information, conveyed by ... the press has tended to become more constrained and more internally consistent. (Burns, 1977, p. 67)

#### The Public's Watchdog on Government

The press is "the guardian of freedom" (Agee, 1968, p. 2), "the life line of democracy" (Mollenhoff, 1968, p. 175), and "the watchdog of government" (Kriegbaum, 1972, p. 2). "Were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate to prefer the latter" (Jefferson, 1939, p. 142).

Freedom of the press is considered the most precious of human rights in a democratic society. People must get sufficient information to make the judgements required of a democratic society. The media are the main source of public information. "Democracy is contingent upon an informed public with means to learn what the government is doing and the right to criticize what the government is doing." (Mollenhoff, 1968, p. 175).

The press mediates between the government and the public's "right to know". Government cooperation is necessary to ensure the dissemination of information on decisions and actions of government which keep the people alive to the common interests and problems they

face.

Because of rivalry both within the media and government, government cooperation sometimes is obtained from leaked news. This is done if information giving is inefficient or if a deliberate attempt is made in government circles to withhold information. It is also done by individuals for reason of principle, partisanship, or personal advantage.

We know from experience that a vigorous, competent and dedicated free press is never going to have an easy time investigating the ills of popular government, because it is in the very nature of government to defend itself at all cost. (Hohenberg, 1978, p. 285)

The press takes on the role of investigator into government, refusing to accept practices that they believe to be against public interest. This creates a tension between press and government as journalists maintain a skeptical attitude toward government. This adversarial position of the press probably strengthened during the 1960s (Hohenberg, 1978). A history of acquiescing to government sharpened the press defences. During the 1950s, newspapers in America echoed Senator McCarthy's cry of communist involvement in government. President Kennedy persuaded the press to withhold publishing information at the time of the Cuban crisis in 1961. The war in Vietnam further demonstrated that journalists could not go along with a government that was deliberately misinforming. When the New York Times published the Pentagon papers, secret documents on American

involvement in Vietnam, and subsequently received the Pulitzer Prize for Public Service, the jurors said: "[it] can reaffirm to the American people that the press continues its devotion to their right to know, a basic bulwark in our democratic society" (Hohenberg, 1978, p. 128).

Given this development of a more adversarial press in American, it is interesting to find hints of a parallel trend in comments by British Columbia Ministers of Education from 1957 to 1979.

**1953-54 R. W. Bonner (Social Credit Party)**

We enjoyed, I felt, undue media attention. (Giles, 1983, p. 112)

**1954-56 R. G. Williston (Social Credit Party)**

I think the press was far fairer. I think you will find the media represented gave me a far better break than they give anybody today. (Giles, p. 112)

**1956-68 L. R. Peterson (Social Credit Party)**

It was really more of an anti-government stand than anything else. But I thought in terms of overall responsibilities of our government, the media from time to time was unfair. (Giles, p. 113)

**1972-75 E. E. Dailly (New Democratic Party)**

Once you get an image, they can be quite ruthless. The positive things are downplayed, but they always are! The nature of the media created an impression of turmoil. (Giles, p. 113)

**1975-1979 P. L. McGeer (Social Credit Party)**

I found the media highly negative for what we were trying to achieve which was a combination of fiscal responsibility and academic improvement. The media

generally is suspicious of power and was particularly hostile to our government. They naturally became the handmaidens of the interests who are trying to preserve the status quo. (Giles, p. 114)

The press maintained a stronger adversarial position in the 1960s and 1970s in spite of a change of government, and this suggests it is not motivated by partisan interests.

#### Political Image Making and Agenda Setting

Just as the public is dependent on the media to keep them informed about the government, so are the politicians dependent on the media's attention to attain and maintain political power. The media creates the image of the politician. As former federal Conservative leader, R. Stanfield (1980) put it: "For the politician, the image is the maker or the breaker. It is more important for a politician to have a good image than a good idea" (p. 7).

Black (1982) supports this by suggesting the media allows no time for reflection and judgement. The politician must articulate instant opinions and ideas as demanded by the attentive public.

Common sense tells leaders to move slowly. They know that acting sensibly requires far more data than the mass media carries. The problem is with the phenomenon of news. While the public may treat news as though it were a fair and complete digest of all the relevant facts, it is not. What is relevant depends on whose need or interest we are talking about and the mass media audience has so far demonstrated little interest in the dull details that public officials need to make balanced appraisals. (p. 12)

Politicians criticize the media for the power they have in deciding which persons and events in government get media coverage and which do not.

They are the articulators of those events of government which they and their bosses deem worthy of note ... The press decides which ... words and events shall receive prompt attention of millions and which, like timber falling in a deep and uninhabited forest, shall crash silently to the ground. (Cater, 1959, p. 14)

What is newsworthy and what is not is determined by gatekeepers (Lewin, 1947). These are the reporters and editors who evaluate facts, events, ideas, determine their relevance and value to audiences and decide what to select and what to ignore. This channeling has an agenda-setting function because it selects the issues that are news and decides their importance decided by the amount of information in a news story and its position in the paper. "The press may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about" (Cohen, 1963, p. 120).

In an investigation of this agenda-setting capacity in the 1968 American presidential election, a correlation was found between what voters said were the key issues of the campaign with the actual content of the mass media during the campaign (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). Individuals, groups, and ideas became important simply by being selected for media attention.

Power has many forms. The critics of newspapers and broadcasters see their power as lying in controlling the agenda, in their ability to select certain issues for discussion and decision and ignore others or treat them as non-existent, and in the ability to treat certain conflicts of interest as manifestly proper material and others as too complex or marginal or unmanageable. Perhaps the greatest constraint of all lies in the conventions of what is called "newstating" ... to decide almost instantly which messages coming through to the office count as news and which aren't. (Burns, 1977, p. 60)

#### People, Press and Government

The relationship between the public and the government is reciprocal. The people have "the right to know" and political leaders need a mechanism to know the opinions of the people. "The effectiveness of all governments depends on their ability to handle and act on information. It is clear that before governments take action, they must have a wide and continuing flow of information about situations to be dealt with" (Black, 1982, p. 4).

Individuals have attitudes on issues, which when expressed become opinions. The range of attitudes expressed by a significant number of people on an issue of general importance constitutes a public opinion. The importance of public opinion is well established in political life.

Governments become intolerable if many publics feel their opinions are disregarded on many issues. Basic to the expression of public opinion in a democracy is freedom of communication. People



must be able to speak on public matters.

Public opinion polls are often taken to determine people's views on issues and politicians, but polls may not reflect accurately the public's attitudes. For example, President Reagan's victory in the United States of 1980 was not predicted. "People may now be so 'aware' that they are concealing their opinions in public surveys and in the public in general so as not to upset consonance with the views of others and the media" (Hiebert et al., 1982, p. 563).

The newspaper is a channel of communication between the public and the government. However, what is claimed to be an expression of public opinion in the paper, is often an expression of elite viewpoints (Best, 1973; Altschull, 1984). "Although there may be a large number of people within the political system who hold opinions on a political question, not all of them have access to the institutions which aggregate and articulate public opinion" (Best, 1973, p. 216).

The "beat" system of newspaper reporting establishes a regular reporter "at organizations associated with the generation of news and holding centralized information" (Tuchman, 1978, p. 27). This system gives an advantage to those people which are the focus of beat coverage. Otherwise, to gain access to the media, publics must do something noteworthy. They must structure their actions to attract media attention.

Interest groups have traditionally assumed the role of

communicating public opinion to the government. The success of an interest group in gaining both media and government attention is predicted by the following group resources:

- 1) Physical .... money, membership, size
  - 2) Organization .... membership skills, unity, leadership skills
  - 3) Political .... campaign expertise, political process knowledge, strategy and political reputation
  - 4) Motivational .... ideological commitment
- (Ornstein & Elder, 1978, p. 53)

Interest groups are an established part of the political functioning in government. The claim that these groups are not representative of public opinion stems from the fact that those who lack the cost, skill, interest, or time are under represented. Groups lobby for their own interests which are not necessarily the interests of the larger public they are taken to represent. "Groups attempt to monitor governmental activity that might affect them, initiate government action to promote their interests and block action that works to their detriment" (Ornstein & Elder, 1978, p. 53).

In education in British Columbia, two organizations, the BCTF and BCSTA, have succeeded in establishing themselves as effective political interest groups and have gained media access as part of the education beat. In fact, both the British Columbia Teachers' Federation (BCTF) and the British Columbia School Trustees Association (BCSTA) have established political action as one of their priorities.

That the BCTF and its local associations take political action aimed at enhancing educational program quality and equality of access to educational programs. (BCTF, 1982, p. 1)

A medium for legislative action: to provide a mechanism through which school boards can arrive at a common position and act to influence legislation and decisions which will affect the course of education. (BCSTA, 1983)

Journalists are alerted to their role in addressing the public interests in education reporting, although the complicated politics of this role is underplayed.

To effectively cover the education beat, the reporter must address many publics, all of them with different interests in school affairs. Separately, they constitute special interest groups often with a unique response of their own toward decisions reached in the school system. (Schulte, 1981, p. 263)

#### Summary

This chapter considers the functions of the newspaper in society. Newspapers are a public informer allowing the public access to a world of information beyond what they can obtain themselves. What is news is governed in part by audience appeal and as a result centers on conflict, the unusual, and the knowns or stars. Although reporters claim to be objective, their reporting implicitly expresses values. The media do not merge as a major contributor to change in attitude or opinion. They can be a source of information, but they generally

reinforce the opinions of the reader.

News has a social function in that it imposes a social order on the world by having news events occur at some locations and not others and using some people as sources and not others. News is the ally of institutions because it routinely reports on their activities.

Politically, the freedom of press is considered to be a principle for the survival of democracy for it mediates between the government and the people's "right to know". Reporters and editors, in their selection of what information is going to be printed, have an agenda-setting capacity in that they determine what issues people know about. The press not only gets information about government to the public but also allows the public to have a voice. It is important for interest groups to gain media attention to be successful.

### Chapter III

#### Methodology

This study consists of a content analysis of all articles featuring Education Minister, Bill Vander Zalm, as they appeared in The Sun and The Province during his time in office. The aim of content analysis is to improve the quality of inferences made about communication content by providing a more objective basis of information. The study made a preliminary analysis which was quantitative. Categories were established and frequency counts done to reveal information about the manifest content of articles. The secondary analysis was qualitative and considered the holistic nature of the content. It attempted to describe the interrelationship of variables illuminating latent meanings of the text. The primary data source for the study was the news articles. A number of informal interviews were conducted to provide background information and to alert the researcher to particular aspects of newspaper operations.

#### The Sample

All articles, including news stories, editorials, columnists, and letters to the editor, that appeared in The Sun and The Province during the time the Minister of Education, Bill Vander Zalm, was in office and citing Bill Vander Zalm's name were selected as the sample. The period covered was August 11, 1982 to May 6, 1983. The sample

also included two editorial retrospects on Vander Zalm as Minister of Education (SEMy12, PEJu20), and Vander Zalm's response (PLJu63). Vander Zalm's name had only to appear in the article to be selected, that is, he is not necessarily used as a quoted source in all clippings.

Obtaining the sample was greatly facilitated by the Vancouver School Board which maintains a newspaper clipping file on education. All articles featuring Vander Zalm were selected from these files and xeroxed. The accuracy of this selection was checked with the British Columbia Legislative Library-Newspaper Clipping Index under the title Vander Zalm and covering the period he was Minister of Education. Any clippings missing from the school board selection were obtained either from the British Columbia Teachers' Federation newspaper clipping file or xeroxed from newspaper microfilm at the Burnaby Public Library.

Even the cross check with the Newspaper Clipping Index does not guarantee that this selection of articles covers completely those mentioning Vander Zalm. A number of articles obtained from the Vancouver School Board were not listed in the Legislative Library Newspaper Clipping Index even though Vander Zalm featured prominently in them. A human element enters into the accuracy of selection, but considering that, the sample of newspaper clippings used in this study is as complete as possible.

The decision to study news articles featuring Bill Vander Zalm in particular was triggered at the Vancouver Public Library clipping

service which had education articles filed by subject rather than by date as did the Vancouver School Board. Of the Ministers of Education in British Columbia, Bill Vander Zalm's file was noticeably larger than that of any other minister.

#### Source of Sample

The two large Vancouver dailies, The Sun and The Province, were chosen as the sources of the news articles for this study. Both are published by Southam Press; The Province in the morning, The Sun for the evening. Although The Province has recently changed its format to a tabloid, the clippings were taken from The Province in its broadsheet format. Circulations for the two papers are included in Table 3-1.

These two newspapers have the largest circulation of any in British Columbia. The Victoria Times-Colonist is the third largest with a circulation of 74 500. It can be noted that the larger country circulation of The Province may be accounted for the fact that, as a morning paper, it reaches distant places on the same day, whereas The Sun arrives the next day.

There are several reasons The Sun and The Province were chosen as the sources. Because of their large circulations, they focus on provincial rather than community coverage. Local Vancouver community papers cover school board news rather than the Ministry of Education so there were too few articles on Vander Zalm in such papers to

Table 3-1

Weekly Average Circulation of The Sun and The Province (1982)

	The Sun	The Province
City	153 130	76 450
Lower Mainland	72 200	35 460
Country	26 450	34 210
Total	251 780	146 120



include in the sample. Although comparisons with one Vancouver paper and the Times-Colonist or one of the larger interior city papers would have provided a good contrast, obtaining the complete sample of clippings from the latter papers was difficult. A compromise was made by deciding to determine if there were differences in coverage between the two major Vancouver dailies only.

One of the disadvantages of the choice of The Sun and The Province is that Southam owns and publishes both papers. Until early 1980, The Sun was published by FP Publications and The Province by Southam both working in the same building using the Pacific Press on a 50-50 basis. In 1980, Thomson purchased FP Publications and then Southam bought out Thomson, thereby assuming 100% ownership of Pacific Press.

#### The Sample Size

Vander Zalm dominated the news in education during his eight months as Minister of Education. For that period, his name was mentioned in 350 of 615 (57%) of The Sun and The Province newspaper articles on public education in the Vancouver School Board clipping files. When the sample was supplemented with articles missing from these files, the total number of clippings in the sample was 439. A type breakdown of these articles by number and size is provided in Table 3-2.

Table 3-2  
The Sample Size by Article Type

Article Type	<u>Sun</u>			<u>Province</u>		
	Number	Length (Col. cm)	Mean Length	Number	Length (Col. cm)	Mean Length
News Stories	129	5143	40	112	4482	40
Editorials	13	329	27	20	586	28
Editorial Cartoons	1	51		6	219	36
Columnists	18	847	47	33	1608	49
Letters to the Editor	44	1066	32	63	972	16
Total	205	7436		234	7867	

In the two newspapers, the mean length for each type of article is nearly the same, except in the letters to the editor. The assessment of article length was included because The Sun letter editor indicated they did not edit letters to the extent of The Province. Although The Province had a greater number of letters to the editor (63) compared to The Sun (44), the total length in column centimeters of The Sun letters (1066 column centimeters) is greater than The Province letters (972 column centimeters). Average letter length in column centimeters for The Sun is 32 compared to 16 for The Province. The Province has a greater overall volume owing largely to almost double the coverage provided by columnists.

#### The Writers

News articles. Because the style of writing is consistent in news articles, it is not usually evident to the reader that many writers are involved. Two cases of inconsistency, however, did occur in the sample. Both were headline errors with the word teacher appearing instead of trustee. The headline, "Abbotsford teachers rap Begin", had as the lead line: "Abbotsford school trustees have censured B. C. School Trustees Association President Gary Begin..." (SF24). Another headline, "Teachers 'reassured'" had as its second line: "Vander Zalm was commenting on reports of fears by the B. C. School Trustees Association..." (SM9). One would speculate from these

two errors that the writer of the news story was different from the writer of the headline. This study will not attempt any analysis on the information which different reporters present, or why so many reporters are used. Observations on 'who reports' are included because the volume of reporters contributing to this sample does say something about newsmaking. The 128 news stories of The Sun were written by 15 different reporters and the 110 stories of The Province had 18 reporters. The Province did not have a special education reporter, The Sun did in Carol Volkart and as shown in Table 3-3, she wrote a greater volume of articles than any other reporter.

One reason that several reporters are needed to cover the education scene is the volume of stories written. A single reporter could not handle all the stories. Another is that the stories span two main 'beats' or recognized news sources that are regularly covered. The Sun reporter in her education beat concentrates on school and university affairs in the Vancouver area. A separate government beat established in the Victoria Bureau covers the affairs of the Ministry of Education. Often there is compilation of information coming from both Victoria and Vancouver sources which, in part, accounts for stories having no by-line (Volkart, 1984). Which reporters cover a story is often a case of who is available.

Journalists, as professionals, have established standards to which they conform, defining what is reportable and how to report. Their assignments do not appear to be contingent on an in depth

Table 3-3

## News Article Reporters

<u>Sun</u>		<u>Province</u>	
Reporter	Number of Articles N = 129	Reporter	Number of Articles N = 112
No By-line	63	No By-line	34
Carol Volkart	23	Marc Edge	17
Ros Oberlyn	8	Barbara McLintock	16
Larry Pynn	8	Eli Sopow	8
Peter Comparelli	4	Bonnie Kettner	7
Brian Kieran	4	Bob Chamberlain	5
Tom Barrett	3	Tony Wanless	4
Mike Bocking	3	Val Casselton	3
8 others	1 or 2 each	John Ferry	3
		10 others	1 or 2 each

understanding of the issues reported. In fact, reporters on particular beats are often changed so that they will not become allied with particular interests and lose their objectivity (Black, 1982).

The Sun education reporter explained the difficulty of covering a specialty beat:

The facts are often very complicated so by the time they get spoken from an expert to a reporter who is not an expert, who then tries to put it into some interesting form for the reader, who we are told has the average reading ability of a grade five person, you tend to get a simplified version. Then the city desk may not like it so you go through two writings and (with) the transfer of information along the way, the opportunities for getting things screwed up are incredible. I try to be accurate but people say it was taken out of context and I feel badly.... If you are going to get the message out, you have to get it out somehow. What The Sun could do is hire more reporters, but resources are limited. (Volkart, 1984)

Editorials. The editorial is written by or under responsibility of the editor and reflects newspaper management's opinion. Although it was sometimes evident by style and opinion that different persons had written the 13 Sun and 20 Province editorials, an editorial is written anonymously. Rather than being primarily informative, an editorial is persuasive in that it interprets the news events and argues for a particular position. Sometimes the editorial will come in the form of a cartoon which is an interpretive comment. People and issues are portrayed in an exaggerated manner to make a point.

Education Minister Bill Vander Zalm was the subject of one editorial cartoon in The Sun and six in The Province.

Columnists. The purpose of the columnist is to analyze and interpret. They tell the reader what the facts mean. In contrast to the reporter, who is not expected to express opinions and ideas, the columnist takes a point of view. This type of writing always appears with a by-line and often the columnist's picture to distinguish it from the news story. The individual columnists and the number of their articles in the sample appear in Table 3-4.

The Province devotes 90% more space to education columnist writing than The Sun. Crawford Kilian, identified as The Province Education Columnist, is an instructor at Capilano College and former school trustee. The Sun has no columnist identified with education. Noel Herron, a school principal (The Sun) and Joseph Katz, a retired education professor (The Province) are not regular writers for the papers as are the other columnists, but their articles appear in this category because they express the interpretations and opinions of the writers.

Letters to the editor. Letters to the editor are a forum for the expression of audience opinion. The public can express views, giving issues a climate of debate. The reader does not have the advantage of reading all the letters written, as does the editor, so that it is

Table 3-4  
Columnists

<u>Sun</u>		<u>Province</u>	
Columnists	Number of Articles	Columnists	Number of Articles
Marjorie Nichols	10	Allen Garr	13
Les Bewley	3	Crawford Kilian	9
Denny Boyd	3	Mike Tytherleigh	5
Nicole Parton	1	Jack Clark	4
Noel Herron	1	Allan Fotheringham	1
		Joseph Katz	1
	—		—
	18		33



difficult to know how representative the selection is. The Sun publishes between 1/4 to 1/3 of letters submitted (Ramsey, 1984), while The Province published between 1/3 to 1/2 of their letters (Warren, 1984). Editors indicated the quality of writing is one of the factors of selection and that they did edit letters to make them more readable. Because some writers identify their place in the education system in their letters, it is possible to get an idea of either who is responding to the issues (assuming the selection is representative), or who is chosen to respond to the issues (assuming the selection is made on some other basis). The identities of writers to the editor are indicated in Table 3-5.

In The Sun, 57% of the letters selected were written by persons identified with the education system: teachers, students, professors, parents, school trustees, the Minister of Education, and the BCTF president. The Province has 35% of responses to the editor identified as persons directly associated with the education system; teachers, students, parents, school trustee, the Minister of Education, the president of BCTF, and the president of BCSTA. It is possible that some of many of the letters were also persons identified with the education system even though this was not indicated in the letter.

#### Special Interest Groups

Because the British Columbia Teachers' Federation (BCTF), with its president, Larry Kuehn, and the British Columbia School Trustee

Table 3-5  
Writers to the Editor

<u>Sun</u>			<u>Province</u>		
Writer	Number of Articles	Percent	Writer	Number of Articles	Percent
teacher	12	27	teacher	9	14
Vander Zalm	3	7	parent	4	6
school trustee	3	7	student	3	4
Kuehn (BCTF President)	2	5	Begin (BCSTA President)	2	3
parent	2	5	Vander Zalm	2	3
professor	2	5	Kuehn (BCTF President)	1	2
student	1	2	school trustee	1	2
unidentified	19	43	unidentified	41	65
Total	44	99*		63	99*

\* error due to rounding

Association with its president, Gary Begin, received such attention in The Sun and The Province articles of this study, a short description of these two organizations is included in this chapter.

#### BCTF - British Columbia Teachers' Federation

The first annual meeting of the British Columbia Teachers' Federation was held in 1917. Wartime inflation had boosted the cost of living five times faster than teachers' salaries so a united organization was needed. Other grievances, such as insufficient training, lack of tenure and professional contracts, and disrespect for teachers' rights by some employers, brought teachers together in a bid for professional recognition and status (BCTF, 1983).

In 1919, the BCTF was incorporated with three objectives which are still included in the constitution:

1. to foster and promote the cause of education
2. to raise the status of the teaching profession
3. to promote the welfare of the teachers of British Columbia. (BCTF, 1983, p. 91)

Salaries were a major concern for teachers but because of the depression and World War II, gains were limited. It has mainly been since the war that continual improvements in salary levels have been made. As justification for economic advances, the association put emphasis on better qualifications for teachers and the necessity for teachers to keep up to date through in-service, thus promoting

teaching as a true profession.

In 1947, the Public Schools Act made membership in the BCTF automatic for all certified teachers in the public schools of the province. Although 93% of teachers were already members, BCTF campaigned for compulsory membership to gain control of ethical standards of the profession (teachers suspended from BCTF could not teach in the province). The Social Credit government removed the automatic membership provisions in 1971, but a New Democratic government restored it in 1973 with little loss of membership in the interim.

Another major BCTF campaign which began in the mid 1960s was to reduce class size. "The class size campaign will remain a major thrust of the BCTF, for it has the potential to provide more quality and equality to the school system than any other endeavor" (BCTF, 1983, p. 96).

In 1974, the BCTF began to urge the extension of the scope of bargaining. In 1975, the School Act was changed so the minister of education could group districts into zones for collective bargaining, with districts having the right to choose local bargaining if they preferred. Amendments in 1978 directed all unresolved salary negotiations in districts of a zone to be handled by a single arbitration board.

In 1981, the federation made the achievement of full bargaining rights its number one priority and many districts achieved clauses

covering working conditions such as noon-hour supervision, personnel practices, and grievance procedure.

The priorities for the federation in 1982-83 were established in March, 1982 at the annual general meeting, before the Education (Interim) Finance Act which initiated restraint measures became law (April 30, 1982) and before Vander Zalm became Minister of Education (August 10, 1982). The priorities for 1982-83 were:

1. That the priorities for the BCTF for 1982-83 be:
  1. To protect the existing level of educational programs
  2. To protect the job security, working conditions, and economic status of members.
2. (a) That the BCTF bargaining priorities for 1982-83 be to consolidate the 1981-82 bargaining gains and to continue to expand the scope of bargaining at the local level.
  - (b) That the focus of federation activities be:
    - (i) co-ordination and support for bargaining the terms and conditions of employment into contracts at the local level and for effective administration of these contracts;
    - (ii) support for local associations actions up to and including job actions, taken to achieve bargaining objectives.
3. That the BCTF and its local associations take political action aimed at enhancing educational program quality and equality of access to educational programs.

(BCTF, 1982, p. 1)

Larry Kuehn was the president of the BCTF in 1982-83, the period covered in this study. He was serving his second, one year term. In April 1983, after Education Minister Vander Zalm announced he was leaving provincial politics, Kuehn was elected for a third term, an unusual move as it is normally a position held for only two terms.

BCSTA - British Columbia School Trustees Association

Although education is a provincial matter, some responsibility is delegated to school boards in which trustees are elected from the community. Boards are governed by both central authority (School Act and regulations) and local authority (school board policies and decisions). A school board is to abide by the provisions of the School Act and adopt policies to provide for the effective and efficient operation of schools.

The British Columbia School Trustees Association was founded in 1905 out of a need for boards to get together at a provincial level. In 1944, when M. A. Cameron was appointed to enquire into finance and the relationship between the province and the school districts, there were 649 school boards operating in British Columbia. The enquiry led to a reorganization consisting of 74 administrative areas each with its own school board. There are now 75 districts.

The BCSTA (1983) established priorities for its organization:

- promotion and preservation of the public's voice in education

- provision of membership services to assist board competence
- provision of a mechanism for boards to arrive at a common position and act to influence legislation
- reaffirmation of the belief in lay control of education
- provision of facilities for exchange of information to increase the effectiveness of the association and individual trustees.

Although membership in the BCSTA is voluntary, all 75 districts were members at the time of this study. Gary Begin was the association's president (1982-1983) and Joy Leach was the vice president. Gary Begin was not the main spokesperson for the BCSTA after he announced in February 1983, that he was going to be a Social Credit candidate in the 1983 provincial election.

#### Coding System

Because of the large volume of newspaper articles (438) used in the study, a coding system was adopted. A full listing of all the articles appears in Appendix A.

Coding For News Articles

The first letter of the code designates the newspaper.

S - The Sun  
 P - The Province

The second letter indicates the month of the year.

A - August	F - February
B - September	M - March
O - October	Ap - April
N - November	My - May
D - December	Ju - June
J - January	

The number indicates the chronological position (not the date) of the article within the month.

For example:

PA4 - fourth Province news article appearing in August  
 SF13 - thirteen Sun news article appearing in February



Coding for Editorials, Columns, Letters to the Editor

The first letter designates the newspaper. The second letter indicates the article type.

- E - editorial
- C - columnist
- L - letter to the editor

The third letter indicates the month. The number indicates the chronological order within the total of the sample of each type. Because of the smaller numbers, numbering is not by month as with news articles. The month is placed in the code to give an indication of the place of the articles in time.

For example:

SCJ11 - eleventh Sun columnist article of the sample which was written in January

PEA2 - second Province editorial which was written in August

News articles are easily distinguished from commentaries because they have only two letters and a number, whereas commentaries have three letters and a number.

### Content Analysis

Content analysis is a technique developed by socio-political researchers for interpreting communication content (Berelson, 1952; Carney, 1972; Gerbner, 1964; Holsti, 1969; Janowitz, 1976; Rosengren, 1981). The major concern of the research is to use the data obtained to make inferences about something which is not apparent. "Content analysis is a multipurpose research method developed specifically for investigating any problem in which the content of communication serves as the basis of inference" (Holsti, 1969, p. 2).

Content analysis is backed by two main ideas: that texts hide something, and that systematic analysis can reveal that which is hidden (Rosengren, 1981). The aim of the method is to improve the quality of the inferences made by providing a more objective basis of information. Without this tool, one could but read through a communication, in all its mass and complexity, to get an impression and support this impression by selecting items that prove it correct. The content analysis methodology provides the researcher with a more systematic way of focusing on the communication (Carney, 1972). "The quantitative measurement has often been cited as essential to content analysis... earlier definitions required that inferences from content data be derived from the frequency with which symbols and themes appear in the text." (Holsti, 1969, p. 5).

Counting how many times parents were used as sources of information or how frequently the curriculum theme was mentioned in

this study, for example, would be content data under this definition of content analysis. Early researchers (Berelson, 1952) upheld this definition of content analysis but criticisms and developments have since expanded notions of the methodology.

One criticism of quantitative data is that analysts frequently assume that "the frequency of an assertion is necessarily related to its importance" (Holsti, 1969, p. 10). An understanding in this study considering the agenda setting role of the newspaper, is that even what is not said or what is only briefly mentioned is as significant as that which is frequently reported.

"Classical content analysis" (Carney, 1972) also limits the inquiry because it only describes the surface or manifest content of the material. In the coding stage of the research when words and themes are located, only those items that appear in the articles are recorded. The latent or underlying content obtained by 'reading between the lines' is not incorporated as an analytic technique.

This research breaks with the "classical content analysis" restricted to quantification by incorporating qualitative analysis as well. Categories are established and frequency counts made to reveal information about the manifest content of the articles. The qualitative analysis then describes the interrelationships of the variables established in the quantitative analysis. Using quotations from the newspapers, patterns are established to illuminate what is "between the lines" or the latent meanings of the context.

### Preliminary Analysis - Classification Categories

Grouping content into categories for the purpose of analysis determines the basic pattern of the investigation. "A content analysis can be no better than its system of categories" (Budd, 1967, p. 39). The groups must differentiate and describe the content in a way that best illuminates the purpose of the study.

The categories, although very much the creation of the individual researcher, should adhere to a number of canons (Budd, 1967; Carney, 1972; Holsti, 1969). "Categories should reflect the purposes of the research, be exhaustive, be mutually exclusive, independent and be derived from a single classification principle" (Holsti, 1969, p. 95). For categories to reflect the investigator's question, one must know the subject well and the variables that are dealt with. The categories must be exhaustive, that is, all relevant items appearing in the articles must be placed into a category. No items can be left unplaced. To meet the third requirement of mutual exclusiveness, no one recording unit can be placed in more than one of the considered categories. The fourth requirement is that the categories be independent. "Independence of categories is the rule that assignment of any datum into a category not affect the classification of other data" (Holsti, 1969, p. 100). This criterion does not apply to any category in this study but would apply, for example, if the distribution of items was fixed on a scale and more items than the distribution allowed fell into one unit of the scale.

Once the classifications are established, recording units are counted. "The recording units are the things to be counted. They may be words, themes, characters, or, even interactions.... Categories are the classifications, the pigeonholes if you like, into which the recording units are counted" (Carney, 1971, p. 39). Under the category restraint, a recording unit is one of the key words which identifies restraint: budget cut, funding reductions, revenue cuts. If one of these recording units appears in an article, it is entered as a category count for restraint.

In this research, considerable time was taken in revising the categories until suitable ones were determined. The basic identification categories were easily established: paper -- The Sun and The Province; article type -- news, editorial, columnist, letter to the editor. Initially, in trying to establish the other categories, keeping the source (persons quoted on issues) separate from the issues was difficult because personalities appeared to be the issue. This is because in news, personalities are purposefully identified with issues. Once the source category was separated and distinguished from the issue category, the issues became more readily apparent.

The categorization of these issues is not entirely arbitrary because the journalists must select some sources and activities out of all the events of the day and create reoccurring patterns in the news. The research categories, therefore, to a degree reflect the structure

the journalist has placed on the news.

The issue categories emerged as the most important and central categories of the analysis. Seventeen issues were established. Every article was placed in at least one of these categories but an article could also deal with a number of issues and was therefore entered in all categories that were relevant. Five of the categories have five or fewer entries but these categories were maintained because they indicated what did not emerge as important issues.

Word counting or counting key words in a text is probably the best known kind of content analysis (Sanders & Pinhey, 1983). The assignment of items to issue categories in this study was determined largely by key words. Exceptions to this were the categories of school board autonomy, teacher evaluation and Vander Zalm - personal/political style. In these categories, the count was not always made by a concept. For example, a count under the category school board autonomy was made if there was mention of the Minister of Education imposing cuts on school boards after they had gained Ministry acceptance. The concepts, as well as the key words, that identified categories are outlined in the definitions of issues categories.

Every 20th article of the sample was selected for an interrater reliability check on the issue categories. Twenty-one articles with a total of 52 category placements were rated. Forty-five of the placements were congruent, yielding an interrater reliability of .87. Collective bargaining was an error in placement (that is, it was not

identified as an issue in an article) four times, although the key word identifiers were in each of the articles. There seems to be no explanation for this other than oversight of the rater whose only instructions were to determine what issues were in the articles from the category definitions listed below. School board autonomy, restraint, and teacher evaluation were the other incorrect placements.

#### Definitions of Issue Categories

##### Collective Bargaining

- refers to teachers' bargaining rights and their practise
- identified by any of these words in reference to teachers: arbitration, bargaining, collective agreement, collective bargaining, collective bargaining rights, contract, contract negotiations, negotiations (in reference to school board contracts), salary agreement, teacher contract, teacher settlements.

##### Curriculum/Standards

- refers to the curriculum (what is taught in schools) and how students are performing as regards to it, but does not include reference to programs identified under the category: Restraint Effects on Students and Program.
- identified by these words: academic subjects, back to

basics, bilingual program, core program, curriculum, effectiveness of students, examinations, high quality education, passing grade, sex education, subject area and specific subject area, e.g. math, science, writing.

#### Discipline

- refers directly or indirectly (school discipline) to discipline of students in the public school
- identified by the word discipline

#### Layoffs/Job Security

- refers to teachers losing their jobs, under the threat of losing them, or ensuring that they will not lose them
- identified, in reference to teachers, by any of the words: dismissal, job elimination, job firing, job loss, jobs on the line, job security, layoff, loss of jobs, loss of teachers, termination

#### Non-Teacher Layoffs

- refers to non-teaching school board employees losing their job or under the threat of losing their job
- identified by the words: layoff, job elimination

#### Private Schools

- refers to schools which are not part of British Columbia's public school system
- identified by the word private school



#### Parent Involvement

- refers to parent's involvement in public schools
- identified by the words: make parents aware, parents at school make decisions

#### Restraint

- refers generally to government limiting education spending and most frequently applies to school boards' difficulty meeting budget limitations
- also refers later in term to government returning money to school boards
- identified by the words: against budget increases, balancing budgets, budget cut, budget guidelines, budget reductions, budget slashing, cost cutting, cutbacks, district cuts, educational costs, education spending, fat to be trimmed, financial problems, funding crisis, funding reductions, government financial situation, government saving money, problems of the economy, reduce budget expenditure, revenue cuts, school boards saving money, school funding cuts

#### Restraint Effects on Students and Programs

- refers to any effects of the government restraint program on students or school programs
- identified by specific listing of actual or projected consequences of budget reductions on students and

programs such as no field trips or supplies or cancellation of a specific program

- not identified by words describing generalized effects such as: destruction of education system, massive disruption

#### School Act

- refers to British Columbia's Public School Act
- identified by the word School Act

#### School Board Administrative Costs

- refers to the costs of the school board to administer the schools of the district
- identified in reference to school boards by the words: administrative costs, budget management, district cost per pupil, commission on administrative costs, efficient school boards, financial management

#### School Board Autonomy

- refers to the school board defining and maintaining its power and areas of authority particularly in terms of the Minister of Education
- identified, in reference to the school board, by the words: autonomy of school boards, cancel the school board, destroy autonomy, demise of school boards, eliminate power, emasculates the school boards, erode local control, hamstring trustees, losing their power,

ministry manage school districts directly, provincial wide teacher negotiations, remove right of school board, responsibility returned to local school boards, strip away community, undermine authority

- also identified by actions of the Ministry of Education that:

- a) interfere with the school board's right to hire, fire, and negotiate a contract with teachers
- b) impose cuts on school boards after they have gained Ministry acceptance

#### School Closure

- refers to an actual school closing or a proposal to close a school
- identified by the word school closure or school closing

#### Teacher Action/Strikes

- refers to political and job action taken by teachers (not including news conferences) or in reference to strikes, teacher's right or desire to take this action
- identified, in reference to teachers initiating action, by the words: BCTF resolution, campaign, defamation suit, fund raising to defeat Socreds, job action, libel action, negotiations with government, public meetings, rally, strike, teacher lobby, work to rule

#### Teacher Evaluation

- refers to the ability of teachers to perform their job
- identified by the Minister of Education request for a teacher's evaluation or suspension and in letters to the editor by praise or criticism of the job teachers are doing

#### Teacher Rollbacks/Salaries

- refers to teachers' salaries in general and also specifically to rollbacks
- identified by any of these words in reference to teachers: average salary, pay cut, pay hike, pay increase, professional days without pay, rollback, salary cut, salary kickback, salary freeze, salary hike, teacher earning, wage increase, work without pay, zero increase

#### Vander Zalm - Personal/political style

- refers to any article which has as its main focus, not an educational issue, but Vander Zalm's personal life, political style or political career.

#### Secondary Analysis

The quantitative analysis isolated variables to determine what were the main issues and the sources that spoke on issues in the newspaper coverage. A quantitative analysis did not describe the

complex interactions or patterns within the issues and sources. For this reason, the secondary analysis, with the quantitative data as its base, used a qualitative or naturalistic methodology. This methodology was used to explore the interrelationships among variables and the different patterns of these relationships (Guba & Lincoln, 1981).

Inquiry of this type is suited to "those questions which are holistic, in nature, that is the phenomenon to be investigated is characterized by groups of interacting variables rather than by independently important variables" (LaRocque, 1983, p. 43). Education news is continuing news which is a series of stories based upon events occurring over a period of time (Tuchman, 1983). Issues in continuing news are complicated and almost always center on confrontations within and among complex organizations. Continuing news which encompasses a number of issues and sources, has many interactive variables and is therefore suited to study with the qualitative paradigm.

The inquiry focused on three main interactions: (a) sources interacting with sources (e.g. Larry Kuehn of the BCTF interacting with Bill Vander Zalm of the government); (b) sources interacting with issues (e.g. Gary Begin of the BCSTA speaking on school board autonomy); and (c) issues interacting with issues (e.g. salaries interacting with collective bargaining).

The data used in this analysis consist of quotations from the two newspapers. Quotations from news articles were collected on large

index cards and sorted according to the type of interaction. There were three sets of data cards in all. Each set had two subsets, one for recording information from The Sun and the other from The Province.

One set of cards collected quotations of sources interacting with sources. From the outset, these quotations indicated a pattern: most sources were interacting with the major source, Vander Zalm. A separate card was established for the major sources, Larry Kuehn of the BCTF and Gary Begin of the BCSTA and on it was recorded their interactions with Vander Zalm. Other sources were grouped -- teachers, trustees, and others, with quotations of interactions with Vander Zalm recorded on a separate card for each group.

A second set of data cards was used to record interactions of sources and issues (source/issue cards). If a source spoke on an issue often, as for example, Education Minister Vander Zalm on restraint, a separate card was used to record his quotations on this subject. Also recorded separately, in list form, was the headline of each article, a brief summary of the article, and the sources quoted in the article.

In a third set of cards, each issue had a card on which was recorded all articles that mentioned the issue and quotations from articles with significant information on the issue. These cards quoted the reporters' information, not the quoted sources. (This was recorded on the source/issue cards.)

Interactions of issues with issues were obtained in a limited way by a computer count of how many times issues appeared together in articles. The count showed, for example, how many times the issue of layoffs/job security, and the issue of collective bargaining appeared together in the same article.

The selection of quotations from commentaries differed from that of the news articles. It was guided by the data sheet on commentaries which recorded each issue dealt with in the article and the attitude taken by the writer on that issue. Quotations were selected to reflect the balance of view and the amount of attention given to issues, as indicated in the data. Quotations from commentaries were not put on index cards because the volume was less, fewer issues were dealt with in each article and particularly with columnists, the views became predictable.

In order that the quotations selected for the study were representative of the articles as well as possible, they were chosen to reflect a balance of The Sun and The Province articles. If one paper had more coverage on an issue or source, the selection tried to account for this. Quotations were selected from as large a number of articles as possible. For instance, if a quotation to illustrate one point was selected from a letter to the editor, the researcher avoided selecting it to make another point. There was one full page article in The Sun entitled: "To Bill, it's all a challenge" (SD7) which was quoted several times but was much larger in volume than any other

article. Another article in The Province, entitled: "The Vander Zalm primer" (PS5) was a near full page interview which was also quoted several times because of its large size and the uniqueness of its information.

The selection of quotations was also made to reflect the period of time the issue spanned the news coverage. When possible, series of quotations were given in chronological order.

In the quantitative analysis, the information presented was largely derived directly from the data. Even in the category definitions there was a low level of inference because most issues were identified by key words. The qualitative analysis was more highly inferential. Some of the analysis was derived from the theories on the role of the newspaper in society as described in Chapter II. These theories alerted the researcher to possible patterns of interaction of the variables.



## Chapter IV

Preliminary Findings

The news allows the public access to a world of information beyond what individuals can obtain themselves. From the many occurrences in the everyday world, some are framed by reporters as events and become stories. By giving an important issue more coverage, news establishes a priority of problems or issues. Where a news item is placed in the paper is another indicator of the importance of an issue. Front page stories will catch the attention of a reader more often than those buried deep inside.

Sources are used to gain information on a story. They establish the reporter as objective, distant from an event, and in search of authorities who know the facts on issues. The newspaper gives recognition to certain people as sources. Because information presented is supposed to provide fair hearing to both sides on an issue, two opposing sources are often used. Two sources are frequently set out in the lead or first line of a story to create a mood or tone.

Newspapers may differ in what is considered to be a story, where a story is placed in the paper, who is used as a source, and the mood that is created by juxtaposing sources in the lead in a story.

With this in mind, a preliminary view on the education scene centering on the Minister of Education, Bill Vander Zalm, will focus

on the following questions:

1. What issues are given priority in the coverage of The Sun and The Province?
2. What are the front page stories?
3. What people are used as sources of information on these issues?
4. How are the sources presented in the leads to create the mood of the story?

Comparisons between the two papers, The Sun and The Province will be made on each of these questions.

This preliminary view of the education scene probably reflects the most that the majority of newspaper readers will take in. They will have some idea of the major issues, the sources or 'players' involved and the general tone that surrounds issues. Deeper analytic understanding is difficult because of the way news is structured. Most of the coverage on education issues would be classified as continuing news, a series of stories on the same subject occurring over a period of time. Issues in continuing news are complicated and almost always center on confrontations within and among complex organizations.

Continuing news presents problems to the newspaper reader. Reporters have an event orientation which is ahistorical. Their

emphasis is on the present and contingent events. Reporters do little to draw connections from events on other issues that may be related, or from events of the past on the same issue. Often they do not carry forward developments that were unfolded, leaving the resolution of issues a mystery. Sometimes events are announced as a 'fait accompli', although legitimately they are not.

For example, a bill introduced into the Legislature shortened the school year by five days. Vander Zalm said that would mean an extra 12 minutes and 48 seconds of instruction per day between January and June (PS20). The following day an article appeared to say the BCTF had called a special meeting because they were "furious at the government's new education laws" (PS22). The bill had not been passed but it was 'law'. There was no mention of teaching the extra time. Four days later the BCSTA asked for delay on debate of the bill (P01). There is no mention of the 12 minutes and 48 seconds until one month later with the headline, "Teachers refuse overtime". The story stated that the BCTF representative assembly had voted not to teach the extra 12 minutes and 48 seconds. The bill was then referred to as the School Services Act so one would assume it had passed (P010). The 12 minute 48 second issue never surfaced in the news again. The newspaper reader does not know whether to assume that the bill was enforced or that the teachers' refusal was carried out. As it happened, teachers did not make up the 12 minutes and 48 seconds but the reader, even if following the development with interest over time,

never got the ending.

The continuing news story slithers through the mind without a lot to hold on to. The complexity of events, coupled with their ahistorical presentation blocks the structuring of issues for analytic understanding. Given most readers have only one passing glance at an ever changing scene, the view will probably be remembered by landmarks, constants in the scene which are now described in this preliminary view.

#### Issues in Education

The issues that received newspaper attention in news articles when Bill Vander Zalm was Minister of Education are shown in Table 4-1. A Spearman's rank order correlation coefficient was determined to be 0.96, indicating a high degree of consistency between relative ranking of issues in the two papers. A theme throughout 72% of both The Sun and The Province coverage was restraint. Layoffs/job security and rollbacks/salaries were the next most common issues mentioned in both papers. Collective bargaining, school board autonomy and teacher action also had near parallel coverage in terms of the emphasis given these issues. The greatest discrepancy came on the issue of curriculum which ranked 8th in The Sun and 5th in The Province.

Issues that were given consideration in commentaries in the two papers are shown in Table 4-2. Generally, the editorials, columnists, and letters to the editor correspond to the coverage given issues in

Table 4-1

## Issues in Education - News Articles

Issue	The Sun		The Province	
	Number of Articles (N=129)	Rank Order	Number of Articles (N=112)	Rank Order
Restraint	94	1	81	1
Layoffs/Job Security	56	2.5	53	2
Rollbacks/Salaries	56	2.5	49	3
Collective Bargaining	34	4	28	6
Teacher Action/Strikes	32	5	25	7
School Board Autonomy	31	6	33	4
Restraint Effect	26	7	19	8
Curriculum/Standards	22	8	30	5
School Act	16	9	14	9
Non-teacher Layoffs	13	10	10	11
School Board Admin. Costs	11	11	11	10
Teacher Evaluation	6	12	9	12
Vander Zalm Style	5	13	3	14
Private Schools	4	14.5	1	16
Discipline	4	14.5	4	13
School Closure	3	16	0	17
Parent Involvement	0	17	2	15

Table 4-2

## Issues in Education - Commentaries

Issue	Editorials		Columnists		Letters to Editor	
	<u>Sun</u> N=13	<u>Prov.</u> N=20	<u>Sun</u> N=18	<u>Prov.</u> N=33	<u>Sun</u> N=44	<u>Prov.</u> N=63
Restraint	5	13	9	19	17	30
Layoff/Job Security	4	8	6	10	8	9
Rollbacks/Salary	5	10	4	10	7	9
Collective Bargaining	2	7	5	3	2	4
Teacher Action/Strikes	3	2	1	5		1
School Board Autonomy	4	8	4	6	1	2
Restraint Effect		1	3	7		4
Curriculum/Standards	2	5	5	8	15	26
School Act	2	3	1	1	1	
Non Teacher Layoffs		1		1	2	
School Board Admin. Costs		4	4	1	6	3
Teacher Evaluation		1		3	11	
Vander Zalm Style	1		4	7	6	8
Private Schools		1	1			
Discipline	1		1	1		
School Closure						
Parent Involvement						

the news articles. Restraint, layoffs/job security and rollbacks/salary are the focus. It is interesting to note the much greater importance given to the curriculum/standards in the letters to the editor. There is almost as much emphasis given this issue as restraint. Also The Sun had 11 letters which were classified as teacher evaluation because they criticized or defended the job teachers were doing in schools. The Province did not have a group of letters similar to these.

Attitudes on issues are openly expressed in commentaries. Attitudes and ideas that aligned with Vander Zalm's on issues were assigned positive value and those that were against Vander Zalm's were given negative value. Commentaries that considered both sides of issues were considered neutral.

In editorials, The Sun expressed more positive attitudes to restraint (3 or 5), rollbacks (4 of 5), and strikes (that is, against strike action) (3 of 3) and negative attitudes on school board autonomy (4 of 4). Ten editorials were critical of Vander Zalm and none were openly supportive. The Province editorials also took a stand against loss of school board autonomy (4 of 5 editorials) and supported cutting back school board administrative costs (3 of 4 editorials). Only 2 of 14 editorial comments on Vander Zalm were positive, the rest were negative. Other issues were balanced with positive, negative and neutral views expressed.

Columnists in The Sun expressed 17 negative views on issues, 9

positive and 15 neutral. They came out strongly against loss of school board autonomy (4 of 4 articles) and gave some support to cutting school board administrative costs (3 of 4 articles). Six of nine articles made negative comment on Vander Zalm; three made positive comment. The Province columnists were quite solidly against the government on nearly all issues. Nineteen of 22 views on Vander Zalm were critical.

Views in the letters to the editor were polarized on issues, with few neutral classifications and a relative balance of views. An exception to this occurred in The Province where letters came out strongly against layoffs (7 of 8 letters), and 4 of 4 letters were critical of restraint effects. All three letters on school board administrative costs supported cost cutbacks. Twenty four letters to The Province commended Vander Zalm, while 32 were critical of his position. Eighteen of The Sun letters praised Vander Zalm and 24 expressed unfavorable attitudes toward him.

The editorials tended to separate the issue from the personality and sometimes supported the issue but not the means Vander Zalm was using to obtain his ends. The columnists and the letters to the editor tended either to support the issue and the Minister of Education or take a stand against both.



### Front Page Headlines

The placement of a news story on the front page establishes it as an important news item. Education news featuring Vander Zalm made front page headlines 15 items in The Sun and 18 times in The Province. As shown in Table 4-3 and Table 4-4, each headline usually indicates what was considered the main issue dealt with in the article. Restraint was not a headline grabber as much as the consequences of it. Restraint was never an issue in The Province headlines and was an issue only twice in The Sun.

Headline issues in The Sun centered on rollback/salaries (five headlines) followed by restraint, layoffs, teacher action and curriculum with two headlines each and collective bargaining with one. Issues were not explicit in two headlines.

Curriculum issues not directly related to restraint made front page headlines four times in The Province. Teacher action made headlines four times as well. Rollbacks/salaries, collective bargaining and school board autonomy had two headlines each, layoffs/job security and School Act had one each.

Only two front page stories were the same in The Sun and The Province. Both covered the government request for school boards to rescind layoff notices and to have teachers take professional days without pay (SS10, PS20) and Vander Zalm's criticism of the 5.5 salary increase granted Vancouver area teachers (SD9, PD5). The basic issues did not vary much in the two papers as indicated in Table 4-1 yet the

Table 4-3

Issues Indicated in Front Page Headlines - The Sun

	Headline	Issue
A11	Schools face the "real world" of cut backs	restraint
S3	Teachers head for showdown	teacher action
S10	'New math' compromise: 5 professional days = no teacher layoffs	layoffs
S11	Teachers attack pay-cut bill It's like slavery, Fed. chief says	rollbacks/salaries
02	City teachers 'face new pay cuts next year'	rollbacks/salaries
013	Teachers fail to shake Vander Zalm 4000 rally against education cuts	teacher action restraint
N13	Vander Zalm hits 'fun stuff' in the schools	curriculum
D9	Vander Zalm aghast at teachers' pay hike	rollbacks/salaries
D11	Pay hikes rile Vander Zalm again	rollbacks/salaries
D13	Scrap arbitration, Vander Zalm says	collective bargaining
D15	School job losses 'inevitable'	layoffs
F17	Student diploma is 'political'	curriculum
F21	'Coward' Bennett ducks crowds - Refuses to see protesters	
M16	'This is it' on school salaries	rollbacks/salaries

Table 4-4

Issues Indicated in Front Page Headlines - The Province

	Headline	Issue
A6	Teachers face salary freeze threat	rollbacks/salaries
S4	School Act "key to solution"	School Act
S9	'Strike and be fired'	teacher action
S10	1500 BC teachers 'facing axe'	layoffs
S11	Teachers plan work stoppages	teacher action
S20	\$30m wage grab stings teachers	rollbacks/salaries
O11	Vander Zalm wants boards to gut teacher pacts	collective bargaining
N1	School trustees asking Bennett what gov't plans	school board autonomy
N4	Mergers studied	school board autonomy
N5	Vander Zalm flunks student for poor grammar	curriculum
N9	Awards spark new education fights	collective bargaining rollbacks/salaries
J3	Students fail to soar in science skills	curriculum
F2	Old sex survey catches up on Vander Zalm	curriculum
F10	Three Rs back with bang	curriculum
F12	'Get rid of Vander Zalm'-teachers	teacher action
M15	Local school powers urged	school board autonomy
Ap6	Strike-right idea was gov't's	collective bargaining teacher action

actual events and issues chosen for headlines did.

The word teacher was in seven Sun and five Province headlines. Vander Zalm was in five Sun and four Province headlines, student was in one Sun and one Province headline, and trustee was in one Province headline.

The headlines served not only to alert readers to the issues but also to the actors involved. The importance of teachers and Vander Zalm in headlines points strongly to the conflict of interest of these two on issues.

Because front page articles are more likely to gain reader attention and are considered to highlight the important issues, a chronicle of front page articles provides an overview to the events and issues covered. Reading the chronicle gives one a sense of the difficulty following a continuing news story with its ahistorical event orientation. One issue leaps over others and then lies dormant itself as another issue leaps forward. Although labelled continuing stories, they do not provide a sense of continuity.

#### Chronicle of Front Page Articles

##### The Sun

SA11 School boards are to cutback \$121 million between 1982 and 1983 under government restraint program.

SS3 Under the threat of layoffs and requests for salary rollbacks, teachers threaten strike action.

SS10 Government offers to avoid layoffs if teachers take five professional days without pay.

SS11 BCTF, BCSTA react negatively to days without pay in exchange for no layoffs.

S02 Vancouver School Board Chairman announces the board will try to negotiate salary rollbacks to avoid layoffs.

S013 Vander Zalm defends education spending restraint to a hostile crowd in a rally of teachers.

SN13 Vander Zalm suggests the educational system is not fulfilling its obligation to students and that we have to access what it is we want for our youngsters.

SD9 Vander Zalm is critical of the 5.5 salary increase granted to Vancouver area teachers suggesting it will result in massive layoffs.

SD11 Vander Zalm reacts again to salary settlements after urging no pay increases for teachers.

SD12 Vander Zalm says the arbitration board doesn't work and is costly.

SD15 A ministry report says hundreds of teachers and school employees will be laid off next year even if there are no salary increases.

SF17 Vander Zalm announces a new core curriculum for secondary school students.

SF21 A public opinion survey of BCTF indicates public support for teachers in their fight against Vander Zalm's education restraint program.

SF24 Premier Bennett is confronted by the public in Salmon Arm on the issue of education spending.

SM16 Government announces it will provide money to avoid teacher layoffs if teachers given up salary increases won in the 1983 arbitration.

#### The Province

PA6 The government wage restraint program could be used to freeze teacher salaries using "the ability to pay" concept.

PS4 To prevent teacher layoffs resulting from \$60 million budget cuts in B. C. school districts, Vander Zalm is considering amendments to the School Act.

PS9 Vander Zalm threatens to replace any teacher who goes on strike and to appoint government trustees to school districts that refuse to comply with spending cutbacks.

PS10 B. C. Supreme Court Judge rules that the government is acting legally in ordering school boards to cut budgets by \$60 million making layoffs inevitable.

PS11 BCTF recommends withdrawal of services in areas where school boards have issued layoff notices.

PS20 School board termination notices must be rescinded and teachers are asked to give up paid and non instructional days under new government bill.

PO11 Government discussion paper documents, which propose changes to the School Act allowing the school board to layoff teachers and cancel collective bargaining clauses, are leaked to The Province.

PN1 BCTF and BCSTA presidents want to meet with government to discuss leaked plans.

PN4 Vander Zalm is studying a plan to save money by merging some B.C. school districts.

PN5 Vander Zalm makes corrections on a letter he receives from a grade 7 student and returns it to her teacher.

PN9 Vander Zalm announces government examinations to assess students, schools and teachers.

PD5 A 5.5 wage award to Vancouver area teachers will result in layoffs says Vander Zalm.

PJ3 Students are not acquiring better science skills than they had five years ago.

PF2 Vander Zalm wants a grade 8 teacher suspended for distributing a sex questionnaire to students.

PF10 Vander Zalm wants to increase compulsory courses for graduating students.



PF12 In response to Vander Zalm's announcing changes in high school curriculum, BCTF president is asking that Premier Bennett replace him.

PM15 Vander Zalm recommends that school boards should have a far greater role in details of school administration.

PAP6 The deputy minister asked BCTF whether teachers were interested in full collective bargaining but the talks broke off.

#### Sources - Quotes in the News

Bill Vander Zalm, the Minister of Education, Larry Kuehn, the President of the British Columbia Teachers' Federation and Gary Begin, the President of the British Columbia School Trustees Association were the most frequently cited sources in both The Sun and The Province (see Table 4-5). This substantiates the views of Tuchman (1978) and Gans (1979) that the sources of news are most frequently official leaders in positions of authority and responsibility within important organizations. Government spokespersons, presidents of local teachers' associations, and school board chairpersons and trustees are the next most frequently used sources, supplementing these three organizations, the Ministry of Education, the BCTF, and the BCSTA, as the spokespersons on education in British Columbia.

The circulation for The Province outside the Lower Mainland of British Columbia is greater than The Sun (Province 34 210, Sun.

Table 4-5

## Sources Cited in News Articles

<u>Sum</u>		<u>Province</u>	
Source	Number of Articles	Source	Number of Articles
Vander Zalm (Minister of Education)	75	Vander Zalm (Minister of Education)	91
Kuehn (BCTF President)	40	Kuehn (BCTF President)	33
Begin (BCSTA President)	29	Begin (BCSTA President)	23
School Board Chairman	19	Government Spokesperson	16
Pres. Local Teachers Assoc.	17	Pres. Local Teachers Assoc.	9
Government Spokesperson	13	School Trustee	9
Parent	9	School Board Chairman	8
Premier Bennett	7	Superintendent	8
BCSTA Vice-President	7	Premier Bennett	6
Teacher (School base)	7	Principal	6
New Democratic Party	6	BCTF Spokesperson	6
Principal	5	BCTF Vice-President	5
School Board Spokesperson	5	BCSTA Spokesperson	5
Superintendent	5	BCSTA Vice-President	4
School Trustee	4	College/University Faculty	4
BCTF Spokesperson	4	School Board (as whole)	3
BCTF Vice-President	3	Teacher (school base)	3
BCSTA Spokesperson	3	Parents	3
Teacher (BCTF associated)	3	Teacher (BCTF associated)	2
Students	3	Students	2
CUPE Local	3	School Board Vice Chairman	2
Arbitration Board	3	School Board Spokesperson	2
College/University Faculty	3	Arbitration Board	2
Government Commissioner	2	Municipal Government	2
Nurses Union	2	Compensation Stabilization	2
Health Minister	2	Native Indian Educators	1
School Board (as whole)	2	Government Commissioner	1
Director Independent Schools	1	Parent Involvement Advisor	1
Supreme Court Justice	1	Church Minister	1
Council of Education		Science Curriculum Team	1
Ministers	1	Fed. for Exceptional Children	1
Labor Minister	1	Trustee Candidate	1
President Home and School	1	President Coles' Books	1
Flower Shop Lawyer	1	New Democratic Party	1
Unemployed Action Center	1		
Church Minister	1		
Mayor	1		
Deputy Premier	1		
Trustee Candidate	1		
Teacher Aide	1		

26 450), yet it did not quote country sources more frequently. Both papers quoted 16 sources outside the Lower Mainland.

Superintendents, principals, teachers, students and parents are not in the top ranks as voices on issues although they are involved with the actual problems and practices of educating students in schools. Bagdikian's (1969) suggestion that journalists "be in touch with the world of scholarship" (p. 13), has not been heeded for only two of the college/university faculty sources are quoted for their scholarship.

Both Larry Kuehn of the BCTF and Gary Begin of the BCSTA are presidents of organizations that have established themselves as effective political interest groups with the resources to monitor government activity and pressure the government by promoting their interests and blocking actions that are going to work to their detriment. This activity, centering on conflict with the government, has news value and attracts reporters.

Considered in terms of interest groups and political functioning, it can be noted that parents were used as a source nine times in The Sun while only three times in The Province. Because the newspaper is one of the mechanisms the government has to know the opinion of the people, publics must structure their activities to gain media attention. Gans (1979) notes that unknowns in the media are most frequently protesters. The Sun used parents as protesters involved in lobbying activity (rallying, picketing, petitioning) the nine times

they were quoted -- seven times protesting education spending, once protesting school closure and once fighting school bus changes. In The Province, parents are not associated with lobby activity but are quoted as individual parents representing student victims, Gans's second unknown source category.

#### Leads in the News Story

The first line or lead of the news story most frequently introduces a conflict or controversy. In The Sun, 69 of 128 or 54% of news articles began by juxtaposing persons, groups or organizations in conflict. In The Province, 58 of 112 or 53% of news articles had leads with conflict. The majority of these cases of conflict involve the government and the BCTF or the BCSTA. Leads which indicated persons or groups compromising or reconciling were found in 6% of The Sun articles and 10% of The Province. The remaining articles (Sun, 40%, Province, 37%) did not juxtapose different persons or groups in the lead of the story (see Table 4-6).

Because it has such audience appeal, conflict is highly newsworthy. The leads of the story with their emphasis on conflict, reported with such negative connotations, also carry in them an implied value of what is desirable, i.e. the restoration of order. The conflict is dramatized, frequently using war images to emphasize the undesirability of it and resolution benefits from the sense of relief that end to war provides. For example:

Table 4-6

## Personalities/Organizations Juxtaposed in the Lead of News Articles

	<u>Sun</u> (N=129)	<u>Province</u> (N=112)
Leads indicating conflict		
govt. Vander Zalm - BCTF, teachers	30	30
govt. Vander Zalm - BCSTA, school boards	21	14
govt. Vander Zalm - BCTF, BCSTA	3	1
govt. Vander Zalm - teachers, parents	2	1
govt. Vander Zalm - parents	5	-
govt. Vander Zalm - students	2	4
govt. Vander Zalm - New Democratic Party	2	-
govt. Vander Zalm - schools	2	-
BCTF - BCSTA	2	1
teachers - school board	-	2
students - teachers	-	1
NFA school trustees - COPE trustees	-	1
govt. Vander Zalm - arbitration board	-	1
govt. Vander Zalm, BCTF - BCSTA	-	1
	-----	-----
	69 (54%)	58 (53%)
Leads indicating compromise/negotiation		
govt. Vander Zalm - BCTF, teachers	3	5
govt. Vander Zalm - BCSTA, school boards	5	4
govt. Vander Zalm - BCTF, BCSTA	-	1
BCTF - BCSTA	-	1
	-----	-----
	8 (6%)	11 (10%)
Leads without personalities/ organizations juxtaposed		
	51 (40%)	43 (38%)
	-----	-----
	129 (100%)	112 (100%)

Another battle is brewing between BC teachers, the government and school trustees. (PD5)  
 Education Minister Bill Vander Zalm drew fresh blood Monday in his simmering battle with teachers when he promised to introduce legislation that will wipe out contract gains they have achieved in the areas of working and learning conditions. (SD3)

A lead indicating compromise/negotiation provided dramatic relief from the raging battle as indicated in this quote:

Peace on the B.C. education front inched closer Wednesday as teachers and government agreed they were moving in the right direction over the thorny issue of salary hikes. (PM18)

#### Summary

The news coverage of education is complicated because it involves continuing news, that is a series of stories on the same subject over a period of time. This analysis isolated variables as they appeared in this continuing coverage to reveal which elements were constant in the stories.

The major issues that appeared in the news coverage were similar in The Sun and The Province. Restraint was an issue in 72% of articles. Layoffs/job security and rollbacks/salaries were the next most common issues. The issues dealt with in the front page headlines differed in the two papers with rollbacks/salaries gaining the most headlines in The Sun and curriculum and teacher action gaining the most headlines in The Province.

Bill Vander Zalm, the Minister of Education; Larry Kuehn, the

president of the BCTF; and Gary Begin, the president of the BCSTA were the most frequently cited sources in both The Sun and The Province. In The Sun and The Province over 50% of news articles began by juxtaposing persons, groups, or organizations in conflict. The majority of these cases of conflict involve the government and the BCTF or the BCSTA.

To summarize, the findings of the preliminary analysis revealed that the news articles featuring Vander Zalm centered on conflict between the government and the BCTF and/or the BCSTA over the major issues of restraint, layoffs/job security, and rollbacks/salaries. The major sources quoted on the issues were Bill Vander zalm, Larry Kuehn, and Gary Begin.

The secondary analysis to follow in chapters five and six describes the interactions of issues and sources. Three main patterns of interactions are considered: (a) sources interacting with sources (e.g. Larry Kuehn with Vander Zalm); (b) issues interacting with issues (e.g. restraint with rollbacks/salaries); and (c) sources interacting with issues (e.g. Gary Begin with school board autonomy). Chapter five describes the interaction of sources with sources and chapter six describes the interaction of issues with issues and sources with issues.

## Chapter V

### Sources

One of the patterns investigated in this study was that of sources interacting with other sources. This chapter considers first the interaction of the three major sources: Bill Vander Zalm of the Ministry of Education, Larry Kuehn of the BCTF, and Gary Begin of the BCSTA. This is followed by an explanation of why Vander Zalm appeared so frequently in the news. The account is made primarily in terms of how other sources and commentators (editors, columnists, writers to the editor) interacted with Vander Zalm.

#### Interaction of Major Sources

News is about individuals, not just events (Tuchman, 1978). Personality is an important cue in determining which news articles get reader attention. Personality also provides a sense of continuity linking events together. For these reasons, it is not surprising that the education news in this study featured three main personalities: Bill Vander Zalm, the Minister of Education; Larry Kuehn, the President of the British Columbia Teachers' Federation; and Gary Begin, the President of the British Columbia School Trustees Association.

Because news emphasizes people over groups, it pays less attention to institutionalized social order, except as reflected in



its leader. Leaders, officials in powerful positions, are efficient sources because they can supply reliable information easily and efficiently and can make their point concisely (Gans, 1979).

When these characteristics of news gathering are considered in terms of public education, the leaders are essential in bringing issues of education to the public's attention because the media are not going to attend to the institution apart from the leaders. Leaders become the chief critics and promoters of the system in the public's views through the media.

The fact that Bill Vander Zalm, Larry Kuehn, and Gary Begin, the three major sources speaking on education issues, are leaders of institutions representing particular interests has an effect on the information that the public receives. An institution is going to bring to the public consideration only those issues which are innocuous to them (Bachrach & Baratz, 1970). Leaders introduce issues that will gain support of the public and at the same time maintain or strengthen their own organizational interests. Because institutions are worried about their public image, they will not bring forward evidence against the opposing side if they feel such evidence does not have public support. Leaders often respond to the issues put forth by attacking the views of opponents rather than by asserting an alternate view. Few views are presented other than those of the three major sources or their spokespersons. As a result issues lose their complexity and are simplified into black and white cases. Minister of

Education Bill Vander Zalm, himself, commented: "The experts need not come knocking at my door ... They would have us believe we live in a complicated society but our problems are more fundamental than we think" (SA10).

In the articles analyzed, the three leaders very seldom left their firmly held stands and rarely acknowledged another point of view so as to make an issue appear negotiable. Views were presented with solid conviction such that the speaker on the issue always presented himself as the good guy and anyone opposing as the bad guy.

Both Larry Kuehn of the BCTF and Gary Begin of the BCSTA generally opposed the views of Bill Vander Zalm, the Minister of Education. The roles of the three leaders were cast: Bill Vander Zalm was the critic of education, Larry Kuehn was the promoter and defender of the public schools, and Gary Begin was the promoter and defender of the school board's place in public education. The quotes from these officials that follow illustrate that these sources were not only articulate but also provided the dramatic component so desired by the media. Each leader made it clear who their opponent was and why.

Bill Vander Zalm, the Minister of Education took on the role of critic, telling the public that education was costing too much, that teachers weren't necessarily doing a good job, and that students were not learning what they should be.

Education is very expensive, not too productive, and a relatively easy row for students to hoe. (PS5)

There is so much happening that's buried and the bureaucracy doesn't want it to get out, for fear of change. (PS5)

Vander Zalm said he doubts whether he "or our dear Lord himself" would be able to find a solution that would make the teachers happy. All I can say to the teachers is that we'll do the best we can. But a magic money tree won't be available to teachers anymore than it is to anybody else. (S015)

"Everybody gets passed," he [Vander Zalm] said. "You don't have to know anything to pass your grade." (P07)

My position is that changes to the educational system have to be made....Naturally, you have to consult the public on this. (SF18)

Although Vander Zalm's main focus of criticism was the education system, he also criticized the teachers' federation.

My first responsibility is to the public. I'm a politician not a bureaucrat and I would be putting the public second place if I talked first to BCTF for its approval before making changes. (PS5)

The teachers' federation is just playing politics... They wanted a whole lot more money, practically unlimited spending... They just want to cut out the school boards, cut out the parents. I don't really know if they are all that concerned about teachers keeping their jobs. (PM14)

It's the power of big bureaucracy, the power of big union in this particular instance which is perhaps preventing us from getting it together. (SM14)

Larry Kuehn, the President of the BCTF promoted the system as it was, defending the cost of education, the job teachers were doing and

what students were learning. He did this primarily by attacking the Minister of Education, Bill Vander Zalm and his views on issues.

Teachers' morale -- and that really affects students -- is at an appalling low level and Premier Bill Bennett and his "agent provocateur," Education Minister Bill Vander Zalm, are totally responsible. They are dismembering the system, denigrating teachers and drastically affecting the future of our province's children. (S07)

We as teachers have a great deal of pride in the work we do. And Mr. Vander Zalm, it's time that you saw that pride and we got the support from this government that we have to have to do our work. (S013)

Mr. Vander Zalm abuses his power by attacking individual teachers, shows contempt for the legal processes he has responsibility for carrying out, announces arbitrary and destructive changes to the school system as dictates which cannot be changed regardless of damage to students, and frequently uses his access to the media to make false statements about the public school system and teachers. (SF18)

Monday, delegates gave BCTF president Larry Kuehn a standing ovation after he attacked outgoing Education Minister Bill Vander Zalm's policies, which he described as "a wild combination of Let's Make a Deal and that ancient panel show To Tell the Truth." (PAP4)

Gary Begin, the President of the BCSTA, representing the school boards, promoted their rights in education governance and defended them in the cross fire of government demands for budget cuts and teachers' demands to maintain the system as it was. Begin attacked Vander Zalm and his views as one of the means to establish his position on these issues.

If the minister wants to strip away community right to deliver education then we'd be opposed to that and he'll be in for a fight. (SA2)

In a blistering attack Wednesday, BCSTA president Gary Begin accused the Surrey MLA [Vander Zalm] of intransigence, politicking, morally indefensible action and making "thinly veiled threats." (SS6)

Vander Zalm is sitting on his fanny making speeches about firing teachers who go on strike while trustees are the unfortunate ones who have to decide who and what to chop. (PS10)

... name a new education minister to fill the vacancy created by Vander Zalm's total transgression of duty and office. (PF17)

Begin, the President of the School Trustees Association, also focused on the poor communications with government and stated his displeasure with confrontation.

Education is many people and requires a lot of consultation. If he thinks he can dictate, he'll be in for some problems (SA1)

Leaks are a terrible way of communicating with school boards. (SN1)

Education Minister Bill Vander Zalm has told school trustees that he has no intention of changing his confrontational political style even though they were pleading with him to adopt a more consultative approach ... Gary Begin warned that "the system can't survive if we are going to continue fighting ... Our basic concern is attitude. We just can't continue with this negative tone." (SN8)

However, a greater injustice will result if we allow ourselves to be consumed by old conflicts and fail to prepare ourselves to address the needs of the future ... we cannot afford the luxury of continuing to fight the battles of 1982. (PJ1)

Bill Vander Zalm, Minister of Education, was the critic of public education. Larry Kuehn of the BCTF and Gary Begin of the BCSTA were the promoters and defenders of public education's status quo. These roles were maintained throughout Vander Zalm's time in the office of Minister of Education, and established a pattern on which issues were debated.

#### The News Appeal of Vander Zalm

Bill Vander Zalm was introduced as the Minister of Education on August 11, 1982 in lead lines which set the scene for his term in office.

The appointment of Bill Vander Zalm as education minister is a political ploy designed to force confrontation with teachers, B. C. Teachers' Federation President Larry Kuehn said Tuesday. (SA1)

Bill Vander Zalm's appointment as education minister has brought howls of outrage from B. C. teachers who say the move is designed to force a confrontation and set the stage for an election. (PA1)

Bill Vander Zalm's initial remarks as Minister of Education were: "It will be a controversial ministry because I'm a very controversial person" (SA1). Larry Kuehn, President of the BCTF made as one of his first comments: "The threat to the system by putting him in is incredible." (PA1)

These first articles were the beginning of a drama that had great news value and they begin to illustrate the reasons Vander Zalm made

the news. Vander Zalm seemed to have an innate sense for what news was and, liking the media attention he received, conformed to it. He played the news game, putting out bait for any reporter who would bite. The more coverage he received, the more prominence he gained, the more was his news value. He was recognized by newspaper writers and readers as a person who captured the media. This was indicated in the quotes below. (Emphasis not in the original text)

It is indeed odd that some British Columbians in high places still get suckered by every flashy lure cast by Bill Vander Zalm, the government's chief balloon flyer and headline grabber. (SC08)

These continual comments through the media do nothing to further dialogue. (Begin, P07)

But now see the apolitical middle-of-the-roader get angry after hearing from Mr. Vander Zalm's smiling television face some of the other ways he intends to cut costs. (SLS3)

Indeed Vander Zalm spends so much of his time alone on the political stage indulging in theatrics that many people wonder whether there is any real sense of political commitment to sustain his medicine show. (SD7)

In his brief tenure as education minister, Vander Zalm has garnered more headlines and more news comment than anyone ... (SCJ13)

Mr. Vander Zalm ... frequently uses his access to the media to make false statements... (Kuehn, SF18)

News is selected on criteria which Bill Vander Zalm fulfills. Both the importance and interest of events are considered in determining what is news (Hiebert, 1982; Jamieson, 1982). News

importance depends on proximity, people want to read about events close to them. Education is a provincial concern, therefore, events stemming from the ministry of education are of relevance to the people of British Columbia, the audience of The Sun and The Province.

Consequences of events also determine importance. The more widespread the effects, the greater the newspaper reader interest. The restraint program with its budget cuts had implications for teachers, non-teaching employees, and students. A large section of the public had an interest in these groups.

The third criterion of news importance is prominence: the more widely known the participant, the more newsworthy the happening. Vander Zalm had already established himself as a prominent and controversial member of the Social Credit cabinet in previously held posts as the Minister of Human Resources and the Minister of Municipal Affairs. Previous to that he was mayor of Surrey, a municipality in the Greater Vancouver area. After Vander Zalm was appointed Minister of Education, news reports in keeping with the ahistorical writing style of news, made no reference to his past. His prominence was assumed. His part was only recognized in articles when his actions as Minister of Education deemed it appropriate.

It's all very reminiscent of his days as minister of human resources, when he threatened to hand out shovels to the unemployed. (PEA2)

The reassignment (push?) of Bill Vander Zalm from municipal affairs to education immediately conjures up



visions of sweeping changes in the school curriculum ... of graduating students with less than a 70 passing average being handed shovels in lieu of diplomas at grad ceremonies. (SCA1)

Vander Zalm ... had accused his cabinet colleagues of being "gutless" when they refused in July to support his land use legislation when he was minister of municipal affairs. (SS12)

Bill Vander Zalm came into the position of Minister of Education with an established prominence and reputation established that the journalists readily nursed along.

Just as importance governs news selection, so does interest. Knowns attract interest. Interesting knowns attract more interest (Jamieson & Campbell, 1983). The newspaper audience is interested not only in the public life but also the private life of the star. Considerable attention was given the private aspects of Vander Zalm's life, which in many ways represents the enduring news value of individualism (Gans, 1979). Vander Zalm was a man who has participated in life on his own terms preserving his freedom as an individual in society. Journalists and the public, in their letters to the editor, related to Vander Zalm's personality and the details of his personal life by their comments, whether negative and positive.

Vander Zalm's life is a rags to riches story. Born in Holland, he is referred to several times with familiarity as "the little Dutch boy" (SLS7, SL017, SCA2, SCS3). One letter to the editor tells a story in which Vander Zalm is the hero for his restraint program.

Suddenly the little Dutch boy heard water trickling through the dike ... They knew in their hearts that if it had not been for the little Dutch boy who held the dike until help arrived, the village with its gardens and schools and people would have been destroyed. (SL017)

Another writer to the editor has a negative view yet still notes his personal background.

The little Dutch boy is doing nothing but causing confusion, consternation and chaos. (SLS7)

During the war in Holland, Bill Vander Zalm's family was poor and suffered the absence of his father who was selling tulip and daffodil bulbs in B. C.

In 1944 things were very tough. We had no heat, no electricity, no food ... The family ate sickly sweet tulip bulbs. (SD7)

Vander Zalm followed his father's footsteps to become the owner of by far the largest and most successful garden shop chain in B. C.

Good luck in the nursery business Mr. Vander Zalm. You will need it, for if you prune fruit trees the way you prune the educational system you will end up with trees -- but no fruit. (SL020)

The analogy is interesting because one prunes 75% of new growth on a fruit tree, almost exactly what the government was proposing to cut from the 1982 budget increase.

That he told the school trustees of his early experiences during an address on the need for restraint in education spending was not well received by one columnist, yet the fact she related it to her newspaper audience suggests it had interest.

The disclosure that he [Education Minister Vander Zalm] once wore pants made from a sister's old coat has puzzled many political and economic analysts, not to mention several thousand B. C. teachers ... The minister, being a modest man, did not point out that he survived his Second World War pants to become a multi-millionaire businessman and successful politician.  
(SCA2)

Vander Zalm is the image of the successful, self-made man. His handsome face appeared in The Sun ten times and The Province seven times, sometimes even showing his "five foot, 11 inch, 175 pound" (SD7) frame. Notice was given to other personal details of Vander Zalm.

Education Minister Bill Vander Zalm has shed his semi-pompador in favor of a cut that would bring tears to the eyes of a Marine Corps recruiter. (SCD10)

He eats bran flakes for breakfast; always a ham and cheese sandwich for lunch; a glass or two of white wine with a large dinner. His weight hasn't varied in 20 years. He never exercises. (SD7)

As a known figure in public life, the newspaper coverage, particularly commentaries (editorials, columnists, letters to the

editor), focused frequently on Vander Zalm's personal qualities; again showing that his personality captured writer's interest. Those with positive views of his character noted his honesty, emotional control, courage, boldness and realistic approach.

There is far more reasonableness in Mr. Vander Zalm's honest, forthright approach to a changing world... (SLS5)

We doctors could sure use a little of his forthright honesty... (SLM60)

He is making hard decisions that have been long overdue, and at the same time he is keeping his cool. (SLN27)

When Education Minister Bill Vander Zalm went to that teachers' really ... he knew he was going into a bear pit ... he showed the people as well as the teachers themselves that he has both personal and political courage. (PEO7)

This man of energy, charm, and courage is ambitious. (PCM26)

Without Vander Zalm's bold, head on confrontational approach, nothing would be forthcoming. (SCS4)

Bill Vander Zalm is to be congratulated and also perhaps commiserated with on his realistic approach. (SLN28)

Those that mentioned negative personal qualities of Vander Zalm considered him to be inconsiderate, insensitive, bullying, outspoken, impulsive, two faced, and dictatorial.

Those three taught me the Golden Rule, to do unto others as you would have them do unto you. Education Minister Bill Vander Zalm does not appear to understand that simple principle. (SLD29)

When you have an ambitious, aggressive education minister like Bill Vander Zalm, insensitive to the subtleties of life in 1983, that is what you get. (PFC23)

Wild Bill Vander Zalm goes on shooting from the hip, picking off teachers and ... blissfully unaware that one of his bullets has hit my son. (SLA5)

With his obvious talents for gallows humor and bully-boy tactics ... (PLS3)

... surely he doesn't have to start bullying students. (PLN36)

Too bad we don't have an education minister with more diplomacy, one who wasn't so unpopular and dictatorial. (PLM58)

Bill Vander Zalm, the tough talking, shoot from the hip minister of education... (SCS5)

Bill Vander Zalm, the outspoken minister of education... (SCF16)

Education Minister Bill Vander Zalm may not have much else, but he's got chutzpa that just won't quite. Chutzpa is the quality displayed by a man who murders both his parents then pleads for mercy before the judge on the grounds that he is an orphan. (PCS5)

Vander Zalm is "icing on the poisonous cake". (SA5)

... an erratic and dictatorial minister ... (PS22)

Although Vander Zalm was recognized in the news as important because he was the Minister of Education; he was recognized as interesting because of the personality and life style that he brought to the ministerial position. Vander Zalm attracted people's interest

and many responded to him positively or negatively but rarely with indifference.

Another characteristic that determines news interest besides personality is conflict. Vander Zalm, himself, admitted: "I love the heat" (SM13). He said after his appointment to the ministry of education that it would be a very controversial ministry because he is a controversial person. After several months in office, he announced proposed changes to the School Act: "When I say controversial changes, you can bet they'll be controversial" (P011). Controversy is a cause or occasion for disagreement: a difference marked especially by the expression of opposing views. When important people express opposing views it often leads to conflict and frequently makes the news (Gans, 1979; Jamieson, 1983). Vander Zalm was controversial both for the views he held on issues and for his controversial political style.

The views Vander Zalm held on issues and the conflicts that resulted are discussed in the chapter on issues. Issues involving Vander Zalm fulfilled the criterion of conflict, thus gained reader interest. To be examined in this section is Vander Zalm's political style which determined the manner he dealt with issues. This style was given considerable attention in both news articles and commentaries.

Vander Zalm's political style was characterized by "his populist instincts, his ability to walk on controversial waters and his

inability to turn aside from challenge" (D7). One school board chairperson labelled him, "a consummate politician" (N15). Consider first his populist instincts. Vander Zalm had public support.

While his record is one of controversy and frequent confrontation, he [Vander Zalm] is a proven vote-getter. (PCM26)

It [Premier Bennett's speech] was predictably, a restraint speech and the applause, while polite, was appropriately restrained: Just two standing ovations, neither of which matched the thundering standing o given Education Minister Bill Vander Zalm during the pre-speech cabinet introductions. (SCN9)

The shock waves Vander Zalm sent rippling through the education bureaucracy are not without public support. (PCM24)

Vander Zalm +- no matter how controversial the assignment -- continues to be the darling of Social Credit grassroots. (SD7)

One of Vander Zalm's explanations for his support was:

I do believe I have a fairly good feel for public opinion. Because I'm outspoken I tend to attract a lot of people with hidden beefs. Maybe that is how I get a reading of public opinion ... more than some of my colleagues would... This sounds sort of corny, but I believe everything that I do or propose to do is the people's business and it is as much a right for a citizen to know what it is that Bill Vander Zalm is thinking as it is for a bureaucrat or for that matter, my colleagues. (SD7)

Vander Zalm was perhaps even more at ease in his relations with the public than he was with the government. He admitted that he was not that comfortable in government.

I don't feel comfortable in government. I'm used to making decisions. In government, it doesn't work that way. Everything is committed and committed. (SD11)

... I like to see decisions made. Democracy can be watered down so much that decisions aren't made. (SA10)

We have become lost in a maze of "meaningful dialogue" spewing out of our institutions ... We have lost the common touch. (PA7)

"People in government, regardless of where they sit, should come to things more co-operatively." Vander Zalm said the legislature is always confrontive and he doesn't think that's good.

Too much democracy and too much bureaucracy is hampering the B. C. educational system, allowing local school board officials and provincial bureaucrats to frustrate the decision making process. (SN13)

With ideas like these determining Bill Vander Zalm's political style, he was a controversial figure not only to the public but also to the elected members of the Social Credit party.

As one Socred MLA said earlier this week: "I get up every morning and call to find out where Vander Zalm's going to be. All I hope is that he stays out of my riding." (SCF16)

People close to the education minister say he was humiliated last Friday ... Asked about the role of the education minister in the prolonged education funding dispute, Bennett said the one thing he didn't need anymore was "political heat from any quarter". (SS12)

Privately more than one cabinet minister has accused the strident Vander Zalm of refusing to play the political game according to the good old boys code of ethics. "He's not a team player," one minister told The Vancouver Sun. "Vander Zalm doesn't seem to understand the concept of cabinet solidarity." (SD7)



Vander Zalm's political style was also criticized in the newspaper articles by his main opponents: Larry Kuehn of the BCTF and other teacher spokespersons, and Gary Begin of the BCSTA and other school board spokespersons.

He needs to change his approach; indeed he's shooting in the dark, firing from the hip. (Begin, P03)

The problem with Vander Zalm is you never know from one day to the next what his position is going to be. (Kuehn, SD12)

Kuehn accused the minister of bias against education and said ad hoc decision making by the government was causing a poisonous climate. (P08)

He hasn't kept quite since the day he took over. (School board chairperson, S02)

... tell him about the damage the leaks have done to employee relations. (Begin, PN3)

High school teacher and counsellor, Ralph Finch said he is not only upset about Vander Zalm's actions, such as changing curriculums, but he's even madder about the lack of consultation with teachers or parents. (SF22)

In the news stories, the point of view on Vander Zalm's political style as expressed by teachers (presidents of local associations, teachers with BCTF associations, teachers based at school, and principals) was consistent with that of the President of the BCTF, Larry Kuehn. In other words, no teacher was quoted in a news article indicating they approved of Vander Zalm's style. In the letters to the editor, one of twenty-one responses by teachers was identified as positive.

Generally in the news articles, the school board spokespersons (school board chairpersons, school board trustees) expressed views that supported those of the BCSTA President, Gary Begin. One exception was the Abbotsford school trustees:

Abbotsford school trustees have censured B. C. School Trustees Association president for criticizing Education Minister Bill Vander Zalm's role in a sex education controversy. (SF24)

(Of letters to the editor by school trustees, three are supportive of Vander Zalm's style and three are critical.)

It is ironic that, in news articles, Vander Zalm was selected for the news because he was controversial and set up conflict, while in newspaper commentaries, he was strongly criticized for his political style. As one letter to the editor put it:

The news media ... seem to be doing everything in their power to make him [Vander Zalm] look bad. (PLM54)

Almost all editorial comments in The Sun and The Province were critical of Vander Zalm's political style. The editorial comment that came closest to a compliment appeared in The Province.

Even if Mr. Vander Zalm's ideas do not stand the test, they may lead to other proposals. (PE08)

One Province editorial complimented Vander Zalm on his personal and

political courage for attending a teachers' rally but then continued to say:

... education is far too important to be left to the dangerous charms of Mr. Vander Zalm... He knew what he was doing ... He knew also that there was political capital to be made. (PF07)

Generally, editors were critical of Vander Zalm's political style:

#### The Sun

It is plain that Mr. Vander Zalm does not know how to deal with people or when to hold his tongue. (SES4)

Why is it that everywhere Social Credit cabinet minister Bill Vander Zalm goes, confusion and hard feelings are sure to follow. (SEN6)

Changing things on the run, as Mr. Vander Zalm seems to be doing, benefits nobody, least of all the students whose future he holds in his hands. (SEF8)

If there is a policy, it's hard to detect who's directing it or which way it's going. Some days it seems to be Premier Bill Bennett. Some days it's Education Minister Bill Vander Zalm (in fact, some days there seem to be two Bill Vander Zalm's heading off in opposite directions). (SEM10)

... their knowledge comes only from reflections in a lame-duck education minister's magic mirror, not from any firm commitment by the cabinet. (SEAp11)

The new minister of education must be someone who is capable of doing a thorough repair job on the damage Mr. Vander Zalm has done to relations between the government, teachers, school trustees and parents. (SEMy12)

### The Province

To begin with, Education Minister Bill Vander Zalm should lower the rhetoric and ease back from confrontation. (PES3)

His [Vander Zalm's] approach, his ill-informed and all considered statements, his attempts to assert authority beyond his powers, have created a great deal of unease among school children, parents, trustees and teachers. The confused situation was getting out of control, with nobody knowing how many teachers were going to lose their jobs, how many would strike, how many would simply leave their classrooms for a few days, how the government expected the cost savings to be achieved. (PES4)

It's not the way to have a sober, productive discussion on necessary changes. It looks as if the minister is indulging in one of these purely political fan dances he seems to enjoy rather than a genuine search for solution. He's [Vander Zalm's] clearly not the man for this sensitive portfolio and should probably be replaced. (PE09)

He [Vander Zalm] put himself in the centre of the storm by swinging that sword blade about a bit too wildly. (PE06)

The episode exposes once again the minister's penchant for politicizing an affair that needs much more sensitive handling. (PEF15)

The way Vander Zalm is going about it is appalling. (PEF16)

Columnists also expressed negative views about Vander Zalm's political style. Only one Sun columnist, Bewley, was consistently positive:

But much more effective than any silent distress signal has been the appearance of Bill Vander Zalm on the scene as new minister of education. Vander Zalm's appointment as education minister -- an inspired stroke

of casting has generated about the same reactions as the sudden appearance of an eagle in a drowsy barnyard... (SCS3)

Those school trustees, teachers, and politicians who are livid with rage about the approach taken by B. C. education minister, Bill Vander Zalm are clearly operating under two serious misconceptions ... Nothing else seems to explain the near incoherent, purple-faced rage expressed by Vander Zalm's critics, who continue to shriek that his sole purpose is to return all of us, by his challenges to the teaching establishment to the "dark ages" and to "barbarism". (SCJ11)

Another Sun columnist, Nichols, was not consistent in her views of Vander Zalm. From August to February, she wrote critically of Vander Zalm's political style:

Bill Vander Zalm, the tough-talking, shoot-from-the-hip minister of education, should patent his recipe for creating maximum havoc in the least available time. (SCS5)

Mr. Vander Zalm is, as usual, marching to his own drummer, proposing wholesale reform of the education system without consulting anyone, and generally whipping up passion with his inflammatory statements. (SCF16)

A positive statement, not in harmony with those above, appeared in Nichols's April column:

The education minister is a right-wing ideologue who believes in dealing frankly and forthrightly with issues and problems. (SCAp18)

One Province columnist, Tytherleigh, made a supportive statement on Vander Zalm's political style"

Vander Zalm cited various examples of initiatives that, if they had been left to the bureaucracy to implement, would have studied, referred to committees and experts, and months down the road, would still be in the talking stage. His impatience with bureaucrats is shared by many people, but few politicians will take him on, particularly in Ottawa. (PCM24)

All other columns mentioning the political style of Vander Zalm were critical:

But instead of sitting down and drafting some coherent guidelines to help the teachers and boards, the minister hopped on his red necked charger. (SCS5)

Bill Vander Zalm's provocative speeches in the legislature and his attacks on open-line shows have gone a long way to undermine public confidence in the education system and the teachers who work in it. (PC09)

The man who shoots for the lips first and asks questions afterward... (PCN12)

One of Bill Vander Zalm's most maddening skills is his ability to take a good idea and live it to death. (PCD14)

What's disturbing about Mr. Vander Zalm's approach is that it looks backwards. (PCJ18)

Nobody knows how exactly to react to what's going on because what's going on doesn't conform to any kind of logic. (PCF23)

What we are all suffering from is the tyranny of the minority currently represented by Bill Vander Zalm. (PCF22)

The Zalm's purpose in all this is like some bomb throwing anarchist. (PCM25)

Mr. Vander Zalm has shown he can't lead by consensus or compelling personality or force of ideas. But he has

political ambitions to satisfy and he has identified a market he thinks he can cultivate: the people who believe the old days were better and that some old-fashioned discipline and virtues would straighten everything out. (PCAp33)

Letters to the editor presented a balanced view on Vander Zalm's style, although those who were identified in their letters as having association with the education system (Bill Vander Zalm, Larry Kuehn, Gary Begin, teachers, school trustees, students, and parents) had 14 positive comments to 32 negative comments on Vander Zalm. Positive statements included:

It's about time we received a fresh look at education... and that's exactly what Bill Vander Zalm is providing. (PL022)

Mr. Vander Zalm's ability in his position as minister of education should be praised not condemned. (PLJ44)

... I applaud Bill Vander Zalm's new approach to education -- it's about time. (SL023)

Three Cheers for Bill Vander Zalm! (SL024)

Negative opinions on Vander Zalm's style from letters to the editor included:

... it is fortunate that the minister of education casts himself as the personification of oversimplifications. (SLS1)

It seems our new education minister would like to lead us back in time. (PLS7)

You don't have to be an NDP supporter or a teacher to be alarmed at Mr. Vander Zalm's methods of curbing education spending. (PLS18)

The minister's iron-heel approach to education is incurring the wrath of not only teachers, but parents, students and school boards. (PLF52)

When an election is called, Mr. Vander Zalm will have to make some real decisions and not resort to coercion and innuendo. (SLJ30)

A case has just been made that Bill Vander Zalm made the news because his controversial political style created conflict and sparked comment. Yet as one letter to the editor pointed out:

Vander Zalm's political style may be offensive to many teachers and similar disaffected groups but it is a style that differs little from that of the very leaders of the B. C. Teachers Federation themselves. (SLAp42)

Any attacker needs a defendant for conflict to exist. It can be argued that both the President of the BCTF, Larry Kuehn and the President of the BCSTA, Gary Begin, did "get suckered by every flashy lure cast by Bill Vander Zalm" (SC08). Two sides must co-operate, that is they must both add their opposing side, to maintain conflict. In this sense, the news appeal of Vander Zalm, as a leader in conflict, was dependent on the opposing views of these other two leaders, Kuehn and Begin. In fact, it could be argued that had it not been for the confrontational tactics of BCTF President Larry Kuehn, Premier Bennett may not have appointed Vander Zalm to the position of Minister of Education.

A third characteristic which makes news interesting besides its focus on personality and conflict is that news is an event (Gans,



1978). An event is easy to communicate and more likely to have story making potential. Slow evolving processes are not reportable unless they can be pegged to an event even if a staged event such as a news conference or a speech. There are a number of ever present issues in the system of education, but they are not the center of media coverage until there is an occurrence or event which has news interest. Vander Zalm understood this. He created events which brought issues into public consideration through the media. One newspaper reporter even suggested that if things were dull, one could always ask Vander Zalm a question and his response would be news. As a leader, his speaking became an event.

Vander Zalm created front page headlines on the last day of 1982 with the lead:

Education Minister Bill Vander Zalm says he'd rather have schools shut down by strikes and lockouts than continue relying on arbitration to determine salary increases. (SD13)

By taking a dramatic position on an issue, all Vander Zalm had to do was speak and he had front page attention.

His actions also became events. Take for example, his suggestion to a school board that the teacher of a controversial sex education program in the school be fired.

Words cannot express my revulsion towards this incident... The teacher should be suspended without pay for a reasonable period of time. (PF2)

The teaching of sex education is an issue in education because there is no consensus of opinion about what should be taught. This incident also brought forward the issue of school responsiveness to parent and community needs.

He said he was asked to intervene in the Smithers case by parents whose children "are the ones affected by all this crap. I don't have to wait for someone else to act." (PF17)

Learning standards are a continuing concern in public education. When Vander Zalm received a letter from a grade 7 student with 18 errors, he circled the errors and mailed it back to the teacher (PN5). He generated an event to bring the issue of standards into the public view especially in that it appeared on the front page.

I thank you again for providing me with this opportunity to once again check the effectiveness of the educational system in the province. (PN5)

As the expression indicates, Vander Zalm "made the news".

The fourth characteristic of news interest is that news reports the odd, the unusual, and the unique rather than the normal (Wicker, 1978). The combination of his interesting personality, his unusual political style and controversial ideas on education made Vander Zalm unique. The Ministry of Education was anything but normal under his direction as it was portrayed in the newspapers. The image created by the news articles and commentaries was that of a leader firing bullets

in the wild west.

To summarize, Vander Zalm conformed to the criteria for news selection which is based on importance and interest. Vander Zalm first established himself in a position of importance in the cabinet, eventually to become the Minister of Education. This alone does not explain his name in the news. The spark of interest Vander Zalm brought to events by his personality, political style and willingness to take stands on controversial issues was the sine qua non for getting his name in the news.

## Chapter VI

### Issues

The issues in the news were important and central categories in the analysis of the study. Seventeen issue categories were determined. The issues in education were complex in that any one issue had consequences for other issues. One event could involve a number of issues. This chapter begins by considering the complexity of the issues, that is how issues interacted with issues. The account establishes which issues occurred together in the same news articles.

The sources interacting with issues create the bulk of the events of the newspaper. In this part of the analysis, each issue is discussed in terms of the views on issues of the main sources. Included here also are the commentators' responses to issues.

#### The Complexity of Issues

Issues in education as they appear in the newspaper are not simple. Frequently issues are related and converge. Public education is a complex system which is composed of interdependent parts, characteristics, and activities (Hoy & Miskel, 1982). This is an important consideration in analyzing education reporting.

Education Minister Bill Vander Zalm, initiated action by asking school boards to cut \$60 million out of the budget. By that request, all the working systems within the body of education were affected.

Province columnist Jack Clark stated it well:

It's a rule in life that you can't do just one thing. Each action you take provokes a reaction and leads on to something else. Which is what made Bill Vander Zalm's move into the education ministry a short millenium ago so fascinating. (PCS7)

School boards have a particular jurisdiction in the education body which includes determining the school district's budget and hiring, paying and laying off teachers. The teachers also have an integral functioning in the whole, with bargaining rights under the School Act and contractual agreements with the school board. Eighty percent of a school district's budget goes to salaries, 70% to teachers' salaries (Coleman & LaRocque, 1984). When a large amount of money was to be cut from the budget, particularly when in the previous year budget cutting already pared down that not going to salaries, the threat was to teacher's jobs and their salaries. Layoffs/job security and rollbacks/salaries became the center focus to the question, "what to cut?" and this was reflected in the news coverage which gave these two issues more mention than any other, excepting the more general issue of restraint.

The more complex question was "how to cut the budget?". School boards have salary agreements with teachers. Neither the board nor the Minister of Education can interfere with the bargaining process or alternate agreements that can have been ratified. The school board does have the power to lay off teachers but when it attempted this as a solution, provincial legislation, introduced by the Minister of

Education prevented boards from laying off teachers. Stemming from these situations were the issues: school board autonomy, collective bargaining, the School Act, and teacher action/strikes.

Tuchman (1978) suggests that news blocks inquiry by preventing an analytic understanding because it does not provide linkages between events and has only a concrete, contingent, present time orientation. Events occur today by chance rather than by consequence is the news message. Reading through the education news articles of this study was as Hecht (1981) said "like trying to tell the time by watching the second hand of the clock" (p. 147). It was very difficult to get a grasp on what was happening.

One way to demonstrate the complexity of issues in news events is to determine which issues appeared together in the same article. Many news articles mentioned more than one issue. Table 6-1 and 6-2 show the number of times issues appeared together in articles. For example, in Table 6-1, 94 Sun articles mentioned restraint. Of these, 50 discussed in the same article layoffs/job security. Of the 31 articles discussing school board autonomy, 14 of them also discussed collective bargaining. In contrast, of the 22 articles on curriculum, only one also mentioned layoffs/job security. Of the major issues, curriculum/standards was the only issue that stood relatively on its own. Although the articles may not make the links between issues, one event can have consequences for a number of issues. This is one of the reasons issues appear together.







Figure 6-1. Network of Issue Interrelationships

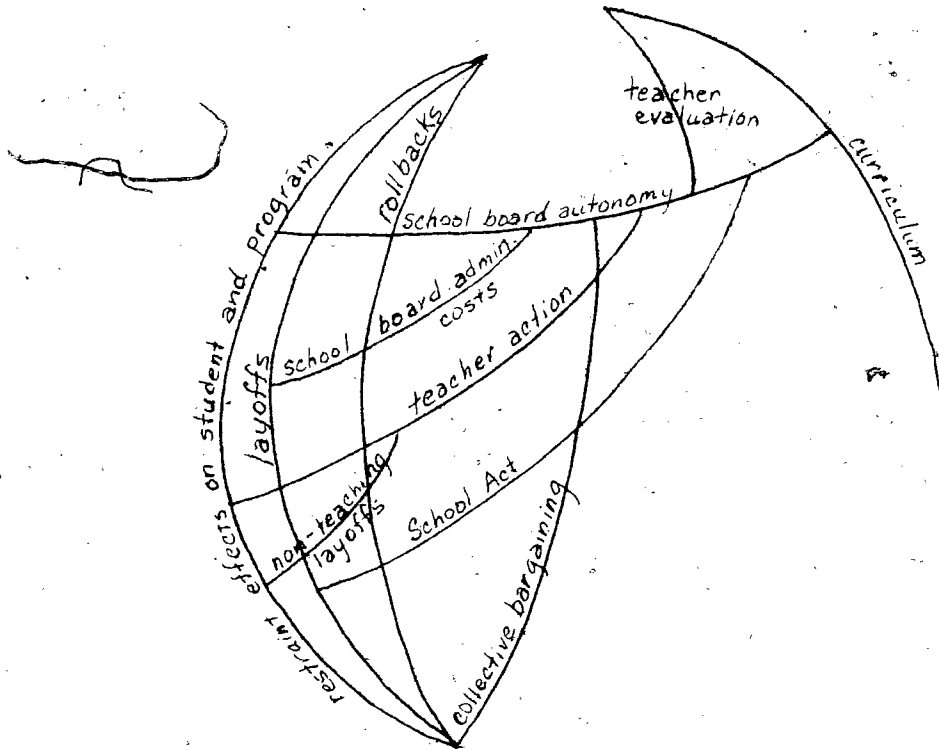


Figure 6-1 shows how the issues are interrelated. In this diagram, intersecting lines represent issues that appear together in news articles. For example, reading the figure from left to right, it can be shown that the issue of school board autonomy affected or was affected by nine other issues: restraint effects on students and programs, layoffs/job security, rollbacks/salaries, school board administrative costs, collective bargaining, teacher action, School Act, teacher evaluation, and curriculum. Figure 6-1 illustrates that one issue cannot be separated from other issues. The issues are linked in such complexity, it is doubtful that the newspaper reader can understand them. Analysis of an issue is difficult because an issue cannot be considered in isolation apart from consequences on other issues.

#### Issues

This section describes the issues as they were presented in the news. In news, information is most frequently attributed to sources, so quotations from sources form the bulk of this description. What information is presented and how it is presented have implications for the newspaper reader's knowledge and understanding of issues. For this reason note is made of misinformation or distorted information when it appeared. General comments are added when an issue can be used to illustrate a point on the style of newspaper reporting or the role of the newspaper in society.

Restraint

Restraint was the key issue in the news during Vander Zalm's term as Minister of Education, appearing in 72% of The Sun and The Province news articles. Vander Zalm's name was associated with restraint immediately upon his appointment to the Education Ministry:

Vander Zalm is known for his conservative policies in municipal affairs and some education matters... The government has instructed the province's 75 autonomous school boards to slash \$60 million from their operating budgets in two phases before March, 1981. (PA1)

School trustee officials will meet Tuesday with Vander Zalm in Victoria to propose that the government change the schedule under which \$60 million must be chopped from board budgets. (SA2)

The budget cuts soon became attributed to Vander Zalm:

... to meet Education Minister Bill Vander Zalm's demand that the district cut ... from its 1982 budget. (SS1)

Education Minister Bill Vander Zalm's order to slash spending to the tune of \$60 million. (SS4)

We gone one day for Remembrance Day and one day for Vander Zalm's cuts. (student) (PN7)

The initial articles did not explain that the restraint measures had already been introduced several months before Vander Zalm's appointment. These was a hint of it in one of BCTF President Larry Kuehn's first remarks:

... they brought in the second level [of budget cuts] and then they threw in Vander Zalm. (PA1)

Kuehn stated it more clearly eight months later after Vander Zalm announced he was leaving provincial politics.

Ultimately the problems in education during the last year are not just Bill Vander Zalm. The cutbacks were announced before he was appointed minister. He was carrying out government policy. (PAp4)

The BCTF President did not view Vander Zalm as a puppet following government policy up to that end point but as an initiator in it:

"The government has injected another element with possibilities of destruction, disruption and chaos," Kuehn told about 400 teachers ... "All this stems from his [Vander Zalm's] 'know nothing attitude about education.'" ... Kuehn, who received a standing ovation from conference delegates, said the cutbacks "threaten the very nature of public schools" and represent the most serious education crisis since the Depression. (SA5)

He and others repeated this idea that cutbacks created a crisis:

I see us all facing a disaster in this province -- there's no way out of it. (Kuehn, PA7)

"... just scratching the surface" of the disaster that is going to happen to the school system if the government continues its present course. (Kuehn, SA9)

We're talking about a real crisis. (teacher, PS2)

It's a cliched thing to say, I know, but there's a crisis in education coming. (teacher, PS13)

... the crisis in school financing could easily be resolved if teachers will agree to cut professional days. (Vander Zalm, SS10)

Vander Zalm has been at logger heads with both trustees and teachers over how school boards should cut \$60 million from their budgets, and both groups insist that the minister has been inflexible. Meanwhile a patchwork solution -- some involving heavy job and program cuts -- has developed in B.C.'s 75 school districts, and sources indicate the government is increasingly worried about the "atmosphere of crisis." (reporter, PS17).

As the quote above indicates, the conflict in the restraint issue was between Vander Zalm and both teachers and school trustees. The views of Education Minister Vander Zalm; the President of the BCTF, Larry Kuehn; and the President of the BCSTA, Gary Begin, are presented to illustrate this conflict.

Vander Zalm gave his reasons why there was a need for restraint:

"I don't think it's reasonable for a government to spend money it doesn't have," he said ... Vander Zalm told reporters he thought British Columbians were too used to good times. (PA7)

We can't print money. (SS6)

I know people are suggesting that the \$60 million will mean the end of education. I don't believe that because if money and expertise were the answer we should have the best education in the world... We can look at restraint as a challenge and an opportunity to question what's happening in the system... the changes that result from restraint may be of benefit in the long haul. (PS5)

"We must all give a little," he said ... education is not being singled out for restraint... Even with the current round of restraint, "the provincial

contribution to education will have increased by 15 per cent in 1982 compared to an overall provincial increase in spending of only eight per cent," he said. (S013)

He [Vander Zalm] said he believes that there are still places where fat could be cut without having the basic quality of education decline. (PN2)

The correlations show that throwing money at the problem isn't the answer. I've always said that if dollars were the answer, we should have had utopia long ago. (PD3)

The minister said the education system has to do its share of cutting back in tough economic times, "and we can come out much stronger for what's happening." The free-spending attitudes of a few years ago weren't particularly healthy he said. "To raise a whole generation in a time when you're simply giving and whenever a request comes you somehow accommodate it and there is little request to account for what ever is being asked, I think [that is] raising an unhealthy society." (SF5)

"Education is a priority ... when you talk about changing the government let me tell you the government must consider more in its mind than just one aspect of life.." To a persistent heckler who chided him about education cutbacks, Vander Zalm retorted: "There has to be a balance and I don't want to be a part of the sort of selfish society you are talking about." (SAP3)

Larry Kuehn, the President of the BCTF opposed Vander Zalm's views on restraint:

Kuehn said, "once members realized how seriously the cuts would affect their work and their students, they voted strongly in favor of opposing them." (PA5)

The message is that to his government, education is not a high priority. (PS18)

He [Kuehn] accused the government of using the depressed economy as a smokescreen to fulfill long-

standing plans to reduce social services. Kuehn claimed the government lacked priorities, borrowing millions of dollars for B.C. Hydro and B.C. Railway, while refusing to do the same on a short-term basis for education, health and other social services. (SA5)

Kuehn insists that any solution that does not involve more money is a temporary patch. "You can only give blood so many times before you have none left." (PS18)

Kuehn urged a continuation of the fight against cutbacks through petitions, letters, speeches and support for local school board candidates who will fight the cuts. (S013)

A six-per-cent-increase would allow school boards to maintain a barely adequate level of service without massive firings and destruction of school programs and services to children. Anything less than that would be disastrous to education. (PN1)

Most teacher spokespersons on restraint backed the sentiment of BCTF President, Larry Kuehn. For example:

... teacher ... described as "mind-boggling" Vander Zalm's reasoning in explaining the restraint program. (S013)

Some 15,000 teachers in 11 Lower Mainland teaching districts plan to step up the funding war with a \$20,000 anti-cutback campaign to tell the public how schools are hurting. "We want to explain to the public what the budgets are doing," said Calvert Moore, president of Delta Teachers' Association. (PN3)

There was some indication in the news articles, however, that showed teacher opinion did vary. Considering the fact that Kuehn had already stated the BCTF strongly opposed restraint, the quotation below is incongruent.

To call Bill Vander Zalm the education minister is to

make a joke -- a very black joke -- to teachers who talked with The Province in the last few days... None of the teachers would be identified. They did not want to be seen as breaking rank with the B.C. Teachers' Federation, which all said they fully support. But they lashed Vander Zalm as uninformed, a political panderer to rednecks, gutless and obstinate. They agreed that economic restraint is necessary but warn that important programs, some developed over 15 or more years, will die. (PS13)

If these teachers "agree that economic restraint is necessary," they are "breaking rank with the B.C. Teachers Federation". They cannot, with this view, "fully support" the BCTF because, in August, BCTF "opposed them [budget cuts] completely" (PA5). This could be a case of a reporter trying to fit his views into a story by having others say what he wants to say.

There were three other indications that not all teachers (includes principals who are BCTF members) were in total agreement with the BCTF position on restraint:

She said teachers understand that everyone in the school system will have to be prepared to make some sacrifices in the new year. (teacher, PS6)

"Restraint, of course," he says. "But calmly -- not by shotgun method." (principal, PS12)

"He acknowledges the need for restraint and recognizes 'we have to do our bit,' but the way the cuts have been made is inexcusable. (principal, S09)

Gary Begin, the President of the BCSTA opposed Vander Zalm on the issue of restraint but from a different view than the teachers. First



he challenged the timing of the request for cutbacks which came after the budgets had been approved and salary agreements with teachers made.

The association [BCSTA] wants all the cuts to be made in 1983 when the current agreement expires. (PA1)

Vander School Board challenged the government on the legality of the budget cuts:

Education Minister Bill Vander Zalm said he is prepared to introduce legislation to enforce a \$60 million school board budget cut, despite an upcoming court challenge by the Vancouver School Board against the cut. The minister has given school boards until September 15 to come up with revised budgets... "It's a no-win situation," said B.C. School Trustees Association President Gary Begin ... adding teachers will eventually have to accept job modifications, salary roll backs or terminations. (PA5)

The situation between the boards and the government was strained when only 26 of 75 school boards had their budgets reduced by September 15. The courts had not yet ruled on whether the cuts were legal.

Relations between the trustees and the minister have deteriorated, as a message sent from the trustees to Vander Zalm and released by him shows.

"It becomes more and more apparent that your government is not interested in economic restraint solutions designed to minimize damage to education and to the public working within the system," Begin's message said... "Your sweeping generalizations ...

leave many boards with no choice but to create wholesale unemployment among school board employees..." (SS6)

School board chairpersons and school trustees quoted supported Begin's views. For example:

... we cannot cut out any more money from our budget without decimating the educational system... (school board chairperson, SS4)

... trustees ... said a telegram to Education Minister Bill Vander Zalm should forgo the usual title of "Honorable" because "what we're doing is not an honorable thing." (school trustee, PS16)

When the court ruled that the cuts were legal on September 16, the school boards searched for solutions to the budget cuts.

"The court decisions legitimizes layoffs which boards have been hesitant to enact," Begin said. (SS7)

Begin said layoffs should be postponed if Vander Zalm allows all public schools to be closed for five days before Christmas vacation. (PS10)

Vander Zalm's response was:

"The circles I walk in would only view a week shutdown as a holiday for teachers." (PS10)

The search for solutions moves the problem of restraint from a general issue to specific issues such as layoffs, so the events discussed by Begin under the category restraint will close at this point.

In general, the commentaries supported the views of restraint of either Vander Zalm or Larry Kuehn of the BCTF. Many agreed with the BCTF that the more money spent on education, the better the quality of education.

Unfortunately, it seems the government isn't too concerned with education as such in making its cuts ... it is focusing on figures, not on effectiveness or the best buy for its buck. (PES1)

That would certainly save money, but at a terrible cost to our children and the system itself... if Victoria pushes for any of the other alternatives except emergency borrowing and serious planning, we'll have a plain English word for children, parents, teachers, and tax payers: victims. (PCA2)

... more drastic cuts to school budgets, created a state of emergency in the education system. (SCS5)

I have had the "advantage" of being educated in classrooms exceeding 40 to 50 students and that experience was enough for me to realize the disastrous effects on education that these cuts are making. (PLS5)

By imposing such massive restraints on school boards and by being so unresponsive to alternative plans for saving dollars, Mr. Vander Zalm is forcing teacher lay-offs and thus depriving our children of the quality of education they need to prepare for the future. (PLS19)

Now, as minister of education bent on "trimming the fat from the operation", he is busy dismembering the entire system. (SL016)

Trustees have stopped wondering when the next shoe will drop. They just want to know when Bill Vander Zalm is finally coming to burn down the school house and relieve them of the misery. (PCN13)

Soered policies and cutbacks are promoting the decline

of the productive citizen and tax payer of the future.  
It is painfully obvious that this government does not  
view our students as an investment in the future.  
(PLJ41)

... the school system mauled by restraint and in  
crisis. (PCM15)

One news article giving results of a provincial survey of  
education costs presented a case to counter the assumption that the  
more money spent on education, the better the quality. The Province  
article entitled "B.C. education figures contradict conventional  
wisdom" stated:

... results were compared to the amount of money being  
spent on each child ... the average amount spent  
province wide per pupil was \$3,282.70. School  
districts who spent less than 92 percent of that amount  
ended up with test results about three percent above  
the provincial norm. (PD3)

Gary Begin suggested the public should remember that there are  
reasons for the difference in costs:

But BCSTA president Gary Begin is worried that the bare  
statistics with no explanation of why costs in some  
districts are higher than in others could be misleading  
and "used in a very negative way." (SD8)

Vander Zalm's response was:

... throwing money at the problem isn't the answer.  
(PD3)

Bewley, was the only columnist to speak explicitly in favor of restraint.

Those school trustees, teachers, and politicians who are livid with rage ... are operating under two serious misconceptions.... The second is that the more money you throw at education and the more you insist on the so-called professional status of teachers, the more readily you possess the keys to "quality education". (SCJ11)

A number of editorial comments supported restraint:

... there can be no justification for refusing to accept the need for restraint. (SEA1)

As unhappy as the situation may be for all concerned, the reality is that the government simply cannot afford an education program as rich as the province's school districts budgeted for the coming school year. (SEA2)

The province's treasury does have a serious revenue shortfall.... Trustees and the government need each other's co-operation if budgets are to be cut in ways least damaging to students and the education system. (PES3)

Just over half of the 47 letters to the editor mentioning restraint, supported Vander Zalm's restraint program.

Wading through the flood of protest against proposed reduction in the escalating costs of education, one has to conclude that in the minds of the protesters the purpose of the system is primarily to provide well-paid jobs for educators with the maximum security, pensions, vacations and fringe benefits and secondarily to produce educated students. (PLS13)

Mr. Vander Zalm's crime is that he has been saying there must be an end to the annual astronomical increases in education costs. The screams of outrage invariably focus on the idea that if he has his way, the "quality" of education will be drastically cut. Who do these people think they are kidding? (PLS15)

Restraint is an absolute necessity in these times of shrinking revenues... let us recognize the BCTF's charge that the government is destroying the quality of education for the hypocritical and self serving drive that it is. (PL021)

He [Vander Zalm] is accused of crippling public education because he is making the cutbacks that must be... Too many people realize we have basic education at a horrendous cost. (SLN27)

(Has a minister of education who denied public funds ever been popular with those [teachers and school trustees] people?) His faults was to articulate rather too boldly the opinions about public education and its costs held by many people... Nevertheless, it would be a sad day for British Columbia if a minister retired every time a special interest group was offended by policies intended to spread the burden more fairly. (SLAp42)

The views of Vander Zalm and Kuehn provided most of the information for the commentaries. Writers either supported or opposed them. The commentaries did not investigate background on the issue or question inconsistencies in the leaders views. Because new information or other points of view was not presented, the perspective on the issue is limited and incomplete.

The figure \$60 million appeared in 19 of 26 Sun and 22 of 30 Province news articles for August and September. No background information on the cutback was provided by reporters or commentators. There was no mention of this cutback as a percentage of total

education budget, no connections made to any change in total provincial revenue, no investigation into the government's "ability to pay" the full amount of the education budget without cutting the \$60 million.

The newspaper audience was simply told the budget must be cut because the government could not afford it. Sixty million dollars was always presented as a cut although Vander Zalm stated "the provincial contribution to education will have increased by 17% in 1982" (S013). He also said "teacher or professional salaries have risen 68 per cent since 1978 and the cost per pupil in B.C. since 1978 rose from \$1,824 on average to \$3,283" (PF11). There was never any comment on these figures. In fact, the provincial education budget increased from \$1.44 billion in 1981 to \$1.67 billion in 1982 (BCSTA, 1981, 1982).

Gary Begin of the BCSTA suggested the government was not using the tax money appropriately:

When 1982 property assessments sky rocketed and a corresponding higher school tax was levied ... more money came flowing into the provincial coffers. "I would like to know if they're spending all that on education or whether it's being siphoned off," said Gary Begin. (PA8)

This raised the serious question of government trust yet no further explanation was ever given. No other source, reporter, editor, columnist or letter to the editor investigated this query of Begin's. The mystery of government finance still hovered months later.

What we suggested was that the government should commit themselves to provide from the general revenues of the province a percentage at least equal to the average percentage that is committed by other provinces in Canada. Studies have shown that B.C. contributes only 32.6 per cent of school budgets from general revenues, compared with 62.1 per cent in Alberta and 50.6 percent in Ontario. The rest is financed through property taxes. (BCTF spokesperson, PM13)

From the beginning of the coverage on restraint until the end, a number of questions were left unaddressed. The newspaper audience had no clear sense of the reasons for the restraint other than Vander Zalm's explanation that the government did not have the monies. Begin suggested that the government did have the money and had siphoned it off. The public never found out if this was true, if the property tax money they paid for schools got into the education fund. The news audience was also left wondering why education gets so little from general revenue and so much through property taxes compared to other provinces. The public was led to believe by the repeated phrase, budget cuts, that the government had cut back its contribution to education in 1982, when in fact, the provincial contribution had increased in 1982. Finance in education is a very complex matter but the newspaper, by raising issues on the matter and never investigating their answers, leaves its audience at loose ends and unable to participate because they do not have an adequate base of information.

Other sources might have contributed to make this base of information more complete but reporters must obtain the most reliable information possible from the fewest number of sources quickly and



inexpensively. Coverage is therefore primarily limited to the information provided by spokespersons for the three major institutions who were most frequently: Vander Zalm, Kuehn, and Begin.

### Layoffs/Job Security

From the first news articles appearing in the newspapers after Vander Zalm was appointed Minister of Education, a consequence of the budget cuts was predicted to be teacher layoffs.

Begin (BCSTA) warned that more than 3,000 teachers could be laid off unless there is a rollback of teachers' wages. (SA2)

BCSTA president said as many as 8,000 teachers could be laid off by December if Education Minister Bill Vander Zalm rejects the association request to delay cutbacks. (PA3)

The BCTF estimates more than 3,000 of its members will be laid off this fall because of the government's budget cuts. (PA7)

Begin predicted the possible layoff of about 2,700 teachers and 1,500 non-teaching staff province-wide by Oct. 1 unless the government softens its position. (SA10)

Trustees and teachers have warned that as many as 4,200 school board employees could lose their jobs by year end if the original timetable for the cutbacks was strictly enforced. (PS4)

Larry Kuehn, president of the B.C. Teachers' Federation - who estimated there are 1,500 teacher jobs threatened ... (PS10)

Although a newspaper reader may be confused by these variable

predictions, the message that was a lot of teachers could lose their jobs. This message was supplemented with listings of the layoffs different districts were predicting:

Delta (\$1.2 million to be cut from budget by Dec. 31): Unless employees accept a seven per-cent wage cut, at least 100 teachers and 25 non-teaching staff could be laid off. (SA11)

Thirty-six teachers have been fired in Castlegar and 15 in the South Okanagan. (SS1)

In Abbotsford, 66 teachers were given termination notices. (PS2)

The Surrey board says it must reduce salaries by \$700,000 through ... layoffs of up to 89 teachers and 36 other workers. (PS8)

The BCTF said they were considering strike action if teachers were laid off:

At a special meeting Saturday, BCTF delegates voted to advise local associations to withdraw services where teachers were laid off. (SS8)

Begin, the BCSTA president had predicted teacher layoffs, particularly after a Supreme Court decision ruled that the budget cuts were legal:

The court decision legitimizes layoffs which the boards have been hesitant to enact. (SS7)

Begin disagreed with the BCTF stand on layoffs:

The president of the B.C. School Trustees Association said Sunday, he opposes a plan by teachers to withdraw services in areas where teachers are laid off as a result of the provincial government's restraint program. Begin said a better alternative to layoffs is legislation allowing boards to dismiss teachers on the basis of seniority, skills and qualifications. (SS8)

Begin's opposition to the BCTF, however, was not an indication of government support:

He [Begin] also repeated warnings that if the government goes ahead with further cutbacks in funding, the only alternatives left open to boards will be massive layoffs. Every possible dollar has already been trimmed from the 15 per cent of school budgets that goes to items other than staff, he said. (PN1)

The government's response to the predicament of layoffs was to introduce a bill (to become the School Services (Interim) Act) forbidding school boards to lay off teachers.

Vander Zalm said the legislation will enable school districts to cut \$60 million from their budgets between now and June without any staff layoffs, program cuts or loss of classroom time. (SS11)

How many other professional groups today would not love an act that gave them job security for at least a year? (Vander Zalm, P08)

School boards responded negatively to the bill:

... trustees are dismayed at losing their power to layoff teachers. (Begin, SS11)

Having the right to dismissal is a key element of being an employee, she said. (BCSTA vice-president, SS14)

Larry Kuehn of the BCTF reminded the government that there had already been layoffs as a result of restraint.

Kuehn said the minister employed "Vanderfacts" when he claimed that no teachers had been laid off as a result of the first round of restraints. "Let him tell that to the hundreds of teachers on temporary contracts who were teaching last year but were not hired this year." (S014)

Vander Zalm had suggested a way to prevent layoffs would be for teachers to accept salary rollbacks:

We don't want people to be unemployed. We don't want the system disturbed. I still believe there is sufficient opportunity for savings within the system without reverting to layoffs. (S016)

The School Services (Interim) Act was passed to forbid the layoff of teachers and required teachers to give up their paid professional days. These unpaid days had the effect of a salary rollback for teachers.

When salary negotiations for 1983 went to arbitration settlements and wage increases were granted, the threat of layoffs loomed again.

Education Minister Bill Vander Zalm brushed aside criticism of his intervention in the teachers' salary arbitration process and reiterated Tuesday his warning that pay increases for teachers will translate into layoffs next year. (SD12)

Vander Zalm said a recent arbitrators' award ... "will only result in layoffs next year." (PJ2)

All 62 B.C. school districts that had submitted to arbitration to settle wage contracts with teachers have now received their awards... Assuming that there's no money coming into the system ... we will be looking at reducing in June of 3,000 plus positions in the province ... to balance our budgets... (Begin, SJ2)

The majority award did not give adequate consideration to "the number of layoffs of regular continuing teachers which may be required as a result of the level of salary increase." (dissenter arbitrator, PD4)

The BCTF response to the arbitration awards was:

Jobs won't necessarily be cut. We just don't know how much money the districts will have until the ministry makes it clear how much the budgets will be cut. (PJ2)

The government wanted the teachers to vote on a plan that would guarantee teachers job security in exchange for no salary increase:

... a proposal will be sent next week to all 75 school districts, stating that if they negotiate a zero-percent 1983 salary increase with their teachers, the government will provide job guarantees and some additional funds. (SM2)

Every teacher in B.C. should vote on a new government proposal that would guarantee teachers' job security if they forgo any wage increase in 1983, say the education ministry. (PM1)

Bennett [Premier] has said teachers should forego a wage increase next year in exchange for job security. (PM16)

The BCTF reacted to the proposal as a breakdown of the collective

bargaining process and refused the government's request for a teachers' mailing list. Later this comment was made:

He [BCTF spokesperson] said an earlier offer by the government of a no-layoff guarantee in exchange for teachers forgoing a wage increase this year is meaningless because it doesn't deal with positions lost through retirement and attrition. (PM13)

Vander Zalm's term of office came to a close but the dilemma of layoffs lived on:

Education Minister Bill Vander Zalm may be out of their [BCTF] hair in the next provincial election, but his offer to teachers of a no-layoff guarantee in return for giving back 1983 wage increases is still on the table. (PAP2)

In a public opinion poll conducted during Vander Zalm's term as Minister of Education, 74.3 per cent said teaching jobs should not be reduced to meet the cuts (SF20). Many commentaries expressed a similar concern about the layoffs.

Mr. Vander Zalm did it again on Thursday when he joked that because of him all teachers have learned to pray -- to keep their jobs. (PEA2)

Since last spring, when the first budget cutting edicts were produced and teachers started losing their jobs, the education system has been in turmoil. (SCS7)

"Layoffs" mean firings. Teachers let go this fall won't be called back, especially with an 11 percent drop expected in 1983 school budgets. They'll be finished for the year and maybe for life. (PCS2)

Things are intolerable when teachers and students alike feel angry, scared, and frustrated. They never know when the footsteps of the hangman are going to stop outside their classroom door and deliver the fateful letter telling them they no longer have a job and a class. (teacher, SL02Q)

Some commentaries agreed with the government position:

Apparently she [teacher] feels that because teachers are paid by the taxpayers, they should be immune from the unemployment that is hitting those taxpayers who are paying their wages. (SL032)

They [teachers] can ... see up to 2,700 of their number, plus 1500 non-teaching staff thrown out of work. (SEA2)

They [teachers] know that they cannot be exempt from the effect of the recession and it would not be reasonable for them to accept a pay freeze given a promise of no layoffs. (PCM24)

The issues of layoffs/job security and rollbacks/salaries frequently appeared together in the same article (See Tables 6-1 and 6-2). The fact that these two issues received such news coverage suggests the interests of teachers are attended to in the education news much more than non-teaching employees, students, parents, or the public at large. Teachers are organized into a powerful federation and are a strong interest group recognized on the education "beat". The emphasis in education news on teacher layoffs carries with it an implied value that employment is preferred to unemployment in the society but if this was the only value, then non-teaching employees would have had comparative coverage. Teacher interest has the public

believe that all teachers in the system are essential and that layoffs will lead to the deterioration of the school system. The newspaper coverage never goes beyond the assumption to explore such questions as salary increases and staffing changes over the past years, the effectiveness of support staff, or results of increased student/teacher ratio on student performance. Instead, all arguments presented on the issue and the implied value because this issue gained such attention, was that layoffs of teachers in public school are bad not just for teachers but also for students. Because teachers had established themselves as authorities on education promoting the public good, together with the fact that teachers could threaten to disrupt the school system if teachers were laid off, these assumptions basically went unchallenged in the press.

#### Rollbacks/Salaries

Because a large percentage of the school board budget (80%) goes to salaries and benefits of employees, rolling back salaries was considered a solution to the cutbacks in the budget.

School budget cutbacks totalling \$20 million in March eliminated most non-salary items, including maintenance and equipment, leaving teacher salaries as virtually the only budget items that could be chopped. (PA3)

The Province stated that: "Eighty per cent of school board budgets go to teachers' salaries on average" (PA3). This was incorrect as 80



percent of school board budgets go to employee salaries and benefits, 64 percent goes to teacher salaries (BCSTA, 1982).

Vander Zalm saw salary rollbacks as the preferred alternative to layoffs:

Vander Zalm was cautious in commenting on his new portfolio Tuesday but said he agrees with the idea of persuading teachers to take voluntary salary rollbacks so that layoffs can be avoided. (PA1)

Vander Zalm said teachers should agree to go without salary increases this year so boards can balance their budgets without layoffs. (SF16)

Begin of the BCSTA, from the beginning, warned teachers that salary increases would mean layoffs:

The reality is if you want a raise, be prepared to give up more positions. There's just no more money coming through. (Begin, SA8)

Rollbacks were suggested to teachers as the alternative to layoffs but because a contract settlement was in place, rollbacks could not be made without teacher approval.

Gerry Moulds, [Delta school superintendent] speaking at a packed but orderly information meeting ... said: "Inasmuch as the board does not have the authority to rollback salaries, the prospect of achieving reductions in payroll through layoffs is a real one even though such proposals may be irrational and inappropriate to the needs of our clients, the personnel working here and the system as a whole." (SS3)

School superintendents say more teacher layoffs could result if teachers stall in accepting proposals for wage rollbacks or days without pay. (PS15)

"We say we have no option but to try to negotiate salary rollbacks," Vancouver school board chairman Pauline Weinstein said today. (S02)

Larry Kuehn opposed the idea of rollbacks:

B.C. Teachers Federation president Larry Kuehn charged Friday the public school system is being held for ransom by the provincial government. Kuehn, referring to termination notices sent Friday to 66 Abbotsford teachers, said teachers are being told "if you want to preserve the school system you'll have to kick back part of your salary every month, for the rest of your life." (SS1)

The government, by ordering school boards to negotiate rollbacks with their employees, has also destroyed any semblance of local autonomy over education. (Kuehn, SA5)

The School Services (Interim) Act passed by the government had the effect of rolling back salaries:

Under the new rules, B.C.'s 30,000 teachers must give up at least one -- and possibly as many as six -- paid non-instructional days by the end of 1983, along with five days pay in 1983. (PS20)

Vander Zalm justified the bill by saying:

"That's [teachers giving up paid non-instructional days] their contribution to the restraint program," said Vander Zalm, who says it can be interpreted as a rollback in teachers' salaries. (PS20)

He [Vander Zalm] said teachers will only lose about three per cent of the "17-plus per cent increase gained by teachers for the year 1982 ..." (S013)

BCTF president Larry Kuehn's reaction to the bill made headlines: "Teachers attack pay-cut bill. It's like slavery, Fed chief says." (SS11).

"That's obviously a totally unacceptable position -- to dictate that they're going to work for free. Some people might call it slavery," Kuehn said. (SS11)

One staff on an elementary school did not support the BCTF president:

But none of them were quite ready yet to label Vander Zalm's move as slavery -- as BCTF president Larry Kuehn did -- until they get more details. (SS15)

The legislation was enacted:

Schools will be closed in Vancouver and several other districts today as teachers take a "day without pay" to comply with the B.C. governments' school spending legislation. (PN7)

Salaries were again an issue when teacher salary negotiations began. Vander Zalm had advised school boards of budget limits months before negotiations.

Education Minister Bill Vander Zalm says in telegrams to the province's 75 school boards that "ability to pay" will be a key factor in deciding salary increases

given to teachers and other school board staff next year. (PA6)

In October, the BCTF indicated they were bargaining for increases:

The BCTF is recommending to individual bargaining units throughout B.C. to ask for a pay hike of up to eight per cent. (PO12)

Vander Zalm was critical of the salary settlements.

A 5.5-per-cent salary increase awarded teachers in three Vancouver area school districts by an arbitration board is "totally disastrous" and will cause "massive layoffs", Education Minister Bill Vander Zalm said Thursday. (SD10)

In the meantime, the battle between teachers, school trustees, and the ministry over budget cuts continues to boil. Vander Zalm said a recent arbitrator's award of a 5.5-per-cent salary increase for Vancouver's 4000 teachers "will only result in layoffs next year." (PJ2)

Larry Kuehn, BCTF president did not condone Vander Zalm's criticism of the arbitration process or the arbitration results.

But B.C. Teachers' Federation president attacked Vander Zalm's comments as political interference in the arbitration process. "They're talking about reopening negotiations even before the arbitration process is complete," Kuehn fumed. (PD5)

Larry Kuehn said salary increases for 25,000 B.C. teachers will amount to a net average of only 1.51 per cent this year, when the fact that they are losing five days' pay this spring is taken into account. (SJ4)

However, even the arbitrated wage settlements were not final:

Another variable in the puzzle are the arbitrated salary awards for teachers that most districts are contesting before the Compensation Stabilization Commission. While most of the settlements are within the guidelines set by the commissioner Ed Peck, the school boards are seeking rollbacks on the ability-to-pay argument. (PF7)

Apart from this, the government was still trying to negotiate a "zero increase" with teachers in return for job security even after arbitrator settlements had been made.

"I don't think it's unreasonable to ask them to take a zero increase this year," Bennett [Premier] said, pointing to increases last year averaging 17.5 per cent. (SF23)

After an hour long meeting with Premier Bill Bennett, Education Minister Bill Vander Zalm said he had the premier's support on an offer made public Tuesday in which teachers would get a "true zero" pay hike next year and keep last year's staffing level. (PM18)

The confrontation between government and teachers over salary did not come to an end with Vander Zalm's termination as Minister of Education, so the issue closes with little sense of resolution.

Commentaries that supported Vander Zalm's views on rollbacks and salaries included:

Vander Zalm is the tough mule-skinner needed to jerk the reins on education spending -- and that means chiefly teacher costs. (PEA1)

When B.C.'s teachers return to school next month we hope they'll be able to explain to their students why, with the economy crumbling all around with ... they couldn't bring themselves to sacrifice part of a 17 per cent pay increase to save 3,000 jobs. (SEA1)

... negotiate a wage freeze with their teachers in return for government guarantees of job security and some additional financing offers a way out for everyone involved. (SEM9)

The loss of 11 days will mean a cutback of only about five percent of annual earnings for most teachers. (SCS6)

Commentaries that were opposed to Vander Zalm's views included:

We consumers were largely silent when the ridiculous call was raised for an extra 12 minutes and 48 seconds of daily teaching time, forcing teachers to work the equivalent of five unpaid days in the school year, despite the many unpaid hours most already contribute each week for extra curricular activities, student counselling, and meetings with parents. (SCJ13)

Now Education Minister Bill Vander Zalm has threatened teachers with massive firings if salary "kickbacks" aren't made in order to cover deficits accrued in other areas of government involvement. (PLS9)

So now it is asking the teachers, in return for job security, to forgo pay raises -- pay raises obtained through an arbitration process established by the very same government. (PEM8)

On the issue of salaries, reporters did not make the connection between the 17% increase in teachers' salaries in 1981 and the subsequent funding difficulty in 1982. No further investigation of Vander Zalm's statement that teachers' salaries had increased by 68% since 1978 was made, although it seems a significant point.

Rollbacks/salaries is an issue which demonstrates the characteristics of continuing news. The issue centered on a number of events over time, and the major sources comment on the issue in terms of these events. Yet the problem behind the issue remained unresolved when Vander Zalm left the Ministry of Education. Even though the newspaper followed the issue of rollbacks/salaries from the beginning articles in August, the news reader has come no closer to a sense of the resolution of the problem after months of conflict.

#### Collective Bargaining

Minister of Education Vander Zalm clashed with both the BCTF and BCSTA over his views on collective bargaining. One of BCSTA president Gary Begin's first remarks was:

- The B.C. School Trustees Association wants the government to avoid tampering with the teachers' collective agreement and rolling back salaries this September. (PA1)

Teachers considered Vander Zalm's suggestions to rollback salaries an infringement on their collective bargaining rights:

In principle it is illegal for us to open our contract -- and our salaries are not unreasonable. (teacher, PA3)

Elliott [teacher] said she would be prepared to see her salary rolled back as a "last option" to save her job, but she added the money could probably be saved in

other ways and the teachers should not be asked to open their contract. (SS2)

We settled on arbitration to settle our contract and then all of a sudden we are told we have to take a rollback. (S013)

The School Service (Interim) Act introduced by Vander Zalm, cut five paid non-instructional days from teachers. Larry Kuehn of the BCTF spoke against the bill, arguing:

... everybody who works has a right to collective bargaining. (P010)

It will mean the absolute destruction of teachers' bargaining rights if they do go through with it. (P011)

Vander Zalm encountered more opposition when The Province obtained leaked proposals of changes to the School Act. Vander Zalm explained the proposed changes:

Vander Zalm confirmed to reporters that among some of the possibilities being considered in an overall review of the School Act are proposals:

To change the current system in which individual school districts negotiate agreements in their community to a province wide bargaining system.

To eliminate or "update" the compulsory arbitration process. Currently, teachers, who do not have the right to strike, have their contract dispute put to arbitration if they are unable to reach agreement through negotiations. (S016)

Begin of the BCSTA and Kuehn of the BCTF responded negatively to Vander Zalm's proposed changes to the School Act.



Begin said leaks are also seriously damaging collective bargaining between teachers and school boards because neither side knows whether the government will allow agreements to stand for the duration of 1983. It makes it almost impossible for trustees to bargain in good faith, no matter how good their own intentions might be, he said. (PN1)

School boards actively involved in negotiations must now cope with statements that make a mockery of meaningful, good faith bargaining. (Begin, S017)

He [Kuehn] said it is interesting that revelations about revisions to the act were leaked only two weeks before the November 15 negotiation deadline for teachers and boards. There have been suggestions, he said, that it might have been a deliberate attempt to further confuse negotiations. (S017)

Another area of disagreement between the BCTF president and Vander Zalm was over bargaining working conditions. Kuehn supported the idea of having working conditions in the contract.

Teachers are expected to vote in favor of being brought under the Labor Code as a union at their April meeting ... Kuehn said that as a union, teachers would be able to negotiate terms and conditions of their employment, where as now they can only negotiate salaries. (P02)

Vander Zalm was against having working conditions included in the contract:

"If (teachers) can negotiate with a pretty substantial club how many hours they will work or what size of class they will teach or what lessons will be provided or how they will be provided, [then they will] really have employer/employee conditions all within their control," Vander Zalm said. "It doesn't make much sense," he added. (SD3)

Gary Begin of the BCSTA agreed with Vander Zalm's position:

The BCSTA maintains the teachers now have no legal right under the School Act to negotiate working conditions with the school boards that employ them, and Education Minister Bill Vander Zalm agrees. (PM10)

Both Vander Zalm and Premier Bennett spoke against the arbitration system as part of collective bargaining:

Education Minister Bill Vander Zalm says he'd rather have schools shut down by teachers' strikes and lockouts than continue relying on arbitration to determine salary increases. (SD13)

Bennett slammed the arbitration system at an earlier lunch, saying it should be used as a last resort but not relied on. The teachers scoffed at this, saying the arbitration route is laid out in the laws of the province. (SF22)

BCTF president Larry Kuehn's response to their views was:

What the government is asking for is a breakdown of the binding arbitration that has been in place for decades. (SM2)

Commentaries that supported Vander Zalm's ideas on collective bargaining included:

It's true that, as a principle teachers should not be forced to take less than their negotiated contracts stipulate, which is what the bill in effect does. But with their average salary of \$33,934, they'll get no support in fighting the rollbacks from British

Columbians, one out of eight of whom is jobless.  
(PES5)

Final offer arbitration can become something of a lottery in which one side or the other "bets" on the outcome by setting a figure in hopes the arbitrator will buy. And the system denies the arbitrator the freedom to decide the most appropriate award in the public interest. A better idea might be to set up province wide bargaining, with the trustees association facing a teachers' central bargaining agency. (PE08)

Education Minister Vander Zalm is right -- it is high time we ended the annual tribal dance over teacher salary agreements ... One obvious way this ritual could be avoided, with considerable savings in negotiation costs and a lessening of annual trustee-teacher confrontations, would be a province-wide settlement instituted by the department of education, as in the province of New Brunswick. (PLJ40)

Those commentaries that spoke against the views on collective bargaining held by Vander Zalm included:

The Vander Zalm legislation has already violated the sanctity of the contract by arbitrarily and retroactively changing the individual contracts between teachers and school boards. (SCS7)

... the last proposed assault on education in the leaked cabinet document that would allow contracts to be turned into putty while teachers were laid off and school shut down. (PC010)

So Bill Vander Zalm is "aghast" at the recent teachers' arbitration results! ... Perhaps he is not aware that the concept of arbitration means that both sides in the argument have been unable to agree and hence they were willing to accept without interference of the third party. What he is really saving is that arbitration is fine as long as the arbitration board agrees with him -- which in this case would have meant no increase for teachers. (SLJ30)

It could be argued that the news on collective bargaining was providing the education system with a sense of stability at a time when the system was threatened. The power of the Minister of Education, Bill Vander Zalm was checked by the laws governing the collective bargaining process. He spoke against aspects of these laws in suggesting teachers roll back their salaries after a contract had been settled and in criticizing the arbitration system of settling contracts.

The attention given by the press to the issue of collective bargaining reflects a general polarity in the province of B.C. between the union movement, as represented by the BCTF, and the Social Credit government. The differences between these two groups are a theme through all the issues in education.

#### Teacher Action/Strikes

Action by teachers protesting the restraint program included: work to rule, rallies, anti-restraint campaigns, threatened strike action and negotiations with the government. The issue of strikes was the first to receive attention. When teacher layoffs were being considered as a solution to budget cuts, teachers threatened strike action.

Surrey teachers Wednesday vowed to strike if the school district attempts to layoff teachers as part of the B.C. government's restraint program. (PS2)

... Larry Kuehn, who warned Wednesday that his members will strike if the government doesn't change its

educational policies. (S06)

Education Minister Bill Vander Zalm was opposed to strikes:

Education Minister Bill Vander Zalm has threatened to replace any teacher who goes on strike. (PS9)

Behind this opposition was the understanding that teachers did not have the right to strike: "There is no provision for them to strike" (Vander Zalm, P02). One columnist, however, pointed to an inconsistency in Vander Zalm's view on the issue of strikes:

Mr. Vander Zalm who only three months ago suggested that any teacher who walked a picket line ought to be lashed with a wet thong and then dismissed, sweetly told Mr. Webster that he thinks teachers should indeed have the right to full collective bargaining and all accompanying rights, including the right to strike. (SCJ12)

Larry Kuehn of the BCTF presented reasons why teachers could strike:

"There's no mention of strikes in the School Act," Kuehn said. "Because of salary bargaining conditions there is a widespread myth that teachers do not have the right to strike ... but we have a number of legal opinions to the effect that teachers do have the right if the board unilaterally changes the terms and conditions of employment, which is exactly what they've done with these firings. (SS3)

Teachers, in general, had indicated they would not press for the right to strike:

In a mail-in vote completed in March, teachers voted 59 per cent against pressing for the right to strike. (P02)

In a public opinion poll, "34.5 per cent disagreed with teachers having the right to strike" (SF20).

The issue of strikes did not surface again for six months. The headline, "Teachers vote on move to abandon School Act", re-introduced the subject.

B.C. teachers will decide today if they want to be removed from the School Act and instead have their jobs subject to provisions of the provincial labour code ... This would give teachers the same rights guaranteed to other workers in the province allowing ... a [grievance] resolution procedure that would include the right to strike... (PAP4)

Two weeks later an article announced:

A government education negotiator says it was he, not the B.C. Teachers' Federation, who put the question of the right to strike on the table at a meeting with union representatives three weeks ago. (PAP6)

The article made no mention of the results at the BCTF general meeting on the resolution that teachers be removed from the School Act and given the right to strike.

The negotiations referred to in the article (PAP6) were another action undertaken by teachers in March, 1983.

Kuehn said it appears the government is prepared to discuss the real problems in the school system including the problems that we outlined in our call for negotiations last week. (SM3)

Vander Zalm's reaction to these negotiations with the premier was:

If they [BCTF] want to negotiate with the premier or the premier's deputy or the guy that cleans my office every night, that's okay with me. But the premier certainly couldn't conclude anything without my concurrence. (PM2)

The negotiations were not successful:

"The government was not negotiating seriously and its last proposal was more harmful to teachers and the school system than anything put forward previously," Larry Kuehn, president of the B.C. Teachers' Federation, said Thursday. (PM13)

"His [Vander Zalm's] interest seems to be in not having an agreement," Kuehn said ... (SM12)

Education Minister Bill Vander Zalm says a walkout by teachers from talks with the government proves he's been right all along: The teachers' federation was just playing politics. (PM14)

Teachers initiated other actions throughout the year in response to the budget cuts that received newspaper coverage.

About 1,000 teachers in Kamloops have also vowed to pursue a work-to-rule campaign that has halted all supervised extra curricular activities for students until the government increases education spending. (S07)

Education Minister Bill Vander Zalm got a box of dead flowers, a bottle of Extra Strength Tylenol and media coverage of himself defending education spending restraint to a hostile crowd of about 4,000 ... But when it was over, there was no indication that a 2 1/2-hour B.C. Teachers' Federation rally at the PNE Agrodome Wednesday night changed anyone's position on the government's education restraint program. (S013)

We want to explain to the public what the budget cuts are doing ... We'll include a lot of radio advertising, some door to door canvassing, meeting with parents and lobbying in shopping malls. (local teachers' association president, PN3)

Editorials, columnists, and letters to the editor expressed views on teacher action. Some of the commentaries viewed teacher action positively:

Under the Labour Code, they [teachers] would undoubtedly have more freedom to bargain, presumably with the right to strike now denied by the Public School Act. (PEAp19)

And what is most interesting about this is that more teachers appear convinced that political action is the only way to deal with the Socreds, just like in 1972 when teachers organized to turf W.A.C. Bennett out of office. (PC09)

There were also commentaries that opposed teacher action:

It is proper for the minister to declare that a teachers' strike would not be tolerated. (SES4)

We need dedication, not union militancy (which is another word for greed). (PLO27)

The fact that teacher action was the fifth most frequently



mentioned issue in the newspaper demonstrates that large interest group protests and conflicts with the government gain considerable media coverage. One explanation of the attention given this kind of disorder news is that this news suggests the desirability of and need for order in the educational system. Teacher action was a threat to this order. Another explanation might be that the newspapers concentrated on the disorder to make the point that there was a need for government to change in the direction of the protesters' views.

#### School Board Autonomy

The issue of school board autonomy centered on the conflict of jurisdiction between school boards and the government. Many of Education Minister Vander Zalm's moves were interpreted as infringing on school board rights.

The first event to establish the issue of school board autonomy was the imposition of the government of budget cuts after they had approved school board budgets. As the chairperson of the Vancouver School Board put it: "The government is breaking a contract as far as we can tell" (SS7). The Vancouver School Board challenged the education cutbacks before the B.C. Supreme Court. The decision was that the government budget cuts imposed on school boards were legal.

After this ruling, Vander Zalm made it clear that the government expected school boards to comply to cuts:

If school boards don't go along with the proposed cuts, "then of course they face the possibility of a trustee," said Vander Zalm. "Hopefully, that wouldn't happen, because, when you sent in a trustee, you in effect cancel the school board." (SS7)

In the same article BCSTA President, Gary Begin was quoted:

The 513 trustees of this province represent directly the people in B.C. who care more about education than about politics. In the final analysis, I believe your decision will be rendered practically and morally indefensible. (SS6)

The newspaper reader does not know what "your decision" was because this message was sent to Vander Zalm before he announced he would appoint trustees. The "your decision" probably refers to budget cuts.

Larry Kuehn of the BCTF also expressed his views on the budget decision:

Larry Kuehn, president of the B.C. Teachers' Federation -- who estimated there are 1,500 teacher jobs threatened -- said the court ruling means government has destroyed the autonomy of school boards ... "Boards can no longer count on the word of government when grants are announced. It's impossible to plan a school year when there's no stability to the amount they'll receive." (PS10)

Several commentaries expressed concern over loss of school board autonomy:

Education Minister Vander Zalm is quoted as saying that

even if the Vancouver School Board's challenge to the ministry's cutback in school board budgets is upheld by the courts, the provincial legislature will be recalled to legalize the order ... Many colleagues of my own childhood died in the Second World War to make it possible for us to live under a system where no government would bend and adjust the lay to suit its passing whim. (PLS6)

"School board autonomy" means trustees doing Victoria's dirty work. After the imposition of the new education finance formula, plus two Sacred budget cutbacks, boards have no real autonomy. (PCA2)

The major controversy over the issue of school board autonomy occurred when Vander Zalm introduced a bill which stated:

All termination notices sent out to school boards now must be rescinded and no cuts can be made to special education programs. (PS20)

The bill "spared immediate outrage" (PS20). Responses included:

The bill places all school districts under trusteeship and the people of B.C. don't trust or accept word of this single most powerful trustee, who has no commitment to public education. (New Democratic Party education critic. ( PS22)

Proposed Education-restraint legislation will destroy the autonomy of local school boards, angry school trustees charged Wednesday. Leach [vice-president of the BCSTA] said "the writing is on the wall" that the provincial government is taking over the rights of school boards to make local decisions ... Vander school board trustee Gary Onstad said the new legislation "makes a mockery of local autonomy. School boards have been left in the situation of not being able to make any decisions at all." (SS14)

It's another severe blow against local autonomy. (trustee, PS21)

Taken at face value, the bill quite clearly emasculates the school boards ... In the case of the education system, the government has gone beyond establishing cash limits. It has in effect put the education system under provincial receivership. (SCS6)

The issue of school board autonomy surfaced again when Vander Zalm objected to the arbitration process and pay hikes awarded teachers.

The arbitration process besides being costly, doesn't work because the teachers have learned to set their salary demands high ... Vander Zalm favors wage freezes for teachers and has warned that current arbitration awards of between three and 6.5 per cent will cause "massive layoffs". (SD13)

Larry Kuehn is then quoted in the same article saying:

He [Larry Kuehn] said school boards have lost the power to bargain when the provincial government decides to set their budgets for them. (SD13)

In another Sun article appearing the same day, BCSTA president, Gary Begin, presents views that are sympathetic to Vander Zalm's on arbitration:

B. C. School Trustees Association president agreed that arbitration of salary disputes, while "a very expensive vehicle" is a necessary evil. School boards can't do anything except obey the law, he [Begin] said. (SD14)

One result for the newspaper audience of this kind of presentation of

ideas, is that viewpoints on issues such as arbitration and salary hikes are not connected. Larry Kuehn's and Gary Begin's remarks are presented as isolated views in two articles. Because arguments are not presented in relationship to one another, the analysis and understanding of an issue is difficult.

The press was available to the BCSTA to voice its concern that aspects of education governance be controlled at a community level. BCTF probably aligned with the BCSTA's position because it would benefit their interests to have a combined opposition against the government.

#### Restraint Effects on Students and Program

Larry Kuehn, President of the BCTF introduced the issue on restraint effects on students and programs:

Education cutbacks will result in massive unemployment among teachers, higher pupil-teacher ratios, reduced equipment and supplies and a general decline in the quality of education. (PA2)

Teachers also reported on effects:

My district can't afford to layoff people. Already special programs and services have been cut. Students will be paying for government mismanagement. (PA3)

Teacher aides, one of the cogs in fitting handicapped students into the mainstream of the education system, are laid off and the blind students who need them to transcribe notes from Braille are dumped back into the

full institutionalized setting. (PS13)

Basic instructional supplies have been cut ... Library audio visual collection has been frozen ... School maintenance will suffer ... Construction work has been delayed. Field trips have been frozen. (principal, S09)

They [teachers] told of confusion with special needs students put in classes of 40 or more, of pupils being shunted to other classes because substitutes can't be provided readily when teachers are off sick, of supply shortages that cripple many courses and activities, of distress and discouragement in the classroom. (SN5)

Commentaries expressed concern over the restraint effects on students and programs:

And what about the kids? Remember the kids? Our future and all that stuff. Things they once enjoyed like art classes, theatre, music, French -- they've all been cut back. (PCN13)

I learned at a meeting at Port Kells school that one of the 93 teachers given their termination notice is Bill's teacher. Her program will be eliminated. No one knows what will be done with Bill and his classmates. (SL014)

I am a Grade 12 student with first-class standing at Alpha Secondary school in North Burnaby, B. C. and you should be aware how the tight budget is felt by the students of my school... Burnaby schools no longer hire substitute teachers for one or two days absence of the regular teacher. As a result, the students are left with unsatisfactory instruction... (PLS12)

Golly gee, Mr. Vander Zalm, today they wiped out the French program in my school district, kindergarten to Grade 6. (PLS16)

Class size was frequently mentioned as a factor affecting

students. Education Minister Vander Zalm stated:

... he is not opposed to increasing class size as one way to meet the cutbacks. (PS3)

Teachers opposed increase in class size:

Those changes [in conditions] are already being made with changes in class size. (Kuehn, P02)

The overall impact of the cutbacks and layoffs will be larger classes. (Kuehn, SA9)

The result ... is that classes will get bigger and the education system "as we know it will change". (teacher, S06)

Class sizes are changing -- usually growing. (principal, PS12)

Among the examples of deteriorating conditions in the schools they [teachers' associations] cited: oversized classes and reductions in help for those with learning problems... (SF2)

Only once was a statement made questioning the assumption that small classes lead to better education:

The analysis disputes the traditional contention that smaller class sizes lead to better education for their students. In fact, the situation is almost perfectly reversed. Students from districts with the largest classes in the province consistently performed better on the tests than students from districts with smaller classes. (PD3)

This information was never linked to any statement which assumed

larger classes meant the deterioration of quality education.

Vander Zalm announced in late September, 1982, that "no cuts in special programs are allowed without ministerial approval" (PS22). Remarks by The Sun columnist, Nichols, suggest she did not understand what this meant.

Mr. Vander Zalm's assurances that special educational programs won't be gutted without his personal approval is not very reassuring. Most of the special programs that have been threatened or already eliminated by various school districts aren't covered by this section. The reason is that most special programs are inventions of the districts. (SCS6)

There are special education programs for exceptional children set up all over B. C. under provincial guidelines and all these programs were protected by the legislation introduced by Vander Zalm (Baglot, 1984). Nichols statement is misleading because she is not using the same definition of special education as Vander Zalm. Her definition of special programs probably included locally developed programs or programs such as English as a second language, but she did not state this. Nor did she indicate the nature of the programs that were protected by the legislation. The purpose of the columnist is to analyze and interpret the facts. This statement only confuses the newspaper reader as to what the facts are.

The reporting of restraint effects on students and programs was often based on assumptions of what conditions led to a quality education. The audience was led to assume, for example, from the



numerous quotes by teachers on higher pupil-teacher ratios, or cutback on equipment and supply spending, that the quality of education suffered.

### Curriculum/Standards

Curriculum/standards was an issue which basically stood alone of the major issues, that is it was not affected by the general issue of restraint as the other issues were. Minister of Education Vander Zalm initiated the criticism on curriculum, saying it was too easy, and on standards, claiming student achievement was not high enough. The letters to the editor response to the issue of curriculum was large, second only to restraint.

A representation of Vander Zalm's criticism of curriculum/standards includes:

In B. C. generally, I believe there's a dissatisfaction with the system, a belief that we're not getting our money's worth and that our children are not learning the basics of reading, writing and arithmetic. We've all just allowed things to become so loose over the years ... I'm not saying students should be leaded down with work -- we've just allowed things to become too loose. (PS5)

... 500,000 students are being moved too easily through the system, and without adequate preparation. Everyone gets passed ... You don't have to know anything to pass your grade. (S012)

If this is a sample of ~~the~~ work of a Grade 7 student, then it truly puts the effectiveness of our educational system in question. (PN5)

But when the news system is fully in place -- probably not for a couple of years -- students will have to pass the Grade 12 exams before they can receive their diploma, he [Vander Zalm] said. (PN9)

Vander Zalm says it's about time B. C. schools stopped acting like a babysitting service and got back to the "meat and potatoes" of education... "We in the educational hierarchy have lost all understanding of what education really is or what it ought to be or was intended to be," he said. (SN13)

The material delves into sexual techniques and goes well beyond what anyone would consider the sex education needs of 13 year olds. (SF6)

Education Minister Bill Vander Zalm plans to introduce an entirely new curriculum for B. C. senior grades ensuring that every student graduating from high school will have passed courses in English, mathematics, and science, a foreign language, and social studies at the Grade 12 level. (PF10)

Vander Zalm had support for his ideas from some of the commentaries. Views expressed in the commentaries included:

Quite apart from the politics of the situation ... it is entirely possible that the minister may be right in his back-to-basics approach to secondary school education. (SEF8)

The new curriculum ... is tougher, academically, than today's requirements and is a good idea in principle. (PEF16)

Education Minister Bill Vander Zalm proposed some sweeping changes in the high-school curriculum a few weeks ago ... While his proposals were silly and impracticable, the minister has given us all a sharp reminder that serious thought about the secondary curriculum is overdue. (PCM29)

Thank you, Mr. Vander Zalm, for the superior quality of education that will be implemented for the 1982-84

school year. Unfortunately the program will be too late for our child in Grade 11. Upon graduation she will traverse through life, excelling in tough football, while riding her bicycle with the physical education class to Redwood Park, tootling merrily on her clarinet for the afternoon. (SLM36)

I am a Grade 12 student at Chilliwack Senior Secondary School and would like to express my feelings regarding Education Minister Vander Zalm's plans. I agree with his policy that the emphasis should be based upon academic subjects. (SLM39)

Over the last 10 years we have seen the end products of 12 years of schooling coming into the work face with little or no marketable talent. (PLS14)

Changes must be implemented if we expect the school system to survive in the '80's. It's obvious the basics have been overlooked in recent years. Kids fail to take classes because they are not encouraged, not interested or it's too difficult. Mr. Vander Zalm is right. (PL022)

This illustrates just how badly she missed Mr. Vander Zalm's point, which was that a Grade 7 student -- if well taught -- should be able to write a letter that did not need to be vetted by the teacher. (PLN31)

Larry Kuehn of the BCTF responded to Vander Zalm's criticism of curriculum and standards in British Columbia's public schools:

It is "ridiculous" to use standardized tests as a means of measuring pupil performance and teacher effectiveness. There are a whole variety of factors involved. Some children are read to at home. Obviously they might do better than children from homes where English is a second language. If you use this to see which classes are doing better it is simply ridiculous. (PN10)

Calling the education minister's latest decree on changes to high school curriculum "dictatorial" B. C. Teachers' Federation president Larry Kuehn said

Thursday he has written to Premier Bill Bennett, asking him to replace Vander Zalm ... There must be choices. There must be a place for the arts, which foster a sensitivity toward other persons and a respect for the diversity of ways of being human. Dropouts from high school would again become a serious problem and many students would be denied access to university education for which they are well suited because of arbitrary, unreasonable and rigid course requirements (PF12)

Special groups, such as the handicapped students and native children, would suffer most under the curriculum, said BCTF president Larry Kuehn. (PF15)

Fundamental changes like this to the education system are done after a royal commission or after months of study by the government. But, not overnight. Right now the system already had the three R's. It has been there for years. (SF18)

Gary Begin of the BCSTA also was critical of Vander Zalm's views on curriculum and standards:

The president of the B. C. School Trustees Association said he takes "a dim view" of Education Minister Bill Vander Zalm's announcement of a compulsory core program for secondary students. "This is consistent with his approach he'd rather play the political role rather than deal with us directly." (SF17)

Other sources quoted were also against the changes in curriculum/standards as proposed by Vander Zalm:

Most of the students said the changes would disrupt courses planned in earlier grades to prepare them for specific jobs or university programs. All the students said they were taking maths, English and socials courses already. (students, SF17)

It is cynical for Education Minister Bill Vander Zalm

to say science is inadequately taught in public schools when his ministry is not providing money to improve teaching in this field, according to a teacher who is co-author of the official guide to teaching science ... (teacher, SJ3)

To Vander Zalm, there's no such thing as a special group. We [Indians] don't exist as far as he is concerned. (Indian teacher, PF15)

Curriculum was the only issue to have university sources. For example:

While Education Minister Bill Vander Zalm complains about mathematics in B. C. high schools, B. C.'s junior students ... rank with the best in the world ... In particular, B. C. students placed ahead of most of those from comparable English-speaking countries such as U. S., England, Australia and New Zealand says Dave Robitaille, a professor of mathematics education at the University of B. C. and a member of the study team. (PM3)

Many of the views expressed in the commentary were against those of Vander Zalm's on the issue of curriculum/standards:

Education Minister Bill Vander Zalm is wasting his breath on sex education. (SWF7)

He says he wants a standardized way of testing the school system, the students and the teachers. A simple province-wide examination won't do that. (PFN12)

If children are, on their own, asking the very questions that showed up in the document so heavily criticized by Vander Zalm, that's evidence enough of the need for some sensible and open minded education on the subject [sex education]. (PEF15)

And most of us kept quiet when Mr. Vander Zalm floated

the idea of province-wide exams, perhaps forgetting the reason why such exams were dropped in the first place -- because they put undue emphasis on a student's performance in a concentrated period, that for any number of reasons, may unfairly reflect that student's knowledge on the subject. (SCJ13)

It's back to the basics. Writing good. You know. (PCS3)

Mr. Vander Zalm has announced that all students must study English, mathematics, French (or a foreign language), as social science, and a science in Grade 12 ... The simplistic core curriculum is based on one conception of reality will not empower our students. It will merely cripple, limit, and restrict their capacity to find solutions to the region of conundrums that now confront us. (SLM35)

What can I say about Mr. Vander Zalm? It is fine to have a little fun correcting one another's grammar, but marking a Grade 7 student's letter in the newspaper is going too far. (PLN33)

Education Minister Vander Zalm suggest the school curriculum be changed to make the majority of academic courses mandatory for all students up to Grade 12 ... It is a fallacy to think that all young people will pursue careers requiring academic skills. If Mr. Vander Zalm wants to improve the quality of education he should strive to raise the standards of the courses which are now being taught. (PLM57)

Vander Zalm provided the initial views on the issue of curriculum/standards. The sources and commentaries directed their comments either in support of or in opposition to Vander Zalm's ideas. The level of debate was generally on the surface of the issue. For example, there was little evidence presented saying whether standards in secondary school had gone down as Mr. Vander Zalm suggested. In one article, interviews with a few students were used to represent the

entire secondary population: "All students said they were taking maths, English, and socials courses already" (SF17). There were no overall figures presented to say the percentage of students taking those subjects. The newspaper audience is left with a very unclear picture of the academic inclinations of secondary students.

Because the issue of curriculum/standards is not interconnected with other issues, it is easier to understand. This may in part be an explanation why there was such a large response to this issue in the letters to the editor. People can participate in an issue they understand. Another reason for the larger response to the issue may be simply that more people feel they know something about it or are interested in it than other issues. Although editors of the two newspapers maintain the letter selection is representative, an explanation for the large volume of letters on the subject of curriculum/standards could also be that this was a topic on which the editors chose letters to print.

#### The School Act

The School Act is the law which governs public education in British Columbia. In the newspaper, it was often cited as a source of authority to establish the legitimacy of sections, particularly those of the Minister of Education, Bill Vander Zalm.

When the budget cutbacks were introduced, the School Act was used to establish a case on the legality of the cuts:

... because the government gave formal approval in May to 1982 school board budgets, it cannot order a subsequent spending cutback without amending either the School Act or the Education (Interim) Finance Act. (SA3)

When Vander Zalm said he would "replace any teacher that goes on strike" (PS9), Larry Kuehn of the BCTF used the authority of the School Act in his response: "There's no mention of strikes in the School Act" (SS3).

On one occasion, Vander Zalm suggested the names of suitable arbitrators to the Minister of Labor. The School Act was quoted to establish where the authority on the matter lay:

In most cases, teachers and boards have agreed on a choice of arbitration chairman. Where no agreement is reached, the School Act empowers the labour minister to appoint the arbitrators. (SD9)

When the Education Minister demanded that a teacher be suspended, Begin's response was:

[Vander Zalm was] overstepping his own bounds as defined by the Education Act. (PF17)

Begin said the School Act prohibits the education minister from becoming personally involved in quasi-judicial school matters. (SF19)

Because Vander Zalm was bringing up issues that were controversial, the School Act was used to establish the limits to the



actions that Vander Zalm as Minister of Education, could make with his authority of office.

The issue of the School Act became particularly contentious when revisions to the acts were viewed as a means to solve the problems of implementing budget cuts:

Education Minister Bill Vander Zalm is considering changes to the School Act as a way out of the current economic-restraint impasse with the province's 75 school districts. (PS4)

BCSTA proposes school boards be allowed to layoff teachers on the basis of seniority. Currently, the School Act allows layoffs only on the basis of the closure of classroom, departments or schools. (PS4)

BCTF president Larry Kuehn said the act need change but not simply to allow income cuts or to make layoffs easy. (PS4)

One month later, the issue flared because documents discussing Vander Zalm's proposals of changes to the School Act were leaked to The Province:

A confidential submission to the B. C. cabinet will call for arbitrary layoffs of teachers, cancellation of some existing contract provisions and removal of teacher bargaining rights, The Province has learned. Documents obtained by The Province disclose Education Minister Bill Vander Zalm will propose to cabinet changes to the School Act... (P011)

Larry Kuehn of the BCTF and Gary Begin of the BCSTA opposed the changes:

... Larry Kuehn appeared startled when told ... of the proposals. "It will mean the absolute destruction of teacher's bargaining rights if they go through with it." (PO11)

Larry Kuehn said the proposed revisions to the School Act amount to an "unprincipled attack on teachers and the school system." (SO11)

"It's becoming a familiar story, but once again the ministry of education has found a way to create havoc in the school system," Gary Begin said ... "First, the ministry hamstringing trustees by freezing school district budgets and by telling boards they cannot lay off staff, and now the education environment is further poisoned by reports that government will completely reverse its position on layoffs and then its nose at the collective bargaining process." (SO17)

Democracy is contingent on an informed public, and the media often mediates between the government and the public's right to know (Mollenhoff, 1968). Co-operation in obtaining information on the actions of government is sometimes obtained from news leaked by individuals for reason of principle, partisanship, or personal advantage (Hohenberg, 1978). It is difficult to speculate why the news on revisions to the School Act was leaked. The frequent references in the newspaper to the School Act established the legitimacy of the actions of Education Minister Bill Vander Zalm. The reports on the leaked information suggest that the newspapers were functioning in their capacity as the public's watchdog on government, guarding the bounds of authority that any one leader in government can have.

Non-teacher Layoffs

Non-teaching employees were the target of layoffs as a result of the restraint program. Quotations from the newspapers on non teacher layoffs, were generally short and concise:

... 6 maintenance workers may be laid off. (PS3)

... 400 non-teaching workers won a reprieve from layoffs. (SD1)

... 47.7 non-teaching positions have been terminated. A total of 107 teachers's aids also have been laid off. (PS15)

An exception to these short statements on non-teaching layoffs was The Sun feature entitled: "The day they closed the book on Colette's life" (SA9). The feature included a picture of Colette with the caption: "I'm trying not to cry." Colette had been a teacher aide for 11 years in a secondary school and was losing her job. She was portrayed as a victim of restraint.

Another exception was the statement made by a non-teacher employee at a teachers' rally:

Owen Dykstra, president of the B. C. region of the Canadian Union of Public Employees ... noted that since the government has said teachers cannot be laid off, it could mean that non-teaching staff will bear the brunt of the cutbacks. (S013)

A school trustee made the same point:

Board trustee Philip Rankin said agreement was reached with teachers on pay loss because the bill put "a gun at their head." But further cuts "transfer" the problem to non-teaching staff who might lose twenty-five percent of their jobs next year. (P03)

The interests of non-teaching employees were established as secondary compared to the teachers' interests. Non-teaching layoffs were mentioned 13 times in The Sun and 10 times in The Province but generally in conjunction with teacher layoffs.

One thousand teaching positions and 700 non-teaching positions have been eliminated, along with the service that would have been provided to children had those positions been filled. (SLAp44)

The restoration of funds is only a partial restoration -- not sufficient... to restore 1000 teaching and 700 non-teaching jobs lost last year, he [Kuehn] said. (SAp 1)

There were approximately three times more teachers than non-teachers hired by school boards (BCSTA, 1982), so proportionately non-teachers were hardest hit by layoffs. Larry Kuehn said 1000 teaching and 700 non-teaching jobs were lost but the loss of the non-teaching positions did not make headlines the way the teacher jobs did. Teacher layoffs were given more coverage in part because they are viewed as more vital positions in the school.

There is no reason to cut the number of teachers to cut school costs but cutting down on the number of non-teachers would be effective. (SLS11)

More significant is the fact that the teachers have the BCTF, a large

organization which has the physical, organizational, political, and motivational expertise to be a powerful interest group and gain media and government attention (Ornstein & Elder, 1978).

#### School Board Administration Costs

From the beginning of his term, Vander Zalm stated that school board administrative costs were part of the "fat to be trimmed" in restraint:

I want to spend some time looking at the administration of school boards and my ministry. Administration in education has grown at an enormous rate and become very costly and frankly I think is in need of an overhaul. In my district of Surrey, costs rose from 1978 to 1982 from \$56 million to \$102 million and from \$1,900 per student to \$3,500 per student and I believe a good chunk of that cost is administration. (PS5)

Vander Zalm received considerable support for the idea in that year, 1982:

I think [school districts] should look at the administration; I feel we might be a bit top heavy. It's nice to have filet mignon, but sometimes you have to settle for hamburger. (PS12)

There is, of course, room to cut school budgets. Adjacent school districts with small shrunken enrolments could be amalgamated. But a good start could be within the school districts' own bureaucracies. (PEA2)

North Vancouver School District wouldn't fall apart if 15 percent were lopped off the \$387,700 total salaries of its five senior administrators. (PES5)

I was appalled to read that of the 5,000 employees of the Vancouver School Board, 2,000 are considered to be support staff ... The remaining 3,000 include school administrators and co-ordinators who are also non-teaching staff ... cutting down the number of non-teachers would be effective. (SLS11)

Nobody, and I am sure this includes teachers and school boards, would seriously argue that enormous sums are being wasted in B. C. education: inflated administration... (PLS18)

The outcome has been spiralling school budgets, a system overloaded with expensive and, under existing legislation, practically irremovable personnel, and top heavy with administrators with salaries to match. (SLN28)

In January, 1983, a commission was established:

The two-man Sager Commission seeking ways of cutting administration costs in B. C. education will hold its first public hearings ... (PF13)

With its establishment came complaints:

B. C. School Trustees Association president Gary Begin said Monday he would have preferred a more independent commission. (SF1)

One fact they ought to know from their own experience is that cutting administrative costs won't reduce school expenses very much any more than you lose weight by trimming your toenails. (PCF19)

The real problem with the education system he [Vander Zalm] said, is not the money grabbing teachers but the handful of underworked and overpaid school administrators. (SCJ12)

On another issue, teachers voted to oppose the "overt political nature" of the commission on school district administrative costs. (SAP2)

When Vander Zalm's term as Minister of Education was over, The Province editorial, which eight months previous had stated that a

district "wouldn't fall apart if 15 per cent were lopped off the ... salaries of its five senior administrators" (PES5), now stated:

Education Minister Jack Heinrich has acted wisely in terminating the Sager commission on school cost-cutting before it wasted any more taxpayer money. The commission seemed at the time, and now in retrospect, to have been nothing more than another club that former education minister Bill Vander Zalm used to clobber some of his political foes. (PEJu20)

Vander Zalm established himself as foe with both the BCSTA and the BCTF in establishing the commission on administrative costs but that did not mean that the airing of the issue did not have effect. The Vancouver School Board, for example, has made considerable cuts to its central office staff since 1982.

#### Teacher Evaluation

The issue of teacher evaluation surfaced twice during Vander Zalm's term. In the first instance, government examinations were to be used as a method of teacher evaluation.

We tend to view these exams as a means of measuring the success of the pupil against provincial standards," he said. "But it also gives us a chance to monitor the school districts, schools and teacher..." He agreed it provided an extra check for teacher competence. This is not provided by the current system... (PN9)

Larry Kuehn of the BCTF and Gary Begin of the BCSTA responded in tandem to this suggestion:

Kuehn and Begin said it is impossible to evaluate the effectiveness of teachers and schools on the basis of one examination. Kuehn said the only way it would work is if all teachers had students of exactly the same calibre. (SN12)

One editor asked:

What would he do with districts revealed by the province-wide examinations as underperforming? Fire the teacher .... (PEN12)

The second instance involved Vander Zalm's request for the suspension of a teacher. This was considered teacher evaluation because Vander Zalm was making a judgement (or evaluation) on her professional competence in asking for her suspension.

B. C.'s controversial Education Minister Bill Vander Zalm wants the suspension of a Grade 8 sex-education teacher who allowed students to see an explicit questionnaire on sex prepared by Vander Zalm's own former Ministry. (PF2)

The response to the issue centered on the fact that Vander Zalm's demand for the suspension usurped school board rights.

B. C. Teachers Federation president Larry Kuehn called Vander Zalm's letter a massive abuse of power. (SF6)

The minister, by making it a public issue at the provincial level, has placed this teacher on public trial, making recourse to due process without bias through the appeal procedure impossible to achieve," she [school board chairperson] said. (PF4)



He has defiantly tried to interfere ... by calling for the dismissal of the teacher concerned. (PEF15)

In trying to uphold high standards of student literacy, he bullied and insulted a Prince George student and her teacher. (PCD14)

And the Smithers school board, faced with Vander Zalm's scandalous meddling in the disciplining of a teacher, has rebuked the minister for his impropriety. (PCF20)

Because teachers were the target of restraint, the issue of teacher evaluation surfaced in a general way. Some interpreted restraint as an attack on the job teachers were doing. The Sun, in particular, featured a number of letters to the editor which commented on the job teachers were doing. Some teachers provided self-evaluations.

Many thought teachers were doing a good job:

Teaching is a profession of devoted and sacrifice. Sacrifice is nothing new to me as a teacher. (SLO20)

All staff and especially the teachers, have been very kind and helpful. The teachers go out of their way to let students (myself included) know they are there to help. The teachers are available in the morning before classes, they give up their lunch hour and they are available in the morning before school -- plus the time they give to extracurricular activities. What more can Mr. Vander Zalm (or anyone) expect? (PLO26)

I am ashamed to admit that while I was very grateful for all that was done for me, opportunities to say thank you never seemed to crop up. Yet teaching is one of the noblest professions, and the lessons learned have been instrumental in shaping my life ... To teachers everywhere: a big thank you for all you are doing for today's youngsters and their future. (SLD29)

But I do feel it needs to be said, in simple and plain language, that our teachers are doing a good job and that we appreciate their efforts. (SCJ13)

However, I have just worked a seven and one half-hour day, teaching children. I then spent an hour and a half in an after school workshop and I have taken a "break" from three hours of report card writing to place these thoughts on paper. Tomorrow, I will be loving patient, and creative in my classroom. (SLM38)

Another group of responses did not uphold the job teachers were doing:

Teachers are constantly glorifying themselves as "professionals." But wouldn't you think that true professionals would make stringent efforts to rid themselves of the deadwood that is so abundant among their number, as evidenced by the foregoing long list of errors -- especially when they possess the awesome responsibility for passing their faulty knowledge forward to our young? ... Professionals? What a joke! Give 'em hell, Bill Vander Zalm! (SLS8)

A basic requirement for any successful business is the ability to hire and fire expeditiously, on merit. The economic consequences of surrendering that principle to militant unions supported by ill-conceived and over protective government legislation is only too evident all 'round us, nowhere more than in the school system. (SLN28)

Surely, a case in the minds of many parents, for some of those who continually masquerade on TV as "concerned" and "dedicated" teachers is to have administered to them 12 smart ones on their leftist hands to smarten them up, noses down and go get on with the business of teaching and giving our children a better education. If teachers want to play politics, they should resign and become politicians. (SLAp41)

The issue of teacher competence is a concern of the public in

B. C. (Smith, 1981). The issue surfaced with Vander Zalm expressing his view that there was a need to measure teacher, as well as student, competence. Some of the public responded to the issue and The Sun chose to publish letters centering on teachers and the job they were doing. Vander Zalm's action seems to have provided the stimulus in bringing the the issue to public attention because all letters make reference to him. Neither Kuehn or Begin mentioned the issue of teacher evaluation because it was not in their interest to do so. The result was that this issue was not kept alive in the press.

#### Vander Zalm Personal/Political Style

Because Vander Zalm had a controversial political style and interesting personality, some articles and commentaries focused on these aspects of him. However, Vander Zalm's news appeal is also connected to this personal/political style, so this category is discussed at length under the heading: "The News Appeal of Vander Zalm".

#### Private Schools

From the first Sun article to appear after Vander Zalm's appointment, one would have thought that private schools were going to be an issue during this term of office.

Vander Zalm is also a known supporter of the private school system. During a June legislative debate over

raising private school grants by 40 percent to \$17 million, the minister said he would "personally stack a youngster who had received an education in an independent school against my own and any other who had received an education in a public school. He said he would like to see public schools instilled with the same degree of "competitiveness and dedication as the private system"... (SA1)

Private schools, however, did not emerge as an important issue in the newspaper as it was mentioned only five times. Vander Zalm used private schools as an example to make a point about restraint:

The public school system in B. C. has "plenty of fat to be trimmed and could perhaps learn from the independent school system which operates at one-third the cost."  
(SN13)

The comment was not discussed by a quoted source or investigated by any reporter. There was no mention of how much of that one-third was teacher salaries which Vander Zalm did not include in the expression "fat to be trimmed".

One editorial and one parent questioned private school funding:

... the government has given additional money to private schools this year on a percentage basis, while cutting back on public schools. (SF11)

No wonder the parents are upset about their children's education prospects. No wonder they are upset when provincial grants to public schools hardly changed last year while government grants to private schools rose 41 per cent (admittedly on a relatively small base).  
(PEF14)

One editorial suggested private schools could become a preferred alternative to public schools:

If the present confusion continues, more and more parents who can afford it will take their children out of the public system. (PES3)

One Sun columnist, Bewley, echoed the idea.

The few private schools available, turn applicants away. (SCS4)

What is curious about this relative absence of the issue of private schools in the newspapers is that in a public opinion poll conducted by the BCTF, 64% of the respondents were opposed to public money being given to private and religious schools (SF20). Although this suggests the government may not have acted in the public interest, no public interest group actively challenged this issue, and it did not make the news.

### Discipline

Vander Zalm spoke on the issue of discipline seven of the eight times it appeared in news articles:

There has to be more discipline and it can be provided in a variety of ways. For example, I believe I've said that if people were found writing on the school walls they perhaps could be required to clean the school grounds. (PS5)

Vander Zalm also said new and more strongest discipline guidelines will be forthcoming, though these do not

include the reintroduction of the strap. (SF18)

The news discipline proposal would allow boards more freedom to suspend unruly students to prevent disruption of the classroom routine. (PM15)

Only one editorial raised the issue of discipline:

These [students] are not the ones with behavioral problems, the ones the minister would discipline by forcing them to pick up "every piece of paper and cigarette butt for a week a block every way of the school" (SEF8)

Garr, The Province columnist, made a remark on discipline:

Then tell them you [Vander Zalm] think we need more discipline and make the point that your most lasting impression of school was getting the strap. (PCF21)

One news article (SF20) and the columnist, Nichols (SCF16), gave the results of a BCTF survey of public attitudes in B. C.:

There were some fascinating feelings. For example, school discipline was rated as the factor that most needs improvement. (SCF16)

These findings were similar to those of the Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes Towards Public Schools (Gallup, 1984) in which discipline was cited as the biggest problem of the local public schools for the last ten years. As Nichols said, it is fascinating because it is not an issue in the news at all. Vander Zalm was the

only one to bring up the topic and few responded. There were no letters to the editor on the issue. Comments by Garr and the editor on the issue made it appear as though it wasn't a problem, yet at some level it was perceived by a significant portion of the public as being a problem.

This finding does not seem to support the notion that the newspaper sets the public's agenda of issues (McCombs & Shaw, 1963). Discipline is not an issue given coverage in the newspapers, yet is is an issue in the public's mind according to opinion polls. It appears that Vander Zalm has read the public concerns, but the media is not alert to them. The public opinion poll suggests that although the newspapers and other media frequently set the agenda, sometimes they reflect, only after the fact, public concerns.

#### School Closure

School closure is an issue largely because student enrolment has been declining in some school districts over the past decade. If there are too few students attending school, the school is often closed if the cost of maintaining it is excessive. In the three articles citing school closure, none mention declining enrolment as a factor determining the decision to close the school. All three had quotes of parents protesting the closure. Because Vander Zalm's name was associated with the issue, the reader of the articles might assume the closures resulted from restraint.

One of the school closures did appear to be a consequence of restraint although probably not entirely. No background is provided on the school except for the following quote:

Victoria Bielka, the only teacher at the school for Grades 1, 2, and 3 said that if the school closes June 30, the 19 pupils will have to take a bus to another school ... It will mean that'll be away from home from 8:10 to 3:45 every day, it will cost Bielka her job, and it will end the close involvement of the parents with the school ... Bielka said, "It's not much of a saving. They have to save several hundreds of thousands, and they'll only save \$15,000." (SF22)

The researcher contacted one of the other districts associated with school closures and was told the closures were part of the school board's long range plans based on declining enrolment. There was no mention of this in the news article. Long range planning represents a slow, evolving process over time and does not gain mention in the ahistorical, event oriented news. Linking the decline of enrolment in schools to the need to close schools does not occur in the news because news emphasizes contingent events, that is, events that appear to have an uncertain or accidental occurrence and are not linked causally (Tuchman, 1979).

#### Parent Involvement

Parents were mentioned as news sources nine times in The Sun but the issue of parent involvement in education was not mentioned once. In The Province parents were quoted as sources three times and the



issue of parent involvement was brought up twice. Parent involvement was not discussed in any editorial, column, or letter to the editor.

Vander Zalm brought the issue of parent involvement twice, once speaking on it himself and once releasing a press discussion paper including it.

Right now, the system is too complex and it's difficult for the average individual to figure out what's happening in schools and how they work, how they grade students in report cards, the methods they use of selecting programs. We have to make parents aware. (PS5)

The other comment was by the co-ordinator of Education Advisory, "an authority in the area of parent involvement" (PM17), who was commenting on a discussion paper released by Vander Zalm to the press.

She was particularly excited about the concept of "school-based management," in which the principals, staffs and parents at the individual schools are given the right to many many day-to-day decisions about how the school should run. But, she said, it takes a ministerial initiative like the one Vander Zalm is taking to get this system going, because, in many cases, parents and teachers resist sharing their power with parents and the public. (PM17)

There appears to be an error or misquote in the last line, "parents and teachers resist sharing ... with parents and the public", which should probably read teachers resist sharing their power with parents and the public. Because parents are unknowns, they can communicate their special interests and make the news by protesting or portraying

themselves as victims (Gans, 1979). Parents and the public did not have enough of a crucial interest in involvement in public schools to warrant protesting or portraying themselves as victims and so the issue did not make news.

#### Summary on Issues

All the issues in the newspaper coverage became news events because of the actions or ideas expressed by the leaders of one of three major institutions: Bill Vander Zalm of the Ministry of Education; Larry Kuehn of the B. C. Teachers' Federation; and Gary Begin of the B. C. School Trustees Association. Restraint became an issue because Education Minister Bill Vander Zalm requested budget cuts. Layoffs/job security and rollbacks/salaries were issues because they threatened teacher interests and the B. C. Teachers' Federation defended these interests. The issue of school board autonomy surfaced because Vander Zalm's actions threatened the rights of school boards which the B. C. School Trustees Association guarded. All the major issues centered on conflict between the Minister of Education and the BCTF or teacher interests; the Minister of Education and the BCSTA or school board interests; or the Minister of Education and the teacher and school board interests.

Most information on issues from other sources and reporters supported either one side or the other of these conflicts. Commentaries did not present new information or different points of

view, or link events and issues in analysis. Basically, they represented the views and actions of the three main leaders and added their opinions on the leader's part in the conflict, either positive or negative. Because most columnists and editorials did not support Vander Zalm, the commentaries on issues were biased against Vander Zalm's views on issues.

Information in news is generally attributed to sources, that is, the reporters indicate where they get their information. The main news sources of information on education were the leaders of the Ministry of Education, the B. C. Teachers' Federation, and the B. C. School Trustees Association. Interviews with the sources provided only general comments on issues. Perhaps because they did not have the time, reporters did not inquire into the details to reveal the misleading information, the inconsistencies in ideas, or fallacies in arguments or the assumptions on which they are based. For this reason, the information on issues presented in the news was limited in scope and sometimes distorted. For example, when the news reported the budget cuts, there was no information other than Vander Zalm's few comments presented to explain that the budget had increased over the previous year and that it was the amount of the increase that was to be cut. This explanation was not in the interest of the BCSTA or the BCTF to bring up so the fact of it is lost. These two groups emphasized the budget cuts to benefit their interests. Reporters also chose to emphasize the budget cuts rather than the budget increase

probably in part to keep the drama of the conflict alive, and perhaps to reflect their own views which were sympathetic to teachers' interests.

Statements by sources on issues are not presented in an historical context with links made to other information or events. For example, an article discussed a study that revealed larger class size led to higher achievement by students. Other articles in the paper quoted teachers condemning large classes and indicating that large classes would lead to the deterioration of education. What makes analysis of this issue difficult for the newspaper reader is the fact that the two views on the issue did not appear together in an article. Unless readers were very involved in the issue, they could not remember the information on class size of the study and link it to the teachers' comments on class size. Even though news stories are continuing and deal with the same issues over time, each article was presented as an isolated story. The emphasis in news coverage of issues in education was on contingent events, not on the structure of arguments presented on the issues.

The news articles discussed over a dozen major issues over a period of eight months. Each issue centered on a number of events over that time and each of the major sources had views on each event. These events had implications for more than one issue. The result was that news coverage on the issues in education was very complicated. This fact, coupled with the style of news coverage which does not

structure the arguments presented on issues, made it difficult for the newspaper reader to analyze and understand the issues.

## Chapter VII

## Implications for the Public's Perception of Education

The coverage which The Sun and The Province gave Education Minister Vander Zalm has implications for the newspaper reading public's perception of education. What the public knows about education is determined, in part, by the information that is provided in the newspaper. A power of the newspaper is that it determines what information to print.

Research on mass media initially concentrated on how media messages influenced change in the public's opinions and attitudes. In these studies the mass media did not emerge as major contributors to change in opinions (McQuail, 1977). More recent research does not discount belief in the power of the media but approaches the problem differently. For example, a study might examine what people know or what information is presented to them, rather than their attitudes and opinions. Such was the focus of inquiry in this study. Answers to the questions of the study were sought by analysing newspaper articles in order to obtain descriptions of what information was presented and who presented it, and support speculations made as to why the information was presented. From this analysis inferences can be made on the implications of the newspaper coverage for the public's perception of education.

Implications are discussed in terms of the sources who present

information, the issues which are the framework of information, and the newspapers, which are the public's agent for education information.

#### Sources - Presenters of Education Information

The newspaper imposes a social order on the world by having news events occur at some locations and not others and using some people as sources and not others. The news coverage of Education Minister Vander Zalm occurred at three centralized institutions: The Ministry of Education, the British Columbia Teachers' Federation, and The British Columbia School Trustees Association. Officials in positions of responsibility and authority, namely, Bill Vander Zalm, Larry Kuehn, and Gary Begin, were the sources of information for these three institutions.

One of the reasons for using these three leaders is that as powerful officials, these persons were known. Knowns have audience appeal so they gain newspaper reader's attention (Jamieson & Campbell, 1983). Another reason for using leaders as sources is that as officials of organizations, they can supply journalists with reliable information, easily and efficiently (Gans, 1979). Because journalists are expected to deliver the latest news to their audience, news becomes significant if it is efficient. Investigating unknown sources is too time consuming and costly to be the mainstay of journalism. Reporters must obtain the most reliable information possible from the

fewest number of sources, as quickly and inexpensively as possible.

The fact that these leaders of institutions, serving different interests in education, were the primary sources for the newspaper has implications for what information the public received. An institution is going to bring to the public consideration only those issues which are innocuous to them (Bachrach & Baratz, 1970). Leaders will introduce issues that will maintain and strengthen their own organizational interests. During the period of interest to this study, the interests of the three main sources were in conflict; both the BCTF and The BCSTA were strongly opposing the government. The result was that the information presented on issues was limited to the simple black and white views of the two opposing forces.

The informational roles of the three leaders were cast. Bill Vander Zalm was the critic, telling the public that education was costing too much, that teachers were not necessarily doing a good job, and that students were not learning what they should be. Larry Kuehn, President of the BCTF promoted the system as it was, defending the cost of education, the job teachers were doing and what students were learning. Gary Begin, President of the BCSTA, promoted the rights of the school board in education governance and defended school boards in the crossfire of government demands for budget cuts and teachers' demands to maintain the system as it was.

In news, information is most frequently attributed to sources. Reporters maintain that their reporting is objective by attributing



facts and opinions to authoritative sources and representing a fair balance of arguments on issues. The shortcoming of this claim in the education coverage of this study is that in using Bill Vander Zalm, Larry Kuehn, and Gary Begin as the authoritative sources of fact and opinion and presenting a fair balance of only their arguments on issues, other sources with different facts and opinions are assumed not to exist.

The ideas and actions of only these three sources provided the informational framework which established the limits of the discussion of issues for both the reporters and the commentators. Reporters, editors, and columnists did not investigate background information or attach isolated pieces of information provided by these leaders into a more complete context. Interviews with the three sources provided only general comments on issues. Reporters did not inquire of them for details to reveal the misleading information, the inconsistencies of ideas, or fallacies in arguments. Nor did they move beyond these institutions to provide alternate views such as those of teachers who disagreed with BCTF policy, unemployed teachers, education authorities at universities, or views that were more representative of the public at large. The overall result of using only three institutional sources for the newspaper coverage was that the information presented provided a distorted and incomplete picture of the issues.

Using only three major sources, not only limited the information provided on issues, but also established a pattern on which all the

issues were debated. Not only reporters but editors, columnists, and letters to the editor debated within the terms set by the three leaders. It was difficult for the newspaper reader, concerned that government money be used in the best possible way, to learn from the discussion provided by the newspaper and move in their own mind toward a solution. The pattern of debate was not to assess issues in terms of their substance but rather to side with one or other personality presenting the arguments. The object of the debate appeared to be the maintenance of the conflict, rather than sharing information to arrive at the best solution. Larry Kuehn of the BCTF and Gary Begin of the BCSTA predictably reacted negatively to almost everything that Education Minister Vander Zalm did. As a result, Kuehn and Begin, tried to establish themselves as the protectors of the public interest in education even though it was the government, elected by the public to represent their interests, which initiated the restraint program.

This situation came about because the public depends on the newspaper as a channel of communication between the public and the government. However, what is claimed to be an expression of public opinion in the paper, is often an expression of elite viewpoints (Altschull, 1984). The success of an interest group in gaining media and government attention is predicted by resources which include: money; organizational size, unity, and leadership; political process knowledge; and ideological commitment (Ornstein & Elder, 1978).

Both the BCTF and the BCSTA are presented as interest groups expressing public opinion, yet they are expressing their own special interests. The budget cuts primarily affected the interests of teachers so the teachers' organization, the BCTF, lobbied to protest this change in the distribution of government funds. What the BCTF succeeded in doing, however, with the combined support of the BCSTA and the newspaper, which aligned itself with teacher interest, was to establish the BCTF as the authority on all education matters and convey to the public that the interests of teachers were also the interests of education.

The opinion polls give some evidence that the public did support the views of the BCTF during this period. In 1983, the public had a more positive view of the BCTF than in 1982, before the restraint program was introduced. The percentage polled who viewed the BCTF "somewhat positively" increased from 30 to 44 per cent over that year (Campbell, 1984). Opinion polls fluctuate and the effect of the media on public opinion cannot be established as having a fundamental influence, but it can be noted that during the time the BCTF was given a large amount of coverage and was portrayed generally as the protector of the public's interest in education so did they gain in their image with the public.

The use of the three leaders of organization as major sources in the newspaper can effect the public's perception on education, both in that these leaders provide only limited and distorted information and

also in that they provide a set of assumptions on which educational issues are debated. Other sources of authority on education, in particular those of the university, are not used as sources yet these persons might well have more objective opinions in considering what might best benefit the education system as a whole.

#### Issues - The Framework for Education Information

Information on education is attached to issues. What information was presented on issues in the newspapers and how it was presented both have implications for the public's perception of education. Considering first what information was presented, all issues in the newspaper coverage became news events because of the actions or ideas of the leaders: Vander Zalm, Larry Kuehn, or Gary Begin. The information these leaders presented on an issue was limited to that which they felt would benefit their organization's interest. The interests of teachers dominated the information in the news.

Restraint as an issue appeared in 72% of the news articles in both The Sun and The Province. A large amount of the school board budget goes to teacher salaries (70%) so when school boards were under the order of the Minister of Education to cut their budgets, the threat was to teacher's jobs and their salaries. Layoffs/job security and rollbacks/salaries became the central issues around the question of what to cut and this was reflected in the news coverage which gave these two issues more mention in both papers than any other issue

except for the more general issue of restraint.

The fact that restraint, layoffs/job security, rollbacks/salaries, collective bargaining, teacher action/strikes and school board autonomy were the issues given major coverage in the news might affect the public's perception of education.

In the news, teachers were treated as the central figures in education. Education in the news did not center on students, schools, or learning. The fundamental concern was not school programs and practices, or student attitude or achievement. "Public education is teachers" was the message of the news. With this news so attentive to teacher needs came the message that if teachers were dissatisfied, then the quality of education would be unsatisfactory. There was an assumed belief that the things that satisfy the teachers are necessarily good for education. In concentrating on the interests of teachers, the news overlooked the interests of students, parents, and the general public. The news did not examine the problem to determine what directions would be of overall benefit to public education.

The emphasis on finance also carried with it the basic message that any improvements in education came about only as a result of finances. Little attention comparatively was given to those aspects of education that can be improved at no cost. For example, research has established the educational importance of the school ethos for its effects on student attitude and achievement. Positive school environments are not achieved by improvements in finance but by human

factors. Although Vander Zalm stated that throwing money at education does not solve its problems, other quoted sources as well as commentators scoffed at this idea. Few news reports and only one columnist investigated the significance of the statement.

How news is reported also has implications for the public. Tuchman (1978) claims that news eschews analysis by emphasizing the concrete and contingent in events, and the present, ahistorical time orientation. News avoids making linkages between events or the issues stemming from the events.

Education news is continuing news, which presents a series of stories based upon events occurring over a period of time. Issues in continuing news are complicated and center on the confrontations of complex organizations. The news articles covering Education Minister Vander Zalm discussed over a dozen major issues during an eight month period. Each issue centered on a number of events over that time and each of the major sources had views on each event. Events had implications for more than one issue. The result was that news coverage on the issues was very complicated. Analyzing these issues was made more difficult because of the way news is structured.

Statements by sources on issues are not presented in an historical context with links made to other information or events. Unless newspaper readers are very involved with issues, they cannot remember the information presented on an issue at one time and link it to the same issue at another time. Issues change from article to

article, so that one article might deal with curriculum and a few days later the issue will be rollbacks and layoffs. A week later an article might again discuss curriculum but make no reference to the previous article on curriculum. This manner of reporting does not facilitate the structuring of issues for the reader so they can be analyzed.

The commentaries do not help much either in the understanding and analysis of issues. Nearly all criticized Vander Zalm and rather than considering the substance of what was being said concentrated on the personality and style of the spokespersons. Columnists frequently made sweeping statements to exaggerate a point so the reader did not know when fact ended and myth began. Editorials confused the public trying to understand issues by taking inconsistent stands. The Province editorials, for example, had four editorials that supported restraint and five that were against it. The Sun suggested that teacher salaries be rolled back but objected to the government interfering with collective bargaining. Perhaps The Sun editor expected the teachers to take voluntary rollbacks but because several months separated the editorials advocating teacher salary rollbacks and those on collective bargaining, another speculation could be the editors simply did not understand the ramifications of the suggestion that teachers accept salary rollbacks. The editorials frequently took simplistic views of issues and made simplistic unworkable suggestions for solutions. The news presented issues that were very complicated

but generally the commentaries gave little assistance to the newspaper reader in understanding this complexity. Commentaries, like the news, appear to consider entertaining, not informing, as their grounding principle.

The public was prevented from analyzing and understanding the issues in education because events were reported as though they occurred by chance rather than by consequence. The emphasis in the news is not the structure of arguments, so links are not made between events. The commentaries also did not aid the public in their understanding of issues because they were preoccupied with the personalities involved and did not analyze the substance of the information presented on issues. The result may be that the public abandons the complexity of issues by taking sides with one of the leaders who present issues in simplistic terms. The leaders have predictable stands that the public can identify. Their personalities give the newspaper reader a sense of continuity in the complex and changing events and issues covered in the news.

#### Newspapers - The Public's Agent for Education Information

The public depends on editors and reporters to select the information on education that it receives in the newspaper. The tradition of the freedom of the press, considered to be a principle for the survival of democracy, advocates a press free from government control to provide a forum for the unrestricted competition of ideas



and opinions. The paradox of a press free from government control, is that news becomes a commodity, produced and belonging to the owner company. Southam, the owner of the two newspapers of this study, The Sun and The Province, is the second largest newspaper chain in Canada. Chain ownership, rather than improving the quality of reporting has resulted in chain papers having less news, fewer staff written stories and higher advertising and newsstand rates (Maclean, 1981). News, as business, has diminished the competition of ideas and opinions.

Because newspapers must attract and hold a large audience to be profitable, they express the views and values most widely accepted. The information on sources in this study supports the idea that only a small range of acceptable viewpoints are presented in the news and that it does not allow for much competition of ideas and opinions.

What is selected as news cannot, therefore, be separated from the fact that newspapers are a business. The publisher prints what appeals to the audience so they will buy the newspaper. Audience appeal is an important criterion in assessing newsworthiness, so news selection depends on the importance and interest of an event. News importance depends on the proximity of events to audience, the prominence of those involved in events, and consequences of the events. News interest is characterized by conflict and the unusual and features known or stars with interesting personalities. Readers give more attention to news featuring these characteristics of interesting news and the consequence is that as many of these elements

are worked into the news stories as possible.

An initial understanding of coverage on education is that reporters and editors do not have as their fundamental interest keeping the public informed about the education system. They have as their interest what education events they think will have audience appeal.

Bill Vander Zalm, as Minister of Education, conformed to the criteria of news importance and interest. His name was a cue that attracted reader interest. It was for this reason, he was selected to get media attention. Vander Zalm met the news criteria of importance by holding the portfolio of Minister of Education, an important position in education for British Columbia.

Vander Zalm also established himself as newsworthy because he was interesting. His personal life exemplified that of the self-made man. His life began in wartime Holland, where he had little to eat or wear. He came to British Columbia to become in time a very successful businessman and politician. One of the reasons the public received information on Vander Zalm, was that he had an interesting personality and life.

Another criteria of news interest besides personality is conflict. Vander Zalm received a lot of news coverage when he took stands and introduced policies in areas that led to conflict with other interests, particularly the BCTF and the BCSTA. These conflicts were reported with negative connotations implying that the restoration

of order was valuable. The news emphasized that the budget cuts enforced by Vander Zalm created a crisis in education. Kuehn stated initially that Vander Zalm was a threat to the system. Gans (1979) identified social order and maintaining social order through leadership as two of the enduring values in news. The news with its emphasis on social order, portrayed a threat to the status quo as inherently bad. Rather than opening out issues and airing them in light of all information available, the news focused on the leaders to re-establish order.

The press can be criticized because it provides the public with information in education primarily when events stemming from education involve conflict. This limits the coverage the public has of education. The newspaper can be further criticized because in its attention to conflict, the news had as its main value the maintenance of social order and so it did not allow issues their full scope of debate. Although it is difficult to speculate how this affects the public's perception of education, this news could contribute to the public's sense that public education is difficult to change or that it is unresponsive to public demands for change.

News is an event. Although there are a number of ever present issues in the system of education, they are not the center of media coverage until there is an occurrence or event which has news interest. Vander Zalm understood this and created events which brought issues into public consideration through the media. In a

sense, Vander Zalm, literally "made the news" by speaking on issues and making his views known. Because the media does not attend to social institutions, except as it is reflected through its leaders (Gans, 1979), the leaders of public education are essential in bringing issues of education to the public's attention. It could be argued that Vander Zalm, in bringing education issues into the public's consideration through the media, did generate some public interest in education. In an opinion poll of the public's perception of education in British Columbia made in February 1983 (Campbell, 1984), the percentage of people without opinions dropped from 16% to 9% between 1982 and 1983. Although the newspapers did not present complete information on issues, by giving greater coverage to education matters, they may have increased public interest in education issues.

The reports on Vander Zalm fulfilled a political function of the newspaper. People must get sufficient information on education matters to make judgements. The press is considered important in democratic society because it is an important source of public information. It keeps the public alive to the common interests and problems that the public faces as the supporter of a public education system. The press takes on the role of investigator into government, refusing to accept practices that they believe to be against the public interest. The press is free to criticize government and inform the public of government activities and problems facing public

education. Although the information the public received was limited, the press did function as the public's watchdog on Vander Zalm and the Education Ministry and conveyed to the public that education is a public system and has guards to maintain it as such.

Politicians are dependent on media attention to attain and maintain power. The newspaper reporters and editors decide which persons and events in government get media attention and which do not. Reporters and editors evaluate facts, events, and ideas, determine their relevance and value to audiences and decide what to select and what to ignore. Further, they want politicians to articulate instant opinions and ideas as demanded by the attentive public. Bill Vander Zalm, as Minister of Education, by conforming to the criteria of news interest and importance was selected to get media attention. Other Ministers of Education have not had such extensive coverage. The public may perceive Vander Zalm as a more important or influential leader in education because of this greater news coverage which may be erroneous. As Stanfield (1980) said, a politician's image has become more important than his/her ideas.

The media reinforce a particular style of leadership and debate. A leader who moves slowly and wants to consider all relevant facts is not going to get media coverage because the media wants leaders to instantly articulate a position. One who does not head into open conflict will not create newsworthy events. Leaders who want to portray the normal occurrences in public education will not be

attended to by journalists who are looking for the unusual and the unique. The newspaper determines what leaders will get into the news by using their criteria of what is newsworthy.

The public depends on the newspaper to report on its education leaders. In turn, the newspaper is going to attend to public education primarily as it is reflected by its leaders. The result is that if the leader does not speak on issues, the public has little information on education. If the leaders do speak on issues but the newspaper chooses not to attend to the leader, the public has little information.

This dilemma raises the question of whose responsibility it is to bring forward to the public issues in education. As it stands, the newspaper does not look to other sources of authority to present information to the public, such as university experts or bureaucrats in the education system. The responsibility now on leaders to articulate information to the public could be shared with other sources. People may be moved beyond their own myths about public education by information and experience. What information the public receives about education and how it is presented is a shared responsibility of the many authorities and leaders in public education whose ideas are needed to provide full debate on issues and the newspapers who could present to the public these issues in the fullest light of information. The fact is journalists are not doing this. The newspaper is a business and reporters write what appeals to the

audience. The audience may not have displayed an interest in the details needed for making balanced appraisals of issues in education. This, however, is not an adequate explanation for this coverage given education issues. The practise of journalism itself is embedded with ideas that define what news is. The journalists' own cherished notions of a news story are perhaps the greatest obstruction to illuminating reports on education.

#### Summary

Newspaper editors and reporters, in deciding who is news and what is news in education, determine what information the public receives. The use of leaders, from the Ministry of Education, the BCTF, and the BCSTA, as sources limited the scope of information presented on issues because leaders only provide the limited information which will maintain or strengthen their interests. The assumptions on which these leaders based their information were left unquestioned by reporters and commentators and were incorporated into the debate on issues.

The interests of teachers dominated the news. Because of this, the public could believe that the interests of teachers were synonymous with what was good for education. The emphasis on finance in the news might also suggest to the public that improvements in education come about only as a result of money rather than human efforts.

The issues in education were complex. There were over a dozen issues reported and one event could have implications for a number of issues. Also, the news was constructed with an emphasis on present and contingent events rather than on the structure of arguments on issues or the connections between events. For these reasons, it was difficult for the public to analyse and understand issues. The result may be that the public, like the news reporters and commentators, abandon the complexity of issues by siding with a leader whose simple and predictable stands provided a sense of continuity in complex and changing events and issues.

Because newspapers must attract and hold a large audience to be profitable, the coverage on education is based on audience appeal rather than on keeping the public informed about education. The newspaper reports on education issues if they involve important and interesting people, conflicts, and unique or unusual events. Reporters did not often search out other authorities on education other than leaders. To receive information on education in the newspaper, the public depends on leaders to speak on issues and the newspaper to judge as newsworthy what the leaders are saying.

Having a public informed on education matters is a shared responsibility. The many leaders in education need to present views on education issues. The public has the responsibility of attending to the details needed for making balanced appraisals of issues. The newspaper writers and editors must illuminate issues with reliable and



complete information. To do this, journalists will have to change their notion of what news is.

## APPENDIX A

## Complete Listing of Articles Used in the Study

<u>News Articles</u>		
<u>Sun</u>		
Code	Date	Title
SA1	Aug. 11, 1982	Vander Zalm's appointment 'a ploy to force confrontation
SA2	Aug. 12, 1982	Vander Zalm Plans Talks: Minister ponders counties
SA3	Aug. 14, 1982	No cuts without new laws, schools' lawyer advises
SA4	Aug. 14, 1982	The Last Word - In Dutch
SA5	Aug. 17, 1982	Teachers Told: Vander Zalm 'icing on poisonous cake'
SA6	Aug. 17, 1982	School layoffs feared if cuts continue
SA7	Aug. 20, 1982	Teachers consider taking more time off to avoid rollbacks
SA8	Aug. 25, 1982	Pay raises mean layoffs, teachers told
SA9	Aug. 26, 1982	The day they closed the book on Colette's life
SA10	Aug. 27, 1982	Vander Zalm Meets BCTF: 'Nothing guaranteed' for teachers
SA11	Aug. 30, 1982	Schools face the 'real world' of cutbacks
SS1	Sept. 4, 1982	Abbotsford Teacher Layoffs: Schools' held for ransom'
SS2	Sept. 8, 1982	Teachers Get Layoff Notices: 'Shoot first, talk later' called indefensible policy
SS3	Sept. 9, 1982	Teacher head for showdown
SS4	Sept. 13, 1982	Despite Call For Budget Cuts: Delta 'won't lay off teachers'
SS5	Sept. 15, 1982	Vander Zalm orders study in bid to retain campus
SS6	Sept. 16, 1982	Strikes won't be tolerated, Vander Zalm tells teachers
SS7	Sept. 17, 1982	Trustees accept judge's ruling on budget cuts for B.C. schools
SS8	Sept. 20, 1982	Trustees chief opposes teacher action
SS9	Sept. 22, 1982	500 students protest teacher layoffs
SS10	Sept. 24, 1982	'New math' compromise: 5 'professional days' = no teacher layoffs

## APPENDIX A (Continued)

Code	Date	Title
SS11	Sept. 29, 1982	Teachers attack pay-cut bill: It's like slavery, Fed chief says
SS12	Sept. 29, 1982	Vander Zalm watched by Sacred colleagues; bends Opposition ears
SS13	Sept. 30, 1982	Education bill adds to school daze
SS14	Sept. 30, 1982	Restraint bill ends school board autonomy, trustees say
SS15	Sept. 30, 1982	Teachers in turmoil over new bill
S01	Oct. 1, 1982	Vander Zalm Claim: BCSTA 'manipulated'
S02	Oct. 1, 1982	City teachers 'face new pay cuts next year'
S03	Oct. 2, 1982	Worried teachers' union calls emergency meeting
S04	Oct. 4, 1982	Teachers studying 'free days' bill
S05	Oct. 6, 1982	Education bill fought by teachers, trustees
S06	Oct. 7, 1982	Vander Zalm ponders facing teachers' rally
S07	Oct. 9, 1982	Teachers in Gulf Islands planning to work to rule
S08	Oct. 9, 1982	Vancouver Schools: Non-teaching staff warned of 400 layoffs
S09	Oct. 16, 1982	Restraint scheme results in chaos at Moberly school
S010	Oct. 19, 1982	Policies Under Fire: Vander Zalm will address B.C. teachers
S011	Oct. 20, 1982	Attendance Estimate Drops: Teachers 'too tired' to rally
S012	Oct. 20, 1982	Vander Zalm 'fails' B.C. schools
S013	Oct. 21, 1982	4,000 Rally Against Education Cuts: Teachers fail to shake Vander Zalm
S014	Oct. 24, 1982	Angry B.C. teachers throw the book at 'Vanderfacts'
S015	Oct. 25, 1982	Vander Zalm 'Not Scared': Teachers threatening job action
S016	Oct. 28, 1982	By Cabinet: School Act revisions 'under study'
S017	Oct. 29, 1982	Proposed changes in school act 'defy all logic'
SN1	Nov. 2, 1982	Teachers, trustees tell Vander Zalm to clear 'fog of rumor'
SN2	Nov. 3, 1982	Vander Zalm: 'No time' for talks on leaks
SN3	Nov. 4, 1982	Vander Zalm expects rewrites on school bill

## APPENDIX A (continued)

Code	Date	Title
SN4	Nov. 6, 1982	Teachers join to fight school budget slashes
SN5	Nov. 9, 1982	Teacher seek allies in budget revolt
SN6	Nov. 10, 1982	ICBC 'too expensive' for school insurance
SN7	Nov. 12, 1982	B.C.-Wide Talks: Vander Zalm likes proposal
SN8	Nov. 12, 1982	Education minister won't change his combative style with trustees
SN9	Nov. 12, 1982	Closure delay urged
SN10	Nov. 13, 1982	Vander Zalm 'set back'
SN11	Nov. 14, 1982	NPA's school financing proposal draws fire from COPE trustees
SN12	Nov. 15, 1982	Teacher, trustee spokesmen slam B.C.-wide exams plan
SN13	Nov. 25, 1982	Vander Zalm hits 'fun stuff' in the schools
SD1	Dec. 3, 1982	400 non-teaching workers win reprieve from layoffs
SD2	Dec. 6, 1982	School board praised for fighting cuts
SD3	Dec. 7, 1982	Teachers' gains will be 'erased'
SD4	Dec. 8, 1982	Parents petition for more money for schools
SD5	Dec. 8, 1982	Boards to get 'report cards'
SD6	Dec. 9, 1982	Vander Zalm sports back-to-basics pin
SD7	Dec. 15, 1982	To Bill, it's all a challenge
SD8	Dec. 21, 1982	'Report card' worries trustees
SD9	Dec. 22, 1982	Teacher Wage Settlements: Arbitrator 'meddling' rapped
SD10	Dec. 24, 1982	Vander Zalm aghast at teachers' pay hike
SD11	Dec. 29, 1982	Vander Zalm Plans Talks: Minister ponders counties
SD12	Dec. 29, 1982	Pay hikes rile Vander Zalm again
SD13	Dec. 31, 1982	Scrap Arbitration, Vander Zalm Says
SD14	Dec. 31, 1982	Lawyers hit back at Vander Zalm
SD15	Dec. 31, 1982	School job losses 'inevitable: Minister disputes report
SJ1	Jan. 5, 1983	Vancouver mulls teaching tryout for Vander Zalm
SJ2	Jan. 6, 1983	3,000 teachers' jobs on the line as school districts count awards
SJ3	Jan. 6, 1983	Science Funding: Teacher hits Vander Zalm for criticism

## APPENDIX (Continued)

Code	Date	Title
SJ4	Jan. 7, 1983	Wage hikes for teachers averaging 'only 1.51 pct.'
SJ5	Jan. 19, 1983	Vander Zalm accused of libel
SJ6	Jan. 22, 1983	City school staff cuts tied to salary increase
SJ7	Jan. 26, 1983	Cabinet to 'grade' education agreements
SJ8	Jan. 29, 1983	Nurses protest school budget cut
SJ9	Jan. 31, 1983	Stables named to schools probe
SF1	Feb. 1, 1983	'Insincere, Partisan': School districts inquiry hit
SF2	Feb. 3, 1983	10 school districts defy Vander Zalm guidelines
SF3	Feb. 3, 1983	36 aides lose jobs at schools
SF4	Feb. 5, 1983	Teachers Hang Tough
SF5	Feb. 5, 1983	Schools: Curbs 'good'
SF6	Feb. 7, 1983	Sex Dispute: Suspension of teacher demanded
SF7	Feb. 8, 1983	Parents fight school bus charges
SF8	Feb. 8, 1983	1,600 Delta parents expected at rally
SF9	Feb. 8, 1983	Smithers trustees slam Vander Zalm
SF10	Feb. 9, 1983	New Sex Education Guide Being Set Up For Schools
SF11	Feb. 9, 1983	Delta parents protest education cuts
SF12	Feb. 11, 1983	Teacher slams Vander Zalm
SF13	Feb. 12, 1983	Compromise school budget drafted
SF14	Feb. 15, 1983	Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows defies restraint
SF15	Feb. 16, 1983	'No beatings' if trustees over-budget
SF16	Feb. 16, 1983	Achievement tests to be compulsory
SF17	Feb. 17, 1983	Students Fear Education Setbacks: School diploma idea 'political'
SF18	Feb. 18, 1983	Vander Zalm's curriculumms will be 'open to discussion'
SF19	Feb. 22, 1983	Trustees 'play silly games'
SF20	Feb. 23, 1983	Public 'backs teachers'
SF21	Feb. 23, 1983	Vander Zalm gets apology for flowers
SF22	Feb. 23, 1983	Child pickets take Bennett by surprise
SF23	Feb. 25, 1983	'Coward' Bennett Ducks Crowd: Refuses to see protesters
SF24	Feb. 26, 1983	Abbotsford teachers rap Begin
SM1	Mar. 1, 1983	School Services: \$1 million sought for health

## APPENDIX A (Continued)

Code	Date	Title
SM2	Mar. 2, 1983	Teacher wages freeze 'trade-off' illegal, Lauk says
SM3	Mar. 9, 1983	Negotiation Appointment Delights Teachers Group
SM4	Mar. 10, 1983	Teachers: Feud answers sought
SM5	Mar. 11, 1983	Vander Zalm claims 'final say' on teachers
SM6	Mar. 12, 1983	Trustees 'observers'
SM7	Mar. 12, 1983	'Too political' newspaper banned by school principal
SM8	Mar. 14, 1983	From Forum: Vander Zalm and Kuehn withdraw
SM9	Mar. 15, 1983	Teachers 'reassured'
SM10	Mar. 15, 1983	Probe 'out to prove' Vander Zalm theory
SM11	Mar. 18, 1983	Layoff Notices Held Back for 28 'Health' Employees
SM12	Mar. 18, 1983	Teachers' chief says minister intervened
SM13	Mar. 19, 1983	Vander Zalm promises decision
SM14	Mar. 19, 1983	Minister offers to talk with each school district
SM15	Mar. 22, 1983	Trustees seek OK for plan to keep health services
SM16	Mar. 23, 1983	Pay Freeze for Job Security: 'This is it' on school salaries
SM17	Mar. 23, 1983	School health funds being considered
SM18	Mar. 23, 1983	Trustees, teachers say school boards need funding along with 'autonomy'
SM19	Mar. 25, 1983	Warning to teachers stands
SM20	Mar. 31, 1983	Vander Zalm to meet trustees on offer
SAP1	Apr. 4, 1983	Teachers' chief flays Victoria-trustee pact
SAP2	Apr. 7, 1983	Sit tight, teachers advised in \$42 million school deal
SAP3	Apr. 14, 1983	Vander Zalm, critics have a lively debate over education cuts
SAP4	Apr. 20, 1983	Top BCSTA officials' opinions differ on politics of annual general meeting
SAP5	Apr. 27, 1983	Parents sue over school closings

## APPENDIX A (Continued)

Code	Date	Title
<u>Province</u>		
PA1	Aug. 11, 1982	Teachers howl with outrage
PA2	Aug. 17, 1982	School system 'under attack by Social Credit'
PA3	Aug. 18, 1982	Teachers 'really frightened'
PA4	Aug. 20, 1982	Best school districts hit hardest: Minister
PA5	Aug. 22, 1982	Teachers caught in 'no-win' bind
PA6	Aug. 25, 1982	Teachers face salary freeze threat
PA7	Aug. 27, 1982	Cuts and layoffs needed, Vander Zalm says
PA8	Aug. 31, 1982	Trustees say gov't siphons off education tax revenue
PS1	Sept. 8, 1982	School challenge 'to spark debate'
PS2	Sept. 9, 1982	Surrey teachers threaten to strike
PS3	Sept. 10, 1982	Powell River teachers walk out today
PS4	Sept. 12, 1982	School Act 'key to solution'
PS5	Sept. 12, 1982	A Vander Zalm primer
PS6	Sept. 13, 1982	Vander Zalm irked by Dutch reporter's story
PS7	Sept. 14, 1982	School budget cuts claimed illegal
PS8	Sept. 15, 1982	Crunch day for education cutbacks
PS9	Sept. 16, 1982	'Strike and be fired'
PS10	Sept. 17, 1982	1,500 B.C. teachers 'facing axe'
PS11	Sept. 19, 1982	Teachers plan work stoppages
PS12	Sept. 19, 1982	'We need restraint, but not shotgun'
PS13	Sept. 19, 1982	Insecure teachers bitter about Vander Zalm
PS14	Sept. 19, 1982	Gallows, posters confront minister
PS15	Sept. 19, 1982	Massive layoffs facing teachers by January
PS16	Sept. 21, 1982	Trustees eye budget alternatives
PS17	Sept. 24, 1982	Bennett summons educators
PS18	Sept. 26, 1982	Policy backdown key to school peace
PS19	Sept. 28, 1982	School cutbacks prevent layoffs
PS20	Sept. 29, 1982	\$30m wage grab stings teachers
PS21	Sept. 29, 1982	School bill blasted
PS22	Sept. 30, 1982	Irate teachers call strategy meeting
P01	Oct. 1, 1982	B.C. teachers 'facing 1983 pay cut'
P02	Oct. 4, 1982	Teachers considering strike action
P03	Oct. 13, 1982	Teachers lose one day's pay
P04	Oct. 17, 1982	Premier won't attend
P05	Oct. 17, 1982	Special-needs youngsters hit by curbs
P06	Oct. 19, 1982	Teachers get Vander Zalm
P07	Oct. 20, 1982	Vander Zalm levels new blast

## APPENDIX A (Continued)

Code	Date	Title
P08	Oct. 21, 1982	Problem is you, minister told
P09	Oct. 24, 1982	BCTF angry over insult to Vander Zalm
P010	Oct. 28, 1982	Teachers to refuse overtime
P011	Oct. 28, 1982	Vander Zalm wants boards to gut teacher pacts
P012	Oct. 29, 1982	More to come - Vander Zalm
PN1	Nov. 2, 1982	School trustees asking Bennett what gov't plans
PN2	Nov. 3, 1982	More cuts to schools inevitable - minister
PN3	Nov. 9, 1982	Teachers up ante
PN4	Nov. 10, 1982	Mergers studied
PN5	Nov. 10, 1982	Vander Zalm flunks students for poor grammar
PN6	Nov. 12, 1982	B.C. asked to teach creation
PN7	Nov. 12, 1982	Teachers taking day without pay
PN8	Nov. 14, 1982	Vander Zalm says he's not sorry
PN9	Nov. 14, 1982	B.C. students face June start of gov't exams
PN10	Nov. 15, 1982	Teachers blast exam plan
PN11	Nov. 16, 1982	Education, legal cuts to be top NDP targets
PN12	Nov. 16, 1982	Weinstein hits direct approach to Vander Zalm
PN13	Nov. 18, 1982	Students learn practical politics
PN14	Nov. 18, 1982	School sale
PN15	Nov. 22, 1982	Board braces for teacher layoffs
PD1	Dec. 7, 1982	Teacher firings delayed
PD2	Dec. 7, 1982	Teachers face contractual setback
PD3	Dec. 23, 1982	B.C. education figures contradict conventional wisdom: Dollars don't seem to help school standards
PD4	Dec. 24, 1982	Vander Zalm criticized by LRB panel
PD5	Dec. 29, 1982	Awards spark new education fights
PD6	Dec. 29, 1982	Teachers can't count on more than 3% hike
PJ1	Jan. 3, 1983	Trustees back bargaining
PJ2	Jan. 4, 1983	Vander Zalm is told he has no class
PJ3	Jan. 5, 1983	Students fail to soar in science skill
PJ4	Jan. 6, 1983	Three grades face exams
PJ5	Jan. 10, 1983	Teachers hit pay problem
PF1	Feb. 4, 1983	Gov't will impose budgets on rebel boards
PF2	Feb. 6, 1983	Old sex survey catches up to Vander Zalm
PF3	Feb. 7, 1983	Minister's sex quiz protest came after local apologies



## APPENDIX A (Continued)

Code	Date	Title
PF4	Feb. 8, 1983	Vander Zalm slammed in sex case
PF5	Feb. 9, 1983	Vander Zalm OKs new sex guide
PF6	Feb. 10, 1983	Sex quiz no big deal - teacher
PF7	Feb. 13, 1983	School boards buck limits
PF8	Feb. 14, 1983	Bawdy Bard bit bounces back into school book
PF9	Feb. 15, 1983	Vancouver schools sent Victoria trouble
PF10	Feb. 17, 1983	Three Rs are back with bang
PF11	Feb. 17, 1983	Minister assails BCTF
PF12	Feb. 18, 1983	'Get rid of Vander Zalm' - teachers
PF13	Feb. 18, 1983	Cost-cut duo sets hearings
PF14	Feb. 18, 1983	Core curriculum has loose ends
PF15	Feb. 20, 1983	Vander Zalm plan 'would hurt natives'
PF16	Feb. 20, 1983	B.C. students face toughest test
PF17	Feb. 22, 1983	Vander Zalm laughs off resignation call
PF18	Feb. 24, 1983	Poll favors education spending
PM1	Mar. 2, 1983	Teachers urged to vote on job-security plan
PM2	Mar. 6, 1983	BCTF seeks negotiations with premier
PM3	Mar. 8, 1983	School horror tales don't add up, math study shows
PM4	Mar. 9, 1983	He still seeks more math
PM5	Mar. 9, 1983	Negotiations set on teacher issues
PM6	Mar. 11, 1983	Vander Zalm to square off with critic
PM7	Mar. 11, 1983	Blackout on school talks
PM8	Mar. 12, 1983	Teachers protests growing
PM9	Mar. 14, 1983	Education debaters withdraw
PM10	Mar. 15, 1983	Trustees fear deal with gov't
PM11	Mar. 16, 1983	Teacher talks just 'ploy' school trustees claim
PM12	Mar. 16, 1983	School health workers win reprieve from axe
PM13	Mar. 18, 1983	BCTF labels gov't talks a 'hoax'
PM14	Mar. 18, 1983	I was right on BCTF: Vander Zalm
PM15	Mar. 23, 1983	Local school powers urged
PM16	Mar. 23, 1983	Gov't eyes offer to teachers
PM17	Mar. 24, 1983	Trustees slam minister for 'talk' of local control
PM18	Mar. 24, 1983	Teachers nearer pay deal
PM19	Mar. 25, 1983	Angry trustees decide to tell Vander Zalm to his face
PM20	Mar. 29, 1983	Gov't does U-turn on teacher pay
PAp1	Apr. 3, 1983	Vander Zalm is biding his time

## APPENDIX A (Continued)

Code	Date	Title
PAP2	Apr. 4, 1983	Teachers show new solidarity
PAP3	Apr. 4, 1983	Vander Zalm sabbatical decision the biggest gamble of his career
PAP4	Apr. 5, 1983	Teachers vote on move to abandon School Act
PAP5	Apr. 13, 1983	Bennett will hold line on school-tax mill rate
PAP6	Apr. 13, 1983	Strike-right idea was gov't's

EditorialsSun

SEA1	Aug. 18, 1982	Back to school
SEA2	Aug. 28, 1982	School daze
SES3	Sept. 1, 1982	Birds of a feather
SES4	Sept. 17, 1982	Minister of Threats
SES5	Sept. 30, 1982	That'll teach 'em
SEN6	Nov. 2, 1982	He never learns
SEF7	Feb. 10, 1983	Vander Zambia
SEF8	Feb. 18, 1983	Class warfare
SEM9	Mar. 2, 1983	Behind the scenes
SEM10	Mar. 25, 1983	Quite an education
SEAP11	April 6, 1983	Unnecessary layoffs
SEM12	May 18, 1983	Don't hurry back

Province

PEA1	Aug. 26, 1982	Political axe is swinging
PEA2	Aug. 29, 1982	Minister ham-handed, again
PES3	Sept. 19, 1982	Education cuts
PES4	Sept. 26, 1982	Remove Vander Zalm
PES5	Sept. 30, 1982	Order in the school chaos
PEO6	Oct. 4, 1982	The crazy world of Vander Zalm
PEO7	Oct. 22, 1982	Vander Zalm in the bear pit
PEO8	Oct. 29, 1982	On teacher bargaining
PEO9	Oct. 31, 1982	When Vander Zalm speaks
PEN10	Nov. 2, 1982	On educating Vander Zalm
PEM11	Nov. 12, 1982	If it's cheaper, insure elsewhere
PEN12	Nov. 16, 1982	One simple exam won't work
PED13	Dec. 30, 1982	More school chaos
PEF14	Feb. 10, 1983	Why all those school parents are furious

## APPENDIX A (Continued)

Code	Date	Title
PEF15	Feb. 14, 1983	When students ask about sex
PEF16	Feb. 18, 1983	Bumbling towards a new curriculum
PEF17	Feb. 20, 1983	Restrain Vander Zalm
PEM18	Mar. 24, 1983	School-baiting is abating
PEAp19	Apr. 6, 1983	Are teachers professionals or unionists?
PEJu20	June 10, 1983	Mess left by Vander Zalm

ColumnistsSun

Code	Date	Title	Columnist
SCA1	Aug. 11, 1982	Moving furniture in a burning house	Denny Boyd
SCA2	Aug. 28, 1982	In the spirit of Horatio Alger	Marjorie Nichols
SCA3	Sept. 11, 1982	Many parents will cheer the tiger	Les Bewley
SCS4	Sept. 21, 1982	It's time to examine the product	Les Bewley
SCS5	Sept. 21, 1982	Education minister gives a lesson in creation of havoc	Marjorie Nichols
SCS6	Sept. 29, 1982	Education bill is a deliciously devious work of political art	Marjorie Nichols
SCS7	Sept. 30, 1982	Education bill invites boards to start teacher-bashing	Marjorie Nichols
SC08	Oct. 29, 1982	Employers hardest hit by insurance premium increase	Marjorie Nichols
SCN9	Nov. 13, 1982	The drinkers are letting B.C. down	Denny Boyd
SCD10	Dec. 16, 1982	Of estimates, portents, and rumors	Marjorie Nichols
SCJ11	Jan. 4, 1983	The foundations must	Les Bewley

## APPENDIX A (Continued)

Code	Date	Title	Columnist
SCJ12	Jan. 5, 1983	It's easy to be upbeat if unpleasant facts are ignored	Marjorie Nichols
SCJ13	Jan. 8, 1983	Who'll speak up for the teachers	Nicole Parton
SCF14	Feb. 12, 1983	Some cosmetic budget-cutting	Marjorie Nichols
SCF15	Feb. 4, 1983	Principals as managers managers	Noel Herron
SCF16	Feb. 23, 1983	Not an ordinary minister subject to ordinary discipline	Marjorie Nichols
SCAp17	Apr. 2, 1983	Vander Zalm's taking a breather	Denny Boyd
SCAp18	Apr. 4, 1983	Socred ship on shoals of indecision	Marjorie Nichols

Province

Code	Date	Title	Columnist
PCA1	Aug. 12, 1982		Allan Fotheringham
PCA2	Aug. 27, 1982	Putting it in plain English	Crawford Kilian
PCS3	Sept. 7, 1982		Allen Garr
PCS4	Sept. 11, 1982		Mike Tytherleigh
PCS5	Sept. 9, 1982		Allen Garr
PCS6	Sept. 16, 1982	'Monstrous', 'damnable', 'traitorous': A look at B.C.'s policies on education	Joseph Katz
PCS7	Sept. 30, 1982	Inciting school yard brawls	Jack Clarke
PCO8	Oct. 4, 1982		Allen Garr
PCO9	Oct. 17, 1982	Teachers, school boards unlikely allies on cutbacks	Allen Garr
PCO10	Oct. 31, 1982		Allen Garr
PCN11	Nov. 3, 1982		Mike Tytherleigh

## APPENDIX A (Continued)

Code	Date	Title	
PCN12	Nov. 5, 1982		Mike
PCN13	Nov. 2, 1982		Tytherleigh
PCD14	Dec. 21, 1982	Why the Bible should be taught: Next time God wants Vander Zalm's help He will think twice	Allen Garr Crawford Kilian
PCD15	Dec. 28, 1982	How \$3 per British Columbia can avert gutting the schools	Crawford Kilian
PCJ13	Jan. 6, 1983		Allen Garr
PCJ17	Jan. 11, 1983	Many 'dumb ideas' expected in new schools act	Crawford Kilian
PCJ18	Jan. 13, 1983	The irrelevance of Vander Zalm	Jack Clarke
PCF19	Feb. 9, 1983	Baiting a school administrator is easy but ...	Crawford Kilian
PCF20	Feb. 15, 1983	First tremors of a political earthquake coming from schools	Crawford Kilian
PCF21	Feb. 17, 1983	Vander Zalm kept on a short chain	Allen Garr
PCF22	Feb. 24, 1983		Allen Garr
PCF23	Feb. 24, 1983	In the wacky world of Bill Vander Zalm	Jack Clarke
PCM24	Mar. 23, 1983	Education rows have got public talking	Mike Tytherleigh
PCM25	Mar. 20, 1983	Handle The Zalm or choke again, Bill	Allen Garr
PCM26	Mar. 21, 1983	Bill Vander Zalm has nothing to lose by sitting this one out	Mike Tytherleigh
PCM27	Mar. 24, 1983	Bill - you're creating more problems	Allen Garr
PCM28	Mar. 29, 1983	Nervous disorder afflicts the province	Allen Garr
PCM29	Mar. 29, 1983	Tough questions about school that we can't afford to duck	Crawford Kilian

## APPENDIX A (Continued)

Code	Date	Title	
PCAp30	Apr. 5, 1983	Many dropouts and \$50 million may be curriculum's cost	Crawford Kilian
PCAp31	Apr. 8, 1983	Socreds given the boots	Allen Garr
PCAp32	Apr. 12, 1983	Some suggestions for the next minister of education	Crawford Kilian
PCAp33	Apr. 17, 1983	Bill Vander Zalm has nothing to offer	Jack Clarke

Letters to the Editor

Code	Date	Title
<u>Sun</u>		
SLS1	Sept. 3, 1982	'Denial of complexity is essence of tyranny'
SLS2	Sept. 4, 1982	Let us all hail the emergence of this Renaissance Man
SLS3	Sept. 4, 1982	Let us all hail the emergence of this Renaissance Man
SLS4	Sept. 8, 1982	Lay one on government to save teacher's jobs
SLS5	Sept. 10, 1982	Reasonableness is Bill's long suit
SLS6	Sept. 14, 1982	Young need to learn how to handle money
SLS7	Sept. 18, 1982	Socreds destroying themselves
SLS8	Sept. 24, 1982	He should be forgiven mildly incorrect usage
SLS9	Sept. 27, 1982	Religious instruction needed in schools
SLS10	Sept. 29, 1982	B.C.'s school employees are best-paid in nation
SLS11	Sept. 30, 1982	B.C.'s school employees are best-paid in nation
SLS12	Sept. 30, 1982	B.C.'s school employees are best-paid in nation
SLS13	Sept. 30, 1982	B.C.'s school employees are best-paid in nation

## APPENDIX A (Continued)

Code	Date	Title
SL014	Oct. 2, 1982	Wild shot from Wild Bill hits difficult 8-year-old
SL015	Oct. 4, 1982	Dismissing teachers won't help economy
SL016	Oct. 5, 1982	Record tells sorry story of minister's ineptitude
SL017	Oct. 5, 1982	Record tells story story of minister's ineptitude
SL018	Oct. 6, 1982	Same brush tars the outraged press
SL019	Oct. 13, 1982	Is he serious about 12:48?
SL020	Oct. 20, 1982	Pruning education system is a fruitless exercise
SL023	Oct. 22, 1982	Teachers oppose changes in social studies curriculum
SL024	Oct. 28, 1982	Teacher should be glad she still has employment
SL025	Oct. 28, 1982	Teacher should be glad she still has employment
SL026	Oct. 28, 1982	Teacher should be glad she still has employment
SLN27	Nov. 16, 1982	Vander Zalm should be praised for long-overdue hard decisions
SLN28	Nov. 20, 1982	School boards lack power to match responsibility
SLD29	Dec. 31, 1982	Teaching is third most stressful job
SLJ30	Jan. 9, 1983	Pay increases within 6-and-5
SLJ31	Jan. 18, 1983	Vander Zalm's criticism of Trail schools unjustified
SLF32	Feb. 4, 1983	Shift of coverage for schools is giveaway for private insurers
SLM33	Mar. 7, 1983	Don't attack teachers, help children to read
SLM34	Mar. 1, 1983	Low standards are cheating everyone
SLM35	Mar. 1, 1983	Low standards are cheating everyone
SLM36	Mar. 10, 1983	Bravo for the new school program
SLM37	Mar. 11, 1983	Not tied to my proposal for changes in curricula
SLM38	Mar. 4, 1983	Businessman draws dirty looks from teachers
SLM39	Mar. 14, 1983	A student agrees with Vander Zalm's policy
SLM40	Mar. 29, 1983	Ministry ousts sex educator
SLAp41	Apr. 11, 1983	Debatable tactics used by BCTF's leftist radicals

## APPENDIX A (Continued)

Code	Date	Title
SLAp42	Apr. 11, 1983	Debatable tactics used by BCTF's leftist radicals
SLAp43	Apr. 18, 1983	BCTF never donates to political parties
SLAp44	Apr. 18, 1983	BCTF never donates to political parties
SLMy45	May 2, 1983	The Vander Zalm legacy detailed by its builder

Province

Code	Date	Title
PLA1	Aug. 23, 1982	School trustees support restraints, but not unequal price tags
PLS2	Sept. 5, 1982	Charges challenged
PLS3	Sept. 8, 1982	The last straw
PLS4	Sept. 8, 1982	On speaking good
PLS5	Sept. 10, 1982	On teacher-bashing: 'Education must be a priority, not a target'
PLS6	Sept. 10, 1982	On teacher-bashing: 'Education must be a priority, not a target'
PLS7	Sept. 16, 1982	Free not to pray
PLS8	Sept. 20, 1982	And special thanks to the man who made it all possible
PLS9	Sept. 20, 1982	Teachers face government 'extortion': School cuts spark fears for children
PLS10	Sept. 20, 1982	Teachers face government 'extortion': School cuts spark fears for children
PLS11	Sept. 21, 1982	Contemptuous attitude
PLS12	Sept. 24, 1982	Students feel squeeze
PLS13	Sept. 26, 1982	The two sides go to town on each other: Vander Zalm's school cutbacks: The debate rages on furiously: 'Time to cut the fat and frills from the education system'
PLS14	Sept. 26, 1982	The two sides go to town on each other: Vander Zalm's school cutbacks: The debate rages on furiously: 'Time to cut the fat and frills from the education system'
PLS15	Sept. 26, 1982	The two sides go to town on each other: Vander Zalm's school butbacks: The debate rages on furiously: 'Time to cut the fat and frills from the education system'



## APPENDIX A (Continued)

Code	Date	Title
PLS16	Sept. 26, 1982	'Children at the mercy of an arrogant education minister'
PLS17	Sept. 26, 1982	'Children at the mercy of an arrogant education minister'
PLS18	Sept. 26, 1982	'Children at the mercy of an arrogant education minister'
PLS19	Sept. 26, 1982	'Children at the mercy of an arrogant education minister'
PLS20	Sept. 28, 1982	Education a sacred cow
PL023	Oct. 4, 1982	More on teachers, schools and that education minister
PL024	Oct. 5, 1982	Thanks to Vander Zalm
PL025	Oct. 15, 1982	The abuse of a child
PL026	Oct. 18, 1982	Teachers work harder today, says student who remembers: Mom goes back to high school with her kids
PL027	Oct. 18, 1982	Teachers work harder today, says student who remembers: Mom goes back to high school with her kids
PL028	Oct. 26, 1982	BCTF disowns 'gift'
PLN29	Nov. 9, 1982	School year not unfolding as it should
PLN30	Nov. 9, 1982	School year not unfolding as it should
PLN31	Nov. 16, 1982	Education controversy masks deeper needs: Properly taught pupils need no supervision
PLN32	Nov. 16, 1982	Education controversy masks deeper needs: Properly taught pupils need no supervision
PLN33	Nov. 16, 1982	Education controversy masks deeper needs: Properly taught pupils need no supervision
PLN34	Nov. 16, 1982	Party-line philosophies don't help school system
PLN35	Nov. 19, 1982	Was it truth or bullying?
PLN36	Nov. 19, 1982	Was it truth or bullying?
PLN37	Nov. 21, 1982	Three posers for teachers
PLD38	Dec. 6, 1982	Minister's view absurd
PLD39	Dec. 13, 1982	Letter: Willian N. Vander Zalm
PLJ40	Jan. 9, 1983	Salary dance
PLJ41	Jan. 13, 1983	Skiing outranks schools
PLJ42	Jan. 13, 1983	Skiing outranks schools
PLJ43	Jan. 14, 1983	Stupid, heartless tests
PLJ44	Jan. 21, 1983	Praise to Vander Zalm
PLF45	Jan. 24, 1983	Sex and politicians

## APPENDIX A (Continued)

Code	Date	Title
PLF46	Feb. 27, 1983	Children and old-fashioned morals
PLF47	Feb. 28, 1983	Views through the classroom window: school daze: Should Vander Zalm be praised or fired? B. C.
PLF48	Feb. 28, 1983	Views through the classroom window: school daze: Should Vander Zalm be praised or fired? B. C.
PLF49	Feb. 28, 1983	Views through the classroom window: school daze: Should Vander Zalm be praised or fired? B. C.
PLF50	Feb. 28, 1983	Views through the classroom window: school daze: Should Vander Zalm be praised or fired? B. C.
PLF51	Feb. 28, 1983	Views through the classroom window: school daze: Should Vander Zalm be praised or fired? B. C.
PLF52	Feb. 28, 1983	Views through the classroom window: school daze: Should Vander Zalm be praised or fired? B. C.
PLM53	Mar. 2, 1983	Attack on Vander Zalm disowned
PLM54	Mar. 7, 1983	On many and varied matters of schools
PLM55	Mar. 14, 1983	A student agrees with Vander Zalm's policy
PLM56	Mar. 15, 1983	Views on schools and Vander Zalm
PLM57	Mar. 15, 1983	Views on schools and Vander Zalm
PLM58	Mar. 15, 1983	Views on schools and Vander Zalm
PLM59	Mar. 15, 1983	Views on schools and Vander Zalm
PLM60	Mar. 21, 1983	Doctor wants Vander Zalm
PLAp61	Apr. 5, 1983	That BCTF poll
PLAp62	Apr. 8, 1983	Not the whole story
PLJu63	June 20, 1983	Vander Zalm disagrees the mess was of his making

## REFERENCES

- Agee, W. K. (Ed.). (1968). The press and the public interest. Washington, D. C.: Public Affairs Press.
- Altschull, J. H. (1984). Agents of power: The role of the news media in human affairs. New York: Longman.
- Atwan, R., Orton, B., & Vesterman, W. (Eds.). (1982). American mass media: Industries and issues. New York: Random House.
- Bachrach, P., & Baratz, M. S. (1970). Power and poverty. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Bagdikian, B. H. (1969). The press and its crisis of identity. In W. K. Agee (Ed.), Mass media in a free society. Lawrence, Kansas: The University Press of Kansas.
- Baglot, E. (1984, October). Co-ordinator Special Education, Vancouver School Board. Personal Communication.
- BCSTA. (1981). Analysis of school district budgets 1981. Vancouver: British Columbia School Trustees Association.
- BCSTA. (1982). Analysis of school district budgets 1982. Vancouver: British Columbia School Trustees Association.
- BCSTA. (1983). Trustee reference manual 1983. Vancouver, B. C.: British Columbia School Trustees Association.
- BCTF. (1983). Member's guide to the BCTF 1983-1984. Vancouver, B. C.: British Columbia Teachers' Federation.
- Berelson, B. (1952). Content analysis in communication research. Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press.
- Best, J. J. (1973). Public opinion. Georgetown, Ontario: Irwin-Dorsey.
- Black, E. R. (1982). Politics and the news. Toronto: Butterworths.
- Brucker, H. (1973). Communication is power: Unchanging values in a changing journalism. New York: Oxford University Press.

- Budd, R., Thorp, R. K., & Donohew, L. (1967). Content analysis of communications. New York: MacMillan Company.
- Burns, T. (1977). The organization of public opinion. In J. Curran, M. Gurevitch, & J. Woolacott (Eds.), Mass communication and society (pp. 44-70). Beverly Hills, California: Sage Publications.
- Campbell, B. (1984). Public Perceptions of Education. Marktrend Report presented at BCSTA Metropolitan Branch Seminar, March 24, 1984. Vancouver: BCSTA.
- Canada Act. (1982). The charter of rights and freedoms. Section 2
- Carney, T. (1972). Content analysis. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press.
- Cater, D. (1959). The fourth branch of government. Boston: Houghton.
- Cohen, B. C. (1963). The press and foreign policy. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Coleman, P., & LaRocque, L. (1984). Economies of scale revisited: School district operating costs in British Columbia, 1972-82. Journal of Education Finance, 10, 22-35.
- DeFleur, M. L., & Ball-Rokeach, S. (1975). Theories of mass communication. New York: Longman.
- Duthie, C. (1984, June). Manager Duthie's Book Chain, Vancouver. Personal Communication.
- Gallup, G. H. (1983). The 15th annual Gallup Poll of the public's attitudes toward the public schools. Phi Delta Kappan, 65, 33-48.
- Gans, H. (1979). Deciding what's news. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Gerbner, G. (1969). The analysis of communication content. New York: John Wiley & Sons.
- Giles, V. (1983). The ministry perspective: Personal perceptions and reflections of Ministers of Education in British Columbia from 1953 to 1979. Unpublished master's thesis, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, B. C.
- Gosbee, C. (1984, February). Head of Communications Department, Vancouver School Board. Personal Communication.

- Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1981). Effective evaluation. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Hiebert, R. E., Ungurait, D., & Bohem, T. (Eds.). (1982). Mass media III. New York: Longman.
- Hohenberg, J. (1978). The crisis for the American press. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Holsti, O. (1969). Content analysis for the social sciences and humanities. Don Mills, Ontario: Addison-Wesley Publishing.
- Hoy, W. K., & Miskel, C. G. (1978). Educational administration: theory research and practice. New York: Random House.
- Jamieson, K. H., & Campbell, K. K. (1983). The interplay of influence. Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Company.
- Janowitz, M. (1976). Content analysis and the study of sociopolitical change. Journal of Communication, 26, 10-21.
- Jefferson, T. (1939). Democracy. Appleton: Century Company.
- Katz, E., & Lazarsfeld, P. (1955). Personal influence. New York: The Free Press.
- Kerlinger, F. N. (1964). Foundations of behavioral research. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, Inc.
- Klapper, J. T. (1963). The social effects of mass communication. In W. Schramm (Ed.), Science of human communication. New York: Basic Books.
- Kriehbaum, H. (1972). Pressures on the press. New York: T. Y. Crowell Company.
- LaRocque, L. (1983). Policy implementation in a school district: A matter of chance? Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, B. C.
- Lewin, K. (1947). Channels of group life. Human Relations, 1, 145-152.
- Liebling, A. J. (1961). The press. New York: Ballantine Books.
- MacLean, E. (1981). Between the lines. Montréal: Black Rose Books.

- McCombs, M. E., & Shaw, D. L. (1972). The agenda-setting function of the mass media. Public Opinion Quarterly, 36, 176-187.
- McQuail, D. (1977). The influences and effects of mass media. In J. Curran, M. Gurevich, & J. Woolacott (Eds.), Mass communication and society (pp. 70-94). Beverly Hills, California: Sage Publications.
- Milton, J. (1961). Aeropagitica: A speech for the liberty of unlicensed printing. (H. B. Cotterill, Ed.). London: Macmillan.
- Mollenhoff, C. R. (1968). Life line of democracy. In W. K. Agee (Ed.), The press and the public interest (pp. 175-190). Washington, D. C.: Public Affairs Press.
- Ornstein, N. J., & Elder, S. (1978). Interest groups, lobbying, and policymaking. Washington, D. C.: Congressional Quarterly Press.
- Ramsey, J. (1984, June). Editor of Letters to the Editor, The Sun. Personal communication.
- Rosengren, K. E. (1981). Advances in content analysis. Beverly Hills, California: Sage Publications.
- Royal Commission on Corporate Concentration. (1977). The newspaper and freedom of information (Study #23). Ottawa, Canada: Canadian Government Printers.
- Sanders, W. B., & Pinhey, T. K. (1983). The conduct of social research. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Schulte, H. H. (1981). Reporting public affairs. New York: MacMillan Publishing.
- Seymour-Ure, C. (1973). The political impact of mass media. New York: Constable.
- Smith, B. (1981). Education: A report from the minister. British Columbia: The Ministry of Education.
- Smith, D. D. (1968). Cognitive consistency and the perception of other's opinions. Public Opinion Quarterly, 32, 1-11.
- Stanfield, R. (1980, October 2). The media and politics: The trend of distributing. Toronto Globe and Mail, p. 7.
- Tebbel, J. (1974). The compact history of the American newspaper. New York: Crowell.

- Thomson, K. R. (1977, August 15). Time, p. 47.
- Tuchman, G. (1978). Making news: A study in the construction of reality. New York: The Free Press.
- Volkart, C. (1983, December). The Sun education reporter. Personal communication.
- Warren, J. (1984, June). Editorial Office, The Province. Personal Communication.
- Wicker, T. (1978). On press. New York: Viking.
- Winston, B. (1973). The image of the media. London: Davis-Poynter.