

# FREEDOM FLYER

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE FREEDOM PARTY OF ONTARIO

JULY 1992

**'Please Teach My Child To Read...'**

**'WHOLE LANGUAGE'**

and the

**Politics of Reading**



## WHAT IS 'WHOLE LANGUAGE'?

The use of **whole language** is widely being identified as a major cause of Canada's growing illiteracy problem, particularly in reference to graduates of the public school system who nevertheless remain "functionally illiterate."

A clear, consistent definition of **whole language** is very difficult to come by, since many have a different definition and understanding of what is meant by the term, and also because the term can be used in different contexts. Some define "whole language" strictly within the context of imparting reading skills -- as a teaching technique differentiated from the technique of teaching phonics. Still others refer to a broader concept: the "**whole language philosophy**".

Depending on the scope of one's perspective, either approach can be an acceptable way to use the term **whole language**. However, "whole language" as contrasted to phonics is clearly just one narrow application (see illustration of **Freedom Party's Ontario Information Bulletin**) of a much broader **whole language philosophy**, making the latter usage the more relevant one. Brochures provided by school boards explicitly promote a "whole language philosophy", which is central to their group-oriented and "child-centered" approach to teaching.

A growing mountain of evidence shows that the **whole language philosophy** is based on a number of verifiably incorrect and false assumptions, leaving it more accurately defined as an education **cult**, one that fails to prove objective results. The cult of "whole language," though not the term, has been around in North America for much longer that public educators care to admit.

Over the years, variants of the "whole language philosophy" have been referred to as **universal instruction, visual method, look-and-say, whole word, word method, sight reading, top-down, whole-to-part, top-to-bottom, real books, Aldine method, Scott, Foresman Method, whole language, psycholinguistics**, and the **alternative approach**, among others.

The confusion created by constantly changing the terms that all refer to the same "philosophy" has been the main tactic by which "whole language" has survived in the public school system. Over the years, instead of abandoning one of the above-mentioned teaching techniques whenever it was discovered to be ineffectual,

educators using the technique simply changed its name to create the illusion that the old technique had been abandoned or "improved upon." '**Whole language**' is simply one of the later terms given to an education philosophy that is continuing to produce poor results --- most visibly in the teaching of literacy skills.

The only thing that makes the term '**whole language**' more significant than previously-used terms is the unprecedented number of parents, students, and educators who have come to identify that specific term with the increasingly poor literacy skills of public school graduates. In other words, "whole language" is a term that the public can identify with.

Already, local school boards and the provincial Ministry of Education are making new efforts to "redefine" **whole language** to make it sound more appealing to its detractors. "Whole language", we are now being told, "includes and prescribes **graphophonics**," yet another term to add to the growing list of "whole language aliases" --- and one calculated to appease supporters of the **phonics** based approach to literacy.

Whichever term our government-run educational monopoly uses to disguise a primary cause of its poor performance and unjustifiably-high education taxes, the only identifiable "philosophy" motivating the "whole language" approach is the philosophy of **egalitarianism**. You'll see this philosophy most-often expressed in terms like "Success for Every Student...", which explains the educational monopoly's evasions relating to the issues of **objective educational standards, testing, objective performance, results measurements**.

**The WHOLE LANGUAGE issue is fundamental to every citizen and taxpayer's understanding of what's wrong with our schools today --- from ever-increasing education taxes to the ever-decreasing results taxpayers get for their money.**

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### ➡ GET THE DETAILS!

Get your copy of Freedom Party's **JUST SAY 'KNOW' TO 'WHOLE LANGUAGE'**. See both sides of the issue presented as objectively and fairly as possible, including reprints of direct challenges to Freedom Party's campaign, and reprinted media coverage (and opinion) relating to the issue of "whole language." Please call or write. See green box on back cover for details.



## Education and the "Whole Language" issue...

# FREEDOM PARTY LAUNCHES PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

LONDON, OTTAWA, TORONTO, SARNIA (March 26, 1992 - present) - **Freedom Party** is continuing with the second phase of its public awareness campaign on the **quality of education** in Ontario by launching another door-to-door distribution of thousands of **Ontario Information Bulletins**. The bulletins warn against the failings and pitfalls of **WHOLE LANGUAGE** and promote the teaching of **PHONICS** as the proven method of teaching **reading, writing, and spelling**.

The campaign began in London and was timed to coincide with London Board of Education budget hearings which were held on March 28, 1992 (see coverage).

"My experience as a trustee candidate in (London's) Ward 7 during the last municipal election convinced me that many of our education tax dollars may be doing more harm than good," said **FP leader Robert Metz** in the party's media release. "I was overwhelmed by the number of parents with whom I came in contact who were deeply concerned that their children were not able to read, write, or spell. At a time when the London Board of Education is demanding more tax increases from the public, it is vital that we examine the value of what we get for our money."

### MOTIVES QUESTIONED

The principal of *Sherwood Fox Public School* in London pub-

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## ONTARIO INFORMATION BULLETIN

(A Public Service Provided by the FREEDOM PARTY OF ONTARIO)

*Parents & Taxpayers Beware!*

# SCHOOLS FAILING OUR CHILDREN!

**YOUR EDUCATION TAX DOLLARS MAY BE DOING MORE HARM THAN GOOD! SOME STARTLING FACTS:** 17% of all high school graduates in Canada are **ILLITERATE** (Southam Survey). 40% of Canadians **CAN'T READ** due to limited or non-existent reading skills (Statistics Canada Report, 1989). The **DROP OUT RATE** is approaching 30%! Canada has a growing **SKILLS SHORTAGE** and **UNEMPLOYMENT** rate because Canadian schools do not target needed skills (Canadian Business, Feb/91). More parents than ever are becoming disillusioned with the **LACK OF OBJECTIVE STANDARDS** in the school system. More than ever are turning to **REMEDIAL SCHOOLS!**

These alarming statistics are just a sampling of the growing list of evidence that the way many of our children are being taught to **READ, WRITE, AND SPELL** within the public education system is a disastrous failure. Currently known as **WHOLE LANGUAGE**, this approach to teaching literacy skills is increasingly replacing the teaching of **PHONICS**. As a result, more and more parents are resorting to alternative methods of teaching their own children to read while school boards continue to demand more of their education tax dollars.

**BE INFORMED!** Arm yourself with the facts! **JUST SAY 'KNOW' TO WHOLE LANGUAGE!** Don't be fooled by the **WHOLE LANGUAGE CON GAME!** **COMPARE FOR YOURSELF!**

### WHOLE LANGUAGE

- (1) An authoritarian conditioning process based on unnecessary **memorization and guesswork** (i.e., the letters *c, a, and t* mean 'cat' because 'teacher says so').
- (2) Children are taught to **recognize** (not read) words first, then to **copy** (not write) them. They **never learn to spell** properly.
- (3) Children are forced to memorize words one at a time, and the program has **no definite end**. A victim of whole language continually comes across words he or she has not memorized.
- (4) Requires individual supervision of students, often leaving the rest of the class unsupervised. This is often used by teachers' unions as an excuse to **reduce class sizes, to hire additional teachers, and to raise taxes**.
- (5) **Whole language is a failure**. Its name has been changed ('look-say', 'whole word', 'word method', 'top-down', and 'whole reading', among others) each time the failure becomes obvious.
- (6) Has been associated with **physical and emotional problems** in children, including insomnia, headaches, stomach aches, defiance, and temper outbursts.

### PHONICS

- (1) An **independent learning process** which does not rely on the authority of teachers or educational 'experts' (i.e., the letters *c, a, and t* mean 'cat' because that is the sound those letters represent phonetically).
- (2) Children are taught to **read, spell, and write** at the same time.
- (3) Children generally **complete** the entire program in **six months**, after which they can read, write, and spell any number of words, even those with which they are not familiar.
- (4) Does not require individual supervision, a need for smaller class sizes, or the hiring of additional teachers, making it extremely **cost effective**.
- (5) **Phonics works**. It is not new or difficult and has always been called phonics.
- (6) A rewarding experience which **instills pride, self respect, and a sense of accomplishment**.

*Above: The front-side of Freedom Party's door-to-door bulletin on whole language. Public response to the bulletin has been highly positive, while response from the government's education monopoly has frequently adopted a hostile tone.*



## EDUCATION

# Language learning battle lines drawn

Critics of the whole language approach want the more traditional phonics method used in schools.

By Kelley Teahen  
The London Free Press

At first glance, it's a fight about how to teach little children to read.

But with closer examination, the brouhaha surrounding whole language education is nothing less than a titanic clash of political and philosophical wills.

The latest skirmish has surfaced at the London board of education, where some parents and at least one political party are giving the board failing grades for how it teaches children to read, write and spell. A special public meeting on the issue is coming up Tuesday night.

In the last two years, similar clashes have occurred in the Middlesex County board of education and the London and Middlesex County Roman Catholic school board. Other pockets of concern have surfaced around Southwestern

Ontario, especially in Elgin County.

This time, the political edge is out in the open. Anti-whole language talk flowed freely from taxpayer coalition candidates during the 1991 trustee elections. The latest push comes in a flyer distributed this spring by the Freedom Party of Canada.

The flyer, with the headline 'Schools Failing Our Children', argues that the phonics system of teaching reading is superior to the whole language system now used in schools. So far, 20,000 copies have been distributed.

Robert Metz, president of the Freedom party, says parents should have a choice in how their children are educated. Offer classes using both methods and let parents choose, he says. He and Craig Stevens, who follows education

See **BATTLE LINES** page B2 ►

## TEACHING METHODS

## WHOLE LANGUAGE

- ❑ **Called whole-to-part approach, or top-to-bottom way of teaching language:** When children learn to speak, they hear adults speaking fluently and catch on first by recognizing simple words, then learning to speak them. They learn how to put words together correctly through trial and error. Whole language teaches reading and writing skills in the same way: The children are immersed in written words — through story hours and shared reading — and then encouraged to express themselves as best they can, with correct use learned and achieved over time.
- ❑ **Supporters' arguments:** They say whole language is the best of all teaching worlds. "Whole language is precisely that — dealing with all elements of communications. Whole language is not a particular approach, and phonics, spelling and vocabulary are part of the whole," said Darrel Skidmore, director, London board of education.
- ❑ **Detractors' arguments:** They say the method leaves many children able to read only words they have memorized, rather than being able to sound out new words. Spelling and grammar are ignored in favor of "expressiveness" and children aren't given the discipline required to master language literacy.

## PHONICS METHOD

- ❑ **Called bottom-to-top, or part-to-whole approach:** Children learn the sound of letters, then sound out words, learn grammar rules and then progress to reading and writing sentences. Children learn to read from "readers," made up of stories using words that clearly follow phonics rules.
- ❑ **Supporters' arguments:** They call it "teacher-proof" (because step-by-step instructions are prescribed in textbooks), disciplined, and a system where progress is easily measurable.
- ❑ **Detractors' arguments:** They say phonics may teach the sound of words but not meanings. A child isn't encouraged to write or develop a love of books and reading because they aren't allowed to write sentences until they have learned how to spell each word.

✎ **Above and Above Right:** June 8, 1992 coverage on the front-page of the City & District section of the *London Free Press* highlights Freedom Party's efforts to force the **whole language** issue into the public arena.

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licly questioned **Freedom Party's** political motivation for "launching an attack on teaching strategies," citing tax savings as the party's primary consideration. Ironically, the principal acknowledged that current teaching trends have been supported by "the Education Ministries of all the major political parties," yet went on to challenge **Freedom Party's** legitimate interest in the **quality of education** received for tax dollars.

Given that well of 20% of the provincial budget and over 50% of municipal taxes go to fund the government's educational monopoly, it would be most remiss for any serious political party not to get involved in the issue.

## ✎ A QUESTION OF CHOICE

**Individual freedom of choice** is, and always has been, the primary motivation behind every campaign on which **Freedom Party** has embarked. The party's record of action and advocacy on this principle is consistent, documented, and dates back to the party's initial foundation in 1984. **Freedom Party** first publicly campaigned for freedom of choice in education in 1985.

"If parents could choose how their children are taught to read and write," says **FP leader Robert Metz**, "there would be no 'whole language' debate. Parents deserve, and should demand, a choice in not only where their education tax dollars

are being spent, but in how those dollars are being spent."

## ✎ CAMPAIGN EXPANDS - SUPPORTERS NEEDED

**Freedom Party's Ontario Information Bulletins** on "whole language" have, as of this printing, been distributed in the communities of Ottawa, Toronto, London, Sarnia, and Oxford county. Any readers who may be interested in financially sponsoring the distribution of our pamphlets and information packages (in their own local communities) are invited to contact **Freedom Party** for details. Remember, your contributions are tax-credible! We also need volunteers for door-to-door deliveries. The information bulletins can be easily

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B2

## BATTLE LINES: Debate part of two larger issues

► From page B1

issues for the London-Middlesex Taxpayers' Coalition, believe the whole language method has been pushed because ideally it requires small class sizes — which means hiring more teachers.

"Whole language instruction being used in schools today has become politicized," Stevens will admit after much prodding.

A 1990 paper by University of Western Ontario psychology professor C. H. Vanderwolf points out that support for phonics is seen "as simply one aspect of right-wing political views," a perception he says shouldn't keep schools from using phonics, which he believes is the best method of language instruction.

**QUALITY:** On the opposite side are professional educators like Darrel Skidmore, the London board of education's director.

"The whole language debate is one small element of two much larger issues," he says. "The first is the whole issue of quality assurance. People feel they're paying a lot of dollars for education and, therefore, they want assurance they're getting good value for the dollar."

The second, he says, is the comparison issue: how a child

### If You Go

- **What:** Program committee meeting on whole language.
- **Where:** London board of education office, 1250 Dundas St. E.
- **When:** Tuesday, 7 p.m.
- **Who:** The public is invited to make presentations or simply attend. If you wish to make a presentation, call the executive secretary's office, 452-2145, to register.

compares with his classmates; how a school compares with the rest of the board; how the board compares to the province, to other provinces and to schools around the world.

Mix into the equation the shifting responsibility from home to school, where schools are expected to take on everything from feeding hungry kids to teaching them how to get along with other little human beings, responsibilities once left exclusively to the home, and you have the final political picture: a social-responsibility vision of education, where every child must be encouraged, versus the best-academic-bang-for-our-buck supporters.

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catered to local communities with local contact numbers.

In the confusion that is certain to be generated in the on-going "whole language versus phonics" debate **Freedom Party** will continue to monitor the issue and to inform the public via its ongoing door-to-door bulletins, media releases, and specialized publications.

<END>

### GET THE DETAILS!

Copies of **Freedom Party's Just Say 'Know' to Whole Language** publication are now available to FP members and supporters on request. Please call or write. See green box on back cover for details.

## STUDENTS MOBILIZED AGAINST FREEDOM PARTY

LONDON (April 24, 1992) - In a surprisingly lengthy challenge to **Freedom Party's** campaign against "whole language", the principal of *Sherwood Fox Public School* in London had a two-page response to FP's *Ontario Information Bulletin* distributed around her school's neighbourhood by children attending the school. This raised the anger and surprise of many parents, who had signed consent forms leading them to believe that their children were delivering flyers promoting "Education Week, May 4-8".

This prompted the formation of a local parents' group that raised an issue with the principal over the appropriateness of her using school time and resources --- including their children --- to promote "the expression of personal opinions and political ideology" which should have "no place in school newsletters."

### ALIBIS IN ACTION

For **Freedom Party**, the written challenge to its "whole language" information bulletin proved to be the best possible way to illustrate how "whole language" supporters consistently defend "whole language" with the same narrow, dogmatic, "alibis" and "aliases" listed in FP's *Just Say 'Know' To 'Whole Language'*.

As a consequence, the entire challenge to FP's information bulletin was reprinted in its publication, along with a point-by-point response to each argument and "alibi" used. As of this writing, no challenges to **Freedom Party's** claims about "whole language" have resulted in the revelation of any inaccuracies.

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## 'WHOLE LANGUAGE' BULLETIN TERMED 'HATE LITERATURE'

LONDON (June 9, 1992) - **Freedom Party** was accused of doing "damage... to schools and communities which are already struggling with the many challenges of the times" by its distribution of "hate literature" --- the information bulletins warning against "whole language."

In a letter to the party which went so far as to suggest that "truth and objectivity are obviously not the prim-

ary pursuits of the Freedom Party," **R. D. Corsaut**, in conjunction with the staff of *St. George's Public School* in London, requested "please do not send us further hate literature until you check out the realities."

### INVITATION OFFERED BUT DECLINED

Despite the tone of the letter directed against **Freedom Party**, an invitation was extended to party ex-

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cutive "to visit St. George's school and observe in classrooms as so many of our parents and volunteers do."

Unfortunately, when **FP secretary Robert Vaughan** called Corsaut to accept his invitation it was verbally declined, purportedly on the grounds that he "did not want the visit to be used for political gain." Unlike the original invitation, Corsaut refused to acknowledge his withdrawn invitation in writing, nor did he wish to discuss the issue of

"whole language" at any length.

#### ✶ EVASION AGAIN

In an effort to highlight the consistent evasive tactics used by "whole language" supporters, **FP leader Robert Metz** issued a media release to the London-area, charging that "this evasion is yet another example of how our tax-funded public school system does not want the 'whole language' issue to be addressed."

<END>

## Still Failing Our Children...

# FP ATTACKS 'WHOLE LANGUAGE' SPENDING

LONDON (March 28, 1992) - In separate presentations to the London Board of Education's public budget hearings, **FP leader Robert Metz** and **Provincial Secretary Robert Vaughan** both attacked the direct and indirect costs associated with the **whole language philosophy**.

Reactions of trustees and school board administrators to Metz's and Vaughan's comments ranged from disbelief to open hostility, making it clear that the "whole language" issue touches a very sensitive nerve within the government-run education monopoly.

#### ✶ BUDGET PHILOSOPHY IS THE WHOLE LANGUAGE PHILOSOPHY

That could be because the "whole language" teaching approach is a hidden culprit behind runaway education costs, inflated bureaucracies, and an absence of objective performance standards -- for students, teachers, administrators, and trustees alike.

To illustrate the point, Metz and Vaughan cited how "whole language" budget priorities supported by the Board were directly responsible for unnecessarily high **pupil-teacher ratios**, escalating **costs**, and **lower performance results**.

#### ✶ MESSAGE UNWELCOME

Upon Metz's first mention of the term "**whole language**," Board chairman **Bill Brock, London trustee for Ward**, immediately interrupted, warning that "if you continue with the philosophical debate, your presentation will cease."

Curiously, up to the point of Brock's interruption, the term "philosophy" was never mentioned by Metz, confirming once again that **whole language** is seen in that light by most educational authorities. Brock again re-emphasized a philosophical perspective when he similarly interrupted Robert Vaughan by attempting to divert Vaughan's focus away from the "whole language" issue. He suggested that Vaughan be "invited to a meeting... where you will be able to espouse your philosophy."

"Thank you very much, but it's not my philosophy," Vaughan replied, "and if you'd let me continue, I'll get on with the budget."

#### ✶ WHOLE LANGUAGE COSTS

Among "the most costly side effects of **whole language**," Vaughan cited the following: (1) **large pupil-teacher ratios (PTRs)** as a consequence of the inadequacy of "whole language"; (2) an **excessive number of professional develop-**

**ment days**, "so that (teachers) may be brought up-to-date on new techniques to improve a program which needs to be scrapped"; (3) an **ineffective child-centered approach** that stretches out "the six-month and in some cases, six-week process of learning to read write, and spell into a never-ending process..."; (4) **more "special-educational assistants"** due to a "whole language" caused increase of children thought to be in need of "special help."

Beyond such measurable costs, Vaughan emphasized that "there are some **hidden costs of whole language** that cannot have a price tag put on them": (1) the **harming of children** who have become victims of the approach; (2) **harrassed teachers**, "who are afraid to speak out against what they know to be an inferior system"; (3) **blaming parents** for the illiteracy of their children; (4) an **uncompetitive economy**, forced to absorb "high-school graduates, 17% of whom are functionally illiterate and 40% of whom have some difficulty of one form or another with literacy."

#### ✶ EVASIONS AND DENIALS

Metz and Vaughan were the only two presenters to broach the subject of **whole language** throughout the entire London Board budget hearings;

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✶ **At Right:** June 10, 1992  
*London Free Press*  
 coverage of the London  
 Board of Education's public  
 hearings on **whole**  
 language.

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 they were the only two who were repeatedly interrupted in attempts to have their presentations cease. At one point, it literally came down to a standoff between trustee chairman **Bill Brock** and FP president **Robert Metz**.

In countering Brock's attempt to stop his presentation, Metz challenged: "I was told that I could speak on any subject that concerned the budget of this board. What you're telling me is that you believe my points don't concern the budget and because you disagree with me, I don't have the right to speak." After a long pause, Brock conceded: "Continue."

After fielding a few sarcastic remarks and absurd questions from London Board trustees, Metz concluded his appeal to the board by asking that parents "have the right to question the product before we have to pay for it."

Remarkably, after Metz left the podium, the board proceedings were then interrupted by London Director of Education **Darrel Skidmore**, who then proceeded to accuse **Freedom Party's** information bulletin of being "inaccurate and unfounded." Skidmore charged that the definition of "whole language" as used by **Freedom Party** was "not a definition of 'whole language' as it's defined by this board." Ironically, **Freedom Party's** definition of "whole language" is entirely based on the London board's verbatim description of the term, which the party reprinted in its own **Just Say 'Know' To 'Whole Language'** publication.

SEE NOTICE, NEXT PAGE

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## EDUCATION

# Parents question value of whole language teaching

Whole language teaching was a hot topic at the London board of education Tuesday night. By the end of the meeting, a consensus seemed near: schools must do a better job of determining if it's working for children.

By Kelley Teahen  
*The London Free Press*

*Jois and glad to and net clows and patrin and Good colrs to and big sombrero and net wips.*

A child without diagnosed learning problems wrote that sentence in Grade 3, says parent Bonnie Cumming.

The boy's next report card stated it is "easy to read his approximated spellings."

In Grade 5, the same child was asked to list simple household tools. The list includes "nif, frk, spon," "pansl," "talafon," "lon more" and "ti catl."

That's knife, fork, spoon, pencil, telephone, lawnmower and tea kettle.

**BIG CROWD:** Cumming — and more than 200 others concerned with language education in London schools — crowded into the London board of education chambers Tuesday night to make presentations on "whole language," the approved teaching method used in London schools since 1987.

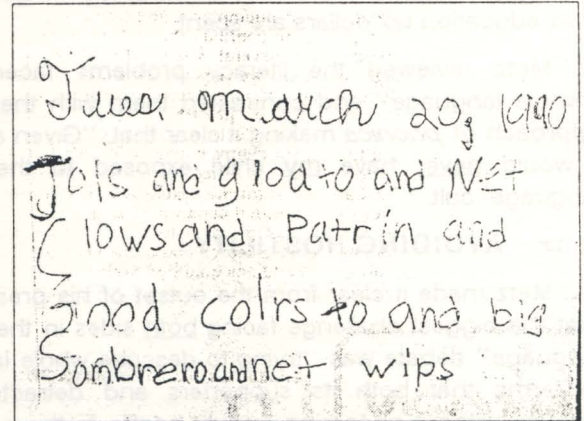
Cumming was one of 29 presenters who gave either oral or written presentations to the board's program committee, which is responsible for overseeing how and what is taught in the city's public classrooms.

She said the child in question finally made spelling progress as well as better neatness in his work after private tutoring.

"What happens when the language program doesn't present the results the system says it will?" asked Cumming. "A faulty education isn't something you can return for a refund, like a washing machine... this is our children's future."

Cumming said the teaching methods now used where teachers follow a child's own pace and teach by encouragement, rather than criticizing when a child doesn't reach high standards, backfire in the end. "If work a student presents is always acceptable, always presentable, no matter what it's like, that is all you will ever get."

Several trustees and education director Darryl Skidmore commented on the thoroughness and thoughtfulness of the presentations, which contained references covering everything from 18th century French philosopher Jean Jacques Rousseau to bibliography lists of modern-day education specialists.



Sam McLeod/The London Free Press

This is one example of a pupil's writing used during a session on whole language education.

Skidmore said he plans to release a directive to the board today giving "quality assurance a higher profile and commitment throughout this system... The London board of education must be willing to put its reputation on the line." While he didn't discuss specifics of his directive, he said the reforms "deal with accountability head-on" and will cover everything from what's taught in the classroom to staff assessment.

### OTHER COMMENTS

□ **Mark Flear, London teacher and parent:** "Whole language is not a magical, mystical method descended from ivory towers. It's common sense." He said expectations for learning reading and writing are skewed: "We expect it will take a child five years to learn enough spoken language to hold a conversation with an adult, but we expect them to cover three times the amount of work (to learn read-

ing and writing) in one-third the time, once they start school."

□ **Robert Metz, Freedom Party of Ontario:** His party, which published a flyer critical of whole language in March and presented a 10-page booklet on the issue Tuesday night, advocates parental choice in education, with parents choosing where to direct their tax dollar. He suggested the board offer phonics-based language instruction in some schools and let parents decide which kind of education they want for their child.

**ASTOUNDED:** "I have been astounded by the degree of hostility directed toward me from whole language supporters," he said, producing as an example a letter from a London school principal that labels the anti-whole-language flyer "hate literature." "We want you to teach the sound of letters to school children. How can this be construed as hate literature?"

### WHOLE LANGUAGE

Sometimes called whole-to-part approach to teaching language. When children learn to speak, they hear adults speaking fluently and catch on by first recognizing words, then learning to speak them. They learn how to put words together correctly through trial and error. Whole language teaches reading and writing skills in the same way: Children are immersed in written words, through story hours and shared reading, and then encouraged to express themselves as best they can, with correct use learned over time. Its supporters say spelling, grammar and phonics (sounding out words) are part of this process; its detractors say some children learn expressiveness, but not the basic building blocks of language, and end up unable to write or read well.



*"Please Teach My Child To Read..."*

## 'WHOLE LANGUAGE' UNDER FIRE

LONDON (June 9, 1992) - In one of dozens of anti-"whole language" presentations made to the London Board of Education by parents and educators, **FP leader Robert Metz** once again offered a solution to the education dilemma --- parental and taxpayer choice in how their education tax dollars are spent.

Metz reviewed the literacy problems faced under "whole language" and contrasted them with the positive approach of *phonics*, making it clear that, "Given a choice, I would never have my child exposed to the 'whole language' cult."

### ☛ AVOIDING HOSTILITY

Metz made it clear from the outset of his presentation that the biggest challenge facing both sides in the "whole language" debate was "trying to describe whole language in terms that both its supporters and detractors can discuss without becoming unduly hostile in the process." He cited his previous experience with trying to raise the issue with the Board which did not want to discuss "whole language" within a budget setting.

"Had I proceeded to talk dollars-and-cents without first explaining what I understood the concept of 'whole language' to be, I know that my listing of costs and my suggestions for savings would have been dismissed out-of-hand or ridiculed for being 'unrealistic' in light of the Board's objectives," declared Metz. He emphasized the hostility surrounding the "whole language" debate and the

"lack of an open willingness to discuss the issue in a meaningful forum." He also questioned how anyone within the educational establishment could possibly regard the simple request that "the sounds of letters be taught to our school children" as "hate literature."

### ☛ JUST SAY "KNOW"

In the interests of hopefully forcing the "whole language" issue into an open and balanced debate, Metz announced the preparation of **Freedom Party's Just Say 'Know'** to 'Whole Language' newsletter.

"As you will see, though we have an open and declared bias against 'whole language,' our material also includes reproductions of this Board's definition of 'whole language,' verbatim transcripts of **FP's** two March 28 submissions to the Board on 'whole language,' a reprint of a direct criticism of our *Ontario Information Bulletin* which was distributed by one London school principal, and a host of information, newsclippings, commentary, debate, and a list of relevant references used to help us prepare our package," announced Metz.

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### ☛ GET THE DETAILS!

Copies of Freedom Party's *Just Say 'Know' To 'Whole Language'* are now available to Freedom Party members and supporters on request. It includes verbatim transcripts of Metz's and Vaughan's whole language presentations to the board. Also reproduced are the London board's own whole language definitions and reproductions of arguments against FP's campaign (see related coverage). There's also a re-cap of Rudolf Flesch's (author of *Why Johnny Can't Read*) *10 Alibis for Whole Language*, and a lot of fascinating press reprints. You'll be an expert on whole language before you 'know' it. See green box on back cover for details on where to write or call for your copy of *Just Say 'Know' To 'Whole Language'*.

## JUST SAY 'KNOW' TO 'WHOLE LANGUAGE'

A Parent-Teacher's Primer  
to the  
Politics of Reading

produced by the  
Freedom Party of Ontario



## ✎ CONSPIRACY AGAINST CHOICE

Metz placed a blunt challenge to all present at the Board's meeting: "If 'whole language' is really so great, what's the problem with dealing with a bit of criticism? Why all the anger, fear, and intimidation?"

"Could it be that perhaps there is something so fundamental about the true nature of 'whole language' that it threatens the powerful educational establishment and teachers' unions?"

The fundamental issue, of course, is **choice**. In an environment where parents/taxpayers/students could direct their education tax dollars to the school of their choice, "whole language" simply would not survive since most people would opt for the best value for their money.

**Choice** is the fundamental issue underlying all political conflicts, and until individual choice is acknowledged as the solution to our education crisis, the conflict is guaranteed to be a perpetual one.

## ✎ BOARD TO MAKE MATTERS WORSE

Despite being presented with an avalanche of evidence, research, and testimonials denouncing "whole language," **Robert Andrews, Program Superintendent** for the London Board of Education informed all presenters in a letter dated June 25/92 that his board would nevertheless continue to make it "a significant priority beginning in September 1992."

He cited that the problems related to "whole language" simply amounted to an "imperfect understanding of the curriculum including Whole Language, by all stakeholders including teachers," a poor "communication with stakeholders/partners in education," and to "a significant inconsis-

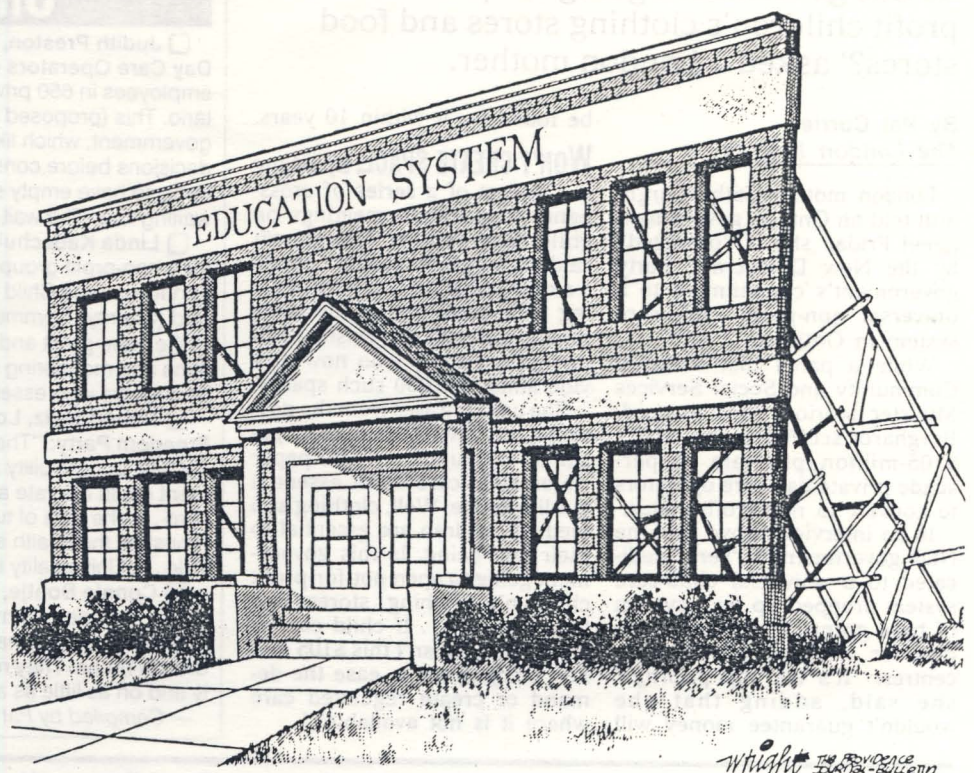
tency in the implementation of a Whole Language philosophy."

It's a classic tragic irony. Given that "whole language" has been promoted as a means of acquiring "language skills", the fact that even those who are promoting it do not understand it or have a clear definition of it is possibly the best proof available to illustrate the inherent inability of "whole language" to impart such skills.

In the meantime, taxpayers will continue to get bilked for billions of education tax dollars that are being spent not only on a system that fails to produce results, but also on the propaganda made necessary to justify the waste.

## ✎ JOIN OUR BATTLE AGAINST 'WHOLE LANGUAGE'

You can support Freedom Party's on-going information campaign on the "whole language" issue by offering to sponsor the printing and distribution of our information bulletins in your community. All contributions are fully tax-creditable which means that you can use some of your hard-earned tax dollars to undo much of the damage being incurred by those who are spending your tax dollars without your consent! For more information or details, please call or write FP headquarters. Details and information are in the green box on the back cover of this newsletter.





*Childcare deformed...***FP DEFENDS PROFIT PRINCIPLE IN DAYCARE****✶ 'SETTING THE STAGE' FOR CHILD CARE MONOPOLY**

LONDON (April 3, 1992) - In an address to the **Ministry of Community and Social Services** on the issue of **child care reform**, **Freedom Party leader Robert Metz** accused the NDP's planned child care strategy of being both greedy and fraudulent --- and a complete disservice to the people it is purportedly intended to help.

Among its objectives in its public consultation paper entitled **Setting the Stage**, the Ministry outlined the

following: (1) the introduction of universality as the overriding premise of government-funded daycare; (2) the expansion of a government monopoly and/or regulation over daycare; (3) the amalgamation of daycare with public education; (4) the elimination of, or handicapping of, private competition in daycare; (5) forced uniformity on the whole daycare industry; (6) the establishment and expansion of a government daycare bureaucracy with "supervisors/administrators such as specialized training in management and administration" (sic); (7) the introduction of employment equity as a "qualification" of caregivers; (8) the

regulation and licensing of home-based child care; (9) the establishment of non-profit and the elimination of market forces as "principles" behind a government-monopolized daycare system, and of course (10) more taxes to pay for the socialist scheme.

**✶ FOUR PRINCIPLES?**

Ironically, the government's consultation paper dares to suggest that the "four guiding principles" of its daycare strategy are **quality, affordability, accessibility, and sound management**.

(PROFIT... cont'd next pg)

# Minister gets earful at session

'Is this government going to open not-for-profit children's clothing stores and food stores?' asked a London mother.

By Pat Currie  
*The London Free Press*

London mother Cathy Burghardt told an Ontario government panel Friday she is "outraged" by the New Democratic Party government's commitment to a universal non-profit child-care system in Ontario.

While a panel that included Community and Social Services Minister Marion Boyd listened, Burghardt scoffed at the NDP's \$105-million program to persuade private day-care operators to convert to non-profit status.

In an interview, Boyd said the NDP government is "very" dedicated to a universal child-care system propped up by a system of base grants and wage subsidies for workers in non-profit centres. "It's our top priority," she said, adding that she wouldn't guarantee money will

be found for it within 10 years.

**WON'T CREATE SPACE:** Speaking at the first of a series of cross-panel consultation meetings on child-care reform, Burghardt said the program wouldn't create a single space for a family needing child care, and at the same time threatened the existence of private operators who now provide almost 30,000 such spaces.

She used phrases from the government's own consultation paper as ammunition. "The paper states child care is an essential public service. Well, clothing and feeding children are essential to their well-being. Is this government going to open not-for-profit children's clothing stores and food stores? ... If child care is essential, why isn't this \$105 million being spent to ease the demand or create regulated care where it is not available?"

**OTHER SUBMISSIONS**

✶ **Judith Preston, Toronto, president of the Association of Day Care Operators of Ontario (ADCO):** "There are about 7,000 employees in 650 private centres that serve 30,000 families in Ontario. This (proposed reform) will destroy our livelihoods ... This government, which likes to say it consults people, made massive decisions before consulting anybody. Ideology reigns supreme. It's ironic to have empty spaces across the province while we have waiting lists. The wait isn't for the space — it's for the assistance."

✶ **Linda Kadachuk, London Private Home Day Care:** Speaking for a non-profit group that included Community Child Home Care of London, Home Child Care Services of Haldimand-Norfolk, and Oxford (County) Community Child Care, Kadachuk welcomed the idea of the base grant and said all four groups want provincial regulations and monitoring that apply to them to apply also to "informal" care-givers who essentially run babysitting services in their homes.

✶ **Robert Metz, London, president and leader of the Ontario Freedom Party:** "The government proposal stresses quality, affordability, accessibility and sound management ... (To say) government could operate a program on any one of these principles is absurd ... the idea of turning child care into the kind of insupportable monsters the health and education systems have become is laughable ... Universality is stupid, wasteful and tragic ..."

✶ **Connie Bontje, Middlesex Community Child Care Development:** A modern farm is a dangerous place for children, but "many rural families don't have any choice at all" except to keep the children at home. They need child care that can take children seasonally and on as little as a day's notice.

— Compiled by Pat Currie and Sandra Coulson *London Free Press*

*Above: Coverage on the front page of the London Free Press (April 4, 1992) captures the negative mood directed at the NDP's "top priority" plans to monopolize a universal daycare system, despite an admitted inability of the government to adequately fund such a system for at least a decade. Given Ontario's high government deficits and eroding tax base, universal daycare in Ontario may be bankrupt before it even starts.*



"To suggest that government can possibly operate on any of these principles is nothing short of absurd," charged Metz in his opening comments to the Ministry. "If there were four good reasons to keep government away from the provision of daycare, the four principles purportedly guiding this consultation paper are among the best."

In his oral presentation to the ministry's panel which included **Minister of Community and Social Services Marion Boyd** and **London South MPP David Winniger**, Metz focussed his criticisms on the Ministry's irrational adherence to the principles of **universality** and **non-profit**.

"If you've been watching the trend, you should know that the current public pressure is for more market forces to come into play, including choice, competition, and accountability to consumers themselves --- not to governments or to the public," argued Metz. "You should also know that universality and the non-profit approach are failing and constantly need to be propped up by continued tax increases, deficits, and service cutbacks."

#### ☞ **THE ROAD TO BANKRUPTCY: UNIVERSALITY**

Given that he was addressing a socialist panel, Metz made it clear that he more than aware that any suggestion to abandon universality would fall on deaf ears: "It seems that the only time politicians consider abandoning universality is when their universal giveaway schemes invariably run their due course to bankruptcy."

Metz repeated his message about the tragedy of universality and of its clear and visible effects on Canada's health, welfare, and education systems.

"It's regrettable but true. Under universality, the needy get pushed out

by the greedy, who unfortunately include politicians of all parties who use universality arguments to buy votes."

#### ☞ **'NON-PROFIT' AS A FRAUD**

"As a consumer, I would much rather pay \$400 a month to a private daycare making 20% profit than pay \$500 or more a month through hidden taxes to a government-monopolized daycare system that is operating on a 'non-profit' system," said Metz. "Indeed, the term 'non-profit' is most misleading as a political appeal, and I might even venture to suggest that it is fraudulent when used in conjunction with saving costs."

Metz spent a large portion of his submission to the ministry contrasting the private concepts of "profits/losses" with the government concepts of "surpluses/deficits".

"As a 'motive', non-profit is

simply political, possibly among the most greedy of all," emphasized Metz.

#### ☞ **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

In his conclusions to the Ministry, Metz offered the following recommendations:

(1) Abandon universality. It will only guarantee bankruptcy and poor service.

(2) Encourage diversity through competition in a free market --- not through regulation and monopoly.

(3) Direct government assistance only to those who need it.

#### ☞ **GET THE DETAILS!**

**Transcripts of Metz's address to the Ministry are now available to FP members and supporters on request. Please call or write. See green box on back cover for details.**

<END>

### **NEXT ISSUE:**

- ☞ **IS IT DISCRIMINATION OR CHOICE?** Freedom Party addresses the **Ontario Human Rights Code Review Task Force** to denounce the enforcement of laws against **"systemic discrimination."**
- ☞ **IT'S STILL THE CENSOR BOARD TO US!** Freedom Party presents an official submission to the **Ontario Law Reform Commission**, in conjunction with its review of the **Ontario Film Review Board**.
- ☞ **DRUG PROHIBITION: IS IT WORTH THE COST?** Discover the frightening truth about the **hemp conspiracy** and the **prohibition** of marijuana that resulted. **Freedom Party** joins the effort to re-educate the public on this controversial issue.
- ☞ **ELECTION REFORM:** Support for the major Ontario political parties is declining, while the alternate parties are showing a significant increase in support. **Freedom Party** joins forces with the **Green Party, Family Coalition Party, C.O.R., Libertarian Party**, and even the **Communist Party** in an address to the **Elections Finances Commission**.
- ☞ **SAVING CANADA:** Author **William Trench** addresses **Freedom Party** supporters in London; **Freedom 200 Pins** awarded to 14 more **FP** supporters.



## WHOLE LANGUAGE BLAMED FOR HIGH ILLITERACY RATES

Sheila Morrison, author of *Unbunbling the Basics* and operator of *Sheila Morrison Schools*, has had more than her fair share of experience with victims of whole language.

"The main reason we have such huge problems with high-school graduates is not that these are dull, unintelligent, unmotivated young people; it is that they have been shortchanged by the educational systems," says Morrison. "Kids need structure. They need to know the limits. The only way to ensure children are learning is to test them."

"Any kid should be able to read anything at all by the time he's eight," insists Morrison. All it takes is consistent, intensive teaching of phonics and repetition.

"Once you have the basics, all the other stuff takes care of itself."

To prove her case, Morrison has developed and produced a set of audio and video teaching tapes to compliment her *Unbunbling the Basics* text and workbooks. With this material, parents can do the job that the public education system is failing at -- teaching their kids to read, write, and spell.

## PARENTS AND EDUCATORS!

### JUST SAY 'KNOW' TO WHOLE LANGUAGE!

YOU CAN TEACH YOUR CHILDREN TO READ IN AS LITTLE AS THREE TO SIX MONTHS!

SHEILA MORRISON'S *UNBUNGLING THE BASICS* HOME EDUCATION KIT IS NOW AVAILABLE THROUGH *FREEDOM PARTY* AT A TREMENDOUS COST SAVING TO YOU! MANY OPTIONS AVAILABLE! CALL OR WRITE FOR DETAILS!

FREEDOM PARTY OF ONTARIO

P.O. Box 2214, Stn. 'A', LONDON, Ontario N6A 4E3

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## 'WHOLE' DEBATE UNNECESSARY, SAYS METZ

"If parents could choose how their children are taught to read and write," says *Freedom Party* leader Robert Metz, "there would be no 'whole language' debate. Unfortunately, parents who find that their children have been handicapped by whole language also discover that they must pay twice to remedy the situation -- once to a government monopoly system that is doing more harm than good, and once again to remedy the damage through alternate schooling or private tutoring."

"Parents deserve, and should demand, a choice in not only **where** their tax dollars are being spent," says Metz, "but in **how** those dollars are being spent."

## NO EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT WHOLE LANGUAGE, SAYS UWO PROFESSOR

An extensive review of the scientific literature on whole language by Dr. Case Vanderwolf, a psychology professor at the University of Western Ontario has revealed the following:

(1) Direct phonics-based teaching produces more accurate reading and better comprehension than the various 'top-down' (whole language) methods of teaching.

(2) Children in whole language programs performed more poorly than phonics groups in reading a passage from a primary reader, reading comprehension, computation, mathematical concepts, and in interpreting what is happening in pictures. No superiority of the whole language groups was found on any objective measure.

(3) No evidence has been found to support the view that whole language results in either more creativity or in better development of higher level concepts than other teaching methods.

(4) Children learn to read more accurately and with better comprehension if their instruction begins with a systematic training in phonics.

(Dr. Vanderwolf's findings appeared in *Orbit*, October 1991, Vol. 22, pages 20 - 22.)

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☛ **Above:** The back-side of *Freedom Party's* door-to-door information bulletin on **whole language**. See page 3 for reproduction of front-side and for coverage relating to our public awareness campaign.

## FREEDOM FLYER

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## FREEDOM PARTY OF ONTARIO

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