

# END LEGISLATED POVERTY

N E W S L E T T E R

#40

April 16, 1991

## ELP GOES TO PARLIAMENT

On March 21st a 15 person group from End Legislated Poverty met with Norm Jacobsen, Minister of Social Services and Housing and with the NDP Social Services Committee in Victoria.

We asked for these things:

1. That welfare rates be raised to the poverty line;
2. That minimum wage be increased to at least \$7.50 an hour;
3. To end forced employment for single parents on welfare;
4. For provincial funding for Vancouver style lunch programs in low income areas throughout the province.

Social Credit, Norm Jacobsen, responded by saying:

1. That he **knows** it's not easy to live on welfare but he believes it provides for basic necessities;
2. Raising the minimum wage is not an easy solution because it doesn't create employment opportunities;
3. That GAIN is "quite

generous to help" single parents to be independent; and

4. That if these children aren't getting what they need, then teachers should be reporting them to welfare.

The NDP made a committment, that if they were elected, they would **stop** forced employment of single parents on GAIN. They also thought that the welfare rates and minimum wage should be raised to reflect real costs, but didn't say how much. They were very vague about the school lunch programs and couldn't give us any direct answers.

Although no government is a perfect one, at least the NDP is willing to listen to you and try to understand what is happening in the real world.

In the meantime...the Socreds will sit back, say they **know** what it's like and shake their finger at you, as if you are a naughty person.

By Anita Gingrich

## FREE LAW CLASSES

Here are some free law classes. If you want to attend, phone the number listed. They will tell you the address too.

**CO-OPERATIVE HOUSING:**  
Marpole Centre (327-8371)  
Tues., April 23, 7:30 to 9:30.

**EMPLOYEES--KNOW YOUR RIGHTS!:** Barclay Manor (689-0571) Wed. June 19, 7:30 to 9:30.

**ICBC AND PERSONAL INJURY:** Fraserview Library (325-4522) Thur. June 13, 7:00 to 8:50.


**LOANS TO FAMILY AND FRIENDS:** Trout Lake Centre (876-3371) Wed. May 22, 7:30 to 9:30.

**SEPARATION AND DIVORCE:** People's Law School (688-2565) Tues. May 14, 7:00 to 9:00.


**UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE:** Barclay Manor

(689-0571) Wed. May 22, 7:30 to 9:30.

**SENIOR'S BENEFITS--AM I GETTING THEM ALL? 411**  
Senior Centre (684-8171 local 7)  
Thur. June 11, 1:30 to 3:00.



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# RIGHT TO APPEAL

Did you know that you have a right to appeal decisions of your welfare worker?

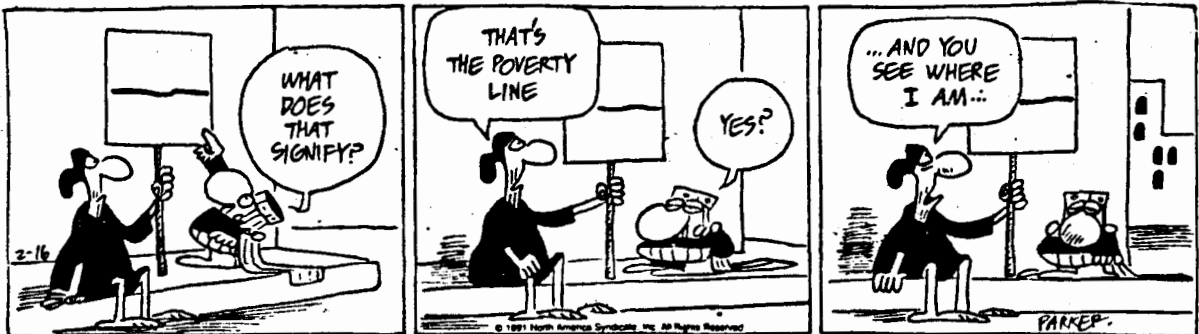
According to welfare policy a Right to Appeal poster "must be prominently displayed in the reception area of each district office. Is there an appeal poster in your office? If not, show this policy to your worker or a supervisor and demand that they put one up. If you don't want to do it, phone END LEGISLATED POVERTY at 879-1209 and we'll bug them to put one up.

Welfare policy also says that "Your Right to Appeal" pamphlets and Appeal and Tribunal Kits have to be available at all times. You might want to ask your worker for a pamphlet. If they don't have one, show them this policy or call ELP.

If you have appealed a welfare decision in writing, you may be able to get copies of all

documents on your file relating to the issue that is being appealed.

Appeals are sometimes quite complicated. To have a good chance at winning, its best to get an advocate and a group behind you. If you want to appeal a welfare decision, go to one of the groups listed on the back page.



# NPA COUNCIL MEMBERS ABANDON HUNGRY CHILDREN

School lunch programs keep hungry kids from stealing food. They keep children from going through garbage bins. They reduce the number of children who get arrested for stealing food. That's what Marie Davis of Raycam Community Centre told Vancouver City Council on April 11th.

"Once you're not hungry, then you can realize your full potential," Paul Taylor of Carnegie told Council.

"Stop this irreparable damage to our children," urged Debbie Ellison.

School lunch programs help children learn and are cost effective, said Margaret Ennenberg of the Unitarian Church.

But none of the eloquent speeches were enough to convince the NPA members of Vancouver Council to contribute \$640,000 to expand the school lunch program to 4 more elementary and 1 high school.

Instead the Council reduced its funding for school lunch programs from \$200,000 last year to

\$160,000 for the coming school year.

The decision was made along straight party lines. All members of the NPA refused to vote for a motion to contribute \$640,000 to the lunch program. All members of COPE, Libby Davies, Bruce Eriksen, Bruce Yorke, Pat Wilson, and Harry Rankin, spoke in favor of expanding the lunch program to 4 more elementary and 1 high school.

End Legislated Poverty's Pat Chauncey put forward the ELP proposal to expand the lunch program to the five extra schools after the School Board refused to ask for enough money to meet the need.

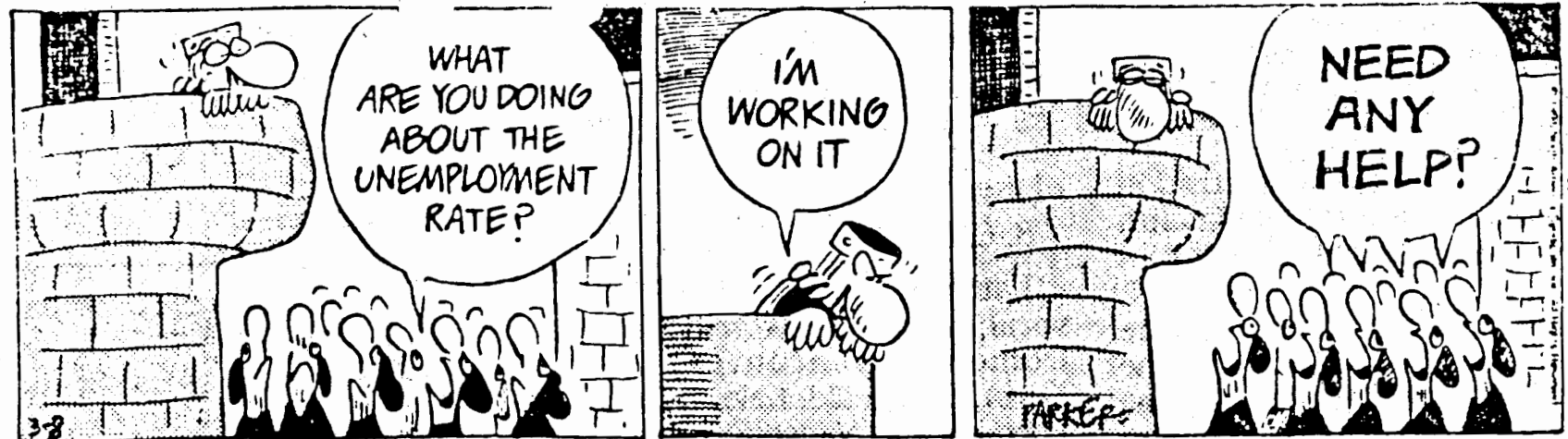
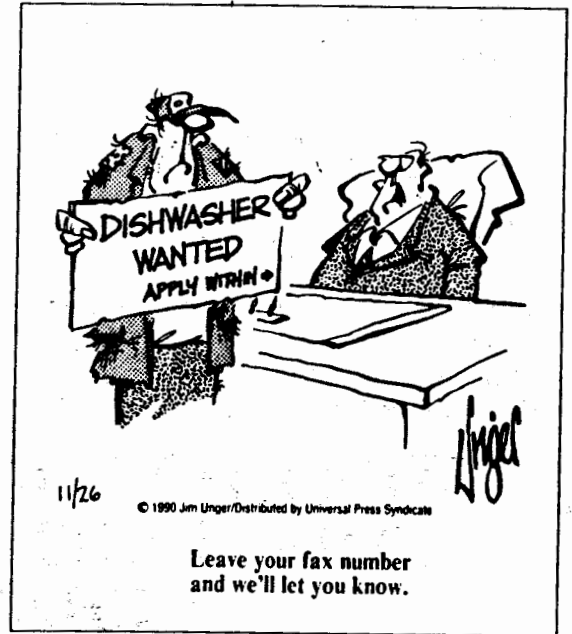
Chauncey said that the number of people on welfare had increased by 20,000 between November and January.

NPA members did not object to paying \$685,000 to Tourism Vancouver, an organization that prints brochures inviting people to visit Vancouver.

The COPE members argued that the decision depends on straight priorities. The NPA thought Tourism Vancouver's brochures were a priority. COPE and the delegations thought feeding hungry children is a priority.

ELP plans to continue pushing all levels of government for funding for school food programs.

HERMAN



## HOME VISITS FROM WELFARE

Have you got a letter from welfare saying that you will get a home visit before you get your next cheque?

Would you rather have the worker stay away from your home?

This is what lawyer David Mossop told End Legislated Poverty: There is no requirement for an income assistance recipient to allow a welfare official into their home for a home visit.

If you get cut off for refusing to let a worker into your home, you can appeal the decision. Benefits have to be reinstated until the appeal is heard. Get an advocate on the back page to help you out.

This does not apply to child protection. Workers do have the right to visit your home for child protection issues.

## WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE 'TASTE OF NATIONS' CHARITY?

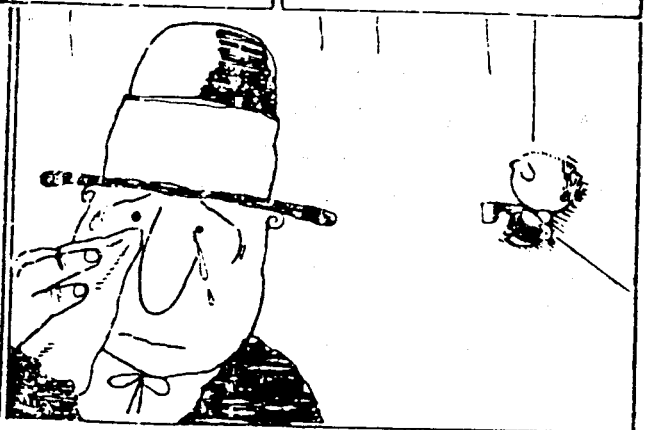
On April 25th a group of Vancouver restaurants and wineries are sponsoring a charity feast. It costs \$62.95. The money raised will be donated to food charities. Here is one comment on this event from a person who uses the food bank:

"There should be lots of these events. It may alleviate 1% of the problem for a short time. I feel grateful. We should appreciate it.

Do you have any other feelings: "A littly gunshy and downtrodden. All those negative feelings come out. But you go with your needs and not with your feelings."

Here's another comment: "I think its a government responsibility, not charity. They should raise the minimum wage and welfare."

Another: "Profit and greed create these imbalances therefore we have a gap of really rich and poor."



## **GET HELP WITH WELFARE FROM THESE GROUPS**

**DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE  
RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION,**  
9 E. Hastings. Phone 682-0931.  
Open 9 to 4 Monday through  
Friday.

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

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

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

**B. C. COALITION OF  
PEOPLE WITH  
DISABILITIES,** 456 W.  
Broadway. Phone 872-1278.

Open 9 to 5 Monday through  
Friday.

## **FOR HELP WITH LANDLORD TENANT PROBLEMS:**

Call the **TENANTS RIGHTS  
COALITION** Hotline: 255-  
0546.

## **FOR HELP WITH SERIOUS CRIMINAL PROBLEMS OR URGENT FAMILY PROBLEMS RELATED TO THE LAW:**

Go to the Legal Services  
Society, 191 Alexander St.  
Open Monday, Tuesday,  
Thursday, and Friday from 9 to  
3:30, and Wednesday from  
12:30 to 3:30. Legal Services  
may be able to help with child  
custody and restraining orders.

