

END LEGISLATED POVERTY

N E W S L E T T E R

June, 1992

#54

Minimum wage should be \$9.05 an hour

In 1975 the minimum wage was above the poverty line. It was 22 percent over the poverty line for a single person.

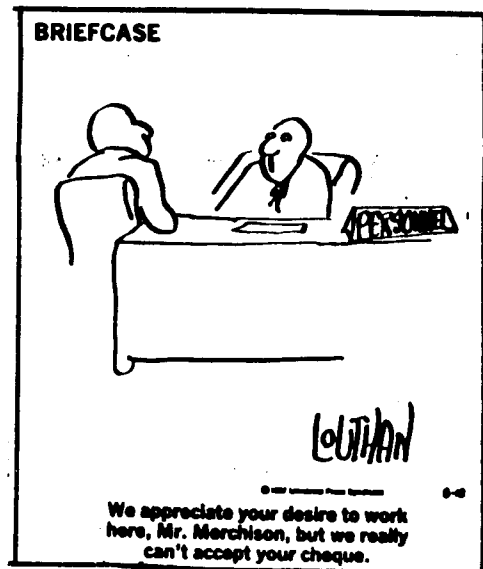
For the minimum wage to be 22 per cent over the poverty line now, it would have to be \$9.05 an hour. But it is only \$5.50 now.

Moe Sihota is the Minister in charge of the minimum wage. He told ELP that he wanted to raise the minimum wage to 125% of the poverty line within four years. But will he do it? We need a big increase NOW.

ELP wrote to Sihota on May 14th. We asked him to announce an increase in the minimum wage now. Sihota wrote back. This is what he said: "...the government (will) be consulting with various interested groups in the community on proposals for a further increase to the rate. I anticipate that this process will be

undertaken by the Employment Standards Branch during the summer. When this is completed, the government will make a decision on the amount and timing of a further increase."

You can write to Sihota and help ELP put on the pressure for a better minimum wage. His address is Ministry of Labour and Consumer Services, Parliament Buildings, Victoria, BC, V8V 1X4.



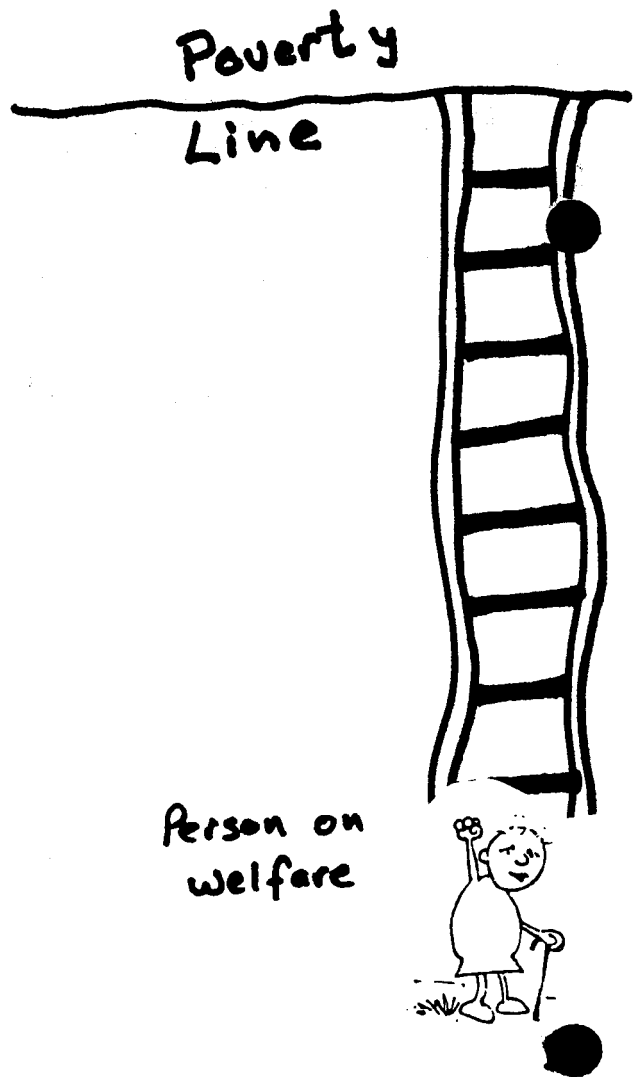
New poverty lines are out

The National Council of Welfare has come out with the new poverty lines for 1992. They call them the "low income cutoff" lines.

In a city like Vancouver the poverty line for a single person is \$15,426 a year. If there are two people in the family, the poverty line is \$20,910. For a family of three people it is \$26,579. For four people, it is \$30,548.

How does the poverty line compare with welfare? A single so-called "employable" person on welfare gets \$6300 a year. This person is \$9126 a year below the poverty line.

A single parent with two children gets \$13,572 per year on welfare. This is \$13,007 below the poverty line.



Equal Pay for work of equal value will be the downfall of the Canadian economy!



Where would this country be today if we hadn't stood by our principles?



And just what principles are those?



Well... cheap labour for one.





For quick information on your rights as a tenant, call the Tenants Rights Action Coalition Hotline at 255-0546.

If you have a complicated problem and it may be better to talk to someone in person, the Tenants Rights Action Coalition has a tenant legal clinic every Thursday evening at
● Britannia Community Centre.

Tenant Legal Clinic

Britannia Community Centre
1661 Napier Street, Vancouver, BC

Thursdays 6 - 9 PM

Survival Guide

For a more complete explanation of your rights as a tenant, the Tenants Rights Action Coalition publishes the **Tenant Survival Guide**. Call us for a copy.

Lost your ID and need to cash your cheque?

Here's a tip from Jenny Kwan. Jenny is an advocate at the Downtown Eastside Residents' Association.

If you lost your ID and need to cash a cheque, you can:

1. Get a picture taken of yourself at a photobooth. Woodward's on Hastings has one in the basement. It costs \$3 for 4 photos. If you have a friend who needs a photo, you could split the cost.
2. Go to Legal Aid at 191 Alexander St. and ask for a "statutory declaration." This is a legal statement that says you are you.
3. Attach your picture to the statutory declaration.
4. TD bank accepts this as ID and so does the Bank of Commerce.

This is cheaper than going to Money Mart.

Welfare should also help you get BC ID. BC ID is permanent. Ask your worker to help you get it.

Ministry takes three year limit off education

Single parents on welfare and people with disabilities may be able to go to university. The Ministry of Social Services has changed a rule that allowed people only three years of training.

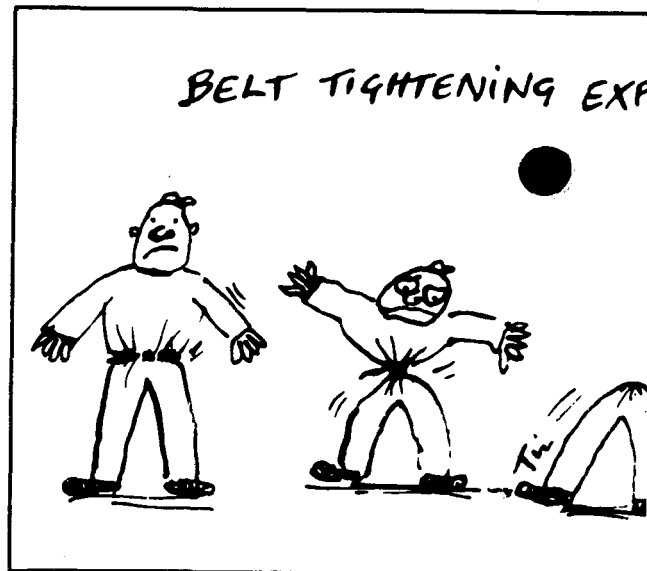
Now, single parents and people with disabilities who are on GAIN can talk to their worker about a training plan. If that plan leads to a job, it could mean that the person could go to university. Welfare would pay the regular rate plus books, tuition, and childcare. In the past university was ruled out by the Ministry because it took longer than 3 years to complete.

The move is a step in the right direction but not enough. Sherrill Gullickson of 100 Mile House is on welfare and wants to become a lawyer. Sherill is married and has three kids. She has also raised 71 foster kids.

But, because Sherill is not a single parent or disabled, the Ministry will not pay the \$228.98 that she needs to take the LSAT test to get into UBC law school. "I could get off welfare for the price of an admissions test," says Sherill.

But Ministry rules still are not broad enough to help this woman get an education.

If you are a single parent or a person with disabilities you can talk to your worker about a training plan.



Law students will hold summer legal clinics

The Law Students Legal Advice Program is holding legal clinics in the summer. They have clinics in many Vancouver neighbourhoods as well as Burnaby, Coquitlam, Langley, New Westminster, Richmond, the North Shore, Surrey, and White Rock. They also have special clinics for People with Aids, women, and people who speak Cantonese and Mandarin.

There is a special drop in clinic at the Carnegie Centre and Main and Hastings. This clinic is on Wednesday and Thursday between 10 am and 4pm.

You have to have appointments for the other clinics. To find out

which clinic is best for you, and to make an appointment, call 822-5791.

The law students can take on problems like these:

- *wills and estates;
- *divorces (\$20 charge for paperwork);
- *landlord and tenant (the students will handle arbitrations);
- *any criminal charges that Legal Aid won't help with. (Go to Legal Aid first to see if they can help);
- *problems with your boss;
- *problems collecting debts;
- *unemployment insurance, welfare, WCB, and OAP problems.



B. C. Hydro unfair

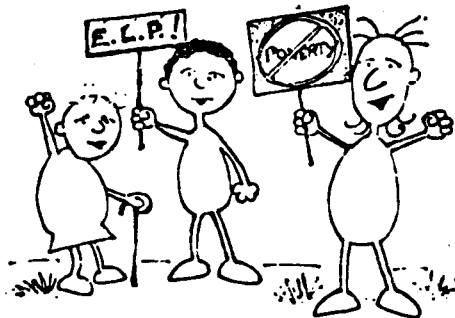
By Irene Schmidt

I notice the new NDP government made a clean sweep of the bureaucrats at ICBC. A great number of low income people wish they would do the same at BC Hydro. This monopoly desperately needs competition as they keep on calling the shots and receive rate increases without really justifying them.

As we well know rents in Vancouver are excessively high without the added burden of a hydro bill with extra costs of a regional transit levy and the dreaded GST. If you happen to be a little late in paying there is also a late payment charge consisting of 1.5 percent of the total bill.

To top everything off low income people are harrassed with letters like Final Payment Notices. This latest one was sent to me exactly a week after I received the bill. The provincial and federal governments work hand in hand taxing the poor to death and are responsible for increasing poverty at an alarming rate.

Please let us know about your unjust experiences concerning B. C. Hydro and we could launch a petition to present to the government. Enough is enough.



UIC Blues

Unemployment's not enjoyment
That's the truth I know
From NFLD to BC tis so
You better not get fired or 8 weeks you'll wait
by then you'll be rehired, although your rent is still late
you're not allowed to quit
your agent will have a fit
And if it happens that you appeal
to crime you might turn; to feed yourself you'll steal
you stand in line to inquire
why your cheque's been delayed a year
an hour later, angry and tired,
you find out you're in the wrong line; another hour I fear.

--Wayne MacEachern



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

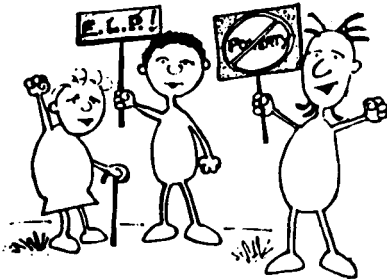
246 E. Broadway. Phone 872-8648. Open 9 to 4 Monday through Friday.

B.C. Coalition of People with Disabilities

#204 456 W. Broadway. Phone 872-1278. Open 9 to 5 Monday through Friday.

Little Mountain Tenants' Association

125 E. 37th. Phone 324-0555. Open 10 to 3 Monday through Friday.



For help with landlord and tenant problems:

Call the Tenants' Rights Coalition Hotline: 255-0546.

For help with welfare, 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.