

Majority now signed in every local

B.C.'s teachers are jumping the provincial government's hurdles with ease and are now well on the way to forming their own federation of local unions.

The BCTF sign-up drive has been an overwhelming success and now the local certification vote process is shaping up to be the same.

"Every local in the province has now signed up a majority of its members," Lynne Macdonald, sign-up/certification coordinator, told the Executive Committee on December 11.

Most locals have signed up about 90 per cent or more of their members — the lowest currently is 68 per cent — and

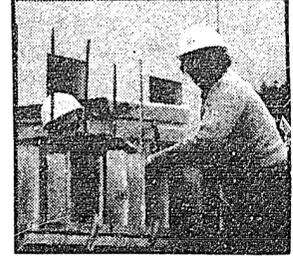
seven locals have signed up 100 per cent of their members, she said. The seven are: Hope, Queen Charlotte, Windermere, Keremeos, Shushwap, Summerland and Fort Nelson.

She said that all locals have now also amended their constitutions and by-laws. Teachers appear to be having no diffi-

culty clearing the next hurdle either, Macdonald indicated. Bill 20 requires a majority of the newly signed-up teachers to pass a certification vote — the Section 131.2 vote — to become a trade union for purposes of the Industrial Relations Act."

Up to press time, she said 52 locals
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BCTF Newsletter



What's all that banging about? ... see page 8

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Teachers urged to

Take back control of teaching

Teachers must take back control of teaching if public education is to be improved to meet contemporary needs, says BCTF's director of professional development.

Mike Zlotnik made the statement in a keynote address on "Giving Teaching Back to Teachers" at a coordinated educational leadership planning session and think tank on December 7. The meeting, held in the Palisades Hotel, Vancouver, was attended by about 50 members and staff representing all areas of federation work.

He called on teachers to join together and use their knowledge and skills to improve education from the perspective of the classroom teacher.

One of the great changes which is at the root of the current crisis in education, he said, was foreshadowed at least eleven years ago when it became evident under then-Minister of Education Pat McGeer that the government no longer had a commitment to public education.

"We began to see that the very institution of a system of schooling that was designed to create a democratic society with rights of equal participation for everyone was now in question as a goal," said Zlotnik. "I think at that time we had

foreshadowed what is now very, very clear — the agendas of privatization, the free trade initiative at the federal level and so on. They are all, I believe, a fundamental crisis of our culture and our identity as a people."

In the process, he said, teaching has increasingly been taken away from teachers, with direction and control being placed in the hands of people not directly involved in teaching.

Zlotnik identified five realms of action

for teachers to regain professional power: intellectual and cultural, political, collective bargaining, communications and pedagogical. Noting that leadership will involve action in all realms, he suggested that the intellectual/cultural and the pedagogical had not been emphasized by the BCTF.

Turning to discuss intellectual and cultural influences on education, he pointed out that we're still carting some of the "old baggage" of classical liberal education, which reached full flower at the height of the British empire, and which believed education required non-involved objectivity. Today, he said, the dominant frame of reference for education is the political-managerial-technical
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At the leadership conference, PD Director Mike Zlotnik (left) outlined five areas for teacher action to regain professional control.

Hardline boards stall '87-88 contracts

George North
Director, Bargaining Division
As schools closed for Christmas, several locals were still without a 1987-88 agreement — six months after contracts are normally settled — and in two locals teachers were forced to strike to bring their employers back to the bargaining table.

They were short-lived walkouts as trustees in Queen Charlotte Islands and Vancouver Island West rushed off to the courts and obtained injunctions ordering teachers back to their classrooms.

The court orders were brought down on December 4 by Mr. Justice J.C. Bouck in the case of the Queen Charlottes after a three-day strike and on December 9 by Mr. Justice G.S. Cumming in the case of Vancouver Island West teachers on the second day of strike action. Both judges based their decisions on a ruling by Chief Justice Allan McEachern last year that said teacher strikes violated the School Act, which continues to govern teacher-trustee collective bargaining until

December 31. After that, locals certified under the Industrial Relations Act will operate under the same labour legislation as all other British Columbia employees and will have the right to strike.

An irony in the school boards' actions was their failure to negotiate seriously and in the Vancouver Island West situation to strip the agreement while rushing off to the courts to proclaim the urgency of getting teachers back on the job.

Teachers in both locals showed a tremendous degree of unity during their strikes, mounting picket lines at schools and around board offices during some of the province's most inclement weather. During their strike, Queen Charlotte teachers and school board agreed on a mediator who was expected to bring the parties close enough to conclude an acceptable agreement prior to the December 12 weekend.

In Vancouver Island West, however, the board has reluctantly agreed to meet but so far has refused to continue the seniority/severance agreement, has uni-

laterally cancelled the working and learning conditions contract and long-standing housing provisions, and has also refused to negotiate membership protection clauses, including one that would provide continuation of negotiated terms until a 1988-89 contract is negotiated. In addition, the local is seeking something better than the 1.9 per cent salary increase awarded in boycotted arbitration proceedings. The provincial average salary increase is currently a little over 3 per cent on grid.

The Queen Charlotte situation is marginally better with the membership protection package and a salary increase dominating negotiations. Teachers were "awarded" a salary freeze in arbitration in spite of an earlier board offer of 2.5 per cent and a budget surplus more than double the amount required to give teachers a 3 per cent increase.

At least one local has concluded negotiations over the past few weeks — Chilliwack — settling with a modified mem-
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Meech Lake, free trade affects us all

Elsie McMurphy
BCTF President

Why should the BCTF take a position* on free trade or the Meech Lake Accord?

Do these issues affect the teacher in the classroom? I believe they do. Both the Meech Lake Accord and the free trade agreement have the potential to transform the character of Canada, affecting teachers in both their professional and personal lives. The BCTF has a responsibility to provide information and promote the widest possible debate on these important issues.

Meech Lake Accord

The inclusion of Quebec as a full partner in the constitution is welcomed. However, the language of the Meech Lake Accord is ambiguous and inconsistent. Individual and minority rights, equality rights for women, and territorial rights are not explicitly protected.

In Canada, some areas of national significance are administered by the provinces, for example, health insurance, and education. The Meech Lake Accord permits provinces to "opt out" of a federal initiative and to receive reasonable compensation towards a comparable provincial program. There is no process to ensure quality of service, or equality of access. In B.C., it seems prudent to worry about the provincial government's interpretation of these federal initiatives. Concern has been expressed that federal childcare funding will go directly to private daycares.

Free Trade

The implications of the free trade agreement are equally serious for teachers. How can we guarantee

Canadian content in our curriculum when American materials become even more accessible and less expensive? The deal contains clauses that affect Canadian book publishing, television and radio program guidelines and advertising, and Canadian production of records and tapes.



Through the agreement, Americans intend to establish a "level playing field" by "harmonizing" social policies such as government health insurance, family allowance, and maternity benefits. The final level could be much below the one Canadians currently enjoy. The new drug patent legislation which protects a drug from generic copying for a longer period of time — 10 years compared to four years previously — is an example of "harmonizing." The U.S. pharmaceutical industry, which enjoys 17 years protection on new drugs in that country, lobbied long and hard for this controversial change.

Teachers will be directly affected by any "harmonizing" of collective bargaining. In the U.S., only 33 states have collective agreements with their teachers, while six states have legislation which prohibits bargaining for teachers.

Free trade will affect employment. Critics anticipate job loss in some sectors coupled with a slowdown in the creation of new jobs. B.C. has already experienced pressure in softwood, shakes and shingles, grapes and fruit production. The economic and social stability of many regions and small towns is threatened. Both families and schools will feel the effects.

Many Canadians have called for an election to provide for a national debate on these significant issues.

*The Executive Committee has voted to oppose the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement and the Meech Lake Constitutional Accord. These decisions, with supporting statements, will be presented to the January 29-30 Representative Assembly.

Pension fund diversification discussed

Bruce Watson
Income Security

The Investment Advisory Committee for the public sector pension plans held productive discussions November 10 on diversifying investments aimed at improving returns to public sector pension funds.

BCTF representatives on the committee have presented the federation's position favouring diversification for the Teachers' Pension Fund, providing adequate safeguards are in place. At present, investments are confined to the bond and short-term money markets; diversification would see a proportion of the funds invested in equity stocks.

On November 25 the federation advised the Minister of Finance that it could not support legislation to broaden the types of investments permitted for the pension plans until adequate processes were in place. These processes include the control of investment policy, the mechanics of how the investments are carried out, the performance standards for investment managers and performance measurement.

As a prerequisite to support, the BCTF has advised the minister that these processes together with draft legislation must first be reviewed by the Investment Advisory Committee and must be satisfactory to the federation.

On November 25 the minister advised the legislature that diversification would not proceed without agreement of the interested parties.

The next advisory committee meeting is set for February 16, 1988.

In 1981-82, the BCTF participated with the government in a joint study on investment of the Teachers' Pension Fund conducted by James D. Reid (superannuation commissioner at that time) and James G. Paterson (a consulting actuary). The study was undertaken in anticipation that a change in investment practices would provide more money for indexing pensions and provide an overall improvement in fund management and performance.

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The 1983 AGM subsequently approved as policy that the investments of the Teachers' Pension Fund should be diversified to obtain improved returns and that the Pension (Teachers) Act should be amended to give the federation equal representation with government in the operation of the fund. These principles, which have been conveyed to government, were subsequently incorporated in

BCTF to fight privatization

The Executive Committee is calling on teachers to fight any government moves to privatize aspects of the public education system.

The executive adopted this position after hearing a report from PD Director Mike Zlotnik at its December 11-12 meeting. Zlotnik gave an account of a meeting with an education ministry official in which he learned that the government is considering selling the Provincial Education Media Centre and eliminating its textbook branch by putting the responsibility onto local school districts. Under

the Bargaining and Professional Rights report of 1986.

In the spring of 1987 the Ministry of Finance undertook a review of its investment management policies with the assistance of consultants from J.P. Marshall Inc. of Toronto. At the November 10 advisory committee meeting the consultant's recommendations were reviewed. They were that: the fund should receive

a greater return if some of it were invested in equities; action should be taken now to bring this about; and steps should be taken to ensure the proper procedures and personnel (both internal and external) are in place to manage the investments.

In discussion during the advisory committee meeting, the BCTF, BCGEU and municipal employees representatives expressed concern over privatization, the use of the increased return, the ethical nature of the investments, the control over the investing and the structure of the committee. BCTF representatives were Dave Gunderson, pensions committee chairperson and income security staff member Bruce Watson.

The Investment Advisory Committee has been in existence since March 1981 and consists of representatives from public service management and unions as well as senior officials of the finance ministry and superannuation commission.

After discussing the disastrous impact these changes would have, the executive adopted a recommendation that "the BCTF oppose the privatization of PEMC and the decentralization of the textbook branch" and that local associations be urged to endorse this position and convey their opposition to the ministry, their school boards and local MLAs.

Fergusson nominations deadline is Feb. 20

Each year at the BCTF Annual General Meeting the G.A. Fergusson Memorial Award is given to a BCTF member (or ex-member) who has made an outstanding contribution to education. Presentation of this award is a highlight of the AGM.

Nominations of candidates for the award may be made by any federation member or by a local association of the federation. The nominations must be submitted to the BCTF office by February 20. Because each nomination should be accompanied by a brief describing the nominee's work and supporting letters, thought should be given now to teachers who might be deserving of this award.

More information on the award may be found on page 103 of the *Members' Guide*. If you would like more information on the nomination process, please call Jacquie Boyer at the BCTF.

BCTF Newsletter

British Columbia Teachers' Federation
2235 Burrard Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6J 3H9 (604) 731-8121

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BCTF nominees sweep to majority victory in college election

From page 1

Teachers have dramatically demonstrated their desire for the new College of Teachers to represent their concerns by electing BCTF candidates to 14 of the 15 elected seats on the college council.

Candidates supported by the federation were elected in 12 zones — by clear majorities — in the first college election, which wrapped up on December 7. Two other BCTF candidates were acclaimed earlier. The result for the fifteenth seat, for the north zone, was not available at press time, but BCTF candidate Harvey Harrison was expected to win.

"Once again, teachers have demonstrated that they are united and well represented by the federation," said BCTF President Elsie McMurphy on receiving news of the election result. "Teachers are very concerned about new regulations governing certification and discipline. Our significant representation on the college will guarantee that teachers' concerns are addressed."

The following are your zonal representatives on the college council: **Don Creamer** (East Kootenay — acclaimed), **Robert Jackson** (West Kootenay), **Wes Nickel** (Okanagan), **Sheila Park** (Mainline Cariboo), **Mike Campbell** (Fraser Valley), **Peter Ellis** (Surrey), **Margaret Woodlands** (Delta-Richmond), **Jim Killen** (Vancouver), **Debbie Gregg** (Metro), **Pauline Galinski** (South Coast — acclaimed), **Colin Scott** (North-Central), **Bill Broadley** (South Island), **Shirley Bonfield** (North Island) and **Joe Panichelli** (North Coast).

There are a total of 20 seats on the college council. Another four council members are chosen by the provincial government and the universities' education deans jointly nominate one more member.

The Minister of Education's appointees are William T. Ross, headmaster of Brentwood College in Mill Bay and Jack Fleming, assistant deputy minister, educational programs, ministry of education. The cabinet's appointees are Roy M. Kahle, a Kamloops lawyer and former teacher, and Tilly Marxreiter, former chairperson of the Richmond School Board. Representative of the university education deans is Dr. Nancy Sheehan, dean of education, University of British Columbia.

Lillooet has signed its salary agreement but has not dropped its membership protection objectives.

It appeared likely that a settlement would be reached in Kettle Valley where teachers and the school board have been carrying on serious negotiations. As the *Newsletter* went to press in mid-December, contracts remained to be concluded in Abbotsford, Cranbrook, Kimberley, Nechako, Nisgha, and Peace River North. In the latter case, the original letters of reprimand have been removed from teachers' files to be replaced by a board letter essentially stating that trustees still disagree with the original job action.

Teachers in locals without settlements comprise about five per cent of the public school teaching force. Nonetheless, this represents a significant number of professionals who are being badly treated by hard-line employers. It provides a glimpse of the future with the qualification that teachers will then be in a stronger position to challenge school boards that treat their employees unfairly.



Court ordered Queen Charlotte teachers (above) and Van Island West colleagues back after brief walkouts.

BCTF seeks pension improvements

The BCTF has opened negotiations with the provincial government aimed at getting a better deal on teachers' pensions.

BCTF President Elsie McMurphy and income security staff member Bruce Watson met with Provincial Secretary Elwood Veitch on December 8 to present federation proposals for amendments to the Pension (Teachers) Act and its Regulations.

McMurphy also discussed the question of possible privatization of the pension plan, first rumoured in the press in late September, and the question of diversifying the investments of the pension fund.

In response to the privatization question, Veitch assured the president that there has been no discussion of such a move at the cabinet level. On pension fund investment diversification, the minister also assured McMurphy that the

federation's concerns on the need for full consultation at all stages of any changes in the investment process would be conveyed to cabinet. (See investment story, page 8.)

The proposed amendments seek to bring the plan into line with current thinking on pensions, make it more equitable, ensure it is adequately funded, and meets contemporary teacher needs.

Specifically, the suggested improvements put forward by McMurphy included that:

- participation in the plan from the first day of employment be made compulsory for all members;
- the government contribution rate increase immediately by .74 per cent to meet the rate recommended by the actuary;
- benefits to be vested in members after five years of contributions;

• contributions, when vested, be locked-in unless transferred to a reciprocal locked-in pension plan;

• the pension benefit formula be improved;

• the leave of absence and purchase provisions be amended to give greater flexibility and assist early retirement;

• years of absence for child-rearing not be considered absence for purposes of reinstatement;

• common-law spouses be recognized as eligible for survivor benefits;

• pre-retirement death benefits be provided to the estate where there is no surviving spouse;

• and government to pay full premium for MSP, EHB and dental plan for retirees and beneficiaries into retirement.

See "Veitch" page 8

Executive Committee Highlights

BCTF seeks links with college teacher reps

The BCTF wants to work with elected teacher councillors on the College of Teachers to ensure the new organization serves the best interests of teachers.

Towards this goal, the Executive Committee December 12 approved a motion authorizing the College Advisory Task Force to meet with the BCTF-member councillors prior to the first college meeting in January to "establish an ongoing working relationship" and to share ideas developed by the task force.

The executive took the decision after hearing a progress report from Bob Taverner (Prince George), chairperson of the college task force, on developing a comprehensive federation response to the college. The draft report dealt with proposed college operating principles, committee functions and finances. A final report, with recommendations will be presented to the executive in January.

In addition to Taverner, the task force includes Karam Gopaulsingh (Burnaby), Alice Gro (Central

Okanagan), Moira MacKenzie (Surrey), Rod Sherrell (Vancouver Island North), supported by staff members Nancy Hinds (PD) and Des Grady (legal counsel).

Communications plan adopted

The executive has endorsed a comprehensive communications strategy for the federation.

In its external programs, the BCTF is to promote the federation's vision of public schooling, foster public confidence in teachers and the public school system and promote public support for adequate education funding. Internally, the aim is to strengthen membership commitment to and involvement in the local/BCTF, increase membership understanding of and participation in collective bargaining and support continuing improvements in professional practice.

As part of the new effort, an expanded BC Teacher/BCTF Newsletter newsmagazine is to be published on a trial basis for three issues. A decision on adopting the new format for continuing publication is to

be made later following a membership survey.

Other features of the communications program include: a review of all BCTF publications; a poll on public satisfaction with public education and opinions on education funding; development of radio features on teacher professionalism; and a series of focus group discussions to be held with members on federation issues.

BCTF reps going to CLC Winter School

The executive has decided to send 10 BCTF representatives to the Canadian Labour Congress Winter School in Harrison Hot Springs.

The decision was taken with a view to gaining useful new information on a variety of union concerns and to learn more about the CLC. The winter school involves a series of short courses — on topics ranging from arbitration to health and safety — from January 17 to February 12.

The BCTF contingent is to include: one federation staff person, one Labour Affairs/Labour Education Committee member, two staff

rep training program representatives (staff person or PD Associate) and six elected representatives, recruited primarily from local association presidents.

Class size drives backed

The Executive Committee has decided to inject some financial muscle into the campaign for lower class sizes.

The executive made the decision after hearing a report on the Langley class size campaign.

Recommendations were adopted that:

- grants of up to \$4,000 be made available, on a matching basis, to locals which make a substantial commitment of time and resources for a Working and Learning Conditions Campaign (i.e., class size, pupil load, prep. time, supervision, weighting, health and safety);
- a budget of \$30,000 be established for such grants and that the EC recommend to the RA that this be a charge against the Reserve Fund;
- the Langley Teachers' Association be given a grant of \$4,000 from this fund to apply to their class size campaign.

Peace education aims to change minds

The task for peace educators is not so much to add new instructional units as to transform teachers' perspective on the existing curriculum, says Sechelt elementary teacher Fran Jovick.

She was one of 14 Peace Associates who related their accomplishments over the past year to participants at a peace education training session in Vancouver, November 19. They shared experiences in seven workshops designed to meet their teaching needs and heard speakers from other parts of the world who encouraged the leadership role the BCTF has taken in peace education. The following are some of the highlights.

BCTPE President Beverly Davis reported on workshops given to parent/teacher and local PD conferences, network activities with environmental educators, UBC, the National Survival Institute, BCTF Program Against Racism, and CUSO in exploring a global education project.

Susan Hargraves has been involved in a peace education pilot project for Grade 7 students in Burnaby schools. Steve Hamilton does peace education in the classroom, school and outdoors as part

of his Adventure Education program on Lasqueti Island, as well as giving workshops to college and community groups.

Paul Costello, Langley, is well known to high school students for his work at the November 1985 PEC Youth Peace Education Conference and WCOTP conference in Richmond, August 1986, where high school students made presentations to world teacher leaders on peace education.

Alan Wilson, Gabriola Island, writes a weekly column in his local paper on peace. Sandy Kalmakoff, Burnaby, has developed a 30-lesson unit on conflict resolution. Barbara Cooper, a Surrey

secondary librarian, helped organize a "world harmony" week at her school. Betty Taylor, Richmond, has developed a multicultural focus; and Eloise Carbonne, Richmond, did a month unit on the novel *Hiroshima*.

Lynne Phillips, Trail, initiated and organized a Remembrance Day program at her school and assisted teachers in planning peace activities for the week. Scott Ritter, Victoria, has organized a local group of peace educators and a joint conference with environmental educators.

Fran Jovick reports that students approached the Sechelt board request-

ing a district peace education curriculum and the board established a committee to bring the curriculum in by September, 1988. Susan Camps led a session on her experiences developing a curriculum project in Burns Lake, giving practical tips.

The conference also featured workshops on such topics as: Basics of Teaching Peace, Defence White Papers, Building the Peaceable Classroom, District Curriculum Project: the "How to's", From "I" to "We", and Mediation Skills and Conflict Resolution.

The Peace Associates were joined later by provincial, national and international figures who reviewed progress in the peace movement at a dinner meeting.

Dr. Laila Kulpas, Canadian Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, noted that education is the only way to achieve a society capable of non-violent conflict resolution.

Jim Ronson, an Ottawa social studies teacher and member of Educating for Peace, stressing the importance of training, said the example of B.C. peace associates will assist the development of Ontario's peace education programs.

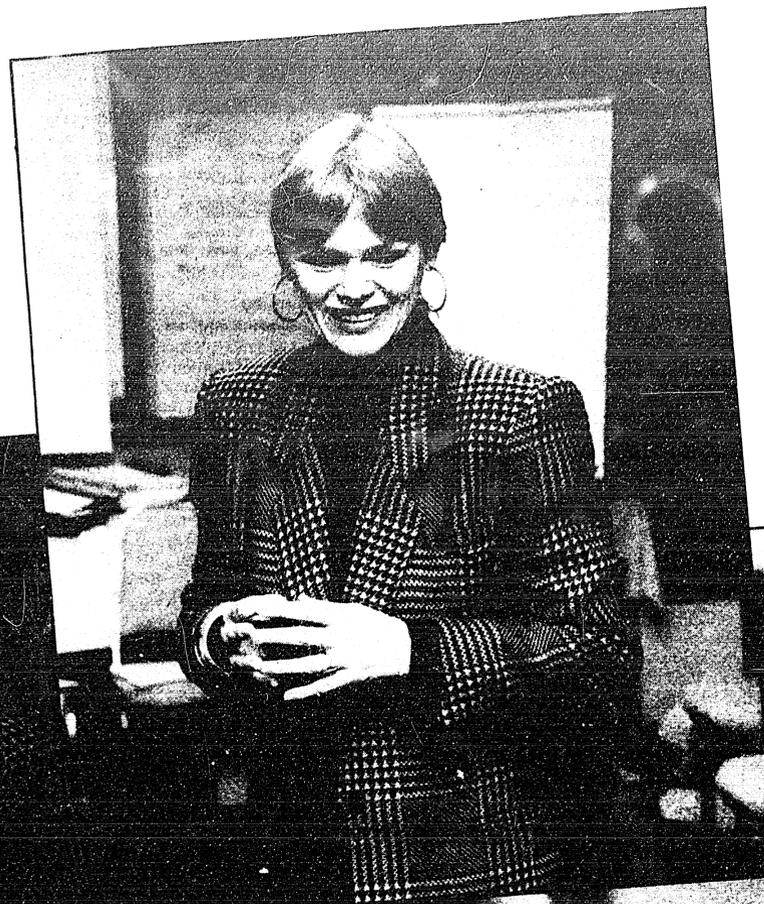
And Benjamin Yanov, teacher and writer from Israel, who has written a curriculum on peace in both English and Hebrew, also stressed the importance of education in building understanding. Also participating were: Helene Minishka, Peace Education Centre, Paula Temrick, Justice Institute and Ella Marie Weerts, Executive Director of Public Education for Peace Society.

Mike Zlotnik, director of the BCTF PD division, acted as master of ceremonies presenting each new associate with a graduation pin and giving recognition to the veterans of three years.

Members interested in more information may consult the *Peace Education Journal*, which is distributed to each school in the province.



At training session, PD Associates (left to right) Betty Taylor (Richmond) and Barbara Cooper (Surrey) share experiences with facilitator Susan Hargraves (Burnaby).



Scott Ritter (Victoria) shares a laugh with (left, almost out of picture) Mike Zlotnik.



Jim Ronson (Ottawa), a social studies teacher and member of Educating for Peace, listens intently to presentation.

Leadership plans being made

Teachers have begun planning how to exert leadership in the new educational environment rather than being dominated by it.

The first step was taken December 7 at a coordinated educational leadership planning session and think tank attended by almost 50 teacher leaders and staff representing the PD networks, bargaining, teacher personnel services, and working and learning conditions.

The day began with a provocative keynote address by BCTF Professional Development Director Mike Zlotnik who expressed the urgent need for teachers to regain control of teaching and who outlined a new model of teacher-directed research and professional development (See separate story page 1.)

To help stimulate a new way of thinking, participants then met in small groups where a PD Associate read a script that encouraged them to visualize the school

of the future and imagine the best of all possible schools. In the schools they described, teachers were relaxed, confident, independent, and supportive of one another. Students brought energy and creativity to school. Everyone had time to do things well and reflect on their accomplishments.

Following a report back in the plenary session, they met in different groups to consider teacher-led initiatives that would move the profession closer to the ideal school of the future. Empowering teachers to take control of their environment will require initiatives in areas of core pedagogy, bargaining and contracts, and skill development.

The conference was part of the Coordinated Educational Leadership program of the PD division that seeks to:

- strengthen PD networks;
- build agreement around pedagogical principles;

- strengthen the BCTF's voice on professional issues;
- provide skills for teachers as the role of principals changes;
- and promote the vision of the self-directing professional.

A volunteer group from the conference will continue the process with PD staff.

Control of PD funds a vital goal

From page 1

view, which is essentially of American origin, and which emphasizes the individual ego, competition and an instrumental notion of rationality.

But what is needed to shape education of the future is a holographic/transformational frame of reference, Zlotnik argued. Drawing on western and eastern thought, it holds that the goal of education is to make whole persons and that this can only be done in community. "The idea," he said, "is not to be separate from the world but to be in the world as a reflective being."

The ideas which currently shape our school system, he said, derive largely from research conducted by outside experts, the vast majority coming from the United States. The major cause for concern, said Zlotnik, is that this

research, which carries "the dominant cultural prejudices," effectively dominates the professional lives of teachers.

"When we take back teaching for teachers, we will appropriate the cultural and intellectual action as our own and not be in a merely subservient position of importing culture from around the world," he said.

What is needed, he said, is to encourage teachers to do their own practice-based research. Acknowledging the federation's proud tradition of "teachers teaching teachers," he went on to outline an entirely different model for professional development.

"I think if we took all the networks we have now and we each taught one another the best of what we've got — Project TEACH, PRIDE, TTLC, the Program for Quality Teaching, the associates, the

PSAs, the social programs — if we put all that stuff together to make the best of what we know, we would have a powerhouse. We would be on the leading edge of teacher education.

"We have to start to shift the emphasis from a curriculum-dominated system to one which is pedagogically-dominated. What I mean by that, is that it's the powerful teacher free to teach, not the system that is all articulated and worked out, that will make the difference."

Zlotnik concluded by emphasizing that the first step begins at the bargaining table.

"It's of the greatest urgency that we negotiate the control of funds for professional development — this year," he said. "This could give us the control we have to exercise that political control over local level professional development."

Representation votes to be held in January

From page 1

have passed their Section 131.2 votes by an overwhelming margin — generally in the 90 per cent range.

Following that requirement, the next hurdle laid down by the government requires teacher locals to apply to the Industrial Relations Council (IRC) for a representation vote to be held. A majority of members voting must give their approval in that vote for the teacher local to be formally certified as the local bargaining agent.

Macdonald said locals are now preparing applications for the representation vote to submit to the IRC in early January.

"It's no surprise that teachers are continuing to support their federation," said BCTF President Elsie McMurphy. "They know this is the only way to protect their economic and professional rights."

McMurphy pointed out that it was important for locals to pass their representation votes in January with strong majorities. This will send a message, she said, about teacher commitment when it comes time to bargain this spring over such key issues as class size, compulsory membership, preparation time, salary increases, sexual harassment, PD funding and paid maternity leave.

"We want boards to know that teachers will be coming to the bargaining table this spring in unity and in strength," McMurphy said.

A plea for brevity

Members are beseeched to ponder the issues at length but write *brief* letters to the editor. Letters that balloon beyond 250 words tend to squeeze other correspondents off the page. — Ed.

Math PSA honours two colleagues



Named Teachers-of-the-Year by their Math PSA were (left) Jim Swift of Nanaimo and Norma Norris of Surrey.

CTF defence fund gives BCTF \$860,000

The Canadian Teachers' Federation board of directors has approved a motion that the BCTF receive 90 per cent of the first million dollars in the Canadian Teachers' Defence Fund.

From the total CTF member organizations and affiliates have so far contributed to the fund, the BCTF is now to receive approximately \$868,000. The federation has so far received about \$433,000 and stands to receive another \$435,000.

BCTF President Elsie McMurphy expressed the federation's gratitude to the CTF, saying the fund will be a great assistance in fighting the destructive impact of Bills 19 and 20.

The B.C. Association of Mathematics Teachers has honoured two members for their contributions to the teaching of mathematics.

Norma Norris, a primary helping teacher in Surrey, was awarded the elementary Teacher-of-the-Year Award, and Jim Swift, a secondary math teacher in Nanaimo, was granted the secondary Teacher-of-the-Year Award.

Norris is well known by her colleagues for her work in developing workshops for the Math Their Way program. A strong advocate of the teaching of statistics, Swift has recently been pursuing the use of computers in mathematics teaching.

The awards were presented at the BCAMT annual meeting.

CTF seeks nominations for special awards

The Canadian Teachers' Federation is seeking nominations for its 1988 Special Recognition Awards.

Any person who has given meritorious service to education and/or to the teaching profession at the interprovincial, national or international level is eligible for the award.

If you think that you know of someone who meets the criteria, you should forward a nomination to the BCTF Nominations from CTF member organizations are considered at the April meeting of the CTF board of directors, which may award up to two Special Recognition Awards in any given year.

The award is in the form of an appropriate plaque and is presented at the CTF Annual General Meeting which, next summer, will be held in Vancouver. The award winner's attendance expenses are borne by CTF.

New trustees stir cautious hopes

Local presidents and staff prime contacts are cautiously optimistic about the results of recent school trustee elections. Campaigns to begin a taxpayers' revolt not only failed to gain ground, but there was also a modest improvement in the composition of many boards.

In Penticton, every candidate who ran on a platform of holding down costs was defeated. A full slate of "tax revolt" candidates in Coquitlam without success. In Peace River North candidates who favoured removal of the letters topped the polls. In Kimberley, the campaign was waged on the issue of teacher-personnel relations, and the results were favourable. Kimberley teachers expect they will now be able to obtain a member protection package. In Vancouver Island West, currently in dispute, two, possibly three, supportive trustees were elected to a five-person board.

A different result occurred in Delta, where six of the seven trustees were elected from a new "free enterprise" slate called FAST — "fully accountable school trustees." The FAST platform includes cutting costs, increasing class size, eliminating elementary counselling and reducing secondary counselling hours, and reducing substitute costs by not calling a sub on the first day of illness.

Shawn Christopherson, Summerland teachers' son, wins CCT scholarship

Shawn Christopherson, a 1987 graduate of Summerland Secondary School, has been selected as the recipient of the Canadian College of Teachers (Greater Vancouver Chapter) Scholarship.

The award is made annually to a graduating student from a school in B.C. or the Yukon who is the child of a teacher. Shawn's father, Lloyd Christopherson, is a teacher at Summerland Secondary and his mother, Judith, is a substitute teacher in School District #77.

Shawn was not only an academically successful student, but also active in school clubs, the South Okanagan 4H Lamb Club and championship figure skating. He plans to enter medical school.

Delegates to attend WCOTP Australia meeting at own expense sought

The Executive Committee will designate up to six persons as BCTF delegates or observers to attend next summer's WCOTP Assembly in Australia at their own expense.

The assembly of the World Confederation of Organizations of the Teaching Profession will take place in Melbourne from August 2-9, 1988.

BCTF knowledge and experience will be factors in the selection. Members wishing to serve as delegates or observers at their own expense should apply, outlining their background and experience, to Jacque Boyer at the BCTF office by February 20, 1988.



Planning the next phase of the award-winning Program Against Racism, while stealing occasional glances at sculpture award (foreground) are (left, rear) coordinator Nora Greenway; (left, front) Eric Wong, Vancouver race relations consultant; (right, rear) Janet Vesterback, a Vancouver substitute teacher and (right, front) Laurie Vranka, a teacher affiliated with the Multicultural Education Society.

Program Against Racism wins award

BCTF's Program Against Racism was the recipient of a Canadian Council for Multicultural/Intercultural Education (CCMIE) award at a national conference in Edmonton on November 13, 1987.

Nine awards were given to individuals or organizations which have demonstrated commitment to and leadership in multicultural education. The BCTF was the only organization in Canada to receive this award; the other awards went to individuals.

Nora Greenway, co-ordinator of the PAR, and June Williams, the past co-ordinator, accepted a sculpture on behalf of the BCTF. In her acceptance speech, Greenway praised B.C. teachers for creating, funding, controlling and supervising the PAR — a program by teachers, for teachers. Recognition was given to Lloyd Edwards, a Surrey teacher who initiated the BCTF task force to address discrimination and to Ed May, for his leadership and dedication as the first full-time PAR co-ordinator.

The Program Against Racism will continue to work with teachers in meeting the needs of B.C. students from a multicultural background.

RTA presents brief to royal commission

The B.C. Retired Teachers' Association (BCRTA) will serve a unique role in the brief it will present to the royal commission on education. It will reinforce and support ideas and proposals of its members and branches. It can also serve as partner and advocate for active teachers and administrators who wish this support.

There is a BCRTA Brief Collating Committee eager for such input as copies of letters, briefs, and other material being presented to the commission and/or intended for inclusion in the BCRTA submission. All material judged to be widely supported and supportable will be included. This judgement will be made by the committee and the BCRTA Executive. Members of the collating committee are John Church, Fran Worledge, Art Wright and Ray Wunderlich.

To satisfy logistical needs for the processes leading to submission and to meet the commission deadline, it would be useful to have all materials by mid-January. Send materials to: BCRTA Collating Committee, 2235 Burrard Street, Vancouver, B.C., V6J 3H9.

CPP takes more in 1988

The contribution rate for the Canada Pension Plan will increase in 1988 to 2 per cent of earnings covered under the plan. Therefore the maximum annual contribution will be \$478.

The maximum monthly retirement benefit will be \$543.06. For those who start to receive their CPP at age 60, the maximum benefit will be \$380.14.

The maximum weekly UI benefit will be \$339.

Letters

Television ads commended for positive teacher image

It is commendable to see the BCTF promote the positive features of our profession in TV ads. We certainly need this exposure to counter negative thinking about our professional values and efforts.

Ads showing teachers' involvement in extracurricular activities, parent-teacher meetings, home-and-school association activities, adult education programs, etc., certainly enlighten those skeptical of our professional concerns.

Teachers should suggest ways to present to society the positive aspects of their dedicated efforts and values. Fortunately, the BCTF has used the most popular visual media to our advantage and should be encouraged to continue this valuable service.

Max Pronin
On leave
Langley

Thanks for the memory of active BCTF membership

I want to thank the membership for making it possible for administrative officers to retain their professional association with the BCTF through affiliate membership. For me, it's not the SIP or any other benefit that may eventually be obtainable through affiliate membership that matters. What really counts is that I can say with pride that I am still a member of the BCTF, something that I have been immensely proud of all my teaching life. I'll miss not having active membership status, of course, but you can be assured that I will continue to be involved in the affairs of the federation in

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whatever way that my affiliate membership will allow.

I have chosen to finish out my teaching career as an administrative officer because I feel that in this capacity I can best serve the interests of teachers, the federation and the public education system in general. As I have already stated on numerous occasions, Bill 20 will not change the way I have always worked with my colleagues, and that is, collegially and professionally.

Thank you again for a great 31 years of active involvement in the BCTF.

George Seaman
Principal
Kilmer Elementary
Coquitlam

"Shouldn't we be angry at treatment of principals?"

In early November, principal Jack Stevens of Queensbury Elementary in North Vancouver announced that he will be leaving his current job, opting for a return to his former status as a classroom teacher. This, in response to the impact of Bill 20 on the role of principals in the public system.

What is happening to public education in British Columbia? Why?

Will there be other principals taking the last resort step that Mr. Stevens has taken? We can be sure that Mr. Stevens did not take the step hastily. One can imagine the hours of soul-searching as he considered the question: am I doing the right thing?

In the end, Stevens decided that his commitment to being an advocate for students was of prime importance and that he could not perform that duty adequately as a principal-administrator under Bill 20.

Shouldn't the rest of us be angered and

moved by what is taking place? Or, are we truly convinced that Bill 20 only means a minor change to the principals' role, and as such, that it is tolerable?

How we answer these questions will have important and lasting effects upon the future of B.C. students and teachers and our society at large.

Gavin Ross
Voluntary Active
Vancouver

Peanuts on railway track have limited choices with train bearing down

A peanut lay on the railway track. Its heart was all aflutter . . .

The peanut was troubled. It had received much advice that it should roll off the track and seek safety with its brethren amongst the gravel below. But it was happy where it was. The contact with the polished metal provided a tangible link with civilization. It liked the view of a straight and narrow path, laid down by the proper authorities. It had vague forebodings about the fate of those who left the beaten track. After all, its comfortable position had served it well so far.

Being a cautious individual, the peanut sought the counsel of a panel of four gurus. The wise ones determined that by government decree a train would pass through on midnight of December 31. They carefully investigated the weight of the train, the hardness of the wheels of the train and of the rail, and the ability of peanuts to resist being crushed. Their unanimous finding was that the peanut should jump.

This advice did not resolve the peanut's problem. Surely, it mused, there are two points of view on any issue. It issued a public statement that the panel must

have been biased, and entered into a review of past peanut glories.

The train came roaring round the bend — Too! Too! Peanut butter.

Sreb Collins
Burnaby Central
Sr. Secondary

BCTF needs "bill of rights" to curb exec, RA powers and protect minorities

If the BCTF is to survive as a viable teacher organization for all teachers, then certain essential reforms must take place. Top on the list of priorities is direct election of the president by all members. It is not necessary to extend this to the other table officers, because, with direct election, no doubt slates will form, as in the other democratically run organizations.

Another absolutely necessary reform, as I see it, is the creation of a bill of rights for members. The BCTF has initiated a number of actions over the years that, even though they had the backing of majorities — on occasion — have run rough-shod over the feelings of minorities, or their political and religious beliefs.

This must stop. One reasonable way to do this is to adopt a charter of rights that limits the powers of the executive and assemblies to clearly defined areas, and also clearly sets out the taboo areas. To be blunt, the BCTF must be an organization in which both NDPers and Socreds feel welcome. Any political persuasion or moral position that Canadian society accepts as a legitimate view must be made to feel welcome in the organization.

Now I know that this means that some members would have to give up their cherished causes — I have a few myself

Letters

— but the price has to be paid. Every teacher is a teacher of democracy, and if we don't practice what we preach in that one organization that speaks for all teachers then we are bound to have internal strife to the point where many teachers will manage to found a separate organization. The prize of unity is moderation.

The third item I feel very strong about is the freeing of the media. The BC Teacher and the BCTF Newsletter, while excellent publications from a technical point of view, lack the vibrant newsworthiness and relevance of the normal media. What we need is a proper teacher newspaper, as is found in Great Britain and other countries. Perhaps we should charge modest subscription fees so that teachers could vote with their wallets, so to speak.

I fully realize these major reforms are easier to enunciate than to implement, but if the attempt is not made to mend our ways, the future brings further fissioning of the central organization.

Jack Boulogne
Prince Margaret Senior
Secondary Surrey

Make AGM more representative by holding in school time

No one suggests the BCTF doesn't do a good job when it comes to the nuts and bolts issues, such as promoting education, working for teacher welfare and trying to raise the status of the teaching profession.

No, the problem is when the BCTF tries to play politics. They are not so good at that and the reason why they are not so good is really very simple — we tend to have a left-wing leadership and a

middle-of-the-road membership. (A broad generalization, but one that I think is true.) So, what we have for many of the BCTF issues is broad apathy on the part of the majority of the members. Premier Vander Zalm saw this clearly and so we have the current crisis.

The crisis for many members is this — we want to support the BCTF, but not its left-wing policies. So, how do we solve this problem? I have, I think, a simple solution that would be workable and fair. The AGM is where most of the power lies, therefore we must change the rules of that meeting. As it now stands, we meet after a long stretch of teaching and then must give up three or four days of our Easter vacation. I admire the people who are willing to do this, but, unfortunately, the majority of our members will not. The people who do give up their time are to be admired, but that body of people does not really reflect the wishes of the majority. (Again, a broad generalization.) The majority of delegates tend to be left-of-centre and have a greater social conscience than the majority of members.

Unfortunately, many of the "burning issues" at the AGM do not interest the majority. So what is the solution?

Change the time of the AGM to school time. For example, say the last week of February on Thursday, Friday, Saturday with Sunday as a travel day. What difference will this make? The majority will now offer themselves as delegates. Sad to relate, if they are being offered "time off" the majority will accept. A fact of life.

The difference will be an AGM that more truly reflects the feelings of the majority and we will have a much stronger organization. I realize that for the above to happen, the present leadership will have to give up effective control for the much more risky proposition of delegate election. However, if they do

not get a more open and balanced forum, the BCTF will, over the next few years, cease to be a voice for the majority of its present members and that would be a sad thing.

R. Gillies
Hastings Elementary
Vancouver

New power is illusory, Industrial Relations Act makes union a "eunuch"

The September 23 issue of the BCTF Newsletter claimed that local associations which formed themselves into unions would have the power to strike. Such a statement ignores the text of Bill 19, now incorporated as part of the Industrial Relations Act, and is misleading. Section 137.97, paragraphs 1 and 2 of Bill 19 clearly state that the government will take action to prevent teacher strikes. The commissioner appointed under the act also has the power to prevent strikes on his own authority, under section 137.8. This section also states that teachers ordered to stay on the job must "maintain in full measure" their services.

In other words, work to rule can be prohibited.

As a union a local would be a eunuch, deprived of essential union power. The Newsletter would, I believe, perform a better service to its readers by describing the true powerlessness of our position under the Industrial Relations Act, rather than by creating the illusion that this government has given us true union power.

John Collins
Maple Ridge Secondary

Contributions sought for memorial scholarship in honour of Alice Merer

It was with great sorrow that we learned of the sudden death of Alice Merer this summer. She was a dedicated classroom teacher at Simon Fraser elementary in Vancouver who put forth great effort to encourage her pupils to excel in their academic endeavours. In her honour the Alice Merer Memorial Scholarship for excellence in science and/or mathematics will be given to pupils at Hamber and Tupper secondary schools, who graduated from Simon Fraser Elementary School.

Colleagues and friends who would like to contribute to this fund are requested to send their tax-deductible cheques, payable to the Vancouver School Board, to Mr. Robert King at Sir Charles Tupper Secondary School, 419 East 24th Avenue, Vancouver, BC V5V 2A2.

Anne Meul
On leave
Vancouver

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Veitch says cabinet will review BCTF pension proposals

From page 3

Responding to the federation's requests, Veitch said that further discussion was required on the question of who should pay for the improvements which increase the cost to the pension plan. On most of the non-cost items, he indicated that he would present the BCTF proposals to the Legislative Committee of cabinet for consideration for legislation in the spring of 1988.

It was further agreed that the Superannuation Commission and the Pension Committee would review a number of items which can be implemented through regulation and would discuss further the ways and means of improving the pension plan in areas where there was a cost impact.

Prior to this meeting, the federation had been discussing many of the current items with the superannuation commission and the government over the past seven years. The last major changes to the teacher pension plan were made in 1980.

The BCTF's position on pension changes was developed from contributions made by the Pensions Committee, Executive Committee and local association representatives and is based on AGM pension policies.

Early retirement plans offered to BCGEU, Hydro staff

The B.C. government and B.C. Hydro have announced early retirement plans for their employees which include payment of salary incentives. The plans appear to be an improvement over what is currently available to teachers.

Under the announced schemes, employees who have 10 years or more of service and are age 55 or older may retire on a pension which is not reduced for retirement before age 60. Hydro employees must exercise this option between January 1 and February 29, 1988; B.C. government employees must exercise the option between October 20 and April 1, 1988.

In addition, employees who retire within these time periods will receive eight months' salary if under age 60 and six months' salary if over age 60.

The early retirement plan for teachers also waives the reduction for retirement under age 60 and is available to eligible teachers until June 30, 1989. However, the plan does not provide for the payment of salaries although payments may be made by individual school boards.

Circle a seminar date for retirement planning

Members planning retirement are urged to pick a date and attend one of the following BCTF information seminars in the new year:

SPRING 1988

Vancouver - January 30 Plaza 500 Hotel 09:00 - 16:00

Richmond - February 6 Richmond Inn 09:00 - 16:00

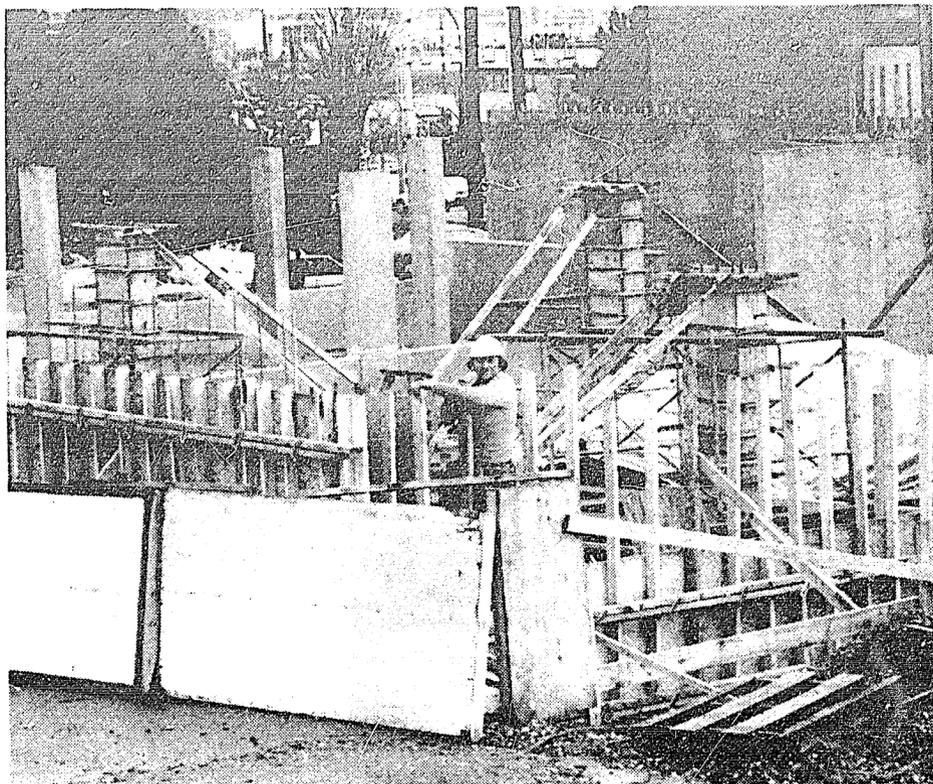
Surrey - February 13 Surrey Inn 09:00 - 16:00

Coquitlam - February 20 Best Western Coquitlam Motor Inn 09:00 - 16:00

Kamloops - March 5 Dome Motor Inn 09:30 - 16:30

Williams Lake - March 12 Overlander Motor Inn 09:30 - 16:30

Victoria - March 19 Harbour Towers 09:30 - 16:30



First phase of the teacherscarpenters' development project, now well underway, involves a parking garage to replace space lost to the condominiums.

Joint teachers/carpenters development project starts

Construction has begun on a \$6 million residential development on BCTF-owned land that is planned to benefit both B.C.'s carpenters and teachers.

Phase one of the joint B.C. Teachers' Federation/Western Housing Development Corporation project, a two-level decked parking garage, is currently being erected behind the BCTF building in Vancouver. This parking structure will replace current parking space which will be lost when the main project is constructed.

Phase two of the development will involve construction of a 72-strata-unit condominium complex on federation-owned residential land just west of the BCTF building. Construction of this

phase will commence in late winter/early spring of 1988.

The plan, which is intended to achieve a socially responsible development built with union labour, was approved by the fall 1986 Representative Assembly. Under it, Western Housing Development Corporation, a development arm of the Carpenters' Welfare and Pension Plan, will pay the federation \$2,058,000 for its land and bear the almost \$4 million development costs.

Western Housing's goal is to employ carpenters' union members and to provide quality housing to the community. Construction of phase one is being handled by Turnbull and Gale, a union contractor. The BCTF expects to receive its \$2 million early in the new year.

Gov't denies exchange teachers improved medical coverage

Ken Smith
Income Security

The ministers of education and health have rejected a BCTF brief requesting an improvement in medical coverage for exchange teachers to B.C.

The brief pointed out that under present rules incoming exchange teachers have to wait up to three months before they can apply for B.C. medical coverage or be covered by B.C. Hospital Insurance. To obtain coverage during this waiting period, these British and Australian teachers must purchase costly private insurance which imposes an unwelcome burden on their modest salaries.

The BCTF had asked that the waiting period — B.C. is one of only four provinces with the requirement — be waived but the request was declined.

Health Minister Peter Dueck said the three-month residency requirement conforms with an agreement among all the provinces and territories of Canada. Although some provinces waive the waiting period for individuals arriving from outside Canada, the health minister said B.C. policy is to apply the requirement uniformly to all would-be subscribers who are establishing or re-establishing residence.

The BCTF brief had also asked that exchange teachers be given free medical coverage, noting that B.C., Alberta and Ontario are the only provinces charging medical premiums, but this request was also rejected. Education Minister Tony Brummett replied that it was unrealistic that exchange teachers meet the same criteria for coverage as B.C. citizens.

B.C. teachers going on exchange continue to pay B.C. medical premiums through their school boards and thereby retain medical coverage for the month of departure and 12 months of temporary absence.

Salary Indemnity Fund healthy with \$4 million surplus

Ken Smith
Income Security

The BCTF Salary Indemnity Fund is in a healthy financial condition according to the latest actuarial and audit reports. The current turmoil over membership and the ups and downs of the stock market should not adversely affect the soundness of the fund.

The auditor's report indicated that the Short Term portion of the fund (as of December 31, 1986) had a surplus of \$7,082,000. At the same date the Long Term portion, which, unlike the Short Term plan, must set aside \$12,375,000 in reserves to pay benefits over the long term, had a deficit of \$2,952,000. The third account in the SI Fund, the Special Indexing Reserve, is totally reserved and has no surplus or deficit. Therefore, in total, the SIF has a surplus of \$4,130,000 and unless there is a sudden shift in claims, there should be no drain on this surplus.

Any loss in membership should be offset by a corresponding reduction in possible liabilities.

The fund is invested primarily in bonds. As of September 30, 1987 fund investments were: 54 per cent in bonds, 28 per cent in stocks and 16 per cent in treasury bills. The downturn in the price of stocks has caused an increase in the price of bonds. Whether the two movements will result in offsetting performance remains to be seen. In 1986 the fund earned 11.1 per cent.

SIP investments are governed by the B.C. Trustees Act which limits the amount of the fund which can be invested in stocks. Investments are made by a professional investment company with the securities held by a large trust company. None of the monies are available for general operating use by the federation.

Vacancies

Applications to BCTF committees should be submitted on BCTF curriculum vitae forms. Most appointments are for three-year terms. For more information on any of these vacancies or curriculum vitae forms, please contact Jacquie Boyer at the BCTF office.

Bargaining Committee

A bargaining co-ordinator is required in the Peace River zone. Applicants are reminded that they must be nominated by a local within their zone. Deadline for applications is **January 22**. The appointment is scheduled for the February 12-13 executive meeting.

Professional Development Advisory Committee

Professional Development co-ordinators are required in two zones: North Coast and Vancouver Island South. Please refer to above vacancy for nomination and deadline information.

Judicial Committee

Elections will be held at the January 29-30 Representative Assembly for three positions on the Judicial Committee. Please check pages 86-87 of the *Member's Guide* for information relating to this committee. Deadline for receipt of nominees' curriculum vitae forms and notice of local approval is **January 26**.

Committee of Ombudspersons

Elections for ombudspersons from two regions will be held at the January 29-30 RA: Okanagan-Central Mainland and North Central-Peace River-North Coast. Specific information can be checked on page 70 of the *Members' Guide*. Local association representatives should submit nominations on curriculum vitae forms by **January 26**.

BCTF Assistance Society

Ten BCTF members are needed to serve two-year terms as "special members" of the BCTF Assistance Society. These members attend the annual general meeting and special general meetings of the society. At least four directors are elected from society special members. Applicants must be from the Lower Mainland. Application deadline is **February 1**.

Other Committee Vacancies

Deadline for these vacancies is **February 5** with appointments scheduled for the February 12-13 EC meeting: **Income Security Committee (2)**, **Status of Women Committee (2)**, **Teacher Personnel Committee (2)**, **Investigation Committee (1)**, **Professional Relations Advisors Committee (3 elementary teachers)**.