August 3, 2018 |

Statements

Statement about Pride from BCFED president Irene Lanzinger

We are well in to the Pride Season in BC; and as we gear up for the Vancouver Pride Parade this Sunday, we turn our minds to the recent local and international events that have shaped the global discourse on LGBTQ issues.

We continue to work as a labour movement to make our organizations, workplaces, and communities safer for LGBTQ community members; and we realize that the very people who started pride have been largely left out of this picture, especially BC.

Pride, which was started by an uprising against police discrimination by trans women of colour at the Stonewall Inn in 1969, has largely forgotten the communities that stirred its origins almost half a century ago.

As we attend events in the community this year, we pay special attention to the voices we hear who tell us they do not feel safe.

We honour the voices of Muslim, Trans, Black, Indigenous and People of Colour in the broader LGBTQ community and recognize that we have not achieved victory as a society until all of these people feel safe to express themselves fully. We have not achieved success until all of these community members, including two-spirit and intersex people are able to fully exercise their rights.

As we position ourselves in Canada and in the province of BC to be a safe haven for LGBTQ community members fleeing persecution in their countries or origin, we must do the work to ensure that Canada is truly a safe space for these community members when they arrive. We cannot save people to place them into a society that oppresses them.

The BC Federation of Labour and its 500,000 members continues to learn from the people who make up the movement of working people in this province, and we take our lead from the voices who face the most oppression on hold true to our values this pride season and always: What we desire for ourselves, we wish for all.