

END LEGISLATED POVERTY

N E W S L E T T E R

#41

May 22, 1991

POVERTY IS REAL

(This article is by Anita Gingrich. Anita was part of the End Legislated Poverty event outside the Taste of Nations. She was handing out leaflets about "Justice, not Charity" to the people who paid \$62.95 to attend this feast).

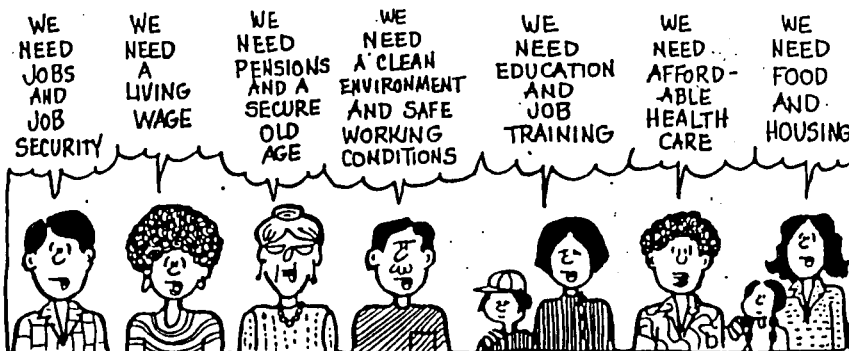
I stood face to face with a closed-minded person who argued that there was NO POVERTY in Canada. I was told that I should feel privileged to live here.

find it so offensive when my words ~~are~~^{and} feelings are ripped

from me; and my life of poverty is called a lie and tossed aside like garbage!

I find it amazing that some people are mere robots of a blind society, conditioned to believe everything's fine. They think that there is no problem with poverty in Canada because we're not all dropping dead like flies.

There is poverty in Canada! Canada does have problems that seriously affect our lives. And they are real problems for real people.



ELP GOES TO 'TASTE OF NATIONS'

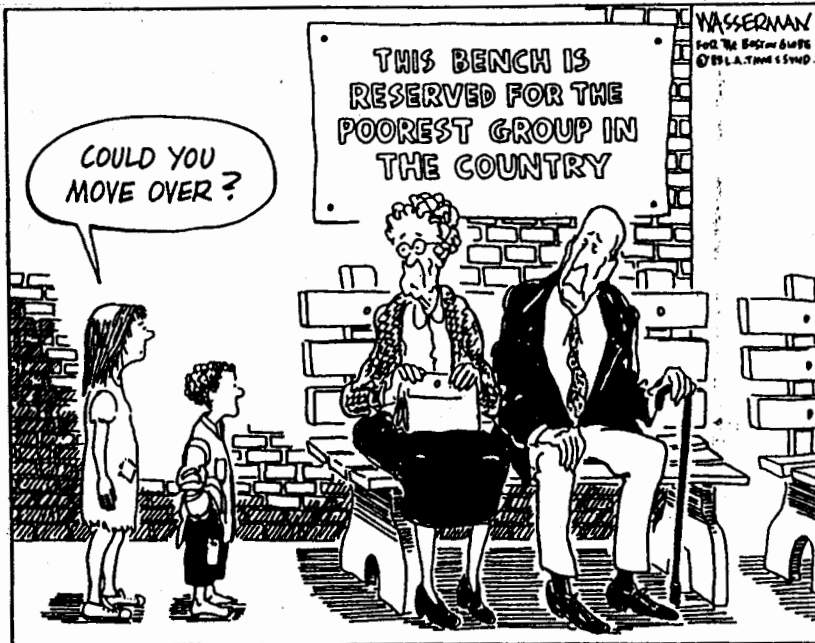
By Anita Gingrich

On April 26th, there was a benefit dinner at the Trade and Convention Centre to raise money for a refrigerated truck. This truck will pick up left over food from restaurants and buffets and give it to food banks and charities.

About 15 people from End Legislated Poverty participated in a demonstration in front of the building. There was a great skit

of a rich lady eating exotic food and throwing the crumbs to some squabbling poor people, and a banner titled, "Charity is a bandaid, not a solution." Leaflets were handed out outlining the problems that charity creates.

We are not against the food banks or any of these people involved in this benefit dinner. They have good hearts. But we do believe that Justice is much better than charity.



FREE LAW CLASSES

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

Employees--know your rights!
Barclay Manor (689-0571) Wed., June 19, 7:30 to 9:30 pm.

Landlord and tenant law
Barclay Manor (689-0571) Thur., June 6, 10:30 to 12 noon.

Seniors' benefits--am I getting them all?
411 Senior Centre (684-8171/local 7) Tues., June 11, 1:30 to 3:00 pm.



"You've landed on an un-competitive Canadian industry, get government to slash social programs and safety and environmental standards to make yourself more efficient."

DEEP THROAT REVEALS ALL ABOUT WELFARE SYSTEM

Once a month the people in Vancouver who work as volunteer or paid advocates get together. They discuss cases they win and lose and how to get more "wins" for people on welfare.

At the April meeting a person from the B. C. Government Employees Union came. This person works in the Ministry as a Financial Aid Worker. Here are some of the things this person told the advocates. They may help you understand the welfare system and what your rights are.

Computerization: The whole income assistance system was computerized on March 4th. This new system makes it easier to check on people on welfare AND on the Financial Aid Workers.

The computer knows immediately if someone is told they can't get welfare. This means that you can't go to another office and try for a more sympathetic worker.

The computer enforces policy as written. This makes it harder for workers to make decisions that benefit people on welfare.

Home visits: The Ministry requires workers to do home visits to make sure that people live where they say they live. Sometimes workers will also do annual reviews at this time. People do not have to let workers into their homes. They can come to the door and say that they live there. Then you can make an appointment for an annual review.

Many workers hate home visits because it is a waste of time and invades people's privacy.

Confidentiality and fraud: Usually people like police and landlords can't get information about people on welfare unless the person on welfare signs a "release" form allowing them to do this.

But if there is a fraud investigation, inspectors can get information from police and landlords without the person's consent.



TALKS, NOT TANKS, SPRING GATHERING

By Irene Schmidt

This caring and sharing experience occurred on May 11 and 12 at the Native Education Centre. There are plans to commemorate the landing of Columbus in 1492 next year. However we do not intend to take part because of the pain caused by five hundred years of oppression and genocide.

We are trying to go through a healing process, but it is extremely difficult when dealing with the heartless federal and provincial governments. They did away with residential schools, however they replaced this with vast apprehensions by the provincial government. We must

fight to stop the destruction of our children.

I was greatly impressed by the patience of all the people who made our gathering such a wonderful success. The topics were: Before the European Arrival, The Process of Colonization, Legal and Political Strategies, Direct Action Strategies, and The Way Forward. The closing ceremonies included an eight year old girl who danced and sang. Shauna had grandparents in Oklahoma and Alaska.

This particular group intends to continue just like the Child Poverty Action Committee.



WOMEN FIGHT TO GET LAW CHANGED

A small group of single parents on welfare and their children showed up at a Canada Manpower office on May 13th, the day after Mothers Day.

The event was organized by End Legislated Poverty to help women on welfare speak out against an unfair law. The law forces single parents on welfare to look for work or training as soon as their youngest child becomes 6 months old.

The women went into the Manpower office and looked at the job board. These are some of the jobs that were available: diaper demonstrator, \$7 an hour; waitress, \$5 an hour. A single parent with one child would have to make at least \$9.72 an hour just to reach the poverty line, not counting childcare costs.

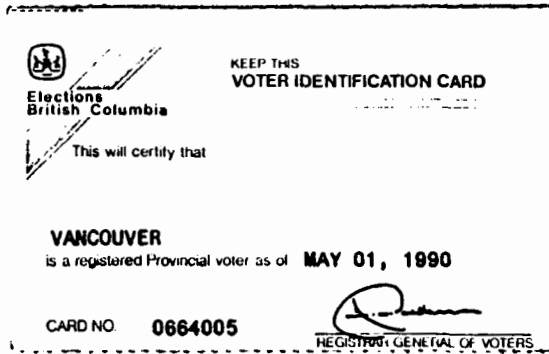
Thresa Tresidder has three little girls under 5. She told the group that the Ministry would have to pay more money for childcare if she worked outside the home, than it would have to pay in welfare if she continues working with her kids at home.

Debbie Ellison said that parents need choice, higher welfare rates, higher wages, and recognition that parenting is an important job because our children are our future.

Georgina Isaacs said that women need higher wages and childcare services, as well as choice to stay home with their children if they want to.

Supporters of the group included Ed Berry of the Daycare Action Coalition and Alderman Libby Davies and MLA Darlene Marzari.





**You
can't
vote**

Unless you've received this card.

If you have a Voter Identification Card, you're all set to vote in the next provincial election.

That card means that you are on the provincial voters list.

If you don't have a voter identification card, then you're not on the list. You won't be able to vote in the next provincial election.

Here's how to get your card:

- 1.** If you don't have a card, call 660-6848 (in Vancouver). Ask them to mail you a voter registration form.
- 2.** Fill in the application and mail it back.
- 3.** Wait for your Voter Identification Card to be sent to you.
- 4.** Remember to make sure that your entire family gets registered.

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.

