

Learning conditions top priority

Learning conditions, the number one priority for the Federation for 1974-75, shifted into high gear on school opening day.

Local chairpersons across the province began implementing a planned program

for learning conditions developed in Penticton, August 19-22, where 60 chairpersons and co-ordinators hammered out the details.

Also included were 10 BCTF staff members, part of the boost in resources for the

learning conditions program estimated to be about 50% in manpower and dollars over last year.

This fall's program has two main thrusts: enforcement to ensure that districts adhere to the 1974-75 criteria, and staff-

ing presentations designed to improve class sizes in the 1975-76 school year.

Target for solution of violations in the minimum criteria is October 30.

Provincial Learning Conditions chairperson Ralph Sundby told the presidents gathered at the Naramata conference that the minimum criteria will be with us for a long time. 'We have far from ideal conditions in the province.'

Last year made it clear that if teachers don't do the job, nobody will, he said. Trustees were arguing that there was not enough money, that teachers were not available, there were not enough classrooms, and that the research was not honest, Sundby said. But the learning conditions program nevertheless was successful.

Why was it successful?

'Because it had a negative and a positive side. Negative when we publicized poor conditions embarrassing those districts with poor situations, and positive when we used research on quality education.'

Sundby hit at John Ellis, the SFU professor who accused the Federation of using 'sleazy research,' saying that Ellis ignored overwhelming evidence for smaller classes.

'Critics have failed to dampen the enthusiasm of teachers for the learning conditions program,' he said.

Objectives for learning conditions

The learning conditions program this year has nine main objectives, one of them of course, the enforcement of minimum criteria.

Included in the enforcement of minimum criteria will be an early identification of violations through a simplified survey as well as means for preventing future violations of minimum criteria.

Local committees will be assisted in presenting a case to local school boards for improved staffing in library services.

Representations will be made through the Executive Committee to government for improved library service, changes in legislation, and improved building provisions.

The Federation will also promote studies of the benefits of small versus large classes in one or more districts seeking to apply indicators of quality evaluations and establish an ongoing evaluation program on the benefits of small classes.

School staffs will be surveyed to determine current practices with regard to staff committees, particularly the types, decision-making processes and scope of the decisions in these committees. It is intended as well to promote collegial decision-making and act as a clearing house for staff committee models.

newsletter

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President says:

'We have a balance sheet to keep with gov't'

'The hopes we held in the election of the government two years ago for a dramatic improvement in learning conditions have not substantially been met,' Jim MacFarlan told local presidents at Naramata.

'And we have a balance sheet to keep that will record the way working and learning conditions were dealt with by this government.'

In his speech that alternated praise and criticism of government where it was due, MacFarlan stressed the major emphasis must be on improving learning conditions in the province. He assured delegates that after the AGM decision to put the emphasis on learning conditions the Federation intended to 'devote a large amount of resources to the program with an increase of 50-60% in budget and staff time.'

'We recognize and congratulate the government for the moves that were made this year in lowering pupil-teacher ratio toward obtaining some of our learning conditions objectives,' MacFarlan said.

Meeting the minimum criteria will be an extraordinarily difficult task in some districts but MacFarlan urged presidents to fight very hard to ensure they are the practice of educators in this province.

The Federation will be making submissions to expand the scope of bargaining this year as well as dealing with the issue of provincial versus local bargaining. The provincial government, he said, must know that we want bargaining on learning conditions matters.

'We cannot accept the situation where in good faith we sought substantial changes, including the right to negotiate learning and working conditions, only to find four years later that there have not been significant changes.'

One important step taken by government, MacFarlan said, was to decentralize curriculum to the local level but he warned 'we're not prepared for it — we

don't have the expertise in course development and we don't have the time to develop courses either.'

'We have to develop, in a short period of time, the capability to develop courses locally. And we should get some help from the new research and development branch established by the Department.'

'Our next priority,' MacFarlan said, 'the status of women program has been an enormous success in one year, mainly through the efforts of our staff person, Linda Shuto. And we are pleased that the government has appointed Reva Dexter to serve as an advisory person in the Department.'

'Our task now is to eliminate sexism by conscious, deliberate determined effort at the local level. When we look at local programs we must ask: How does it relate to the local status of women program?'

Another priority for this year will be 'the chronic and historic problems of weak and floundering locals' who need to become 'strong and vibrant locals.'

Teacher bargaining, he said, was going to be a shock to some trustees when they see the size of the increase we are going to negotiate this year. 'I'm not going to speculate on the size of the increase your locals will be seeking — but it will be a hell of a lot.'

We stand four-square for local bargaining he told the presidents and charged that the trustees were cutting their own throats on their march to collective bargaining at a provincial level.

'If they want to send paid flunkies to do the job, then let them come to Creston, Stikine and Cranbrook because we don't intend to go to Howe Street to bargain.'

He spoke strongly against recent government intervention in the firefighters' strike.

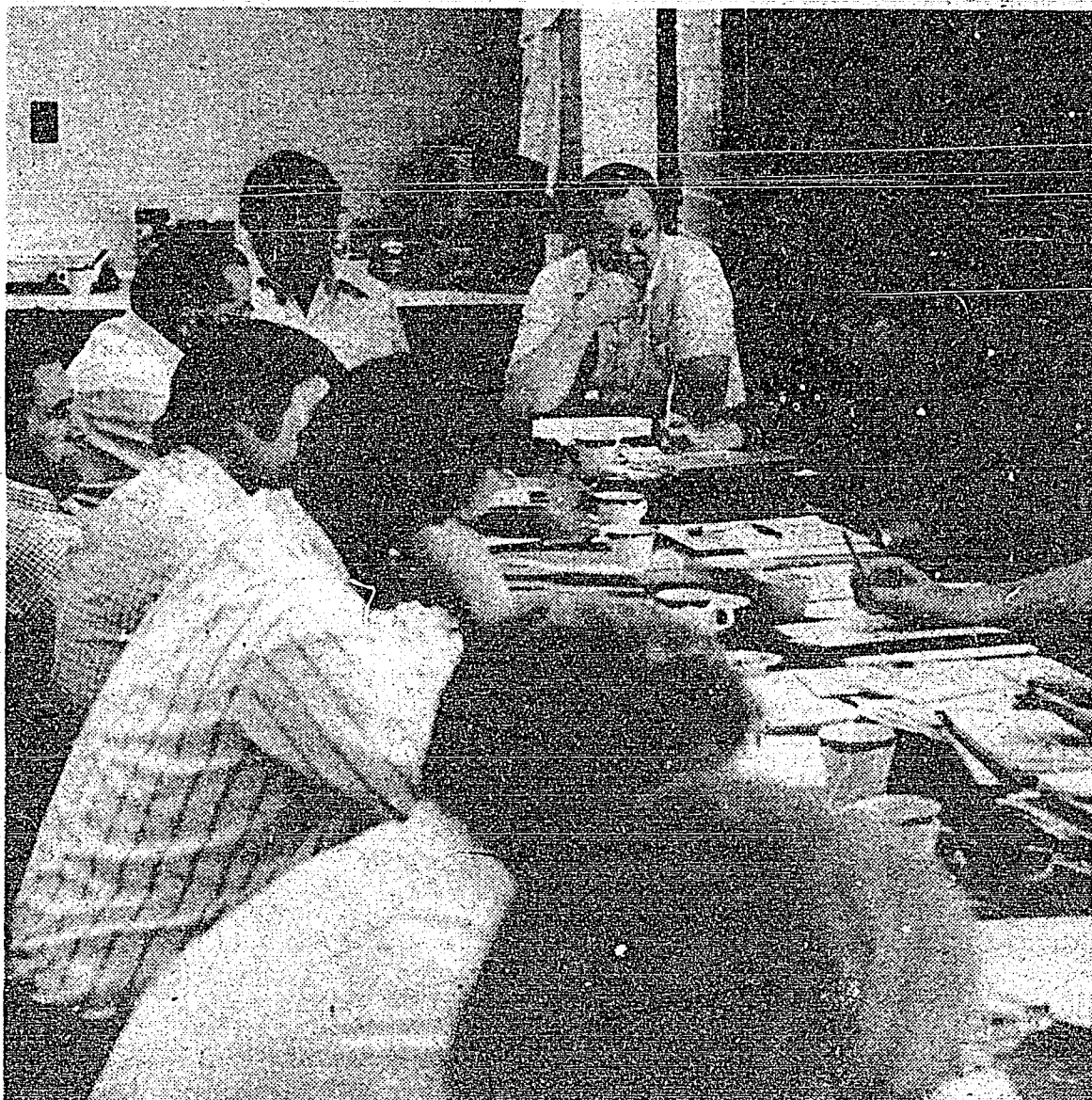
'Two years ago we said the public service had a right to



full, free collective bargaining. I can remember those words at Hastings Park, Victoria, Trail and in other public meetings. Yet the government broke the strike of the firefighters.'

There was no threat to life and limb and security despite the propaganda released by the government because the fire halls were manned, he said, calling the government intervention 'unwarranted and unjustified when it had made a solemn pledge to guarantee the right of all employees in the public sector to free collective bargaining.'

'That kind of erosion of rights is a threat to all of us and we cannot stand idly by and let it happen again.'



Doug Steinson, center, explains problems for agreements

Purchasing power eroding rapidly with inflation

Doug Steinson, chairman of the provincial Agreements Committee, expressed grave concern when he met the BCTF Executive Committee in Naramata.

'Purchasing power for teachers is fixed in contracts and it will undergo further reduction in the remaining four months,' he said.

Already falling behind in salaries, teachers have suffered a substantial erosion in purchasing power because of inflation — and all indications

point to further erosion in the last quarter.

There is a need, Steinson said, to recover the loss suffered through inflation as well as to match the high increases recently negotiated in other sectors. And with the new trustee bargaining tactic, he foresees a difficult bargaining arena this season.

The 11.1% average increase in 1974 salaries has already been exceeded by a consumer price index increase of 11.3%.

While the province's economy flourished with an increased productivity, teachers received no share of this increase in provincial wealth, a trend that has prevailed for the past few years.

Steinson dealt with the unusual call to bargaining by Henry Armstrong, trustees' Executive Director, by way of a letter sent to all local associations saying the BCSTA was now the sole bargaining agent for the district and was terminating the agreement.

July 12 was a most inopportune time to pursue an effective negotiations, Steinson told the Executive. Most locals are non-operative during the summer recess, nor would many have any practical way of communicating with members.

'Some locals were prepared and indicated that they would meet, but on home ground.'

The BCSTA held their meeting July 12 but only reporters showed.



Presidents sometimes broke into small groups outside at the pleasant Naramata site.

Deputy Minister says:

Department's going collegial

Collegiality and decision making could be interpreted as a plea for help according to Deputy Minister Jack Fleming.

'How do you take a system, how do you structure it on a hierarchical basis and turn it around?'

Speaking to Summer Conference participants in Penticton's Peach Bowl, Fleming said that the Department was attempting to implement a collegial approach to decision making. And while humanizing the Department was not going to be easy, he said progress

was being made in fostering an attitude that the Department can work in creative and innovative ways.

Finding a consensus in education was probably the most difficult task, Fleming said, and he suggested that we opt for solutions that are 'livable' for all parties.

'It's clear that involvement is vital but that there must also be authority to make the decision, responsibility for it and accountability.' There are a fair number of people around, Fleming said, who argue for authority and say

they will take responsibility but they are not willing to devise any mechanism for accountability.

Authority Fleming sees as not fixed at one point, but dispersed throughout the system at points where decisions need to be made. 'It seems to me that we must find a more flexible way of evolving authority throughout the system in response to the needs of the problem. And this implies a lot of skills on the part of a lot of people that I'm sure we don't necessarily have.'

We talk about what kind of authority a teacher should have in a classroom but in my opinion we haven't defined what kind of responsibility systems we need to go with it, Fleming said. 'Furthermore, we're all deathly afraid of the notion of accountability.'

Dealing with the triangle of a teacher, a parent and a child, Fleming asked: does the student have any authority in that relationship? To whom is the student accountable?



Jack Fleming, Deputy Minister, talking with Ralph Sundby (left), stressed accountability in a collegial system.

Unanimous vote on Exec

BCTF slaps gov't for strikebreaking

That the BCTF Executive condemn the action of the provincial government in calling a special session of the provincial legislature to adopt emergency legislation to break the recent strike of firefighters in several metropolitan districts.

Public sector employees have a right to full, free collective bargaining, including, where they wish, the right to strike.

The entire labor movement joined with the BCTF in the spring of 1972 to demand that the Socred government restore this right to all public sector employees. In the 1972 election NDP candidates gave their pledge to all public sector employees to provide them with the same rights enjoyed by all other workers.

The government's action in the firefighters' strike is a repudiation of the pledge and represents a denial of a principle which virtually every NDP MLA endorsed.

We view with alarm the government's action in forcing workers into a bargaining unit which is not of their choosing. Adequate legislation for establishing bargaining units by a non-governmental body already exists. The government should not interfere with this process. Further, we feel that the legislation denies firefighters the right to enter into direct negotiations with their employers at the local municipal level.

The BCTF calls upon the provincial government to repeal the recently adopted legislation and to restore to the firefighters all of the rights which they previously enjoyed.

Teaching profession act

Teacher competence for October RA

There are no innovations in policy in our proposals, says a group charged with drafting a Teaching Profession Act, but the selection of existing policy proposed for legislation would, we feel, give this Federation an innovative and more influential role in determining the quality of education in this province.

Proposals from the group touch on such matters as teacher competence, appeal procedures, disciplinary authority, local association authority, professional rights and staff responsibilities that would be embodied in a professional teaching act that will now go forward to the October Representative Assembly for discussion.

The push for a Teaching Profession Act came from an original Task Force on Membership formed in 1972-73 which had viewed such an act as a 'most likely avenue to attain control of entry to the profession.'

Control of entry would be the profession's most effective means of influencing the quality of service, and a teaching profession act could also legitimate the teacher competence procedures.

The Task Force on a Teaching Profession Act involved a wide range of Federation members including committees from Membership, Competence, Learning Conditions, Agreements, Reorganization, Constitution and By-Laws and Teacher Education.

One recommendation that will go forward to the Representative Assembly includes a teacher's certification board which would be established with major representation from the Federation.

'It would set policies and regulations governing certification and would be the authority for issuing certificates of qualification of teachers.'

At the present time the task force is considering the desirability of legislation requiring teacher education institutions to consult with the Federation for purposes of establishing standards in courses.

Teacher competence has been approved by the 1974 AGM to be instituted on an optional basis and the task force sees that present policy remaining in the new act.

Appeal procedures would assure members of due process to the Court of Appeal.

The Federation's existing authority to discipline members would be continued but due process beyond that given in the Discipline Committee procedures would be provided with recourse to the Court of Appeal.

In professional rights, the task force says, each teacher is granted the right to establish his or her own instructional procedures within the bounds of acceptable practice. But, they say, there is an obligation to involve pupil and parent.

Similarly the professional staff of a school is given responsibility for general educational policies and procedures in the school acting within the provisions of the Public Schools Act and board policy but with an obligation to seek public participation.

The 1974 AGM authorized the RA to approve a draft of a teaching profession act and attendant regulations for further presentation to the provincial government for enactment in legislation.

Teachers concerned about any aspects of the proposed Teaching Profession Act should let their representative know before the October RA.



Learning conditions people from the Fraser Valley (above) and Metro area (below), met at Penticton to develop LC program.

Summer conference

Local presidents given valuable help at Naramata

Programs of the various local associations should be particularly effective this year, if success of the Summer Conference for presidents is any indication.

This year's conference was the best yet, according to evaluation forms completed by the delegates. Sixty-two of the 63 forms turned in rated the conference good, very good or excellent. The other form carried a 'fair' rating.

Purposes of the conference were to brief presidents of local associations on the major issues for the year and to suggest ways in which the associations could help the BCTF work toward its goals.

The evaluation forms showed that the conference achieved all the objectives set for it. Several delegates who attended last year as well said that this year's program was much more helpful than last year's in preparing presidents for the year ahead.

The planning committee was guided by the evaluation forms completed by delegates to the

1973 conference, and most of the program this year was a result of suggestions received last year.

Delegates indicated that particularly effective sessions were two using simulation techniques to acquaint presidents with the types of problems they may encounter during the year, one on parliamentary procedure, one outlining the procedures used to process resolutions submitted by local associations, and a panel discussion on the authority and responsibility section of the government's white paper on education.

The Naramata Center for Continuing Education rated very high as a site for the conference. Delegates were also enthusiastic about the hospitality shown by teachers of the Okanagan Valley.

They turned thumbs down however, on a suggestion that next year's conference be combined with ones for chairpersons of agreements, learning conditions and professional development committees.

Status of Women

Local action this year

Since time began everybody has liked to play — that's why the Women's Theatre Co-operative was such a highlight at the Naramata Summer Conference.

Through a series of skits, the Women's Theatre communicates a woman's plight in our society in an easy way for people to grasp. A talented group, they entertained local presidents at Naramata but there was no doubt that their serious message was understood.

Presidents were told by the Status of Women Task Force that local action programs will have major emphasis this year.

A kit entitled, 'How to Establish Your Local Program' was

given to the presidents by Nora Grove, Vancouver Elementary contact person. The kit includes a job description for the contact person, tips on establishing a committee with good lines of communication, goals and means to achieve the goals. Grove stressed the need for co-operation between the status of women committee and the local executive. Issues related to women should be raised in learning conditions, agreements and professional development committees, she said.

An orientation conference October 26 for local status of women contact persons will feature ways to establish a status of women program at the local level.

Learning conditions

Conference 'best ever' say participants

This conference has given me direction and skills for dealing with learning conditions in the Castlegar School District. I see the year ahead as one in which we teachers must work with the public and the school board to build their empathy for our students' needs.

AL SHEPPARD
Castlegar

Involvement yields improvement in learning conditions. Concerned New Westminster teachers are invited to become involved in our learning conditions committee this fall to strive for improvements this year and next. Make your commitment now.

MARILYN STEELE
New Westminster

The learning conditions conference has clearly presented provincial learning conditions objectives in which each member of the Chilliwack local must become involved.

Every member must get to know our learning conditions objectives and establish these conditions as a personal, professional obligation.

Let's get on with the job of getting our learning conditions objectives into practice.

BILL DUYVEWAARDT
Chilliwack

Fantastic conference. With the rather large costs involved in changing the learning conditions for our children, I hope that we can come to some agreement about what constitutes quality in education and the value of bringing this quality into our system.

It will be impossible to have a successful long term LC campaign unless the people paying the bills understand and endorse these new conditions.

JERRY JOYCE
Cowichan

The Kamloops Association executive has been actively pursuing the educational priorities which the teachers established in the spring. The Educational Priorities Report was discussed with the trustees in June, and discussion will continue.

Many objectives have been met, and we are optimistic that the remaining ones will be satisfied this year. As LC chairperson, I am confident that the Kamloops teachers will be actively supporting our program to achieve local and provincial objectives.

LOYD BISHOP
Kamloops

The LC conference was the best conference I have ever attended.

Teacher involvement in education and concern for local learning conditions has been poor in the past. Now is the time to show an active concern for the quality of education each child in your class is getting.

What can you do?
Attend your local association and LC meetings and find out.

JUDY STEVELY
Cranbrook

PITA goes political

Caught in the limbo which is, after all, the fate of all things neither fish nor fowl, teachers and their classes of the intermediate years have watched the rewards of successful political action and public support go to other sections.

This year, following agreement between the Provincial Intermediate Teachers' Association executive and the planning committee for the fall conference, a program is being developed to mobilize teachers and focus concern on an impoverished section.

Contact Ray Wunderlich, Planning Committee, Richmond Elementary School, Victoria, B.C.



Sheila Thompson, center, explains how to handle male put downs at the 'Women are persons' short course held at Vancouver's Teacher Center in July.

Enrolment up in BCTF short courses

A busy summer for teachers in short courses.

At Jericho alone, more than 320 teachers were involved with parents and students in an extensive in-service training program designed to satisfy the need for new knowledge and skills in special education.

A joint venture of the BCTF and the Department of Education, Jericho '74 had phenomenal success in the creation of a learning community.

Besides the core program, there were 14 courses given at

Jericho, and 14 given elsewhere in the province by the BCTF. Teachers paid about \$50,000 for the courses.

About 478 people attended summer courses held in Vancouver, Kelowna, Prince George, Victoria and Vernon — an exceptional summer with a good response from teachers.

Evaluations on the courses show participants were pleased, particularly with the resource people for their innovative and exciting courses.

BCTF staff member Roy Ronaghan says he was pleased



Henry Lunn demonstrates resources available to parents of children with learning disabilities at the popular Jericho '74 summer course.

with the overall success of the programs this summer and that he would like to express his appreciation to resource people for the time and effort they put in to make the courses successful.

There was, he said, good co-operation from school boards who allowed the use of facilities and, in some cases, office staff as well as good co-operation from commercial displays who left the displays and equipment to be used.

Probably the most fascinating center to go to this summer was Jericho where Henry Lunn, a Prince George supervisor and recognized provincial expert in learning disabilities, assembled a veritable kaleidoscope of interlocking activities.

Next summer he wants to see Jericho move forward at three levels. 'We want a leadership training center to produce regional resource people, a parent / child center and credit programs in learning disabilities.'

Parents from all around the province showed an interest in the learning disabilities program but many had to be turned away.

PD conference a success

By VICTOR GUENTHER
Past Chairperson,
PSA Council

The 1974 Professional Development Summer Conference was and remains, at least for this participant, a memorable one. Good advance planning, interesting and varied activities, maximum participation, an attempt to clarify and solve realistic problems, an evaluation of the conference and free time to meet people socially made this a meaningful, provocative educational experience.

It was good to meet the two new Professional Development staff persons, Wes Knapp and Jim Bowman. I believe they will make very substantial contributions to B.C. educational leadership.

Several outstanding reports were given which need to be summarized: Ralph Sundby emphasized the close relationship between 'working conditions' and professional development. He felt there were three paramount objectives: lowering class size, improving

library facilities and implementing collegial decision making, which, incidentally, 'should also be the model for local professional development committees.' Ralph stressed the need to include everyone in local professional development committees: superintendents, boards, parents, students, district staff, teachers (to which should be added administrator, department heads and PSAs).

Pi Kalaidzis briefly summarized the work done to date in the 'Status of Women' area:

1. a contact person now exists in every district
2. a conference is planned for October 5, 1974
3. an in-service kit is now available
4. a nonsexist kit will be ready in September
5. a Women's Studies course is ready for optional use in September 1974
6. provincial government and BCTF representation exists on an advisory committee dealing with sex discrimination

Ross Regan viewed the conference as opportune preparation for long-overdue decentralization of educational decision making. Ross encouraged local professional development committees to carry on with (i) integrating subject areas, (ii) continuing to develop courses to meet local interests and needs, and (iii) helping to change the content-oriented to a more process-oriented curriculum.

Areas which the conference felt were the legitimate domain of the local professional development committee were listed (in an unranked order) as: learning conditions, curriculum development, teaching styles, women's status program.

Obviously when any committee commences a task, the starting point is a careful, comprehensive 'Needs Assessment.' Roy Ronaghan spent Tuesday morning with us, stressing the importance of determining needs, setting objectives, developing evaluative criteria, planning and design.

Killeen lashes out at Education Ministers

OTTAWA (CTF News Service) — In his presidential address to delegates gathered in Calgary, Alberta from July 16-19 for the 1974 Canadian Teachers' Federation Annual General Meeting, Jim Killeen lashed out at the Council of Ministers of Education which claims to be 'the supreme educational body in Canada.'

Killeen is now back in Vancouver as vice-principal of David Thompson Secondary.

Killeen charged them with "attempting to develop a fourth level of government in Canada."

He condemned 'the secrecy of its operations and the absence of any collective accountability to an electorate, both of which make this concept of the Council, not only untenable, but outrageous — an offence to the 'Canadian tradition of parliamentary control, a trespass upon provincial autonomy and a violation of the Constitution.' He said the Constitution was invoked by the Council 'only when it suits its purposes.'

He added: 'If governments, alone or in concert, — as in a Council of Ministers — seek to inhibit access to information by tactics of secrecy, if they claim proprietary rights over information or assert privacy as a privilege of a controlling clique, they must be met by organized and direct public challenge.'

Killeen then focused his thoughts on three major CTF programs which have taken up much of CTF's energies and resources during the past year. They are: quality of education, education finance and standards of teaching and learning conditions.

'I am sick and tired of our critics who call on us to innovate, to teach the three R's to every man's child, to be in-

volved in a host of extra-curricular activities, to act as a custodian cum truant officer, to solve all of societies' ills, and so on — and then tell us to do all this with larger classes, with less money for educational provisions, and with little or no say in programs and processes.'

CTF records the net Canadian picture for 1973-74 was an increase of 3,700 teachers, nearly 2% over the figure for 1972-73 for a new total of 210,451 teachers.

Substantial increases were recorded in B.C., Newfoundland and Nova Scotia.

Reva Dexter adviser on sex bias in schools



Reva Dexter, an executive member of the status of women group in Vancouver and a counsellor at Eric Hamber Secondary, was appointed by Education Minister Eileen

Dailly to advise on the elimination of sex discrimination in schools.

The position is a new one created to assist the Department of Education in removing sex bias in curriculum programming and learning materials used in the schools and to facilitate co-operation with public schools and other public education institutions in dealing with problems of sex discrimination, Mrs. Dailly said.

Ms. Dexter said her role as consultant won't involve measuring sexism in schools on a definite ruler and condemning those who don't meet her standards.

It also won't involve hasty action in trying to rid the system of sexism immediately — what she calls 'book burning' — but will proceed with an eye to practical replacements as well.

She has a master of arts degree from Teachers College,

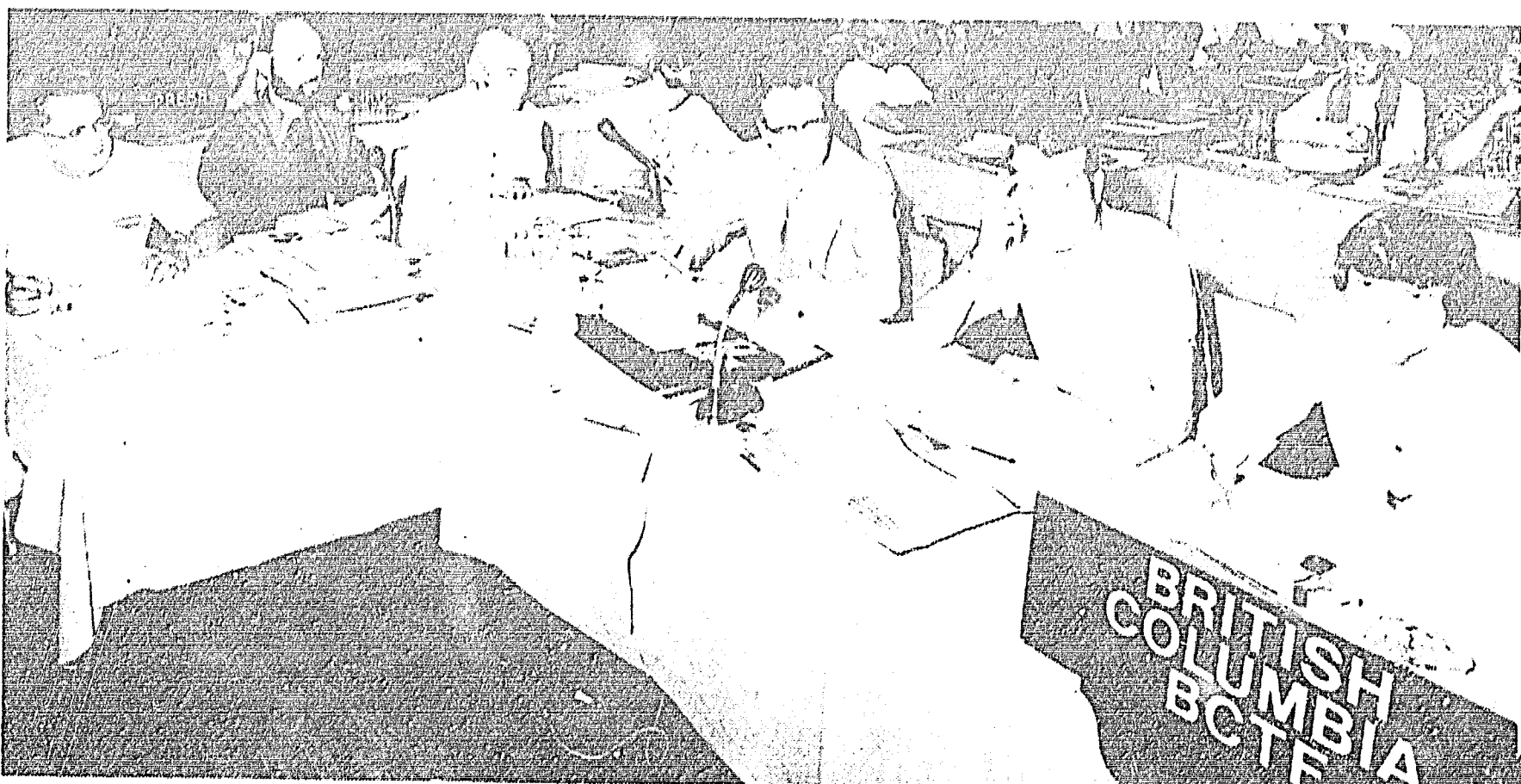
Columbia University, and undergraduate degrees from McGill and Sir George Williams Universities in Montreal.

She has co-ordinated women's studies for UBC, and worked as a group leader in women's studies at SFU.

Ms. Dexter has five years teaching experience in elementary schools in Montreal and New York City plus one year counselling in New York and one year guidance and counselling at Eric Hamber Secondary in Vancouver.

Ms. Dexter will be an advisor to Provincial Curriculum Advisory Committees, and she will also act as a resource person for school boards or school personnel who request her assistance, by participating in workshops, seminars and staff meetings.

She said she is offering to discuss sexual stereotyping with B.C. school districts and is also open to invitations from student organizations.



B.C.'s representation to CTF at Calgary from l. to r. Adam Robertson, John Powell, Bill Broadley, Dorothy Glass, Bob Buzza, John Winstanley and Jack Tearne.

Hilroy's October 13

Deadline for Hilroy Awards to be submitted to the Provincial Advisory Council is October 31, 1974.

The Hilroy Fellowship Program is administered on behalf of the Roy C. Hill Charitable Foundation by the Canadian Teachers' Federation trust fund. Its purpose is to encourage and reward teachers who, in the course of active teaching, are developing promising new ideas for the improvement of teaching practices, and to disseminate information about such ideas as widely as possible.

United Way

When the volunteer in your school offers you the United Way, pledge card, say yes! Make good things happen the United Way.

Norm Olson replies to his critics

Thanks very much for the newspaper clippings regarding the class size issue. It appears 'considerable' controversy has been stirred up. One could easily parallel developments in the educational scene in B.C. with strategies more commonly identified with serious military conflicts between nations.

As the 'battle lines' are being drawn by the various parties, I hope each gives careful consideration to the negative impact on the morale of teachers and students in the schools and the public which supports them. Hard feelings too often result in very vindictive behaviors which can forever polarize people and groups who have the same basic concern: improving the quality of education.

In fact, I hope you will pardon me for taking the liberty to suggest the behaviors of the various education professionals and government officials indicate there are a number of other important concepts like co-operation which have not been learned. Concepts like demeanor, respect, atmosphere of agreement, communication and inter-communication which apply to effective interpersonal relationships. Or, concepts like decision-making, conflict resolution, consensus, group goals, and teacher purpose which apply to constructive group productivity.

Perhaps the behaviors and skills are not in evidence because the individuals did not learn them during their own years of schooling. Do you suppose the school people in those days were obsessed with 'content' achievement at the expense of these other essential learning outcomes?

At the heart of the problem is the idea that the simple planting of knowledge and facts in the minds of youth by the organized and systemization presentation of separate subject information by educators will result in educated citizens who are capable of leading successful personal and professional lives. Success for an individual is determined almost solely by how well he or she regurgitates information on various academic content tests.

Little objective examination is devoted to student achievement in other important areas. One can single out such things as the social and interpersonal skills, creative and divergent-thinking skills, individual procedures for problem-solving, skills for effective group leadership or effective participation as a member of a group. Or, as many psychologists are suggesting today, schools have been neglectful in dealing with student achievement of healthy attitudes about self, ethics, and moral responsibility.

This narrow and simplistic view of school achievement distresses me greatly.

Your organization's stance on professional development of teachers in-service, your focus on teaching styles and techniques which promote active student involvement, and your grass-roots involvement of teachers within districts to question and establish appropriate learning conditions, and most notably, your efforts to diminish class sizes throughout the province give me a great sense of professional satisfaction.

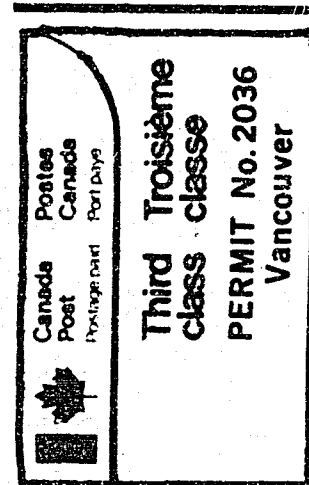
Not only does this mean training teachers to employ a greater variety of skills and the more productive styles of educational activity, it also means removing or neutralizing specific barriers in the schools which serve to prohibit teachers and students from interacting successfully. Barriers like teacher fear of authoritarian and dictatorial principals; sterile libraries with few resources; stereotyped teacher, administrator, and student perceptions of what constitutes high quality instruction; rigid and inflexible school schedules; and too many bodies in too small a space. This class size (number

of students) question is basic to most of the other issues.

Our studies at Columbia University have shown conclusively that the behavior of teachers and students differs markedly in large and small classes. Smaller classes are better in nearly every way in terms of multiple student learning outcomes.

Province on current events

Starting September 17 each Tuesday issue of the Vancouver Province will carry a full page of information dealing with a current issue in a particular country or area, initially on Asia. The 'textbook' will be edited by a panel of teachers representing university, school administration, and classroom, and will include photos, maps, news despatches, and eye witness accounts. Material will be geared to the curriculum and reading levels of upper elementary and lower secondary students. A limited number of class sets of the newspaper will be provided free on request.



IF UNDELIVERED, return to 2235 Burrard St., Vancouver 9.

BRITISH COLUMBIA TEACHERS' FEDERATION

newsletter

Editor
JOHN HARDY
Assistant
JOAN WHITE

105 - 2235 Burrard Street, Vancouver 9, B.C.

