

NEWSLETTER

BRITISH COLUMBIA TEACHERS' FEDERATION

Vol. 17, No. 15

BROADWAY PRINTERS LTD.

May 17, 1978



BCTF Building inefficient, inflexible, dysfunctional

New building proposed

The June representative assembly will be asked to approve construction of a new home for the federation at a cost of approximately \$4.5 million.

The executive committee decided at its May 5-7 meeting to make this recommendation, in spite of misgivings on the part of some of its members.

It acted on the advice of its building project subcommittee which, after reviewing the advice of consultants, concluded that a new building made better sense than any of the alternatives: doing nothing, renovating the existing building, or renovating plus constructing an addition.

The need to solve the problems of the present B.C. Teachers' Building in the 2200 block Burrard Street in Vancouver — which is rated as inefficient, inflexible and dysfunctional by the consultants — has been a controversial topic at executive and representative assembly meetings for several years.

The January 1976 RA endorsed an executive recommendation that the BCTF construct a new building of up to 100,000 net square feet, plus parking facilities.

The current proposal has been considerably scaled down from the maximum size set by the RA. It envisages a building of 60,000 gross square feet, yielding 51,000 net square feet. This should be sufficient, according to the subcommittee's report, to house the federation's operations and leave a surplus of 11,000 net square feet which could be rented for an estimated \$99,000 a year.

The present building contains 32,235 net square feet. This could be increased to 37,600 net square feet by renovation, at a cost of \$1,732,535. Renovations plus an addition would yield 41,504 net square feet at a cost of \$2,112,465. (The totals for both these projects include the costs of temporary relocation into leased space while work was in progress.)

The subcommittee concluded that the present building is not adequate to meet present or future BCTF requirements. Its inflexible design makes it difficult to reorganize the staff to meet the members' changing needs. Its mechanical systems are old, inadequate and costly to maintain, and the building will be outgrown in about three years.

The subcommittee rejected the alternative of simply renovating the existing structure. It said this would be 'extremely costly and it is questionable whether the end product would result in significant improvements.'

Renovation plus an addition would also be extremely costly, the subcommittee decided. It agreed with its consultants that this would be only a 'band-aid' solution to the problem.

Neither renovation, nor renovation-plus-addition, would add as much to the value of the

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Delegates rank concerns

What do B.C. teachers want from their federation in the coming year?

If delegates to the recent annual general meeting are typical of the members, they want action on learning conditions, declining enrollments, and due process with respect to their jobs.

At the bottom of their list of concerns, apparently, are sexual and racial discrimination, democratization of school decision-making, and political action.

The executive committee polled delegates to the AGM for guidance in identifying major thrusts for the 1978-79 school year. It asked them to answer a questionnaire as individuals rather than as representatives of their local associations.

The weighted rank-ordering of 549 completed responses to the questionnaire is as follows:

1 To pursue high-quality learning conditions such as lower pupil/teacher ratios and satisfactory physical environment;

2 To take advantage of de-

clining enrollment to promote an expansion of school services;

3 To ensure that members receive due process with respect to placement, evaluation, tenure and transfer;

4 To obtain the right to bargain for conditions of employment;

5 To attain adequate salaries and bonuses;

6 To protect the income of members at the time of illness, disability, accident or retirement;

7 To achieve an educational finance formula in which the provincial government assumes a greater share of the total cost;

8 To promote and assist the professional growth of individual teachers, or groups of teachers;

9 To implement more effective public relations programs;

10 To promote the decentralization of decision-making on curriculum design and implementation;

11 To meet local needs by improving local association

Passed to RA

Executive knife trims budgets

The executive committee has sliced more than \$300,000 from the 51 program budgets it will recommend for approval by the representative assembly in June.

The revised cost of federation programs for 1978-79, if the assembly accepts the executive's recommendations, will be \$4,912,331 and the federation will come within \$2,000 of meeting its objective of ending the budget year with a cash surplus of \$300,000.

Budget-cutting is no easy task. It took the executive committee 26 hours of hard debate, spread over the three days May 5-7, to achieve its goal. In the process the executive decided, often with dissenting votes, to recommend budget changes that would:

• Cut out \$62,000 in grants to provide release time for presidents of local associations;

• Delete \$20,000 from the professional development services budget, which funds the professional development advisory committee (PDAC);

• Wipe out the annual conference of status of women contact persons, at a saving of \$23,500, and limit the committee to five meetings a year instead of seven;

• Reverse for 1978-79 a three-week-old decision to pay hotel and meal costs for delegates to provincial and zonal

conferences, for a saving of \$60,000;

• Cancel a proposed television advertising campaign designed to stimulate support for strong school board budgets, saving \$43,000;

• Reject a proposal by the learning conditions committee for a \$30,000 film on the grievance procedure;

• Abolish two committees and put a third on ice;

• Cut a \$5,000 management consultant's fee from the planning and control budget;

• Cut the budget for the annual general meeting by \$7,500 (to \$125,000); and

• Reduce the executive's own expenses by \$4,100. (The executive even considered whether it could save a little more by serving cookies instead of Danish pastries at its meetings.)

Many other proposed cuts failed for lack of majority support. These included elimination of daycare service for children of delegates to the annual general meeting (\$2,000); hotel expenses for metro area executive members and geographical representatives attending the convention; elimination of the annual training session for zonal learning conditions coordinators and the annual short course on negotiations and arbitration (\$20,000).

S/W focus of debate

The most acrimonious debate of the three-day session came during repeated discussion of the status of women program and budget.

The debate was marked by charges of 'paranoia' on both sides and complaints that opponents, by picking at individual objectives and activities, were in effect trying to kill the program.

In a series of split votes the executive decided to save some money and impose control over

'proselytizing' by the status of women, learning conditions and professional development advisory committees.

Individual program budgets contained funds to allow many or all members of these committees to attend summer conferences for local presidents, learning conditions and agreements committee chairpersons.

In future, if the representative assembly accepts the executive's recommendations, these and other committees would be denied funds for attendance at the summer conferences. Committee representatives would attend only by invitation and the funds to enable them to do so would be controlled by the conference planners rather than by the committees.

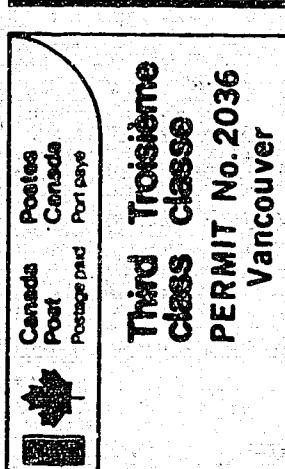
The executive took further steps to limit the influence of the status of women committee.

It watered-down one of the group's objectives. Instead of having a mandate to 'initiate activities' to further its goals within the federation, the committee now would be restricted to integrating its goals with those of other programs.

Opponents of the committee's tactics, led by members-at-large Doug Steinson and Ken Smith, failed to win majority support to delete two other objectives: increasing female participation in BCTF and educational decision-making, and ensuring a more equitable male/female distribution in the teaching force.

Steinson attacked the committee's No. 1 objective: 'To create awareness of sex discrimination within schools and society.'

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IF UNDELIVERED, return to 2235 Burrard St., Vancouver, B.C. V6J 3H9

Decisions prerogative of officers

I am writing in reference to two articles which appeared in the March 9 Newsletter ('Simple message on pension objectives,' and 'Hope seen for sick leave changes,' by Jurd Kirby).

These articles both leave me with the impression that 'big brother is looking after us.' I, as a member, find it distasteful that the BCTF staff is apparently directing our federation and, in effect, making critical decisions on our behalf.

I have worked with Mr. Kirby on the agreements committee and I respect his abilities, but I want the elected officers (who are directly responsible to the membership) to make decisions on such important matters.

In particular, I am concerned about the proposed changes in sick leave. For years we campaigned for 'portability' — now it seems that we are told we cannot negotiate portability and, therefore, we should discard our present scheme in favor of a 'new' insurance model.

It seems to me that we will be discarding a rather good plan for one of questionable merit. It is time the proposed plan was published for all teachers to compare with our present plan so that the membership can determine the value of negotiating changes. It is time for the BCTF officers and membership to regain control of our federation.

Peter Robinson,
Trail

Pensions need more discussion

The BCTF AGM endorsed a number of changes to our pension plan which, if they are agreed to by government, will provide some benefits for our members.

Two of the changes, however, are still of great concern to us, namely, the limiting of indexing of pensions to 5 per cent at a time when the annual cost-of-living is well over that figure, and the additional 0.5 per cent contribution for basic pensions and the computation used to support this proposal.

We would also like to correct a statement made at the convention that the recommended figure of the Bjarnason pay-as-you-go report was the same as the actuaries' figures. Dr. Bjarnason has confirmed that his proposed figure of 15 per cent included cost of indexing, whereas the actuaries' figures did not. In short, the basic contribution level voted on is enough to provide a fully indexed pension and it is this we should be negotiating.

A National Coalition to Save Public Education formed from nine U.S. education organizations is campaigning to defeat the tax credit bills.

The coalition fears that public schools will be left only with the poor, and those rejected by private schools; that school districts, particularly in the big cities, will become re-segregated; and that voter support of school budgets will be eroded because of more parents using private schools.

There is also the issue of quality. The bills contain no standards or requirements for private schools.

The bills would grant up to \$50 per student as a first level of funding.

The issue will spill into British Columbia by way of an

BRITISH COLUMBIA TEACHERS' FEDERATION
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Newsletter

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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. Articles contained herein reflect the views of the authors and do not necessarily express official policy of the BCTF.

Status of Women: dead end?

I read with interest the letter in last month's Newsletter by Lila Stanford in which she requested a referendum on the continuance of the Status of Women Committee. I am wholeheartedly in agreement with the sentiments she expressed.

It seems to me that the S/W committee is leading us down a dead-end path. Those associated with this committee want women to be like men, have the same opportunities as men, and take positions of leadership currently held by men. They are very concerned with rights that they claim they do not have, and want relief from rape — evidently an ever-present danger.

Teachers are people — we do not need a S/W committee to tell us that.

Good luck to Lila Stanford.

John E. Collins,
Maple Ridge

N.B. The views I have expressed are my own, and cannot be attributed to the MRTA. However, I was elected to office by an association who were aware of my views on this and on most other matters concerned with the BCTF.

Membership has decided

I wish to respond to the statement made (letter, April 6, 1978) that 'many desire the elimination of the Status of Women Committee from the BCTF.'

I seriously question the claim that extensive but quiet opposition to the S/W committee and its programs exists. A majority of locals have endorsed S/W standing committees, delegates to the BCTF AGM have repeatedly passed S/W recommendations, and the fall RA defeated the move to amalgamate S/W programs with others. Clearly this is evidence enough that although some may find fault with the S/W programs, a decided majority do not.

All decisions in favor of the S/W program have been made by teachers or their duly elected representatives through democratic process. A call for a 'referendum on this very vital issue' in the face of those facts only points to a reluctance to face them.

Lynda Philipsen,
Delta

I certainly join with him and urge that, as he says, 'The federation roles (local and provincial, voluntary and paid) must be brought within more manageable limits.'

Meetings, meetings, meetings

Al Garneau hit the nail on the head in his 'Garneau explains why he stepped down' article in your April 27 issue. The concern he expressed applies not only to volunteer work with BCTF but with locals as well. VESTA, for instance, has a large membership — but very few people are willing to serve. Why? Most of them would cite Al's reasons in total or in part.

We want to assist in our professional organization but we also have family and community responsibilities.

I'm going to quote myself from the last issue I did as editor of VESTA News. Many members seem to equate working for VESTA as a full time undertaking and you must attend meetings, meetings, meetings — and more meetings!

There are many of us, however, who are not fond of committee sitting! We want a specific task that we can do in a reasonable number of hours and feel that we are helping out in the overall association work.

I've been lucky because both tasks I'm involved in with VESTA fit that 'reasonable number of hours' category. But BCTF, VESTA, and probably other locals are losing out on a lot of volunteer hours because, as Al suggests himself — 'I am interested, I am enthusiastic, I have something to offer — but not at the cost that has to be paid by my family and my job.'

I certainly join with him and urge that, as he says, 'The federation roles (local and provincial, voluntary and paid) must be brought within more manageable limits.'

Heather Harris,
Vancouver

Unemployment has been worse

I refer to correspondence from Jean Pickles concerning the B.C. Federation of Labour 'Citizens Lobby for Jobs' campaign, in your March 9 issue.

While I do not wish to de-emphasize in any way the seriousness of unemployment in either our province or the country generally, I really must protest the use of phrases such as 'the worst unemployment level since the 'dirty thirties' — Ms. Pickles' opening paragraph.

Assuming the 1 million unemployment figure used as a median for comparing the 1930s with 1978. I would point out that while the unemployed figure is constant, the population comparison shows a different picture. The 1931 census indicates a population of 10,377,000. Rounding this figure out to 11 million by 1935. Without boring your readers to distraction with statistics, I think it is significant to note that in 1931 the male-to-female ratio of the labor force was 3,291 / 751. In 1975 this ratio was 6,499 / 3,515.

In other words, there are considerably more females in the workforce today than 40 years ago. I refuse to be drawn into any argument concerning the merit of this participation rate but simply point to the fact that it exists.

If one had the time, and the inclination, I am certain that the statistical analysis between our times and the 1930s would reflect an overwhelming material advantage to the 1978 workforce. I suggest these comparisons would also tend to reduce inflammatory rhetoric and I am not certain that this would meet with overall approval.

According to Broadley the recommendations meant that 'we are prepared once again to try at least to move in the direction of saying we are going to judge such things as competency, based on the responsibilities that our colleagues assume, which are inextricably linked to the rights they should have to practice as teachers.'

B.C. Daniels,
Trustee, SD Penticton

Scholarship open

The Association for Visually Impaired Students of B.C. is offering a scholarship of \$300 to a qualified teacher returning to university for study. Contact: Scholarship Committee, Association for Visually Impaired Students, 4093 West 14th Avenue, Vancouver, V6R 2X3.

Report from the Legislature

Education on the back burner this session

Education, particularly the public schools side of it, will not be a high priority for the government during the coming year.

The throne speech delivered by the lieutenant-governor on March 30 promised only that major new construction of educational facilities will be undertaken by the Ministry of Education, and that the Open Learning Institute, which had already been announced by the minister, will be set up to bring educational programs to adults through television, radio and the printed media.

The emphasis of the throne speech was on job creation, and most of the six-day throne debate centered on this issue. The official opposition moved three non-confidence motions to express their disapproval of current economic conditions in the province. All failed.

With most of the MLAs' attention on job creation, the surprise firing of the minister of energy, transport, and communication, and the PWA affair, education was almost lost. In his contribution to the

throne speech debate, the minister of education completely failed to talk about education, and in his contribution to the budget debate he mentioned only post-secondary education, particularly the Open Learning Institute.

To fail thus on two important occasions to talk about the public schools side of his portfolio must be seen as somewhat of a record for a minister of education in this province.

Provincial budget:

• For the first time the budget allocates \$9,156,008 to independent schools. Of this amount, \$9 million is in the form of grants to these schools; the rest covers various administrative and office expenses.

• The increase in the basic levy was set at 2.25 mills over last year.

• Some of the highest budget increases went to economic development, law enforcement and corrections, tourism, and consumer and corporate affairs. The budgets of such ministries as human resources and finance were actually decreased.

• For 1978-79 there will be a \$100 million public school construction program.

premier . . . actually done? They have given only an increase of slightly over 3 per cent to the school boards . . .

The other shocking thing is . . . that the amount of money which has been given to private schools this year amounts to \$9 million . . . to 18,000 private school children . . .

Each private school child should get roughly \$500. Do you know how much the government will be giving this year to the public school student in the city of Vancouver? \$135 . . .

Elwood Veitch (Burnaby-Willingdon-SC): We (Social Credit) promised financial aid to the independent schools and we've made it available. We promised to return high standards of discipline to education, and the core curriculum program was only the first step in effecting that. As the minister of education announced, we're continuing to improve not only our educational standards but, through new, great plans, we're expanding the opportunities for people. Things like the University of the Air are not just for the elite, but for all of the people who wish to partake of higher education in B.C., and that is a mammoth step forward.

Len Bawtree (Shuswap-SC): I applaud the decision to fund the independent schools. I know many on the opposition side feel that this is a retrograde step. Well, \$9 million is not a lot of money for the numbers of students involved.

Human Resources Minister Bill Vander Zalm: All of us pay school taxes and all of us are extremely concerned. I think that . . . this is due . . . to improper budgeting and . . . by far the majority of the responsibility for this must rest with the local school boards. There has been terrible or no budgeting whatsoever or improper budgeting and we're concerned.

(Mrs. Dally's) sister-in-law is chairman of the Coquitlam school board where recently they hired 28 more teachers, when all the reports would have indicated that they could have done with 37 less teachers. Now I agree that we must provide for additional classes or improved classes for the handicapped, but even with that, instead of a decrease or at least holding our own, that particular school board hired 27 more teachers. Also, I believe, recently opened a new school and the day they could fill it was to pull students from two other schools . . . It's this sort of thing, it's this attitude, it's that approach which is creating the problem, a problem that we're all extremely concerned about.

Dennis Cocke (New Westminster-NDP): Because of (Finance Minister Evan Wolfe's) policy as chairman of the treasury board, the school tax burden on the local taxpayers in the city of New Westminster is 90 per cent . . . In Vancouver they're picking up roughly 93 per cent of the load. Now isn't that a crime? . . . If they could dump the whole load onto the local taxpayers all over the province.

George Mussalem (Dewdney-SC): If Vancouver chooses to spend \$135 million more than they are receiving in shareable amounts, that's their privilege . . . but do not come crying to this House saying we're putting a burden on the taxpayer. This is not so. The burden is established by their own doing . . . In our municipality it costs much less to educate a student and the finest students come from that area.

Chris D'Arcy (Rosslane-Trail-NDP): It is not the municipal services that take the biggest bite when (taxpayers) get their tax notice in June. It is the school districts . . . and I don't blame them for that. They've had an arbitrary increase in the last three years of 50 per cent in their mill rate. From 26.5 to 39.5.

I'd also like to know when Bill 82, which was purported to extend the funding for regional colleges from 40 per cent provincial and 40 per cent local to 100 per cent provincial, is going to be proclaimed . . . The school districts of this province . . . are still paying 40 per cent of the operating costs of the regional colleges, when they were promised last year, by this House — by the support of every member in this House — that they would not be . . .

The information I have is that, of the additional funds going into basic education this year, \$67 million extra will come from local government, from local taxpayers, and only \$15 million will come from the central authority, the provincial government, thereby pushing even more of the load of basic educational expenditures on the local taxpayer. I think that is a regressive step . . .

Gordon Gibson, Liberal leader (North Vancouver-Capitalo): (References in the budget speech) to the field of education, unlike that of research, I found very disappointing.

Eileen Daily (Burnaby North-NDP): This government campaigned on a promise that they would lower school taxes. What has actually happened, Mr. Speaker? Since this government came in, the amount of money which they are placing into public school education . . . has decreased compared to the amount that the local taxpayer must raise . . .

There is no other province in Canada which has abrogated their financial responsibility to the local school taxpayer more than this government here in B.C. . . You will find nowhere else such disproportionate financing . . . (McGeer) has been purposely trying to create an anti-education mood in this province, to put up a smokescreen to cover the inadequate financing by the Social Credit government of education in this province.

They're very quiet on this aspect . . . The minister of education, when he spoke during the budget debate, took a rather, I think, shameful stance in that he didn't comment once upon public school education . . . except to mention grants to private schools . . . I think that's shocking.

But no wonder he didn't mention it, because what have the minister of education, the minister of finance and the

minister of education to let the public know whether they endorse his statement.

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Reduction of criticism 'worth \$13 cost'

The United Society for Education Review in B.C. held its first annual general meeting on April 22, approved terms of reference for a proposed commission on education and heard a report on the proposed structure for the commission, which would cost \$1 million.

The BCTF executive committee reviewed the terms of reference May 5 and recommended that the representative assembly authorize the executive to grant the society \$200,000 in 1978 and a further \$200,000 in 1979, provided the society receives at least equal funding from other sources.

Terms of reference for the commission and background information on the executive's recommendation are being sent to geographical representatives so they can discuss the matter in their locals and be prepared to vote at the June representative assembly.

The need for a commission on education was first identified by the BCTF learning conditions committee. A task force was struck to investigate the idea and at the May, 1977, RA reported that a commission was indeed needed. The task force recommended possible terms of reference and a budget of \$431,160.

The RA approved the proposal in principle but, feeling that a commission sponsored only by teachers might not have as much credibility as was desirable, instructed that other groups be asked if they

would co-sponsor the commission.

The BCTF convened a meeting of representatives of the B.C. Association of Colleges, B.C. Chamber of Commerce, B.C. Federation of Labour, B.C. Home and School Federation, B.C. School Trustees Association, Canadian Association for Young Children, Federation of Independent Schools Association, Simon Fraser University, University of British Columbia and the University of Victoria.

These organizations enthusiastically agreed on the need for a commission and formed a society to sponsor it.

The RA and the executive supported the society by passing a resolution in October 'That the BCTF be prepared to make a substantial financial contribution to such a society,' and in January by authorizing the BCTF to join the society and by granting up to \$40,000 to help the society get established.

This money has been used to establish an office and hire an interim executive director who is now working full-time to organize the commission and raise funds for it.

Peter Minshull and Larry Kuehn, the BCTF representatives to the society, said they hoped teachers would support the proposed grant of \$400,000 for the commission.

'Presently teachers are subjected to constant criticism from all sides because there is no consensus as to what

teachers should be doing,' said Minshull. 'If this commission can bring about a consensus on the goals for education it will mean increased support for teachers, an end to the present unjustified level of criticism and increased job satisfaction. That should be worth at least the approximately \$13 per member that we are being asked to contribute.'

The \$400,000 would come from the federation's reserve fund.

The executive was concerned about what contribution others were making to the commission. Representatives of USERBC reported that funds were being sought from other members of the society, from government and from private foundations.

The society, it was reported, is concerned that its funds come from as wide a variety of sources as possible to enhance its credibility.

'We don't want people to suspect that he who pays the piper might be calling the tune,' said Minshull, 'and we would not expect the federation to contribute all or even a majority of the funds.'

He explained that the BCTF was being asked to make a commitment at this time because it would help persuade others to contribute if they knew the society already had almost half the funds it needed. He pointed out that the executive would have the final say in committing the funds and that if the society could not raise money from other sources the executive would not be expected to grant the \$400,000.

Other executive members questioned how the society would control the funds. It was explained that the society was hiring a consultant to translate the terms of reference into a budget for the commission. The society would ensure that the commission stayed within its budget but would not interfere beyond that.

The society is asking member organizations to suggest suitable commissioners.

Minshull said that he would be asking GRs to suggest names but he also asked that the *BCTF Newsletter* let all members know that they could suggest commissioners by contacting him by June 15.

He explained that the society would probably be looking for

three commissioners, at least one but not all of whom should have a background in education, and at least one of whom can write well and act as rapporteur.

The society will be looking for commissioners who, above all else, the public will recognize as fair and able to render a balanced judgment without bias.

Following B.C. lead

National task force on education mooted

Trustees, teachers, university professors, BCTF staff and representatives of the United Society for Education Review in B.C. made up a contingent of about a dozen who represented our province at the April 30-May 3 conference, 'Education Imperatives' sponsored by the Canadian Teachers' Federation.

The conference was held to discuss ways of achieving improvements in Canadian education suggested by the 1976 OECD report.

The first recommendation of the conference was based largely on a paper given by Peter Minshull, first vice-president of the BCTF and vice-president of USERBC.

Minshull described how, in B.C., the idea of holding a commission on education had evolved out of a feeling that education lacked goals for the future and that a new consensus on the purpose of education was needed. He explained that in order to achieve wide public support for new goals that might arise from such a commission, the BCTF had invited trustees, parents, universities, colleges, independent schools, labor, the chamber of commerce, the B.C. Union of Indian Chiefs,

students, and anyone else interested in education to form a society to sponsor such a commission.

The B.C. venture obviously interested the conference. It was described as 'courageous.'

The first recommendation approved by the conference was that the Council of Ministers of Education and the Government of Canada sponsor a national task force on education. The task force should identify and enunciate national goals in education and should study the responsibilities of the federal, provincial and local jurisdictions in education.

The conference recommended a broadly based membership including representatives of teachers, trustees, ministers of education, CEA and universities.

While in Ottawa representatives of USERBC held preliminary talks with representatives of the Secretary of State's department to explore the possibility of getting federal grants to help finance the society. As a result of the fact that the society was actively encouraging the broadest possible community involvement, the initial reaction was encouraging.

From page one

'War of the Sexes'

It was this awareness-creating approach that made the committee dysfunctional, he claimed: 'They're on the attack, trying to create World War III, the War of the Sexes.' He sought to alter 'create awareness of sex discrimination' to 'ameliorate sex discrimination,' but his amendment foundered in a semantic argument about the meaning of 'ameliorate.'

Although the opponents won support to eliminate the annual provincial S/W contacts' conference, they were unable to kill a planned meeting of contacts at the annual general meeting.

First Vice-President Peter Minshull said he favored a meeting to encourage new female delegates to participate in convention discussions, but he didn't want any group lobbying and 'pushing a particular point of view.'

Al Blakey, first vice-president-elect, said it seemed some people were 'concerned about status of women people ever getting together.' Many would interpret this as 'an attempt to gut the program.'

Past President Bill Broadley said he had faith in the wisdom of members. They would 'straighten out' the status of women approach which was that 'you can't be a supporter of the status of women position . . . without being a socialist. That's crap.'

Opponents also failed to win support for their attempt to delete another S/W objective, 'to work with students to increase awareness,' as in a recent and controversial high school conference on sexism, schools and society.

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The executive's decision to recommend cutting \$62,000 in grants to local associations was made in spite of the reservations of some members that it might harm smaller eligible locals and diminish services to members. The grants are intended to pay for release time for local presidents who spend more than 10 per cent of their time on association business.

Ken Smith said cutting off the grants would effectively increase local association fees by \$4 per member and that the move would 'look like the provincial government shifting the burden to local taxpayers.'

The executive decided to discharge with thanks two committees — school staffing and labor liaison — thereby saving the federation a minimum of \$4,700. Some of the work of the two committees will be carried on under other programs.

The committee on school buildings, grounds and facilities becomes a 'slumber committee': it was suspended for the 1978-79 budget year. Staff will carry on activities to meet the committee's prime objective of serving teachers involved in school planning and design.

The executive approved the task force on racism's proposed reduction in activities and budget (reduced to 62 per cent of 1977-78); President Pat Brady commended the task force for 'its restraint in not trying to solve all the problems of the world.'

However, the executive postponed a decision on the task force's request for a two-year extension of its life span.

building as they would cost, the subcommittee suggested. It recommended a new building for a number of reasons:

1. The cost per net square foot (\$90.04) would be less than for either the renovation project (\$99.27) or the renovation plus addition (\$99.09).

2. A new building would be more efficient and would provide the flexibility needed to meet changing circumstances;

3. Operating costs would be less. The saving in maintenance costs over the next 20 years is estimated at between \$700,000 and \$1,000,000.

4. A new building would have a greater market value in relation to cost;

5. Sale of the present BCTF building and other BCTF properties (six adjacent lots, a pancake restaurant on Broadway) would make it possible to finance a new building without 'an inordinate increase' in membership fees.

6. Land costs are now going down and construction prices are competitive.

7. Surplus space in a new building would be easier to rent.

The need for more space for federation operations is based on a forecast of an increase in

Options for financing

administrative staff from 28 today to 38 in 1998, and in support staff from 93 to 134.5. The total staff is expected to grow over the two decades from 121 to 172.5.

The need for additional staff is, in turn, based on a projected increase in the membership from 30,000 today to roughly 40,000 by 1998 and on increasing demand for services. (By contrast, the subcommittee noted the membership was only 10,000 in 1957 when the present building was constructed.)

The subcommittee suggested that sale of the existing building and the other BCTF properties could mean that only an additional \$1.4 million would have to be raised to finance the new \$4.5 million building.

It said this could come from one or a combination of sources: creation of a special BCTF registered retirement savings plan; sale of debentures to members; or by borrowing from the federation's salary indemnity fund, the B.C. Teachers' Credit Union, the Teachers' Investment and Housing Co-op or standard commercial mortgage sources.

Repayment of the loans over 25 years would require an in-

crease in membership fees of from \$1.65 to \$3.15, depending on membership growth and interest rates.

The subcommittee's package of recommendations was opposed at the executive table by Al Blakey, first vice-president-elect. He said a new building would only intensify members' feelings that the BCTF is a remote organization that does not serve them effectively.

Member-at-large Doug Steinson said he was open-minded on the issue, but he felt members might react negatively to the BCTF 'building a pyramid.'

Julia Goulden said she was 'less open to the idea now than three years ago.' She said she didn't know a single teacher who would vote for a new building.

Second Vice-President Allen Garneau, a member of the subcommittee, argued that the executive should take the lead on the project. He agreed that the membership would never press for a new building, but he said that many BCTF programs are 'designed to change members' minds,' and he was prepared to argue the logic of the subcommittee's proposals.