

# END LEGISLATED POVERTY

N E W S L E T T E R

#42

June 26, 1991

## SOCREDS CRACK DOWN ON "EMPLOYABLES" (AGAIN)

Have you got a letter from Norm Jacobsen? Its the one that says: "A MESSAGE FOR EMPLOYABLE INCOME ASSISTANCE RECIPIENTS".

The letter says "New applicants for income assistance who are employable will be expected to explore opportunities in the local labour market. Those who have relied on income assistance will be encouraged to actively pursue new avenues toward employment." TRANSLATION: The government wants to force people on welfare to take low wage jobs.

There's a bunch of other words in the letter too. Jacobsen says there is a program called Local Initiatives for Employables Program. 140 additional people

in the Ministry will be working to force you off welfare.

This letter could go to almost 100,000 people in B. C. It will probably not go to single parents.

On the next pages, we will try to answer some questions you might have about your rights on welfare and finding a job.



# **DON'T YOU HATE IT WHEN:**

You're broke only a week into the month?

Someone says you just sit around at home all day?

You're told to get out there and find yourself a job?

Someone says you need to budget your money?

You're told you have to PHONE your worker to make an appointment?

You look in your closet and decide to wear something cheerful?

You decide to go out for dinner because "you deserve a break today"?

You just find out you've run out of detergent?

# **BUT THE FACT IS:**

You only paid your rent and bills.

You haven't had a minute to yourself all week.

There's a crowd of people waiting in line in front of you.

There's nothing to budget with.

You're standing at the welfare office.

All you see hanging there is sloppy clothes.

You can't even afford McDonalds.

It's the same soap you've been using to wash you dishes, floors, hair, and laundry.

*By Anita Gingrich*

# THESE GROUPS WILL ALSO HELP YOU WITH WELFARE PROBLEMS

Carnegie Centre, Main and Hastings in Vancouver. Ask for Irene in the Learning Centre.

Branching Out in Dawson Creek. Ask for Cecil at 782-5642.

Dan Larson in Clearbrook. Call 852-3744.



**"The government's program to speed up the economy is doing well. The rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer at a much faster rate."**

## DO I HAVE TO LOOK FOR WORK?

If you are on welfare and "employable" you *DO* have to look for work unless you have a health problem.

The law says you have to

1. Make reasonable efforts to find work, and
2. Prove you are actively looking for work.

### What is reasonable?

If you ask your worker for bus fare and clothes and phone money, that's reasonable. Ask your worker for money for stamps and for getting your resume typed. If you ask people you know for jobs, put their names down. Call any of the group listed on page 7 and ask them for a job. You probably won't get one, but they won't hassle you and you can put it on the form. Write down the names of other places where you apply. Be sure to write down every phone call and every contact you ask for a job.

### What if I can't read?

(If you know someone who doesn't read very well, read this part to them). Tell your worker that you can't read very well. That should be a good reason for not being able to find a job. You might want to ask for some courses to help you learn how to read.

### How many jobs do I have to apply for?

This will probably be left up to your worker.

### What can I do if I get cut off?

If you go to pick up your cheque and it isn't there, say immediately: "I want to appeal this. I want an appeal kit. I want you to fill out the Ministry's part of the form"

Then get one of the groups on the back page to help you. These groups have a good record of winning appeals. The government has to give you your benefits until the result of the appeal is known.

### What if I'm sick or injured?

Get a letter from your doctor saying that you can't work. Give it to your worker and say that you want to become "unemployable."

### What if these things don't work?

Get help from a group on the last page. You are much stronger with a group behind you. They are experienced in dealing with the welfare system.



## WHY IS THE GOVERNMENT CRACKING DOWN NOW?

Norm Jacobsen is the so-called responsible for welfare. He says in his letter that the numbers of people on welfare have gone up. That's because the unemployment rate has gone up. It's not YOUR fault. There are about 40,000 more unemployed people in B. C. this summer than last summer.

It's also because the government in Ottawa has cut back on UI. People who used to be able to get Unemployment Insurance are now forced to claim welfare. This isn't YOUR fault either.

The so-called are going into an election soon. It's politically popular in some places to bash people on welfare. Maybe they think this will get them some votes.

What do you think?

# LAW STUDENTS OFFER FREE ADVICE

The Law Students Legal Advice Program offers free advice from law students in various centres around the Lower Mainland. To find the centre nearest you, call 822-5791.

Here are some of the things they do:

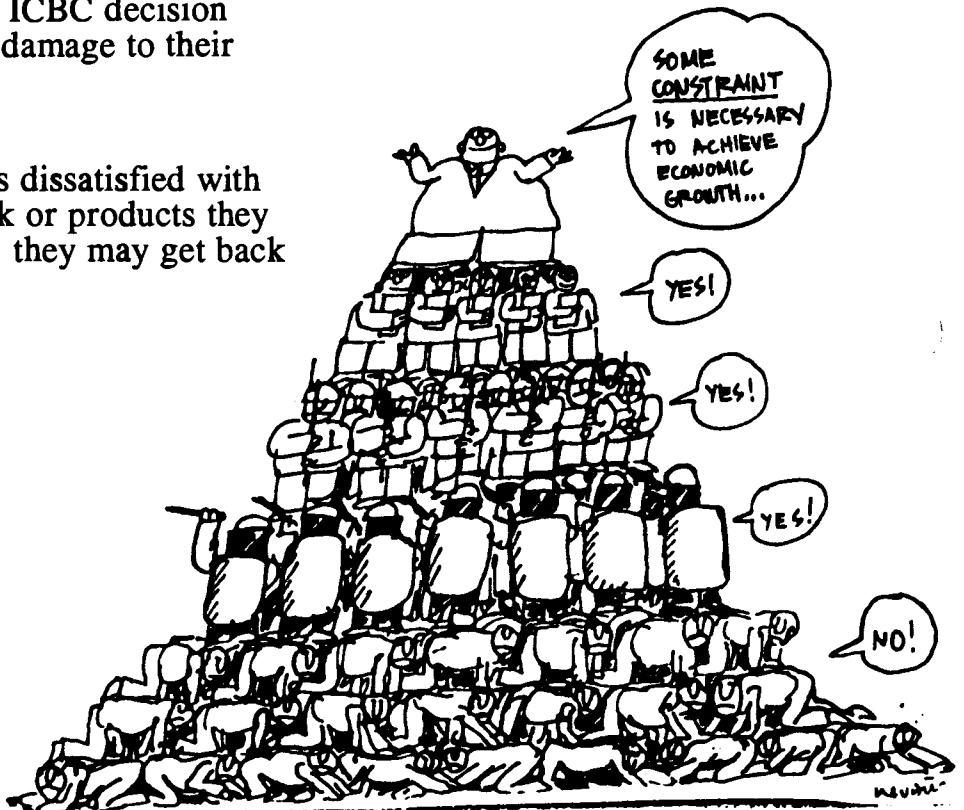
We give advice if someone wants to dispute an ICBC decision dealing with damage to their vehicle.

If someone is dissatisfied with service, work or products they have bought, they may get back any losses.

Disputes between tenants such as damage to their apartment, unpaid bills, etc.

If someone is fired unfairly, they may get some money as damages.

The law students can help someone who is being sued by a lender.





## **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, Wednesday, and Friday, 9:00 to 11:30 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.

