

***Address and Official Opening of Building 180,
Honourable L.R. Peterson, Minister of Labour and Education,
May 30, 1964***

This school had its beginning in 1936 when the Provincial Government started an automotive class of 8 boys under the care of Jack Macready in a converted stable not half a mile from this present school.

This first class was a result of the depression period when Governments were concerned with the problem of stimulating the economy to provide work for the idle millions and a realization that Vocational Training was an essential part of the total scheme which must be implemented, if once again we were to return to near full employment and national prosperity.

From this most modest beginning the automotive school graduated in 1938 to better facilities in the Thomas Hodgson School. This training was discontinued during the World War II years when Mr. Macready took on the job of training soldier apprentices in the automotive and heavy duty vehicle field at various locations in B.C.

Eventually, the cycle of events brought Mr. Macready and the automotive training programme right back to Nanaimo into the Army's Heavy Repair Workshop on this school site.

On the cessation of hostilities the Army workshop and facilities reverted to civilian status when the Provincial Government purchased buildings and land for a token price.

Further, The B.C. Loggers Association, acting for the forest industry which desperately required men for the woods, petitioned the government to introduce additional courses where veterans might train for technical jobs. This saw the introduction of forestry power saw operators, heavy duty diesel mechanics, and a crosscut saw filing course, set up to train 200 qualified saw filers.

Logging was not the only industry which benefitted. A fisheries course (the school had 2 boats) consisted of instruction in boat maintenance, coastal navigation, and net and trolling techniques. A power linesmen's programme was also introduced where trainees were familiarized with the stringing of and handling of high tension wire.

All graduates who desired work in the woods or elsewhere were accommodated and when the need had been filled classes were discontinued.

As interest in the school flourished, additional cooperative programmes between interested parties composed of Management, Labour, Equipment Companies, and the Unions were introduced. All of these industrially oriented organizations are credited with contributing to the success of this school.

Industry contributed wholeheartedly, supplying experienced practical men for instructors, areas for practical exercises, and jobs for successful candidates.

Equipment Companies gave freely of their time and equipment, and the I.W.A. agreed to permit students to gain valuable experience working on jobs which would otherwise have been left undone.

The whole operation has been a fine team effort.

I would like to pay tribute to Mr. Jack Macready who worked so hard for his school and his boys and was responsible, in no uncertain terms, for the manner in which he nourished the necessary cooperation and support of Industry and Labour and worked so hard on finagling equipment to make his new programmes operative at a time when Government money for these school purposes was difficult to come by. Mr. Macready built a school reputation second to none and visitors came from all corners of the globe (Burma, Pakistan, India, Great Britain, and the United States) to see a school dedicated to the principle that all training must be practical and closely aligned with industry itself; that student cleanliness, civility, and attitude toward employer, employee, and work are every bit as important as other professional requisites. In other words, the embryo mechanic must learn citizenship and safety as well as theory and professional monkey wrenching. To the Industry and the young trainee, Jack Macready has expounded the philosophy that "Service is our Motto".

To give you some inkling of the importance of Vocational Training and how such training reflects on Canadian manpower, may I recite the "Big-Inch" pipeline construction problem of 1956/57. At that time we had unemployed welders in B.C. who had little or no experience in the welding of "big-inch" gas and oil pipelines. Consequently, the contracting companies were importing Americans from Oklahoma

and Texas to work on these spreads and were paying as much as \$1200 per month for the hi-balling tactics required to push such lines through to completion on time. Through the co-operation of the Welding Unions, the National Employment Service, Pipeline Companies and others, we set up in B.C., here in Nanaimo, a "Big-Inch" pipeline school. Hundreds of B.C. men, including Canadians from Ontario, have since acquired their Pipeline Pressure tickets and today in Canada practically all pipeline and other pressure ticket welding work in Pulp Mills and the like are carried out by Canadian workmen, whereas in 1956/57 over 80% of all Pipeline Welders were imports from the U.S.A.

It is difficult to accurately measure the value of the school's training, but it certainly has increased the available supply of skilled manpower for technical jobs in the logging, heavy construction, automotive-diesel, commercial, and service occupational fields. On the other hand the liaison it has brought about between government, labour, and management could have and is having a terrific impact on industry as a whole.

There have been many men from Industry and Labour who from the very first have, through their own personal efforts, given aid and sound advice to this school, again: the various Advisory Committees who have sat and given freely of their time must not be overlooked. May I, as Minister of Labour and Education, thank these people for their invaluable service to our school and to the young men and women whom they have indirectly helped to acquire specialized training followed by employment - Canada is indeed indebted to these citizens.

This school has now emerged from a modest beginning in 1936 consisting of a single instructor and a class of 7 boys to a 2.8 million \$ establishment in 1964 having a total staff of 35 full and part-time employees and graduating over 900 trainees.

This school has been the guinea-pig and model for all the "satellite" schools which followed, namely the Vancouver Vocational Institute (1948), the B.C. Vocational Schools in Burnaby (1956), Prince George (1962), Kelowna (1963), Nelson (1963), and with new centres being planned in Victoria, Kamloops, Dawson Creek, and the Prince Rupert/Terrace area.

This school, with the recent addition which we are officially opening today, cost approximately \$1,300,000.00 including all buildings, equipment, and services.

Our dormitory facilities sleep 114 men and 16 women who become the guinea-pigs for the cook's training and waitress training programmes conducted within the cafeteria where we are now assembled.

This school and its programmes of instruction are all listed in the Blue Covered booklet which each of you are now holding. I believe we are correct in saying that this school is the most diversified school in Canada when you consider that Programmes range from all the way from Beauty Culture and Practical Nursing, to Commercial and Heavy Duty Mechanics, and Pipe-Line Welding, through to Diamond Drilling, and Log Loading.

It is very seldom that there is not at least one trainee from somewhere outside of British Columbia. Recently we had applications from Nigeria and England to say nothing of the requests for assistance in setting-up similar courses in other schools in Canada, the United States, India, Pakistan, and Africa.

Before closing, I wish to pay tribute to the Government of Canada in making it financially possible for the Provinces of Canada to undertake the Construction of and Operation of such schools as this. You would be interested in learning that since 1961 this Province has spent some 19 million dollars on the development of its Regional Adult Vocational Schools and its Institute of Technology. Further, Provincial Schools, such as this have their entire Capital and Operating Costs borne by both Governments and therefore the local taxpayer and business man in a city wherein such a school is located has a real community asset without having to contribute school taxes at the local level to the school's development and operation.

May I thank the local Service Clubs, Chamber of Commerce, and City Council Members for the active support they have given our Principal and our School to make it what it is today --- may you continue to do so in the future.