

Free - donations accepted.

# Carnegie

## NEWSLETTER



SEPTEMBER 1, 2001

401 Main St., Vancouver, BC V6A 2T7

Email: [carnnews@direct.ca](mailto:carnnews@direct.ca)



DIANE 2001

## VISION QUEST 2001

You might have seen a tipi and several tents and blankets in Oppenheimer Park, next to the totem pole from August 14 - 18. It was a fast to bring attention and some answers to the problems our First Nations people deal with daily. During those 4 days, 12 people camped in the park without food, drinking only water. The tradition is to go to a mountain or a hill alone, to sit in one place and stay awake as long as possible without food and sometimes without even water. It's a search for guidance. The answer comes through physical suffering and prayer, in dreams, tears and often a visit or a vision of a spirit-helper. "A different type of knowledge than you get from watching TV or reading the newspaper" Edna says.

Edna Brass, one of the elders and core members of Vision Quest explained why they do this in the city. It's to see the alcoholism & addiction, the dis-ease, the poverty & prostitution, the role the police and the System play, and to remember the loved ones who are missing or murdered. It's both a ceremony of survival and a wake up call. People come for different reasons: for strength, physical, emotional, mental and spiritual; in protest; and in prayer. She chose a spot to set up her tent surrounded by the beauty of the trees, and cleansed and blessed it with sage and cedar. She says "To Native people, every green space is a church, and it's time we started using those churches whenever and wherever we can. For many Native people living in the city, traveling to the country and climbing a mountain just isn't possible."

Vision Quest's first fast was in 1998 in Pigeon Park. They chose a place where the hurt and abuse are so obvious, including abuse from the System. Many Native organizations were invited to participate, but no-one came. 4 people spent 4 days and nights in what is considered "the worst place" in Vancouver, sleeping on the ground "which is where many of our people end up sleeping anyway" Edna said. This fast was named "From the Cement Up" and was the event that strengthened her, among others, to become a spokesperson for urban Aboriginals, to encourage everyone to get up, speak up and make a difference, to open their eyes to what is happening in our neighbourhood, and to recognize all the people that are missing and murdered.

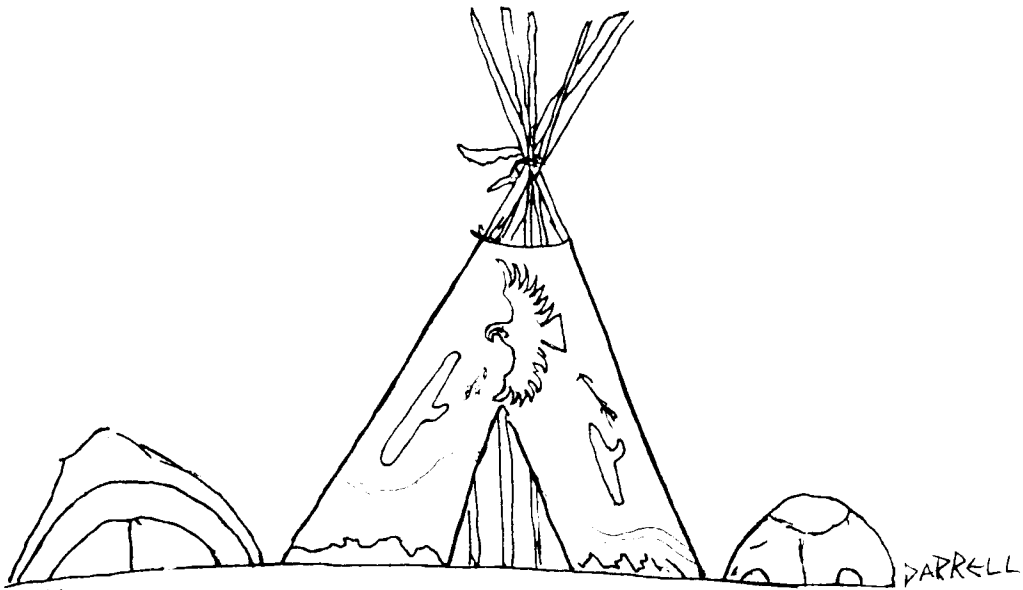
Last year's Inner City Vision Quest was at Victory Square, where a monument reminds us "Lest We Forget". One of the elders said "It is a place where we can come together to publicly mourn those lost and wounded in the war against our identity, while sharing and coming together in search of a vision for a better tomorrow."

This year's Vision Quest started with 12 fasters. 10 made it through the whole 4 days after 2 of the men doing security were caught by an elder munching on a Kit Kat chocolate bar on the second day!

I was one of the many supporters who dropped by with water, greeted with hugs, teasing and laughter. I was introduced to daughters, nieces, aunts and friends. I joined the other women singing the Women Warriors' Song from Lillooet, the one we sing on the February 14 March for our women in the Downtown Eastside. People stop and ask why we're here, what's it all about? There's no brochure, just a simple banner, and questions are directed to an elder. She explains that this is a non-violent gathering, a traditional ceremony, like a Sun Dance or a Rain Dance. "There is genocide on our streets. Why is it always about greed instead of need?" She explains that she is fasting for those living under the threat of starvation, and that she is fasting because of the epidemic of residential schools and child apprehension. She was a prisoner of Residential Schools for 10 years herself.

As if we needed more proof of this, one of the women supporting the fasters brings her baby that's in foster care to the park on a day she has a visit, and the social worker shows up, criticizing her for bringing her child where there are alcohol and drugs seeing only a portion of what is going on in Oppenheimer Park. Everyone was so upset, apparently she ignored the explanations of the elders that the mother was participating in a traditional sacred ceremony, and had only seen as far as her own prejudices and fears. It was unclear when she and the woman and her baby left the park whether she had refused the mother any more visits, as she had been threatening.

The fasters didn't sleep well the first night, and found out from security in the morning that the police had pulled a gun on some of the other people using the



park. I heard horrific stories of family members threatened and brutalized by the police, as well as those who had died in jail.

Matthew Coon Come, national chief of the Assembly of First Nations, stated last Sunday that "within Canada there are two realities. There is the 'reality' of a highly developed, just society that the world knows, and then there is the harsh and deadly reality which aboriginal peoples endure. Racism against indigenous peoples in Canada alone, direct and systemic, costs thousands of lives per year."

Amnesty International reports on human rights abuses and this year included Ontario Provincial Police's 1995 killing of Dudley George and Saskatoon police dumping aboriginal men outside city limits in sub-zero weather last winter. Many Vancouver Natives can complain of similar treatment, including a daughter of one of the women there.

During the fast, police were called to take a knife off an elder who was carving with it. They totally disregarded that the place where a ceremony takes place is sacred. One of the men doing security spoke up: "Why is it OK for white men to come and screw up our Native ceremony? But what do they do if Natives go into a Christian church and tear up a Bible?!"

On the third night many of us had powerful visionary dreams. We got together and talked about them the next day. As well, I wrote mine down, and a friend drew 3 pictures of what he'd seen. We didn't jump

out of bed, grab a coffee and run out the door! We recognized we're living in a world where everything is sacred and full of meaning.

Edna, who ran independently in the last federal election, calls herself a feminist. "I am liberated. I am authentic. How do you get it out there? How do you get people to listen to you?" As with addiction and recovery, we can only "carry the message" This was made painfully clear by her drug-addicted daughter's visits to the camp, when Edna's gentle yet powerful love for her was obvious to me, as she repeatedly suggested the woman lie down in her tent and sleep. Edna is raising her 10 year old granddaughter Cheyenne, because her daughter can't. Cheyenne participated every day in the fast, but went home to sleep and eat (as I did!) On the fourth night we started to celebrate, knowing it would all be over soon enough, and Cheyenne whirled and danced in a blanket, the star of the show in the centre of our circle, then afterwards laughed, offering to teach the adults how to dance.

On Saturday the fast was broken with drumming & blessings & blueberries, before a feast of salmon, moose and bannock for everyone. Though I have asked, I still don't know if the elder got his carving tool back, or the mother got her baby back. I do know it was a powerful healing ceremony for everyone involved and am honoured I have been chosen to write this for the Carnegie Newsletter

By DIANE WOOD

## A poem Dedicated to Vision Quest 2001

### Traditional

Being one  
with nature is  
a chance we are given  
spirits  
do that naturally  
it's called living

A heart is born wild and free

All the love inside is there  
Unconditionally

Traditionally  
Is  
more than a state of being free

It's a part of life  
you see  
Traditional means so much  
yes  
It has a soft touch

Isidore Lahache



## *Community Day In the Rain*

The focus of the August 23 event at Oppenheimer Park was to be on food and fun. We hoped to have lots of sports, featuring an Old-timers vs Youths baseball game, self-care services, crafts, a piñata, music and plenty of good food. As the rain poured down on Tuesday and Wednesday, predicted to last until the weekend, we figured we would have to postpone the fun but we couldn't postpone the food which was pouring into Oppenheimer Park.

Fortunately, Thursday morning, the rain wasn't coming down in torrents as we had dreaded but there was a steady drizzle. Tarps and tents were quickly set up around the fieldhouse. United We

Can had done an excellent job of cleaning up the Oppenheimer area. At 9:30AM, Cody was already pumping up the jam under one tent. Sister Elizabeth the Learning Exchange, Quest and the Revitalization office had brought fresh fruit which was set out with coffee donated by Carnegie and fancy breads and yoghurt. First Nations carvers were sculpturing under another tent where the VANDU information table was stationed. A bit later, Greg was leading a Community Directions button-making workshop there as well. Leona, with the Street Nurses, cut hair for many hours under a tarp.

Delicious aromas floated out of the kitchen where the Latinos were cooking an incredibly nutritious and tasty soup. The Community Directions First Nations working group members cleaned and barbecued salmon, then chicken, then pork kebabs, sausages and hotdogs. Native Health loaned their barbeque and volunteers busily cooked the corn Liz, the Streetnurse, had donated. Nancy from the Arics project had mobilized elders and youths from the Aboriginal Friendship Centre to prepare and serve salmon, bannock and potato salad. The Women's Centre prepared two beautiful and seemingly bottomless tubs of macaroni salad. ASIA had a huge and delectable Chinese noodle dish. The Lookout sent trays of colourful tarts. And there was much, much more.

People who had been angry at each other for years were cheerfully chopping and bopping to the music together.

We had hoped to avoid the dreaded line-up scene by having separate tables of different foods that the guests could go around to with a plate. On a clear day maybe... Because the rain persisted, the food had to be centralized around the fieldhouse.

Word of the event had quickly got out to the community. The lineup extended out to Cordova Street when Kelly offered a Coast Salish song and welcome, Byron offered a Bienvenidos and serving began. Paul, who works so hard at the Pigeon park markets, gave out 400 tickets, made sure the physically challenged were escorted to the front and respectfully kept people informed as to how long the wait would be. There were boxfuls of large, juicy mandarin oranges and trays of yoghurt fruit drinks, so we took them out to the waiting line. Then, like Christmas in August, about twenty large

pizzas and pop arrived from the Portland. So that was taken out to the (by then) very cheerful crowd.

The sun broke through the clouds around 1:00PM so the responsive and helpful Oppenheimer staff quickly got out the volleyball net and baseball gloves. Some of the kids played basketball but the skies soon darkened and the clouds opened again. At least it wasn't cold.

The line was still back to the totem pole at 3:pm when the Latinos set up the piñata. There were only five kids so they got lots of candies as well as some of the surrounding young at heart.

The dedicated and friendly sewers were still filling plates after 4:pm and many people stayed to clean up. The garbage area was overflowing and we worried about feeding our increasing rat population. We covered it as best we could and the Parks Board did come and clear it all away early the next morning as promised.

Whether it was the weather or the event, I didn't see one drug deal or smell a whiff of crack at Oppenheimer all day. And a lot of people felt better. Events like this do reduce harm.

Special thanks to the Streetnurses Liz and Byron and Ingrid from Watari who listened to the Downtown Eastsiders requests to have a food extravaganza during this long month, to Brenda from Crabtree who created the fun and eye-catching poster, to Con and Joyce from the Women's Centre and Dionne from the Learning Exchange who solicited great donations from businesses and unions, to Sandy from Carnegie and to Mel and Earl from VANDU who offered their expertise in the planning and implementation of the Community Day. And to all the volunteers who gave their time and energy. It was a real community effort.

Other coalitions of parents, youth workers and community centers have been forming to organize wonderful kids' events in the Downtown East-side/Strathcona neighbourhood. It's amazing what can be accomplished when we work together instead of bickering.

Maybe a new attitude is arising in the area!

By LEITH HARRIS



(as reported in Robert L. Dilenschneider's annual 1997 Report to Clients)

If we could shrink the earth's population to a village of precisely 100 people, with all the existing human ratios remaining the same, it would look like this:

**There would be**

57 Asians

21 Europeans

14 from the Western Hemisphere  
(north and south)

8 Africans

52 would be female

48 would be male

70 would be non-white, 30 white

70 would be non-Christian,

30 would be Christian

89 would be heterosexual,

11 homosexual

59% of the entire world's wealth would be in the hands of only 6 people and all 6 would be citizens of the United States

80 would live in substandard housing

70 would be unable to read

50 would suffer from malnutrition

1 would be near death

1 would be near birth

1 would have a college education

1 would own a computer

When one considers our world from such a compressed perspective, the need for both acceptance and understanding becomes glaringly apparent

## **CITY COUNCIL OK'S \$\$ FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY PLAN**

Last month City Council approved funding for the Carnegie-Health Connections Centre Outreach Program. The \$335,845 annual funding is for a two year trial period as part of the Downtown Eastside Health and Safety Initiative and the Vancouver Agreement. The Outreach Program will incorporate the present Carnegie Street Program. The activities of the Street Program will be carried on within the Health Contact Centre (Roosevelt Hotel) and will also continue outside on the north side of Carnegie. By operating at the Health Contact Centre the Street Program will be able to provide more in-depth program and service opportunities with street people, such as happened with the Historic Markers Project at the Alibi Pizza earlier this summer. The program will also be operating seven days a week, seven hours a day.

The Contact Centre will be operated around the clock by the Vancouver Richmond Health Board, who will provide health personal.

For further information contact Sandy MacKeigan or Bob Moss of Carnegie Staff.

### **RE-CONSTRUCTION OF MAIN & HASTINGS GOING AHEAD**

City Council has also approved \$540,000 for the reconstruction of the corner of Main and Hastings. The new design will increase covered outdoor space for Carnegie patrons and reduce the room available for people to congregate for buying, selling and consuming drugs. Highlights include, removal of the public washroom roof and divider wall at street level, up-grading of the washrooms, an enclosed patio on the eastside of Carnegie with a canopy, a program notice board and sign at the entrance to Carnegie, new trees on the north side of the building, paving and upgrading the lane adjacent to the Roosevelt (where the main entrance to the Health Contact Centre is located), and improved lighting in heritage-style fixtures along Carnegie's west wall in the lane. The lane should become an attractive, pedestrian-friendly place.

Reconstruction of the corner will begin when the Health Contact Centre is open. This means there will be no dispersal of the drug market from the corner until this facility and two other Health

centres are in place and can offer essential services to people with addictions: the Downtown Community Health Centre at 569 Powell Street, and the Pender Community Health Clinic at 59 W. Pender.

Current schedules call for the three health



facilities to open December 15<sup>th</sup>. Construction on the corner will begin then and may take as long as three months. The LifeSkills Centre is scheduled to open at 412 East Cordova in the spring (it will focus on supporting street people in training, pre employment and life skills programs).

### **NEW DETOX ACCESS SERVICE**

The Vancouver Richmond Health Board has launched "ACCESS 1" - a one call phone number for access to alcohol and drug detox services. Telephone **604-658-1250**. The Health Board expects this will provide easier access, decrease wait times, and enable a better match of people to the services they require.

### **PORTA-POTTIES SPROUT OVERNIGHT AT MAIN AND HASTINGS**

An experiment is underway. Every night between 6:00 pm and 6:00 am two portable toilets are placed on the Hastings street side of Carnegie. Their purpose is to provide a washroom service after hours for people who don't have access to any other toilets, and to cut down on the use of lanes and doorways. In the first week almost 1,000 people used the toilets.

The service is sponsored and operated by the City of Vancouver, VANDU, Carnegie Centre and the Vancouver Richmond Health Board. If successful, this health and sanitation initiative will continue until the opening of the Health Contact Centre, which will offer 24 hour washrooms.

The washrooms are supervised by two volunteers - one from Carnegie and one from VANDU. For information: Sandy MacKeigan at Carnegie or Ed. McCurdy at VANDU.

belligerent  
 unsmiling  
 accusing  
 what an opportunity  
 in world history  
 live to see  
 demands  
 threats  
 risk war  
 the cost of justice  
 heady days  
 driving the point home  
 swaggering arrogance  
 the might to wreak havoc  
 a giant  
 Armageddon appears  
 be there for the killing  
 naked power  
 prosecution  
 a terrible toll  
 decay revealed

charles fortin

### Glad to see the sun

Saturday, special sunrise  
 Precious life goes on  
 Sun comes up  
 I am still kickin`

I`ll kick ass  
 Cut my grass  
 Bomb your mother  
 Be a gas

Thanks Spirit  
 for the guns  
 blow back all the bad  
 Make mama sad  
 Still tickin`  
 Still kickin`

Robbie Quag



a nightly revelation  
 now you see it  
 now you don't  
 tip your waitress  
 a race with expectations  
 a race with the self  
 night after night  
 unknown people  
 drunk  
 dancing  
 seeing nothing  
 making fools of themselves  
 to take part  
 to change  
 in the heat of the moment  
 in frustration  
 in the air  
 in wonder  
 the wish to hold on to it  
 charles fortin

### I`LL BE THERE FOR YOU

I spend my nights alone,  
 And my days in deep despair  
 If I could find a way outta here  
 Baby, I`d be there  
 All the things that are wrong  
 I`d change and make right  
 I`d kiss away your tears,  
 And make you smile again  
 I`d hold you close to me  
 And take away your pain  
 I would do this for you  
 Until your sadness was forgotten  
 I would do this for you  
 Be cuz, you`re all I`ve got  
 I`ve written this for you  
 And it`s more than it seems  
 I`ve written to tell you this  
 I`ll see you in your dreams.

Lori Mathieu.



On the telephone I tell her honey the country`s  
 the place I got wired, you can`t hide. The Dragon  
 is in every nook and cranny, crack and crevice  
 small town BC just hides their problem better,  
 tha`s all.

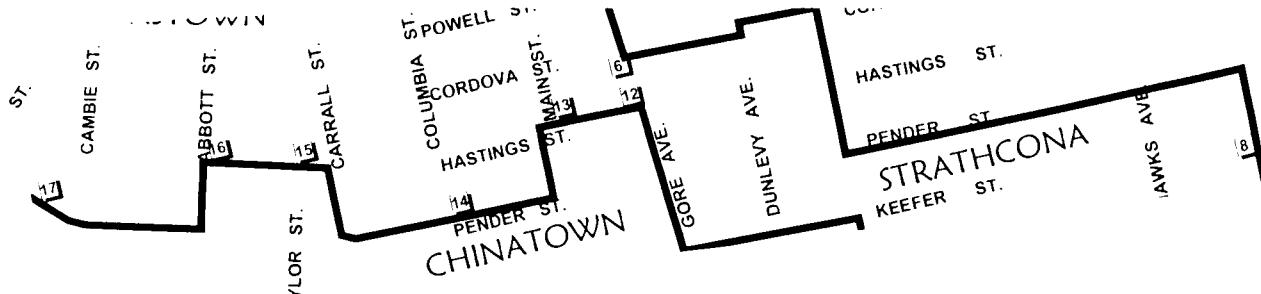
so no way, ain`t runnin` away, rather hang with you  
 till the Work is thru.. this man`s gotta job to do

Told you when you were 12 years old  
 This old man ain`t never gonna leave ya again  
 Lord have mercy, I`ll try till I die  
 ta keep my word, ain`t no lie

You all think lovin` a woman is hard  
 With a daughter you`ll always be on guard  
 When shit gets rough, kid`s had enough,  
 Can always come to Papa, Papa always here

I know some of you won`t understand  
 how the son is the father to the man  
 took a little girl with crinkled toes  
 finally shake me, wake me,  
 make me stand up tall  
 that`s the truth and that is all.

Robbie



## Huge Omission

### Mars "Old Vancouver Townsite Walking Tour" Guidebook

This story is important, so we had better start at the beginning. In the spring of 2001, the Federal Government's Western Diversification Program approached the Carnegie Community Centre Association Board asking for a proposal to develop a street beautification project for our neighbourhood. The Board involved the Carnegie Street Program, which designed the proposal and managed the project.

This project was called the Footprints Community Art Project, and it created seventeen historical markers (mosaics), with banners, that gave an account of some of the history of the Downtown Eastside/Strathcona/Chinatown/Gastown areas. These mosaics have been implanted in the sidewalk at various locations in the Downtown Eastside, and a guidebook called the "Old Vancouver Townsite Walking Tour" has been written so that interested people can walk from mosaic to mosaic, and learn something about Vancouver's oldest neighbourhood. An eighteenth mosaic is in Oppenheimer Park, but it isn't in this guidebook.

First of all, the people who worked on this project did an excellent job. The mosaics and banners look great, and they capture something of the history and spirit of our community. The time line for the project was too short, but dedicated workers finished the job, and they are to be congratulated.

Two thousand copies were printed of the first edition of the guidebook, the "Old Vancouver Townsite Walking Tour", and it has many excellent features. The mosaics are beautiful, and the stories that go with many of them are very interest-

ing. Unfortunately, the guidebook has some omissions so serious that I believe it must be redone. I also believe that the Carnegie Community Centre Association Board, the sponsor of the project, didn't see the booklet before it was published.

For the record, I was asked to talk to some artists about the historical background for a couple of the mosaics. I did this willingly, and felt privileged to meet people involved in the project. I was also asked to be on an advisory committee, but it rarely met and seemed to have no clear function. I did volunteer to work on a booklet for the walking tour, but my offer wasn't taken up.

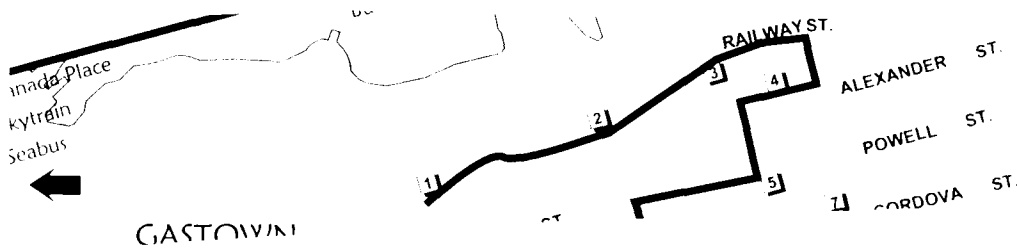
#### Here's what's wrong:

(1) The name of our community, the Downtown Eastside, has been left off the front cover, off the page "About this project", off the page "How to use this guide", off the map of the Old Vancouver Townsite Walking Tour on pages 20 and 21. This omission is enormously hurtful to the residents who call their community the Downtown Eastside. Leaving out the name of our neighbourhood in key places in the guidebook is equivalent to the genocide of our community.

As Paul Taylor pointed out in the *Carnegie Newsletter* (August 15/01), the Carnegie Community Centre Association Board has asked to have our community, the Downtown Eastside, named on both the cover and the map of the guidebook, and a sticker affixed to the inside back cover acknowledging the mosaic and bench in memory of Oppenheimer Park volunteers.

(2) In my view, the labour history in this guidebook is both inadequate and biased against working people struggling for human rights. For example, on page 15, our community, referred to as simply "this community", is described as "being a working person's neighbourhood" instead of a





working class neighbourhood. This kind of devious inauthenticity is unacceptable. Then, on page 19, labour organizers are described as working hard "at promoting radical socialist causes". In fact, labour organizers worked at getting what we take for granted today — the eight hour day, the right to form trade unions, decent wages and safe working conditions. On page 22 we're told "Vancouver became a magnet for unemployed men looking for work and relief." The fact is they already had *slave labour* work and relief in the work camps they escaped from, and they came to Vancouver demanding work and wages — but there was no work, just as there is no work for many people today. The impression given in the guidebook is that workers were radical (extreme) and violent, and the proud history of the struggle for human rights (a major theme in the Downtown Eastside) is muted. It takes at least two to make a fight, and much of the violence in labour disputes was initiated by police or company guards. In 1903, a company guard shot and killed Frank Rogers who was picketing for the striking United Brotherhood of Railway Engineers at the foot of Gore Avenue. In 1918, Canada's first General Strike took place in Vancouver to protest the murder of Ginger Goodwin, a labour organizer from Cumberland, B.C.

What needs to be done now?

(a) Two thousand copies of this flawed first edition of the "Old Vancouver Townsite Walking Tour" are out there now. I understand that steps are being taken to stamp them in the appropriate places with a Downtown Eastside stamp or sticker. We really need a new edition of the guidebook, however, and the labour sections need to be rewritten in a way that captures the proud working class history of our community. The Downtown Eastsiders and

Carnegie members who have gone before us would expect us to honour their memory. I can't look at the present guidebook without feeling sad and angry. People who get involved in arts projects in the Downtown Eastside have to be careful that they don't get sucked into programs that promote unscrupulous gentrification.  
 (b) Maybe the Carnegie Community Centre Association Board could conduct an investigation as to how this marred first edition of the guidebook got printed in the first place. Who owns the guidebook? Where are those two thousand copies? Can they be recalled? The omission of the name "Downtown Eastside" from the front cover and the map is so glaring, and the labour history is so twisted, that I can't believe these "mistakes" were simply accidental.

Sandy Cameron

**Saturday, September 29<sup>th</sup>** —  
 Traveling Community Office with Libby Davies  
 Come and visit and share any concerns you have over the federal government. Libby will be at  
**Crabtree Corner, 101 East Cordova**  
**from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm.**  
 For more info, contact 775 5800.

**Thursday, October 11<sup>th</sup>** —  
 Accountability Session with Libby Davies  
 Come hear Libby's updates on issues in Ottawa  
 Give her feedback on federal government matters  
**7:00-9:00 pm at the Carnegie Centre, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor.**  
 Contact 775 5800.

This is timely - a press release from the Fraser Institute that says Canada has too many people on welfare and it should be more aggressive in "decreasing the number of welfare beneficiaries" basically by making it tougher to qualify for, and by using PRIVATE companies to do the dirty work! - where are these people to go you wonder - there will only be more homeless people and more deaths, a consequence that obviously doesn't count in the study...



**Attention News Editors:**  
**Fraser Institute says Canadian welfare reform too weak to make significant impact**  
VANCOUVER, Aug. 16: Canada must implement more innovative welfare reform in order to significantly decrease the number of welfare beneficiaries says a new study. Surveying US and Canadian Welfare Reform, released today by The Fraser Institute.

"The United States is in the process of successfully transforming its welfare system back into an employment-focused, temporary assistance program for those in need. Canadian provinces should follow their lead and move forward with innovative reforms that would make a positive impact on our welfare system," says Jason Clemens, co-author of the study (the Institute's director of fiscal studies).

Both Canada and the U.S. have experienced declines in the number of welfare cases, both in absolute terms and as a percentage of the population.

The United States has experienced a decline in the number of welfare recipients from a high of 14.2 million in 1994 (5.5 % of the population) to 5.8 million in June of 2000, representing 2.1 percent of the population. The number of welfare recipients in the United States has declined by 8.4 million, a decrease of 59.4 percent between 1994 and 2000.

Canada has also experienced declines in the

number of welfare recipients. The number of welfare beneficiaries in Canada has dropped from a high of 3.1 million in 1994, an astonishing 10.7 percent of the population, to 2.1 million in 2000, representing 6.8 percent of the population. Between 1994 and 2000, the number of welfare beneficiaries dropped by 1,015,000, a decline of 32.7 percent over six years.

However, the current number of welfare beneficiaries in Canada is still 155,000 more than at the beginning of the decade.

"The provision of welfare and related services is a sensitive undertaking requiring a delicate balance between the compassionate delivery of services to those in need and maintenance of fiscal prudence," says Clemens. "Both Canada and the United States have reformed welfare during the late 1990s but reforms in the U.S. went further and were more successful in dealing with the underlying causes of welfare."

In the US, the 1996 passage of a seminal piece of federal legislation, the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) began a period of flexibility, experimentation, and innovation in the delivery of welfare and related services at the state level.

Reforms have included ending the entitlement status of welfare through time limits for receipt of benefits, exploring alternate possibilities for support through family, charitable organizations or lump sum payments, and immediate work requirements. Other innovations have included private sector delivery of programs, and provision of services through faith-based organizations.

"By introducing reforms such as time limits, these states effectively ended the right to welfare benefits and changed the tone of welfare provision in their states," notes Clemens. "A significant reason why reforms in the United States have produced positive results is that the presumption of welfare as an entitlement has been eliminated."

Privatization reforms include contracting out to both for-profit and non-profit organizations of a number of administrative and delivery functions of welfare programs.

One of the most innovative and successful experiments in welfare delivery has been undertaken by New York City, which entered into a

contract with America Works, a for-profit company. America Works aims to assist hard-to-employ individuals to make the transition out of welfare dependency into stable employment. In 1998, 88 percent of clients placed in jobs through America Works in the previous three years were still off the welfare rolls.

Alberta was the first province to make significant reforms to welfare and provided a policy template for other provinces. The province undertook large-scale reform of the welfare bureaucracy, reduced benefits, increased monitoring and fraud investigation. Alberta also introduced a stronger focus on diversion and employment, and incorporated the limited use of non-profit organizations to aid in the delivery of services.

Alberta has experienced an impressive 66.9 percent decrease in the number of Albertans in receipt of welfare since the peak in 1992/1993. The claim that there was a large migration of Alberta recipients onto BC's welfare rolls has proven to be largely unfounded.

Ontario is the only province to introduce limited workfare-mandatory employment stipulations for the receipt of benefits. Like other Canadian provinces, it also reduced benefits, overhauled its administrative bureaucracy, and focused on diversion and employment. Ontario also experimented with private contractors and the limited use of non-profit charitable organizations.

"The introduction of the Canada Health and Social Transfer (CHST) in 1996 allowed greater flexibility in the delivery of social services by the provinces," says Clemens. "However, none of the Canadian provinces have chosen to undertake some of the most successful reforms that have been implemented in the United States."

#### **Recommendations for Canada and the Provinces**

1. Provincial governments should adopt specific time limits, for instance 48 or 60 months, for receipt of welfare benefits. A lifetime assistance limit of 5 years or less would create an effective incentive for recipients to find self-sustaining employment.
2. Divert potential recipients from entering the welfare rolls.
3. Implement immediate work requirements as a condition of receiving assistance.



4. Implement tough sanctions for non-compliance with benefit requirements.
5. Focus on employment, not training and education. Provinces should refocus their efforts and funding on programs and initiatives geared directly to assisting recipients in securing and maintaining employment.
6. Encourage private for-profit welfare providers. Canadian provinces have not experimented with private sector welfare-to-work programs and have instead focused on wage subsidies to employers.
7. Encourage the involvement of faith-based non-profit organizations.

"By undermining the work ethic and expanding the size and scope of the welfare state, the system has worked to entrap recipients while at the same time generating new clientele. Innovative reform is the only way to stop this damaging cycle of dependence," concludes Clemens.

{Okay, why is this shit here? All articles and reports and insight into the corporate agenda that have graced these pages for 15 years have gnawed away at this drivell. We are now poised to experience Ontario and Alberta-style of "innovation and experimentation" and likely workfare, the privatization of welfare delivery and more. This article on the Fraser thing is to show you what the politicians and bureaucrats are hearing from the relentless assaults of the Fraser alumni. Check the notice on Page 21 and come to the DERA Meeting!]

## What Are We Waiting For?

Sitting in my room  
at the Dominion Hotel  
the ink bottle  
begins to move  
across the table.  
Earthquake, I think,  
is this what  
we're waiting for?  
Or the Martians?  
Where are they  
when we need them?  
Or that ambiguous friend  
who knocks  
on our door  
in the night?  
Or Godot?  
Is it Godot  
we're waiting for  
in Oppenheimer Park?

It's quiet here,  
waiting like salmon  
for a change  
in the tide.  
Looking  
when there is  
nothing to see.  
Listening  
when there is  
nothing to hear.

There's a rumour  
going around  
of a secret embarkation,  
women and men  
preparing for a journey  
to unknown lands  
where no one  
is excluded.  
Underneath the clamour  
of globalization  
another voice is growing,  
another expectation.  
We've heard it in  
Vancouver  
Seattle

Washington, D.C.  
Geneva  
Barcelona  
Prague  
Quebec City  
Genoa  
throughout the world.  
Listen.

Sandy Cameron



## HOPE FOR DESPAIR

Despair is a bitter affliction. It crushes the spirit, eats at the heart, splinters the soul. It makes life a prison. For healing, forget miracles; crawl, kick against the pricks... Forgive when you stumble and plug on plug on ..plug on.

**Sam Roddan**

## Ontario's New Welfare Rule:

### Be Literate and Drug Free

ETOBICOKE, Ontario - The province of Ontario is taking a tougher stance on welfare than has ever been tried before in Canada. It plans to make passing a literacy test mandatory for receiving public assistance and it will screen recipients for drug or alcohol problems, cutting off benefits to those who refuse treatment.

In a country where government compassion toward the disadvantaged is widely considered a national trait, the strict new measures to be imposed this fall have been characterized as mean-spirited, overly harsh and possibly in violation of Ontario's human rights code.

But officials defend the measures, contending that they are necessary in order to push people still receiving assistance toward independence. Years of whittling down the welfare rolls have left only the "hardest to serve" clients still receiving assistance, they say.

The province intends to start screening for literacy and addiction problems by October. People who fail the literacy test will be required to enroll in workfare programs.

The government of Premier Mike Harris of the Progressive Conservative Party has won two terms promising that welfare reform will help reduce spending and cut taxes in Ontario, Canada's most populous province. Six years ago, more than a million Ontario residents received welfare. But as with the American programs, Ontario's have reached the point at which reducing welfare rolls further is far more difficult. The remaining recipients have been on welfare for many years and often have problems that keep them from finding work even in a robust economy.

The literacy test, requiring clients to fill in a brief answer sheet, does not strictly measure reading skills but rather measures a facility with words and numbers required for basic work skills, officials said.

Miss Neil, a mother of four, has been on welfare since she lost her job as a janitor at a local college five years ago. She said that forcing people like her to take a literacy test in order to receive public assistance would be unfair because she never finished high school.

"I don't have the education for it," she said. "I'd



fail every time."

Critics of the government are concerned about the lack of day care and other social services to help welfare recipients get back on their feet. They say welfare clients are coming under this pressure because *it is a politically popular thing to do.*

"I do not believe for a second that the goal here is to help these people," said Michael Gravelle, a legislator with the Ontario Liberal Party. "The real goal is finding another way of kicking people off welfare."

Similar efforts to link drug treatment to welfare reform have been struck down in the United States because they required mandatory testing of all welfare applicants. Ontario officials said they studied the United States and avoided similar problems by requiring screening, not chemical testing, first step.

Under the Ontario system, trained social workers would look for evidence of an addiction, like needle marks or incoherence during an interview. If the screener concluded that a welfare recipient had a drug problem, the person would be required to enroll in a treatment program, or risk having welfare benefits cut off. If the person disagreed with the screener's conclusion, the only option would be to submit to chemical testing.

While Ontario has tried to avoid a clash with the courts, the drug screening may still violate the province's human rights code, said Keith Norton, head of the Ontario Human Rights Commission. In the province, alcohol or drug dependency is considered a disability, and their human rights code prohibits discrimination against disabled people.

By ANTHONY DePALMA

Poverty is being legislated, opportunities for poor people are now morally wrong; cities and townships make it illegal to do even micro-sales.

Poor people are hit by the "system" in a silent guerilla war leaving them dead, sick, in madness or in prison.

"But I was only trying to make (earn) a few coins to buy food, Your Honour."

"I can't afford to fight that! I've got to take the loss, which I also cannot afford."

And so we are driven downward as surely as a man's fists beating us. People in government cannot know how to protect the poor because they are not poor.

Every day it's something new, and the young and old alike are herded into a life where they have no say or control over their rights or lives. "Livable Region" strategies are more like densification for the almighty dollar.

Saving the environment has put poor people's opportunities into the hands of big business. That's right - you are now stealing from them since they now have the legal right to cast-aways. This was formerly the domain of the poor.

We are truly being wrapped up ever tighter; I

### excruciations of compassion

what do you do  
when "the most hated human being in society"  
is the only man you knew  
who loved you  
and was your gangster-hero-stepfather  
but molested your sister  
and was convicted of raping a 9 year old girl?

or what do you do  
when a woman accused of  
"flaunting contempt for the moral laws  
on which our society ultimately rests"  
accused in a full-page sensational  
suicide and sex scandal  
what do you do when  
this most evil woman is your mother?

or what do you do  
when the killer who shot your grandmother  
in the heart

believe that one day soon no one will be able to buy or sell anything without some authority number. This was spoken of many years ago and is now coming to pass.

Moral decay seems to be the culprit, but that's more subtle and insidious than a kid stealing a candy bar in a corner store. Keep on keepin' on; it ain't over 'til it's over.

I saw a guy doing a dance  
His youth was given to heroin  
A friend of his once said  
I'd like to chain him up in a basement  
and get him off that stuff.  
But I said 'no, that won't work.'  
But here he is, dancing amid death & crime  
Ten years later.. but for him, thousands  
My God, how can he survive?  
A few moments of dancing.. will he ever be free?  
We see you brother but you don't see us  
They are trying to help you  
and I know you know and God knows too  
Bob's yer fren and Iyam tu

By Mike Bohnert

is her daughter and your aunt  
who turned the gun on herself?  
well  
it's a hell of a lot easier on me  
to condemn some monster/alien/stranger  
and revel in self-righteousness  
than to have  
these excruciations of compassion  
and suffer with  
the most hated humans  
the most immoral women  
the most extreme violence  
in a scary and confusing  
solidarity with the socially damned  
that burns so furiously  
in my blood

good friday 2000

Bud Osborn



# **Break the Silence**

## **End the Violence Against Women**

### **in the Downtown Eastside**

Breaking the Silence is an ongoing campaign to end violence against women in the Downtown Eastside. Our focus is on the many forms of violence women face in our lives such as: physical assault, psychological abuse, sexism, racism, homophobia and ageism, to name a few. Over the past few months, Breaking the Silence has organized a number of events for women and the community. These include: a workshop on lateral oppression, a memorial for the missing women of the Downtown Eastside, a film screening and discussion about the transit strike, and a picnic in Crab Park.

In this insert, we would like to tell you about two actions Breaking the Silence is a part of organizing.

- Take Back the Night
- Sisters Resist: a Women's Week of Education, Mobilization and Action

Thanks to the Carnegie newsletter for giving us the space to let Breaking the Silence update women and men living and working in the community about what we are organizing around these days.

If you want to reach Breaking the Silence, please call us at (604) 682-3269, box 8319.

# WOMEN UNITE

On your mark. Get Ready. Let's TAKE BACK THE NIGHT!

On Saturday, September 15<sup>th</sup>, women in Vancouver will be out on the streets in droves. Why? Because it's time again for Take Back the Night, the annual international protest against male violence against women. For the past month, Breaking the Silence has been working with Vancouver Rape Relief and Women's Shelter and women living or connected to Strathcona and the Downtown Eastside in planning for that night. Our goal: to hold a high-energy, loud and strong rally of women and girls in our community.



## When did Take Back the Night get started?

Take Back the Night rallies have been happening in Vancouver since 1978. It started with an ad hoc group of women who dressed up in witch-like costumes and demonstrated in the rain through the West End. The next year, women at Rape Relief took on the responsibility for organizing women to Take Back the Night, and have done so ever since.

## Why do women want to Take Back the Night?

Do you remember being told to "stay at home; don't go out at night" by the authorities (read: the police and media), after there was a report about a woman being raped on the streets? Women "Take Back the Night" to make a strong statement that we will not be silenced; we will not be forced to hide. Women have the right to be safe, anytime and anywhere. It doesn't matter if we're in our homes, in school, or walking down the street. It doesn't matter if it's daytime or nighttime. It doesn't matter what we're doing or who we're with. Violence against women is NEVER okay.

## Is Take Back the Night a women-only event?

Yes, it is. Why? Because too often, women are told that we need a man to "protect us." But women can take care of ourselves and each other, and we do. Still, it's important that men realize they must also take action to end violence against women. For Take Back the Night, men can show their support by talking to other men about violence against women, by providing childcare so women can attend the rallies, and by encouraging women they know to participate.

## What is happening for Take Back the Night this year?

This year, Rape Relief is organizing in three communities: Strathcona, Kerrisdale and Metrotown. This is to recognize that violence against women happens everywhere. Take Back the Night will take place on **Saturday, September 15<sup>th</sup>** and will start at 7:00pm with rallies in those three communities. Then, women will travel downtown and gather at Granville St (between Robson & Georgia) for a rally and march. The downtown event is wheelchair accessible, and childcare is provided. For all the details, call Rape Relief at (604) 872-8212.

## How can I get involved?

There are lots of ways that women can get involved in Take Back the Night.

- 1) Take part in the rallies on September 15<sup>th</sup>  
In Strathcona, Take Back the Night will start at McLean Park (Keefer & Heatley) at 7:00pm. Bring your drums, noisemakers, chants & cheers, placards, and your vibrant energy.
- 2) Help plan Take Back the Night in Strathcona  
The next two organizing meetings are on **Tuesday, September 4<sup>th</sup>** and **September 11<sup>th</sup>**. They are held at Strathcona Community Centre, 601 Keefer St, from 7:00 to 9:00pm. Snacks and childcare are provided. This is where we'll decide what to do in our community.
- 3) Spread the word  
Put up posters in your building and anywhere you go. Pass out pamphlets and flyers. Talk to women you meet about Take Back the Night. Encourage the group or agency you're involved with to bring a group of women to the rallies. (To get posters or pamphlets, call Rape Relief.)
- 4) Let your creative juices flow... Make something fabulous for Take Back the Night  
Breaking the Silence is hosting an afternoon of creative making adventures for Take Back the Night. Join us on **Thursday, September 6<sup>th</sup>** from 3:00 to 6:00pm at the Seniors' Centre, 509 E. Hastings St. Create a flashy placard. Make your very own button to wear or share. Belt out some new chants. Work on a new dance groove. It's free & fun. Refreshments will be served. Children are welcome. For more info, call Breaking the Silence at (604) 682-3269, box 8319.

# TAKE BACK THE NIGHT



*Get ready for*

# **Sisters Resist**

**A Women's Week of Education, Mobilization and Action**

**October 15<sup>th</sup> to October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2001**

Breaking the Silence is planning a week of activities to share information and stories, and come up with strategies to fight against the many forms of violence women in the Downtown Eastside face. Some of the highlights planned so far are:

- Workshops on Native women's issues and resistance
- The official opening of Bridge Housing for Women
- Women across the generations – talking among ourselves & with each other
- A march against poverty (open to everyone in the community)
- Ongoing creative activities & film screenings

Planning for Sisters Resist Women's Week is very much in the works, and Breaking the Silence welcomes input from women. We want to hear from you. We want to know what you would like to see happen during this week. We want to know what needs to be in place to ensure you can participate. So please, join us for a community meeting.

## **Sisters Resist Organizing Meeting**

**Wednesday, September 12<sup>th</sup>**

11:00am to 1:00pm

(location still to be decided)

Lunch will be served

*To let us know you're interested in attending, or if you can't come to the meeting but want to know more about Sisters Resist, just give us a call at (604) 682-3269, box 8319. Leave us your name and a way for us to get in touch with you. We will be happy to answer your questions, take down your suggestions, or pass on information to you.*

# Please Boycott Nestle

*One and a half million babies die every year because they are not breastfed. Millions more become ill. What makes a woman believe she cannot breastfeed her baby, is the constant undermining of her confidence, by formula advertising.* **UNICEF**

In recognition of this problem, **The World Health Organisation** and **UNICEF** drew up *The International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes*. Nestle violates *The Code* in Canada, United States, and around the world, by aggressive advertising and delivering formula samples to new mothers.

*The Code:*

- 1 No advertising formula to the public.*
- 2. No free samples to mothers.*
- 3 No promotion of these products in health care facilities.*
- 4. No baby pictures on products.*

Although Canada endorsed the Code in 1981, Nestle sends tins of Carnation Good Start to every newborn baby address they find, without so much as a frown from the Minister of Health. It's a bad start for babies given Carnation; they are hospitalized 10 times more often in their first year of life than breastfed babies. Brilliant marketing means dull children: Carnation kids grow up to be a full 8.3 IQ points lower than if they received nothing but brain developing breastmilk.

Nestle violates *The Code* world-wide, by giving hospitals free samples in China, South Africa, Thailand and Hungary. Nestle runs direct-mail promotions in Australia, The Philippines and in Mexico promotes *Nestum* with a picture of a plump, white baby. Nestle label violations resulted in court action in India. When Nestle sells formula in under-developed countries where refrigeration is scarce, The Carnation Good start means bottles full of bacteria. Even if the water was clean at the well head, an hour later, mixed with powdered Nestle Nan or other marketed madness, it has microbes that will cause bloody diarrhea, marasmus, fever and death to two babies every minute. Where water is unsafe, a bottle-fed baby is 25 times more likely to die of diarrhea than a breastfed child.

Show Nestle it is indecent to participate in baby deaths for profit. Boycott their products and their lack of concern for vulnerable babies at home and abroad.

Boycott Bloody Nestle!

Nescafe Coffee, Tasters Choice, Encore, **Hills Bros.**, Acro Bars, Smarties, Nestle Crunch, Kit Kat, **Coffee Crisp, Crunch, Rob, Mirage**, Carnation Evaporated Milk, **Carnation Instant Milk, NesQuik.** **Parlour and Hagaan Daas Icecream, Libby's Fruit Beverages, Stouffer Frozen dinners, Frisky, Fancy Feast and Alpo pet food, and anything with Nasty Nestle's Name**

The Friends of Breastfeeding Society, RR#3 Clifford, Ontario, Canada, NOG 1MO  
tel. 515-327-8785 email: zyoung@wcl.on.ca

**THE CLASSIC MILK-DROP**



# BOYCOTT NESTLE

"My eyes are dim, I cannot see..."

Chorus: (to be sung between verses)

Good-bye Haagen Daas  
We won't miss thee,  
We'll cut out everything Nestle  
I have not bought anything Nestle

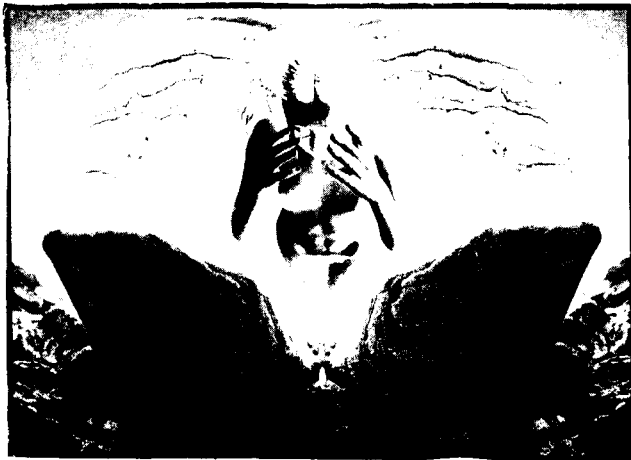
Repeat...  
each verse  
end with  
→ (Boycott  
Nestle  
at the  
store.)

- 1) No Nescafe, Nescafe, throw it all away at the store, at the store.
- 2) No Taster's Choice, Taster's Choice, time for a divorce at the store, at the store.
- 3) No more Encore, Encore, toss it out the door of the store, of the store.
- 4) No more Hills Brothers, Hills Brothers, diarrhea kills at the store, at the store.
- 5) No more Kit Kat, Kit Kat., four sticks of crap at the store, at the store.
- 6) Nestle's Crunch, Crunch, leave it at the front of the store, of the store.
- 7) No more Smarties, Smarties, nasty rotten Smarties at the store, at the store.
- 8) No more Aero, Aero, mothers filled with sorrow at the store, at the store.
- 9) No Coffee Crisp, Crisp, feed it to the fish at the store, at the store.
- 10) No more Rolo, Rolo, IQ points are lower at the store, at the store.
- 11) No more Mirage, Mirage, belongs in the garbage of the store, of the store.
- 12) No Carnation, Carnation, death in every nation at the store, at the store.
- 13) No Nesquik, Nesquik, poisons really quick at the store, at the store.
- 14) No Haagen Daas, Haagen Daas, permanently paused at the store, at the store.
- 15) No more Parlour Parlour, withhold the mighty dollar at the store, at the store.
- 16) No more Libby's, Libby's, other juice for kiddies at the store, at the store.
- 17) No more Stouffer's, Stouffer's, anything but Stouffer's at the store, at the store.
- 18) No more Friskies, Friskies, for our little kitties from the store, from the store.
- 19) No Fancy Feast, Feast, add it to the heap at the store, at the store.
- 20) No more Alpo, Alpo, anything but Alpo from the store, from the store.
- 21) No more Nestle, Nestle, buying nothing Nestle from the store, from the store.



rosanne

(To the tune of "The Quarter Master's Store")



Who Am I?

I'm not what I think I am . . .  
I'm not what you think I am . . .  
I am what I think, you think I am . . .  
Who do you think I am?

Jeaninne Fischler

## The Vancouver Legal Challenge

Pursuant to sections of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (the right to security of the person and the freedom of speech, based on the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights), three human rights organizations dedicated to the poor — the National Anti-Poverty Organization (NAPO), End Legislated Poverty (ELP) and the federated anti-poverty groups (fapg) — are challenging Vancouver's bylaw regulating the locations and hours of panhandling, as well as the behaviour of panhandlers (the infamous "aggressive begging" bylaw), before the Supreme Court of British Columbia.

MacDonald, a lawyer with the BC Public Interest Advocacy Centre (PIAC) who has represented the three groups in the challenge of Section 70A of the Streets and Traffic Bylaw, believes we will succeed. The 9-day trial, which ended on July 19<sup>th</sup>, went well, and in Ms. MacDonald's opinion: "*The evidence is strong that the City of Vancouver does not have the authority to pass a bylaw that deals with aggressive solicitation and that the bylaw is a breach of the right of expression for the poor.*"

The judge has reserved decision: it could be a year before it is handed down. The Attorney General of British Columbia intervened in the case on points in which equality it may be established on the basis of poverty, security, and liberty interests would impact on provincial legislation.

This legal challenge in Vancouver resembles a similar case in Winnipeg, "the model" for other cities, in which a settlement was reached in Sept. 2000. A few months ago in Calgary, a proposed bylaw requiring a panhandler ID-tag was on hold. In Ontario, the Safe Streets Act which makes squeegee work and hitchhiking illegal is also facing a legal challenge.

Our claim is that the Vancouver bylaw is unconstitutional and openly discriminates against the poor by distinguishing them from other citizens. The Criminal Code already penalizes those who threaten, impede the way of someone, follow in a persistent manner, or harass. And, in reality, very few people act this way, and only on very rare occasions. Panhandlers are not a threat to the safety of other citizens. In general, they are hungry

people trying to survive. Like other poor people who do not beg, panhandlers are not a homogeneous group: there are men, women, youth, middle-aged people and even seniors. (21)

Anti-panhandling regulations will not eliminate poverty. The number of panhandlers is rising with the increase of poverty in this country. There are more people in the streets - women, children, teenagers, men and whole families- food banks just cannot fill the gaps in social assistance.

Why? Because our governments let a few dictate their decisions to drastically reduce access to employment insurance and social welfare, to slash welfare benefits that are already below the poverty level, to slice social programs, to eliminate rent control and to stop construction of social housing. The influencers are the same few who profit from the market without creating decent and stable jobs and who implement massive lay-offs.

We are being thrown back more than thirty years. It is even worse nowadays as enormous budget surpluses are funding tax credits to large corporations - and nobody calls it "aggressive begging" when these corporations scratch and claw for their sizeable tax breaks. All the while, the general public is being misinformed: poverty is blamed on

### MEET THE MINISTER

#### HON. MURRAY COELL, Provincial MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCES

HAS AGREED TO COME TO THE SEPT. DERA GENERAL MEETING TO "OUTLINE POLICIES, DISCUSS CHANGES AND MOST IMPORTANT, LISTEN TO CONCERNS OF RESIDENTS."

COME AND ASK HIM AND HIS STAFF ABOUT B. C. BENEFITS OR ANY RELATED CONCERN ABOUT WELFARE ISSUES.

**FRIDAY, SEPT. 7, 10AM.- NOON**

**CARNEGIE CENTRE THEATRE!**

THERE WILL BE A LOT TO GET THROUGH IN A SHORT PERIOD OF TIME SO THIS MEETING WILL START EXACTLY AT 10A.M.

***SEE YOU THERE.***

the individual, the poor are called lazy, ignorant, unable to stick to a budget, and now, they are criminals. Notwithstanding the lack of respect for everyone's right to housing, food, clothing, transportation and freedom, even charity is now being regulated and criminalized, just like the Poor Laws of two centuries ago which segregated the poor into two categories: some deserved minimal assistance while others were not to be encouraged in their "laziness", "fraud" or their "alcoholism".

Governments are not passing laws to eliminate poverty, but rather to make it invisible. By claiming they only want to help clients and tourists safely reach businesses and banks, business people use their influence to push governments to kick the poor off the streets. But where can they go? Shelters and other services are overflowing. Nobody likes to see people beg. Their mere presence tells those living from one paycheque to the next that this could be them one day and that their meagre individual contribution to alleviate poverty may not weigh much in the collective balance. But every gesture counts. Your boss does not ask if your paycheque will go to beer, cheese spread, or bingo. So why presume how panhandlers will use a donation? Perhaps they have a dire

and urgent need.

**Our right to give freely must not be taken from us, nor should our right to help the poor in their efforts to see their rights to dignity and security observed.**

The movement against anti-panhandling laws and other efforts to hide poverty is encouraging because it goes against the powers that create poverty. But we must do more than protest against discriminatory laws. We must see that social condition is included in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms as illegal grounds for discrimination, and we must take on a real strategy of coordinated policies to eliminate poverty.

It is more and more difficult for the financial and political elite to hide the poor - panhandlers, homeless people, welfare and EI recipients, minimum wage workers and others - and to maintain that the reason for poverty lies with the individual. Nurturing intolerance and social division can only make things worse. A political will to observe the rights of the poor is essential. In Canada, governments must return to governing in the name of all, without exception, and stomp out the roots of human right violations rather than hide them from us and from the rest of the world.

By Marie-José Dancoste & Jacquie Ackerly  
[From NAPO News, July-August 2001]

**Book Signing with Daniel Rajala  
September 10 at 6 pm  
Spartacus Books, 311 W. Hastings**

## Breaking In

I went to a garden party,  
I thought it was for the 'arty,'  
There wasn't one artist  
Nor a single clown

The back yard was divided in 2 parts  
A ramp came down to the back yard's  
One part was garden, the other lawn and chairs,  
and birds singing in a pear tree

The hostess served lots of food and drink  
I sat down and ate and ate, and drank  
The minister and his crew came late  
They had been out all morning in back lanes

He had taken their pictures while they bent over  
Picking up condoms and dirty needles  
They'd removed the bad stuff from the downtown  
So children wouldn't accidentally find them

They had gone home to shower and change  
And come and dine on sandwiches and cake  
What a Saturday they had!  
And they were very glad

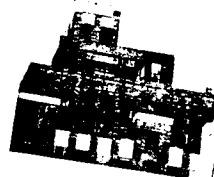
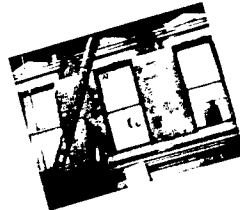
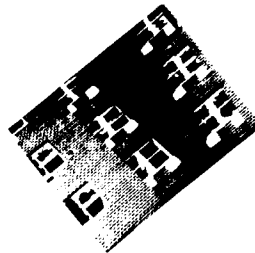
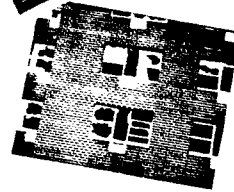
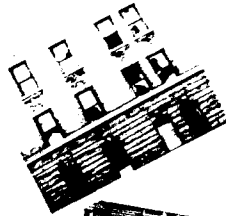
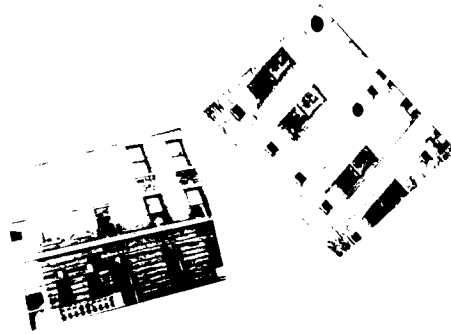
I broke an old stair in half  
I should have gone up and down the ramp  
I ate too much, and must have put on weight  
To damage their stairway

Dora Sanders

## Paternal Rambling

Through my delusional fog  
I see sandwiches at my door  
not far away a few good butts  
offerings for the Buddha. no  
just my neighbours watching  
me kick and twist  
first methadone for 3 months  
now benzos when oh when  
does it all end my friend?  
If you're honest with yourself  
and those around you, you  
are sure to piss some people off  
So what, can't handle the truth?  
Just be yourself.  
Stop hiding in the uniform.

R



## Reprive

At 3am my head clears  
perfect clarity no pain  
no craving, no jones  
food and sacred tobacco  
seem to be the big issue  
after sunrise miles ahead

I am a legend no yet dead  
a walking contradiction  
a flower in one hand  
a hatchet in the other  
comes with the turf  
strong as steel  
without losing my soul  
Under all this skin, scars,  
beats a heart with heart  
Wah I NEE

R

## There is a Witch in the Woods Tonight

A Brujo sits very still, just waiting  
lost in the bamboo smoking up shit  
says a prayer for blowback  
blast those blues back to hell  
Wait a minute, mister, woncha let me ride?  
Hold that train, I'm leaving  
Was your love kept me believing  
Aint no dope strong enough these days  
to blow back the memory, purple haze  
of those dark eyes, that lovely brown skin  
Been strung out, hung out to dry or die  
Somewhere this side of Hades - north of Main  
Bunk corner is the real deal. bitchin' downtown  
You don't need no lesson, you already know  
Have no fear, my darling, don't worry  
If it's hell you're frettin' over  
You are already here  
Now don't you go forgettin'  
that what goes around comes around  
comes back to bite or bless  
Ten to ten power payback  
Fools, fools, go ahead, blow yourselves away  
Have your self a real good heart attack  
Only God payin' you back.

Richard Stonefeather

poverty  
disease  
despair  
exploited by authority  
poisoned  
ailing  
without help  
the very worst outcome  
the result of failure  
a battleground  
teetering on the brink  
times are changing  
posing grave risks  
serious deterioration  
less and less able  
dealing death  
the wrath  
broken power  
amid fear  
weakness  
is it safe to look?

charles fortin



# Survival Of The Cedar People

For some 9000 years, and probably longer on the Pacific Northwest Coast, natives have migrated, settled and moved on, or been displaced by succeeding waves of other peoples. The history is a long one, recorded only in part by myth and legend until quite recently. It has been only a little over 200 years since men with paper, pens and ink arrived on the coast in sailing ships to write down where they went, what they saw and whom they met. The men brought with them items of trade: iron, beads,



mirrors, buttons, copper, cloth, iron pots and muskets.

Unwittingly, they also brought diseases that had never been known in the land, and to which

the people had no immunity. The worst was smallpox, which raged along the coast, wiping out whole families and sometimes entire villages, until the population dwindled to a pitiful few.

The early explorer and traders were followed by missionaries and settlers, who were followed by Indian agents and the paternal hand of government. With them came the ban of the potlatch. The potlatch lay at the very heart of the native culture. The swift destruction of a thriving people was well documented by historians and anthropologists and by the people themselves. Time passed, but the quiet strength and pride of the people did not. With a new awareness of their place on the coast, the Northwest Coast people are again a positive force on the coast, using their rights and privileges to the land, the sea and the rivers. They have emerged with a stronger voice and a rejuvenated sense of identity.

Many of our people are grasping the tools and education to enable themselves to compete in a complex 21<sup>st</sup> century society, and many are focusing on the re-emergence of the old art forms. The cedar tree is often central to that art, providing, as in the past, the raw materials they needed: wood, bark, roots and withes. Women have not only revived the weaving skills they learned in their youth-exhibiting and selling their exquisite basketry - but are teaching it to the young people. Men, and occasionally, women, often with the apprentices at their side, carve totem poles and canoes, make baskets and steam-bent boxes, and create masks, drums and rattles. Large plank houses are again being built and used for feasts and ceremonies, and the return of the potlatch.

**We, as a people, a culture, have survived and have continued to grow - STRONGER!!**



## The meaning of U'mista

***In earlier days, people were sometimes taken by raiding parties. When they returned to their homes, either through payment of ransom or by retaliatory raid, they were said to have "u'mista". The return of our treasures from distant museums is a form of u'mista.***

The U'mista Cultural Society was incorporated under the British Columbia Societies Act on March 22, 1974. Since that time, it has worked towards fulfilling the mandate to ensure the

survival of all aspects of cultural heritage of the Kwakwaka'wakw. To facilitate the accomplishment of this mandate, the Board of Directors, composed of any person who is an individual, family of honorary member and can trace ancestry to a member of any tribe of the Kwakwaka'wakw, is responsible for developing, implementing and monitoring all policy. The Executive Director, hired by the Board of Directors, is responsible for developing and implementing strategies that achieve the ends and aims that the Board has identified. This comprises day to day operations, management of the Centre, and yearly budget development.

The staff of the society consists of three full time positions, including the Executive Director, with contract staff being hired for specific tasks. The full time staff ensure that all programming is achieved and the facility is open Monday to Friday from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm (please contact us for extended summer hours; Victoria Day to Labour Day).

One of the objectives of the Society was the development of a facility to carry out the aims of the society. The present facility was opened in November of 1980. The focus of the permanent collection is the "Potlatch Collection." The other permanent exhibits on display include description of the traditional ethno-biology of the People and origin stories of the Kwakwaka'wakw villages, as well as historical and contemporary Kwakwaka'wakw pieces. Traveling exhibits of significance to the community are also displayed.

### U'mista Cultural Society

Front Street, PO Box 253  
Alert Bay, BC V0N 1A0

Under the cloud of misunderstanding Native Peoples across Canada keep a hold on why blockades and other acts are necessary. What's reported in the media seems to focus on "What has happened today." The Native Nations are basing their actions on what has happened since the 1700s, and the factual history since the 1800s (the history that usually is not in the books).

At a DERA membership meeting a Native representative named Rosalie gave a brief but clear



Near the foot of Main, and Luck-luck ee, in the 1890's

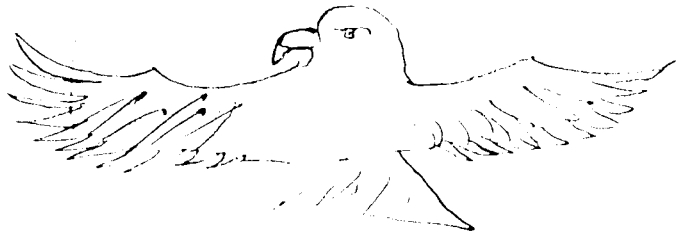
history of Indian land claims.

North America, the "Great Island" in native terms, is the land given to the Natives by the Creator to protect and live in harmony with. When the English and French first arrived, the agreement reached with the English (after the French settlers were defeated) was known as the "two-row wampum". The Natives were simply formalizing, for the sake of the English, what to them was natural: equal rights to live in peace. In 1867, the four colonies of non-natives got together and formed the nation of Canada, without the knowledge or consent of the First Nations and began signing treaties in the name of the British crown. In 1871, British Columbia entered Confederation without the knowledge or consent of the First Nations. No treaties have ever been signed by Natives in this province, yet the governments of both BC and Canada have dealt away lands without any recognition - legal or otherwise - of the Natives' claims.

Natives have been consistently lied to for over 100 years: encroachment has been the result of every promise with "this land only for...; a road is needed for...; and underlying all "It's in your best interest.. for your own good.. that this last bit goes for..."

Rosalie talked then about the Oka issue. The lands claimed by the Mohawks is their burial grounds. The expansion of a public golf course is the reason





this time for the unapproved (by the Natives) "expropriation". The Mohawks took Quebec to court when the Federal Government denied the existence of their claim. The Court also denied this claim as having any legal bearing on the matter. The Mayor of the town went to court to get an injunction to stop the Mohawks six months ago from blockading the road. When the blockade went up in July, he called in the police. The Natives asked that the Warriors Society, part of their tribal system, come in and help. A policeman was killed.

Here in B.C., the so-called have consistently denied the existence of any land claims — EXCEPT WHEN FORCED TO NEGOTIATE. Native Peoples have lobbied the government for years to sit with them and settle this issue, but representatives of the government do not show up.

The Supreme Court of Canada has recently ruled that no law can extinguish any land claims; that both Federal and Provincial governments have a legal obligation to the Native Nations to resolve all land claim issues.

Rosalie asked for support for the Native claims. She left to go to Mt. Currie, then to another province then on to Oka, Quebec. Before she left, a motion was carried unanimously reaffirming the support of all present for Native land claims.

In 1911, the Indian Act was amended to allow the expropriation of Indian lands for "public works". At that time the policy came down in favour of a provincially chartered railway for development of a certain part of the country.

The situation now in Quebec has the Mohawks in Oka defending their land rights against an (at present) municipally owned golf course. The Mohawks have, along with every other Native People in North America, decided not to accept the idea that the proposed development will be "for your (their) own good!". The land, in case after

case, starts out being taken out of Native hands for some use, and 10 years later, 5 years later, even next week, the government body accepts an 'unexpected offer' from a non-public source and lets the land change hands for private developers to work their schemes.

Technically, legally, if the land was expropriated by a government for public works it can't be challenged except on the issue of compensation for the previous owners. When the people behind the expropriation then shake on the deal to sell it to the picked buyer, that's legal also. When the private owner changes the land use to, say, housing or a shopping mall, millions are made. The Native claim and its violation are, by this time, ancient history.

The Mohawks will not allow this preordained chain of events to get started. Once it begins, any claim they have..... Both sides know the rules of the game, or at least can predict what happens next. The land can legally be grabbed, the Natives get a chunk of money after they spend years and millions in court, the public ownership is lost when the work to develop the land is finished and paid for by tax dollars and sold to private hands.

What's scary & sickening is that someone called in the Provincial Police to make sure their scam was going ahead. One of them was killed. Now we have two opposed camps with the media showing racist activities as normal, everyday events. The ass-covering schedule that makes this whole scam legal is giving the Mohawks widespread support.

Blind eyes are becoming as scarce as dodos.

By PAULR TAYLOR

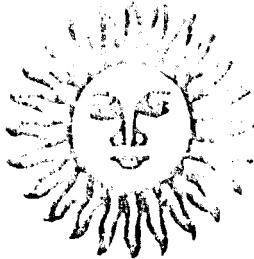
## SINGLE MOTHER'S SUPPORT GROUP

If you are interested in

- \* Meeting new friends
- \* Embracing Single Motherhood
- \* Empowering oneself
- \* Sharing your parenting challenges

COME JOIN US FOR COFFEE  
WE MEET EVERY FRIDAY FROM  
10:00AM - 1:00PM

Lunch, Daycare, and Bus tickets are provided  
Call Brenda @ 604 689-2808



I would like to praise security staff who worked as a team in saving the life of a young man who had been stabbed out on the street. Apparently three individuals had been stabbing people at random and there were six victims; one just happened to enter Carnegie. They worked extremely hard to try and stop the bleeding, and kept uttering comforting words - "Everything is going to be alright." Our Security work on the front lines (and in the trenches).. they deserve more support and less criticism.

So often with our human ways, we remember the faults but not the praise!

The security staff who were on that Tuesday evening had to go for trauma counselling.

In closing I would like to say we must be kinder to each other, as there are very difficult times ahead under the Liberal government. Those who persist in negative and mean-spirited ways shall find that they are fending for themselves.

Irene Schmidt

PS: The best news is that all of the stabbing victims are recovering.

Strathcona Community Centre  
Presents

## NOBODY'S PERFECT PARENTING PROGRAM

interested in sharing and experiencing your child's world?

September 27 to November 1

Thursday Mornings for 6 Weeks

Strathcona Community Centre  
601 Keefer Street, Vancouver, BC

NOBODY'S PERFECT is a parenting program which will enable parents to learn more about the physical, safety, emotions and behaviour of their children. It's also an opportunity to meet other parents.

*If you are interested in attending  
contact Brenda (a 689-2808*

the community

mary overdosed alone  
in her hotel room  
but the old guy next door  
an alcoholic  
found her and saved her life  
they watch out for each other  
like when he's drunk  
she helps him get back to the hotel  
but mary broke  
a couple of her fingers  
when she dropped  
and her face has now erupted  
with a rash and sores  
from a bad cut  
in the heroin

*Bud Osborn*

"Label Jars, not People" is the title of a talk/discussion by Millie Strom at the Humanities Storefront on September 12, 2001. Millie Strom is director of Madness 101 Mental Health Dialogue Series. *Humanities Storefront, 49 W Cordova. Sandwiches & coffee at 6.30 p.m. Talk discussion at 7p.m.*



## Crab Park Family and Summer Fest

A community celebration for families and children on Friday, August 17 at Crab Park. The **Crab Park Family and Children Summer Fest** was attended by over 450 children and families in the area! There were balloons, a clown, two big inflatable obstacle courses for kids, volleyball, water games, and arts and crafts. Luckily, the weather held — giving us a beautiful day, and there was just enough fried chicken and potato salad for lunch!

Thanks to RayCam, Strathcona Community Centre, YWCA Crabtree corner, Four Sisters Coop, Safety Office, CAP-C programs and all the volunteers from Community Directions for all their hard work that went into organizing the event! And of course, thanks to all the families and children that came out and enjoyed the day with us!

## Kids Putting the Lid on Litter!

On Tuesday, August 14, the children in Strathcona and DTES held **A Day of Action** at Maclean Park. Children from the area, in response to surveys and discussions conducted in the spring, highlighted the need for more garbage receptacles to make their neighbourhood a cleaner place for children. The Child, Family, and Youth Working Group from Community Directions, along with resident children, met earlier with city officials in July and successfully lobbied 13 additional garbage receptacles for the community!

As part of the event, the children accompanied city officials and local media on a walking tour of the neighbourhood. Placards, made and decorated by the kids, marked the sites of planned garbage receptacles that will be erected in the fall. There will be five additional ones placed on busy streets. These cans will be provided and maintained by the City. The City will provide another five on the residential streets in Strathcona. These receptacles will need to be sponsored and maintained by residents. The last three receptacles are pending negotiations with the City, Parks Board and School Board. In addition, the City has agreed to increase street cleaning by Strathcona schools and will be contracting United We Can to do this.

Congratulations to all the youth, children and families in the neighbourhood for all their hard work in successfully lobbying the government, decorating placards and banners, meeting with city officials, and talking to the media!

For more information, or if you're interested in sponsoring a litter receptacle, please call Edna at 801-6893.

Edna Cho  
Community Directions

## Dare to be Great

On those off rainy days when  
Some plans come to an end  
With an addiction dying out  
Waiting to take you down

Dare to be Great

Remember the little children  
and the love on their faces  
The roses outside a flower store  
Waiting to find a home to grow

Dare to be Great

When skyscrapers loom above you  
Technology soaring ahead of you  
Youth steal the bouquet of flowers  
And you feel like a speck of sand

Dare to be Great

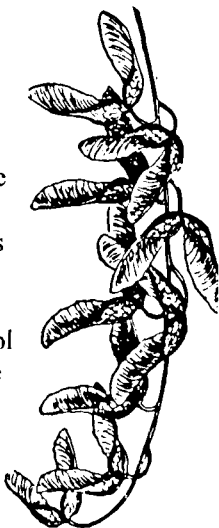
When everyone else is driving cars  
And the mountain you climb is high  
When the world seems against you  
Thinking you're the most hopeless case

Dare to be Great

Then watch the fireworks light up  
The sky like a giant Christmas tree  
And someone looking like the Devil  
Could be hiding a SAVIOR inside

Dare to be Great

Daniel Rajala





### Federal Housing Breakthrough (!?)

An important breakthrough at the federal-provincial-territorial housing ministers' meeting in London, thanks to determined efforts of National Housing and Homelessness Network partners and allies.

We've moved several key steps closer to a fully-funded national housing program. After eight years of housing drought in Canada, the developments are exceptionally important.

First, the federal government is going to re-draft its \$680 million housing grants program (\$170 million annually over four years) and negotiate deals with the provinces and territories to get the housing built. The ministers will be meeting in early November in Quebec City to conclude the negotiations and get the program going. This was a key demand of NHHN and other groups, such as the Federation of Canadian Municipalities. The federal program, as it was proposed before the London summit, would've created rental housing that was not affordable to more than half the tenant households in most parts of Canada. The new program will be geared to low and moderate-income households.

We expect to see a new federal housing program in three months that will allow us to start building new housing (including new social housing) soon after that. This is a very hopeful development. In order to accommodate the changes to make sure that the program helps lower-income households, instead of upper-income ones, there will be fewer units built (since each unit will require more money). But we should get the start of a new national housing program - so desperately needed after so many years of arrested development.

The fact that the ministers have set such a short deadline to complete negotiations on the new program - just three months - is also a hopeful sign.

And those of us in the network should be pleased that the meeting will be held in Quebec City and chaired by Manitoba, two provinces that are more sympathetic to our demands than other provinces (such as Ontario).

Second, the federal government now calls its \$680 million program "short-term". This is the response that federal housing minister Alfonso Gagliano gave to NHHN during our meeting with him. We noted that the federal program is less than 10% of our goal of \$2 billion annually. Minister Gagliano didn't try to argue with us. He just called his program "short-term", then repeated that under questioning from the media at the post-summit press conference.

We've got to hold Minister Gagliano's feet to the fire (in the few months leading up to Quebec city) to make sure that the re-drafted program meets our target of low and moderate-income households.

We've got to increase the pressure regarding the One Percent Solution so that the feds put real money on the table for a real national housing program.

We've got to build the pressure on the provinces and territories, so that they add their own money for housing.

...and, of course, we've got to start working to build an even more powerful presence in Quebec.

There were about 200 people (the biggest gathering ever at a national housing summit) from London, Windsor, Brantford, Kitchener, Toronto, Montreal and Hull. Our event was passionate and powerful, a clear demonstration of the determination of the network and its allies to build the pressure for a new national housing program.

The usual cautions, however. The process to date has been painfully slow. We have to acknowledge that as politicians spin out the process, many people have died on our streets and many, many more have had their lives shattered by the housing crisis. Even as we celebrate the breakthrough in London, we have to say with great sadness that the developments have been too slow for too many.

There is still a chance that everything could unravel before or during the Quebec City meeting, and we'll get nothing. So we can't celebrate the real victory until the first units have been built under the proposed new program.

LINDA MIX

## 'Serving' the people, corporate style

Even while protesters climb barricades and police beat their shields, recent global trade summits have mostly carried on undeterred. But what exactly the delegates are talking about has been veiled by the clouds of tear gas outside their hotels.

To read the newspapers, you'd think the meetings were all friendly get-to-know-the-neighbours chats and the protestors outside were opposed to such a thing on principle.

Not so. The recent summit in Genoa attended by the leaders of the wealthiest seven nations (plus Russia), involved more than 1,200 delegates. The eight leaders might have spent most of their time chatting and posing for pictures, but the others had more important business.

The delegates to these trade meetings are the managers of global business. These are really their meetings, and national political leaders are invited along merely as window dressing. Jean Chretien, George Bush, Tony Blair and the rest are merely public relations spokespeople for the global corporate boards. They hang around outside the meeting rooms, and when beckoned, are handed statements to read to the press, announcing what global business managers have decided will be our future.

What the corporate managers meeting in Genoa talked about - and what they will talk about next year at Kananaskis, Alta. - is the next stage of free trade: the privatization of services provided by governments. This is the real mother lode corporate boards have their eyes on, since roughly half the gross national product of the world is currently in the hands of governments.

The corporate boards have begun to look at our governments, with all the taxes they collect for the services they provide, as competition. Provision of clean water and sewage treatment for residents of cities, education for our children, prisons for our convicts, medical services for our ill, even our fire and police departments are now considered fair game for private investors to take over. Corporate managers are in the process of discussing how to swing this deal without setting off violent revolt among the subjects of their grand experiment. This is what they talk about at those global summit meetings.

Of course, it's not the provision of traditionally



photo: elaine briere

### Comments? Concerns?

Contact  
**Jenny  
Wai Ching  
Kwan, MLA**

## Working for You

1070-1641 Commercial Dr., V5L 3Y3  
Phone: 775-0790 Fax: 775-0881  
Office hours: Tuesday-Friday 9am-4pm

government-supplied services, but the enormous cash flow governments rake in for those services that global corporation managers are hot for. In

Canada alone, government services generate more than \$500 billion annually. In the world, the potential action tops \$50 trillion. In a world glutted with privately produced goods and services, government-supplied services represent the only avenue left for corporate growth. And they want it - all of it.

It may be a waste of time to ask whether we want our essential services handed over to the vagaries of private enterprise. Noting increasingly hostile police reaction to protests, and the determination of so-called representatives of the people like Chretien to keep providing hotels and security to enable global managers to meet and finalize their plans, there is an over-abiding sense of *fait accompli* about it. Then again, capitalists have been thoroughly routed by tuned-in masses before, and there's nothing saying history can't be repeated.

By KEVIN POTVIN

**DOWNTOWN  
EASTSIDE  
YOUTH  
ACTIVITIES  
SOCIETY**

**STD CLINIC - 219 Main; Monday-Friday, 10am - 6pm**  
**NEEDLE EXCHANGE - 221 Main; 8:30am-8pm every day**  
**NEEDLE EXCHANGE VAN - 3 Routes**

**City - 5:45 pm - 11:45 pm**  
**Overnight - 12:30 am - 8:30 am**  
**Downtown Eastside - 5:30pm - 1:30am**

**2001 DONATIONS** Libby D. -\$69  
Sam R. -\$30 Nancy W. -\$4 Eve E. -\$4  
Margaret D. -\$30 Shyamala G. -\$2  
Pam C. -\$20 Val A. \$20 Wm B. -\$20  
Harold D. -\$20 Pam. -\$6 Mary C. -\$30  
Rolf A. -\$75 Bruce J. -\$34 Peggy. -\$45  
Kettle -\$20 Sonya S. -\$120 BCTF -\$9  
Nancy H. -\$19 Bill G. -\$130 Wes K. -\$14  
DEYAS -\$150 RayCam -\$70 LSS -\$230  
John S. -\$34 Paddy. -\$60 Sarah E. -\$20  
Rockingguy -\$30 Anonymous -\$273  
The Edge -\$200 Celeste W. -\$22  
Jo's Mom -\$25

Free donations accepted.

# Carnegie

## NEWSLETTER

401 MAIN ST. VANCOUVER BC V6A 2T7

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 next issue**  
Tuesday, September 11

**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 28 years!!!!**

how vicious are we?

one of our daughters  
still a girl  
is below my balcony  
keeping 6 in the alley  
while a native or latino or black man  
shoots up behind her whose  
valuable skin is torn by  
objects more comforting  
than our harsh hand  
locking her up again and again  
because we cannot stand  
to see her love where we do not  
she's our white renegade terror come true  
and consequently we refuse  
to help her  
no help for her  
standing in a chinatown doorway  
leaning there actually quite defiantly  
smokin a cigarette  
and ready  
to not take  
any shit  
from police  
whose handcuffs  
scar the wrists of  
our  
abandoned  
daughter

Bud Osborn

How to stop teardrops.

Teardrops flowing softly at first, slowly will roll, steady, then falling heavily, like a leaky faucet on hot burns: eyes that are glancing over the mayhem, brimming, stinging, salty; digesting the shattered dreams.. shot to pieces over stretches of time and collapsing like dominoes in a creaking chain reaction of agony. Animate objects, squinted, thru a web of hazy threads, spinning like tops in an endless whirlpool of stifling despair, not knowing how to stop centrifugal revolutions, turning downward, wanting desperately to get off this jagged road map to an untimely death. It is a frenzied game of chance that has the slimmest of odds to step down and be off this uncontrollable roller coaster, as of now, to regain gain your correct and priceless balance, in tune, in

theology from the outer darkness  
(to randy and cheryl)

at a street church in the downtown eastside  
a middle-aged first nations man remains  
after the service and hot dogs  
and says he wants to speak to someone  
he then tells me  
his family is dying  
of a.i.d.s. from dirty needles  
and overdose deaths  
because there is nowhere safe  
to use drugs  
my family is dying right now he says  
in the bar  
on the street  
and the man's face  
streaked with scars  
creases in anguish  
he sticks his arms straight out at his sides  
and makes sounds  
of spikes driven through flesh and bone  
ghastly violent sounds  
he says i don't want to give up  
but my brother just died  
and he really tried  
to find a new life  
and the man nods toward the front of the room  
to the bloody tortured executed christ  
i think a lot about that gentleman he says  
and stretches his arms out again  
and makes the sounds  
of crucifixion  
and says  
the pain the pain

synchronicity with the real world around you and the sky up above.  
Take a minute, try to stand still, motionless, quietly... hush yourself and please, quite simply, think it over for a brief flash of time – end your grief and dry your internal, gutwrenching tears. We all care about what happens to you and what you can become. Keep this in mind and remember always, because you have immense and unlimited potential; but you've known this truth all along the way, deep down inside yourself. just realize it, today, now, this instant.

Robyn