

END LEGISLATED POVERTY

N E W S L E T T E R

December, 1991

Minimum wage goes to \$5.50 an hour on Feb. 1st

The new NDP government has announced that the minimum wage will go up to \$5.50 an hour on February 1st.

The Socred government froze minimum wage at \$3.65 for seven years. The cost of living went up, but wages stayed the same. The minimum wage today can't buy nearly what it could buy in 1975. In 1975 a person earning minimum wage was above the poverty line. Today a person can earn \$5.50 an hour full time. They would still be more than \$3000 below the poverty line.

End Legislated Poverty wants the government to increase minimum wage to \$8.26 an hour. Then it would have the same purchasing power as it had in 1975.

How can a person live on minimum wage of \$5.50? If the person worked full time, they would earn \$953.33 per month. These are some expenses that person would have:

Canada Pension Plan and UI:
\$ 44.74

Tax (is this fair?):
\$91.55

Average rent for 1 bedroom suite
in the West End of Vancouver:
\$666.00

Bus pass: \$50.00

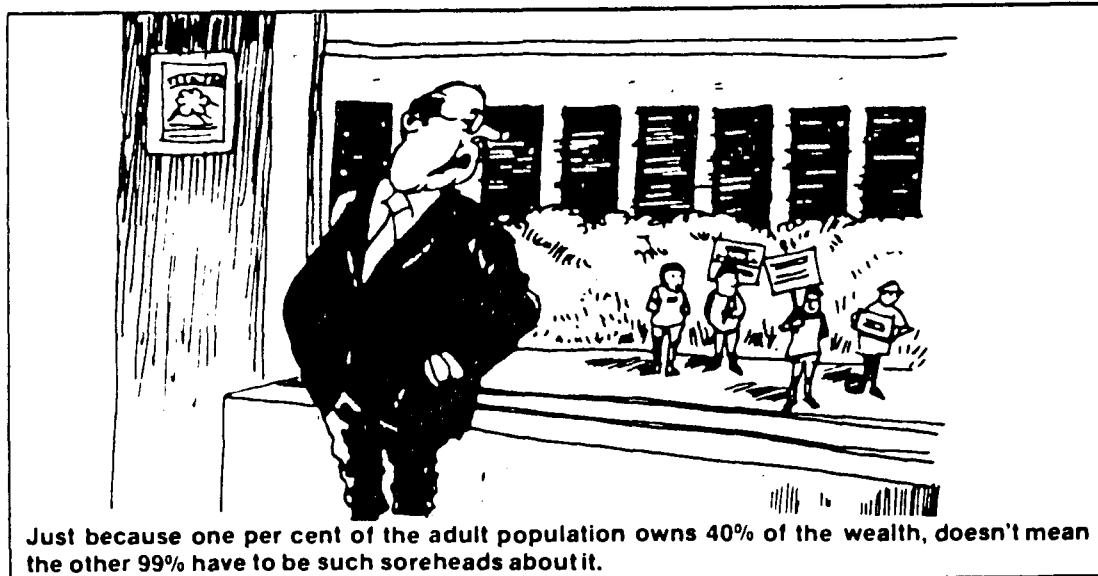
Phone: \$14.00

Amount left for food, clothes,
medical, dental, household
expenses, recreation and LIFE:
\$87.07

End Legislated Poverty will keep pushing the government to increase minimum wage to at least \$8.26 an hour.



Merry Christmas



Just because one per cent of the adult population owns 40% of the wealth, doesn't mean the other 99% have to be such soreheads about it.

Committee will review family and children's services

Two anti-poverty workers are on a new government committee. The committee is supposed to change the Family and Children's Services Act.

This is the Act that deals with foster care, child abuse and sex abuse, child apprehension, services to kids and services to kids in institutions.

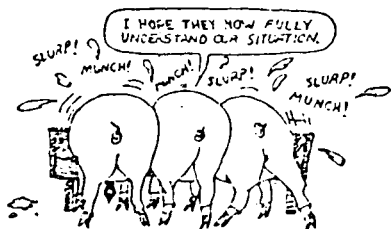
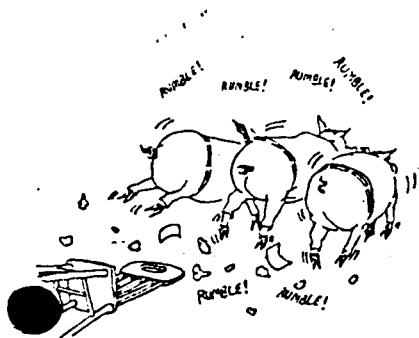
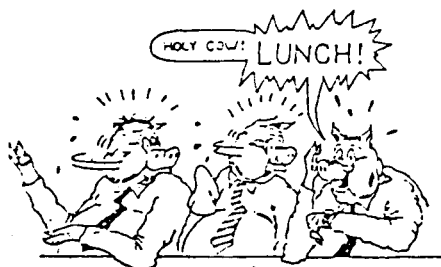
The two workers are Pat Chauncey and Freda MacLellan. Pat works at End Legislated Poverty and Freda works at the BC Coalition of People with Disabilities. One person on the committee, Eva Jacob, is a former child in care. Pat has had

experience being investigated by the Ministry.

The committee wants to get your ideas of how the system should work. They are going to hold hearings in 14 communities.

Pat is trying to get the committee to provide childcare and plain language materials.

If you have some ideas about how to change services for children, you can call 1-800-663-1251. They will send you more information. They can also take your name if you want to talk to the committee.



Family problems?

Where to get legal help



The Legal Services Society has a new booklet. It's about where you get legal help if you have family problems.

The booklet talks about

- *Family court counsellors
- *Legal aid through the Legal Services Society
- *The Ministry of Social Services and Housing
- *The Family Maintenance Enforcement Program

If you want a copy of this booklet, call End Legislated Poverty at 879-1209.

The constitution: what do people?

Do you blur out when you hear the word "constitution."

Do jobs and welfare rates and housing seem more important than the constitution?

The federal government has produced a fancy booklet about the constitution. It is called "Shaping Canada's Future Together." It has a glowing maple leaf on the front of it.

But inside the booklet are some ideas that would increase poverty. The government wants to put these ideas in the constitution.

Here are some ways the government would use a new constitution to increase poverty:

Housing: The government in Ottawa wants to give provinces the responsibility for housing. But they don't want to give the provinces the money for building affordable housing. Right now public housing and co-op housing are funded partly by the federal government. If they stop, where will the money come from for decent housing? There's not enough money as it is.

Property rights: The government wants property rights in the constitution. This does **not** mean that everyone gets to have some property.

It means that people who already have property can use the courts to get even more rights.

If property rights are put in the constitution, it will help property owners challenge many laws that help poor people. These are laws like rent control, minimum wage, pay equity.

Property rights could make it harder for government to stop polluters.

Bank of Canada Act: Now the Bank of Canada is supposed to control money and credit "in the best interest...of the nation." This means that the Bank should try to make the economy create jobs.

The government wants to change this. They want the Bank to be responsible for the cost of living only. The Bank can do this by keeping interest rates high.

Does it mean for poor people?

This is how it works: High interest rates mean that working people can't borrow money. So they can't buy things like washers and cars and houses. Then the people who make these things get laid off. That's how high interest rates create unemployment and poverty.

The changes to the Bank of Canada would ensure more poverty. That's because they would force the Bank to deal with cost of living and forget about unemployment.

The economic union: This is a section of the government's constitutional proposal. It could be called a charter of rights for big business. The government wants the Constitution to take power away from our elected governments. This part would make it illegal for our governments to restrict capital (money), services or goods from moving between provinces.

Here's an example of how this would create more poverty: Provinces have rules about selling beer. Some of these rules help create jobs in the provinces. If these rules are made

unconstitutional, hundreds of jobs making beer could be lost.

The economic union part of the constitution would make it harder for provincial governments to create jobs, help small business, create development that small communities need.

What should poor people do about the constitution? We need to stop the parts of the constitutional proposals that deal with property rights, the Bank of Canada, and the economic union. Some people think we need a Social Charter in the constitution. This could guarantee things like jobs, social programs, housing, and a clean environment. Many groups and people across the country are just starting to think about these things. We want to develop an alternative to a constitution which guarantees rights for big business. We want rights for people guaranteed.



Multicultural Family Support Services

Provides information, culturally sensitive counselling and support services to women and families experiencing violence related problems. Services are provided in many languages. If you need help call 436-1025. Address: 5000 Kingsway Plaza, Suite #306, 4980 Kingsway, Burnaby, B.C. V5H 4K7

Servicios Multiculturales de Apoyo para Familias

Se ofrece informacion, apoyo y consejeria, teniendo en cuenta su propia experiencia cultural, a mujeres y familias que han experimentado problemas de violencia. Ofrecemos nuestros servicios en diferentes idiomas. Si Ud. necesita ayuda, por favor llame a 436-1025. Direccion: 5000 Kingsway Plaza, Suite #306, 4980 Kingsway, Burnaby, B.C. V5H 4K7

ਮਲਟੀਕਲਚਰਲ ਫੈਮਲੀ ਸਪੋਰਟ ਸਰਵਿਸਜ਼

ਜੇ ਔਰਤਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਪਰਿਵਾਰ ਹਿੰਸਾ ਸੰਬੰਧੀ ਸਮੱਸਿਆਵਾਂ ਦੇ ਸ਼ਿਕਾਰ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਨ, ਅਸੀਂ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਸੂਚਨਾ, ਸਭਿਆਚਾਰਕ ਭਾਵਨਾ, ਸਲਾਹਕਾਰੀ ਅਤੇ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਵਾਲੀਆਂ ਸੇਵਾਵਾਂ ਪ੍ਰਦਾਨ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਾਂ। ਇਹ ਸੇਵਾਵਾਂ ਕਈ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਦਿੱਤੀਆਂ ਜਾਂਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ। ਅਗਰ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਮਦਦ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ।

Telephone: 436-1025. Address: 5000 Kingsway Plaza, Suite #306, 4980 Kingsway, Burnaby, B.C. V5H 4K7

多元文化家庭支援中心能為遭遇到暴力問題之婦女及家庭提供多種文化資訊及支援服務。

您若需要幫助，請電：436-1025。地址：5000 Kingsway Plaza, Suite #306, 4980 Kingsway, Burnaby, B.C. V5H 4K7

TRUNG-TÂM DỊCH-VỤ GIÚP-ĐỖ CHO CÁC GIA-ĐÌNH ĐA-VĂN-HÓA

Chuyên cung-cấp những dịch-vụ nhằm giúp-đỡ và hướng dẫn cho các phụ-nữ cùng các gia-đình gặp những vấn đề về bạo-hành. Những dịch vụ này được cung-cấp bằng nhiều ngôn-ngữ khác nhau. Nếu bạn cần sự giúp-đỡ, xin vui lòng liên-lạc tại 436-1025. Địa-chỉ số 5000 Kingsway Plaza, Suite #306, 4980 Kingsway, Burnaby, B.C. V5H 4K7

Advocate wins money for winter clothes

Norma Murray has \$460.65 to buy new clothes for herself and her daughter. She got the money from welfare after going to an appeal Tribunal.

Susan Turansky of the the BC Coalition of People with Disabilities was Norma's advocate.

Norma and her daughter needed winter coats, boots, socks, and slacks because of a house fire .

At first Norma's worker said she could only have \$100, but this wasn't enough. Norma appealed the decision. The District Supervisor agreed with the worker.

Norma got three cost estimates for the clothes she needed. Susan went to the appeal Tribunal with her. "Susan had all the information typed up and photocopied," said Norma. "She was fabulous."

All the people on the Tribunal agreed with Norma and Susan. Norma got her money.

Here is Norma's advice: "If you need clothes, ask your worker for money. If they refuse, appeal. And get an advocate like Susan to help."

(A list of advocates is on the back page)



Get help with welfare from these groups

Downtown Eastside Residents' Association

9 E. Hastings St. Phone 682-0931. Open 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.

B. C. Coalition of People with Disabilities

456 W. Broadway. Phone 872-1278. Open 9 to 5. Monday through Friday.

Downtown Eastside Womens' Centre

For women only. Open 11 am to 5 pm on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday. Open 12 noon to 5 pm on Wednesday. Drop in or call 681-8480.

Little Mountain Tenants' Association

125 E. 37th. Phone 324-0555. Open 10 to 3 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 9 to 3:30 on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday. Open 12:30 to 3:30 on Wednesday. Legal Services may be able to help with child custody and restraining orders.