

Carnegie

NEWSLETTER

FREE - donations accepted.



MAY 15, 1998.

401 Main Street, Vancouver V6A 2T7 (604) 665-2220



PETER BATTISTONI/Vancouver Sun

NEW LOOK: Artist Leona Parks shows off a mural she helped paint around the Portland Hotel.

Earth to gastown. Come in gastown. Are you there?

How many ways are there to spell D-O-R-K-Y? You probably thought there is just one way. But the lame lords of gastown keep inventing a new one every month it seems. Their latest version is too good not to mention.

When you walk west along Hastings, feast your eyes on the mural across the street from Army and Navy. It is the contributin of folks at the Portland Hotel to Walls of Change. The gaslords, however, have been raging at City Hall about one of the

details of this incredible piece of community art. It seems they have taken exception to the image of the pig and the dollar sign that is superimposed on the painting of the Portland Hotel itself.

Now, any four year old who is regularly on a bus going down Hastings Street would recognize the image (at least my 4 year old did). It's an image of the pig and the dollar sign that is taken from the Save-On Meats neon sign, just across and down the street from the mural.

Not the gaspoids, though. They assumed it was a reference to them!

I'm not sure if every single "homeowner" in gastown thinks like this. Most of them probably didn't even notice the image in question, let alone the mural. The people who are complaining and feeling threatened by it are the ones who presume to speak on behalf of all the other "homeowners" in the "heritage" area.

This is the intriguing part of the whole thing because it really shows what the so-called leadership of gastown thinks about themselves and about us. After all, what kind of people look at a picture of a pig and a dollar sign and think of themselves??? I mean, really! It's hard to know whether it's sad or funny.

One thing is for sure: There are so many ways to read this thing that it's hard to know where to begin. The most pithy comment I've heard so far sums it all up in four words: "self-absorbed and

paranoid." It certainly betrays a high degree of anxiety and insecurity. The question is: about what? Why would they get into a tizzy about one little image in a rather large mural?

Could it be that they're not really that secure in all those big claims they make about being a great little community and neighbourhood? Are they just a little bit unsure about it?

After all, *real* community doesn't happen just because you take out a mortgage on an apartment, plunk yourself down and proclaim, ad nauseum, that it exists. *Saying something is so does not make it so.* Real community comes out of history and memory, it comes from shared experience and collective solidarity. It's something that has to be lived and felt before its talked about and analyzed.

For me, that's what Walls of Change is all about. It's only happening because there is a community down here. Sure, funds from the City and a whole bunch of other sources has made it possible, but they only provided that money because they know (despite all our disagreements) that the Downtown Eastside is a community that is capable of mobilizing the other resources required to make something like this happen and it is only happening because people down here have something to say - something important to say.

Too bad some of the new urban gentry don't get it. And how sad for them.

E. A. Boyd

The following story was originally printed with the picture on the cover above it, but 'EA's' bit on one of the more nasty aspects of gas (urp!) town delusion had to run first. It's the perspective thing, ya know. At least since Conrad Black bought the Vancouver Sun, there's this statement about Copyright in every paper. You know: "No reprinting of anything without written permission...yaddayaddayadda" ...except in the Carnegie Newsletter eh.

Art brightens city core

ROBERT SARTI
VANCOUVER SUN

In a first-time collaboration between community groups and Vancouver's engineering department, Downtown Eastside residents and street peo-

ple are wielding paint brushes in a bid to clean up the grimy Hastings street strip.

More than 20 giant-sized murals are being created for some of the most prominent — and unlikely — locations in

the city.

The outside front wall of the police station on Main Street will be hung with a two-storey-high mural picturing a pregnant Barney-like di-

SEE ART, A2

Murals to be unveiled at celebration

nosaur, along with garlands of flowers and a mother and child, all painted by members of the Downtown Eastside Women's Centre.

Nearby, raunchy landmarks like the Balmoral Hotel, the old Smilin' Buddha nightclub site and Pigeon Park are to get a similar beauty treatment.

It's all part of the Walls of Change, and city council has allocated \$35,000 to the Carnegie Community Centre Association, sponsor of the project.

One of the first Walls to go public is on the construction hoardings of the new Portland Hotel now being built on Hastings.

Like most of the other murals in the project, the Portland Wall is full of traditional native Indian motifs. But it has a few personal touches, too.

Leona Parks, a veteran of the street scene who has lived in the old Portland for years, wanted to memorialize a friend who died prematurely. "Everyone at the Portland got together, put our ideas together," said Parks, 31.

"We wanted it to be something good, positive. I did the picture of my friend Bruce who passed away. I'm so proud of it."

For John McLewin, the city's superintendent of sanitation, the experience has been a mind-blower. "We're going to be fine," he said. "I'm finding it tremendously exciting."

City engineering crews are power-washing the walls on which murals are to be painted directly, and are helping mount those that were painted on canvas in a makeshift studio.

Under a clean-up plan approved by city council, crews have also started power-washing the sidewalks along Hastings Street. Brighter street lights will also be installed to try to cut

3.

down on street crime at night.

The murals will be formally unveiled at a day-long community celebration May 30, starting at 11 a.m. in Oppenheimer Park, 400-block Powell, and continuing at 3 p.m. at Pigeon Park, Hastings and Carrall.

About 200 residents are designing and painting the murals, under supervision of 15 professional artists from the community, led by long-time muralist Richard Tetrault.

The canvas murals will be taken down before the fall rainy season, and then will go display indoors at a location to be determined.

Walls of Change coordinator Sharon Kravitz said all the participants have insisted the images on the murals be positive.

"This is a neighbourhood that is usually characterized as a hole in the wall filled with problems, but when the people who live here get a chance to express themselves, they are creative and hopeful," she said. "This neighbourhood is the heart of the city. I can't imagine this kind of thing happening anywhere else."

In The Dumpster

binner@vcn.bc.ca

fax: 684-8442 / voice: 682-3269 #8072

Greetings fellow bidders and bidderettes. Shitty Hall has once again struck a blow against the have-nots. 'Thou Shalt Not Panhandle Your Sorry Ass in The Great Supercity of Vancouver.'

Next thing you know it will be against the law to sell or consume drugs.. maybe it might also be wrong to buy sex from children or to sleep in the streets? I see the law say one must wear a helmet while riding a bike in Stanley Park. Do riders have to wear one while snatching purses?

A belated Happy Mother's Day to all de mothers, and to Dave Todd - the biggest mudder of dem all.

United We Can will soon be changing to later hours for the summer. Watch for this and info on the Computer Club and Bike News. (Exclusive thanks to Frank at UWC for doing my bike!)

Here are the Top Ten enterprises in Vancouver:

10. Busker
9. Dope pusher
8. Grasstown Merchant
7. Dumpster Diver
6. Charity Money Grabber
5. Pesty Film Maker
4. Shitty Hall Mayor
3. Shitty Hall Councillor
2. Selling Children for Sex
1. Leaky Condo Owner

May The Bins Be With You. ...and hey! Let's be careful out there.

By MR. McBINNER

Yes, Virginia, there is a class war.

Consider these stories about class war that have appeared in the media. The last story suggests a new class war centred on our attitude to mother earth.

(1) "US study cites deep resentment on the job," (*The Province*, Feb. 3/91). This article reports that most Americans have a cynical attitude toward their jobs. Seventy-two per cent of workers interviewed said management will try to take advantage of employees, and sixty-eight per cent said management salaries are unfair.

(2) "Millions of workers down tools to show anger at steep increase in unemployment," (*Vancouver Sun*, April 3/93). Millions of workers across E.uope went on strike to protest the failure of governments to reverse a steep rise in unemployment caused by the transnational global economy.

(3) "The war between the classes," by Michael Valpy, (*Globe & Mail*, June 30/95). Quoting a study by Ekos Research Associates (June/95), he says Canadian society is fracturing along class lines. The view of running the country as a business in pursuit of profit is held by Canada's government business and elites. Ordinary Canadians see government as a way of expressing social values. They feel our country should be a moral community, not just a collection of economic interests.

(4) "North America evades issues of social class," by Rick Salutin, (*Globe & Mail*, Dec. 15/95). He deplores the lack of class analysis in Canada. There's a relationship between climbing business profits and the decimation of unemployment insurance. There's a relationship between high bank profits and the loss of jobs for thousands of bank employees. Some people get richer because others are being forced into unemployment and poverty.

(5) "Class Conflict," by Duncan Cameron, (*Canadian Forum*, April, 1996). Cameron points out that corporations practice class politics all the time. They support any measure that will weaken trade unions. They work for U.I. cuts, minimum wage reductions, and rollbacks in labour law protection of worker rights.

(6) A new class is forming because of the world's ecological crisis. At the moment it's called

the environmental movement, and it is linked to the peace, feminist and social justice movements. This new class, still swirling like the stellar dust that formed our planet, doesn't believe in unlimited growth. It doesn't believe in the exploitive domination of nature. It believes, as First Nations Elders have taught, that we need to live in a respectful (not just monetary) relationship to the earth and to each other. This new class cuts across traditional class lines. As Klaus Eder wrote in his book, *The New Politics Of Class*, "A new type of society is emerging in which class conflict will be centred on the exploitation of nature." (page 120) As you read this, a new political party is forming in Saskatchewan because the old parties only represent the interests of big business. It is called the New Green Alliance, and is dedicated to environmental protection and social justice.

By SANDY CAMERON



The Tax Report

Tax Guy just had a taxing month. As a community Volunteer Income Tax Program participant, Tax Guy helped many fill out TIS-C forms to claim GST and BC sales tax credits. Three (count em - 3) individuals who received monthly Canada Pension Plan benefits were required by Revenue Canada to submit TI General forms. After careful calculation (oops! - forgot to deduct on line 250 income reported on line 147) the Tax Guy had bad bottom line news.

These elderly men had income tax to pay. And not trivial amounts - two owed over 1000 bucks! They knew it! - from previous years' returns. Tax Guy suggested they ask RevCan to withhold an appropriate amount of income tax from their monthly CPP benefits. Or they could invest an

amount monthly, earning interest before repayment. (This was not well received - some value advice in proportion to its cost.)

One said that when he didn't file a tax return for 1996, RevCan assessed him and demanded he file a return. He is now in debt for over \$2500, plus penalty and interest.

The second said he will declare bankruptcy.

Bzzt! - wrong - RevCan will probably reduce his pension benefits to recover the tax.

The third said his GST and BC sales tax refunds

would pay the tax.

5.

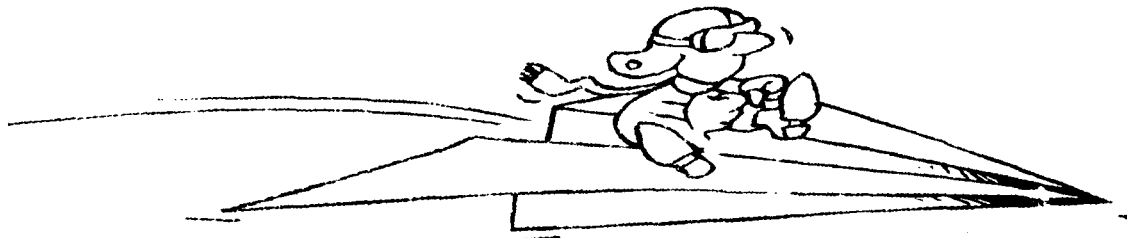
If Tax Guy saw three (count 'em - 3) instances of this claw-back, there must be hundreds(thousands?) of similar cases across Canada.

Is this how Polecat Martinet pays for new shoes when he gives the federal budget speech?

In a darker reflection, perhaps it's an attempt by the feds to reduce the aging population by stressing the elderly into an early grave.

Any other thoughts on redistributing wealth in Canada?

MGR - a.k.a. Tax Guy



FRASER ALERT

"The Myth of the Good Corporate Citizen"

Attention all non-profit service agencies' staff and board members and friends... The Fraser Institute is launching a new initiative aimed at undermining the non-profit sector and attacking the relationship between government and non-profits.

The Fraser Institute, the neo-liberal, corporate funded "think-tank" (based in Vancouver), has hooked up with the Donner Canada Foundation, a well-funded foundation which finances many right-wing causes in Canada, in a project aimed at gathering information to be used in its promotion of free market solutions to social policy issues.

WARNING: DO NOT CO-OPERATE WITH THIS PROJECT AND IF YOU HAVE ANY ALERT THEM TO THE DANGERS OF CO-OPERATING WITH THIS PROJECT.

The project, funded by and named for the Donner Foundation, offers six \$5000 prizes purporting to award "best practices" by non-profit agencies and a \$25,000 award for the agency "which best

illustrates the principles of excellence." These cash awards in effect offer to pay non-profits for their co-operation in their own demise. The Fraser Institute's explicit mandate is to reduce the social role of government to its barest minimum. Its motto is "Public problems, private solutions." In its fundraising materials it boasts about being able to promote the interests of corporations in ways that corporations can not. Institute head Michael Walker once admitted that he and a researcher in the U.S. engaged in an "informal contest" to see who could find the best evidence proving that women fare better in the workforce than men.

The Fraser constantly attacks Medicare and public education as dismal failures; it also attacks official poverty statistics as wild exaggerations of real poverty levels. Its research is often questionable such as a "study" on hospital waiting lists based solely on the "impressions" of self-selecting doctor specialists (no random sample was used) who had a vested interest in creating anxiety about waiting lists. In a leaked five-year plan the Fraser indicated it intends to increase activities and sources of funding.

Murray G. Dobbin

Affordable Housing for the Downtown Eastside

Affordable housing in the Downtown Eastside neighbourhood is scarce, if it exists at all. But one important question is: who will be served by proposed affordable housing? Which persons who have inadequate housing now, even no housing, will be able to have a decent roof over their heads?



There appear to be many groups in the community advocating for more affordable housing. Five major service organizations have housing as a leading agenda item. The problem seems to be that these particular groups assume they have the only important, the only right, information on the subject of proposed and existing affordable housing in the DES, and seem to expend lots of energy fighting among themselves over whose approach to housing is "correct." DERA, DEYAS, Carnegie, Native Health, and St. James have too much interest in preserving their "territory", when, in fact, they should actively be seeking input from all the people of the area. Housing in the Downtown Eastside concerns everyone here, not just these particular groups, and there is room for input from many more places than currently have a say. In an area where people experience the daily miseries we know only too well – substance abuse, homelessness, mental illness, crime – these agencies seem to be quite out of touch, and a little too comfortable in

the certainty. The important thing to remember is that there is nothing more alienating than having a crummy place to live, or worse yet, having no place to live.

Twenty years ago we watched attempts by community groups to address the housing problems. We had the same five nonprofit groups claiming to be the experts on the problems of this community, but there still seems to be a reluctance to admit that there might be others in the community that need to be heard. Even though many of us have differing opinions from the five large and well-established non-profit organizations on the subject of affordable housing, our input is valid and we must be heard.

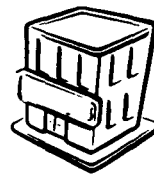
This month the popular language around funding for housing is 'harm reduction'. The SUNRISE and the WASHINGTON SROs (single resident occupancy), hotels are changing management but who will be the residents? Street people? Will there be native people living in these units? How many disabled people will be accepted? The Vancouver/Richmond Health Board must make sure that these marginalized minorities are represented in the tenants of the proposed units. This would result in "harm reduction" that is real, rather than just politically correct lip service. Favouritism and manipulation around who gets the funding must not be the bottom line. A more general approach from groups and individuals who are not represented by the ideals and ambitions of existing housing organizations could go beyond the narrow focus of the current monopoly as we have it now. It is always the same groups patting each other's backs on what a good job they are doing in representing this community.

B.C. Housing must make another attempt to get other groups and individuals involved in the process, from who builds the hotel units to who will be deemed deserving to live there. The main players in this housing development must look beyond the immediate monetary returns, and make attempts to see that the marginalized persons of this neighbourhood finally get a decent break. To

do this we must involve our local M.P. Libby Davies. We must ensure that she, as our elected representative, is kept aware of what is happening in her riding. Whether this be through walk-about in the neighbourhood, public meetings, or input from concerned groups and individuals, Libby Davies is perhaps the single most influential official who can present the necessary motions that will prove successful in changing some of the unproductive and unfair practices in her riding. Ms. Davies may indeed be unaware that inequality, when it comes to access to housing, exists in her riding. The whole issue of "harm reduction" in the Downtown East needs a fresh approach. It entails more than allocating funds to the same groups who have been doing this job till now.

When considering "harm reduction" and its relation to persons with various disabilities, an idea that has already been discussed is the purchase of the ROOSEVELT Hotel. Since this property is adjacent to the Carnegie Community Centre it could be a very convenient and accessible residence for Seniors or persons with physical disabilities. (This idea originated with Bruce Eriksen some years back.) A connecting overpass from the Roosevelt to Carnegie Centre would be a means to enrich and broaden the lives of those forced to live on small pensions and who are limited in their mobility either financially or physically. Vancouver could be a landmark city if this proposal is taken up by the authorities. It would certainly be a greater distinction to be known as the Canadian city with a vision for the future of its disenfranchised rather than the city in North America that has the second worst street drug scene, the highest cost of living in Canada, and very few imaginative or even practical programs to ameliorate these conditions.

Poverty begets poverty, but the attendant social ills such as drug and alcohol abuse, violence and crime seem to feed on this very basic factor. Poverty means not enough food, not enough programs administering to victims of alcoholism and other addictions. But mainly, poverty is living in a miserable hotel room with no cooking facilities or clean bathroom. Poverty is being subjected to noise day and night. Poverty is living without a feeling of safety. But, above all, pov-



erty is no hope of changing your circumstances. For the privilege of even having one of these hotel rooms, tenants must pay \$350. - \$400. out of a welfare cheque that often is as low as \$500. - \$596.

The groups involved in social improvement in our neighbourhood have had their chance. I feel it is important, nay, necessary for the People of the area, the individuals directly involved to take an active role in the decisions affecting their own lives. So far there has only been a token recognition of the importance of the residents' decisions regarding the possible positive improvements to their own lives. We don't want a golf course, expensive condos or luxuries in any sense of the word. We *do* want decent housing and some social programs of culture and recreation that can and do make lives worth living. Home is a big word. It could be a small apartment in a well-run building. B.C. Housing has some apartments that fit this description. But the waiting list is years long, and it helps to have money to grease the manager's palm. Ask me, I'll tell you about it. Even the Ministry of Human Resources does not know of this practice.

Home is also a way of life. In Canada we pride ourselves on our progressive society. Perhaps it is time to take a closer look at our human values. In the multi-cultural community of the Downtown Eastside I have witnessed tolerance to persons of other ethnic origins that I have not seen in Point Gray or Kerrisdale. Our people are worth something too. What is needed is a forum for the ideas, opinions and imagination of everyone in the area - a place where persons of all cultures and situations may speak freely about their concerns. Perhaps together we can make a real neighbourhood, a decent place to live and raise our children.

By FRED ARRANCE



You are losing word power. Creative apathy? Intellectual indolence?

Why is there an instability of vision and creative direction?

Why are you preventing the obvious from happening?

What are the blocks? What are the fears?

Review your reticence or your reluctance towards artistic collaboration.

Is it not that the truth is you wish to selfishly savour the glory of any personal fame that may come your way and is this not egotistical baggage in light of the greater flow of creative energy?

Consider the repetition of Hexagrams 3, 10, 29, 60

Growing Pains, Conduct, Restraint, The Deep

Avoid dangerous spiritual situations because it is obvious; there is no need for defense

The Warrior archetype is not justifiable but the insufficient trappings of artistic poverty do not apply

Understand that each moment of proximity to the web renders you morally incapable of redirecting it.

To do so is to evaluate yourself as morally superior.

Ultimately, there are changes in the Face of God.

Avoid it in your heart and mind.

Do not engage yourself but rather touch the inner affection of yourself, of your nature.

It is no longer will and determination. It is God's generosity to you.

Receive now and Receive peacefully.

You are insecure. Naturally, therefore, you prejudge.

This is the origin of your deterioration.

Recycled insecurity and the loss of word power.

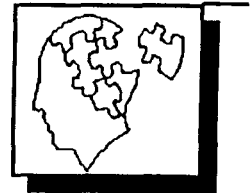
The recirculation of a deficient algorithm of truth.

Reflect upon the ingredients of this insecurity

Post traumas?

Your Mother is dead and your Sister's life is beginning.

She is in God's hands. Believe it.



Stasis has occurred and the ingredients have hardened.

In the emotional death of old perceptions there is still regeneration, growth and emergence.

This birth is precious - poetic but familiar.

You are not Arjuna. You were but you are not now.

Danger has a different face; the trickster, the tempter, the mask of Mephistopheles; the presence of your shadow

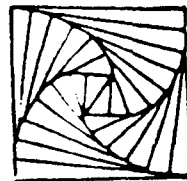
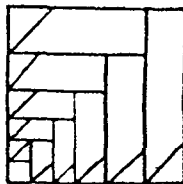
The hesitation of the moment

The anxiety in your mind towards the credibility of others

The indecision towards the engagement of your destiny and the immediacy of time.

You have no obligation to respond in this manner

You have a responsibility to observe and listen and receive peacefully and react with truthfulness that resides in your heart and the power and cogency of your words will emerge.



9.



There are systems of belief
They are inadequate, insufficient, irrelevant
They, too, are static. They do not account for the changing face of God.

Philosophical systems are notions - notions of self-aggrandizement, vanity, fear of an insecure world, the origins of the principles of the unknown, a barrier too the energy of love and timeless flow of life

Chaos will increase.

The Godhead is changing and, eventually, so will the continuum.

Remain flexible.

Remain constant with pattern-changing sensitivity indulging in the lonely revelry of spiritual rebirth.

Chemically, through alcoholic sedation, you have been pre-empting the implications of your newer reality, wavering between commitment and distance.

Then, and then, and only then is the power of emergence misunderstood, misdirected, misaligned..., imbalance
Newer realities submerge into the deep again.

They return into the dead past and resume the hardened ingredients of insecurity.

The old paradigm resumes its function

Old emotional memories plague

Rigidity and repression

The rebirth has died through a chemically-induced abortion.

Stupour and humiliation

Exhaustion and repentance

Pleading to the Godhead for reconsideration

Excoriation

Silence

Health

Clarity

Surrendering to innocence

The gift.

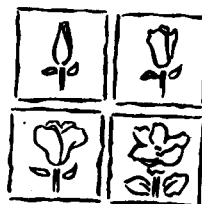
Again time opens up to reveal the stageplay of itself -
indeterminate, for itself, of itself, because of itself
Forever Freedom.

Within Time is God

Within God is Love

Within Love is Man

Within Man is Time



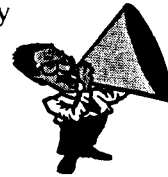
Richard Thomas

Vancouver's fascist City Council

The present city council, a city council whose buffoonery only serves as a mask to hide their fascist beliefs, or whatever the term is, who are bent on selling everything in and about Vancouver to the sleaziest, most disreputable bidder, who continue to spew outright lies about every one of their shady dealings, for instance, the value to be gained by, the profit to be made from, bidding on, and hosting (if they and the decrepit provincial government succeed, after the millions and millions of dollars it will cost, in winning the contract) the 2010 Winter Olympic Games, when everyone around the world everywhere knows that every place that has hosted an Olympic Games goes into debt for decades afterwards, actually spends far more money on them than they could ever recover. A more criminally stupid, inane, arrogantly self-centred, uncivic city council cannot be found anywhere in the world. While Vancouver has the highest rates of infection of numerous diseases in North America, criminally foolish clowns like Don Bellamy rant and rave about panhandlers, and the neo-fascist Conrad Blackian so-called newspapers (really just hate rags) jump on the "brutalize the poor with our penis-like batons" bandwagon. While thousands of Downtown Eastside residents are in the process of losing their homes, dying of horrendous infections, or, just as often, preventable illnesses, and while hundreds of ex-psychiatric patients are thrown out into the midst of a deadly situation, where they are taken advantage of in every possible and impossible way, ways the clowns and buffoons at city hall couldn't even begin to imagine, because they don't want to, comfortable in their buffoonishness as they are, the buffoonish city council takes its direction from the most loutish and self-interested imbeciles they can find, fly-by-night so-called entrepreneurs, really just con-artists, or developers who know only how to *swindle and swindle again*, who are *addicted to swindling money from wherever they can get it* and who have never contributed anything but debt and shoddy condos, for instance, to the society,

who actually cost society, and benefit it none, while the city council ignores anyone who has done anything constructive and/or original, listening only to the destructive and useless criminal, privileged, corporate, academic class, or even to its most simple and goon-like pseudo-representatives, the arrogantly uninformed and egomaniacal buffoons in the gastown business special interest groups.

! Dan Feeney



To the Editor:

In the May issue of the *Carnegie Newsletter* the front page article states that the drug situation is fueled by four things. To me there is one important factor of the drug trade that was left out of this story: the lack of stiff penalties for those who sell their wares on our streets. It seems that a person may be arrested today and attend court tomorrow, then be set free with an apology from the court and a bus ticket back to their place of business.

What there should be is stiffer penalties, but what I heard of the situation was that the city has a lack of funds to prosecute these individuals. So why not have the city pass a bylaw that any and all confiscated goods as well as money be used to fund the ending of the drug trade in our city?

As an example: if a person is arrested driving and has drugs with them then their vehicle will be sold at auction upon conviction and the proceeds go to apprehending more criminals.

Maybe this would help to deter the drug trade with the authorities using the profits of the trade against the trade itself.

Respectfully,

Robert D. Feddery

REGISTRATION - PANHANDLING - APPLICATION

Permit 108 Date 1/16/97

THIS REGISTRATION MUST BE COMPLETED IN ITS ENTIRETY and returned to the Orlando Police Department, 100 S. Hughey Avenue, Orlando, Florida 32801, at least two (2) working days prior to commencement of the activity for which this registration is filed.

FULL NAME (print) ADDRESS SS# PHONE #
Leo James Hudson 639 W. Cent. Ave. FLA 3281 207601618 875795

A/K/A:

N/A

1. I have had a prior Orlando Panhandler Registration revoked within the last two (2) years. Yes No
2. I have been found guilty of violation of the Orlando Panhandling Ordinance, or similar ordinance of another City or State, two (2) or more times in the last five (5) years. Yes No
3. I understand and agree that if I am arrested for violation of the Orlando Panhandling Ordinance, I will release this Registration to the arresting officer. LH
4. Each panhandler must wear the photo ID Registration card issued by OPD on an outer garment. CH
5. By my signature below, I certify that I have been provided a copy of the Orlando Panhandling Ordinance, Sec. 43.86.
6. I have presented OPD with correct photo ID. Yes No

- or -

I hereby swear or affirm that I do not possess a photo identification, and give my permission to be photographed and fingerprinted for this Registration.

[Signature]
 WITNESS

Leo James Hudson
 PRINTED NAME OF APPLICANT

[Signature]
 SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT

NOTICE: PROVIDING FALSE OR MISLEADING INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS A VIOLATION OF CHS CODE, SEC. 43.16.

Panhandling Proscribed

A report in Harper's Magazine has this permit application form with common sense comments at the end of the various lines.

Yeah, thhat's right, Orlando (in Florida) makes anyone panhandling apply for a laminated badge that "permits" them to beg on the streets. No permit? Arrested! An official stated that "We're actually hoping this will displace people to other cities." Out-of-sight/out-of-mind? Every major city in the States, and most in Canada, have shelters and housing for homeless persons that total about 30% of need on a great day.

Elsewhere in here is information about the City of Vancouver's new bylaw making it illegal to ask for money within 10 metres (30 feet) of a bank machine, a bus stop, a liquor store, to sit or lay down on a sidewalk, to even squeegee a car's windshield and hope for a buck.

In Orlando aggressive panhandling is spelled out - bus depots and train stations are off limits

- so are public parks and sports arenas

- you can't do it at bank machines and can't come within 3 feet of the person being asked

- no obscenities, no following people, no working in pairs, stay away from parked cars...

Panhandlers may not make any false representations, which include stating that the donation is required for a need that does not exist or that the solicitor is from out-of-town and stranded when it is not true, wearing a military uniform without having served, pretending to be disabled or using "any make-up or device to simulate a deformity." Furthermore, it is illegal to beg "for a specific purpose and then use the funds for a different purpose." So, if you asked for a buck for a coffee and then bought a donut too, you'd be in deep shit.

The whole thing is to make the poor and homeless Go Away. In New York the city bylaw making it the most despicable crime to be visibly poor has already led to police brutality and massive efforts to just cart the poor street people away

This report is not to make the Orlando scam sound desirable or even sensical. It's driven by the same greed as here - "let's get these damned eyesores out of sight so tourists and consumers will buy with the reckless abandon we want." 'We' is the well-heeled, the made people, the ones that stores like Eaton's, for instance, are talking to when they charge \$44 for a t-shirt or \$230 for a pair of running shoes.

BEWARE OF GRAS\$TOWN SECURITY GUARDS

IF YOU ARE BEING MOLESTED IN
ANY MANNER BY THESE GOONS,
PHONE POLICE AT 911 AND MAKE A
HARASSMENT CHARGE. THIS IS
YOUR CITY AND YOUR RIGHTS.

Hi, I'm going to kick your ass



and get away with it'



Newsletter of the Carnegie

Community Action Project

May 15, 1998

Want to get involved ! Call 689-0397 or come see us at Carnegie (2nd flr.)

Summer is coming

to our
"World Class City"
and so are the
"get rid of the poor" laws
just in time for the tourists



No
undesirables
no
busking
no
panhandling
(just good-looking
consumers, please)

Parallel Planning

City Manager's Office is where the real decisions are made.

Last week Council past an anti-panhandling by-law. Community organizations were made aware of the proposed by-law only a week before it went to council. This gave us little time to study the by-law and prepare arguments against it. Not only were we left in the dark, but most city departments had not heard of it either.

The report was prepared by the City Manager, Ken Dobell. It was obviously lobbied for by the various Business Improvement Association (BIAs), who wanted this by-law enacted before the tourist season kicks into full gear.

City departments like Social Planning or Planning had no input into the report. Yet, Social Planning was asked to comment on the by-law at Council even though they has just received the report the day before. What could they say ?

So, city staff and the community get to work on issues that some times take years for Council to make a decision on. And the City Manager unilaterally gets things through Council in less than a week.

City Council, for over a year now, has had the ability to create a hotel conversion and demolition control by-law and they've yet to publicly discuss it.

One planning process for the community, another for the City Manager and the BIAs. "Let the DISPERSION of low-income citizens begins !"

Note: Private Security Guard will have a field day harassing citizens, who are panhandling. Even though they have NO legal authority to do so.

Carnegie, from the roof-top patio of the new Bruce Erickson Place



Vancouver has just passed an Anti-Panhandling By-law

Know your rights !

You can still panhandle (sort of)
illegal within 10 m. of a:

- bank entrance
- automated teller machine
- bus stop (=36m from bus sign)!!
- liquor store
- anywhere from sunset to sunrise (i.e. at dark)

Only the Police can enforce this by-law, NOT
SECURITY GUARDS OR SHOP OWNERS.

*(Complaints against Security Guards call
Ministry of Attorney General ph. 660-6757)*

You cannot be forced to move, only ticketed.

If you are ticketed, we will help you challenge
the by-law. Together we can strike down this
by-law.

contact: Main and Hastings Community
Development Society ph. 331-8757

RALLY AGAINST THE PANHANDLING BY-LAW

TWO EVENTS

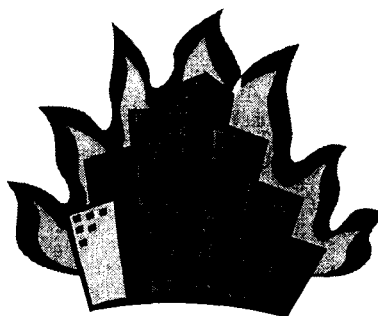
Sunday

May 17 and 24

@ 1pm

Canada Place

**(in front of Trade and
Convention Centre)**



New Provincial Mental Health Plan: Expanded Housing for People with Mental Illness

*(excerpt from Infolink, Newsletter of the BC
Non-profit Housing Association, Apr.-June 98)*

The provincial government recently announced changes to the Provincial Mental Health Plan. Over the next six to eight years a total of 1300 units of existing non-profit, co-operative and BC Housing directly managed housing will be made available for people with mental illness, six new health services consultants will be hired. As well, an additional 2600 rent subsidies will be granted under the Supported Independent Living Program.

One of the requirements for living in social housing is that mental health client must have a demonstrated ability to live independently. The consultant will assist in identifying the community living support services - like meal preparation, a homemaker, or counseling - that will enable people with mental illness to live independently and with an improve quality of life.

Open House

May 28/98

7 p.m.

Carnegie Centre

in the Gallery (3rd flr.)

The Carnegie Community
Action Project (CCAP), in
conjunction with many
Eastside organizations will be
releasing the

DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE
COMMUNITY
HOUSING PLAN:
NECESSARY MEASURES

The evening open house will
include art displays, music,
theatre and presentations.
Food will be available

You're invited to the
Community Inaugural
Celebration for

Walls of Change

A series of murals for the
Downtown Eastside

Saturday May 30, 1998

Starting at:

Oppenheimer Park

(400 block of Powell)
Community Fair and Food at
11:00 am

Pigeon Park

(corner of Carrall of Hastings)
Opening ceremonies and
performances at
3:00 p.m..



How Does a Person Survive in a Matchbox?

Tolstoi told us years ago that, in the "last" analysis, all the land a man or woman needs is a plot "six feet from head to heels." When a man or woman is alive, how then can he or she survive in a casket of a room, a mummy case, a prison of internment of the spirit?

Perhaps a poet can, or an artist.. an aesthetic or a very holy man.. but most of us would perish.

There are always exceptions. Thomas Hardy wrote of the 'darkling thrush'...'aged, frail, gaunt and small' flinging what was left of his soul upon the darkness of his world.

All praise and blessings to the spirit it takes to sit in a god-forsaken room and not perish... which is what my little painting is all about.

Sam Roddan

"I used to be

I used to be a very happy, upbeat guy. That was before I started volunteering in the Downtown Eastside, which means following politics. Now I'm so cynical no one wants to talk to me.

I found out I'm in a real jackpot, and I'm sure a lot of you out there are in the same one. In the late 80's I had a blood vessel burst in my stomach. Thankfully, St. Paul's Hospital people saved my life. Now the jackpot: some years later I received a letter from St. Paul's asking me to have my blood checked for Hepatitis C. Sadly, I've learned that yes, I have this tainted blood. I don't know anything about it. Do you?

From what I've gleaned from the papers, it's like a hot spud... meanwhile we need help right now. Argue later about who's right or wrong but get the medical ball rolling.

(No one's ever wrong in government.)

Another thing I am very upset about is why isn't there more knowledge out there, more information for those of us who have Hep C? I mean, what can I do to protect others? I don't even know if it's contagious.. and me - do I live long, get sick, die soon? We just don't know.

Another jackpot! My partner has Hep C too. She got it from me, so where does she stand in all this?

And hey! Want some more! I'm sure the Ministry of Inhumane Resources, with their Nazi BC Benefits boys, will take every cent any recipient gets. Does that mean the government can criminally injure someone for life, then take every cent legally entrusted to them?!!

Like I said at the beginning, I haven't got a clue what Hep C is all about but I'll now have a sub-standard life if I don't have every chance. My father fought for the rights of every Canadian. If these rights now evade me, I want the next best thing - a fair life where I can hold my head up and not worry about living 50% below the poverty line.

Johnny Rebel

Images of teenagers portrayed on the evening news make me feel like a foreigner from some other planet. The images are like a bad movie with no meaningful plot.

Zena and the Spice Girls seem to have cornered the market on adolescent behavior; aggressiveness and violence seem to be the cool way of dealing with things.

I don't know any teenagers so all I've got to go on are the news publisher's extreme examples from that strange world of puberty that I vaguely recall passing through decades ago.

I wonder what today's average teenager is really like. How do they deal with the tremendous sexual pressures from such role modeling influences as *Much Music* and *Melrose Place*.

Are they happy or disgusted that us adults have allowed sleaze and violence to become the main ingredient of TV programming?

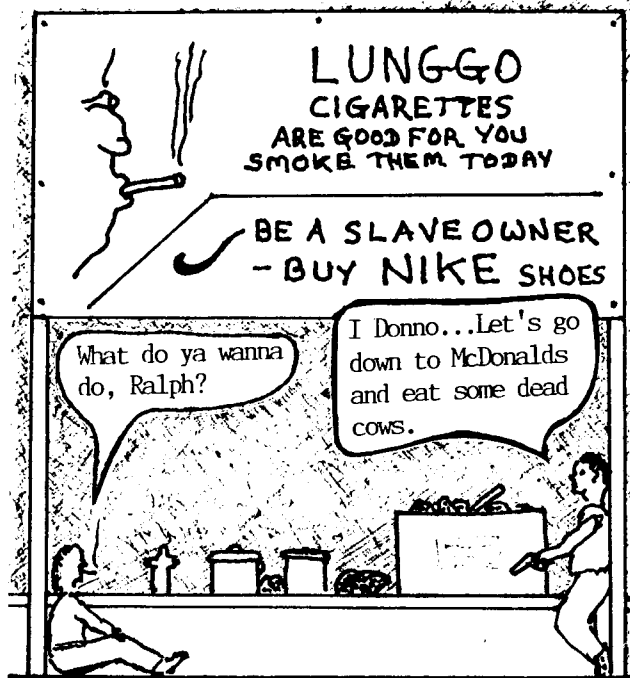
I remember scoffing at the adults when I was a teenager because they said that the new form of music called Rock And Roll would corrupt our morals. In retrospect, they were right. But back then I couldn't figure what all the fuss was about.

In the late fifties the most popular entertainment program on TV was the Ed Sullivan Show, and it censored Elvis Presley's appearance by having the cameras shoot him only from the waist up so the viewing audience wouldn't see him wiggling his nervous hips.

Compare that with a *Much Music* video of the Spice Girls flashing their tantalizing tushes to the probable delight of every 13-year-old in the country.

I shudder just thinking about what will be on TV when our current generation of teens have become adults with children of their own. Will they sit by and let the media producers take the world further down into the abyss of cultural mediocrity just as we did?

I guess only the average teenager knows, but who are they? Why don't they come out of hiding and demand equal time with their



counterparts who make the news by stealing cars and beating their peers to death!

Why don't they come out and demand the responsibility that Nature gives them with the rights of puberty.

We tell them they're not ready for such things as voting in an election. But such a responsibility is exactly what they need at that age so they can enter full-fledged adulthood with the experience of responsibility, knowing they do have a real voice in the shaping of a society that doesn't turn it's back on social responsibilities like we have in the passed thirty years.

As adults who were once teenagers, we know in our hearts that adults are too busy being adults to make this a better world. A new ingredient is needed to turn the tide of indifference, and that is to give adolescents the political power of voting, because they're going to have to live with this current mess of a world after we're gone.

Don't you remember the sincere ideals we had in our teen years? We had all the answers then, but we had no outlet for those grand thoughts. Let's tap into that tremendous resource and give teenagers The Vote.

Child poverty focus brings policies that push down wages



If we want to reduce and end *people's* poverty, is it good strategy to focus on ending *child* poverty? That's a question more and more low-income anti-poverty activists are asking.

Some people think that if we can get people concerned about children's poverty, policies that will reduce adult poverty will follow. I believe that experience shows this is not true. Governments have used concern with child poverty to come up with policies that are good for the government's image, but serve corporate interests of lowering and subsidizing wages of the working poor, as well as reducing welfare for adults. The federal child benefit is a perfect example.

As anti-poverty activists we know that decent jobs, higher wages, good unemployment insurance, affordable housing and decent welfare rates are necessary to reduce poverty in Canada. We also know that governments have attacked all these goals in the last decade and increased child and adult poverty.

That didn't stop Finance Minister Paul Martin (personal assets: about \$30 million) from getting up in Parliament last February and saying, while introducing the new child benefit, "Let us never

come to believe that there is an acceptable level of *child* (italics added) poverty..." Martin's new child benefit actually gave extra money only to families who are not on welfare and who have three or more children (families with two children get an extra \$10 a year).

If the government really wanted to help children in poverty, why would it design a program that doesn't help most poor children? Could it be using child poverty as an excuse to bring in more policies that force parents into the low wage labour force?

Even Edward Greenspan of the *Globe & Mail* is now realizing that "as details of the national child benefit come into sharper focus, it is emerging as far more of a work-incentive program than an anti-poverty one."

Right-wing think tanks like the CD Howe Institute push a child benefit so single parents can compete with single minimum wage earners for the lowest paid jobs. (Nancy Naylor, *Lone Parent Families*, pg.232) With tens of thousands of parents seeking these low paid jobs, employers can keep wages low. If parents want or need to stay home and care for their children, provincial welfare rules stop that, forcing them to seek

low wage jobs or be cut off.

The child benefit also means that employers who pay low wages won't have to support the children of their employees. The government can do that with the child benefit. In other words, the corporations like the child benefit because it both lowers and subsidizes corporate wages. In the long run the child benefit could easily contribute to more working poverty by pushing more low wage job seekers into the labour force when jobs aren't there for them to take. In fact, a US study predicts that President Bill Clinton's new welfare policies, which force both single parents and people without children to work, will reduce wages of the poorest 30 per cent of workers by 11.9 per cent.

There is also a poor-bashing, sexist dimension to focusing on child poverty. When the federal government was trying to figure out how to 'spin' its child benefit to the public, it hired the Ekos company to conduct focus groups in major cities. Ekos reported to the feds that people who are economically secure see welfare recipients in "unremittingly negative terms." Ekos noted that "there was a great deal of skepticism expressed about the ability and/or willingness of parents (on welfare) to transfer assistance to their children." Rather than challenge these stereotypes of mostly women on welfare, the government actually *based* child benefit program details on this prejudice towards single parents on welfare. The child benefit doesn't give parents on welfare or their children any extra money, and doesn't respect the work women do in the home raising their children on totally inadequate incomes. So far the focus on child poverty has led to these poor-bashing, sexist policies that promote more working poverty. If we focus on policies like job creation, decent wages and welfare that will help everyone get out of poverty, then our policy demands won't be so co-optable. They will really reduce poverty, not be used to increase poverty.

Writing in the *Globe & Mail* last June, Rick Salutin asked, "Have you noticed how no social

issue can be broached except in terms of kids?" Jacquie Ackerly, an executive member of End Legislated Poverty, says, "In the end it's the deserving-undeserving poor game. Poverty is legislated. It's the result of choices made by governments under pressure from corporations and is only in the most minor sense the responsibility of the individual who suffers it. Using child poverty as a hook is dishonest. The end doesn't justify the means."

Challenging corporate plans for our economy is a huge job so both groups need to unite on a strategy if we are to have any chance of success. To figure out an effective strategy we need to be clear about how the child-focused policies reinforce poor-bashing stereotypes about adults on welfare and are being used to promote cheap labour and more working poverty.

An excerpt from Jean Swanson's article
printed in *The Long Haul*.

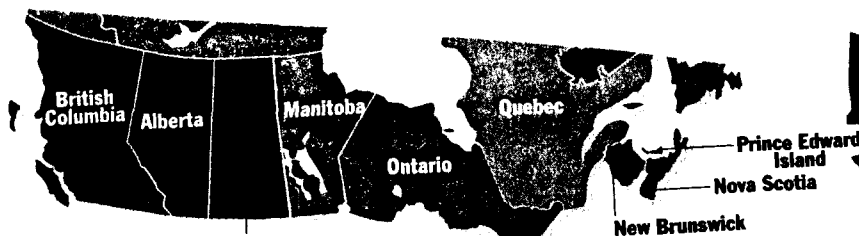


DORIS The door to heaven and hell

IRENE Serene

RATHKE Rath But to the key to heaven or hell

Doris Leslie



Dear Prime Minister Chrétien:

This letter is to address issues of Aboriginal people who were wards of the provinces through the Child and Family Services during the 1960s and 70s.

My name is Sandra Michelle Pronteau and I was a ward of the Manitoba Government from September 1966 to September 1985. I still remember my mother leaving me at the age of two on the steps of this unfamiliar place, my new foster home. I had no choice in this experience as an innocent, disabled Metis girl who ultimately survived through seven different foster homes. Among these homes I have seen alcoholism, discrimination and abuse of all forms including sexual, physical, emotional and spiritual-cultural abuse. When I wasn't being abused, I was being neglected by those so-called "trained foster parents". I know you can't change the past to what it should have been: more humane.

I am writing on behalf of many Aboriginals who had no way out but to be assimilated into the "mainstream" of Canadian society. Many turned to alcohol and drugs as a result of this abuse and assimilation. This assimilation is linked to the "Residential School Syndrome".

I would give you the right to investigate my provincial ward case and you would see that there is no official mention of being victimized through sexual abuse, medically neglected, fed moldy food, and stripped of my heritage and identity. I was led to believe that I am French, but I am not. I learned in my mid-twenties that I am Metis-Cree. I was also led to believe that I have a learning difficulty due to my disability which many people judged by the cover of the book and not the content. I can go on much longer, but I believe you get the message.

I am currently a full-time student at the Native Education Centre in Vancouver, where I am working towards my Grade 12 diploma. I am also a mother of 4 and a social activist. My career goal is to become a counsellor. It is unfortunate that I do not have official status.

What I am suggesting is that the federal government compensate former Aboriginal wards of the court so that they can at least acquire the level of education they deserve to become successful members of this society they never asked to be part of. We have survived ignorance, discrimination and broken spirits in these "smoke screen" homes. There are a large number of foster children who are not making it due to you not recognizing them or their needs.

These children are still victims within the foster care system. I really hurt for my people because of the greed and cruelty we face. I have compassion and want our people to be compensated for the abuse, and for the Ministry not believing us. I hope you feel the same way.

Mr. Prime Minister, I know that historically you helped abolish the "White Paper" delivered in the 1970s. I have also been told by MP Libby Davies that you have compassion for Aboriginals. I would like to believe this and hope that you can assist us and make a difference for the better for our future.

Personally, at this point, I would settle for my rightful disability claim and the education funds to continue on. I hope you will respond to this very sincere letter as I am interested in hearing your thoughts and what you can do to help me and other wards of the court whom the system abused.

Thank you for your time.

UNITED WE CAN THIRD ANNUAL BINNERS OLYMPICS

Tuesday, May 19th, 1998 10:00 a.m.- 12:30 p.m.
(IN THE LANE BEHIND UNITED WE CAN)

CONTESTS, PRIZES, REFRESHMENT, DRAWS,
AWARD CEREMONIES

SCHEDULED EVENTS INCLUDE :

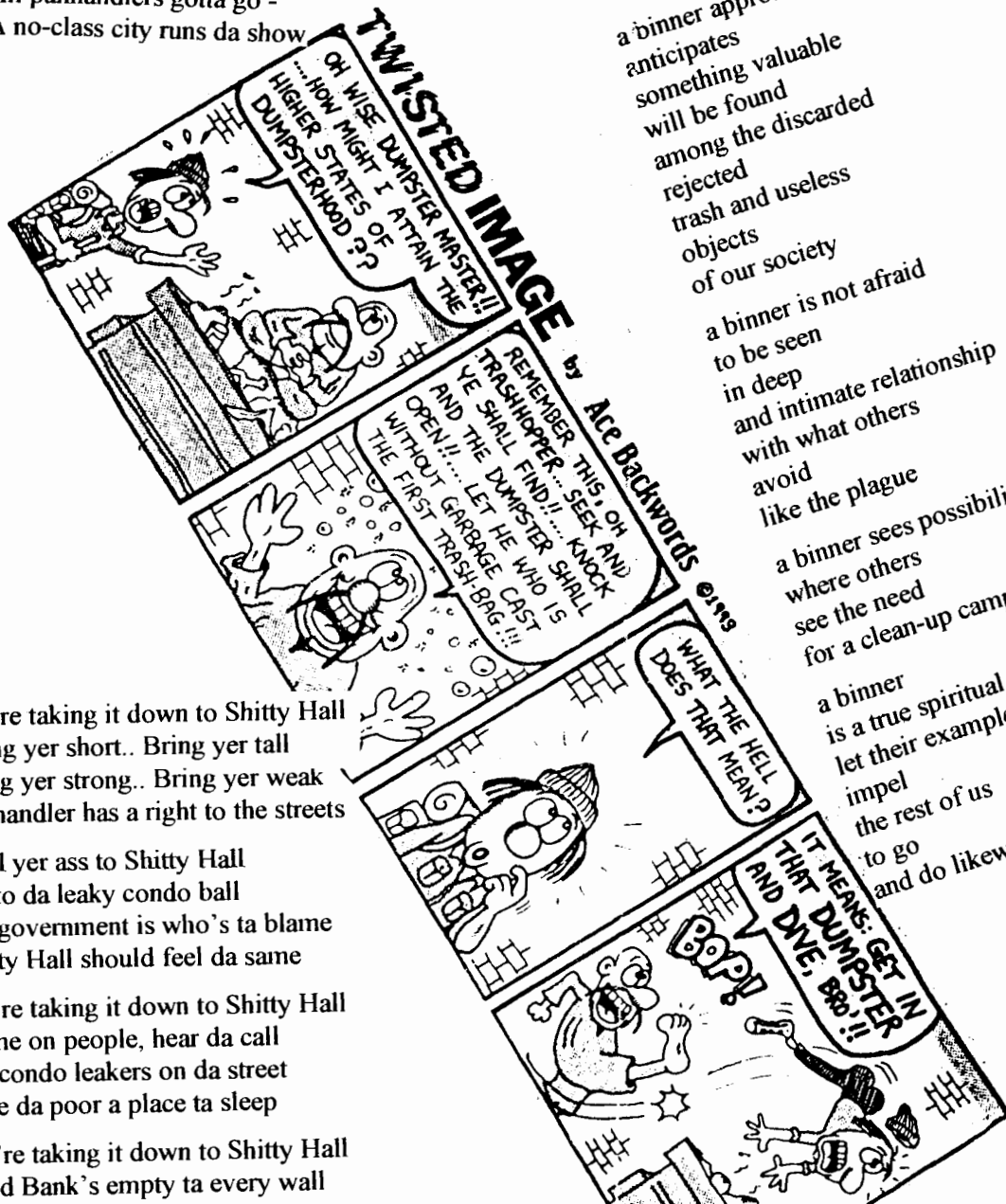
PREMIERE PERFORMANCE OF
"LEAK HERE -LEAK THERE"
(A SOCIAL COMENTARY ON THE LEAKY CONDO PROBLEM)

REFRESHMENTS
SORTING/STACKING COMPETITION
24 FLAT RACE
BIKE CART JUDGING
TREASURE HUNT
BIG BOTTLE CONTEST
SHOPPING CART RACES
GOLDEN COCKROACH AWARD
TRUCK LOADING RELAY

SHITTY HALL

uptown@thepentagon.com

We're taking it down to Shitty Hall
Gonna find out who holds da ball
All panhandlers gotta go -
A no-class city runs da show



We're taking it down to Shitty Hall
Bring yer short.. Bring yer tall
Bring yer strong.. Bring yer weak
Panhandler has a right to the streets

Haul yer ass to Shitty Hall
Go to da leaky condo ball
BC government is who's ta blame
Shitty Hall should feel da same

We're taking it down to Shitty Hall
Come on people, hear da call
Put condo leakers on da street
Give da poor a place ta sleep

We're taking it down to Shitty Hall
Food Bank's empty ta every wall
Shitty Hall's a big disgrace
Shitty Hall hurts every race.

Trashhopper

a binner is a true spiritual guide
to curl

a binner approaching a bin
anticipates
something valuable
will be found
among the discarded
rejected
trash and useless
objects
of our society

a binner is not afraid
to be seen
in deep
and intimate relationship
with what others
avoid
like the plague

a binner sees possibility
where others
see the need
for a clean-up campaign

a binner
is a true spiritual guide
let their example
impel
the rest of us
to go
and do likewise

Bud Osborn

All is well - All grows better.

Downtown Eastside Guru

What the Ants Can Teach Us

by Robert R. Rich

Recently, I've heard a lot of talk about workfare, where welfare recipients are required to work for their welfare cheques.

The U.S. experimented with "workfare" at one time, and one of their leaders actually tried to eliminate it. His name was Abraham Lincoln. He was largely successful, but may I point out that he didn't accomplish this without a considerable amount of blood being shed, including his own.

In Canada we have 4.5 million people living in abject poverty. That's millions: not a few stragglers - millions. What is going to happen to these people?

Lately, there seems to be a movement afield to denigrate certain people, notably single mothers~

Some people say, "Tell them to get to work." First of all, they're working already raising children. Also, I don't know why it is that people can't seem to understand that you can't get a paid job if there is no job to get.

We can't get rid of 4.5 million people. What are we going to do, send them to concentration camps? Even Himmler himself would have been hard-pressed to carry out that assignment. And always remember, dear reader, once they start that business, you might be the next to go.

Do I exaggerate? In the old days you could knock on someone's door and ask to work for a meal but it's certain that no one is going to allow you in their house, or yard, in a city where people are literally putting barbed wire around their residences to keep people out.

We must work together, not against each other. These days, no one ever says, "I'm Canajen, eh." Well, I'm Canajen. For too long we've been going on the basis of, "I'm for me first." but I'll have to admit, it's getting hard to tell who is the enemy. The New Barbarians are within the midst of our own ranks, not invaders from foreign shores. Like the Confederate and Union forces, we will soon be pitting brother against brother, sister against sister, family against family. Stop now, before it is too late. We all live in the same country.

In my younger days, I used to study biology. There I discovered that ants also form societies. Ants have learned what apparently we haven't, that

unless they all work together, none will survive. Unless we learn to live and work together, we are all going down the drain. Together.



LES MISERABLES REVISITED

Garry Gust

Who's decision is it to have the police keep persecuting the Cannabis Cafe, when just several blocks away deadly hard drugs are openly bought and sold 365 days a year?

The clogged courts have no great desire to deal with marijuana cases because they recognize that an unjust law is being imposed upon a good portion of the adults in this country.

Is the Mayor ordering the Chief of police to sustain the persecution, or is the Chief taking it upon himself to disrupt the regulated harm reduction efforts of the Cannabis Cafe?

Why would the Chief of police choose to drive the lucrative cannabis trade back into the murky underworld, as opposed to letting a taxpaying organization such as the Cannabis Cafe take its inevitable course in the commerce of supply and demand?

With much bigger legal fish to fry, what does the Chief have to gain from the ongoing persecution??

Only a thorough investigation can answer these questions.

DOWNTOWN STD CLINIC - 219 Main; Monday-Friday, 10a.m. - 6p.m.
EASTSIDE NEEDLE EXCHANGE - 221 Main; 8:30a.m. - 8p.m. every
YOUTH NEEDLE EXCHANGE VAN 3 Routes day
ACTIVITIES City - 5:45p.m. - 11:45 p.m.
SOCIETY Overnight - 12:30a.m. - 8:30a.m.
Downtown Eastside - 5:30p.m - 1:30a

1998 DONATIONS

Tim S. -\$18 Sam R. -\$40 Helene S. -\$18
Margaret D. -\$20 Sabitra G. -\$15
Charley B. -\$15 Jenny K. -\$18 Joy T. -\$18
Rick Y. -\$45 Sharon J. -\$30 RayCam -\$10
Thomas B. -\$35 Beth L. -\$18 Yukiko -\$25
Rolf A. -\$25 Bruce J. -\$14 Susan S. -\$7
Harold D. -\$20 Kettle -\$18 Sonya S. -\$80
Steve T. -\$18 Nancy H. -\$35 BCTF -\$12
DEYAS -\$50 PRIDE -\$50 Brenda P. -\$10
Heather S. -\$25 BCCW -\$25 Bill G. -\$9
Planning: \$60(Central), \$50(Social)
WisconsinHistoricalSociety -\$30
Anonymous -\$79.60

Paula R. -\$10
Wm. B. -\$12
Pam B. -\$20
Libby D. -\$50

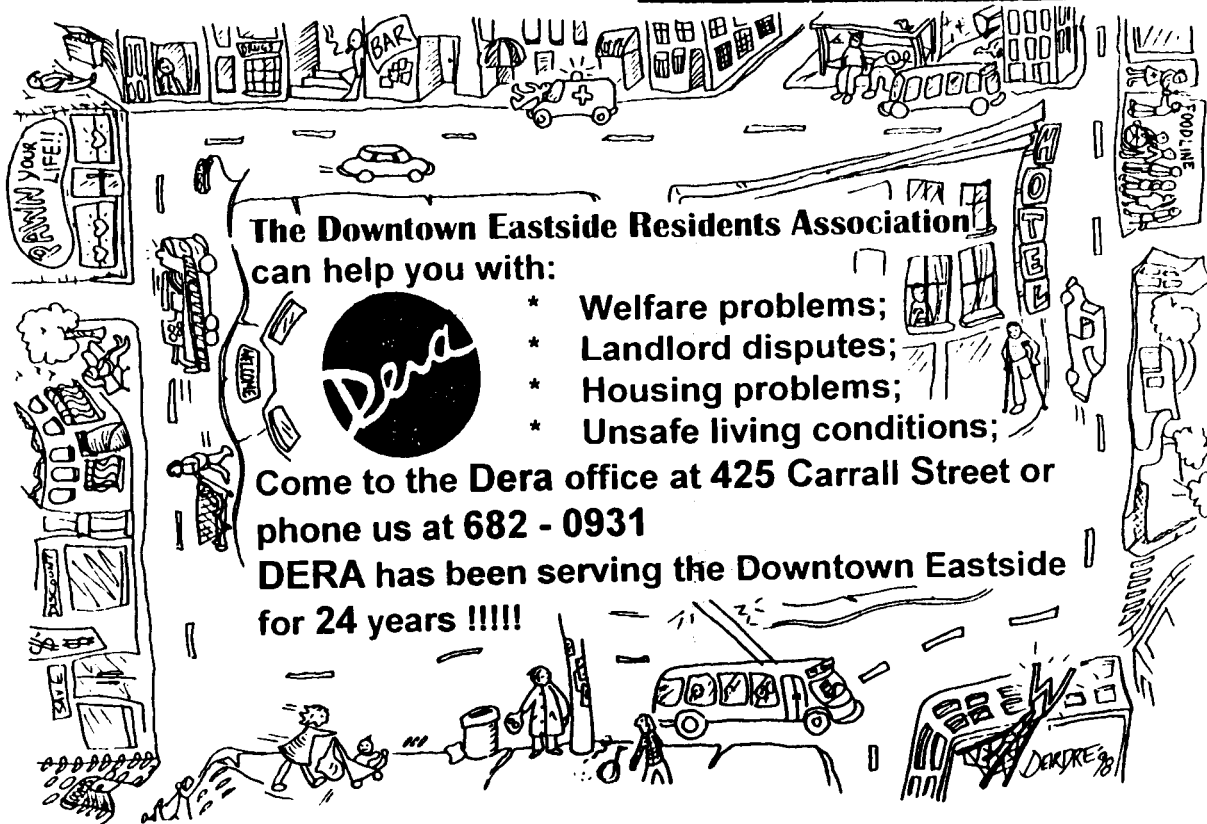
Carnegie

NEWSLETTER

THE NEWSLETTER IS A PUBLICATION OF THE
CARNEGIE COMMUNITY CENTRE ASSOCIATION

Articles represent the views of individual
contributors and not of the Association

Submission Deadline
for the next issue:
Wednesday, May 27



The Downtown Eastside Residents Association
can help you with:

- * Welfare problems;
- * Landlord disputes;
- * Housing problems;
- * Unsafe living conditions;

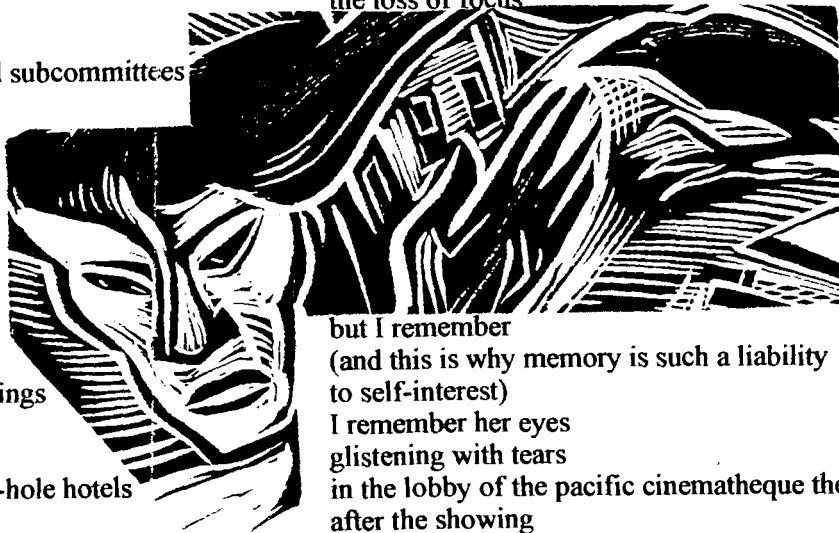
**Come to the Dera office at 425 Carrall Street or
phone us at 682 - 0931**
**DERA has been serving the Downtown Eastside
for 24 years !!!!!**

complaint of an advocate

sad, lord
tired and worn
and sick
so sick of power politics
of turf wars
of meetings and committees and subcommittees
sick of everything that loses
focus
because every deception
every agenda
every meeting
every resentment
every control grab
every move for the money
slams down hardest
on the most wretched human beings
in north america
who are suffering and dying
in the streets and alleys and shit-hole hotels
of the downtown eastside
all the pettiness and ambition
slams directly down
on those who are most afflicted
by poverty and illness
addiction and discrimination
homelessness and demonizing propaganda
so, lord

I want to quit
I want to stop
I want to say fuck it
it's too fucking hard
I am old and beat and hurt like a bastard
I want to sit beneath a tree
a dog beside me
the ocean in front of me
and write an occasional haiku
about a passing cloud
I feel like hell
my life is a mess
I can't sleep worth a damn
my health is shot
I keep going by consuming
caffeine and sugar and nicotine and aspirins
I have no paid job and no resources
to deal
with all this shit

the agencies
the bureaucracies
the maneuvering for advantage
all the greed and fear
the loss of focus



but I remember
(and this is why memory is such a liability
to self-interest)
I remember her eyes
glistening with tears
in the lobby of the pacific cinematheque theatre
after the showing
of her documentary
tu as crie / let me go
a long beautiful love poem
to her daughter
a heroin addict
and prostitute
murdered in montreal
her film also
a plea
a challenge
to transcend
the senseless and bankrupt slaughter
of the war on drugs
so yeah
today when I feel like shit
and want to quit
I see her eyes
glistening with tears
after I held up for her
that day's vancouver sun newspaper
with the headline
western world's worst
hiv/aids epidemic among drug users
in the downtown eastside
she said
don't stop fighting



she looked directly into my eyes and said
don't stop fighting
and today
when the fight seems too fierce to deal with
when it feels like it's killing me
I remember her eyes
I hear her words
and I remember
this junkie in the downtown eastside
who has aids
and who came up to me recently
after our dopefiend discussion meeting
where we discussed
fighting towards a life-saving
and enlightened place
he'd been very articulate during the meeting
he understands the situation
in his flesh
in his misery
in his anger
he understands
how other people hate him
and wish he'd just
go away somewhere out of sight
and die
he said to me
you know how cynical I am
about anything good
happening for us
but this meeting today
it gives me
a ray of hope
and I see his face
illuminated for a moment
with that most alien and elusive
expression
hope
today
when I feel hopeless
when the odds are too long
the deck stacked against
the clock running out
and who the fuck am I anyway?
a junkie.. myself
a fucking mental case
surviving on social assistance
straight just a few years
and ripped again



with dopefiend cravings
for pain relief
shit
sitting in meetings
with people paid to be there
and I pass up the fucking sandwich lines
to sit and listen to them
and get frustrated and pissed-off
and hungry and depressed
shit
and then I see her eyes
and hear her voice
and see on his anguished face
a ray of hope
and then I walk
past the walton and the patricia hotels
within a block of each other
in the downtown eastside
and see the first names of my father and mother
both of whom died homeless and broke
my father full of drugs and booze
when he hanged himself in jail
and my mother
vracked by drug addiction
and mental illness
whose friends at the end
were crackheads and thieves
walton and patricia
and remember
how my parents were
jailed
and scapegoated
but I still want to say fuck it
I don't have to do this
I'm not strung-out now
I've gotten a miracle pass to a new life
why waste it down here
in this mess of shit and trouble
where I have spent
nearly all of my fucking life
I could hustle something better
than stretching between
the gutter with the scum
and meeting rooms with lying backstabbing
sleight-of-hand bureaucratic hustlers
yeah I remember
my father got rid of all our furniture
except for the beds

because he said furniture
 was too middleclass
 so no I'm not too happy
 with all this
 manipulating glad-ass convivial crap
 dehumanizing me even further
 but I remember
 reading about
 the first dirt-poor black man
 sprung from an alabama death row
 for a murder he didn't commit
 sprung largely
 through the intense and tenacious efforts
 of a young black lawyer
 with a graduate degree from harvard law
 who could've written his own ticket
 to corporation law firms coast to coast
 but chose to defend
 for almost nothing
 the baddest and most undeserving of poor people
 and this lawyer
 defines the role of an advocate
 by telling a bible story
 when jesus came upon some men
 fixing to stone to death
 a woman who violated their morality
 and jesus told them
 to let the man who never fucked up
 throw the first stone
 and the men became ashamed of themselves
 dropped their stones
 and walked on home
 but this young black lawyer



says that kind of thing
 wouldn't work today
 because people today
 not only don't become ashamed of themselves
 but are only too eager to decide
 who will live
 and who will die
 and so an advocate today
 says the lawyer
 an advocate today
 must be
 a stone catcher
 catching stones
 with your nerves
 your heart
 your skin
 your life
 catching stones intended for those like
 the western world's worst
 for those like
 my father and mother
 today
 when I don't feel I can take
 another moment of it
 when I don't want to take
 anymore of it
 when I think I must be a complete fool
 to go through another day of it
 when today
 hits me so goddamned hard
 then the fight that is in my blood
 the ray of hope that is in my soul
 the high threshold for pain burned into my bones
 remembers
 despite myself
 who I am
 and where I stand
 when the stones
 are being
 thrown
 who I am
 and where I stand
 when the stones
 are being
 thrown



Bud Osborn