



## 2 Children at Risk

The National Crime Prevention Centre and the National Strategy on Community Safety and Crime Prevention are federal government initiatives, using \$32 million a year to "assist communities throughout Canada to develop programs and partnerships that will help prevent crime in the first place."

The Strategy has objectives of government and non-government partnerships, solutions that deal with crime and victimization of children, youth, women and Aboriginal persons and the increasing of public awareness.

The Strategy's priorities are children and youth, investing in Aboriginal People and Communities, and investing in women's personal security.

The Strategy is split into three areas, but this article and questions concern just one – the Community Mobilization Program.

The problem: the Community Mobilization Program doesn't fund community mobilization. (?) Listen:

There is a Downtown Eastside Child/Youth Protection Strategy that's been developing for several years. There's an advisory committee with people from the Downtown Eastside Youth Activities Society (DEYAS), Watari, Native Health, Trade-workers, Street Orientation Services, the Youth Action Coalition, a lawyer and people from Carnegie, Ray-Cam and Britannia community centres. The Neighbourhood Safety Office is the forum for networking and Deb Mearns and Kate Hodgson work to keep all aspects alive and vital. Guests at meetings have brought great support and whatever expertise and suggestions they can muster to get through or around the barriers to helping the children and youth in our neighbourhood and, by conscious extension, around the Lower Mainland and across the country.

This is Not a gathering of academics who engage in polite debate. Each person is directly involved in working with kids as young as 11, but mostly teenagers – drugs, runaways, sexual abuse situations, money and housing and the Law. What permeates every person's work and interaction is the spectre of kids being preyed on and either recruited or forced into the sex trade. No one, from prostitutes on the street to professors in ivory towers, wants to see young kids peddling their asses to survive or to get addictive drugs.

The DE strategy involves 1) continuous criticism of the police record (and by extension the Attorney General) in enforcement of Sec. 212(4), which is the law on having sex with minors; 2) creating a database on sexual predators who prey on kids; 3) engaging the entire community in helping kids access existing services and, seeing what is needed, fill the gaps.

About 2 years ago the frustration and anger at inaction by the criminal justice system was harnessed and the development of what came to be called the Community Alert Team proposal began. The basic idea is to hold training sessions in communities throughout the city on identifying sexual predators, to engage people in all walks of life to correctly compile and record information that can be presented in court. The most difficult aspect of deterring sexual predation is charging and convicting the predators. As said above, adult sex trade workers help where they can to pass on info about men asking for 12-14 year-olds; agency and service workers try to persuade kids to talk to them and the police 'scoop' kids found engaging in the sex trade or being used as drug mules.

On this last point alone, the Police Board was given a report by Sgt. Ken Frail on police involvement with children in the Downtown Eastside. There are up to three dedicated cars that can be dispatched or called to deal with kids under 16. The operations covered in the report spanned just 6 weeks and entailed 'scooping' children when seen or apprehended in the area for working the street in a sexual or drug-involved capacity. Police rarely arrest kids, instead getting name, age, and contacting the Ministry of Children and Families to see if a track record exists.. kids are then turned over to the ministry or taken home or back to their workers.

The numbers are like ice-water. The police, in 6 weeks, scooped 293 children under 16 from the streets of the Downtown Eastside. 75% were female; 41% were Aboriginal; 56% admitted to be addicted to either cocaine or heroin. Most were apprehended once and didn't return. One person was picked up 17 times in 6 weeks. Frail gave the report to the Police Board and shared findings with several media sources as well as Elders and agencies in the Aboriginal community. The following day he of course checked the media to see how the report was aired or written about – nothing.



The biggest obstacle has repeatedly been the ostrich – “if I don’t see the sexual exploitation of children, it doesn’t exist.”

The advisory committee members working on the CAT approach have ongoing interaction with the police, the Provincial Prostitution Unit, and have been enthusiastically welcomed in places like Ray-Cam, Britannia, Kiwassa, and Watari – places who actually have large numbers of children and teenagers vulnerable to this predation. People in all these communities always ask “What can I do?”

Back to Community Mobilization. The Vancouver Foundation applauded the initiative as good sense and provided funding. VanCity Community Partnerships, the Hamber Foundation, Wataari, Ray-Cam, DEYAS and the Law Foundation were accessed for money to develop training materials, to see what the legal requirements are for evidence and to put what can be shared and recorded on predators into a simple format, to have terminals at different locations on which basic info could be entered. All this was painstakingly developed and tested. The Provincial Prostitution Unit was impressed and one government department was so enthralled that, after attending an Advisory Committee meeting, suddenly announced the Community Action Team approach to involve getting people in all walks of community life trained in recognizing and reporting sexual predators trying to get at kids. (Just out of the blue..) The Advisory Committee saw it as a blatant attempt by the government dept. to come up with something to justify the continuation of its existence (and their funding and their jobs), since the blank of any real progressive work was soon to be realized when the Attorney General demanded a report. The Advisory Committee just renamed their proposal, replacing “Action” with “Alert” and pressed on. The government and PPU had paraded a paper trail but had no substance. The community Alert Team went ahead.

It was all submitted to the National Crime Prevention Centre and the co-chair of the Joint Management Committee of BC, Vera Lagasse, met with the principle people to discuss it in detail. She responded enthusiastically, saying that it met all the criteria, that it did involve communities, that it brought people together and gave a foundation for action in crime prevention. The involvement of children, their parents, aboriginal interests, and the de facto enhancement of (young) women’s safety and security was

particularly strong. She noted the involvement of the police in their efforts to deal with a flawed law (the infamous Sec. 212(4) again) The funding application only had to be shared with the other co-chair.

Wendy Taylor.

A letter came to the Advisory Committee through Suzanne Jean, who had been working continuously on the proposal for its entire existence. (By the way, the amount asked for was just \$50,000.) Following is the part where they get squirmy:

“The project that you have proposed does not support a crime prevention through social development approach. Rather, there appears to be a focus on prosecution of offenders instead of preventing the problem of sexual exploitation of youth. [!!] Furthermore, considering the enforcement perspective, there is not evidence of partnerships with police, Crown Counsel, or the Provincial Prostitution Unit. For this reason, [we] cannot recommend funding at this time.”

Crime Prevention is accomplished through community awareness. If the perps know they will be seen, relevant information recorded and competently handled, that the most difficult prospect of charges and conviction can and will happen, then the crime of sexually exploiting children in our and other neighbourhoods can be seriously reduced.

What happened? This kind of thinking is fairly straightforward. Wendy Taylor. When this letter came back, many people connected with the project said, ‘we should have known.’ She was a Crown attorney, got sacked. She made presentations to the Supreme court and got creamed. She was indirectly involved in the ‘liberation’ of the Community Action Team idea. I asked one person what her problem was. He said, “You got 3 hours?!”

The Community Alert Team (CAT) proposal will go ahead. Funding will be found, the Attorney General will continue to feel the heat for the lackadaisical approach of his ministry, and the police will have their arrest record paraded in the media on prevention of sexual exploitation of kids.

It’s sad when a national program gets skewed by individuals. It’s sad when people, dealing with an issue that no one wants to admit exists, get middle-class flack for seeing an approach that is too personal for those with decision-making power to admit is necessary. More on Wendy Taylor?

By PAULR TAYLOR

## I Bought Her Ice Cream

How can I watch a woman I knew  
 In the past long ago  
 When she bounced on my knee  
 When I took her to the park  
 When I bought her ice cream  
 When I pushed her on the swing  
 In the past, long ago  
 Now, when I see her  
 on the corner, after dark  
 She is selling herself,  
 her spirit, her soul..  
 How can I watch  
 This woman I knew

*Paul Wright*

## DERA General Meeting

**Guest(s): JOHN TURVEY of DEYAS**  
 to speak on the Needle Exchange, Youth  
 Detox and other work of the Downtown  
 Eastside Youth Activities Society.  
**COUNCILLOR JENNIFER CLARKE**  
 to speak on what she learned in Europe  
 about Harm Reduction and drug policy.

*October 7<sup>th</sup>, 10 a.m. All welcome!*

[If Carnegie is still closed the location will be  
 posted throughout the community.]



## The Aching Hunger

Little to give thanks when hunger takes over and nothing on your plate. It was bad back in the Dirty Thirties. Chaps I knew well often too tired, washed up or sick to make it to a Mission for a refreshing hymn sing, prayers or "thanks giving".. testimonials..and then (when they had you down on your knees) the bowl of soup. Thank God those primitive rituals, but not the hunger, have all but vanished.

**Sam Roddan**

## Cannibalism In The Downtown Eastside

5

Notes on the Gastown, Chinatown and Strathcona Community Alliance of some Business and Property Owners.

The Spanish painter, Goya, painted a picture of a monster eating human beings. That's what is happening in our community now. The monster of gentrification is devouring the Downtown Eastside, Vancouver's oldest and most inclusive community.

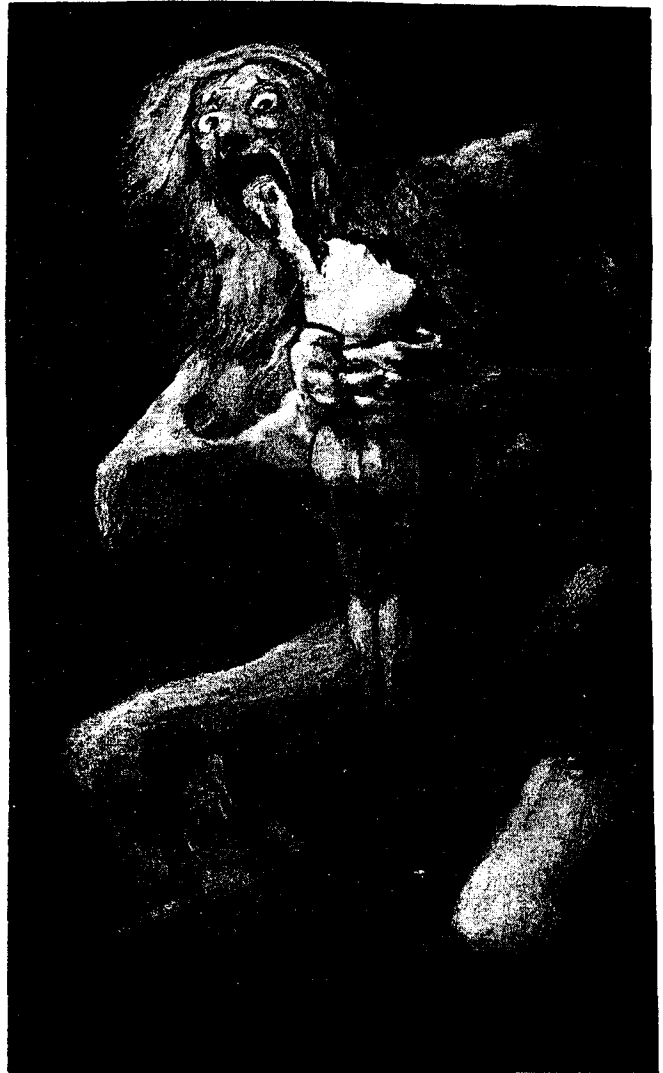
This same monster has already devoured most of the downtown peninsula of Vancouver, with Burrard Inlet on one side and English Bay and False Creek on the other. It is insatiable in its hunger for accumulation. It is market-driven, which means that it is profit-driven, and a city controlled by this monster "is not so much a place for people to live and call their own, as it is a machine rationally and effectively designed for making money." (1) The monster of gentrification thrives on the war of all against all, to use the words of Thomas Hobbes, and, as Shakespeare said even before Hobbes:

"It will come  
Humanity must perforce prey on itself,  
Like monsters of the deep."

(King Lear, Act 4, Scene 2)

Businessmen today talk about acting like cannibals when they devour each other or each other's companies. Gentrification - the pushing of low income residents out of their community so that developers can reap maximum profit from high land values and high rents - is a form of cannibalism. It is war, and as the term gentrification implies, it is class war. This dynamic of imperial accumulation, without regard to the suffering of dispossessed people, is behind the recent, brutal attack on drug users in the Downtown Eastside by a Gastown, Chinatown, Strathcona Alliance of some business and property owners. First Nations people have suffered from the dynamic of imperial accumulation for a long time, and they have resisted and they will prevail.

I fear this business Alliance. It has close connections to City Council. Powerful real estate interests have always sought to control city government because City Council has the power to decide what will be built and where. Vancouver's first Mayor was in real estate. Gordon Campbell, a former



GPRA

## Gentrification in the Downtown Eastside.

Mayor and now head of the provincial Liberal party, was trained in the Marathon Realty stable. Grant Longhurst of the business Alliance ran an election campaign for the NPA.

Referring to gentrification in the Downtown Eastside. Lief Eriksen wrote, "The market cannot abide such expensive real estate being used by the poor." (2) The Downtown Eastside is a tiny David compared to the Goliath of development determined to build the corporate city, and the community is in

crisis. One old-time resident said, "One day they're gonna come in here with a bunch of army trucks, and ship us all out to the sticks like POW's."

It seems like that's what the business Alliance really wants. In my view, it doesn't want to help low income or ill people. It wants to ship us all out to the sticks like POWs so developers can build the corporate city in our neighbourhood. The business Alliance call for an escalation of the police war on drugs is absurd in the light of the failure of that war. (3) Its call to abolish the Needle Exchange, which was set up to combat the spread of HIV/AIDS, threatens the health of the entire Vancouver community. Its opposition to a multi-service resource centre in the Downtown Eastside that will act as a sanctuary and referral centre for drug users means more overdose deaths. B.C.'s chief coroner, Larry Campbell, has said that such a centre could save lives, and that the area needs more facilities such as methadone programs, counselling, heroin maintenance trials, treatment beds and detox centres. (4)

By SANDY CAMERON

(1) The Developers, by James Lorimer, pub. by James Lorimer & Co., 1978, p.79.

(2) "Vying for Space: Neo-liberalism and the Criminalization of Poverty," an unpublished essay by Lief Eriksen, 1999.

(3) See the long series in *The Vancouver Sun* on the failure of the war on drugs, starting with the article "Eminent Advice: End The Drug War," by Dan Gardiner, *Van Sun*, Sept.6, 2000.

(4) "Rehab Centre could save lives: Coroner." by Lori Culbert, *The Vancouver Sun*. August 15, 2000.

## jog?

"Run for your life" is a free running and fitness program open to anyone in the downtown eastside, regardless of age, ability or financial situation.

The program is based on the "Sun Run" training book, which is a 13 week program. We start out by walking 3 or 4 days a week, and then gradually build up to running, staying within each person's limits.

We meet 7 days a week at 8am at the Andy Livingston Field at the corner of Keefer and Carrall Streets.

If you'd like to join the club, or if you'd like more information, come out to any session or phone

"The Portland Running Club" at 724-8492



## Homelessness

### LOOKING FOR REAL SOLUTIONS

Feel me and know me for awhile.  
Do you know me?  
I would love to know about you.  
Do you feel what I feel?

How about you?  
I don't have anything?  
Do you know.  
I don't have anyone.  
I have lots of pain around me.

You put your feet on the pedal of the car  
You go fast and faster  
But I have to put my heart under my feet  
And walk slow and steady

When I have a pain my heart is there  
Do you realize what I am talking about  
I don't think so and I'm lost and lonely.

Make me to be a person who feels  
What do you think or feel  
Still do you feel what I feel  
and share your happiness with me  
and let me for awhile feel what you feel

Nahid A. Nasirabdi



## RISK – CRIME – DEATH REDUCTION

For almost twenty years, I've lived in the Downtown Eastside and I've loved it here. I know many of my neighbours and enjoy seeing most of them daily. There have always been drug-related problems and it's always been necessary to guard the kids closely. People watch out for one another. It is a community.

The last few years, however, have been increasingly less fun. The Downtown Eastside Slowpitch League, which I've always played in, has almost disintegrated because players are afraid of falling on needles in our parks. The gym programs at the Carnegie are dwindling because people don't want to go through the drug dealers to get in. I witnessed a drug deal on the steps of my son's school the other day. Friends outside the area and even outside the province have seen the media coverage and are horrified that we continue to live here.

These are petty inconveniences compared to the misery we see people going through in our streets and alleys. One of his teachers told me my son said — "Us Four Sisters Co-op kids would never take drugs — we see how unhappy those people are".

It's obvious that Zero Tolerance isn't working in the United States and the "blind eye" with occasional "sweeps" isn't working here. If you "sweep" people into rat and disease-infested alleys like garbage, there's bound to be more crime and deaths. If you treat people like shit they'll act like shit.

These drugs are so powerful and take such control. How can the pain be lessened? I decided to find out what the European "experts" had to say.

At the drug symposium at UBC, the Dutch delegation explained their drug strategy in a town about the same size as Vancouver. The project is called Typhoon. They have one large clinic where, after the initial intake, addicts can go through one door to get methadone, another door for live-in detox, another

for day treatment, another for HIV treatment, another for counseling, another for after-care, another for addicted mothers and so on.

Hard drugs are not legal but they have about twenty safe injection sites throughout the city where addicts can shoot up in the presence of health workers. They are provided with drug treatment information each time. Dealers are not allowed. If the users don't respect the premise rules, the site is closed down for up to three months. The project has a mascot-like cartoon character called "Little Typhoon" who educates users and nonusers about dangerous drugs.

On the VANDU organized walking tour through the Downtown Eastside, the Dutch "experts" were appalled at the alley scene. They said the Dutch police also do "sweeps" when dealers and users are congregating in public but they call the health officials to tell them when. A medical team goes with the police to administer prescription drugs to the addicts when their heroin is taken and to urge them to go to the clinic. Taking addicts' drugs away just insures more crime and misery. When the walking tour reached the Carnegie corner crowds, one of the Dutch men said, "There should be a safe injection site in this center."

At the Japanese Hall, the Europeans answered the questions of a large group of addicts, residents and even a few politicians. Libby Davies asked them how they countered opposition which claimed harm reduction "enables" drug use. The German "expert" said addicts obviously don't need any enabling to use drugs. They need enabling to live until they can get treatment.

VANDU also helped organize a Positive Solutions rally on the steps of the Carnegie. The German

“expert” told a story about how police enforcement had changed over the last ten years.... One clinic client felt snakes all over him when he couldn’t get a fix. He was known to disrobe publicly and try to slap the snakes off his body. One day he was seen in the middle of an intersection clad only in his underwear. There was a police officer with him and he was banging his club on either side and all around the addict. When he was asked why he was banging his stick around the almost naked man, the policeman replied, “I’m helping him get the snakes off”. Ten years ago, he would have been hitting the addict with his stick.

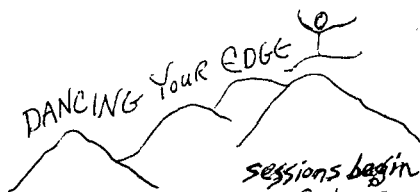
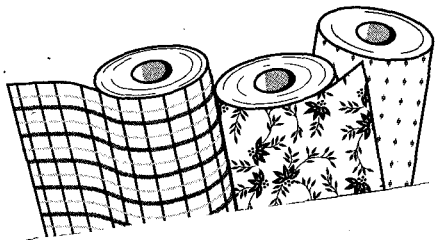
The Europeans also mentioned that their “Parents of Addicts” groups were well organized and strong. A woman from Kerrisdale made a very moving speech about her son’s continuing sad struggle with drug

addiction and our system’s inadequacy.

Ten years ago, the European cities were apparently in much the same state as Vancouver is in now. But they haven’t had the huge influx of crack cocaine yet. And they haven’t had Canada’s history of racism and colonialism. Their cities have managed to drastically reduce crime, heroin overdoses and the street scene. They treat addicts as human beings, not lepers. They said it has taken a lot of talking with all concerned and pressuring for “political will”. They suggested that if “harm reduction” has become such a volatile, controversial term that another phrase be coined like “risk reduction” or “death reduction”.

The bottom line is - A humane drug strategy for Vancouver must be designed now and our own Downtown Eastside experts can tell us that.

By LEITH HARRIS



\* please \*  
\* sign up in office \*

sessions begin  
Sunday Oct. 15  
11:00 - 1:00  
Carnegie gym

### In the Learning Centre – 3<sup>rd</sup> floor The Harry Potter Saga continues...

Every Wednesday morning at 11 a.m. there is a reading circle in the Learning Centre. In October we will continue reading J.K. Rowlings’ “HARRY POTTER AND THE PHILOSOPHER’S STONE.”

Please join us to listen and enjoy.

psst - this is the truth! Don’t tell anyone! There is a place in the fires of the front in the Downtown Eastside where one can go and learn something for Free. No preaching, no church. All you need is a yen to learn or try to learn anything you want to learn in the academic area.

Gee did I forget yours truly and Mike McCormick, and all the unsung others who are there to help you in our own unique ways. Let us not forget Margaret Shea, Vidhea, Tim, Lucy, Bev and all the many others - without their presence this would not be a human experience.

A lot of the folks come here to get 2nd hand education on issues of some importance to themselves, while others seek the companionship of knowing knowledge is here if needed.

I myself am very grateful that at 50 years young I can grow and teach as well as learn on a day by day entrance into my new world of learning.

Mr. Mcbinner\* email \* binner@vcn.bc.ca





## Positive Solutions

*"There is no alternative."* (TINA)

*"There are thousands of alternatives."* (TATA)

The current methods of dealing with drugs and their effects on people and communities are too little, misdirected, hit-and-miss, and the deaths continue. This from users, health officials, front line workers, community activists and even police

The four pillars of effective response are prevention, treatment, enforcement and harm reduction.

On the weekend of September 22-23 there was a conference at the University of British Columbia on Harm Reduction. To bring it to the street.. specifically to bring it to the community surrounding the Carnegie Centre and the Downtown Eastside in general.. the Carnegie Street program and the Community Action Project held an event on the steps of Carnegie starting about noon on Monday, the 25<sup>th</sup>. It was advertised as **"Positive Solutions"**, to give the general public a chance to be on our infamous corner, to see what the Street Program offers, and to both hear from and question the exponents of harm reduction.

There was a video playing outside near the side entrance, giving the current state of affairs and the seeming indifference that drug users and the disease of addiction is afforded. Hard numbers show that the prohibition of drugs mirrors the consequences that prohibition of alcohol had in the 1920's. Criminal activity generates enormous profits, police are corrupted, the legal system seems powerless to stop or even curtail the substance and the erosion of societal mores is blamed on users. One example is that if it cost \$1 to make a pen and this pen could then be sold for up to \$17,000, the penalties for doing so would not be a deterrent but just the price of doing business. (This 1:17000 ratio is the potential in producing and selling cocaine and heroin.) The Video also contained the perspective of addicts and

their fight with the disease.

The first speaker was to have been Larry Campbell, the Chief Coroner of BC. He has been a most vocal critic of the current emphasis on enforcement and foot-dragging on treatment. It was his predecessor, Vince Caine, who slammed the politicians and reactionary mindset that refuses to consider any approach other than enforced treatment and enforced incarceration of drug users. In 1993 there were 353 deaths from drug overdoses, and the time between then and now has seen over 2000 people die from drug overdoses. Campbell couldn't attend but the harsh reality he deals with can't be denied.

Present for both the UBC conference and this event was Werner Schneider, former Drug Policy Coordinator in Frankfurt, Germany. He's been in Vancouver and the Downtown Eastside on many occasions, speaking at harm reduction events over the last several years. Werner spoke of some experiences in Frankfurt where safe injection sites and heroin trials are part of an enviable cross-section of treatment options and low-level access alternatives. It has been a gradual change over the last 10 years to get politicians, service providers, health officials, community groups, police and users to work on positive solutions to the drug epidemic, but results are incredibly encouraging. Werner's stats have been mirrored in Switzerland and England, where 70% of voters agreed to harm reduction and prescription heroin, where property crime fell by over 80%, where drug use did not go through the roof once these measures were in place.

The next speaker was Sheree Hudson, a clinical educator with the Vancouver/Richmond Health Board. Sheree demystified "harm reduction" with examples of seat belts, wearing helmets and pads on bikes and skateboards... of reducing the harm inherent in certain behaviour. The aim of harm

reduction in the context of drug use is to keep individuals as healthy as possible while they deal with both personal and addiction issues at a pace that is at least possible for them.

Mo Townsley supported this approach and expanded on it while speaking of her perspective and experience as the coordinator of Youth Detox with the Downtown Eastside Youth Activities Society (DEYAS), which also operates North America's highest volume needle exchange. The whole idea of detoxification is to reduce the harm that drug use is having on a person, while not simply tying their hands behind their back to stop it. Drug use is often a way of coping with deeper issues, and may even be beneficial if it keeps that person from violence towards self or others. There is no magic bullet in treatment, but the spectre of arrest and jail only serves to increase the risk and keeps use in alleys or isolated places. Overdoses can be treated but the time window is very narrow; preventable deaths are occurring every day.

Randolf Puder is the brother of the late Gil Puder and spoke of Gil's awakening to the reality of the drug problem because of three incidents he went through as a constable with the Vancouver Police Department. The first was when he had to shoot a drug addict robbing a bank; the second was when his partner was killed in a drug raid gone bad; the third was when he had to inform a parent that their child had died of an overdose. Gil became an outspoken advocate of harm reduction and decried the corruption that fighting the drug war brought to his profession and to police in general. Gil was ostracized by his fellow officers and investigated by superiors. He was warned not to promote his views on the legalisation of drugs, better treatment options and the insidious effect that US drug policy has on policing and people. Randolph spoke movingly of Gil's convictions and efforts to bring honour back to policing in drug matters. He assured one questioner that Gil's book, unpublished at the time of his death, would see the light of day. [Gil died, coincidentally, of "cancer" at the age of 40. He was a martial arts expert and trained officers in the use of force.]

Bringing "harm reduction" to the question of "why?" was Suzy Ruttan. She introduced herself as "not an expert" and "[I] don't work on the front lines with addicts or health." Suzy is the mother of an 18

## DARK SPOT

In the city we walk amongst  
The tall buildings rising above  
Threatening to fall down on us  
With those thousands of eyes  
Peering out of windows every day  
On the mountains we bathe  
In the colours of the sky at sunset  
A sea of tangerine and turquoise  
We travel to those distant shores  
As far as the mind will take us.  
In the city we take some stand  
We see the moon reflected on  
The plate glass of the hi-rises  
There is always that dark spot  
In our lives we think is hidden  
Doesn't escape us on the mountain  
Sunlight hits a spot on a tree and  
There find my hand in my pocket  
It is the human part that fails us  
The flip side of the coin, freedom.

Daniel Rajala



year-old heroin addict and has formed a group of parents called From Grief to Action. She spoke of the human face of addiction, of how people get this disease, of the struggles that parents and caregivers alike face when seeing for the first time how appalling the lack of treatment options is. Many of the parents she knows have had a child die; many more have nowhere to get answers or even who to ask – about treatment, the law, health policy and *harm reduction*.

Harm reduction includes safe-use practices to avoid contracting HIV/AIDS, Hep C and other bad effects of needle use. It includes looking at housing, counselling, and enabling addicts to stabilize their lives and function. It puts ignored or missing human factors back into the complexity and contradictions

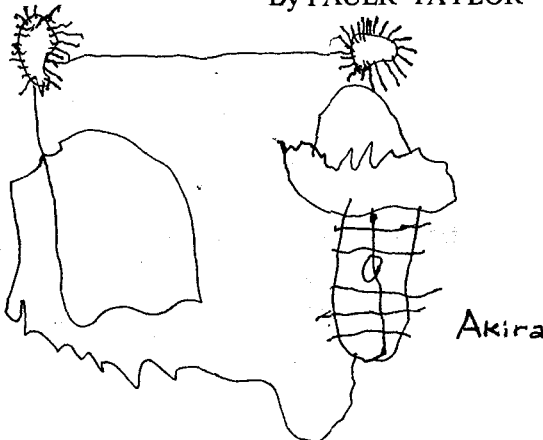
of substance abuse. Factors of poverty, crime, street safety, dignity, disease and hope are all part of the mix.

Invitations to this event went to many people in the surrounding neighbourhoods, and to many groups and organisations aligned (consciously or not) with the so-called Community Alliance. The pushers in this bunch want increases in police enforcement, with all money now going to harm reduction and preventive measures and even education on same to be withdrawn unilaterally – the closure of the needle exchange, the shutting down of the Carnegie Street Program and the incarceration of users.. or people who look like users.. or people who look scruffy.. or anyone who looks so poor that they affect the property or business values of non-users/non-scruffy/non-poor. The idea seems to be Not-In-My-Back-Yard, but includes “addicts choose to be addicts so they should quit or die.” (..and not on my property)


This is the context for any and all efforts to educate and hold open discussions with residents and, on a larger scale, the government. The issues of money, power and class are not separate. Drug users are being used as the most universally condemnable segment of the population, while the criminal activity which profits off them and the prohibition of various approaches to dealing with the ever-present dissatisfaction with life soars.

There were some local people who attended. There was also a conspicuous absence of the most vocal detractors of harm reduction. Hopefully overwhelming evidence and experience of thousands of people and hundreds of organisations around the world will help bring about necessary changes.

By PAULR TAYLOR




## Hungry



Woke up hungry,  
I have no money  
I've written 400+ songs  
And I can't buy a pop.  
PM been MP for 30+ years  
How much money has he spent?  
And I sing at Main & Hastings  
without one toke of coke  
Then barred for wanting to be fucked  
And you know how it feels  
Somewhere you fucking well know  
And so I wait.  
Until you recognize  
We're all the same  
With small divergences  
But what I like you like  
And I've done there been that  
And unless you want to  
get hungry or starve  
You better realize it.

A. Kostynuik

## Tiger and Christian



My friend Tiger  
Was hungry and lean  
My friend Christian  
Was flabby and obscene  
(If obscene was right word  
for disregarding his mien)  
He prayed while tiger  
crept up on the sly  
He looked up to GOD  
Got dust in his eye  
Tiger leapt and took down his prey  
And I not hungry walked away

A. Kostynuik



Attention: Mayor Philip Owen

Re: Downtown Eastside Resource Centre

Dear Mr. Owen,

I am writing to you to express my concern over the moratorium that you have placed on the process of establishing a Downtown Eastside Resource Centre for drug users.

I am an architect who has a business in the Gastown area and often observe intravenous and other drug use near my office. As a compassionate human being I am personally distressed by the pain and suffering which I encounter daily. I completely understand why many of the business community like me in this neighbourhood call for more police action to solve the problem. I believe that this request, while well intentioned, will not help.

After considering the alternatives I am convinced that the solution is to be found in the realm of public health, not in the criminal justice department. We only have to look at our southern neighbours to see the ineffectiveness of the "war on drugs." The United States now has the most number of people per capita in jail in the world and they are awash with illegal drugs. A clear indicator of the failure of the war on drugs is the correlation of increased drug war spending (police, courts, and jails) and increased availability of ever-purer heroin and cocaine. The more money the U.S. has dedicated to police enforcement, the worse the drug problem has become.

The Canadian model of dealing with addictions is predominantly punitive. We are just beginning to realize the consequences of this prohibitionist approach. The global illegal drug industry has empowered organized criminals, corrupted governments at all levels, trampled on human rights, stimulated violence and distorted both economic markets and moral values. These are the consequences not of drug use per se, but of decades of failed and futile drug war policies. The recent series of articles in the *Vancouver Sun* has accurately laid out the horrendous costs of this failed policy.

Instead, I support the policy of harm reduction, and see the resource centre as a step in the right direction. The research coming from European and Australian explorations in harm reduction looks very encouraging. They have been able to reduce street consumption, crime and infectious diseases. They are ahead of us in finding workable, cost effective solutions to the problem of rampant addiction. We need more than just a resource centre and safe injection sites. We need drugs of abuse to be available on prescription to registered addicts. We need to attack the problem in a positive, productive manner by providing drugs to these desperate people.

I know that many of my Gastown corporate and residential neighbours will see this as aiding and encouraging drug use, and would want to see more disincentives (e.g. heavier policing) in place. However, I am struck by the fact that the built-in disincentives to street drug use are so extreme already. Addicts already face homelessness, violence, hunger and a very high risk of death from overdoses and AIDS. The idea that the risk of arrest will deter drug users seems strange. For many of this troubled sector of our population, jail would be a huge improvement in their standard of living.

I am also aware of the argument that a resource centre will add to the concentration of addicts in the downtown eastside, placing an unfair burden on this troubled area. The simple truth is that this is the location for a resource centre that will be the most effective. The implementation of the public health model will take time, but would eventually lead to a disbursement of facilities around the city, as addicts have the opportunity to improve their lives and relocate. In particular, it is obvious that a model of drugs being made available on prescription to addicts would cut the legs out from under the illegal drug trade now concentrated in the Downtown Eastside, quickly reducing the incentive of troubled people to group in one area of the city.

13  
Finally, the logic of the economics of the public health solution is compelling. Both the RAND and Fraser institutes, which are right wing economic think tanks, support the harm reduction approach. They have clearly documented why the war on drugs is not cost effective and harm reduction simply makes financial sense. Both these organizations support decriminalization, legalization, or prescription of currently illegal drugs. This approach, when guided and controlled by a public health vision, could actually lead to a significant reduction of the problems of the Downtown Eastside.

More police is not the answer. The war on drugs is a problem masquerading as a solution. The only chance our society has of actually impacting the massive problem of addiction in our streets, neighbourhoods and families is to start to understand that this is a public health problem, not a criminal justice problem.

Yours sincerely,

**Bruce Haden, MAIBC**

cc Don MacPherson, Vancouver City Hall drug co-ordinator  
Jack Altman, Vancouver/Richmond Health Board  
Jim MacDonald, Addiction Services  
The Vancouver Sun, The Courier  
Tom Laviolette, Carnegie Centre; The Carnegie Newsletter  
Rona Minguay, Downtown Vancouver Association  
Stockwell Day, Leader of the Opposition  
Jean Chretien, Prime Minister



### Other Neighbourhood News

\*The small park at the foot of Main Street has been named the Wendy Poole Park. This is the result of months of effort by Don Larson, one of the people who fought for CRAB Park. Gasbags and related yups wanted to call it Gastown Heritage Park or, as normally done, after some rich dead white guy. Wendy was a young Aboriginal woman who was murdered near by, and the memorial is for women who have died by violence in this community. (In the last 10 years there have been over 130.)

### THE FUTURE OF HOMELESSNESS

Dr. David Hulchanski, director of the Centre for Urban and Community Studies at U of T, is speaking about the national homelessness disaster at the Portland Hotel, 40 W. Hastings, at 7pm on October 4<sup>th</sup>.

### The Ghost of Dylan Thomas

A day of reconciliation met the ghost of Dylan Thomas  
While walking through the open corridor of tall trees  
With grey fog climbing up the mountain from the bay  
Something that had been lost in time could be found  
It is trying listening to lovers talk of their perfect lovers  
Like the picture of the Queen stamped on the full moon  
Mine with a chip off it, tried not to walk away in envy  
Thursday night Dylan Thomas poem, "This bread I break"  
Sitting outside a coffee shop just down from the Ramada  
Rumors are filling city streets as the tourists walk by  
It is a river of life finding home in soft pillows and dreams  
In a company of strangers it is best the cup be overflowing  
When living in a world where great writers are seldom  
Appreciated by man I paint daisies everywhere on my body  
Put on trench coat with dead yellow flowers pinned to it  
And I run out to greet death like a most welcome friend  
For it is life on earth I will not be satisfied with for long  
My body breaks daily with all your words coming to me  
For in this world where we suffer from a lack of sleep  
And when running a race it sharpens the pain of muscles  
When I have given all I got to this life and am left empty  
The task master continues to crack the whip daily while  
There is escape found in the intricate design of everything  
Left us there was much more you wanted to put on paper.

Daniel Rajala



**Vancouver Agreement** – the name given to three levels saying that each has to be involved in changing the Downtown Eastside. About a year ago this happened and the meetings began. The federal government channels a million dollars a year for the next 5 years through the City of Vancouver, with the money coming from the National Crime Prevention Centre. (It makes you wonder if the CAT project was seen as casting too much light on the dark underbelly of what really goes on here, but that's between Wendy Taylor and the wall.) Community Directions also accessed this money, but after it got to Vancouver.

**Vancouver Agreement** – with three different political parties, widely divergent agendas and powerful interests on all sides vying for and crying for the "right thing."

General wisdom and common sense has the Four Pillar approach to drugs and despair – Prevention, Treatment, Harm Reduction and Enforcement.

Players in the **Vancouver Agreement** are the feds, represented by Hedy Fry (Liberal MP), Jenny Kwan (NDP MLA) and Philip Owen (NPA Mayor). They made an official announcement on Friday, September 29<sup>th</sup> of initiatives in five areas:

**-Economic Development:** PEACH is a program of loans, loan guarantees, leases and grants for people, non-profits, co-ops and aboriginal groups. There is the provincial *Community Development Fund*, the federal *Entrepreneurial and Small Business Incentive Program* and the municipal *Lease-Subsidy / Tenant Improvement Program*. Local decision making is through the Vancouver Economic Development Commission and Four Corners Support Fund Society. Local experience with the initial stages of some of these monikored means seem to have gotten a lot of 'maybe's' but stuff is there. A storefront is supposed to open to give street access to information and applications.

**-Housing:** new housing has been coming in various places, and each level of government has had something to do with most of it. Philip Owen cited Four Sisters as beginning the trend over a decade ago, but in order not to miss anything glaringly obvious by its absence the recent list would include DERA's build-

ings and the recent renovation/opening of the Metro-pole; Main&Hastings' Bruce Ericksen Place and its new building at 40 E.Hastings; Native Health's development on E.Pender, St.James' has at least two developments, one reno and one new; the Lore Krill Co-op is coming soon and the Katherine Sanford Housing Society is getting a facility for seniors with mental health issues. The Portland Hotel Society has its new building and is managing the Sunrise, Washington and Regal hotels.

**-Health:** a treatment centre with new and expanded services; detox, sobering, stabilisation, methadone. An "indoor health connection program to provide frontline health and substance misuse [that's a novel way to put it] referral services, life skills training and social support programs for street-involved drug and alcohol users."



**-Street Improvements:** the redesign of the corner in front of Carnegie at Hastings & Main has been under discussion for about a year. The initiative here is to reduce the illegal drug activity. (As another superior fart, a writer named Scott Simpson had an article in the *Sun* calling for the closure of washrooms at the corner as the obvious solution to driving everybody back into the alleys. He consciously ignored the proposals worked out over several months and wrote his tripe, based on similar shit presented at the Police Board. Funny that it gets featured while a report on children in the sex trade is buried.)

**-Enforcement:** Police and targetting of dealers continues to be relatively high profile. Constables will be redeployed, there is money for coordination between police and various health services for users, and maps and graphics were on hand to reassure the right-wingers that there are lots of cops.

Comments came from Tom Oleman about the apparent lack of Aboriginal consultation. He got an answer about how many places there were in all this for Native presence, but a woman standing close by just choked, saying that there hadn't been even 5 seconds when Native issues were front and centre.

Another comment went to the apparent misplacement of harm reduction in this. Maybe it's contained in the health initiatives; maybe everyone is waiting for the outcome of the Resource Centre for drug users melodrama and the 90-day moratorium.

All in all, it is promising when everyone involved can't stop saying how glad they are to be part of something. Keep your eyes open, expect a miracle!

By PAULR TAYLOR



### More Random Acts of Kindness...

- \* As a child I understood how to give. I've forgotten this grace since I became civilized. - *Ohiyesa*
- \* Just do what must be done. This may not be happiness, but it is greatness. - *Shaw*
- \* When you are kind to someone in trouble, you hope they'll remember and be kind to someone else. And it'll become like a wildfire. - *Whoopi Goldberg*
- \* Let a good person do good deeds with the same zeal that an evil person does bad ones. - *Rokeach*
- \* Life's most persistent and urgent question is "What are you doing for others?" - *Martin Luther King*
- \* With every deed you are sowing a seed, though the harvest you may not see. - *Ella Wilcox*
- \* When a blind man carries a lame man, both go forward. - Swedish proverb
- \* The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched. They must be felt with the heart. - *Helen Keller*
- \* Live as if everything you do will eventually be known. - *Hugh Prather*
- \* Service is the rent we pay for being. It is the very purpose of life and not something you do in your spare time. - *Marian Edelman*
- \* Concern should drive us into action, not into depression. - *Karen Hormy*
- \* The white man knows how to make everything, but he does not know how to distribute it. - *Sitting Bull*
- \* We realize that what we are doing is a drop in the ocean. But if this drop were not in the ocean, it would be missed. - *Mother Teresa*
- \* It is our special duty that if anyone needs our help, we should give such help to the utmost of our power. - *Cicero*

Copied out by Beth Buchanan

*We who are liberal and progressive know  
that the poor are our equals in every sense  
except that of being equal to us.*

**Lionel Trilling**

*Women  
constitute half the world's population,  
perform nearly two-thirds of its work hours,  
receive one-tenth of the world's income  
and own less than one-hundredth  
of the world's property.*

**United Nations Report**

*The wrong sort of people are always in power,  
because they would not be in power  
if they were not the wrong sort of people.*

**Jon Wynne- Tyson**



### CAMP FIRCOM

Skipper and clipper ad Early Jones  
Out to sea Ocean canoeing  
Skippy at the bow looking for hidden shoals  
Clipper humming happily music for the soul  
they ain't nothing swifter  
doing double time to the tide  
scattering of light cloud provides  
some shade for we three  
Nothing doing out canoeing  
suddenly spied a wave three feet high  
Raise yer Paddles I sound the alarm  
The decks were swamped we feared  
come to harm  
Challenge the elements battle the swells  
surge up and down up and down  
Man the bilges, hard astern  
Juice cans emptied and none upturned  
Put ashore, we spied a cave,  
let's hide out in there  
"I'm stuck," she said, "Can't get off this rock!"  
"Is everybody here? Let's all take stock."  
Dry off and kick back we can try again later..

Taum Danberger

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

**2000 DONATIONS** Libby D.-\$55  
 Sam R.-\$40 Nancy W.-\$20 Eve E.-\$20  
 Margaret D.-\$30 Shyamala G.-\$18  
 Joy T.-\$30 Val A.\$36 Wm B-\$20  
 Thomas B.-\$41 Harold D.-\$7 Pam-\$22  
 Rolf A.-\$45 Bruce J.-\$50 Paula -\$10  
 Kettle -\$18 Sonya S.-\$140 BCTF-\$25  
 Nancy H.-\$35 Bill G.-\$150 Wes K.-\$30  
 DEYAS-\$200 RayCam-\$25 LSS-\$25  
 Wisconsin Historical Society -\$10  
 Heather S.-\$18 John S-\$50  
 Yukiko -\$10 VEDC -\$25 Paddy -\$60  
 Rockingguys -\$30 Anonymous -\$13

FREE - donations accepted

# Carnegie

## NEWSLETTER

101 Main Street, Vancouver V6A 1T7 (604) 681 1300

THE NEWSLETTER IS A PUBLICATION OF THE  
 CARNEGIE COMMUNITY CENTRE ASSOCIATION

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

**Submission Deadline  
 for next issue**

Thursday, October 12

**The Downtown Eastside Residents Association can help you with:**

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

**We offer many services as well including a  
 FREE PHONE and VOICE MAIL for \$3.00 a month (or less).**

**Come to the DERA office at 425 Carrall Street or phone us at 682-0931**

**DERA has been serving the Downtown Eastside for 27 YEARS!**



# HELP SAVE AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The number of affordable housing units in the Downtown Eastside is shrinking at an alarming rate. In the three years that Vancouver City Council has had the power to regulate residential hotel stock, nearly 1,000 homes have been lost. Council has yet to enact a Conversion & Demolition Control By-Law to control the rate of change in the residential hotel stock.

So many affordable housing units have been lost to conversions to tourist use that new housing has not kept pace. Any stability built up during the 1990s has been lost due to the number of residential hotel units converted or demolished.

If City Council can pass a by-law to protect trees, surely it can protect Vancouver's affordable housing stock. There is less low-income housing in the downtown core now than there was 10 years ago.

Downtown residential hotels have never been considered adequate housing, but they do perform a crucial role in helping to reduce homelessness.

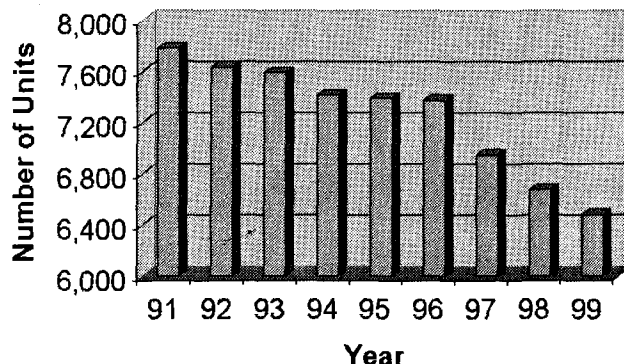
The City has played a positive role in partnering with the province and non-profits to build new affordable housing, but must act now to stabilize the existing residential hotel stock.

**Please sign  
and mail this form  
today**

**Time is running out!  
We must act now  
to stop further losses  
of affordable housing!**

**Get involved: call CCAP 689-0397 or Fax 606-2736**

**Vancouver's Residential Hotel  
Stock 1991-99**





# STOP city council ERASING low-income HOUSING

Dear Mayor and City Councilors:

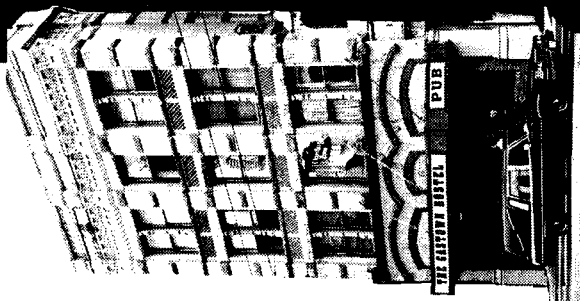
Three years have passed since you have had the ability to create a residential hotel conversion & demolition by-law. Since then at least 12 hotels, totaling close to 1,000 units have converted to tourist use. With every one of these hotel conversions more people have faced eviction, disruption in their lives and greater risk of homelessness.

This significant loss of units has been large enough to offset gains through new affordable housing built throughout the 1990s. How many units must we lose before Council takes action to address this unprecedented loss in low-income housing? Not since Expo 86 have we seen this high rate of loss.

I encourage City Council to endorse as quickly as possible a hotel demolition and conversion control by-law.

SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_



# Call to Action for Affordable Housing Week

## Guiding Principles

The health and stability of our communities depends on the availability of affordable housing. Safe, secure, and affordable housing is fundamental to every person's health and mental and social well-being, and critical to the prevention of homelessness.

Providing affordable housing in all types of neighbourhoods is central to creating inclusive communities that reflect the diversity of our society.

Strategies to provide affordable housing should be built on partnerships between communities, non-profit organizations, local, provincial, and federal governments, and the private sector.

Projects and initiatives addressing housing needs of low income singles, families, seniors, and youth must:

- be affordable (costs should not exceed 30% of the persons net income);
- be accessible to all of those in need;
- provide for a range of housing options;
- protect and maintain existing rental housing stock;
- increase the supply of appropriate and affordable housing.



## Call to Action

We, the Tenants Rights Action Coalition and the Lower Mainland Network for Affordable Housing, representing over 30 community service organizations, non-profit societies, housing providers, social housing developers, and residents associations, call on the federal, provincial, and local governments, as well as communities, to work together to increase the availability of affordable housing.

### Specifically,

#### we call on the federal government to

- restore funding for the construction of new social housing;
- repair and preserve existing affordable housing stock;
- develop incentive-based policies to support affordable housing initiatives from the private sector;
- expand residential rehabilitation funding to preserve affordable housing;
- increase the federal budget for housing by 1%, effectively doubling it, to address affordability problems and end homelessness.

#### we call on the provincial government to

- provide more community supports for people with mental illness;
- increase shelter allowances through the BC Benefits program to reflect local rents;
- increase the provincial budget for housing by 1% to address affordability problems and homelessness.

#### we call on local governments to

- provide or lease land at reduced costs to facilitate the construction of affordable housing;
- permit secondary suites in all single family houses;
- adopt a no net loss strategy to preserve existing affordable housing by placing controls on demolition and conversion;
- adopt Standards of Maintenance bylaws to repair and prevent further physical deterioration of SROs and other rental housing;
- acquire SROs in partnership with non-profit management;
- encourage the creation of inclusive communities through planning and zoning and address NIMBY (Not-In-My-Backyard) barriers through community education;
- increase the municipal budget for housing by 1% to address affordability problems and homelessness.

we call on individuals, communities, and the private sector to

- partner with governments to build and manage new affordable housing;
- support the construction of social housing in our neighbourhoods;
- raise our neighbours' and friends' awareness of the need for affordable housing and its benefits to the overall health of our communities.



## SIGNS OF THE TIMES

across north america  
hand held pieces of cardboard  
crudely lettered or painstakingly printed  
express the lived poetry of poverty

no home  
no job  
no money  
no food  
and name  
preventable diseases untreated  
because of inability  
to pay for relief or healing

signs  
reaching from the atlantic  
to the pacific oceans

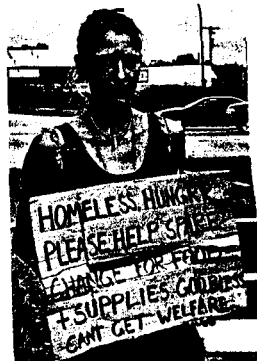
please help  
god bless you  
have a good day  
god bless  
please help

signs  
call to us  
beg  
plead  
pray  
for a meagre but heroic response  
give to all who ask

but they want my money for alcohol  
they want my money for drugs

give to all who ask  
but there's too many  
of these  
signs that disclose  
and subvert  
by their very understatement  
the social extermination  
of human beings

their sheer physical presence  
their faces  
their eyes  
their likeness  
pierce our entertainments  
pierce our wastefulness  
our priorities  
our conscience



a blind man  
homeless  
holds a sign  
and sees through us  
so deeply and clearly  
we can't stand it  
and demand  
public space be made private  
and these living signs  
driven elsewhere  
anywhere  
nowhere  
by more bylaws  
by more police  
these living signs  
anger

they terrify  
because they reflect  
our own possibilities  
in this anti-human economic system

no food  
no job  
no money  
no home

so we need more  
zones of exclusion  
more censorship of human beings  
who hold  
these signs of the times  
because  
they hold them  
for us  
all

Bud Osborn  
[published in Briarpatch, 1/00]

Join women all over the world in protesting against violence and poverty. In Vancouver, we are meeting at Oppenheimer Park at 4PM on October 17 to hear speakers, drummers, and performers speak out on the International Day for the Ending of Poverty. We are marching to the Aboriginal Friendship Centre at Commercial and Hastings. Bring empty pots and pans and other noise makers to show what policies of globalization and legislation mean for poor people. To get more information call 215-1103, 872-8212, or 879-1209. Everyone is welcome!



severely on the lives of the almost 2000 people who use it daily.

**\*Evelyn Saller** is an essential service from the outset, so low cost meals, showers and laundry and some other stuff will be available but with reduced staff and hours.

**\*The Neighbourhood Safety Office** will be open 5 days a week at 12 E. Hastings. 687-1772 Call for info on what they can help with.

**\*Community Directions** held an Open House on September 29<sup>th</sup> right after the Vancouver Agreement announcement and, coincidentally, right across the street. I will make a much fuller, in-depth report on the work in five areas of housing, drug & alcohol, economic development, children & youth, and women's issues. There is now a healthy Aboriginal involvement. Marg and Edna guesstimated 200 came through to see and talk and it looks good.

**\*By the time you read this the so-called Community Alliance** will have held its parade/rally to condemn all programs and services that work with or service anyone even remotely connected with drugs and the street. It's gotten almost childish as their heavy breathing permeates the recent media stuff. It sure shows when you've got money, although what it shows is another story. What I wanted to leave you with is this bit of ice-water down your spine:

- when this alliance thing was made public a few weeks ago a CKNW reporter tried to interview Brice Rositch, the architect at 120 Powell and wannabee NPA politico, on his/their demand that the Needle Exchange be closed. Following is a text rendering ...  
**CKNW:** "So you'd rather AIDS spreads?"

**Rositch:** [Silence]

**CKNW:** "So you'd rather AIDS spreads and people die, sir?"

**Rositch:** [Silence]

**CKNW:** "I am asking you a question, sir."

**Rositch:** [Silence]

**CKNW:** "I am asking you a question."

**Rositch:** Grinned and walked away.

The groups that are organizing the event are: Breaking the Silence, Crabtree Corner, Downtown Eastside Women's Centre, End Legislated Poverty, Grassroots Women's Discussion Group, Philippine Women Centre, and Rape Relief.



## NEIGHBOURHOOD NEWS

**\*Carnegie is closed.** The City employees are on strike for a number of issues, and the CUPE union local is being forced to disrupt all city-run services through job action. The Carnegie Association is on record as supporting the 4-day work week, as this works exceptionally well here. Other issues include benefits and job security, and virtually none will cost the City any money. Unfortunately, as this action commences, Carnegie has not yet been declared an essential service, even though it was previously. The Association is not being struck so we will continue our work, meaning the Newsletter, the Community Action Project and outreach. The reality of no Street Program or Oppenheimer Park staff or, most crucial, no open centre, will almost immediately impact

# CHILDREN'S NEEDS vs. CORPORATE GREED

## The federal government allows:

**\$79  
TAKEN**

by the  
provinces\*  
from each  
child  
every  
month  
because  
their  
parents  
receive  
welfare



**\$0  
TAKEN**

from  
GM Canada  
for  
corporate  
tax  
on a  
profit  
of \$679  
million\*\*

**I do not support** corporate greed. For example, 58 billion in tax cuts which mostly benefit the wealthy. Corporate tax reduced from 28% to 21%. Corporations with a combined profit of \$18,566 billion paying no income tax whatsoever.

**I do want** children on welfare to get the National Child Benefit Supplement of \$955 per year – and *not* to have it deducted from their families' welfare payments. These are benefits they need and deserve. This money would assist parents in providing food, clothing, housing, transportation, school supplies, etc. to their children.

Name.....

Address.....

Signature.....

Produced by Downtown Eastside Women's Centre and End Legislated Poverty (604) 879-1209  
Photo: Colleen Heslin Design & production: Eye Design Inc. Vancouver, BC

Please mail on  
October 17, 00  
International Day  
for the Eradication  
of Poverty

No  
postage  
required

Right Hon. Jean Chretien  
Prime Minister  
Room 309-S  
Centre Block  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 0A6

### Source of income should not be grounds for discrimination

\* Newfoundland and New Brunswick opted to let families keep the NCBS \*\*based upon *Unfair Shares*, 1996/1998 Printed on recycled paper

## ***A Prayer for Children***

We pray for children  
 Who put chocolate fingers everywhere,  
 Who like to be tickled,  
 Who stomp in puddles and ruin their new pants,  
 Who sneak Popsicles before supper,  
 Who erase holes in math workbooks,  
 Who never can find their shoes.

And we pray for those  
 Who stare at photographers from behind barb-wire  
 Who can't bounce down the street  
 in a pair of new sneakers,  
 Who never "counted potatoes,"  
 Who are born in places we wouldn't be caught  
 dead,  
 Who never go to the circus,  
 Who live in an X-rated world.

We pray for children  
 Who bring us sticky kisses and fistfuls of  
 dandelions  
 Who sleep with the dog and bury goldfish,  
 Who hug us in a hurry and forget their lunch  
 money,  
 Who cover themselves with Band-Aids and sing  
 off-key,  
 Who squeeze toothpaste all over the sink.  
 Who slurp their soup.

And we pray for those  
 Who never get dessert,  
 Who have no safe blanket to drag behind them,  
 Who watch their parents watch them die,  
 Who can't find any bread to steal,  
 Who don't have rooms to clean up,  
 Whose pictures aren't on anybody's dresser,  
 Whose monsters are real.

We pray for children  
 Who spend all their allowance before Tuesday,  
 Who throw tantrums in the grocery store and pick  
 at their food,  
 Who like ghost stories,  
 Who shove dirty clothes under the bed,  
 Who never rinse out the tub,



Who get visits from the tooth fairy,  
 Who don't like to be kissed in front of the carpool,  
 Who squirm in church and scream in the phone,  
 Whose tears we sometimes laugh at,  
 And whose smiles can make us cry.

And we pray for those  
 Whose nightmares come in the daytime,  
 Who will eat anything,  
 Who have never seen a dentist,  
 Who aren't spoiled by anybody,  
 Who go to bed hungry and cry themselves to sleep  
 Who live and move, but have no being.

We pray for children  
 Who want to be carried  
 And for those who must.  
 For those we never give up on  
 And for those who don't have a second chance.  
 For those we smother...  
 And for those who will grab the hand of anybody  
 kind enough to offer it.

Ina Hughs