



# GORDON CAMPBELL BC'S PREMIER

*He's attacking:*  
healthcare  
education  
trade unions  
treaty talks  
the poor  
the elderly  
the environment  
**YOU!**



STOP  
SAVE BC NOW  
VIVE ME PE CUTS  
Stop the Liberals  
NO MORE  
JOBS not CUTS

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## Carnegie

NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 15, 2002

401 Main St., Vancouver, BC V6A 2T7 email: [carnevs@direct.ca](mailto:carnevs@direct.ca)

# HE MUST BE STOPPED!

## Open Letter from British Columbia Economists

to Hon. Gordon Campbell, Premier  
Hon. Gary Collins, Minister of Finance

Dear Premier Campbell and Minister Collins,

We are writing to express our concern about your intended spending cuts.

For reasons largely beyond the government's control, the BC economy is in a serious economic downturn. (The average forecast from the most recent BC Economic Forecast Council was for economic growth of 0.9% in 2002, predicated on a US recovery in the second half of the year, while the Ministry of Finance is projecting 0.6% growth). Despite last summer's tax cuts, the unemployment rate has risen sharply, from 6.8% in May to 9.7% in December.

In such a climate, we look to the government to extend help to those in need, and not to aggravate the recession through fiscal drag.

Now is not the time to cut spending, government programs and capital projects, and it is certainly not the time to cut access to welfare and welfare benefit rates. Such income support is needed by those without jobs and represents an important automatic stabilizer. If the government proceeds with its announced spending cuts, economic growth will decline, economic recovery will be delayed, and unemployment will increase. Moreover, many of the proposed cuts represent a false economy--they will cost the government in the future. Federal and provincial tax cuts and lower interest rates are clearly proving insufficient to fend off serious economic hardship. The spending cuts you have proposed would only make matters worse.

BC's fiscal situation is healthy. The province's low debt-to-GDP ratio (of 21.7%) and low debt servicing costs (7.4% of revenues) mean that the province can afford to run deficits during economic downturns. The goal of balancing the budget by 2004/2005 should not be set in stone. Other more pressing economic concerns must take precedence.

The government claims that a \$3.8 billion "structural deficit" leaves it no choice but to cut spending. We reject this claim, and believe such deficit forecasts are based on overly conservative assumptions by the Fiscal Review Panel. It is our view that the 2001 tax

cuts of over \$2 billion create an underlying deficit, with little economic benefit. Therefore, we recommend that the tax cuts be selectively scaled back, and that the recouped revenues be made available to maintain and strengthen current programs. The emphasis at this time must be to restore confidence, protect jobs, and defend the economic and social security of British Columbians.

Given the current economic climate, no one should fault the government for thoughtfully reconsidering its fiscal strategy. We urge you, therefore, to rethink the spending cuts before bringing down the February 19 budget.

Sincerely,

*This letter has been coordinated through the BC Office of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives*

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## Proposed Reduction in Welfare Rates

These are not yet the law; write to your MLA

Category	Current Rate	New Rate	Loss	% Loss
Single Parent, One Child	\$376.58	\$307.22	\$69.36	18.4%
Single Employable Person 55-59	\$231.92	\$185.00	\$46.92	20.2%
Single Employable Person 60-64	\$282.92	\$185.00	\$97.92	34.6%
Employable Couple 55-59, No Children	\$401.06	\$307.22	\$93.84	23.4%
Employable Couple 60-64, No Children	\$452.06	\$307.22	\$144.84	32.0%

Support Allowance for Single Parent does not include BC Family Bonus or Canada Child Tax Benefit payments for dependant children under 18

Source: courtesy SPARC of BC

### Leading BC Groups Call on United Nations Committee To Give Urgent Attention to Welfare and Legal Aid Cuts

On February 13, twelve leading BC non-governmental organizations released a submission to the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, calling on the Committee to pay urgent attention to "a massive assault on the social and economic rights" of BC residents by the Government of British Columbia.

The twelve organizations are: federated anti-poverty groups of B.C., End Legislated Poverty, B.C. Coalition of Women's Centres, Seniors Network B.C., United Native Nations, Working Group on Poverty, West Coast LEAF, Alliance for the Rights of Children, Justice for Girls, Social Planning and Research Council of B.C., B.C. Coalition of People with Disabilities, B.C. Human Rights Coalition.

## MLA WAGE ROLL-BACK SMALLER THAN CUTS TO SINGLE PARENT FAMILIES

### "SHAME," SAY BC WOMEN'S CENTRES

In a media release sent out Tuesday, January 29, Gordon Campbell announced that provincial MLAs would experience a three-year roll-back and freeze of five per cent.

"The five per cent rollback on MLA wages will only apply to members of the government caucus," says the media release. "The current annual MLA salary is \$72,100. Under the rollback, the MLAs' base wage will be frozen at \$68,500 until March 31, 2005."

The total cut in annual wages for MLAs is \$3,600. There will be no cuts to other payments received by elected officials.

Draconian changes to income support programs in British Columbia will mean cuts of up to \$370 per month for single-parent families. This loss of \$4,440 per year will equal a cut of 33 per cent in the incomes of single parents with two children.

The Ministry of Human Resources Service Plan, announced January 17, cuts \$70 off the support portion of single parents' income assistance. Additionally, cuts to the earnings exemption, which allowed working families to earn and keep \$200 before it was clawed back by the Ministry, and the maintenance exemption, which allowed single parents to keep \$100 of child maintenance payments before claw-back, were also eradicated under the new Service Plan.

This appearance of belt-tightening by MLAs is a charade, of which the provincial government should be ashamed.

Far from being any kind of savings to the province, or even a symbolic gesture, the province's media release describing the wage roll-back comes, hypocritically, without the details that the Premier earns an extra \$45,000, meaning he will earn \$114,500 instead of \$117,100. The province's cabinet ministers earn an additional \$39,000 on top of their base salaries.

MLAs also receive additional monies, such as daily cost-of-living allowances of \$150 per day while sitting in the Legislature.



Prior to the announced cutbacks to income assistance, a single parent with two children has received a maximum of \$13,278.96 per year in shelter and support from the BC Ministry of Human Resources.

All of this means the wage roll-back for MLAs will be far less than five per cent of their gross incomes, in sharp contrast to the 33 per cent cut to the net incomes of single parent families in poverty.

Cutbacks to income assistance in British Columbia, called "reckless and unnecessary"\* by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, will push women and their families into homelessness, starvation, and sickness, and will force women to enter or stay in abusive relationships, or even enter the sex trade out of desperation.

According to the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, "The welfare cuts.....are the most surprising piece of bleak news-surprising because the Premier clearly stated during the election campaign that he would not cut welfare benefit rates, because welfare rates are already so shockingly low."\*

Other brutal changes to income assistance include cutting transit passes to low-income seniors, forcing people with disabilities to look for work, and threatening single parents of kids over age 3 with further cuts of 11% if they are unable to find employment.

The BC Coalition of Women's Centres believes the mark of a civilized society lies in how it treats its most vulnerable citizens. Yet under cutbacks to welfare, legal aid and other government services, there can be no doubt that some of our most vulnerable citizens-women, children, seniors and people with disabilities-will die.

The Province of British Columbia is quickly becoming one of the most barbaric societies in Canada.

The Coalition demands that the provincial government end their commitment to a balanced budget and introduce a budget with balance-restoring social justice to the province of BC.



## "Gordonomics": Irresponsible, Irrational, and Unnecessary

The Liberals claim that the cuts to programs and services are necessary to balance the budget. However, Peoples Opposition believes that the cuts are unnecessary, irresponsible and irrational. These cuts are not really about saving money. They are a direct and vicious attack against British Columbia's most vulnerable citizens.

### **Gordonomics is unnecessary**

The notion that we cannot afford public programs that BC has been living beyond its means and has "the most expensive social programs in Canada" (as the government keeps repeating)-is simply untrue. BC's public sector is already the second smallest in Canada (measured by the number of public sector employees per capita). BC's government spending relative to GDP (the size of its economy) is already the third lowest in Canada."

· B.C.'s audited books showed a budget surplus for 1999/2000 of \$40 million and a surplus for '00/'01 of \$1.498 billion.

### **Gordonomics is irrational**

· Premier Campbell chose to cut taxes by over \$2 billion, and gave most of those tax breaks to corporations and to high-income British Columbians who need them the least. Now he and his government have to cut \$2 billion out of government programs and lay off thousands of public servants to pay for it

· While the Campbell government gave \$32,000/year raise for Liberal-appointed Deputy Ministers who were already making \$150,000/year, they cut income assistance rates to families and individuals who survive on less than \$14,000/year. For example, prior to the cutbacks a single parent with two children received a maximum of \$13, 279/year.

· On December 10, 2002 B.C. securities dealers and

companies received a \$12.2 million tax write off. 5  
Meanwhile, funding for women's centres, child care resource centres, and referral centres will be completely cut in the next three years.

· At the same time as the Liberals cut Seniors Bus Pass subsidies and Seniors Supplements, they created the largest patronage pool - the BC Liberal Cabinet - and gave them substantial raises and bonuses.

· The frozen health budget and Liberal funding cuts will mean the closure of hospitals. Meanwhile, the government plans to waste \$9 million on a divisive and ill-advised referendum on treaty negotiations.

### **Gordonomics is irresponsible**

The long-term impact of the BC Liberals' attempt to balance the budget during an economic slump will be devastating to those in marginalized groups. These include seniors, women, aboriginal people, single-parent families, people with disabilities, immigrants, the poor, and all those who require accessible and affordable health care.

· According to a Social Planning & Research Council study, BC's income assistance benefits only cover 45%-65% of living expenses, depending on the family type. Despite already inadequate benefits the BC Liberals plan to cut the rates further to single parent families and those aged 55 and over in the Spring of 2002.

· The Liberals have imposed a freeze on plans for social housing.

· The changes to social assistance coverage and rates, along with reduced availability of social housing, will force more British Columbians - who are already living in poverty - out into the street. These changes will see an increase in child poverty, homelessness, increased health problems, and a greater burden on mental health, addiction services, and other health care providers.

· Increasing prescription costs and reducing coverage for preventative medical care through changes to Pharmacare will cost more in the form of increased hospitalizations, emergency care, and more serious long-term health conditions.

· The cuts have been particularly brutal for BC seniors: in addition to increased costs of medicines, seniors have had their bus pass subsidy removed and their Old Age Supplement will be cut. Many seniors live on fixed pension. All of these changes will

impact their ability to meet the basic needs of food and shelter. Currently, fifty percent of senior couples have incomes at or below \$33,000/year.

The Liberals are considering welfare privatization in British Columbia and have solicited a bid from Accenture Consulting (formerly Aderson). Ontario MPP Michael Gravelle stated that taxpayers paid more for increased administration costs, while services were slashed or eliminated for income assistance recipients. Accenture received \$180 million from the Province of Ontario -- double their initial estimate.

The Peoples Opposition is a coalition of individuals and organizations that are concerned about the direction the Liberal Government is taking.

The Peoples Opposition support the development of a society built on the values of compassion, caring and equality. We work toward building a province that looks after its most vulnerable people. We agree that being fiscally responsible is a priority of government. However, we recognize that the Liberals are not fiscally responsible. They have acted irresponsibly in providing tax breaks, raises to their friends, while creating a bloated cabinet, and going ahead with the treaty referendum. They have acted irresponsibly in cutting social assistance, health & education funding, and in cutting jobs in both the public and non-profit sector.

### Grassroots protest sweeps the province

On February 7<sup>th</sup>, thousands of concerned citizens visited their MLA constituency offices to express their opposition to the Liberal agenda, as part of the People's Opposition's Accountability Day. Over 42 MLA offices were visited, or had rallies, in communities all over the province.

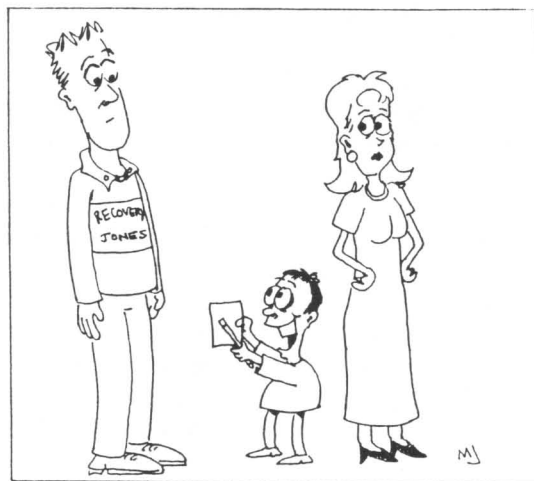
"This is just the beginning of a citizen's movement protesting the Liberal government's attack against the people of BC," says Lesley Moore of the People's Opposition. "The cuts to services for people living in poverty, seniors, single parents, people with disabilities, Aboriginal people and immigrants will have disastrous long-term effects for BC," says Moore.

"The poorer you are the more vicious the Liberal cuts are," says Jean Swanson, founder of End

Legislated Poverty and author of *Poor Bashing: The politics of exclusion*. "Thousands of people in need will be completely cut off assistance, while the richest people in BC get tax cuts of around \$8,000/year. This is almost \$2,000/year more than what a person on income assistance receives," says Swanson.

The People's Opposition is a grassroots coalition of community organizations and individuals, with a social justice mandate, concerned about the destructive direction the Liberals are taking BC's social programs. The People's Opposition is calling on the government to increase income assistance rates, to reinstate the Senior's Supplement and seniors bus pass, to restore funding for social housing and community organizations, and to lift the freeze on funding to health care and education.

"The actions of this government have shown that they have no regard for the elderly, the poor, children and families, people with disabilities, and others that are most impacted by their policies," says former chief human rights commissioner Mary-Woo Sims. "We will not only hold this government accountable today, but will organize for the next election to ensure that they will be accountable for their actions on May 17, 2005," says Sims.



LOOK MOM! IT'S RECOVERY JONES! HE'S GOT THREE MONTHS SOBER, A JOB AND EVERYTHING! CAN I HAVE YOUR AUTOGRAPH RECOVERY JONES?!



## The Quest

"Can't you see that something's wrong?"

Bill said, as lie crawled  
from under tile branches  
of the pine tree hotel  
in High Park, 'Toronto.

"Can't you see that something's wrong?"

He knew he wasn't the person  
they said tie was, and  
he felt as empty  
as a night on the town.

Time to get going  
or he would be screaming  
at the traffic  
at the buildings  
at the people walking by  
as though he were invisible.

He drifted west,  
the highway went that way,  
and when he hit the sea  
he stopped and stayed.  
Vancouver is home to many restless ones  
who don't swim well enough  
to reach Japan.

The Downtown Eastside gave Bill shelter  
as it has done for thousands  
seeking their own voice.  
their own song.

No questions asked, no judgments.

"Get out or the wind,"  
an old timer said.  
"It's cold outside,  
but that, too, will pass."

Bill heard the voices  
in the suffering streets,  
"Resist, resist," they said.  
First Nations people  
and a just land claims –  
the fight will never end  
until what's wrong is right.  
Unemployed men marching  
along Hastings Street  
in the 1930s, and singing,  
"We meet today in freedom's cause  
and raise our voices high;  
we'll join our hands in union strong  
to battle or to die."

Chinatown and Japantown –  
at first people lived  
in these communities  
because they weren't allowed  
to live anywhere else,  
but as the years went by,  
Chinatown and Japantown  
became centres of resistance  
against injustice,  
and they shaped their history  
with courage and endurance.

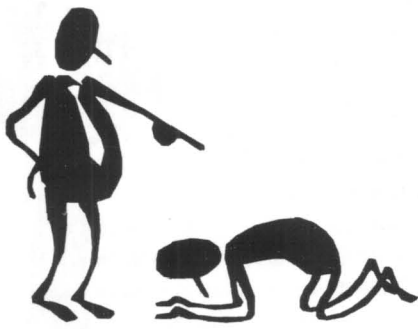
So it goes

In the Downtown Eastside –  
the struggle for human rights.  
The fight of Strathcona residents  
to save their community  
from the bulldozers in the 1960's.  
The seven years' fight,  
led by DERA,  
to win the Carnegie Community Centre  
for the residents of the neighbourhood.  
The inspiring fight for Crab Park,  
and the Strathcona Gardens  
which empowered the community  
through the creative act  
of planting seeds.  
Today, residents of the Downtown Eastside  
fight for decent, affordable housing.  
VANDU fights for  
harm reduction programs that save lives,  
and the Latin American community  
fights for respect, and  
the right to participate fully In Canadian life.  
"Resist, resist", Bill said.

Freedom is belonging somewhere –  
to a community that cares,  
a living community  
where people work together  
to make things better.  
"We need each other,"  
Bill thought with astonishment.  
"We have to give what we most need."

*Sandy Cameron*





BLUES

'FUGEE

I'm afraid of myself. I get into crazy situations that are the exact opposite of my intent. I came to Canada in 2001 as a refugee claimant. Why not? I have a genuine fear of persecution in my own country, I feel that I cannot seek equitable justice there and like it or not, my life has changed because of those new challenges. I want an end to living fearfully. For many years, although people from home would shake their heads and wonder, aloud, why I hadn't fled the country, why I'm still there, I stuck it out hoping for a means to resolution or cessation, which never happened. I'm in Canada because I no longer want to be an ostrich.

Everyone here told me not to do it. They said "Don't plead refugee status, they'll treat you like dirt. They're very prejudiced here..." Again, "Why turn your back on all the good that's been done in your own country? All the hard work? Think of what you're doing..." "You don't have to claim refugee status. Find someone to marry you..."

On and on in the same vein from whomever I would take into my confidence to try and puzzle out this difficult decision before I did something irrevocable. I have a child that I left behind, all these factors...

What happened is this. As my child became older *all* the things I'd preached came up for review. Things that were supposedly being bolstered by the public education system. Freedom, equality, etc... which all sound pretty hollow if there are no active examples of principle in action to illustrate those words, to give them meaning and power. If what your kids see in life is the exact opposite of what you're haranguing them about, you lose your credibility. For a long time.

I surmised by observation over many years, (too many), that its really not what's on television or the

attitudes of society at large that are *most* important to the souls we introduce to the world, but its our own stances and how important they are to us and what we may be willing to sacrifice because we believe that we're right.



It's Black history month in Northern America. We want to honor those ancestral footsteps, not remake them. It takes courage that I don't have to stand up alone for myself and there are days when I don't want to do it. But everybody that I respected, by life and death- did it anyway. I write in memory of Harriet Tubman. I think about her a lot, every time I have to walk great distances, every time I get a headache.

There's support here by way of the provincial services but not for long. Within a month of this issue being published, aid for refugee claimants is slated to be dropped. People came here as I did, with their hearts in their mouths, afraid to open them too widely less their hopes nakedly tumble forth. Came with nothing but themselves and whatever they could muster to make the trip, every footstep a prayer, if I could just make it through, things will be different... They didn't turn me away. I've got a chance.

We, in most cases, aren't allowed schooling, there will be a cut to available health services, (some wonderful providers have already lost their jobs), we are perceived as terrorists, or parasites. No one really believes that we *have* issues in our own countries. When they cut the provincial support no one knows just what's going to happen to us. Go into detention maybe? Keep striving certainly.

Freed Black and slaves came to Canada for new hope and better lives. That's why I'm here as well. Not to be turned back into slavery, not to survive en perpetuity on hand outs. If the government here hadn't seen the system of slavery as morally wrong

way back then there'd be even fewer Black Canadians than there are now. But the Territories in those days took the high road and helped to shape our practice of racial equality as we know it today. Long before the Emancipation Proclamation was signed. Canada is still doing that. It's just the difference between how a principle is stated and how it's expressed on a day to day basis that's undermining the determination.

Well, here I am and thank God, whatever it is, it is.

R. Clark

### EVENT HORIZON (pt 1)

"We live in a society where we are punished, sometimes harshly, sometimes not harshly enough, for crimes such as murder, robbery, rape, child molestation, etc. But to my meagre knowledge of legalese, there is nothing on the books about a little thing called "betrayal." And yet, this is the very demon that is the catalyst directly responsible for igniting the flames of not just the above mentioned atrocities, but so many others as well. Betrayal--that heinous act that, if severe enough, can cause its victims to spend the rest of their lives walking through the world in a kind of cross between slumbering lethargy, and constant sub-threshold fury.

Here in B.C., Gordon Campbell's scimitar is coming down upon our heads so fast, we can hear the wind whistling. Slash this! Cut that! Too many people still employed, not enough welfare n' homeless yet. Not enough senseless crime and violence in the streets. Not enough elderly people lying in piss-stained hospital beds, slowly dying of incontinence, loneliness and neglect.

For myself, I am struggling to look for work. Perhaps, I could be your campaign manager, Mr. Campbell? People tell me that my writing has a kind of "laser-scalpel" quality, as far as cutting directly to the truth. How's this for an example? "The old government said "We will streamline and economize!" Now, Gordon Campbell and the new liberals say "We will eviscerate and sodomize!!"

Betrayal...there are few things worse. The European group "Marillion" ended their song "Forgotten Sons " with "Ring around the rosie..We all fall down..."

Martin A McDermid,

### rainbow

spritzing out through cracks  
in my cemented apathy which corners me,  
multi-colors dance wildly  
and for a split second  
mini windows of  
potential and possibility flicker

they tempt my spirit  
into believing  
that it can cross over  
and dwell in the productive realm  
where anchored inner peace  
and rocket powered passion await me,  
to take hold and fly

melody kruppa



### THE LAST POEM PLEASE

The bones of poets recite  
a day break passing from Night  
to one another

with the wind  
branches creak as squirrels grin.  
Lilac purple trees – sky unblue  
Old dry flowers, new ones too.  
Dandelions stand pale yellow  
a calmness tranquils  
the listening mellow  
in a Poet's Graveyard.

D.W.Sheppard

### Deflation Opinion

Ottawar can't understand  
149 raids – Afghanistan's mutilation  
Swarming hate across this land.

Don't play victim : resist.

Gov't cutbacks, strife and crime  
Integrity. Tell no lies. Don't give in.  
Stop taking control.

Something's wrong, life and death,  
one generation to another  
- make laws then proceed to break them -  
- sleep tight but be aware  
of things that bite in the night

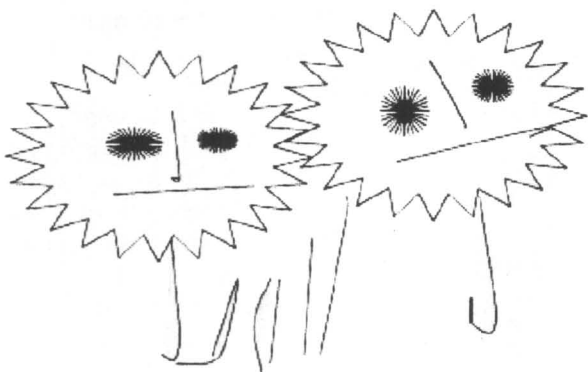
Taum D.

## WORKING CLASS HERO

Garry Gust

Scene 1: A Liverpool theatre where the ghost of John Lennon is appearing for one night only. He sings from the song he wrote...

...They hurt you at home and they hit you at school.  
They hate if you're clever, but despise a fool.  
Until you're too crazy to follow their rules;  
A working class hero is something to be...  
They torture and scare you for 20 odd years,  
And then they expect you to pick a career.  
You can't really function you're so full of fear;  
A working class hero is something to be...  
You're doped with religion and sex and TV  
You think you're so clever and classless and free,



But you're still fucking peasants from all I can see;  
A working class hero is something to be...

'There's room at the top' they are telling you still,  
But first you must learn how to smile as you kill.  
If you want to be like the folks on the hill;  
A working class hero is something to be -  
If you want to be a hero just follow me...  
If you want to be a hero well just follow me....

(Applause)

Lennon: Thanks. Thank you... It wasn't just a song. It's something I saw and ached with. I saw me father going off to sea to work, leaving me mom on her own...he had to go...to make a bloody living.

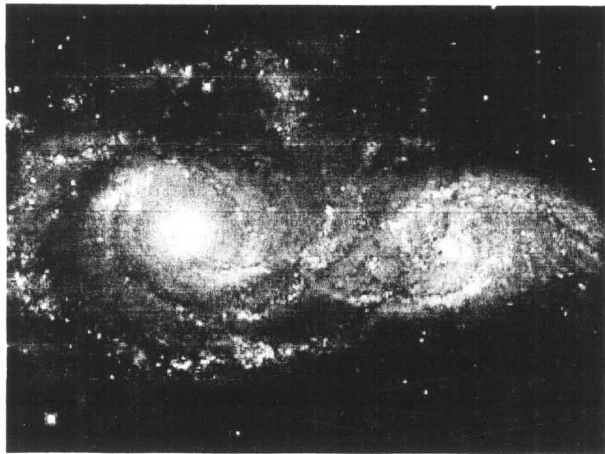
Of the five or six billion people on this planet, ninety per cent are working class. The other ten per cent tell the rest of us what to do, what we *can* do, and *how* to do it. Yeah; I escaped from the ninety per cent but I never joined the ten per cent because me conscience wouldn't let me. Thanks to Yoko, I went from a psychopath and developed a conscience.

So, here I am, between two worlds. I can't leave the old world in the state I left it 'cause I wasn't finished speaking when I was rudely interrupted.

All I'm saying is *think* about why so *few* people control so *many* people... just analyze, research in the damned library or with your friends why you can't toke up without threat... why you can't speak up for homeless Palestinians... why an athlete earns millions while a garbage collector earns peanuts... ...find your priorities, then tell this ten per cent where to get off!

Think of the cavemen...ur, cave people...they moved out of the caves to villages. Yeah, they probably had a leader, but he,, or she, got the same as the rest when the day was over. Somewhere, over the years, these leaders decided that they should get more than the others, and you and your ancestors fell for it! All I'm saying is why should you ninety percent slave your lives away while the ten percent *elite* reap most of the harvest!?! Imagine how most of you are controlled...

Imaaaaaaaaaaginnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnne  
and do something about it





## Be Thankful

Now that the New Year is here  
We gather with those we hold dear  
What a wonderful world if we did not value  
material things  
They may be here today and tomorrow they may  
sprout wings  
I have learned to appreciate the little things in life  
We then are able to avoid everything causing strife  
We all need to live one day at a time  
and not be concerned whether or not we have a dime

Irene Schmidt

## Housing & Homelessness – Still An Un-natural Disaster

Libby Davies, our Member of Parliament for Vancouver East, has written a report on the lack of affordable housing in Canada. Her report is called Housing & Homelessness — Still An Un-natural Disaster, and it is based on her workshops across the country. About 4.6 million people are in desperate need of affordable housing, and more than 250,000 Canadians, including tens of thousands of children, went to an emergency shelter last year.

Low income Canadians are often forced to live in substandard, unsafe housing, and middle income earners are having a hard time finding decent, rental housing because of market-set rents that are out of reach. Among the worst off are a rising number of homeless people. Half of Aboriginal people's households, living off reserve, live in housing that is below housing standards for adequacy or affordability. In addition, Aboriginal people make up many of the homeless in Canada's urban centres.

In her report, Libby said that we need to create a National Housing Strategy to meet the housing crisis. Many people across Canada told her that while the government concentrated on anti-terrorism bills after September 11, 2001, homelessness



## Exterminate the Poor

Gordon We the Poor  
Are not cockroaches  
Not rats or mice or bugs

You cannot exterminate the poor  
You cannot deny the sick medicare  
Nor a hungry child a lunch  
We will not be run out of BC

BC is for Bcers  
Not for the rich alone  
Someday you may get sick  
Need a nurse Need a doctor  
No problem.. you are rich.

This is our home, our province  
We will stay  
We will fight  
We will win.

Sheila Baxter

remained more of a threat to the security of Canadians than terrorists.

Homelessness and poverty are not the result of individual failings, social behavior or private problems, Libby said. They are a result of failed public policy and an over-reliance on market-driven policies. Libby calls for a National Housing Strategy in which the federal financial share should be one percent of the budget, or approximately \$1 billion annually, to meet basic housing needs in Canada. The goal of the National Housing Strategy must be to create 20,000 to 30,000 units of new social housing, and 10,000 units of refurbished housing, every year for the foreseeable future.

Libby insists that the federal government address the critical housing needs of Aboriginal people living off reserve and on reserve, and she calls on the government to increase income support for low income Canadians, and to reduce the economic gap between rich and poor in Canada.

If you would like a copy of Libby's report, Housing & Homelessness: Still An Un-natural Disaster, or a copy of Libby's Private Member's Bill, bill C-416, calling for the adoption of a Housing Bill of Rights, please call **604-775-5800**.

By SANDY CAMERON

## TIMELESS ENDS

You can't predict the future but you can evaluate the past.  
Things that were important yesterday don't seem to last.  
You set your sights on something, dreams so far away,  
and when you finally get there they seem to fade away.  
When you've climbed the highest mountain, and bled on every tree,  
reality and the scope of things begins to come a dream.  
Vagueness arid insecurity seem to cloud the scene.  
Freedom creeps upon you like a thief within the night,  
and silently it leads you to where sanity is in sight.  
When everything you've cared about slowly slips away,  
you climb out of the darkness to face another day.  
You look into the sunrise from a different altitude  
and realize the path you took ended much too soon.  
Pain shared with others who really do not care,  
will always come back to haunt you as a sting of they were there.  
The price you pay is knowledge, the rewards remain confined  
to the echo of your memory of once when you were blind.

Elmo Winnebaeigeio

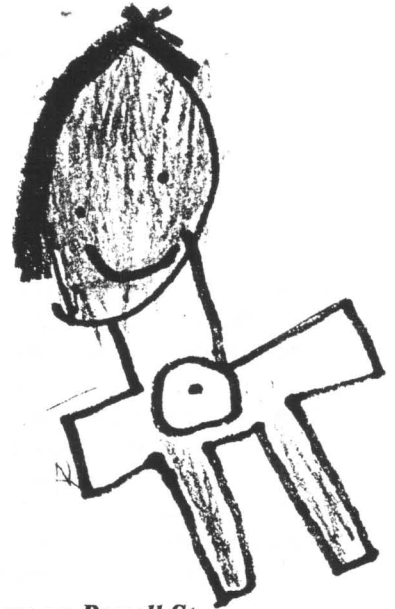


## Cloud Hiding, Whereabouts Unknown

I don't know where my son is  
Oh I knows he's working; big boy now,  
families grow up and disintegrate  
that close knot unravels and leaves  
wistful old men in windows waiting  
looking out on the street, the sad parade  
back in tie, looking inside, other worlds asunder  
staring into the face of God in the morning sky  
You wrap yourself in your children like a blanket  
and when they scatter you are left undone  
holding sacks of memories, the best years  
you find our later  
invested on the brave new people  
you blew your life on  
you molded as if out of clay, your vain attempt  
at righting the wrongs you yourself suffered thru  
May this year be the best of all for you.

WAH I NEE

AI



## For the Princess on Powell St.

Wayne hands me a branch, green buds showing  
A gift to remind me of rebirth, not far away  
Tells me hearing my suicidal rantings scared him  
Hard to accept mattering to anyone anymore.

The Year of the Horse is nearly here  
Oh Lord let it carry me far from this sad winter  
Maybe this year the picture comes clear  
Maybe we'll roll in the sunny green grass  
and smile at the days that surround us.  
Maybe, Maybe not.. either way  
you gotta give 'er all you got.

So now I am ready  
to shed my winter clothes  
to shed my winter woes

Soon cherry blossom heaven will line the avenues  
Hear me my children I am not dead, only hiding  
My heart beats to your footsteps,  
ears open for your whispers  
I feel the pain when you burn your fingers  
playing with fire, testing the flames  
Your personal hell awaits you; get used to the pain.

I don't know where my son is but it don't matter  
I do know what and who he is, that's all that counts  
Walking upright now, a man in every regard,  
Keep on loving life but sonny boy  
but please keep up your guard.

AI



### LSS Board Refuses to Implement Government Cuts to Legal Aid

The Legal Services Society (LSS) Board of Directors, in a majority decision, voted against implementing a budget based on the provincial government's severe funding cuts to legal aid. Board Chair Sandi Tremblay told Attorney General Geoff Plant that board members "made it clear that what we need is more money to provide the necessary legal services to the poor and disadvantaged in this province."

"Furthermore, board members are adamant that LSS funding be provided with no strings attached, and that the independence of the board as written in the LSS Act be honoured," she wrote.

The Ministry of Attorney General last month announced a 38.8% cut to legal aid over three years - from \$88.3 million in 2001/2002, to just under \$54 million in 2004/2005. It restricted what it is prepared to fund, instructed the Society to absorb significant new costs, and said it would amend the LSS Act to allow for the necessary service changes.

The ministry said it intended to limit LSS funding for legal representation to little more than where it is required by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms or the courts and for family matters involving domestic violence.

It indicated poverty law assistance was to be provided mainly in the form of public legal education and

".. nowhere have I seen a lot of attention paid to the fact that all Lawyers pay a 7% cut of all their fees to support the legal aid society. I'm sure that this 7% is enough to cover the whole program, but, it is shuffled away into general revenue and used for, amongst other things....bonus' to cabinet ministers....." (email from a lawyer)

information services.

\* This level of funding would deny legal aid services to as many as 100,000 clients. It would require the Society to largely centralize services, which would have a disproportionate and detrimental impact on rural and remote communities; and eliminate poverty law representation and advice services, and severely reduce family law services, which would deny the poor their fundamental legal rights.

In spite of the Society's request for meaningful dialogue and consultation, none occurred before LSS was presented with these cuts. While the Ministry of Attorney General is faced with only a 14.7% cut in funding and 12.6% cut in FTEs over three years, LSS is expected to bear a disproportionate 38.8% cut in funding that would require a 74% cut in staff. This is a clear attack on our clients, in light of the fact that LSS is being asked to bear \$34.4 million of the ministry's \$83 million overall cut.

The ministry "has put LSS in the position of being unable to provide continued and effective delivery of legal aid. The fact is, under these circumstances, no one can meet the ministry's stated new era objective of providing 'equal access to legal representation and justice for all British Columbians.'"

The government cuts would increase the number of unrepresented litigants in courts and tribunals, making the overall justice system more expensive and less efficient for everyone.

"People in real need of legal help would be greatly hurt by these cuts," Tremblay added. "We're talking about single mothers who need to obtain child support, injured workers who are wrongly denied Workers' Compensation benefits, retirees who have problems collecting their pensions, tenants who are unlawfully evicted - and that's just for starters."

The ministry should take a step back and, as we suggested last fall, conduct a comprehensive review of the justice system.

blow your mind  
think of life  
in a new way

blow your mind  
trade your secure bi monthly cheque  
twenty bucks an hour monetary income  
for feeling passionate about your job

blow your mind  
focus on now  
not then  
not when

blow your mind  
live your passion  
live it now  
milk a cow  
sing out loud  
stand be proud  
buy those paints  
time won't wait  
take up yoga

sew a toga  
swim with fish  
live your wish  
write a book  
learn to cook  
invent your thing  
buy that ring  
play those drums  
plant those mums  
take a course  
ride a horse  
create that tune  
right now, this second,  
immediately, not soon  
sell your mini van  
divorce your abusive man  
quit your job  
leave the slob  
withdraw your cash  
time won't last  
move to a farm  
if that's your charm  
screw the cell phone

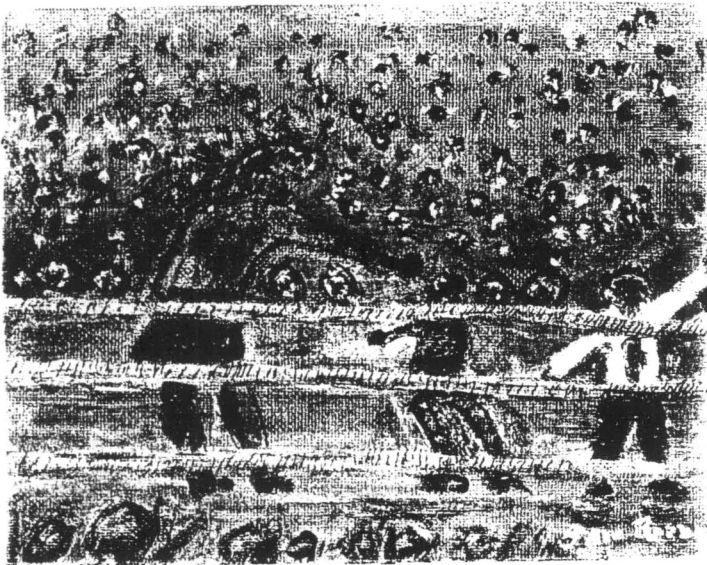
sail to lovely Rome  
piss on should be  
shit on could be  
stomp on maybe  
fight that fear that tells you  
no  
don't go  
can't  
won't  
and just do it.  
risk it all  
you may fall  
at least you tried  
and when you've died  
you know what they'll say  
she lived her dreams  
every day  
in every way

throw caution to the wind is not a sin

who cares what they think  
leave cups in your sink  
give a hot man a wink  
he'll be gone in a blink  
have faith in you  
make your dreams come true  
that's what you're here to do.  
just do it.

you may not be here tomorrow.

Melody Kruppa



## BEATING UP ON THE POOR

With their low blows and right hooks to the solar plexus,  
the political bullies are at it again. But wait, it's only Round One....  
The rallies are coming and our corner is fueled by spirit. .guts....  
grit.... an indestructible passion for fair play and justice

Wait for the bell for Round Two....

Sam Roddan



Graphic by: Gabe Hill



## THAT '80s SHOW

by Todd Scarth



U.S. CUSTOMS OFFICER NIGHTMARE

If BC premier Gordon Campbell really were so overwhelmed with nostalgia for the 1980s, he could have called regular recesses in the Legislature to try finally to solve his Rubik's cube. Or he could have had the desk in his office replaced with a table-top Ms. Pacman game, or retired his dark blue suits in favour of acid-wash jeans, or announced plans to market a Jane Fonda-style exercise video.

Any of these '80s fads would have preferable to the one he chose to give new life in B.C.: supply-side economics.

In 1980, a small group of economists -- if you want more detail, you can look them up under "charlatans n' cranks" in a recent economics textbook-- convinced US presidential candidate Ronald Reagan that an across-the-board cut in income tax rates would actually raise tax revenue. Even though income tax rates would be lower, income would rise by so much the supply-siders claimed, tax revenue would rise.

There was, of course, no credible evidence that the plan would work. Yet Reagan charged ahead with the tax cuts just as the U.S. was heading into a recession -- and government revenues promptly dove. Throw in increases in military spending big enough to sink a battleship, and the result was an explosion in the country's debt.

Even George Bush -- Reagan's Vice President -- famously dismissed this now-discredited approach as "voodoo economics."

U.S. fads have a way of floating north, and sure enough, Reaganomics touched down last year in BC, where Campbell's Liberals -- politically somewhere to the right of Alex P. Keaton -- ran an election campaign promising massive tax cuts that would pay

for themselves.

Six months or so later, the government has come clean. The tax cuts won't pay for themselves. To say the least. The province will cut, in total, three-and-a-half billion dollars worth of services over three years, enough to require throwing at least 12,000 people out of work, or nearly one in every three public-sector workers in BC.

Did Campbell ever really believe in an economic theory that has all the intellectual credibility of, say, phrenology? I suppose people are capable of convincing themselves of almost anything. But really, it doesn't matter.

What matters is what cuts of that size are designed to do: create panic. Sure, BC was slowly sliding into recession, but that was taking too long, dammit, and Campbell wasn't about to wait. He couldn't justify cutting thousands of jobs without being able to point to an emergency. A huge, looming budget deficit would do nicely. When such a deficit isn't available, one must be manufactured.

The BC Liberals share this strategy with health-care privatizers across the country. In Canada health was starved for cash throughout the early 1990s, which forced governments to play catch-up by increasing funding steadily over the past five years or so. Even still, health now takes up a smaller portion of GDP than it did a decade ago, and the real per-capita cost has barely moved in a generation.

That doesn't stop people like Ralph Klein, who sets up an easel, points to the chart showing the spending line going up, and says, Look, if we take a marker and continue this line, in a few years we'll be spending 100% of our budget on health care -- isn't that frightening?

Whoop-de-do. The most frightening thing about it is the chance that this kind of analysis might have any impact at all on medicare. (It is too tempting to resist pointing out that if you used the same method to predict unemployment in BC, based on the period since Campbell started hacking away, you might conclude that by, say, next September there will not be a single job left in the province.)

Of Klein we might ask, as we did of Campbell, does he really believe this stuff? And again, even if the answer is no, that's not the point.

People are smart enough to figure out that user fees amount to little more than shifting some of the tax



## "Civil Liberties and Madness"

a talk by JOHN DIXON

Monday, February 18, 2002 at 7 p.m.

The Humanities Storefront, 49 W. Cordova

**About the speaker:** Dr. John Dixon is president of the B.C. Civil Liberties Association. Dixon is co-author, with Stan Persky, of *On Kiddie Porn: Sexual Representation, Free Speech & the Robin Sharpe Case* (New Star Books, Vancouver, 2001). Dixon's essay, "The Somalia Affair: A Personal Account of Speaking Truth to Power," appears in *[Ab]Using Power: The Canadian Experience* (Fernwood Books, 2001). He also wrote *Catastrophic Rights: Experimental Drugs and AIDS*. Dixon was senior policy advisor to the Deputy Minister of Justice during 1991-1992. Dr. Dixon teaches philosophy at Capilano College in North Vancouver.

**About the BCCLA:** The BC Civil Liberties Association [www.bccla.org](http://www.bccla.org) is the oldest and most active civil liberties group in Canada. The mandate is to preserve, defend, maintain and extend civil liberties and human rights in British Columbia and Canada.

### *Upcoming Madness 101:*

Monday, March 18, 2002

P. Susan Penfold, author of *Sexual Abuse by Health Professionals*

Monday, April 15, 2002

Special Guest: Thomas S. Szasz, author of *Liberation By Oppression: A Comparative Study of Slavery and Psychiatry*, location to be announced.

Monday, May 5, 2002

Bruce E. Levine, author of *Commonsense Rebellion: Debunking Psychiatry, Confronting Society*

June 2002 to be announced.

And that's a wrap for the series.

For more information call: 604-255-0255 or e-mail:

[info@madness101.com](mailto:info@madness101.com)

load away from the wealthy and onto the sick. It's all just money, after all, and you can pay for medicare through income taxes, which are progressive, or user fees, which are not.

Allowing more private, for-profit elements into the health care system would not help the vast majority of Canadians, and Klein et al's problem is that the vast majority of Canadians knows it. Unable to sell a bad option, they must convince people that it's the only one available. Dishonest? Sure. Irresponsible and dangerous? Of course.

But if you're Don Mazenkowski, director of a major insurance firm at the same time you're promoting a health-reform plan that would make insurance companies rich(er), it's the best plan you've got. It's the way Maz and Klein and Campbell and others are working to realize what must be their all-time favorite 1980s touchstone, the creed voiced by Wall Street's Gordon Gecko: "greed is good."

*Todd Scarth is the Director of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives' Manitoba Office.*

crippled  
scarred  
damaged  
is this failure?  
parade your affliction  
be what you are  
a rebel  
an artist  
be original  
get personal  
prepare to be a corpse  
exploding with proof  
that means nothing  
in darkness  
in secret  
in oblivion

charles fortin

innermost disintegration  
a perfect theory  
preliterate  
precognitive  
calling to be invented  
all over again  
or never again  
but that's not quite it either  
part of time  
all too close  
a small leap  
into a new world  
celebrating war  
as a form of art  
nerves  
bloody  
ravaged  
distorted  
hysterical

*charles fortin*

HEY CORPORATE LEADERS! ARE AMERICAN WORKERS - AND THEIR GREEDY DEMAND FOR A LIVING WAGE - CUTTING TOO DEEPLY INTO YOUR PROFIT MARGINS? WELL BEFORE YOU MOVE YOUR FACTORIES OVERSEAS, WHY NOT CONSIDER USING GOOD OLD-FASHIONED AMERICAN PRISON LABOR?



AND THAT'S NOT ALL! INMATES HAVE ALSO BEEN USED AS TELEMARKETERS... AS OPERATORS BOOKING ROOMS FOR MAJOR MOTEL CHAINS... WHY, THEY EVEN TAKE RESERVATIONS FOR TRANS WORLD AIRLINES!



YES, THAT'S RIGHT! YOU CAN AFFORD TO KEEP THAT "MADE IN THE USA" LABEL ON YOUR PRODUCTS - WITH PRISON LABOR! AND YOU WON'T BE ALONE! INMATES IN THIS COUNTRY HAVE ALREADY BEEN PUT TO WORK MAKING JEANS FOR K-MART... ROCKING PONIES FOR EDDIE BAUER... UNIFORMS FOR MCDONALDS... THE LIST GOES ON AND ON...



SO DON'T MISS OUT! AFTER ALL, WITH SALES FROM PRISON INDUSTRIES EXPECTED TO REACH \$8.9 BILLION BY THE END OF THE DECADE... AND WITH A GREATER PERCENTAGE OF OUR POPULATION INCARCERATED THAN ANY OTHER WESTERN NATION... LETTING A BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY LIKE THIS PASS YOU BY -- WELL -- WOULD BE A CRIME!



## What Kind of BC Do We Want?

Every government faces tough choices. With a growing deficit, failing resource economies, and a political decision to cut tax revenue early, the BC Liberals faced some particularly tough ones this year. What they chose to do is one thing; how they decided it is another.

How did they decide to close courthouses in 24 communities, many already struggling with economic and social stress? How did they decide to gut family law legal aid, target poverty law as dispensable, and eliminate Crown-Victim Services? How did they decide there was no need for Family Advocates to protect the interests of children in tough custody battles?

Did they consult with those who work on the justice system's frontlines - the lawyers and judges of BC? No. The community advocates who work every day to get people legal help, and to get them to court? No. Did they consult with mayors, police chiefs, or community leaders? No. Did they consult with you?

What is the "core business" of government? We invented governments and taxes because we believe we can do better acting collectively than we can as individuals. The "core business" of government is to use our pooled resources to ensure that our society works well not just for some, but for all.

There are times when a quick decision - any decision - is better than no decision at all. This is not one of those times. When the justice system is at stake, decisions should not be made by the few, the uninformed or the ideological. If it is a time for change, then let it be directed by the people in the best position to protect the interests of those the justice system was created to serve - not by those whose interests lie elsewhere.

## Health Contact Centre

February 12, 2002

The center (at 166 E. Hastings) is temporarily closed in order to complete renovations and procedures for the health and safety of people who use it and who work there..

There has been a great response to the centre. Everyone directly involved with it is working hard for the Centre to become a strong and positive resource for its participants and in the community.

Notice about the date of re-opening will be provided in the coming days. In the meantime, the Carnegie Street Program will be present outside each day.

For Information: Hardeep Dhaliwal, Vancouver Coastal Health Authority - 828-1038

Hey boss, I really like whacking Indians!

Don't worry, little Bobby. Your work is not yet done.



### Income Assistance Cheque Issue Dates

March 2002	February 20, 2002
April 2002	March 20, 2002
May 2002	April 24, 2002
June 2002	May 22, 2002
July 2002	June 26, 2002
August 2002	July 24, 2002
September 2002	August 28, 2002
October 2002	September 25, 2002
November 2002	October 23, 2002
December 2002	November 27, 2002
January 2003	December 18, 2002

### two cents worth...

In this issue we have letters from lawyers – the Board of Directors of the Legal Services Society unanimously refuses to cut over 38% of its services and cripple Legal Aid; also a thing from the Bar Association's newsletter...

There's a letter signed by 40 economists and professors nailing the government for spending cuts and a few pieces on the lack of any genuine intelligence in this whole attack by government on the citizens of the province.

The outrage and cynicism bubbling throughout all responses to Gordon Campbell are not new. Neither is the public reaction.

Jeff Jones worked at a bicycle store, being an expert on wheels and tires. He tells this story:

Gordon Campbell came in one day, while Mayor of Vancouver, wanting a racing bike for a triathlon. Apparently he and his wife were entered. Gordon first chose the most expensive frame in the store, really top-of-the-line. He then proceeded to get the cheapest add-ons, like brakes, gears, seat and so on. When it came to the wheels, Jeff offered his expert advice, saying that in a triathlon you weren't permitted support, so you'd need wheels that sported easily changed tires in case of a flat. Gordon said he wanted racing wheels (which are a real chore to fix flats on) because he wanted to be fast. Jeff repeated what he'd said about the real possibility of flats and that another type of wheel was better, but Gordon just got more insistent on racing wheels. Jeff adapted to customer preference, and asked that Campbell pay attention while he demonstrated how to fix a flat on racing wheels. It is the kind of thing that is only learned through hands-on instruction.

Gordon, wearing his expensive suit and being self-important, refused and told Jeff to have the bike ready as soon as possible.

Campbell and his wife competed in the triathlon and, sure enough, Gordon got a flat. His wife beat him by 50 minutes as it took him over an hour to fix the flat tire.

Gordon Campbell as an individual has been showing his personality for years but was more or less accountable to people along the way. When Mayor he 'disagreed' that there was a housing crisis.. he was 'excited' about turning Vancouver into an executive city and all the nay-saying whiners could go live in a field outside Langley for all he cared.

He has been getting political enlightenment for some years from the rich and powerful hacks who populate the Fraser Institute.. and the Business Council on National Issues.. and the Transnational banks and the World Bank, International Monetary Fund and what has recently surfaced as the World Trade Organization.

Seventeen years ago the tactics being used right now – cutting so much so fast that citizens are almost unable to organize any effective response – were used in New Zealand while the above named cohorts watched. The public service was slashed with everything possible contracted out, public assets were privatized, trade barriers were removed and taxes cut... all the while a relentless attack on a 'bloated' welfare state and the need to attract capital.

It was an experiment then, being the first time that such measures had been done outside a Third World country (it's called a Structural Adjustment Program and has wrecked the economies of a score of developing nations and impoverished hundreds of millions of people). In an article by Stephen Hume, it says. "Hundreds of thousands of individuals [*in NZ*], their families and communities, have endured a decade of unrelenting hardship. The burden fell most heavily on those who already had the least: the Maori (Native people), the poor, the sick, women with children and the unemployed. Their "freedom of choice" was whether to use their scarce resources to buy housing, health and education, or other essentials such as food – and which of these essentials to go without."

The bicycle story is an honest look at the personal demon driving Campbell. He and his small coterie of true believers are not reinventing government, but



they are in no way going to accept responsibility for any of the grievous wrongs that their collective stupidity generates. Even the word stupid doesn't quite fit. From personal experience, having intelligence and not using it is stupid. If you have intelligence and misuse it, you're just a fool.

If (hopefully when) the BC Liberals and Campbell try to cut their losses in this, we have to be very careful that the hopeful unity of the citizenry isn't shredded by the promise of some crumbs of restored or extended funding of programs. Community groups have deep scars from the abandoning of Solidarity in the early 80's when Jack Munro got what he wanted for some unions and stopped their involvement in fighting for Native rights, the poor, the sick, seniors, women with children and the unemployed.

It may be that the person in a rush – as Campbell surely is to be acknowledged as the great man he thinks himself to be – doesn't see the edge of the cliff until it's too late.

By PAULR TAYLOR

**“Gordon Campbell: Pick on somebody in your own tax bracket.”**

- wisdom from the Woodward's demo

**\black pipes whistle**  
 the building whistles  
 and i thot it a homeless person  
 playing his flute  
 a haphazard melody  
 through an amateur mind  
 the haiku of reality  
 fading fast the memory of reality  
 something fishy in that whistling  
 like a half-working tv  
 or a city-boy fishing  
 twilight staring me in the yarn  
 the foot chakra staring me in the face  
 there truly is a human race

the black pipes stick out of the building  
 surviving the cement  
 oxygenators for the building  
 its airtight rooms filled with grey dust  
 from a puff-galloping caribou

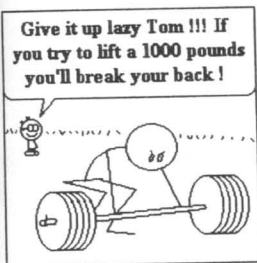
Rudolf Penner

## 50's & 60's ROCK N' ROLL DANCE

Friday, March 1, 7-10pm  
 Carnegie Theatre

“The *Carnegie Newsletter* has come out, with rare exceptions, twice a month since 1986, carrying the voluntary contributions of writers, poets, artists and more on issues of personal and social relevance: poverty & poor-bashing; homelessness & housing, drugs & alcohol; advocacy, crime, safety, seniors, the sex trade, classism, racism, women, children, charity vs. justice, media stereotyping, unemployment, trade deals and the corporate agenda. This project will be a written testament to the creativity and spiritual strength of people in Canada's poorest urban community.”

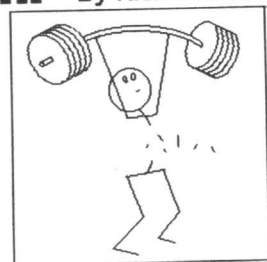
[PEACH (Partners in Economic and Community Help) has approved a grant proposal to produce a book of The Best of the Carnegie Newsletter. It's now in its 16<sup>th</sup> year and the challenge is to get a stack of newsletters over 3 feet high into a book under an inch thick. Hopefully by September...]



© 2001 Rick Nordal



### H Main By Rick Nordal



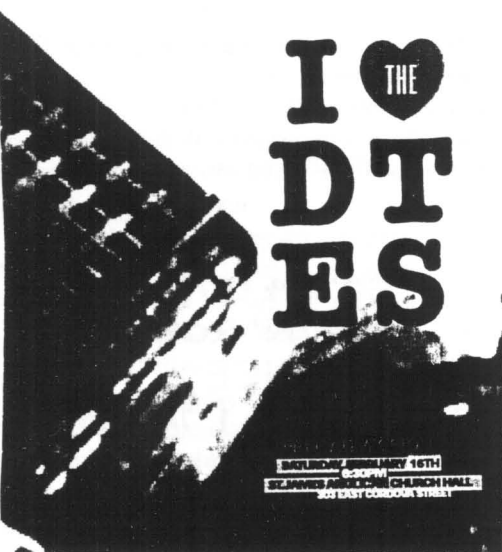
### S t i n g s

## Getting Older:

God grant me the senility to forget the people I never liked anyway, the good fortune to run into the ones that I do, and the eyesight to tell the difference.

Now that I'm 'older' (but refuse to grow up), here's what I've discovered:

- I started out with nothing, and still have most of it.
- My wild oats have turned into prunes and All Bran.
- I finally got my head together; now my body is falling apart.



- Funny, I don't remember being absent minded...

- Funny, I don't remember being absent minded...

- All reports are in; life is now officially unfair.

- If all is not lost, where is it?

- It is easier to get older than it is to get wiser.

- Some days you're the dog; some days you're the hydrant.

- I wish the buck stopped here; I sure could use a few...

- Kids in the back seat cause accidents.

- Accidents in the back seat cause kids.

- It's hard to make a comeback when you haven't been anywhere.

- The only time the world beats a path to your door is when you're in the bathroom.

- If God wanted me to touch my toes, he would have put them on my knees.

- When I'm finally holding all the cards, why does everyone decide to play chess?

- It's not hard to meet expenses... they're everywhere.

- The only difference between a rut and a grave is the depth.

- These days, I spend a lot of time thinking about the hereafter..I go somewhere to get something and then wonder what I'm hereafter.



For the past several months, Savage God has been conducting a pilot project called D.E.M.O.C.R.A.C.E. (pronounced 'democracy', it is an acronym for Downtown Eastside Moves on Capacity Raising through Arts and Cultural Experiences). Phase 2 of the project has involved the pairing of participants, most of whom are residents of the Downtown Eastside, with local professional artists who have functioned as mentors. Most of the mentoring sessions have taken place at Christ Church Cathedral where Savage God is headquartered.

Based on the philosophical principle that the humanities and specifically the performing arts can be effective ways of nurturing individual self-worth and leadership, the project is a creative response to the challenges of developing community capacity and improving people's abilities to think critically and engage meaningfully with the forces that shape their lives.

D.E.M.O.C.R.A.C.E. has now entered its third phase - the presentation of an original performance piece called I-DTES. "The piece is designed as a Valentine to the City from the Downtown Eastside says John Juliani, Founder/Artistic Director of Savage God, "and, as such, is an outgrowth of our collaboration with Opera Breve at the Singing Bank project over the past couple of years. I-DTES consists of a compilation of poetry, songs and text - much of it written by the participants and the remainder drawn from the contemporary and classical repertoire - all on the subject of Love, the many aspects of Love.

**I-DTES will be presented once only, at 6:30pm on Saturday, February 16th at the St. James Anglican Church Hall at 303 Cordova Street (entrance on Gore Street). Admission is free.**

**For further information call: 604.682.3848 ext. 30**