



“One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism.” Eph.4:5

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The EB Mirror: CBC Education Board



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The CBC Hailed as Model of Democratic Practice

This commendation was given last Tuesday, April 11th by North West Provincial Delegate of Labour and Social Security, Mr. Ade Simon Fru in the presence of his South West counterpart on the occasion of the renewal of the 2004 Protocol Agreement between officials of the Education Board (EB) as an employer and Staff Representatives from Baptist primary schools and colleges in Cameroon representing the workers.

For one thing, the Labour boss singled out the CBC for praise as a denominational organisation whose democratic principles remain a unique model and a challenge to others. He observed that the concept of the Protocol Agreement is on going, taking cognisance of the fact that this approach was resorted to in an attempt to deal with the unprecedented economic crises of the 1990's wherein state subventions to schools started dwindling fast. The existence of a Protocol Agreement in any economic set up offers a unique opportunity for regular consultations with the workers and their employer. He

expressed gratitude to the EB for sustaining this process as this continued spirit of social dialogue and understanding, doubtless to say, will render the temptations of industrial actions unnecessary.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

In a keynote address, the Baptist Education Secretary, Mr. Tetevi Bodylawson, paid glowing tribute to some of our fallen colleagues who rendered selfless sacrifices in defence of the Education Board. He reminded the staff representatives of the irregular flow of government subventions as he acknowledged the non payment of subventions for 2003, 2004, and 2005 respectively. This is the more reason why the salary plight of the primary school teachers has become compounded. It is against this background that the Baptist Education Scribe urged the workers' representatives to lend him support in looking for alternative sources of funding our education sector rather than continue to rely on the meager government subsidies. He further appealed to the secondary school teachers not to re-

main indifferent to the financial plight of our colleagues of the primary school sector as he declared by way of commitment that from September 2006, all Baptist colleges will contribute to the special fund of 50 million CFA francs which is intended to augment the regular payment of 40% monthly salaries of primary school teachers. He however, reassured the workers' representatives that our HIPC file is not dead after all as he urged them to keep their fingers crossed for a hopeful future. He concluded his address by expressing his profound gratitude to the Provincial Delegates for putting their know-how at the service of the EB.

Meanwhile, greetings were also given to the staff representatives by the CBC General Secretary, the Rev. Charles Tangwa (Proprietor) who used the forum to appeal to the workers representatives to be good ambassadors of truth about the acute and deplorable financial state of the EB. He further thanked God for the financial hard times because, (cont. on pg. 2)

Upcoming Events:

- April 27th and 28th, 2006. Managers and Principals Administrative Meeting where we will discuss the current year and plan for the end of year activities. We also will use this meeting to plan for the commencement for the new academic year 2006-2007.
- May 2-19, 2006. Board of Governor's Meeting will be visiting CBC Secondary schools to take stock on their activities on the current sport evaluation.

The CBC Hailed as Model of Democratic Practice continued.

"it is in difficulties and challenges that we grow than stagnate" he concluded.

DEBATE IN PLENARY

Shortly after these preliminary presentations, the two Provincial Delegates of Labour and Social Security withdrew from the hall to allow for an in-house family discussions between the parties in Protocol. Meanwhile, on resumption, two Memorandums were presented by the Primary and Secondary school Representatives.

A. Primary School Workers' Memo:

1. Called for an extension from 1-2 years 100% salaries preceding retirement by workers who were in service on or before 1993.
2. Decried the non payment of Family Allowances and accrued salary arrears of more than 96 months. Eg. Belo Managerial Area.

B. Secondary School Workers' Memo

On the other hand, the Memorandum presented by the Secondary Schools' Representatives was perhaps more audacious and uncompromising from the opinion of EB officials. Some of the key demands included the following:

1. A call for the total cancellation of the Protocol Agreement and the immediate return to the 1985 government salary scale.
2. The failure which they advocated for two separate Protocol Agreements respectively for Primary School and Secondary School workers as they argued that each sector has its unique peculiarities which individually can better be handled from that perspective.
3. They also called for the immediate reinstatement of the two incremental positions suspended during the 2001 Protocol Accord.
4. Advocated for a five year duration to precede retirement for EB workers who were in service on or before 1993 to earn full salaries as per 1985 government salary scale.

Indeed it must be observed here that the nine point memo from the Secondary Schools' Representatives immediately provoked a storm of mixed reactions from the EB hierarchy. For instance, the General Secretary, the Rev. Charles Tangwa, rather in a comic style equated this Memo to a man "asking for a pound of flesh nearest to his heart." The Baptist Education Secretary on the other hand, was immediately outraged and disgusted, calling the demands as not only inhuman, treacherous but unrealistic.

At this juncture the two parties engaged in sharp exchanges occasionally punctuated with soft talk which impressed the North West Provincial Delegate of Labour as he described these exchanges simply as "democratic frank talk". Indeed, after all was said and done, the two Provincial Delegates of Labour and Social Security assisted technically in the drafting of the new Protocol Agreement which only extended from 1-2 years full salary preceding retirement by only EB workers that were already in service on or before 1993. This was, in fact, the only compromise agreed to by the parties as not even one of the key demands from the nine point Secondary School Memo was considered.

Little wonders, perhaps, why most of the Secondary School Representatives refused to sign the new Protocol Agreement. Whatever the case for and against, the 2006 Protocol Agreement between the Education Board (EB) of the CBC and it's workers for the next two years is now a reality and hoping that in the next rendez-vous come 2008, the financial fortunes of the EB will have significantly improved to enable hierarchy to start addressing some of the pressing demands of workers especially welfare related issues.

Dugar Charles Reporting

Editorial

What is the Future of our Primary School Teachers?

The Education Board, like all other Boards of the Convention, remains one of the functional vehicles of Evangelism by way of selling its unique and highly qualitative Christian education throughout its institutions of merit. Indeed, Academic Excellence and Moral Rectitude are twin concepts upon which its Education System is tailored.

It is against this background that the Editoralist pauses to reflect on the following questions: How can the afore cited values be made more sustainable in the twenty first century? How can the EB build up a crop of dedicated, assiduous and forward looking teaching personnel that can continue to inculcate these noble values in the Cameroonian child? Perhaps, more importantly, what is the future of our primary school teachers? In fact, these and more questions are both relevant and timely considering that the CBC has just celebrated a momentous Golden Jubilee, full of colour and ecstatic splendour.

However, the attainment of Academic Excellence and Moral Rectitude are indeed lofty goals which take into account many factors such as an ideal environment for the Training of Trainers, the provision of good infrastructure, the revision of existing curricula to incorporate computer studies, special education studies to take care of special schools for the handicaps; art and handicraft to mention but a few. As at now the Baptist Teachers' Training College or B.T.T.C. Ndop, is the lone institution for the Training of Teachers that CBC can boast of. What then is the present state of B.T.T.C. Ndop, one may ask? It is rather regrettable to contemplate an academic environment wherein children commonly co-habit or interact with adults. That, in fact, is the portrait of the symbiotic chord which clads B.T.T.C. and B.S.S. Ndop together with the former parasiting on the benevolent goodwill of the latter.

Upon the foregoing, the Editoralist wishes to recommend as a way forward, that the EB in particular and the CBC hierarchy in general should make a conscious effort to make a modest financial investment on B.T.T.C. Ndop in order to provide it with adequate and befitting infrastructures. This done, it will produce three possible results; a refurbished B.T.T.C. will inevitably attract an unprecedented high student enrolment; the school will also generate more revenue from fees; above all, with regular salary payment and motivation of the lecturers here, we can always count on the high quality and intellectually sound primary school teachers that regularly graduate from here.

When the Education Secretary undertook an elaborate programme of visits to Baptist Colleges last month, he did so to gain first hand realities on the field-he used his working sessions to solicit constructive ideas and suggestions which can help him formulate sound and pragmatic economic policies towards debt alleviation. It should also be recalled that his new budget policy approach is already bearing fruits, as most Managerial Areas are now able to pay 40% of their salaries. The hope is that the primary school teachers who for so long have been victims of chronic salary irregularities in the future could now give a long sigh of relief as they can confidently look to the future with great hopes and expectations. For once, this is a Herculean task the Education Secretary has to grapple with in the years ahead. However, with the collective support, goodwill and dialogue with his teachers, he will succeed by the Grace of God. After all, where there is a will there is a way and surely, the future is hopeful while there is life.

The Pedagogue

Columns and columnists are literary pearls that can make or mar the reputation of the newspaper. In this regard, the Editorial Board of the *EB Mirror* thought it most salutary to introduce a column on our tabloid titled *The Pedagogue* which has come to stay as a regular feature.

The columnist is non else than the veteran Alfred Nfor Gwei who is also the Pedagogic Advisor in the Secretariat of the Baptist Education Secretary. The Pedagogue will, inter alia, seek to address salient and contemporary pedagogic issues which it is hoped will facilitate the teaching-learning process in CBC schools. Contributions to the column and reactions to issues raised in the column will both be a welcome feature because such contributions will foster, doubtless to say, the spirit of scholastic debates. To kick start the maiden edition of the column, The Pedagogue hereby grapples with a necessary and desirable question, is teaching a noble profession?

Is Teaching a Noble Profession?

The word *profession* connotes a specialized advance training that is undertaken by someone in a particular discipline. Teaching, like the law or medical professions, admittedly, is classified as such but the question of what it takes to make a noble profession remains. The Pedagogue would like to advise that it is your absolute right to accept or reject constructively the views expressed here. However, some of the underlined factors that distinguish and give a particular discipline a professional image include the following: (continued on page 4)

(The Pedagogue continued from page 3)

- A) Duration of Training: The length of training has rather been reduced as the present duration ranges from one year for G.C.E. A/L holders to 3 years for G.C.E. O/L. holders to be prepared for the Teachers' Certificate Grade I. There is, no doubt, a manifest devaluation of the Teacher Training Programme evident here as the original curriculum has been streamlined to bone level. This contrasts with an earlier Training Programme which was based on the 3,2 or the 5 year continuous course leading to the award of Teachers' Certificate Grade II.
- B) Content of Curriculum: The content of study areas leave much to be desired. The curriculum of the Teacher Training Programme is so shallow to allow for sufficient time for a mastery of the rudiments of education that the teachers of yesteryears were subjected to. That is why the veteran teachers of yesterday cannot hold back tears of disgust rolling down their noble cheeks for misplaced emphasis.
- C) Code of Ethics: The Teachers' Professional Code of Ethics which ought to ensure that only genuine and qualified persons are admitted into the profession is regrettably absent here. It is for this reason that the teaching profession has become a no-man's-land for adventurers.

However, one regrets the non-respect of or the absence of the afore cited elements in our modern Teacher Training education system. The sad and regrettable absence of a befitting Teachers' Code of Ethics is, perhaps, the missing link which is sine qua non to legitimately qualify teaching as the noble profession emotionally and loosely professed. The re-ordering of the present status quo is imperative because what passes now on for the teaching profession has been disdainfully hijacked by adventurers who lack the calling of noble teachers. The Pedagogue would like to urge the Hon Minister of National Education to adopt the three salient conditions already elaborated here so far in reviewing the academic programmes of our modern Teachers' Training Institutions plus the belated Teachers' Code of Ethics so that the teaching profession will be genuinely seen to be noble and not a club of social misfits.

Queen Takes Over Command of BHS Mankon

The date August 8, 2005 will go down in the annals of Baptist Education as the first ever female Principal was installed by the Baptist Education Secretary, Mr. Tetevi Bodylawson in the presence of a cross section of the staff. For once, that Mr. Che Venatius, hitherto the Principal saw himself doing the inevitable-handing over the baton of command to the soft spoken, witty and elegant looking Miss Enanga Patience Jabea who was charged with the onerous task of managing the destiny of this illustrious academic citadel of Mankon. In presiding over the handing over ceremony, the Baptist Education Scribe emphasised amongst other things that "handing over is strictly an administrative exercise which is intended to revamp the administrative machinery." He cautioned that Mr. Che was not relieved of his functions for indiscipline but purely on administrative matters. The Baptist Education Secretary, concluded on a positive note as he appreciated the outgoing Principal's efforts at the structural and academic development of the school. For example, he cited the just constructed football and handball fields and the spectacular G.C.E. performances at the June 2005 session in which B.H.S. Mankon registered 97.83% and 98.28% at the Ordinary and Advanced levels, respectively.

"Handing over is strictly an administrative exercise which is intended to revamp the administrative machinery"

In the light hearted refreshment that followed, the Doyen of the academic staff challenged the entire staff in general and the women folk in particular to give maximum support to the incoming Principal as they had done to her predecessor because the women could make or mar the chances for other women to be identified and honored with the promotion. In the entourage of the Education Secretary were his Pedagogic Advisor and his Financial Analyst while the PTA chairman Mr. Ngachangong (of blessed memory) watched the scenario with warm sentiments.

Dugar Charles Reporting

Personalities of Honour

December 31st 2004 marked the end of a long and eventful career of one of EB's most dedicated and humble pedagogues. He is in the person of Pa Mbunwe Peter Tawe. Before he left the office of the Baptist Education Secretary, where he served as Chief of the Secretariat, he granted an interview to our Editor - in - Chief Dugar Charles. Below are excerpts.

EBM: You've come to the end of a long and rich career both as a teacher and chief of the E.S.'s Secretariat. How do you feel going on retirement now?

Pa Mbunwe: First of all, my gratitude goes to our ever loving God who has sustained me and my family to be able to run the full span of my career. Personally, I believe that going on retirement is merely a change from one experience to another. Thus, I'm going to start a new experience in life.

EBM: What do you consider the high or low points in the distinguished office you are leaving behind?

Pa Mbunwe: Indeed, if by high points you mean a period when I really enjoyed job satisfaction, then the period between 1989 to 1996 readily evokes great memories. On the other hand, my low points would imply a time when I found my job boring and I felt as giving up. I rather prefer to leave it up to God.

EBM: As a veteran former classroom teacher and Head Teacher, are you comfortable with the standards of teaching in our primary schools nowadays?

Pa Mbunwe: To be honest with you, Mr. Dugar, I am not satisfied with the standards of teaching presently observed in our primary schools. There's generalised laxity on the part of some teachers. Some teachers communicate with pupils in Pidgin English. One can easily observe from pupils' books that corrections of previous exercises are hardly done before new matter is taught. Above all, some of the teaching - learning environments (school premises) are but an eye sore to a critical visitor.

EBM: Which personalities in the Education Department will you like to remember most?

Pa Mbunwe: Indeed, without prejudicing anybody, I will like to remember most the following: Late Miss Forsch Ida, Dr. Zimbleman, the late Haddison George and Mr. S.T. Welang. However, I will not fail to remember the incumbent Education Secretary, Mr. Tetevi Bodylawson, whose open door policy, his jovial but firm nature reminds me of the Welang era.

EBM: What advice do you have for your successor so that continuity and performance can be sustained?

Pa Mbunwe: I will like to advise my successor (Mr. Fomnih Michael) to be polite, punctual to work and to respect hierarchy at all times. If he has reason to complain, dialogue should be the rule, rather than the exception.

Teaching Tips for Teaching Reading Skills

Understanding the meaning and organisation of text and instruction in both literature and phonics is essential to helping young children read. Below are a few tips found on the **World Wide Web** at: <http://ericec.org/ttips.html>.

Create Appreciation of the Written Word. Teach the ways in which reading is essential to the communications of everyday life (e.g., on instructions, labels, and signs). **Develop Awareness of Printed Language and the Writing System.** Students should be taught the basics about books-that they are read from left to right and top to bottom, that print may be accompanied by pictures or graphics, that the pages are numbered, and that the purpose of reading is to gain meaning from the text and understand ideas that words convey. **Teach the Alphabet.** Students must also develop a sense of the purpose of letters. Help students learn to form the letters and encourage them to embellish their work with their names and with other first attempts at writing.

Develop the Students' Phonological Awareness. To learn to read, students must be taught to attend to the sounds (phonology) of language. Develop students' awareness of the sounds of individual words by asking them to clap out syllables and to listen for and generate rhymes. **Develop Phonemic Awareness.** Phonemic awareness refers to an understanding that words and syllables are comprised of a sequence of elementary speech sounds. Begin with simple words and activities, e.g., listen for initial /s/ in sat, sit, sip, and sad. Teach students to blend phonemes into words. Begin by identifying just one phoneme, e.g., /s/-at, working gradually toward blending all the phonemes in words, e.g., /s/-a-/t/. **Teach the Relation of Sounds and Letters.** Students should learn the letters of the alphabet and discriminate each letter from the other, because each stands for one or more of the sounds that occur in spoken words. When presenting each letter,

model its corresponding sound and have children produce the sound. **Teach Children How to Sound Out Words.** After students have mastered a few letter-sound correspondences, teach them to decode words or sound them out. Begin with small, familiar words. Teach the children to sound out the letters, left to right, and blend them together, searching for the word in memory. **Teach Children to Spell Words.** Teach children to spell words by sounding their letters one by one. Model the sounding and spelling process for children as they spell. **Help Children Develop Fluent, Reflective Reading.** Point out unfamiliar words and explore their meaning. Revisit these words frequently and encourage students to use them in their own conversations. At first, teach and work with only a few letter-sound correspondences that have high utility in many words (e.g., /m/ in man, mad, him, and ham). Postpone teaching less frequently occurring letters until students have a firm understanding of how left-to-right spellings represent first-to-last sounds (alphabetic understanding).

**“One Lord, One Faith,
One Baptism.” Eph.4:5**

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Questions, comments, and articles for
submission by CBC EB staff and students
should be sent to the above email address.
Please keep your submission short in length.

**We appreciate your
comments and suggestions.**

Our Mission Statement:

“The Education Board seeks to provide sound, qualitative Christian Education as an expression of love and concern through evangelization in obedience to the Great Commission as stipulated at Matt. 28:19-20.”

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**Literary Corner
The Cameroon Baptist
Convention**

This fountain of Christianity,
Paints the mirror with an elegance of
Beauty,
In her maiden Publication,
In this world of Corruption.
This embodiment of Knowledge,
An asset all her children Acknowledge,
In this her academic Haven,
A gift from God from Heaven.
This vicinity of Health,
To her children it is Wealth,
In this vineyard where God is Hailed,
All her children frown at AIDS.
By: Musaka Lobe Theodore BHS Buea

**The Great Soppo Hill and The Great Commission,
A Metamorphosis. Matthew 28:19**

In the year 1950, the Cameroon Baptist Mission (CBM) started a Teacher Training Centre (PTC) for the training of Probationary Teachers who became known as Certificated Teachers of “C-Teachers”. The Center later became Baptist Teachers’ Training College (BTTC), where Teachers Grades III and II were trained.

In about 1970, the CBM changed hands with the Cameroon Baptist Convention (CBC), but the Great Hill remained until 1975 when it again changed to the Baptist Boys Secondary School (BBSS) for the purpose of educating young Cameroonian boys in General Education based on Christian Principles. In 1985, this institution of Christian based Education became known as the Baptist High School (BHS) which at this time and due to public pressure went co-educational as it was before.

In all of these, it can rightly be said that the fulfillment of the Great Commission has been achieved as (BHS) has remained one of the best Secondary High Schools in the country. Its doors are open to all those who admire and cherish QUALITY EDUCATION.

Tapang N.R. BHS-Buea Reporting