

Pat Lamont, kindergarten teacher at Sexsmith Community School, tries to find a quiet corner in which to teach reading to some of her students. The class is overcrowded and has the additional handicap of non-English speaking children. Lamont resigned as of December 17 for health reasons.

## Premier Bennett and BCTF reps discuss bargaining

Premier Bill Bennett told BCTF representatives that B.C. can opt out of the federal control program in April 1977, if it is ready with its own system. But he cautioned that if a separate system is devised for B.C., it is intended that there would be more control over prices than has yet been shown in the national program.

Bennett also said that most of the issues raised by the BCTF had been discussed with him in his riding by representatives of the Central Okanagan Teachers' Association.

BCTF representatives for the meeting with the Premier were President Bill Broadley, First Vice-President Don Walmsley, G. R. Kirby and W. V. Allester, staff.

BCTF President Bill Broadley thanked the premier for his willingness to meet with the delegation to discuss the teacher bargaining process. Broadley indicated that while teachers share the concern of other citizens about Canadian economic problems, teachers

are concerned about the equity of the program being used to control inflation.

Nor do teachers want the collective bargaining process to be destroyed.

'Teachers believe that law deserves respect. However, no board of government should be able to make rules as it goes. In a free society, rules need to be known in advance.'

Broadley described the teacher bargaining process in B.C. as a 'rigid time frame imposed through legislation in 1958,' with final and binding arbitration awards.

He gave examples of inconsistent and inequitable rulings by the AIB. Broadley also gave details of a problem with experience increments, noting that in Manitoba, increments were excluded from AIB-2 forms at the request of the provincial government. Premier Bennett agreed to consider this request.

Broadley requested the restoration of the traditional teacher bargaining process by April 1, 1977. 'The bargaining process for teachers has brought stability for almost 40 years. The process of negotiation, conciliation and arbitration has caused teachers' salaries to follow those in the private sector.'

The premier was told that the restoration of the normal bargaining process will not see salaries of teachers jump ahead, because negotiated or arbitrated settlements will be subject to all of the current economic constraints.

Premier Bennett conceded that there were inequities for teachers in the control program, noting that the AIB seems to operate under different philosophies at different times.

He said that he hated retroactive legislation, but that there was a commitment to participate in a national program. While he is an advocate of a free system without controls, an emergency situation existed. But he recognized the controls never work fairly.

Bennett said that when the AIB program ended, there would need to be some way of giving fair salary increases to public service employees. He asked if the BCTF would be interested in participating in a joint study to help develop a plan for public sector salaries.

Broadley indicated that the BCTF would be willing to consider a joint study, provided that all groups concerned were involved. BCTF representatives were not in a position to speak for other employee groups, Broadley said.

## Education finance—the good, the bad and the uncertain

Although we have only a few district budgets and incomplete information on the provincial scene, the general picture is clear, BCTF Presi-

dent Bill Broadley told the Executive Committee meeting December 10-11.

Broadley said the information on education finance comes in as good news, bad news and mixed or uncertain news.

In the good news, he noted a substantial increase in the basic education program, up 16.4%, which would mean a reduction in the unshared costs and, therefore, greater equity among districts.

The tax burden falls most heavily on commercial, industrial property and higher priced residential homes.

Previously, education ministers had gone to the news media raising alarms about rising school board budgets whereas this year, Broadley noted, no 'jaw boning' had taken place.

The bad news is that many budgets do not appear adequate to maintain the present quality of services. Few dis-

tricts have budgeted to improve their educational programs.

In the mixed or uncertain news, it was noted the effect of the changes will be uneven with some districts having a full five mill increase on a relatively high mill rate while other districts could conceivably have a net decrease.

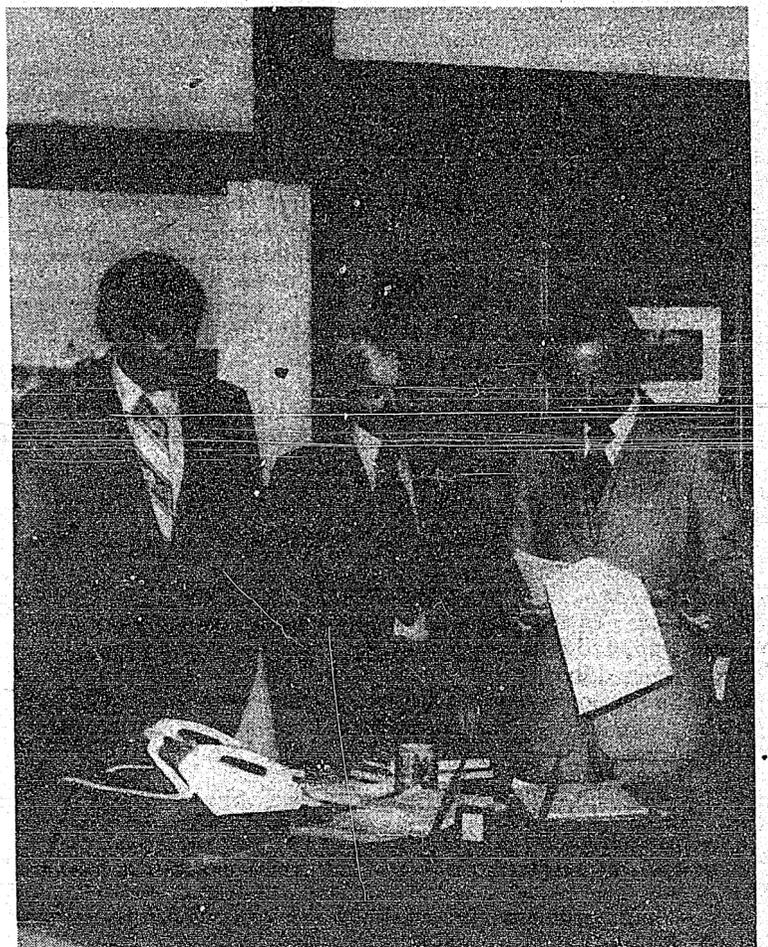
Broadley concluded that government is not seeking a confrontation over education finance at this time.

The main problem, he said, will be to get vulnerable school boards to maintain their budgets and to persuade boards budgeting for inadequate services to increase their budgets for submission on February 15, 1977. 'Education finance is essentially a local problem until some change occurs.'

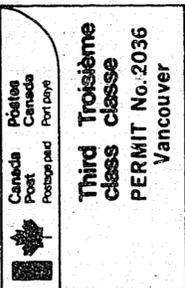
Analysis of budgets on a district-by-district basis is necessary to support local budget programs.

### Education finance

|                                    | 1976        | 1977        | Change |
|------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|--------|
| Instructional Unit Value           | \$21,055    | \$24,500    | 16.4%  |
| Basic Education Program            | \$659M      | \$767M      | 16.4%  |
| Basic Levy                         | 32.50 mills | 37.50 mills | 15.4%  |
| Estimated Operating Mill Rate      | 40.4 mills  | 42.9 mills  | 6.2%   |
| Provincial Share of Operating Cost | 42.2%       | 42.0%       |        |
| Gross Operating Costs              | \$783M      | \$857M      | 9.5%   |



Simpson Studio, Victoria, photo. BCTF Economic Welfare Director Jurd Kirby, left, and BCTF President Bill Broadley, center, discuss the teacher bargaining process with Premier Bill Bennett, right.



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## Grievances



### Who should grieve and why

By DENNIS RANKIN  
Professional Development Division

#### Who should grieve?

Perhaps you should. Perhaps your colleague whose kindergarten class numbers 31 should. Perhaps the staff without adequate library services or facilities should grieve.

The filing of a formal grievance follows the frustration of reasonable efforts to remedy an unsatisfactory learning and working situation. Given that the problem has been identified and that a solution is attainable, a teacher has that responsibility to pursue that resolution.

In conjunction with the staff representative or the local association (probably a learning conditions committee chairperson) the process begins.

#### Why grieve?

Besides the obvious responsibilities, the potential grievor derives a benefit. How successfully can a teacher placate a sense of inadequacy? Oh yes, he or she can rest assured that the best was done 'under the circumstances.' But what was done about those circumstances?

Improvement of the learning environment is certainly a desirable objective. The grievance procedure can serve to meet such an objective by eliminating an impediment to providing excellence of instruction.

The removal of a cause for complaint must be viewed positively. The knowledge that your students received your unimpeded best is worth any effort required in the process. Sound familiar?

In coming issues of the Newsletter grievance cases will be reported. Anonymity may be required to respect confidentiality, but the cases will be all too familiar.

In fact, that similarity may prompt the recollection of a problem that went unresolved. The cases reported may suggest that you or one of your colleagues could press for the remedy of a current problem — overcrowding, inadequate materials, insufficient time, unsafe or unhealthy conditions, timetabling, etc.

## Newsletter policy partially decided — still to be approved

The Executive Committee meeting, December 10-11, developed part of the policy for the Newsletter that will in turn go to the Winter RA before being formally approved.

In addition, the executive instructed that a BCTF Newsletter editorial board, composed of five members none of whom shall be Executive Committee members, be appointed and the posting be done as soon as possible, and not later than December 31, 1976.

The proposed Newsletter policy was initiated when an Executive Committee member expressed concern last January that the Newsletter is becoming a battleground for the purpose of dividing the membership into opposing camps on specific issues.

Delays in discussion of Newsletter policy followed because of pressure of business at the executive table.

The Fall Representative Assembly advised the Executive Committee that it wished to review proposed policy with respect to the BCTF Newsletter and to the establishment of an editorial board prior to implementation.

No appointment will be made to the editorial board, therefore, until after the RA has considered the proposed Newsletter policy.

Another motion on Letters to the Editor, proposed by Gail Neuberger and Julia Goulden, was referred to the proposed Newsletter editorial board for report back with recommendations to a future Executive Committee meeting.

The motion reads: 'That

Newsletter editorial policy ensure that any letter critical of staff, individuals or groups within the federation be published only when ample opportunity has been provided to allow for both points of view to be printed at the same time.' It was agreed that the

Executive Committee will consider at a later date policy regarding letters to the editor. Full policy will be printed in the Newsletter following the Winter RA when any amendments will have been made and following Executive Committee approval.

## Racism presentation extensively used

By JOHN HARDY

The slide-tape presentation on racism has a demand exceeding supply, according to Wes Knapp, staff person on the task force. All indications are that the presentation is being extensively used and well received.

Three BC School Trustees Association staff representatives meeting with the task force in December, however, gave every indication that the BCSTA would join any other organization's efforts but those of the BCTF.

To date a trustee has yet to attend a meeting of the task force to discuss any problems or concerns.

Invitations were extended to the BCSTA, December 1975, to meet along with representatives from 25 other human rights organizations, but the BCSTA refused to meet citing a 'self-fulfilling prophecy' on racism: assuming the existence of a social problem will cause the problem to exist.

The Secretary of State invited the BCTF to submit an

application for funding, April 1976, to enable the slide/tape presentation to be duplicated and distributed. A grant of \$1500 was made.

The BCSTA expressed displeasure with the Secretary of State action, asked for withdrawal of the grant and for destruction of the slide/tape presentation.

The BCTF task force again invited the BCSTA to meet in November 1976. The Secretary of State, meanwhile, informed the BCSTA that the presentation was paid for and belonged to the BCTF.

Bill Broadley and Bob Buzza met with Rendina Hamilton and Henry Armstrong in December but little agreement was reached.

The BCTF, according to the Secretary of State, is breaking new ground. It appears to be the only teachers' organization in the country with a clearly defined program to combat racism in education.

## Armaments

One cardinal source of inflation, not touched by controls or rollbacks, is the armament industry. Let's examine it and draw our own conclusions:

Hamburg's weekly, "Der Spiegel", rates the U.S. as the biggest 'merchant of death' showing exports of \$100-thousand-million since the Second World War; and current exports to 136 countries of \$13-thousand-million annually. France and Britain are second and third with \$3-thousand-million and \$15-hundred-million respectively. West Germany stands fourth with \$100-million annually!

Besides such a volume of trade, the effect of inflation on the armaments themselves is of interest:

The "U.S. News and World Report" lists Second World War prices as compared to current prices in the following way: Battle tank, \$54,835 / \$1,100,000; jeep, \$1,851 / \$5,850; rifle, \$80 / \$150; anti-tank rocket, \$101 / \$8,805; submarine, \$5,200,000 / \$358-million; destroyer, \$3-million / \$348,800,000; fighter plane, \$57,573 / \$15,400,000; long-range bomber, \$433,000 / \$88,830,000.

Surely, this points out graphically where controls ought to be placed; indeed, how inflation might almost be stopped if the armament business were scrapped, and a policy of detente pursued instead.

Gyan Nath, Ivor J. Mills, Geographical Representative, Richmond.

## Wasteful

At the October 1876 meeting of the BCTF Representative Assembly that approved a budget of approximately five million dollars, it was decided that the Planning, Programming and Budgeting System of budgeting — touted as the best system — be reviewed and a report made to the Winter RA.

## Members' voice

### Program needed

I wrote in September asking how the 25% fee increase had been spent to fight controls. I still have not received an answer. I believe that this is because there was no planned program for fighting controls when an emotional plea for funds was put to the AGM, and there is still no comprehensive plan.

Until such a plan is developed we should keep asking how our money is being spent. At the last RA we learned some actions had been taken to oppose controls since I wrote my letter. Nine local associations had tried to place in local newspapers, advertisements expressing opposition to controls. Perhaps because of embarrassing questions about what they were doing to fight controls, the executive offered to pay 70% of the cost of such ads.

Before hearing of the financial assistance, my local asked me to place ads on their behalf. When I applied for assistance, I was amazed that Don Walmsley, who had been so vocal in urging us to do all we could to fight controls, refused to authorize our ad. He then refused to help finance ads for four other locals.

The past president criticized BCTF staff members for giving us technical assistance on what economic arguments to use and the procedures for booking space for the ads.

Despite this interference, we were able to place our ad

because West Vancouver teachers had already agreed to pay for the entire cost if necessary.

Unfortunately, other locals, not having financial backing, were unable to advertise. The fall RA advised the executive to pay for ads, but many locals had missed the opportunity to place the ads when they wanted to.

This is just one example of how power, centralized in the BCTF executive, discourages locals from initiating programs that best meet local needs. On critical issues this power is often exercised on a vote of six to five.

Careful examination of executive minutes will reveal that the same people typically vote together to make up the groups of six and five. The vote to support the October 14 day of protest was one example of this voting pattern. The stand of this small majority on the executive was rejected by 80 to 90% of the membership.

I think the membership should be concerned when a small group, so obviously out of touch, is controlling the BCTF. We need to realize that an executive that is so dramatically out of touch with the membership on an important issue like this is also out of touch on many less visible but equally important issues.

For years teachers worked

to build the BCTF into an influential organization listened to by governments as a legitimate representative of teachers. Now, when our leaders are taking positions that the members obviously don't support, we are losing our credibility and our power. Governments, be they local or provincial, can and do safely ignore organizations whose leadership does not represent the membership.

Am I alone or are you also concerned? If you share my concerns, there are three things you can do. Voice your concerns in your local and attend meetings to elect your AGM delegates. Become active yourself. Write me at 895 Evelyn Drive and let me know that you are concerned and are willing to join with me to work for a change.

Peter Minshall, West Vancouver.

## B.C. Federation of Labour Convention

### Media missed news with focus on leadership fight

By GEORGE NORTH

Behind the headlines that focused on the election contest between 'militant' Len Guy and 'moderate' Art Kube, the B.C. Federation of Labour dealt with 265 resolutions and a dozen committee reports with recommendations that included support for implementation of a program of school-based dental clinics as soon as possible, a position also favored by the BCTF.

The Human Rights Committee, headed by William Giesbrecht, recommended that the labour federation 'continue to press for incorporation of trade union history into the school curriculum, introduction to start below the Grade 10 level . . . The committee proposed that the B.C. Federation of Labour in conjunction with the BCTF draw up a program for trade union education in the school curriculum.'

The committee expressed concern over children's rights, pointing out that most of B.C.'s laws relating to children are over 70 years old. It urged that a special seminar be organized

to create awareness of the Berger Commission Report on Family Law and Children with the aim of enacting its recommendations. In this connection, the committee called for inclusion in the B.C. Human Rights Code of special sections pertaining to children's 12 basic rights and the rights of persons with physical disabilities.

The committee also warned that racial prejudice, which is 'on the uprise,' will be used to divide working people and make scapegoats of non-white immigrants 'because governments have been unwilling or unable to plan and solve the dramatic rise in economic and social problems.' Again, the committee recommended and the BCTF supported seminars and other activities aimed at raising awareness of the 'real cause of racism.'

The federation reiterated its demand for 'a just settlement of the Native Land claims question, the right to their original culture, means of livelihood, and self-government in their communities.'

## LABOR NEWS

Delegates expressed concern over environmental problems, voting continued support to SPEC, Greenpeace, other environmental groups and ad hoc campaigns related to specific environmental issues. The federation wants upgraded pollution control standards and a more effective Pollution Control Board.

The convention asked affiliates to oppose actively the disappearance of agricultural land by joining with like-minded individuals and groups 'to lead a campaign to save farmland from land developers.'

Among other issues, the convention voted to urge the government to:

- provide publicly-constructed housing units for senior citizens, handicapped persons and those on low incomes;

- support and encourage co-op housing;
- provide adequate pensions for senior citizens, with no means test;
- supply adequate assistance to handicapped persons to enable them to live as full a life as possible.

Discrimination against women in B.C. apprenticeship programs was revealed in the report of the Women's Committee — only 497 out of 12,334 registered apprentices are female and 400 of them are in hairdressing or barbering. The report charged Canada Manpower with bureaucratic indifference, 'appearing to be concerned with integrating women into the work force while actually doing nothing.' The committee, noting that these attitudes led to occupation of Canada Manpower offices last September, said it regards the agency's attitudes and practices as 'a serious impediment to the training and upgrading of women.'

It called on affiliated unions representing trades requiring apprenticeships to press for



George North

the full participation of women in apprenticeship programs.

The committee chided delegates for not carrying out commitments made in convention. 'Words that are simply mouthed and formulated at convention and not translated into reality do not fulfill the promise unionism holds out to women. Progress seems to be discouragingly slow.'

## Nomination procedures changed this year

The procedure for nominating candidates for Executive Committee positions has been changed slightly this year.

All nominations will now come from local associations, district councils or groups of 10 members in good standing.

All nominations must be received by the BCTF office by January 31, 1977.

In past years the Nominating Committee (composed of the Geographical Representatives) also nominated people. However, the 1977 AGM changed the nominating procedures to make the role of

the Nominating Committee that of confirming the list of candidates nominated by the other groups (see statement 29.C.24 on page 64 of the Members' Guide to the BCTF).

Nominations are required this year for: President, First Vice-President, Second Vice-President and three members-at-large.

Members-at-large whose terms of office will expire on June 30, 1977 are: Sue Granger, of Williams Lake; Nina Green, of Kelowna; and Ross Regan, of Victoria.

Table officers will be elected for one-year terms; members-at-large, for two-year terms.

## AIB causes fee reduction

Due to the impact of the AIB rollback on teachers' salaries, the situation in the BCTF this year is somewhat unique.

To offset the fee reduction due to the AIB rollback of teachers' salaries, program expenditures will have to be reduced by some \$93,000.

The Executive Committee will recommend to the Winter RA that, for the 1977-78 fiscal year, the fee for active membership payable for the operation of the federation be 0.91% of the estimated mean salary of BCTF members, less \$5.50.

Based on a January 1977 estimated mean salary of \$18,915, application of the

0.91% figure would result in a fee of \$172. The \$5.50 reduction would result in a fee for the operation of the federation of \$166.50.

The fee recommendation is based on the assumption that the additional 2% (\$36) passed at the last Annual General Meeting for the Quality Education Fund, will not be incorporated in 1977.

The Executive Committee will also recommend to the RA that the 1977-78 budget be drafted to meet the objective of an annual cash surplus of \$100,000. Until the reserve fund objective is reached, says the executive, 5% of each mem-

## CTF seeks withdrawal of Anti-Inflation program by MP's review

The Canadian Teachers' Federation will be seeking the withdrawal of the Anti-Inflation Program by approaching federal members of parliament requesting that they review the Anti-Inflation Act as provided in Section 46(6) of Bill C-73.

The Section says that any time after March 31, 50 MPs can file a motion that would have the Act expire before the established date of December 31, 1978. If filed, the motion would be considered within 15 days.

CTF is also urging its members to seek a commitment from their provincial governments to withdraw from the Anti-Inflation Program.

CTF is composed of 14 of the 15 teacher organizations in Canada with a total number of teachers affiliated about 220,000. BCTF members on the CTF Board of Directors are Don Walmsley and Don Kelley.

The BCTF directors opposed a CTF brief to the federal government on the present Anti-Inflation legislation because of a number of items in the brief.

Specifically, the directors objected to CTF's willingness to co-operate in a 'post-control process' which they perceived as a continuation of the controls.

They objected to the implication that unemployment was necessary to curb inflation, to the implication that financial

support to the public sector would have to be reduced and to the implication that high wages cause inflation.

In another CTF news, a status of women national seminar will be held at the Hotel Toronto, January 30 to February 1, 1977 called 'Challenge '77: Strategies for Action.'

CTF has made a formal request to the government of Canada asking for its support for the concept of an International Children's Year.

CTF also requested the Canadian Government to condemn the racist practices of South Africa.

CTF agreed to give a travel subsidy to small member organizations (the Yukon Teachers' Association and the Northwest Territories Teachers' Association would be chief beneficiaries).

## Should be at meeting Executive tells PSA

Stan Dunster, President of the Business Educators' PSA, met the BCTF Executive Committee December 10-11 to find out why the business educators' brief to the Goard Commission was not endorsed.

Dunster and members of his executive had been unable to attend the BCTF executive meeting when the brief was discussed.

He was given areas of concern by a number of Executive Committee members who drew his attention to various parts of the business educators' brief with which they had a disagreement. Among the concerns were

that the schools should not be job training grounds: 'Our business is the business of educating young people — if industry wants to train cooks then industry should pay for it.' Vocational education and cost factors was also a matter of concern, for example, the high cost of a computer for use by a small number of pupils. Some areas of the school system would suffer, it was pointed out, if you add courses requiring expensive equipment.

It was stressed by a number of executive members that representatives of various associations should be in attendance at the time briefs are being discussed.

## Save the Fraser

A 40-minute 'Save the Fraser' slide show and lecture produced by SREC (Society for Pollution and Environmental Control) is now available to schools in the White Rock-Surrey, Vancouver Central and Vancouver South areas.

For information contact Rod Marining, SREC, 1603 West 4th Avenue, Vancouver, B.C. V6J 1L8, or phone 736-5601.

## Conference on sexism

The Canadian Teachers' Federation is sponsoring a conference on sexism in education entitled 'Challenge '77 — Strategies For Action.'

The focus will be on identifying areas for change and developing action plans in schools, in school boards, in teacher associations and in ministries of education and other government agencies.

One session will be devoted to the preparation and use of briefs and reports.

The conference will be held in Toronto from January 30 to February 1, 1977. There is a registration fee of \$15.

For further information, contact Pearl Roberts, BCTF.

# A case of too many children

Pictures and text  
by Annette Croucher

How do you get a dedicated teacher to quit half way through a year?

What's the level of frustration that will drive a teacher out of the classroom?

Sixty children in two kindergarten classes, 30 in each class; more than 75 percent of them non-English speaking; crowded and inadequate facilities.

Pat Lamont has been forced to admit defeat. 'I'm leaving for health reasons,' she explained. 'It's just too much for me. Normally, I would stay until the end of the year.'

Instead, Pat Lamont, who started teaching kindergarten at Sexsmith Community School, 58th Avenue and Ontario Street, 20 years ago, resigned as of December 17.

Vancouver Elementary School Teachers' Association is presenting a brief to the Vancouver School Board January 17 on behalf of kindergarten teachers.

There are, according to VESTA president Steve Norman, 101 out of 159 kindergarten classes that are over 20, the maximum limit set by the BCTF.

Lamont happens to be in the worst situation with 30 children in each class and most of them non-English speaking.



Using lots of picture books, Pat Lamont tries to teach the children how to read.

'A child may have been in Hong Kong yesterday and in your classroom today. Imagine the trauma he is experiencing?'

Other problems exist with the parents themselves; English-speaking parents who are concerned about how their children are being affected. If they are getting their full share, as if they were in a smaller class or an all-English-speaking class.

*'But, the whole situation is very wearing. When I get home at night, said Lamont, 'I just collapse. And I would like to have a life of my own.'*

She works hours upon hours at home preparing materials 'because I don't want the children to suffer. After all, it is the children who matter.'

On her own time, Lamont has rewritten such stories as *The Night Before Christmas* and *The Three Bears*, and then had them translated into three different languages onto tapes.

There are problems when it comes to taping, though, as the whole cultural background is different.

Some sayings in English do not have the same meaning in Punjabi or Chinese.

So Lamont has also started taping stories from the children's own countries. At one point, she and some other teachers even tried learning some of the children's languages.

'It is difficult enough to make an English-speaking four- or five-year-old understand what you want, or to teach them how to formulate sentences. Can you imagine how difficult it is for children who don't even know a few words of the English language?'

In Lamont's morning class, 25 out of 30 children are from homes where English either is not spoken or is a second language; in the afternoon class, 27 out of 30.

A rather ironic twist is that Lamont was one of the initiators of kindergartens in Vancouver.

With seemingly unending patience, Lamont, a motherly person, with a soft British accent — firm, yet gentle, manages to keep organization in what for an ordinary person would be complete bedlam.

Obviously, the children like their teacher, try very hard to please, but there are too many problems.

*'For someone who loves children, and I do love them, it is very frustrating.'*

'The very nuances of the different languages make it very difficult to even tell a story. I have to simplify everything and tell stories more visually than verbally,' Lamont said.

Communication is the prime problem, 'You cannot ask these children to make comparisons. You cannot criticize, even constructively. For example, how do you tell a child that something that should be upright is upside down if he doesn't even understand what you are saying?'

'You don't know if a child needs help. Therefore you can never get at the facts of a situation. You feel helpless.'

'Kindergarten is supposed to take the pressure off children, but when they are struggling like this to overcome language problems, when they are massed in with this number of children, what happens?'

One little boy simply 'couldn't stand it any more and threw a violent temper tantrum.' A girl has constantly been sent home because of the pressure of 'all those people.'

The school bulletin taken home by the children to their parents must be written in three languages — Punjabi, Hindu and Chinese. These are only the children's languages.

**'Communication is the prime problem . . . you don't know if a child needs help.'**



Off on her own . . . perhaps she needs help or is frightened? . . . who knows.

major languages though. There are also Greek, Japanese, Hungarian and others in the class.

Lamont does receive part-time assistance from a Special Needs teacher. However, the day of the interview the Special Needs teacher was away, leaving Lamont with all 60 children.

There is also an ESL teacher (English as a second language), but Lamont finds it very disrupting for the children to constantly be pulled out of class, first for ESL and then for Special Needs.

Theoretically, said Lamont, extra people are great, but in actual fact, the teacher still has the ultimate responsibility for the children; evaluating progress, marking 60 papers, providing teaching materials for 60 children, etcetera.

It has been suggested that the class be broken up into three, thereby making classes of 20.

'But there is no where to put them,' Lamont pointed out.

'For some reason we cannot seem to get a portable. We can't even use this other room we have, because it is being used to teach English to the parents.'

Dwindling space includes what was once a conference room in the library used by Lamont and her translators to make tapes for the children.

It too is now being used for the community as a small library. This means Lamont must either make the tapes in her classroom or at home. 'I've finally given up on that too. What's the use of trying?' she asked.



Raggedy Ann and Raggedy Andy join in story telling time.

Lamont believes that a good teacher doesn't allow the quality of her teaching to suffer in spite of the circumstances. 'You let your personal life suffer first; so this is why I am having to quit.'

She has two grown children of her own. She apprenticed, at age 14, for four years in teacher training in England. After passing her Oxford exams, she began teaching in England. Later, she taught for three years in Bermuda, where she assisted in the opening of its first kindergarten.

After coming to Canada, Lamont's first teaching position was as a kindergarten teacher at Sexsmith. In a campaign spearheaded by Elsie Roy back in 1957, Lamont was one of those who helped educate the public as to the importance of kindergarten.

'We were trying to prove that kindergartens were of value and I believe we were successful.'

*'Those were the days when we took 100 children, 25 at a time, with the rest staying at home until it was their turn.'*

The Chant report came through at that time and it was decided that there should be kindergartens in every school, enough so that every child who wanted to could attend.

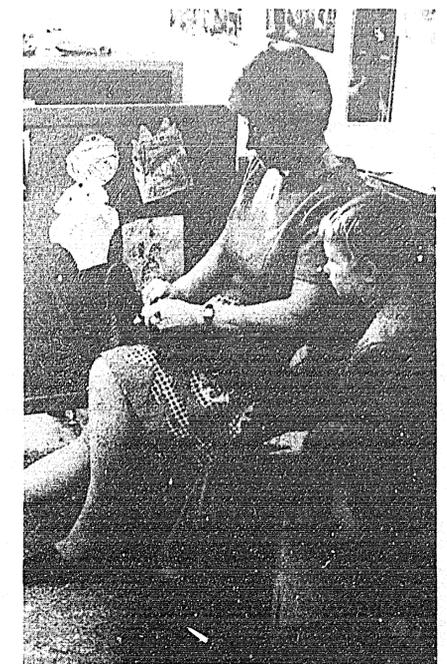
Class size was raised from a previous 25 to 30, with one full-time and one half-time teacher, remembered Lamont.

Then, as the birth rate declined, so did the class size, until immigrants started arriving, said Lamont.

When Lamont first came to Sexsmith she had 69 children and no paper or materials with which to teach. The situation greatly improved over the years.

*'1973 was a good year. There were only 17 or 18 children in each class. But since then the numbers have steadily risen. Last year it was 29 and this year 30.'*

The ratio of English-speaking and non-English-speaking children has also drastically increased. A



It's 'tying up shoes time' and this little boy receives assistance from teacher.

And, of course, said Lamont, what is really needed is smaller classes.

'You can do more with the children and there are fewer pressures put upon them because of the smaller numbers of people they have to relate to.'

'I would also like to see the school board do more integrating before children come to school — teach them things like how to get on a bus, how much money to use, things that seem quite simple to us, but are so hard for the immigrant.'

Lamont said that if she were staying after Christmas, she would start teaching the children about different cultures and what people do in other countries.

But she is not staying. A replacement has been found. However, she will not be idle.

She plans to write about her kindergarten experiences and perhaps submit the articles to educational magazines.



Time to go home . . . line up everybody . . . see you tomorrow . . . hurry home.



## Just what does a full-time local president do?

Charles Frizell

Long hours, frustration, varied work, but also a sense of satisfaction, are characteristics associated with the job of a full-time local president.

Steve Norman, of Vancouver Elementary School Teachers' Association (VESTA), took on the job this school year because it provided an 'interesting challenge.'

'I didn't decide until Christmas (of 1975) and it was a major decision for me,' said Norman.

'I would be going from constant contact with children and teachers to an almost administrative kind of position with very little contact. It was quite a frightening prospect,' said Norman, who tells of his first experience chairing a meeting of 1,000 people.

Norman has been teaching grades 3 to 7 PE and academics for the past 10 years.

He first became interested in the association when he started reading 'those pieces of paper' that came into the school. From there he became the staff representative, VESTA vice-president and finally, was elected president in the spring of 1976.

Working days averaging 12 hours, five and sometimes six days a week, the president primarily acts as an intermediary device, passing on and receiving information for 1700 members.

The president also acts as a liaison between the other four locals — VSTA, the Coordinators, and Elementary and Secondary Administrators.

He also must keep in close contact with school board members.

The real time consuming part of the job is to 'stay on top' of all these different areas, said Norman.

Lately, VESTA presidents have become more and more involved with personnel problems.

'About half the teacher grievances received are handled by VESTA rather than by the BCTF. I handle them myself although occasionally I might draw upon BCTF resources,' said Norman, adding that VESTA generally tries to 'look after its own problems.'

Numerous meetings account for the many long evening hours — executive meetings, meetings with the school PRs, school board, induction ceremonies, general meetings, various BCTF meetings, meetings over the AIB situation and a host of others.

'Fortunately, I do not have a family, otherwise I think there could be problems,' said Norman, who said he may have to start paying his newspaper boy by cheque, he's so rarely home.

Norman said there's 'no way' the job could be properly done with a part-time president.

'Only the major things could be done. Visiting the schools, assisting teachers with problems, would be completely out.'

Norman said because he is a full-time president he feels 'obligated' to take on more than he perhaps should.

VESTA has had a full-time president since 1969, using a general secretary before that. The job operates on an 11 month basis with the general length of time served being two years, although a three year term is possible.

Norman said as the year progresses, he would like to get out into the schools more often. Because of the AIB situation in the fall, he has not been able to leave the office much.

Another area which he will have to deal with within the next few months is whether or not to hire more office staff. The workload has increased five times in the past three years, said Norman. 'We either have to cut back on services or hire more staff.'

One key project of Norman's is to reorganize the VESTA structure so that it is in line with the Vancouver School Board's way of zoning. At present VESTA has eight zones and the school board has five.

'Changing over would bring about better communications and also make it more convenient for everyone,' said Norman.

He is also working on revising the VESTA constitution which has not been changed from its 1969 format of a part-time president.

Norman said he does not know yet if he will run for a second term. He does want to eventually become involved in some BCTF committees and other federation activities.

He said that while he would like to return to classroom teaching, he cannot see himself staying there until retirement.

'I would like to try other things in the education field. I wouldn't mind trying administration, but not right now. I do not agree with their present system of selecting administrators which allows the board to have final say in selecting. I believe staff should have a major input in the selecting and deselecting of administrators.'

Norman said teachers in schools mistrust the school board, BCTF and VESTA because 'we are removed from them.'

'We must become more visible and demonstrate our usefulness,' he said. On the other hand too, he said, teachers should seek out their association and become involved.

Charles Frizell, Vancouver Secondary Teachers' Association, (VSTA), president, spends as much time as possible visiting the schools and assisting VSTA's 1400 members in any way he can.

He sees himself as sort of an ombudsman, keeping in touch with teachers and finding out what



Steve Norman

he can do for them as individuals.

'Sometimes I act as an adjudicator for a teacher in such matters as problems with payroll or with the board and just generally dealing with teacher grievances,' said Frizell.

'I define my role to be primarily to further the cause of education by promoting the welfare of the classroom teacher. I believe the classroom teacher forms the foundation of education,' he said.

Frizell works mainly through three committees — Agreements, Learning Conditions and Professional Development.

He also must deal with the media, put out a monthly newsletter, attend dozens of meetings, and act as a spokesperson for the members.

He attends all school board and board committee meetings, expressing opinions and pointing out any discrepancies or errors in budgets or other areas of discussion.

'Recently I got them (the board) to distinguish between pupil/teacher ratio in the classroom and pupil/teacher ratio in the whole system,' Frizell said.

While the hours of a VSTA president are long and the work extremely varied, from running an office to chairing a meeting, Frizell considers the job 'interesting' and 'no harder than a full-time-teaching job.'

'You just have to set priorities and not spend too much time running the office,' Frizell advised.

Frizell believes every teacher should try to do something like this — it's a change from ordinary teaching.

He does, however, feel it essential for a teacher to have first spent at least four years on the executive, preferably as secretary-treasurer or vice-president and to have some knowledge of budgets, finances and the running of an office.

The amount of money the president is responsible for amounts to \$130,000 — \$75,000 of which is fees, 'So you must know what you are doing,' said Frizell.

Although a VSTA president can remain in office for three years, Frizell feels it necessary for the presidency to change at least once every two years to give other members a chance to become president.

The VSTA president, as in VESTA, also works 11 months — the school year plus two weeks in July and two weeks in August.

VSTA has had a full-time president since 1970. Prior to that, a general secretary, Frizell said it is up to the members whether they want a full-time president, but he could see it being a very difficult job if there were only a part-time person. It would also be difficult for a person with a young family, said Frizell, whose own family is grown up.

Frizell said he wanted to become president because he felt it a 'logical conclusion' to what he had been doing and also because he needed a change. He has served on the VSTA executive for the past five years.

A teacher of grades 8 to 12 for the past 22 years, Frizell wants to return to the classroom, or the 'front line,' as he puts it. He does not know yet if he will run a second term as president.

One of the changes Frizell would like to see happen is for secondary schools to change over to a quarterly system of year-round operation. He has in fact written and submitted such a plan to the school board.

He also wants to continue to visit schools and teachers as much as possible.

## Status of Women

# Women's studies course ready for schools

A women's studies course, now available in wide distribution, has a wealth of information useful to all teachers.

The resource guide is a series of units which can be integrated into specific subject courses such as English, Social Studies and Guidance or used as a resource for development of a local course in women's studies.

Jane Gaskell, Faculty of Education, UBC, and Heather Knapp, Richmond School District, selected, organized, revised and wrote material that was received from many sources.

The main thing for teachers to understand says Heather Knapp, is that the course is a study of women.

It can be taught as a whole course or as a help in any other courses. 'It's really flexible,' she says. 'Essentially it is a model — not the be all and end all for women's studies. Teacher should feel free to add to it all the time.'

There are 10 sections listed in the table of contents: Images of Masculinity and Femininity; Learning Sex Roles; Physiology of Sex Differences; The Family; The Economy; History of Women in Canada; Politics; The Law; Education; Literature and the Arts; and Women in Other Cultures.

The section on 'Images of Masculinity and Femininity' for example expects that students will gain some general understanding of concepts such as 'discrimination' and 'sex roles stereotype' as well as gain insight into the relationship between language and sex role attitudes.

For starters, the unit begins with a stereotype picture of the father with a brief case going off to work and the mother in the kitchen cooking over a stove.

A unit on the family wants students first to understand the influence of the family in defining the role of women as well as having knowledge of how to make decisions regarding their own lives in a family unit.

'The family has traditionally been the focus of women's roles,' says the study. 'Changes in the role of women are most clearly and immediately reflected in the family context.'

The study goes on to give an explanation of the nuclear family, extended families, and reasons for individuals seeking alternative forms.

As the study points out, 'many families are not structured in the form described. For instance, large numbers of mothers work, many families have no



Perusing the new Women's Studies Resource Guide are left to right, Pearl Roberts, Status of Women; Heather Knapp, Richmond; Jane Gaskell, UBC.

children; others have fathers who stay at home; some are single parent families. These realities must always be kept in mind.'

One purpose of this unit, then, is to have students examine their present family unit and make more conscious decisions about their own futures, 'in an intellectually and ethically honest way.'

### Women and law

Women and the Law intends that students will understand how current laws on marriage, child care, welfare, labor and crime affect women. Another aim is for students to understand how laws are made and changed. For a perspective on who has the power to make laws which affect women, however, teacher and students would have to explore other units (history and politics).

Mainly this section, as are all the sections, provide a teacher with ideas of how to approach these topics. It provides an example of a woman in the community, recently widowed who needs credit to buy a car for her new job but finds she has no credit rating. Would the human rights code cover her situation? Where would you lay a complaint in your community?

The Murdoch case, where the woman helped her husband develop a ranch to an approximate value of \$300,000 but then she was only awarded \$200 a month by the supreme court, is also discussed and questions suggested.

### Unique study

What emerges from the women's studies course is that it is a study of women, but a study of women that is needed by both male and female students. Most of the areas for study brought in by the course have not been part of the school system previously.

'It's probably unique for Canada,' says Heather Knapp, who says this is the first provincially endorsed course of its kind.

Along with the resource guide there is an annotated bibliography for women's studies for high school students that will be distributed free of charge to teachers by the ministry of education. It was developed by the Women's Resources Centre of the Centre for Continuing Education, UBC, Vancouver. An invaluable aid to teachers, the bibliography represents countless hours of work in preparation.

The references represent a wide variety of ideas, opinions and perspectives expressed in a variety of ways. Books are categorized as teachers' references or students' references and grade level is suggested, according to the complexity of the material.

Heather Knapp and Jane Gaskell both extend thanks to the many people who contributed to the development of the women's study course. The course originated from the Provincial Advisory Committee on Sex Discrimination and has been more than two years in the making. Special reference was made to the work of Reva Dexter and Julia Goulden, who worked in sequence as special advisors on the provincial committee.

But the provincial committee was disbanded by the government last year, which is another example, says Heather Knapp, of how extremely difficult it has been to develop this course. As she says, it is difficult enough to work through the educational bureaucracy but since the disbandment of the Advisory Committee on Sex Discrimination the difficulties are compounded.

'It would be a mistake for anyone to think we have solved all the problems in education simply by endorsing a women's study course,' she says.

## A need for knowledge

What do we know about the working lives of Canadian women?

Women contributed to the building of Canadian society — but their endless hours of work both inside and outside the home are unrecorded in our history texts.

What do we know about Agnes MacPhail, Cora Hind, Emily Murphy, Helen Gregory MacGill or Nellie McClung?

Sometimes we hear about 'those angry and disruptive suffragists.' But what do know about the reality of the fight for the right to vote?

Some still say that 'a woman's place is in the home.' Yet do they know that 40 percent of our labor force in B.C. is composed of women who are working outside the home?

Do we know the types of jobs that women are entering into in the labor force?

Can we predict the skills necessary for a full, equal and active participation in the labor force without understanding women's roles in the economy and society today?

At one time, educational institutions and schools excluded women. For the most part, that has changed. Yet curricula and classroom materials have roots in the past: they continue to exclude women from study.

Women's roles, abilities and contributions have been stereotyped or omitted from study in the arts, the sciences, the law, politics, history and the economy.

In spite of recently developed courses and classroom materials, women's roles still tend to be omitted or rigidly moulded and restricted.

## Careers day draws large student interest

By PEARL ROBERTS

Students at Windsor Secondary School in North Vancouver recently participated in a rather unusual Careers Day.

Twelve women in various non-traditional occupations spoke about their work and answered questions from students.

Resource people included a

bus driver, architect, veterinarian, newspaper reporter, policewoman, lawyer, businesswoman, bank manager, audio-visual producer, typewriter, school principal and an information officer.

The Grade 8, 9 and 10 students had spent up to five hours in preparatory lessons before the actual Careers Day. By the time resource people

arrived, students were eager to expand upon their previous knowledge and ask specific questions about areas of interest.

During the first hour of the day's program, each speaker visited two Grade 8 classrooms. The second hour was an open session for all interested students. Resource people gave presentations and

students were free to attend the workshop of their choice.

The presentations given by the veterinarian, policewoman and lawyer were among the most popular.

Although participation in the second session was voluntary, students crowded into rooms and discussed issues ranging from the proposed 'cooling-off'

amendment to marriage laws to educational requirements for veterinarians.

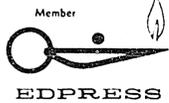
The program was sponsored in conjunction with the Capilano College Women's Studies program.

For more information, contact Carol Givens at Windsor Secondary, 931 Broadview, North Vancouver.

BRITISH COLUMBIA TEACHERS' FEDERATION  
105 - 2235 Burrard Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6J 3H9

newsletter

Editor  
JOHN HARDY  
Assistant  
ANNETTE CROUCHER



Letters to the editor must be signed by and bear the address of the writer. The Newsletter may edit letters for brevity, clarity, legality or taste.

A Fort Nelson teacher, Phil Rexin, has prepared a presentation outlining the objectives and purpose of Alternative Education.

Anyone wishing information may contact him at Box 1418, Fort Nelson, B.C.

The African relief program reported in the last Newsletter should read \$600 needed to ship the clothing.

# 'I couldn't disagree more' MacFarlan replies to Postman

Past president Jim MacFarlan gave the keynote address to the Quebec associations of Protestant (PAPT) and Catholic (PACT) teachers this November at their joint convention. Following is an interview in the PAPT 'Sentinel' made before the convention in which he attacks Neil Postman's address to the CTF conference last spring. (Postman's address was reprinted in the B.C. Teacher last month.)

**Cultural Pluralism - a plus or minus factor in schools?**

I think the schools should encourage cultural pluralism. Whenever you're in a situation where you don't recognize the rights of people who, in fact, have never been integrated, and had the characteristics before we came of a 'proto-nation' or a 'neo-nation'. We have managed in the school system to eliminate most of the vestiges of the cultural traditions of most of the ethnic people who have come to Canada.

This comes from a deep-seated wasp racism that has characterized this country. Certainly the example of racism in Western Canada is the CPR bringing the Chinese workers to build the railroad. Racism has been openly and overtly practised in the school system in the form of texts and so on. The concessions to multi-ethnic people have only been in text book pictures of little Dutch children with wooden shoes and the odd picture of a Ukrainian in a colored skirt, but there's been very little attempt to actually preserve cultural identity through the school system.

**How can the schools solve important political and social problems? Should they?**

Dr. Postman's remarks in Ottawa were basically that the schools should remain out of that area - that the teacher's roll was to make the classroom a happy place and keep his nose out of politics, out of the social and economic problems... I couldn't disagree more.

I think that the school and the teachers have to be vitally

concerned with those social and political problems because every child who comes to school, comes from a deeply affected environment. Working class children from Montreal, Winnipeg and Vancouver already come to school with a significant disadvantage. I don't think the school can remain outside the political arena.

Education itself is political. Teachers have a deep social responsibility on the questions of class discrimination, racism, and sexism... to become involved. In that sense I would have to agree with the position of the CEQ in Quebec. I think their position on social questions is far in advance of any teacher organization in North America.

Teachers have to be clued in, they also have to teach the kids. It's an obligation that teachers have.

The attitude that we've always had is that teachers are objective, that education is above politics, we're not concerned with it... we just do our happy job in the classroom, with the brush and a piece of chalk.

Students have to be taught what the system is doing to them, and why, and what sort of things ordinary people can do to overcome these things, both within this present society, and in the context of a new one. I don't believe that teachers can, in fact, be neutral in the face of the problems that confront us in society. We have an obligation to express our collective point of view, while fostering diverse opinions among our young people. We also have the obligation to bring to their attention all the problems that exist in this society.

**Should we teach labor movement history?**

Part of the whole discrimination that's practised against working class people is that their history is omitted. In B.C. we've set up a Labor History Provincial Specialists Association specifically to develop curriculum materials in trade union history and

trade union struggles... that whole area is just totally ignored. There's a feeling that the omission of women from the curriculum, the omission of Inuit and Indian People, and the omission of Labor History is accidental. That is a bloody lie. It's a fact that the omission of workers and women and native people is a very deliberate, consummately-planned scheme on the part of those who control education in this country to leave those people out. To suggest that the Winnipeg General Strike, which has had such a profound effect on Western Canadian politics for sixty years, merits six lines in a history book written by some ass of an academic who in three breaths condemns the rebellions in 1837-38, deals with Louis Riel as a traitor, and omits the Winnipeg General Strike, except for six lines - that's not accidental. In terms of working class history to working class kids, we have to bring these questions out in the open.

There are very few good texts. One of the better ones in Canada is *Canadian Studies, Self and Society*, written by some people at Queen's Seneca College, that attempts to deal with Canadian politics, Canada/US relations. It even mentions Mel Watkins and gives him half a page, which is some sort of progress. But governments have to spend a portion of the budget giving people time off to produce this kind of curriculum material.

The other factor is that the trade union movement, until recently, has not been very conscious in terms of promoting and fostering material. The CLC is getting better at producing materials but there's been very little done.

In the 1950's the leadership of most of the teacher unions in Canada, following the lead of the States, betrayed our interests, and I don't use that word lightly, by promoting professionalism, in the form of a middle-class view of professionalism - the doctor, the lawyer and the dentist etcetera. In our own province,



Jim MacFarlan

the leadership of the federation was elected and staffed throughout the 1950's and early 60's by people who attempted to sell the professional aspects of the organization and convince people they weren't workers, and we're still suffering from that. We've found that in the October 14th protest vote, the majority of our locals rejected it because they believe it's unprofessional. That's the result of the low level of trade union and political consciousness.

**How can the schools make kids smarter?**

Can we make kids smarter in school?

I don't think the schools can make people smarter, but what they can do, in the absence of any hard evidence about the make up of human intelligence, is make only the most generous and promising assumptions about young people. My credo is that we should not stigmatize people but we should abandon the processes of dealing with intelligence tests and standardized aptitude tests and things like that.

We should assume, with a very small number of exceptions for people who are either institutionalized or who need special personal care, that every child in the school, including those who have problems we diagnose as special now, is capable of mastering the basic material

required to survive in this society. But unfortunately we make the other assumption. We make the assumptions that there are smart kids and stupid kids; we design dead-end courses and dead-end programs; and we treat kids who don't learn in some subject areas as quickly as other like dummies, so they live up to those expectations. The self-fulfilling prophesy is really true in terms of young people.

I had a class one day and they said to me, 'Are you teaching us the same thing as such-and-such a class?' and I said yeah... then one little girl put her hand up and said, 'We can't do that!' and I said why and she said, 'We're here 'cause we're dummies!'

The school instills those expectations or lack of them in kids, so I think we can make kids smarter by humanizing the school system and making more generous assumptions about them. Children react to the kind of attitude we display toward them. If people treat them as if they're dummies and geniuses then, to a certain degree, they'll respond to that.

There are kids who it becomes impossible for the school to deal with, because of society's pressures, but by and large, they are very few. The majority of kids who are getting occupational and vocational training are just a massive addition to the cheap labor force, and it's a damn shame.

## Executive splits on 'how' local political action approved

By KEN AITCHISON

The Executive Committee has agreed to encourage local political action programs, but not without a spirited debate about how the encouragement should be given.

Examining preview copies of a new BCTF Local Political Action Handbook, prepared by the Local Political Action Task Force, executive members agreed unanimously that local programs should be encouraged, along the lines suggested in the publication.

However, they split 5-5 on whether or not the BCTF should lay on regional workshops to acquaint local associations with the new

booklet and the activities suggested therein.

Some members supported a recommendation from the task force that workshops be organized. Others argued that the BCTF should not impose the workshops, but should organize any requested by local associations.

A motion that 'local associations be informed of the program and the availability of assistance in implementation' was defeated on a 5-5 vote.

Al Blakey charged that the motion was 'not leadership, but the abrogation of it.'

Second Vice-President Pat

Brady objected to comments made from those who opposed the motion, stating that he was tired of the attitude that 'if you agree with me, you're a supporter of the federation; if you disagree with me you're apathetic.'

After further debate, the executive passed unanimously this motion: 'That the Local Political Action Handbook be distributed to all locals, and that regional workshops and other supportive activities be initiated to assist in implementation of local political action programs, with a view to integrating them with other BCTF programs.'

## Loans available - members

All BCTF active members should already have seen special notices pertaining to BCTF Guaranteed Loans.

Those wishing to apply for a loan should direct their initial enquiries to the local association. Applications should not be submitted until the amount of rollback and pay back schedule have been determined for the particular school district in which the member teaches.

The loans are a result of the BCTF's fall RA which was concerned about the possibility of significant deductions in members' cheques due to salary rollbacks.

The federation has agreed to serve as guarantor for loans of up to \$500 at the lowest interest rate possible for members needing assistance.

The loans are being handled by the B.C. Teachers' Credit Union, the Teachers' Investment and Housing Co-operative, the Toronto-Dominion Bank and the Bank of B.C.

## ADES

The Alcohol-Drug Education Service (ADES) is an independent organization dedicated to education for prevention of alcohol and drug problems; in particular.

ADES publishes a Newsletter six times yearly; sample copies are available on request. A list of 16 mm films for rental is also available on application to this office.

Fully dependent now upon voluntary support ADES invites the active concern, the suggestions and financial help of everyone sharing its objectives. ALCOHOL-DRUG EDUCATION SERVICE, 245 East Broadway, Vancouver, B.C. V5T 1W4 Telephone 874-2229.