

NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 1967

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Executive to recommend boycott of large classes

Teachers may walk off the job next fall rather than accept classes of 40 or more pupils.

To bring to public attention the gravity of the class size problem, the Executive Committee last month decided to present two recommendations to the 1967 Annual General Meeting:

(1) That the BCTF recommend that no teacher teach regular classes of 40 or more pupils.

(2) That, in the implementation of the foregoing recommendation, the BCTF support morally and, if necessary, financially any teacher who refuses to teach a regular class of 40 or more pupils.

BCTF President Harley Robertson believes the recommendations will be supported enthusiastically by teachers.

'Teachers are fed up with trying to do the impossible,' he said. 'They are expected to develop each child as an individual, yet B.C. has many of the largest classes in Canada. The situation is obviously absurd.'

Robertson said that in touring the province he has noticed a growing demand by teachers for action on the size of classes. 'Teachers want to individualize instruction and to implement the philosophy behind the new curricular programs, but their efforts are being thwarted by the large classes assigned to them.'

If the AGM approves the recommendations, the BCTF will be committed to support any teacher who walks off the job rather than accept a class of 40

or more pupils. The decision to refuse the assignment would be up to the individual teacher.

The figure 40 was chosen as being a class size no one could defend as a good learning environment, and therefore one on which a stand could be taken.

BCTF objectives call for much smaller maximum class sizes: 25 in primary grades, 30 in regular classes in other grades, 24 in industrial education and home economics classes and 15 in selected classes of very high or very low ability.

In Sweden elementary classes are limited to 25. If 76 pupils register in a three-room school, there must be four classes, or the extra student may be taken to and from the next closest school by taxi.

Robertson called on the provincial government to revise its entitlement formulae, on school boards to hire more teachers than the number for whom the province will pay grants, and on superintendents and school principals to show imagination in utilizing school staffs.

'A concerted, co-operative attack on the class size problem is desperately needed to improve learning conditions for our youngsters. The Executive Committee's recommendations, if approved, should at least eliminate intolerable learning conditions in some of our school districts,' he said. 'Then we should be able to do something about establishing good conditions, not just getting rid of bad ones.'

The recommendations are part of a campaign the BCTF is mounting on the class size issue. First step in the campaign was a brief submitted to the Minister of Education, as reported in last month's Newsletter.

The Executive Committee will hold a special session on January 7 and 8 to plan additional action.

Voluntary insurance plan approved

A voluntary group life insurance plan for BCTF members was approved recently by the Executive Committee.

The plan will be underwritten by the Canada Premier Life Insurance Company.

The plan is voluntary, and all BCTF members are eligible to participate, provided they are actively at work.

The plan provides group life insurance up to \$30,000, graded according to age. Premiums increase with age.

Additional benefits allow a teacher to convert the group insurance into an individual permanent plan if he leaves the BCTF.

A waiver of premium provision allows the insured member to continue his coverage without payment of premiums should he become disabled while insured.

A master policy will be issued to the BCTF. Premiums will be payable annually in advance and will be collected by the BCTF office.

Details of the plan will be sent to local association secretaries and will be available from the BCTF office.

Full information on the plan and an application form will be included in the January issue of *The B.C. Teacher*.



DR. GERALD NASON (left), Secretary-Treasurer of the Canadian Teachers' Federation, welcomes to Canada Richard Lagawo, President of the Sierra Leone Teachers' Union. Mr. Lagawo visited BCTF headquarters last month as part of a six-week visit to Canadian schools and education organizations, under the auspices of the Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan. He is the first educational representative of developing nations within the Commonwealth to be invited to Canada under the plan.

SAYS PRESIDENT

Federation most powerful voice in education today

The B.C. Teachers' Federation has broad responsibilities to upgrade the educational standards and the teaching conditions in the province, but it's going to cost money, says president Harley Robertson.

In addresses to teachers' associations in the past month, the president has stressed the fact that the Federation has emerged as the most powerful voice in education in the province.

But he has also emphasized that if this voice is to remain powerful, Federation members must be prepared to pay higher fees to allow the Federation to get on with the job.

'How much of an increase?' he asks. 'I cannot suggest — that is up to the finance committee. Personally I would like to see the fee set at least at \$75 and even that is less than any self-respecting union I could name.'

CONDITIONS CHANGED

Robertson says the Federation's five-year plan, now in its second year, called for a maximum annual increase in expenditure of 10 percent.

He continues: 'This year the amount of increase is 19 percent. The expected revenue over expenditure this year by the five-year plan was to be \$134,000. The actual revenue over expenditure will be \$23,000.'

'We are embarked, belatedly, on a building program. We shall be in debt in September of 1967, approximately \$400,000. By previous planning the building is to be paid for in three years.'

'What do we do then? We can either cut back drastically or we can amortize the building costs over a longer period or we can raise fees. This decision will have to be made at the next annual general meeting.'

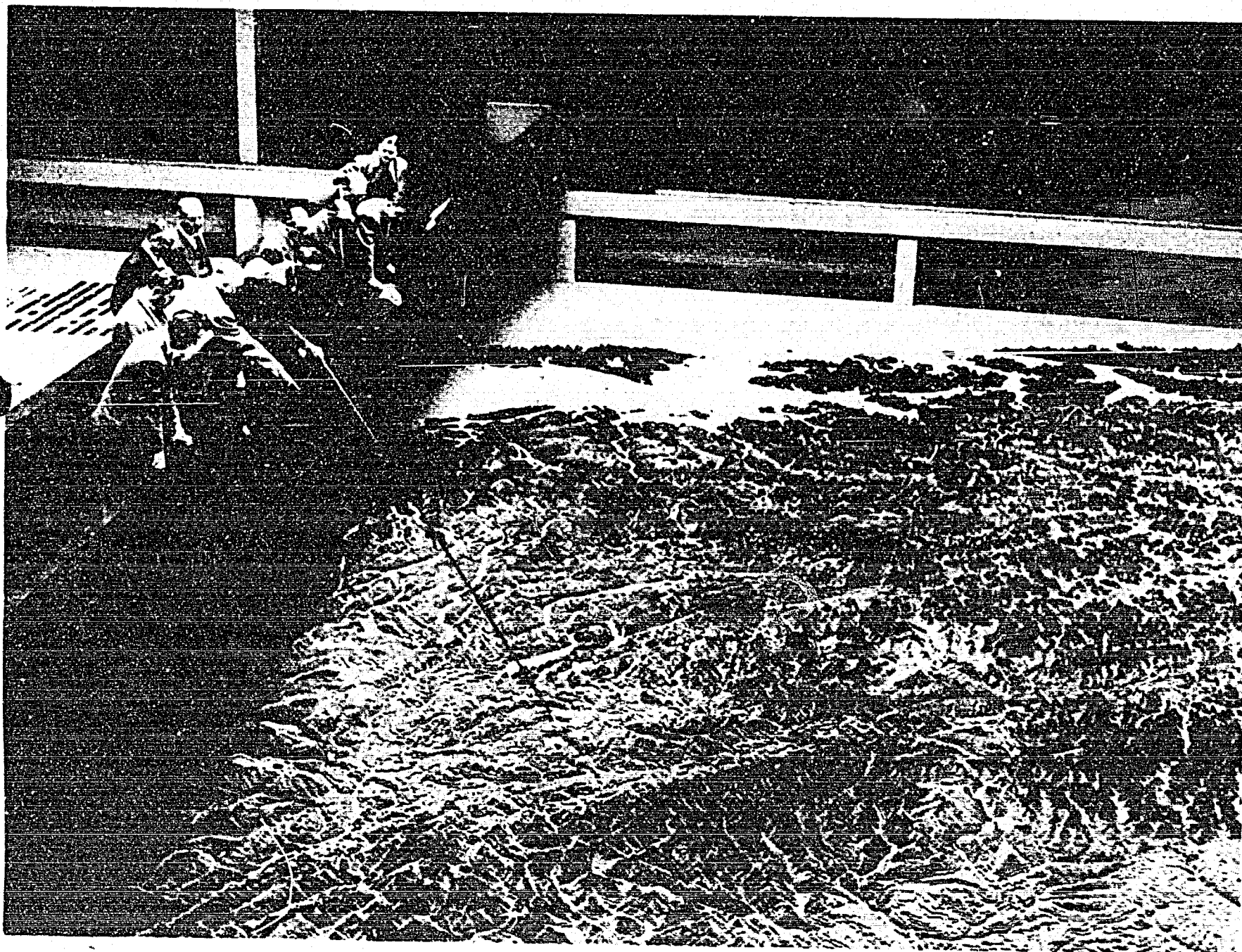
'I would like to make my own position abundantly clear if I haven't already done so. I firmly believe in expanding the activities of the Federation, especially in the field of professional development.'

'The B.C. Teachers' Federation is now the most powerful voice in education in British Columbia. The Department listens to us with respect and seeks our advice — it doesn't always do what we want it to do but at least it listens — I strongly advocate that we do not abdicate our broad responsibilities. Further, I hate living in debt or paying interest when it is entirely unnecessary — let's pay the building off as soon as we can.'

'Well, that doesn't leave much to the imagination, does it? I am in favor of scrapping the five-year plan and its short-sighted planning — we have an obligation to meet — let's get on with the job!'

TEACHERS IMPORTANT

'I am rather concerned over the state of education in B.C. The role of the teacher is the most important role in our civilization. If you sell yourselves short you are selling education short and practices in existence since the time of the Egyptians will continue indefinitely. Your Federation is the only voice you have to correct the wrongs currently being perpetrated on the children in your care. Your Federation can act with authority only in the sure knowledge that 17,000 teachers are in full support.'



THE THREE FLOOR British Columbia Building was designed to accommodate the world's largest plywood relief map, which measures 76 feet by 80 feet and took seven years to construct. Made of 989,842 pieces of 1/4-inch B.C. plywood individually cut, painted and assembled, this massive map can be traversed by means of a gantry or viewed from surrounding balconies on the main and second floor levels. (See story Page 3.)

BRITISH COLUMBIA TEACHERS' FEDERATION NEWSLETTER

Editor, K. M. AITCHISON

Editorial Offices

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We Want Action

Our lead story about the possibility of teachers walking off the job rather than trying to cope with classes of 40 or more pupils will probably startle many people. We hope it does; it's about time something did.

Large classes have been depriving pupils for too long of the individual attention they need if they are to develop their individual capabilities. People in and out of education talk glibly about developing each child to the maximum of his potential and about individualizing instruction for each child. But how are teachers expected to do this when they are given classes of 40 or more?

Perhaps the Executive Committee's recommendations to the Annual General Meeting will jar people sufficiently that they will demand—not merely ask—that the provincial government and school boards reduce classes to a size in which their children can receive some individual attention.

And let's not have any of that nonsense about a teacher shortage being the cause of the large classes. Assigning larger classes to stretch the available supply of teachers will perpetuate the shortage rather than alleviate it. Large classes are driving people out of the profession just when we need them most. Moreover, the prospect of large classes deters people from entering or returning to the profession, particularly married women. Maintaining large classes to solve the shortage of teachers is sheer folly.

Moreover, we haven't even scratched the surface of the possibility of using part-time teachers. Many retired teachers or married women teachers, for example, would probably be delighted to teach one or two courses in their specialties.

It's a sad commentary that teachers may have to threaten to walk off the job to obtain a proper learning environment for their pupils. All those pious words about youth being our province's most valuable resource seem to be just that—nothing but words.

We've had enough words. Let's have some action.

Judge and be judged

By CHARLIE OVANS, General Secretary

Recently I met a teacher distressed by an official report rating his performance as only fair, although throughout a long career in teaching he had never been evaluated lower than satisfactory.

As far as he was concerned he was working as hard as he had ever worked and had not basically changed his teaching style. Through attendance at summer sessions and through in-service education workshops he had kept abreast of curriculum change. Why should his teaching style now be found lacking?

The main point of criticism in the report was that the classroom situation was too teacher-dominated and not enough pupil-centered. Comments suggested that learning should be active, that pupils should 'discover' rather than listen to the teacher 'tell'.

This story illustrates a weakness in the approach of some officials toward their responsibilities for supervision. In this enlightened age, when it is not enough for a teacher just to 'tell,' neither is it enough for a supervisor—whether he be principal, director or superintendent—just to rate.

In this instance, for example, it should have been obvious that a teacher who, in the same district, had had a teaching style reinforced year after year by favorable ratings would not, or even could not, change overnight.

Had the official stopped to ask himself what leadership he and his staff had given toward helping teachers prepare for new methodology he might not have been so quick with his unfavorable judgment.

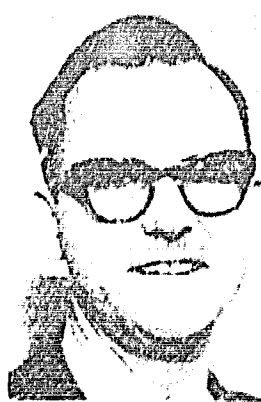


Membership demands cause rise in federation costs

By KEN McATEER
Secretary-Treasurer

The Representative Assembly has requested a commentary on the upward trend of costs in the economy and the effect of this trend on the BCTF budget.

Costs in today's economy are ballooning rather than obeying an established upward trend. Coupled with this is the fact that the Federation's activities are also expanding in all directions. The addition of these exponential trends presents staggering costs to the Federation.



The investment practices of modern business concerns are contributing to these quickly rising costs. Not too many years ago people were astonished at an inflationary rate of 3% to 4% a year.

At that time businesses were beginning to realize that basing an interest rate on the par value of invested capital was leading to depressed yields on investments.

Gradually a new investment policy came into use as the economy expanded and was able to afford it. This new investment policy was called Discounted Cash Flow.

Under this policy two factors go to make up investment cost. The first is the usual rent of the investment or 'interest.' The second is the cost of discounting the investment in time or 'inflation.'

A well-known industrial enterprise makes no secret of the fact that its investment practices are built on Discounted Cash Flow.

The basic concept in Discounted Cash Flow is that money received today, or in the near future, is more valuable to the company than money received later in the future, because it can be reinvested. The real value of money is then measured in terms of amount and time. Discounted Cash Flow methods take both factors into account. The older methods do not.

Older methods were satisfied with an annual return of, say, 7% on the par value of invested money. The Discounted Cash Flow method compensates for the 'present value' of invested money. For example, \$100 invested for one year is worth, at 6% discount rate, only \$94.30 at time of investment.

In order to receive an annual return of 7% this company sets an initial rate of approximately 13%!

This situation worsens at a compound rate if the company invests its money for more than one year. Is this wrong? Not if the company wants to protect the purchasing value of its money.

Where does the Federation come into the picture? Recently we have begun purchasing larger products of this investment system. We are buying a \$475,000 building with \$55,000 worth of furnishings.

In addition, we have purchased or will be purchasing major items of machinery and equipment. By waiting a year to let tenders for construction, we suffered an increase of about 25% in the proposed cost of the building. This is general throughout the economy.

The other factor contributing to our rising budget is the way in which the Federation is growing.

Various groups within the Federation are asking for detailed accounting statements. This has resulted in our having to purchase a larger accounting machine. The printing department requires a larger collator to put together lengthy reports, and the requests for lengthy reports are becoming more and more frequent.

Small areas of interest have become major facets of an approach. For example, the membership is demanding that everything possible be done in the area of teacher involvement in curriculum planning. This means that every item, interest, idea and issue in league with curriculum planning must be supported.

The question arises of whether or not this shotgun approach is reasonable. Our problem is we haven't come far enough to know. It seems many blank cheques must be written in the area of curriculum development until an overall plan can be established.

The expansion of the Federation is no longer confined simply to dabbling in new areas. We are solidly entrenched in economic welfare, communication and now professional development. We are committed to a forward-looking plan. We must protect what we've won. And we must pay for it.

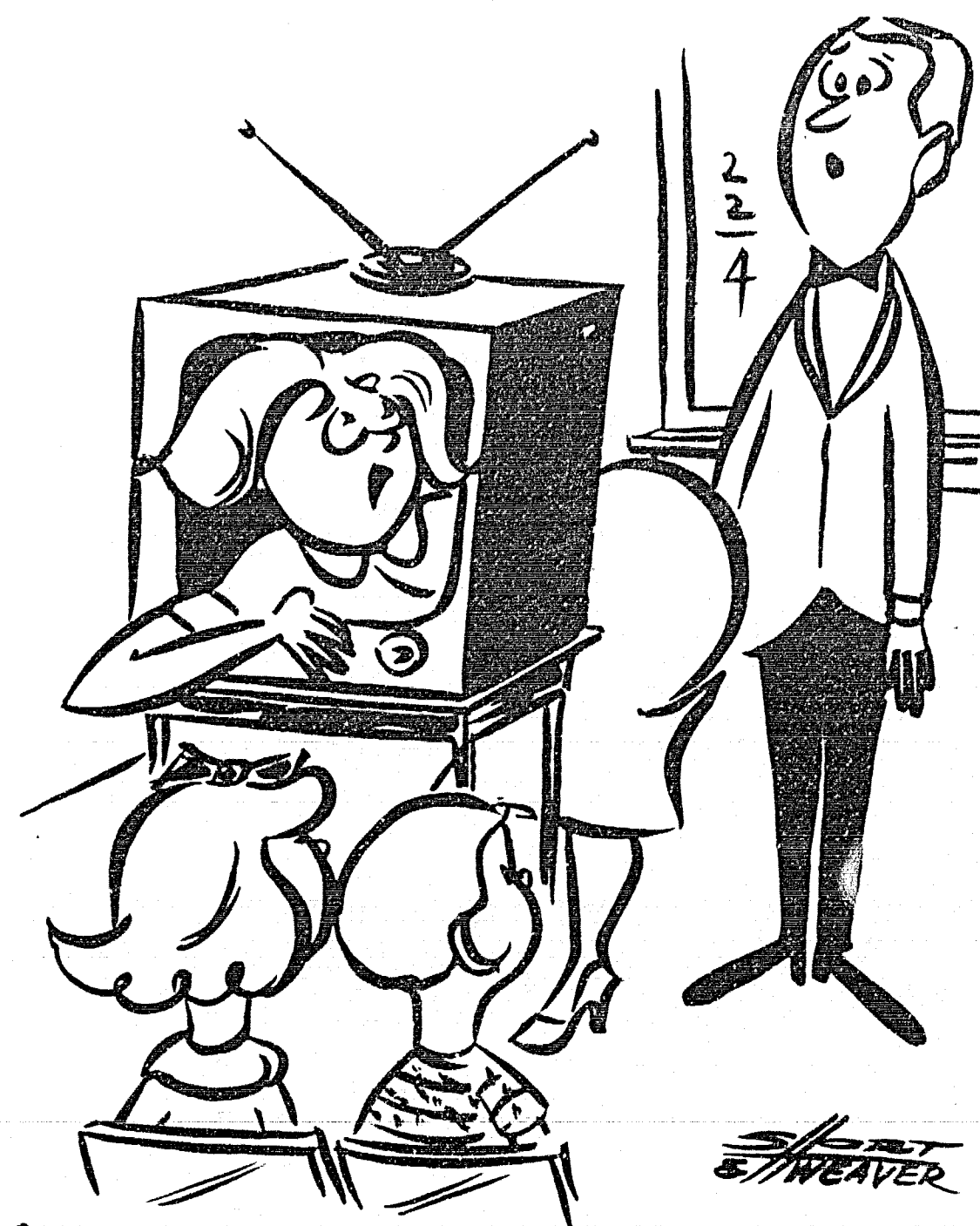
Africa forms available now

Application forms for Project Africa 1967 are now available from the BCTF office.

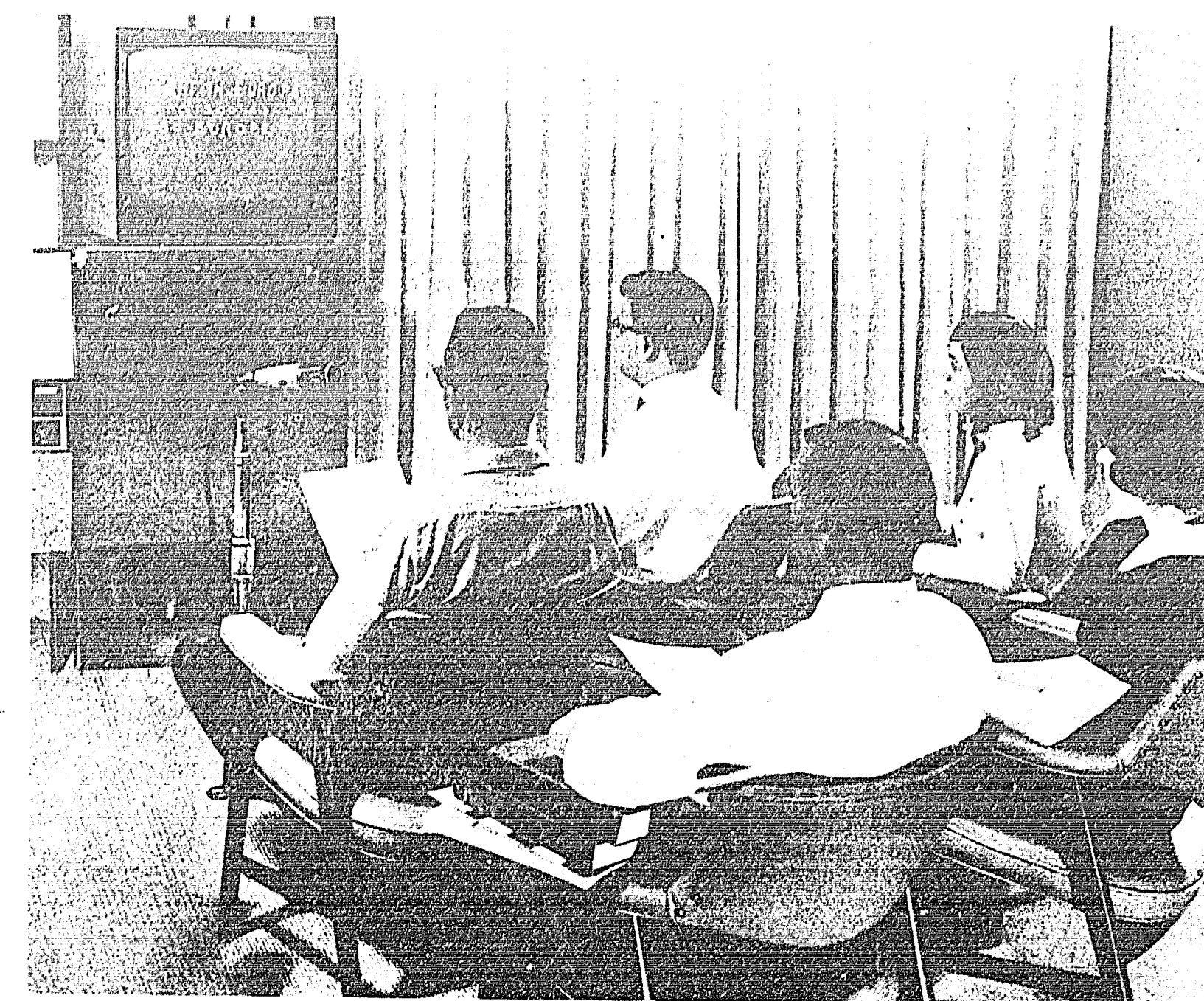
Each summer the CTF project sends teams of Canadian teachers to African countries to assist with training sessions for African teachers.

Expenses of the Canadian teachers are borne by their provincial teachers' organizations.

For several years the BCTF has sent six of its members to the summer project.



WE COULDN'T AFFORD EDUCATIONAL TV
BUT YOU KNOW HOW THESE TRENDS ARE.



LONG DISTANCE LECTURES

An electronic 'blackboard-by-wire' teaching system recently transmitted voice communications and handwriting over telephone lines for long-distance illustrated lectures at a demonstration jointly sponsored by Purdue University and General Telephone & Electronics Corporation.

The new system enables stu-

dents to receive graphic material on a classroom TV monitor. The instructor's voice is heard through a classroom speaker system.

The handwritten information remains on the TV monitor until the instructor presses an 'erase' button at his console. Students can ask questions or comment on the lecture by

pressing a 'question' button in the classroom. The instructor then activates a return audio circuit which permits the students to talk with the transmitting location. Up to six remote locations can be operated from one transmitting console.

The TV-display feature can be used interchangeably with existing TV equipment.

RADICAL CHANGE FOR '67

AGM travel assistance now in form of grants

A radical change in Annual General Meeting travel assistance will get its first test this year.

Beginning with the 1967 convention, there will be no pooling desk, no travel allowance forms to be completed, and no punching of membership cards as evidence of attendance.

All BCTF travel assistance will be in the form of grants to local associations. The associations will be free to decide what additional funds should be provided, and how the total amount is to be distributed.

The new plan was adopted by

the Executive Committee on the recommendation of the Convention Committee.

For several years BCTF grants to local associations have been designed to ensure that each association had the means to be represented by at least one delegate.

The amount of the grant has been the direct travel cost of one delegate, less a sum equal to 50c per member of the association. Additional costs of the association's full delegation have been a local responsibility.

The BCTF grant to each association will now cover the travel cost of three delegates, except where the association is entitled to only one or two. The grant will continue to be reduced by the amount of 50c per member.

Letters

University of B.C.

Sir:

For some time we have watched the exciting materials produced for primary school studies by the various United States curriculum projects, and have wished that similar materials might appear in Canada.

The appearance of Encyclopedia Britannica's 'Eskimo Family' is a substantial contribution toward the type of materials we would like to see. It is written by an outstanding anthropologist, Dr. Moreau Maxwell of Michigan; it is suited to one of the units of our Grade 3 program; print size and vocabulary are appropriate; the teaching materials are almost ideal. The only factor missing is a series of exercises, and this can readily be added by the teacher. The price is \$1.29.

It seems to me that here we have a model which can guide teachers and curriculum committees in their response to developments in the new social studies.

ANGUS M. GUNN

TV series shows gov't

Former Member of Parliament Douglas Fisher, now a newspaper columnist and political commentator, and Trudy Young, teenage actress and television personality, will co-host a special CBC-TV schools and youth production on government.

The five-part series, which begins on Canadian School Telecasts on Thursday, January 19, is called Three Levels of Government, and takes an on-the-spot look at the inner workings and personalities of our three levels of government—federal, provincial and municipal.

Highlight of the series is Trudy Young's visit to Ottawa where she meets Prime Minister Pearson and Opposition leader John Diefenbaker in their offices.

B.C. building tour a students' must

A tour of the B.C. Building on the grounds of the Pacific National Exhibition is a must for students.

The huge building houses the fascinating story of British Columbia and its people. Within this 70,000 square feet of modern exhibit space can be seen up-to-the-minute displays representing the vital forest, mining, agricultural, fishing, power and communications, petroleum and natural gas industries, together with provincial government departments and institutions of higher education, unfolding the widely varied aspects of this prosperous area.

Hundreds of colorful exhibits and the world's largest relief map expound the history, character, resources and industry of Canada's third largest province.

To those with an enquiring mind and a spirit of adventure, this British Columbia Building is a wealth of information, dramatically displayed, for the education and enjoyment of all.

VALUABLE TEACHING AID

For the teacher, these exhibits provide a wealth of detailed information pertaining to government, industrial development, history and topography.

The maps and displays are of particular value to students who are studying the province and specifically those who are taking a general business course.

A total of 166 classes, containing students of all ages, and from many areas of B.C., and their teachers, visited this educational facility during 1965.

Many teachers make a point of familiarizing themselves individually or in groups with the exhibits prior to bringing their classes out on a guided tour.

TOURS FOR CLASSES

Owned and operated by the Pacific National Exhibition, the British Columbia Building is open, without charge, daily throughout the year from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. for school classes and organized groups. Evening tours can also be arranged.

Well informed PNE personnel and additional helpful information services are readily available to ensure a most enjoyable tour.

A modern 550-seat cafeteria in this building, providing hot meals and refreshments, is open daily for the convenience of visitors.

Educational films also are shown free to the public in a 400-seat theater every Sunday, October through April.

Requests for specific group tour

reservations should be made well in advance in writing to:

The Hostess,
British Columbia Building,
Pacific National Exhibition,
Exhibition Park,
Vancouver 6, B.C.

Additional information can be obtained from the Hostess by telephoning 253-2311, local 233.

UBC offers new diploma

A diploma program in adult education is now being offered by UBC.

The program is designed for people who want to acquire the skills and knowledge to organize, conduct, evaluate and administer programs in adult education, but who do not wish to pursue a graduate degree.

It is offered by UBC's Faculty of Education and the Extension Department in response to a growing demand for specialists in adult education.

Candidates for admission to the program should have a bachelor's degree, a satisfactory background in some field of work or study which can make a contribution to adult education, and be serious and mature students.

Detailed information is available from UBC's Extension Department.

African TV series set

A special CBC centennial film series entitled 'The New Africans' will be shown on 'Take 30,' Fridays at 3:00 p.m., beginning January 13.

The nine-program series was filmed in Senegal, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Nigeria and Cameroon. The project had the co-operation of UNESCO and UNICEF.

The objective of the CBC camera crew was to convey on film the mood, commitments, and daily lives of modern Africans in newly independent nations striving to overcome in a decade the lag of centuries.

The programs are particularly suitable for senior elementary or secondary classes.

Retired Teachers' Ass'n Reports

By W. J. EADES
SHAUGHNESSY RESIDENTIAL LODGE

At a special general meeting in September, members instructed the Executive of the Retired Teachers' Association to proceed with the sale of the Lodge. Arrangements have now been completed and the property has been sold. We believe the new owner plans to operate the Lodge as a nursing home.

Our Association purchased the property nine years ago. It was thought that a residence for retired teachers would fulfil a need. Experience has shown that few of our members wanted this type of accommodation and most of the people who have lived there were not retired teachers. At present none of the residents are people for whom the home was intended.

Because of increasing maintenance costs and the probability of operating deficits it was consid-

ered wise to dispose of the property.

Since we have owned the Lodge, it has been capably and efficiently managed by Miss Olga Elliot. At a luncheon recently she was the guest of honor, and on behalf of the Association the President thanked her for her services and presented a cheque in lieu of holidays during the past nine years.

We hope that Miss Elliot will now be able to enjoy her retirement free from onerous responsibilities.

PENSION INCREASE

The recent substantial increase in our pensions has been most welcome.

A letter has been sent to Mr. Forrest, Commissioner of Teachers' Pensions, expressing appreciation for his part in securing not only the improved pension scale but also the subsidization of our medical services fees to the extent of more than 50%.

If any retired teachers have not taken advantage of this subsidy, it is still possible to do so. Write to the Commissioner of Teachers' Pensions, Parliament Buildings, Victoria.

MEMBERSHIP

The nature of our organization makes it extremely difficult to make contacts with all retired teachers. One of our aims is to survey the situation with a view to locating contact persons in all parts of the province.

In Vancouver it may be possible to use the postal districts as grouping areas.

The President, Paul Whitley (563 Esquimalt Road, West Vancouver), welcomes letters from men or women now retired offering practical suggestions.

We are anxious also to be kept informed of the illness of members so that our Visiting Committee can call upon or write to them.

DATELINE: SOVIET UNION

By HARLEY ROBERTSON
and BILL ALLESTER

MOSCOW — One of the greatest dangers in attempting to write impressions about visits to a foreign land is that the visitors may have a tendency to set themselves up as 'experts' on the country after a visit of very short duration.

In giving some impressions of education in the Soviet Union we may be erring in this direction. If we give this impression we are sorry.

What we are attempting to do is sum up some of our findings as a result of our visits to all types of learning institutions and our talks with educators and others not in the educational field.

The thing that impressed us most was the terrific emphasis, in the planned economy of the Soviet Union, on education, health and industrial growth.

The most important thing in the Soviet Union is education. Children are the 'privileged class.' The cleanliness of the floors of a kindergarten we visited put our 'luxury' hotels to shame. This kindergarten, with 100 pupils, had a full-time physician and a full-time nurse in attendance. At an adjacent nursery school of comparable size a resident physician examined each of the children as he or she arrived at the institution each morning.

The children we saw were invariably plump, clean, and well cared for. Often the school buildings and higher educational establishments were drab and crowded, but they usually had plenty of equipment and invariably had a high ratio of teachers to pupils.

THE SCHOOL SYSTEM

The Soviet educational system is rather more complicated than ours with a multiplicity of different institutions and many types of specialization. Nursery schools (where the children 'eat, sleep and play') are provided for a large proportion of those between three months and three years of age.

Federation president Harley Robertson and Bill Allester, Director of Professional Development, spent 17 days in the Soviet Union as members of an educators' study mission. They visited Moscow, Kiev and Leningrad and toured a variety of institutions from kindergartens to elementary and secondary schools to technical institutes and universities. Here are some impressions of the visit.

Kindergartens serve the majority of 3-, 4-, 5- and 6-year olds. All children attend school from age 7 until the end of the 'eighth form' or grade.

Except for those who are mentally retarded or seriously educationally handicapped in some other way, 93 percent of the young people continue beyond the eighth form. Thus while education to the eighth form is obligatory, most pupils continue until they finish the ten years of elementary and secondary education.

Approximately half of those who complete the tenth form (at age 17) go to work, but most of these and many of those who drop out after the eighth form, continue with their education in evening classes or through correspondence.

Thus, virtually every technical school, institute of higher education and university has an evening and a correspondence department in addition to its 'day' department.

We had difficulty, even in the 'planned society,' in getting accurate figures as to the percentage of students going on to different types of higher education.

However, it was obvious that most of our difficulty was due to the trouble we had in translating Canadian terminology into Russian in order to ask meaningful questions.

It would appear that some 30 percent of the secondary schools (10th form) graduates go on to attend universities or institutes for professional training (doctors, teachers and engineers are typically prepared in institutes rather than universities).

Some 20 percent of the secondary school graduates continue their education in a technical school. In the larger cities the institutes of higher education were very specialized.

We heard of specialized secondary schools for art, music, physical education, mathematics, and science, where competent children are selected, in their elementary education years, and given the benefit of special instruction and facilities.

WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM THE USSR?

From the above it will be obvious that we saw much that was of interest to Canadian educators.

We also concluded that our Canadian schools had much which the Russians could imitate with profit to their system. Some of the lessons we could learn from the USSR are:

(1) The fact that Soviet society, government and parents, give such a high priority to education. A shortage of teachers is not tolerated as a normal state of affairs.

(2) Their heavy emphasis on research in education should be introduced in Canada. Their definition of research, like ours, is quite broad. Thus it includes the preparation of curriculum guides and textbooks and the estimation of numbers of students in addition to 'pure research.' However, when they decide to 'research' an educational question, they throw personnel and material into the task in a manner unknown in our country.

(3) Probably the most significant difference between Russian

schools and ours is their employment of so many more teachers and professors, per hundred or thousand pupils, than in this country. The Pedagogical Institute in Moscow has 8,000 day students, 4,000 evening students, and a faculty of 1,000 (ratio — 1 to 12). Special School (English) No. 5 in Moscow has 700 pupils in Grades 1 to 10 inclusive with 60 teachers (ratio — 1 to 11.7). At that school the typical class in senior grades has 35 pupils. The standard teacher load in elementary and secondary schools in the USSR is 18 hours per week (which includes class instruction, laboratory work and tutorial or seminar sessions). If teachers are called upon to teach more than 18 hours (or to mark exercise books) they receive extra pay.

(4) The parents in the USSR are recruited as active supporters of the school program. If a child is not working as hard as he should at school he becomes a problem for the other children, who use group pressures to bring him up to standard. If these measures fail the parent organization of the school is called into action — to put pressures upon the parents to bring the children in line. Such an emphasis on conformity is inconsistent with our belief in the right of individuals to be individuals. Moreover, the pressure upon slower pupils must sometimes be unbearable. Nevertheless, our schools could well profit from a greater degree of parent support than they usually have.

(5) Teachers in the USSR are required to attend classes, to 'upgrade' their teaching methods or to receive new information, every five years. They receive full pay while taking one day off per week to attend classes.

We would hesitate to employ compulsion in this manner in Canada. However, we have thousands of teachers taking evening or correspondence courses, throughout the year, with no reduction in their regular teaching load to compensate for the extra studies being undertaken.

Impressions

- The most important thing in the Soviet Union is education.
- Parents are active supporters of the school program.
- Children are the 'privileged class.'
- Educational research is going on at a rate unheard of in Canada.
- A shortage of teachers is not tolerated.
- Standard teacher load is 18 hours a week with extra pay for any extra work.

February Conference Planned

Dr. Maurie Hillson, professor of Education at Rutgers University, will be the feature speaker at an invitational conference on the non-graded school organization and continuous pupil learning, to be held in Vancouver February 24-25 under the auspices of the BCTF Curriculum Directors.

Tentative plans call for Dr. Hillson to speak on the Friday evening on the philosophical aspects of continuous progress. On Saturday morning his paper will stress the practical aspects.

'We are asking Dr. Hillson to explain classroom management and organization of learning experiences. We are inviting a large number of classroom teachers, and we believe they will be most interested in this phase,' said Mrs. Isobel Cull, chairman of the Curriculum Directors.

Dr. Hillson's second paper will be followed by a talk by a Saskatchewan teacher who has successfully individualized learning in her classroom. Plenary sessions with questions by the audience and small group discussions will occupy the remaining time in the conference.

The Directors plan to invite leaders of the B.C. educational community, including representatives of the provincial specialist associations. Several 'reservations' will be available for teachers and principals, particularly those who are already involved in a continuous progress plan.

'As far as possible, we want to make this a B.C. — not just a lower mainland — conference,' said John Church, Assistant Director of Professional Development. 'Teachers who would like to attend should write to the BCTF office or to the officers of their PSA to indicate their interest.'

There will be no registration fee,' Church added. 'We hope that school districts and PSAs will assist those teachers who want to attend.'

Science Research Associates of Canada will sponsor Dr. Hillson's trip to Vancouver.

D. Parsons, B.C. representative of S.R.A. is assisting the Curriculum Directors in arranging the conference.

Full details of the program will be included in the February issue of the Newsletter.

UVIC plans symposium

A humanities and science symposium for Grade 11 and 12 students will be held at the University of Victoria during the latter part of the Easter vacation.

The symposium will provide promising senior secondary students with an opportunity to meet with outstanding scholars in the science and humanities, and to exchange ideas with them and with students from all parts of the province.

The symposium, to be co-sponsored by UVIC and the IBM Corporation, will feature student papers showing original thought and independent research in the fields of science, mathematics, arts, education and the humanities. There will also be addresses, discussions, guided tours and special events.

The committee planning the symposium hopes that the opportunity to meet and talk with distinguished scholars and to read and defend papers on their own work will give the students who participate a taste of university life and inspire their future study.

Eighteen students will be invited to present their work at the symposium. Transportation and accommodation for the students and for a sponsor-teacher for each student will be provided.

In addition, financial assistance will be provided to enable an interested and able student representative from each school district in the province to attend as an observer.

Detailed information is available from C. F. Goulson, Faculty of Education, University of Victoria.



Members of the educators' study mission to Russia pose in front of the Pioneer Palace in Kiev. Left to right: Joe Brown, president of the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation; Bill Allester; Roy Stibbs, superintendent of schools, Coquitlam; Alan Frizzell, Director of Vocational Education, Ontario College of Education; Harley Robertson; Alexander Mowat,

head, department of education, Dalhousie University; Dean Neville Scarfe, head of the Faculty of Education, UBC; and Andrew McKague, superintendent of schools, Toronto. The two women in the picture are Intourist guides Lyda Smirnova and Svetlana Nadirava.

NEWSLETTER