

END LEGISLATED POVERTY

NEWSLETTER

#5

Sept. 22, 1987

WORK AND WELFARE

Some people on welfare are getting letters like this from their welfare office:



Province of
British Columbia

Ministry of
Social Services
and Housing
FIELD SERVICES

We know that you want to find work, and we believe that we can help you.

A private company, The Hewett Group, located at 827 Carnarvon Street, New Westminster, is ready to:

- o provide you with information on jobs and training programs in your area
- o help you assess your marketable skills and training needs
- o introduce you to employers, and assist you in your job search

A brochure from The Hewett Group is enclosed. Please give yourself a chance by phoning 522-7987 to schedule an appointment.

Yours sincerely,

You may have some questions about the letter.

Question: Will the Hewett Group really be able to help you find a job?

Answer: We don't know, but we'd like to. You can help. If you do contact the Hewett Group, give us

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c/o #104-2005 E. 43rd, Vancouver, B.C. V5P 3W8 Telephone 321-4355

WORK AND WELFARE (continued from page 1)

a call and tell us what you think of them. Are they helping you? Did they get you a job? Do they help you get things you need like training, a buspass, money for a phone, clothes money?

Question: Will your welfare be cut off if you get one of these letters and don't contact the Hewett Group.

Answer: End Legislated Poverty has asked some lawyers about this. The answer is complicated. On one hand the GAIN Act says that the minister may cut off or reduce income assistance for people who

- refuse to accept employment;
- quit a job for other than medical reasons;
- fail to show that they are making a reasonable effort to find a job.

On the other hand, the Canada Assistance Plan Act says that "no person shall be denied assistance because he refuses to take part in a 'work activity' project."

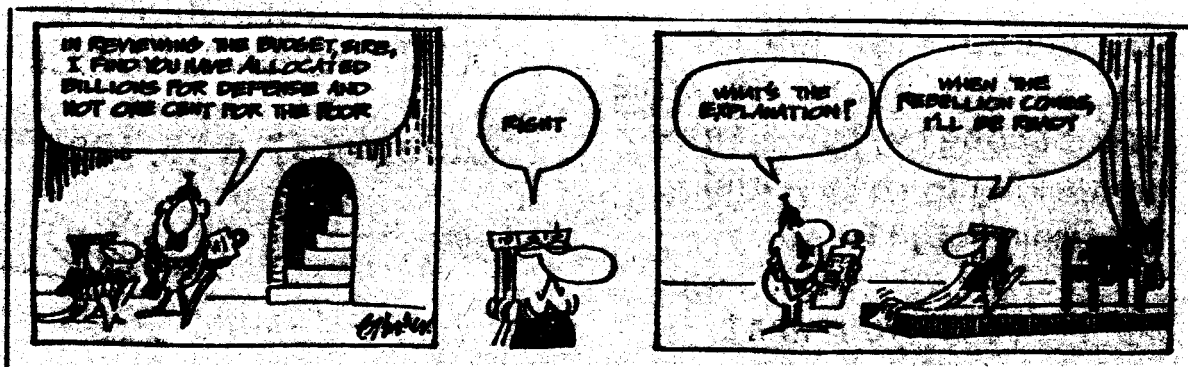
We are waiting for an answer from our lawyers. In the meantime...

Question: What should you do if you get the letter about the Hewett Group?

Answer: You could tell the Hewett people that you need money for a bus pass (to look for jobs), money for clothes (to look for jobs), money for education (what courses would you like to take that might get you a job?), money for a phone (so employers can call you), money for newspapers (to check out the want ads). If you need help, contact one of the advocacy groups on page 12.

Question: Do single mothers have to seek work?

Answer: End Legislated Poverty has a letter from Claude Richmond, the Minister in charge of welfare. In it he says: "Mothers will not be forced to accept employment."



Kids still hungry

The Child Poverty Action Committee (CPAC) has been organizing people to go to the Vancouver School Board meeting on Monday, Sept. 21st.

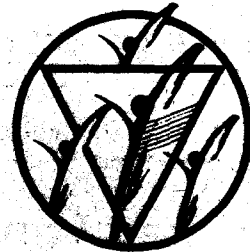
They will try to get the School Board to help hungry kids. CPAC wants a school meal program in low income neighbourhoods. The program would provide nutritious food to all children in each school. It would not single out poor children and stigmatize them.

The group also wants the School Board to come out strongly for higher welfare rates and minimum wages.

We'll tell you what

happened at the School Board meeting in our next issue.

If you would like to help fight for your kids by joining CPAC, call Pat Chauncey at 435-7624.



Ninth Annual Single Mothers' Weekend Conference

In Celebration:
Our Creative Choices

October 17 & 18, 1987

VANCOUVER

 180 BURNARD STREET
 VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA
 CANADA V6C 2W9
 682-2831



"WELL? CITY HALL COMPLAINT? BEST?
 CAN YOU GET UP OF
 OLD-TIME TENANTS -
 THEY'RE CHANGING
 THE PLAN!"

Tenants need more rights

Tenants should have more rights. That's what a groups of people from the Tenants Rights Coalition told Lyall Hanson last month. Hanson is the provincial government minister in charge of landlord tenant affairs.

The tenant representatives met with Hanson in the provincial government offices at Robson Square on Aug. 31st.

The group said that the government should change its tenant laws so that

- *people who live in hotels and rooming houses get full rights;
- *security deposits are abolished;
- *rents are controlled and tenants have the right to repairs and service;
- *the Rentalsmans Office or a similar office should be set up to keep landlord tenant problems out of court.

Hanson didn't agree to any of the changes. He said he would study the suggestions and give a written reply.

Free trade would hu

Most low income people struggle just to put food on the table. So when you hear about free trade in the news maybe you haven't paid too much attention.

Maybe you think it won't affect you that much. But it will. Anti-poverty groups are afraid that free trade will make Canadians even poorer than they are now.

Free trade means getting rid of taxes put on goods and services that go across the Canada-U. S. border.

More importantly, it also means making Canada more like the U. S. Companies want the

same conditions in Canada that they have in the States. They want the same tax system, the same kind of Unemployment Insurance, the same welfare system, the same labour laws, etc.

For example, in Canada, fishermen often get UI in the winter when they can't work. U. S. fishermen can't do this. The U. S. companies say that Canadian UI subsidizes fishermen so they can sell their fish for less. They want the two UI programs to be the same. They call this a "level playing field."

What does a level playing field mean for low

rt low income people

income people?

Welfare

In Washington State a single employable person gets \$81 worth of food stamps a month. That's all. In B. C. the lowest welfare rate is \$359 per month. In Washington, if a person gets hit by a car, he is supposed to pay the first \$500 of

his medical bills or "arrange to pay it." On Aug. 27th, Bill VanderZalm said that Canada needs a level playing field with the U. S. A level playing field in welfare means \$359 a month would go to \$81.

Family benefits

In Canada we have child

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"In this comedy, Canadian and U.S. workers fight over scarce jobs, while I laugh all the way to the bank!"

Free trade (continued from page 7)

tax credits, family allowance, and other benefits for families with children. The U.S. doesn't have as many of these.

The federal government recently brought in a White Paper on tax (so-called) reform. This paper would see family benefits reduced by 58% for average income families and by 20% for families at the poverty line over the next five years.

It looks like our government is already working toward a level playing field with the U. S. in family benefits.

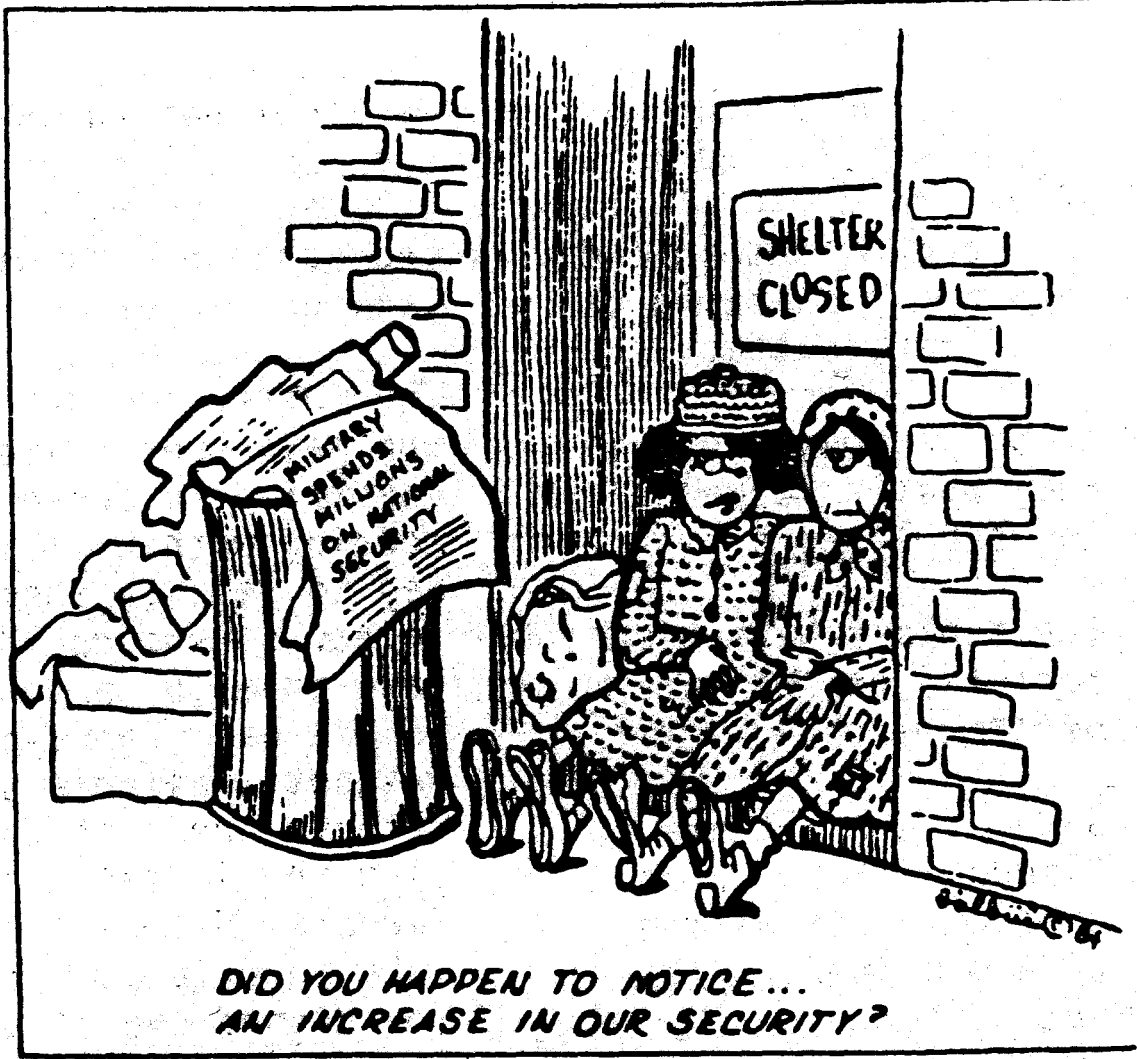
Wages

Between 1976 and 1984,

40% of the jobs created in the U. S. were at or below the minimum wage. Does Canada really want an economic system which creates jobs that keep people in poverty?

What can you do?

The free trade agreement may be signed by Oct. 5th. Write to your Member of Parliament and tell them to stop free trade and save Canadian social programs. Pat Carney, Margaret Mitchell, John Fraser, Ian Waddell, and John Turner are the Vancouver MP's. The address for all of them is Parliament Buildings, Ottawa, Ont. K1A 0A6. You don't need a stamp.



DID YOU HAPPEN TO NOTICE...
AN INCREASE IN OUR SECURITY?

Welfare cutbacks: _____ what's happening?

Are you one of the people who filled out appeal forms and letters to Claude Richmond and Jake Epp protesting the \$7 welfare cutback?

If so you may want to know what's happened to your letters.

The appeals have been sent to your welfare office.

Some of the letters to Claude Richmond were handed to him at the DERA meeting on Aug. 28th. The other letters, about 130 in all, have been mailed. So far he hasn't answered the letter. If

we don't get an answer soon, End Legislated Poverty, DERA, and other groups will get our lawyer to act.

The letters to Jake Epp have been collected. ELP tried to arrange a meeting with Pat Carney to deliver them to her so she could take them to Jake Epp in Ottawa. Carney was not available so we have arranged to give the letters to Margaret Mitchell to take to Ottawa. If you signed one of the letters and would like to come to this meeting, call 321-4355.

THESE WELFARE
CUTS ARE REALLY
GOING TO CHANGE
OUR LIFESTYLES....

...WE'LL HAVE TO
BUY THE NO-
NAME DOG FOOD.



Rally against free trade

Oct. 2 Friday

12:30 pm

1045 Howe St.

These groups will help you with welfare problems:

DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION, 9E. Hastings. Phone 682-0931. Open 9 to 5 Monday through Friday.

LITTLE MOUNTAIN TENANTS ASSOCIATION, 125 E. 37th. Phone 324-0555. Open 10 to 3 Monday through Friday.

FIRST UNITED CHURCH, 320 E. Hastings. Come Monday through Friday, 9 to 11:30 am.

UNEMPLOYED ACTION CENTRE, 146 E. Broadway. Open 9:30 to 3 pm Monday through Thursday. Phone 875-8311.

VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT PUBLIC HOUSING TENANTS ASSOCIATION, 246 E. Broadway. Phone 872-8648. Open 9 to 4 Monday through Friday.

GROUPS IN THE COALITION INCLUDE

First United Church

Port Nelson Advocate and Anti-Poverty Group

Downtown Eastside Residents' Assoc.

Vancouver Unemployed Action Centre

Unemployed Teachers' Action Centre

Tenants' Rights Coalition

New Westminster Unemployed Action Centre

Vancouver and Dist. Public Housing Tenants' Assoc.

Vancouver Status of Women

Single Mothers' Action Committee

Federated Anti-Poverty Groups

B. C. Teachers' Federation

Branching Out, Dawson Creek

Downtown Eastside Women's Centre

B. C. Association of Social Workers

Seniors

Little Mountain Tenants' Assoc.

Carnegie Centre Community Assoc.

B. C. Women Assoc. of Women's Centres