

# RA kills plans for new BCTF building

The June Representative Assembly rejected construction of a new home for the federation.

GRs knocked back an Executive Committee recommendation for a new building of 60,000 square feet with land, design and construction cost not to exceed \$4,510,000 and associated costs of \$81,900.

A motion was passed opposing construction of a new BCTF building at this time. As well, the Executive Committee was instructed to receive approval of the RA before any major renovations are undertaken on the existing BCTF building, and before taking any further studies related to the construction of a new BCTF building.

The BCTF building has been a major controversial topic at Executive and Representative Assembly meetings for several years. In the spring of 1974, the Executive Committee, realizing that the BCTF building was no longer large enough to provide adequate working space for the federation, credit union and co-operative, commissioned architects to study the problem and to prepare a report.

That study examined relationships between the three organizations, forecast BCTF space requirements over a ten-year period, studied location alternatives, examined relocating some BCTF services to rented premises, and obtained real estate appraisals of

the then current market values of the BCTF properties on 6th and 7th Avenues and on Burrard Street.

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.

During the intervening three years, a building project sub-committee reviewed the advice of consultants and 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 sub-committee concluded that the present building is 'not adequate to meet present or future BCTF re-

quirements.' 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 three years. It recommended a new building.

The RA, however, disagreed. One explanation of the source of the disagreement came from Doug Smart, Prince George, during the debate. He said some people seemed opposed for financial reasons, others for restraint and control of the BCTF bureaucracy, and a third group that was opposed 'no matter what. And I am not sure what the motivation is underlying those views.'

While we have to be concerned about cost to our members, he said, we spent money on programs today that are costing a lot more than \$3.15 per member 'and we are not recognizing that the building project is designed to support all those services.' We have to build now, he concluded, because we are going to need the building.

Another delegate explained that he came to the meeting prepared to vote 'no' on the building program 'but I am changing my mind.'

'I was elected at my local association this week on a platform of financial restraint and curbing the bureaucracy increases — and I still stand by that — there is no need to increase the staff to what is projected.'

However, he said, that in the name of good financial management, he was prepared to vote 'yes' on the proposal and prepared to go back and defend this to his membership.

The building sub-committee had suggested sale of the existing building and other BCTF properties to raise \$3,000,000 leaving an additional \$1.4 million to be financed. The committee suggested repayment of \$1.4 million over 25 years would require an increase in membership fees from \$1.65 to \$3.15 depending on membership growth and interest rates. Offsetting this cost was an estimated \$2.00 per member savings in maintenance costs.

The BCTF Executive Committee was split on the sub-committee's recommendations but had approved taking the package to the RA with endorsement.

## newsletter

BRITISH COLUMBIA TEACHERS' FEDERATION

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### Brown picked for Durban

Elinor Brown of Armstrong Elementary School, Burnaby, has been chosen as one of two Canadian teachers who will serve as resource persons for a seminar on early childhood education in Durban Sept. 23-27, sponsored by the African Teachers' Association of South Africa. Ms. Brown, a past-president of the Primary Teachers' Association, was one of 13 B.C. teachers who applied for the assignment.

### B.C. Teacher

Earlier this year, Peter Minshull, outgoing BCTF first vice-president, and Jim MacFarlan, a past president, debated the issue: teacher — professional or worker. The debate was recorded and transcribed for use in the B.C. Teacher this month. What is printed, therefore, is not a literary essay, but the edited transcript of a debate.



The question is put! Voting at the May Representative Assembly.

### Superintendents balk at 'insensitive' survey

A number of superintendents have withdrawn the survey of schools put out by ERIBC this month after they gave agreement initially to the study in principle.

But they have found the questionnaire was not sufficiently sensitive to the climate surrounding the issue of funding independent schools.

There are six questionnaires: for students Grades 4 to 7, and Grades 8 to 12, for parents of children in independent schools and parents of children in public schools, and a survey of principals and teachers.

Dr. Lloyd MacDonald, of the Educational Research Institute of B.C. which is conducting the surveys for Donald Erickson, says the study covers all independent schools in the Fraser Valley and is matched with 75 public schools of the same grades. These public schools were selected at random for urban, suburban, and rural with elementary and secondary in each category or a total of six categories.

Donald Erickson of San Francisco, who has done research for the separate schools movement in the U.S., wants to obtain data

about the implications of massive infusions of public monies into the private school system. He is funded by the U.S. Congress, and he has chosen three major regions to study, two in the United States, and a third, British Columbia.

The BCTF Executive Committee meeting June 9-10 reviewed the surveys that are called 'A Study of the Consequences of Funding Independent Schools' (COFIS).

Steve Norman, executive, expressed concern that some of the questions go 'well beyond the purview of anyone, in a human rights sense, noting that questions were asked on ethnic background 'which can't even be asked in job applications.'

Discussion was postponed until later in the meeting to allow executive members to read the questionnaires.

A motion by Larry Kuehn, executive, that the BCTF oppose the use of the questionnaires was tabled.

Past president Bill Broadley said that the problem is that you can react emotionally to questions that seem to attack teachers. 'But if this organization is never prepared to face up to peoples' perceptions of what we are doing, we can never come to grips with improving education.'

Gale Neuberger called the questionnaires 'an insult to our members and to the general public.'

Broadley argued that B.C. is being used as an experimental kitchen for the U.S. Senate but if the questionnaires are ridiculous, the federation does not have to tell that to teachers, students or parents; 'they will see that for themselves.'

Al Blakey, first vice-president-elect, said that he was sorry that he had to be grateful to superintendents who have 'had the guts' to reject the survey.

### MLAs tell officers:

## They want to hear from you

New Democratic Party MLAs want more educational input from local teachers' associations in their constituencies. They want to hear from local presidents and to be invited to local meetings.

The MLAs' openness to the teacher viewpoint emerged at a meeting between members of the NDP caucus and table officers of the BCTF in Victoria June 8.

The hour-long meeting was attended by 12 of the 18 NDP MLAs, including former education minister Eileen Dailly and party education critic Dennis Cocke. Several of the MLAs indicated they would welcome approaches from local associations in their ridings.

The federation delegation was headed by President Pat Brady, who will hold separate meetings with Gordon Gibson and Vic Stephens, the Liberal and Conservative representatives in the House. Earlier this year a BCTF delegation met the Social Credit cabinet. Purpose of the meetings is to share the federation's concerns about education matters with

elected representatives of all parties.

In his half-hour presentation to the NDP members, Brady outlined the four basic objectives of education funding, as the federation views them. These are: equality of educational opportunity; equality of tax effort; local participation and autonomy in budget-setting; and excellence of instruction.

A major problem, Brady said, is that the current basic education program does not provide for adequate service in all school districts.

He presented data to show that the provincial government's share of funding the net operating budgets of the province's 75 school districts has dropped from 42.7 percent in 1975 to 38.8 percent this year.

Even if the homeowner grant is considered as part of the provincial government's contribution, he said, Victoria's share is still less than it should be. The total paid in homeowner grants increased from \$144.2 million in 1977 to \$154.4 million this year. But Victoria's contribution to the schools, including

these amounts, declined from 60.13 percent of net budgets in 1977 to 58.86 percent this year.

Brady reminded the MLAs that the federation has been advocating that the provincial government assume 80 percent of the costs, and that the McMath Commission had recommended an increase to 75 percent.

The MLAs were told that student enrollment had declined by only 8,421, or 1.6 percent of the provincial total, between September, 1976 and September, 1977.

However, Brady said, this small decline seems to have spawned a 'psychology of retrenchment' on the part of the provincial government and some school boards and municipal councils. The news media, he said, are encouraging the public to 'see education costs in terms of enrollment figures rather than in terms of student needs and program diversification.'

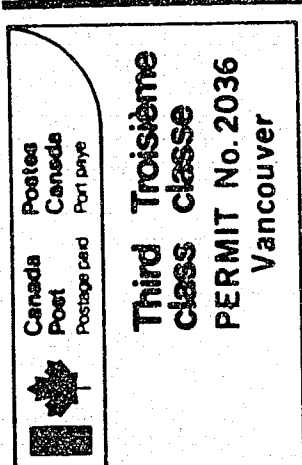
He said the federation's position was that the decline in enrollment should be seen as an opportunity to improve the quality of education in B.C. schools.

### Gifted

A new provincial specialist association — the 23rd — has been added to the federation's list.

The BCTF Executive Committee gave its approval June 10 to the new PSA, which has the longest name of them all: the Association for Educators of Gifted, Talented and Creative Children in B.C.

President of the new organization is Bill Thorpe, 915 Beaumont, North Vancouver, V7R 1P5.



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



# RA budgeteers cut a bit here, add a bit there

Members of the June Representative Assembly, according to veteran observers, came determined to cut costs — and they took some out, but added more in than they took out.

In total, the RA removed \$139,512 from the budget and added \$172,437.

It was a budget-setting Representative Assembly concerned mainly with reviewing programs and budgets over the four-day period.

At the beginning of the RA, some GRs put forward a guide for discussion on reduction in the budget: maintain as a high priority direct services to members; and reduce expenditures as much as possible in the administrative and overhead costs. But the motion was defeated.

Following that motion, came another that the RA budget an amount to cover non-administrative staff salary increases no larger than 6% plus the increment of 1.4% and that professional staff salaries be limited to 6% plus an increment of .9%, but the chair ruled that the question was unconstitutional. A second motion to limit staff salaries was also defeated.

The basic grant structure endorsed by the RA was one recommended by the Professional Development Advisory Committee

not the professional development staff and executive that was reported earlier in the Newsletter. A description of the grant procedures will be contained in the Members' Guide.

Going through the programs, the RA:

Cut \$5,000 in the professional development training program for teachers.

Cut \$2,500 from the PSA Council.

Rejected a call to reduce the negotiation and arbitration budget by \$15,000, and instead increased the legal fees portion of the budget to \$16,000 to cover projected bills on the AIB test case.

Deleted \$28,657 from a program called Influencing the Public and Governmental Education Policy, which will affect the Victoria Liaison Associate, Eric Burkie. Funds exist to maintain his con-

tract to the end of the special sitting of this session of the legislature, but not for next year's session.

Boosted PD grants under the control of PDAC from \$32,900 to \$80,000.

Rejected a call to reduce the learning conditions' budget by \$25,000.

Approved a budget for the declining enrollment program of

\$106,708, on an interim basis subject to finalization of the fall RA. An attempt to add a further \$90,500 mainly for a publicity campaign in declining enrollment was rejected.

Reduced the AGM budget by \$4,000.

Rejected by a vote of 264-237 a call to reduce the daily meal allowance on expense vouchers from \$20 to \$18.

Added \$5,000 to a planning and control program to enable the BCTF to hire a management consultant firm to help with introducing major changes in the way staff is organized to provide services to members.

Increased grants to local associations by \$84,487 for a total of \$99,987 in program A-49A.

Approved \$14,000 for a provincial contacts conference, S/W.



## CTF serves as clearinghouse

The Canadian Teachers' Federation is providing a clearinghouse service for teachers interested in a vacation exchange of homes with other Canadian teachers. Registration forms are available from the Canadian Teachers' Federation, 110 Argyle Avenue, Ottawa, Ont. K2P 1B4.

## Don't confuse means, ends

In response to your inquiry about my views on curriculum prescription, let me say at the outset that generally speaking I am supportive of the notion of a core curriculum. It may be that the core should differ for different groups of children but notwithstanding this, it seems appropriate that suggestions for recommended materials be provided for teachers in order that they might achieve the stated goals of any core curriculum.

On the other hand, it would seem that the prescription by any one agency of one set of materials to accomplish the stated goals would represent a serious confusion between means and ends and, in my opinion, could not be adequately enforced — nor should it be.

Let me illustrate what I mean in the area of reading.

It would be my contention (as stated in the core curriculum) that every child should learn to read in the primary grades. This state-

ment of goal or purpose seems to me to be well within the purview of any school board or of the ministry to determine. However, such a statement represents an 'end' not a 'means.'

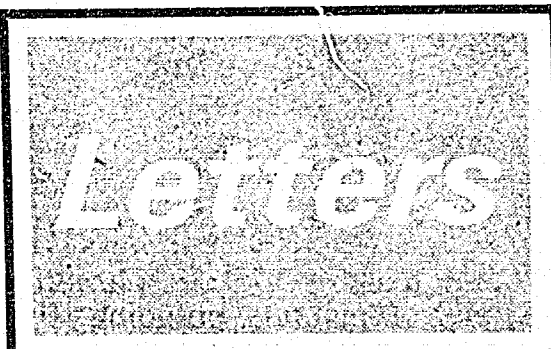
To suggest, as a means to this end, that only one set of materials would be appropriate would be restrictive in the extreme.

To so prescribe would, in my opinion, be turning back the clock a quarter of a century.

Furthermore, such prescription of materials might well provide a backlash which could result in an obedience to the 'letter of the law' but, in fact, a subversion of the 'spirit of the law.'

I would argue that the educators themselves should be the ones to select appropriate materials as a means to the accomplishment of the stated curricular ends which should be determined and prescribed by society through its elected and appointed representatives in the ministry or on local school boards.

Norma I. Mickelson,  
Dean of Education,  
University of Victoria.



## Ex-teachers say 'Thanks'

The Retired Teachers' Association wishes to thank the B.C. Teachers' Federation for the aid and assistance during the past year. We especially appreciate the arrangements made for our annual meeting in the Hotel Vancouver, at which we had an attendance of about 300 members. We also wish to express our appreciation for the space provided both for our office use and for our monthly executive meetings.

Your financial assistance with our News Bulletin has enabled us to improve its coverage. It is now

mailed to all retired teachers, regardless of RTA membership, four times a year. We are looking forward to similar co-operation in the future.

Our membership is very much aware of the co-operation and assistance given to the Retired Teachers' Association by the BCTF and if possible we would like this appreciation publicized in the BCTF Newsletter for the information of all active teachers.

C.M. Hockridge,  
President, B.C. RTA

## Survey story 'misleading'

According to the BCTF Newsletter, B.C. teachers consider the elimination of sexual and racial discrimination 'at the bottom of their list of concerns.' Unfortunately, the Newsletter neglected to report contradictions in the results of the AGM survey of priorities. No mention was made of the fact that discrimination ranked 16th in one part of the survey, and

8th in another, ahead of concerns such as 'more effective public relations programs,' 'improved communication within the BCTF,' and 'increased BCTF involvement in teacher education'. To conclude that the elimination of discrimination is a low priority is misleading.

A survey instrument that yields conflicting results must be carefully examined. I would expect that all contradictions would be analyzed, and, at the very least, differing results would be averaged. If that had been done with the AGM survey, the elimination of discrimination would end up as a medium priority — definitely not at the bottom of the list.

In times of budget restraint, lists of priorities can be used in many different ways. The BCTF Newsletter, as the main vehicle of communication to members, has a responsibility to provide full coverage of major issues, especially when interpretations are open to debate.

More complete reporting, please.

LYNDA COPLIN,  
Delta.

## Women work for same reasons as men — money and satisfaction

The incredible letter from John (Rip Van Winkle) Collins in the May 17 issue of the Newsletter confirms a proverb I've often had occasion to ponder: Just because you're paranoid doesn't mean they're not out to get you.

Mr. Collins is a gentleman — I can read all the signs: he has granted women his own brand of equality, on his terms. Put in a nice compliment or two as well, just to show how generous he can be.

Women are well-off now because men — most men — are gentlemanly and decent enough to see that this is so . . . because as gentlemen they could not perceive of themselves as dealing with

ladies 'unfairly.' For most women, this ensures a reasonable existence, apparently free of discrimination. But — the fallacy of this position lies in the fact that if it is in men's power to treat women fairly, it is also in their power to treat them otherwise. Power is the operative word.

Mr. Collins mouths some of these rationalizations with his patronizing assumptions about what women would rather do . . . e.g. devote most of their energy to the family. This idea is so firmly rooted and virtuously enshrined, that if a woman wishes to put her energy into her career, she is maverick; she is unnatural; she

may even be considered vaguely immoral. She is, in short, seen as causing the downfall of our cherished institutions, with not-so-subtle references to delinquent kids, wandering husbands, high unemployment, etc. etc.

Apparently it's all right for men to devote their best energies to their careers. Why is it okay for MEN to pursue ambitions of mid-life — to the neglect of their families, often? Why are men not expected or assumed to want to spend more time with their children — now probably teenagers? Why is it assumed that the entire success of child-raising rests with women staying home? No research has ever shown that children of working mothers grow up any less secure or less well-prepared to face life, than children of stay-at-home mothers. (see Ruth Adam, A Woman's Place, p. 178.) It's the quality of mothering — and fathering — that counts, not the quantity.

Mr. Collins's comments are based on the attitude that women working are not to be taken seriously, whether it is the 'same' work as men's with the 'same' pay, e.g. teaching, or whether it is one of those low-paid, service-type jobs in which women have been traditionally exploited. The myth, in both extremes, is that women work

just 'for a few years' to while away the time, always ready to answer the more important challenge of looking after the home.

In fact, women work for two of the best reasons I can discover anywhere: to survive and support their families, and for the intrinsic satisfaction work offers. If a woman is lucky (and many teachers are) her work will provide both. For many thousands of women, poorly paid, menial jobs provide only a subsistence, making women in the work force the most exploited class in Canadian society. Single parent families headed by women make up the majority of Canada's poor, augmented by numbers of elderly single women who are virtually destitute. (see Ian Adams, The Poverty Wall, chap. 4.)

The S/W committee is not only concerned with the status of women teachers but with having some impact on this endless cycle of dependency nearly all women are still locked into.

Most women who work today HAVE to work; most still have to work within the framework of the outmoded societal view that women working need not be taken seriously and will be satisfied with 'casual' employment (no job security, no benefits) or temporary appointments (no tenure, no promotional possibilities).

Most women are doing jobs no man would touch with a ten-foot pole. Women do it because it is assumed to be natural for them: they assume it because as youngsters they rarely or never saw anyone but a woman in a primary teaching role. Men avoid it because the nurturing role scares them . . . witless. Many women primary teachers are truly devoted to their work: they chose it and remain with it voluntarily, but the patronizing transparency of Mr. Collins granting them 'access to an area virtually closed to men is eyewash. There is nothing barring men from entering primary teaching except their own conditioning, their own inadequacies and fears, and the assumptions and prejudices of those people in the position to make placement decisions.

Mr. C's comments on rape show a pretty superficial understanding of what rape really is. Robbery and assault are more likely to be threats? Since when is rape not assault? Those progressive states where rape within marriage is now an indictable offence recognize that in fact, rape is a threat in many people's private lives. I guess a gentleman just wouldn't understand . . .

Wake up, Rip Van Collins, it's 1978, not 1958.

Sincerely,  
J. Heiberg

# BCTF pledges support if layoffs hit teachers

The BCTF has taken a strong stand against any teacher layoffs resulting from declining school enrollments.

The Spring Representative Assembly (May 31-June 3) voted overwhelmingly to reject declining enrollment as a legitimate ground for laying off teachers. It gave local associations the right to file a formal grievance on behalf of any teacher who is laid off by a school district that does not meet BCTF staffing criteria in all its schools.

(Only one district in B.C. — Nishga — so far meets those criteria.)

The assembly also committed the federation to support any teacher who is laid off for reasons

of declining enrollment. The federation will provide moral, legal and financial support; it will pay the salary of any teacher so laid off until the grievance is satisfactorily resolved and the teacher restored to his or her position, or until a comparable position is found.

At the same time the assembly opposed local associations' negotiating so-called 'reduction in force' clauses with their school boards: agreements to provide for an orderly decrease in teaching staffs in districts hit by enrollment declines.

The assembly accepted the advice of the federation's task force on declining enrollment that 'attempts to arrange a system of

orderly layoffs would be divisive and unnecessary.'

There is no need for layoffs, the assembly was told. B.C.'s school population has declined by only 1.6 per cent in the last year. Attrition, according to the task force's estimate, should open up 3,000 teaching positions for next September. In addition, B.C. schools still fall 1,950 teachers short of meeting the federation's staffing guidelines.

Education Minister Patrick McGeer himself told the Legislature, while the Representative Assembly was sitting, that attrition will more than compensate for declining enrollment and that teachers currently working can be assured they will be needed.

Lynne Hampson, chairperson of the task force, told delegates that school districts cannot consider teacher layoffs with so many educational needs still unmet.

'Substantial segments of today's youth are still not receiving the help they need from the school system,' she said. 'These include drop-out students, students whose first language is not English, native students, the physically and emotionally handicapped, to name a few.'

The highlight of the debate occurred when delegates tackled the question of the propriety of negotiating reduction-in-force clauses.

Bill Meyerhoff, Burnaby, argued against them. 'Can you imagine a situation where a teacher is paying fees to a teachers' federation that is using the fees to set up layoff procedures for its members?' he asked. 'That would be shameful.'

Peter Minshull, outgoing first vice-president, warned the debate could become 'extremely emotional and divisive.' He urged delegates to seek a compromise.

He said he could support a position statement that there was no need to lay off teachers in 1978-79, or no province-wide need for layoffs.

A 70-per-cent turnout at a West Van local meeting recently called for negotiations to deal with redundancy, he reported. These were aimed at getting board agreement to delay any layoffs until the BCTF guidelines or other desirable staffing criteria were met. Provisions for retraining, leaves of absence, early retirement and part-time employment would be sought to ease the blow, should layoffs eventually become inescapable.

He said his local also wants to negotiate definitions of the terms 'seniority' and 'qualifications,' as used in the section of the Public Schools Act governing layoffs. Finally it wants laid-off teachers to be given preference in re-hiring and in substitute hiring.

'Perhaps we've erred in calling this a reduction-in-force clause,' he said. 'Perhaps we should call it a staff-utilization or staff-retention clause.'

But, he said, 'We want to talk to the board about these matters. We think that talking about them openly and honestly will unite our members.'

If the federation was telling its locals not to negotiate and that no teacher would be laid off, he said, 'We don't believe you.'

But if that was the federation's position, then it should give its members assurance that they would be supported if they were laid off because of declining enrollment. 'In other words, if we suffer any layoffs we'll pull the district out and you'll support us financially and morally as long as we're out.'

Bill Davidson, Vancouver Secondary, told the delegates he would want out of an organization that wasn't fighting to protect his job. 'It is noble for other unions to protect people's jobs,' he said. 'Why isn't it noble for the BCTF to do this?'

Mike Zlotnik, director of professional development, said he was shocked that a teachers' federation would even consider negotiating away teachers' jobs. 'If you are in a pitched battle that you're trying to win, you don't want to know that your leadership is negotiating the terms of surrender.'

Zlotnik said there is no danger of teacher layoffs this year and probably not next year. The danger, he said, is of an over-reaction to the present enrollment decline, which might result in a reduction in intake for teacher-training institutions and eventually to a serious teacher shortage.

He referred to a pair of articles in the June edition of Phi Delta Kappan, which he said predict an 'inevitable, substantial and lengthy teacher shortage' in the U.S., which 'normally leads us by a couple of years.' Graduates from U.S. teacher-training programs in the U.S. declined by 28 per cent from 1970-71 to 1975-76. The reason given by the authors, he said, was recurring emphasis by the mass media on an apparent oversupply of teachers.

Zlotnik said that an argument could be made for reduction-in-force clauses as a kind of 'backup protection in case all else fails.' But, he said, 'You pay a price for it. You weaken the case for learning conditions (and) you deflect the attention of teachers from the issue of quality learning conditions onto the internal arrangements (for orderly layoffs).'

## Class-size study 'no surprise'

Results of a Toronto study on the effects of reducing class size drew a thoughtful reaction from BCTF president Pat Brady last month.

The results came as 'no surprise,' he said, in a news release. 'The only thing that was changed in this study was the number of pupils in the classrooms.'

'No attempt was made to train teachers in new instructional methods designed for small classes. It's little wonder the researcher was unable to find much evidence that smaller classes improve pupils' achievement levels.'

'That's a little like taking a worker off the production line, putting him in a small crafts workshop and expecting him to become a skilled artisan overnight with no further training. It's just not a realistic expectation.'

The BCTF has recognized that teachers will need special training in the use of appropriate instructional techniques in order to produce the best possible results from smaller classes.

Brady was commenting on a recently published study by Dr. Stan Shapson of Simon Fraser University and three Toronto researchers.

In this study Grade 4 students and teachers were randomly assigned to classes of 16, 23, 30 or 37. The following year each student and teacher was reassigned to a class of a different size. Shapson's team reported, after monitoring classroom activities and administering a battery of tests to the students, that students in the smaller classes performed little or no better than those in larger classes except in the area of mathematics concepts.

Shapson's study used 34 teachers and fewer than 1,000 students in 11 Toronto schools, and lasted only two years, the first of which merely established baseline data.

Dr. Martin Olson, whose research was used extensively by the federation six years ago, collected data from a greater sample —

18,528 classrooms over a period of several years — and he concluded that small class size was a significant indicator of quality education.

Olson found that with only two small exceptions to an otherwise perfect linear relationship, smaller classes exhibit significantly higher scores than larger classes.

The BCTF some time ago asked Education Minister Patrick McGeer to commission a major study in B.C. of the effects of reduced class size. B.C. teachers are so convinced of the educational benefits of smaller classes, combined with appropriate teaching techniques, that they have offered to put up \$200,000 of their own money to finance the study, Brady said.

McGeer suggested the BCTF

offer be made to the United Society for Education Review in B.C., which is planning to begin next fall the first major examination of public school education in B.C. in a quarter-century.

Brady said he has invited Dr. Shapson to meet officials of the BCTF to discuss his study and the implications of his findings.

Brady said the BCTF has been in touch with the Toronto school board, which commissioned the Shapson study. Dan Leckie, chairperson of the board, said the study had received little attention either educationally or politically in Toronto. Leckie considered that it was not a definitive study, and said 'Our board is still of the opinion that we need dramatic improvements in class size.'

## Task force on racism gets two-year extension

The federation has given its task force on racism a two-year extension of its term, to continue work on what the task force admits is a virtually impossible assignment.

The task force was created Sept. 26, 1975. According to federation policy it should either have been granted an extension or discharged with thanks two years later.

In asking for an extension, the task force said it has not achieved its goal of eliminating racial and cultural discrimination in education but that it believes it is making inroads into the problem. Teachers are more aware of racism and more prepared to commit themselves to improved race relations, it said.

An attempt by first vice-president Peter Minshull to have the task force's terms of reference reviewed and its memberships re-posted to allow new people to apply

was defeated by the executive after extended debate.

Executive members Julia Goulden and Gail Neuberger argued that the existing task force members should be allowed to continue without change in their terms of reference. First vice-president-elect Al Blakey said Minshull's proposed conditions were an insult to the task force. Doug Steinson, supporting Minshull, argued that the task force's tactics have been an embarrassment to teachers.

The task force's term was eventually extended with minor rewording of its terms of reference and an addition proposed by Minshull: 'To gather examples of various programs or practices that have been used successfully in schools to deal with racism and to make these programs available to teachers in B.C.'

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.

Counting the ballots. The RA elected three members to the Judicial Committee: David Atkins, (Vernon), Logan Morrison, (Grand Forks), and Sheila Pither (Vancouver).



# Executive comes down against language requirement

The Executive Committee meeting June 9-10, decided to oppose the imposition of Grade 11 French or a foreign language as a requirement for entrance to the University of B.C.

The executive was sharply divided on the issues, reflecting conflicting advice from provincial specialist associations and the Professional Development Advisory Committee (PDAC). At one point it found itself both supporting and opposing the language requirement.

The issue first arose when the B.C. Business Educators' Association asked the executive to endorse a brief urging changes in UBC's proposed requirements.

The university plans to tighten its entrance standards starting in the fall of 1981. At present UBC accepts B.C. high school graduates who have passed 12 courses in Grades 11 and 12, including English 11 and 12, social studies 11, PE 11, and three other 12-level courses.

This allows students considerable freedom in course selection; a typical student may take 10 electives among 14 courses in the last two years of high school.

Beginning in 1981 UBC will require a C+ average on 10 subjects. These must include English 11 and 12, French 11 or a foreign language 11, algebra 11, a science

11, at least three 12-level courses from the arts and science category, and one other course.

The business educators said the effect of this is to put an elitist strait-jacket on any student even considering UBC as a possibility. It would force potential UBC entrants to take more arts and science courses and reduce the number of possible electives from 10 to 3. This would cut enrollment in business education. They saw the issue as 'nothing less than academic freedom for the secondary schools.'

They asked the executive to urge UBC to delete the reference to 'the arts and science category' from the unspecified 12-level courses in its list of requirements.

This, they argued, would still give students a basic program in English, French or a foreign language, science, math and social studies, while leaving them free to

develop skills and knowledge in other areas.

The executive accepted the business educators' list and agreed to recommend it to UBC as a maximum requirement.

An amendment proposed by executive member Ken Smith, to delete the language requirement from the list, was lost on a 5-5 vote.

Later the issue surfaced again. PDAC, which had also had trouble coming to agreement, urged the executive to try to have UBC eliminate the language requirement.

President Brady ruled the matter out of order on the grounds that the executive had already dealt with it in endorsing the business educators' brief.

He was overruled on a challenge by First Vice-President Peter Minshull, who argued at length against the language requirement which, he said, would limit students' op-

tions and 'force them through hoops.'

The executive decided to accept the PDAC recommendation. Then, to extricate itself from the contradiction of both supporting and opposing the language requirement, it reconsidered the business educators' brief and deleted French or a foreign language from its list of proposed requirements.

Strongest supporter of the stiffened UBC entrance standards was executive member Doug Steinson, who argued for more academic rigor in the high schools and less 'fingerpainting and basket-weaving.'

Students need to be encouraged to face up to difficult choices and demanding work, he said. They won't thank teachers for 'forcing mediocrity on them' and 'turning them out of school illiterate and dysfunctional.'

## ANNUAL REPORT TEACHERS' PENSIONS ACT

Each year the Provincial Secretary is required to file in the Legislature an annual report of the business done in pursuance of the Teachers' Pensions Act for the year preceding the previous year. Therefore, the report is always a year behind.

The latest report, filed in April 1978, is for the year ending December 31, 1976. If any member wishes the full report, 'Thirty-Sixth Annual Report — Teachers' Pensions Act,' a copy may be obtained through the Queen's Printer, Victoria.

For comparative purposes, the 1975 figures also are given.

### THE FOLLOWING ARE HIGHLIGHTS ONLY.

	1975	1976
Number of current contributors	29,315	29,500
Basic contributions by teacher employees	\$ 23,493,046	\$ 28,254,688
Basic contributions by employers	23,493,046	28,254,688
Amount paid by government to offset deficit in Employer Reserve Account <sup>1</sup>	4,913,519	9,999,131
Amount reimbursed to school boards of Canada Pension Plan employer contributions paid by them in respect of teacher employees	3,694,477	4,165,279
Amount received from reciprocal pension plans covering 70 contributors in 1975 and 86 contributors in 1976	459,930	490,565
Amount forwarded to reciprocal pension plans covering 35 contributors in 1975 and 28 contributors in 1976	1,321,297	900,258
Number of refunds	1,251	1,562
Amount of refunds	2,213,798	2,854,105
Actuarial and administrative expenses	245,848	281,637
Average yield on securities purchased in 1975 and 1976	10.161%	9.475%
Net rate of interest in 1975 and 1976 on all investments made in 1975 and 1976 and in previous years	7.108%	7.688%
Net increase in fund during 1975 and 1976	47,461,380	62,136,391
Fund balance — December 31, 1975 and 1976	321,941,314	384,077,705
Number of allowances granted during 1975 and 1976:		
Normal retirement age	383	404
Deferred	21	25
Disability	12	3
Death in service	24	13
Totals	440	445

<sup>1</sup> In accordance with the actuary's recommendations, \$5,286,000 was transferred to the Pensions Account from the Employer Reserve Account. As this transfer increased the deficit in the latter account and since the deficit is recoverable from the province, the \$5,286,000 is shown as part of the overall amount paid by the province to offset the deficit in the Employer Reserve Account.

	1975	1976
Of the normal allowances granted:		
• average service	26 years	25 years
• average salary during last 5 years	\$ 14,227	\$ 16,523
• average annual single life allowance	6,756	7,908
• average value of allowance	71,460	83,445
• average teacher's share	16,080*	18,221*
• average government share	55,380**	65,223**

\*Teacher's average contributions plus interest.

\*\*The difference between average value of allowance (\$83,445) and average teacher's share (\$18,221) of \$65,223 is the government's guarantee to pay the pension. Some of this amount will come from the government's contributions plus interest; the balance will come from general revenue of the province, i.e., the amount paid by the government to offset the deficit in the Employer Reserve Account.

## Project TEACH instructors selected

Nineteen outstanding B.C. teachers have been selected as the first project TEACH instructors for the BCTF. These instructors

### Probation issue partly resolved

All 107 first-year teachers who were supposedly placed on probation by the Langley School Board in 1977-78 have had all references to such action expunged from their records. Officially, they were never on probation.

However, the Langley board has not yet withdrawn its statement that all 1978-79 teachers new to the district will automatically be placed on probation on the second day of their service.

The federation has twice written to Education Minister Patrick McGeer to object to Langley's intended action. The federation has pointed out that this proposed action is clearly inconsistent with the Public Schools Act and Regulations, and an insult to the district superintendent who, according to the regulations, must be consulted before the board takes action.

How can consultation have any meaning, the federation asks, when the superintendent has had no chance to assess the performance of the teachers involved?

A motion proposing automatic probation for all teachers new to a district was tabled by delegates to the annual general meeting of the B.C. School Trustees Association in Prince George recently. The motion was referred to the association's executive committee.

### Learning, love and laughter

'Discover the Spectrum of Learning, Love and Laughter' will be the theme of the B.C. Primary Teachers' Association fall conference in Victoria Oct. 13-14.

Organizers are planning for a maximum attendance of 1,300 and urge early registration. More than 70 speakers will present interesting and informative sessions covering all aspects of primary education.

The conference has been organized under the leadership of the association's provincial conference co-ordinator Sophia Jeffrey and local co-ordinators Bea Wright and Irene Parkinson.

Registration forms have been mailed to all schools. Additional forms and further information are available from Mary Lane, 2430 Alpine Crescent, Victoria, V8N 4B6.

will participate in an intensive training session in August, and will return to their school districts to open courses for teachers in September.

Project TEACH is an exciting new professional development program, offered by teachers for teachers. It focuses on specific skills which will improve the teacher's effectiveness in relating positively to students, developing a constructive classroom climate, and dealing successfully with discipline problems.

Congratulations are extended to the following teachers, who are undertaking the responsibility of offering project TEACH to B.C. teachers.

Harriet Bawtinheimer, Penticton, Courtenay Beck, Kitimat, Owen Corcoran, Prince George, Daniel DeGirolamo, Vernon, Quentin Docherty, Peace River North, Connie Edwards, Victoria, Joan Felling, Port Alberni, Sam Fillipoff, Vancouver, Gil Henry, Victoria, Dale Kelly, Salmon Arm, Anita LoSasso, Vancouver, Bill McLeod, Kimberley, Lynda Rodier, Williams Lake, Pat Somers, Kamloops, Gladys Stanbury, Coquitlam, June Streigler, Williams Lake, Jack Tearne, Chilliwack, Don Walmsley, Boston Bar, Melanie Zola, Coquitlam.

### Rape relief workshop

Breaking the Hold, a focus on myths and attitudes about rape, is the title of a workshop scheduled for July 15 and August 12 at the Britannia Community Center, 1661 Napier Avenue, Vancouver.

The workshop will be put on by the Rape Awareness Project, No. 4 - 45 Kingsway, Vancouver, B.C., phone 872-8212. Interested members should send a cheque for \$5 before June 30 for the July 15 workshop and July 14 for the August 12 workshop.

The four conference organizers say they would like teachers to participate in discussions about rape and issues related to rape, as well as being aware of the services Rape Relief has to offer. Rape Relief currently does speaking engagements and film showings in secondary schools.

## Highlights of debate on education estimates

Legislative debate on the 1978-79 spending estimates of the Ministry of Education — B.C.'s first billion-dollar education budget — ended June 6, after four days. Some of the significant developments that emerged from the debate:

- Education Minister Patrick McGeer wants a limitation on the number of students enrolled in B.C.'s faculties of education.
- The attrition of teachers more than compensates for the decline in enrollment in B.C. schools. Those teachers currently working can be reassured they will be needed.
- School boards, universities and colleges will all be required to present five-year budget forecasts to the ministry.
- The report of the McGregor committee on teacher education will likely be released June 27.
- A program for gifted children is to be announced by June 30.
- McGeer will make a statement on promotion and assessment of students about the end of June.
- Guidelines for educational administrators' salaries (which will probably include school district, college and university personnel) will be issued soon.
- School boards must notify parents by Sept. 30 of dates for professional days.
- School districts may implement a French-language core curriculum as early as September of this year; by September, 1979 they must implement it wherever 10 or more students in a school request it.
- The Open Learning Institute has been officially designated and a board set up to administer it.

The four-day debate was the longest on the estimates of any ministry except the premier's office. But attendance at times dropped as low as 10 MLAs — the House quorum.

About 30,000 to 40,000 B.C. school children visit the legislature annually. Elwood Veitch (Socred - Burnaby-Willingdon) has a private member's bill before the House which would give students, teachers, their buses and drivers free passage on B.C. ferries when visiting the legislature. Private members' bills usually are allowed to die on the order paper.