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Campaign 5000

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Real CHANGE

is a Washington State
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Real Change is published the first and fifteenth of each month, and is sold by the poor and homeless of Seattle. Submissions are encouraged and should be mailed to "Real Change," 2129 Second Ave, Seattle, WA 98121. Tel. (206) 441-3247.

Tacoma Office: 1417 S. G St., Tacoma, WA 98405,
(206) 572-4247 or 572-6582

On the Web at <http://www.speakeasy.org/realchange>
Email rchange@speakeasy.org
ISSN 1085-729X

Annual subscriptions (12 Issues) are available for \$35, and support *Real Change*. All material copyrighted to author.

Real Change vendors receive 70¢ of the \$1.00 paid for this paper.

MISSION STATEMENT

Organize, educate, and build alliances to find community-based solutions to homelessness and poverty.

Goals

- 1.) provide a foundation for grassroots organizing.
- 2.) publish the views of marginalized communities.
- 3.) create direct economic opportunity.
- 4.) build bridges with a broad range of allies in the struggle against poverty.

Editorial Policy

Articles appearing in *Real Change* reflect the opinion and perspective of the author. We encourage the submission of journalism, opinion, fiction, poetry and artwork, and hope to create a forum where the many perspectives that exist regarding poverty and homelessness can find expression. The editorial committee reserves the right to edit any material for length and style. Articles considered libelous or which encourage violence, sexism, homophobia, or racism will not be considered for publication.

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MAILBAG

2129 2nd Ave., 98121
rchange@speakeasy.org

Dear *Real Change*,

I would like to express my appreciation of your newspaper and what your organization is accomplishing in Seattle for the homeless. Last month I was downtown shopping with my 10-year-old goddaughter who has never met or spoken with a homeless person. She saw one apparently homeless man outside Nordstrom's and turned to me and said, "I'm afraid of those kind of people. Why are there so many?"

I took her by the hand and asked if she meant homeless people. She did. Like an answer from heaven on the next block we

encountered a very courteous man selling *Real Change*. My goddaughter wanted to race past him and was surprised to see me stop, take a dollar out of my purse and buy a copy from him.

It gave me the opportunity to tell her that the man I had bought the paper from was homeless, and that while there are a number of mentally ill homeless people who can be scary to a little girl, the vast majority are just like us, except they had lost their jobs and had no other resources, etc. I tried to explain how easy it can be for the average family to become homeless within a few months of losing a job. As I talked to her I realized that all of the information I was conveying was what I had learned from reading *Real Change*.

For this I thank you. In many little and big ways *Real Change* impacts the lives of

Vendor of the Month

Sherman Owens

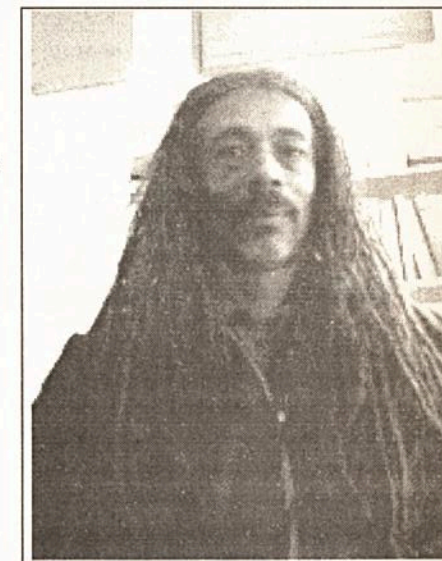
Sherman Owens, 48, is a former firefighter who says he fled Northern California with his son in 1995 due to police repression. After Canada refused him asylum, he settled in Seattle.

His first night in Seattle, he overheard a *Real Change* vendor telling someone at Operation Nightwatch about this paper. The next morning, he was in to sign up. "I was down to my last fifty cents," remembers Sherman, "and I had no way to feed my son. I've been selling the paper ever since."

Selling *Real Change* part-time provides the extra income Sherman needs to get by on his Social Security benefits.

"Selling the paper has allowed me and my son to eat," he explained.

As Vendor of the Month, Sherman wins \$25 and a gourmet dinner for two at Common Meals. Congratulations to Sherman Owens!



people in Seattle. Enclosed is my check to support your goal of publishing two issues per month. Keep up the good work.

I'd also like to rave about Misty, a vendor outside the Fremont PCC who is extremely friendly, professional and even wrote, "Thank you, Misty" on my copy of the January *Real Change*. She was a real pleasure to chat with and exchange stories of our respective holidays.

Kelly Lopez File
Seattle

Dear *Real Change*,

I did not find Sally Johnson's instructions on how to kill a "mean" tree (Winter Warmth, p. 3, December issue) in the least amusing.

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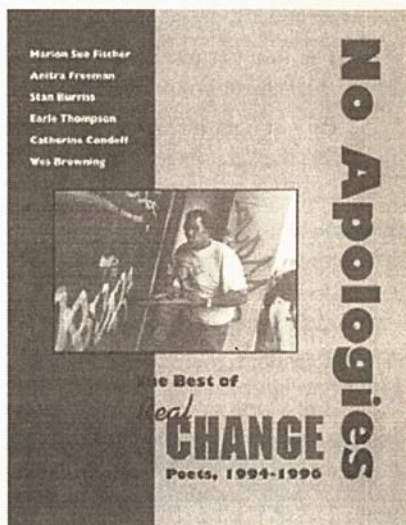
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Cover Photo by John Mostrom

Still No Apologies

Real CHANGE

Seattle's homeless newspaper has released its first poetry anthology, entitled "No Apologies, Best of Real Change Poets 1994-1996." The 36-page chapbook features the work of six homeless and formerly homeless poets who have been regular contributors to the paper.



"I've never claimed to be an expert on modern poetry, but this is the Real Thing with a capital RT. It's not grad students sympathizing with (or slumming among) down-and-outers, it's down-and-outers talking for themselves, with pride, anger, humor, wistfulness, nostalgia, and not a speck of malaise."

Clark Humphrey, *The Stranger*

Proceeds from the sales of "No Apologies" benefit Real Change. The chapbook is available through Real Change for \$6.95. Stop by our Belltown office or mail us a check at 2129 2nd Ave., Seattle, WA 98121. Also available at: Elliot Bay, Left Bank, Fremont Pl. Books, The Globe Cafe, Queen Anne Ave. Books, Speakeasy Cafe, Bailey Coy Books, Red & Black Books, Vandewater Books, and the Penny University.

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A joint project of Real Change and the Homeless Women's Network. \$25 honorarium and one week's notice requested. Call 441-3247 for more information.

More Real Change Than Ever!

This is *not* the February issue of the *Real Change*. This is only the *first* February issue of the *Real Change*. There will be a second February issue, on the 15th. There will be two issues next month, on the 1st and the 15th. There will be two issues every month from now on.

Party!

Anitra Freeman

There is rejoicing in the streets of Seattle. The will of the people has been heard. Norm Rice doesn't listen to you, but we do. The *Real Change* has gone bi-monthly!

Real Change has a whole new look, too. Notice how you can hold this issue in your hand and read it like a magazine, without spreading it out wide and irritating the person next to you on the bus? Or getting the bottom edge of the newspaper in your salad dressing?

This format is not only more convenient, we are much less likely to be mistaken for *The Stranger*. Now we might be mistaken for *Time* magazine. Not.

There is a drawback to all this giddy progress. We have more space to fill every month, and we have to fill it twice as fast. *The Real Change* has built a reputation for informative articles, outspoken editorials, excellent poetry, and all-around quality. We can't pad our extra pages with fluff.

We have expanded our staff, and our editorial board, and everyone from our Board of Directors on down is out scouting for articles.

But we need your help. Do you know a story we should cover? Do you have a story written for us? Do you have a hunch that a search of a certain politician's closet might yield talking skeletons? Give us a call! 441-3247.

We are also starting another tradition this issue. The American Heritage Dictionary defines "obituary" as "a death notice, usually with a brief biography of the

deceased." Traditionally, newspapers have run obituaries of recent deaths in their community. Most newspapers have rarely printed obituaries of members of the homeless community.

This is our community. From now on, when you have news of a death within the homeless community, please call 441-3247 and leave a message for Michele Marchand. Every month, we will print recent obituaries.

Our new schedule will let us cover current events, as they unfold, a little more closely. One article in this issue is an update on the City's current actions on the eternal hygiene center debate. We strongly hope that next issue we will be able to report that the City of Seattle has actually made a move forward in establishing public hygiene services. Your voice to your own City representatives will help insure that news.

Another article is on the corporate takeover of Westlake Park. Please read this article, and if you agree that your public lands should not be made private territory by private business, raise your voice and lodge your protest. We will report the results next issue.

We have a book review this issue, on Merchants of Misery, a report of financial institutions that prey on the poor. In future issues, we will run investigative articles on any such abuses that we find here in Seattle. If you know of a business in Seattle — credit company, pawn shop, check cashing outlet, car dealership, trade school, or other — that takes advantage of poor and minority customers, please let us know.

Real CHANGE

Needs Your Support Now

Real Change depends upon the grassroots support of our readership to do a whole lot with very little money. Every dollar donated to this paper winds up putting about five dollars in the pockets of the homeless. Best of all, your contribution goes beyond simple charity. We help people help themselves while they work for a more just world for everyone. *With your help, 1997, our third year, will be our best ever. Be a part of something important. Support Real Change in any way you can.*

Real Change Matters. Here's What I Can Do.

Name _____

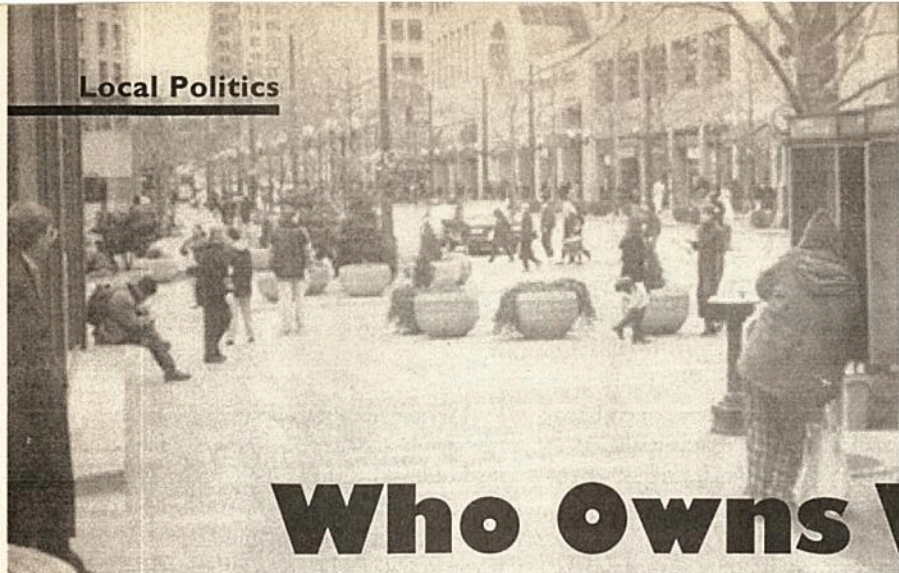
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If you donate \$35 or more, please indicate whether you want a subscription mailed to you. Yes No

MAIL TO: REAL CHANGE, 2129 2ND AVE, SEATTLE, WA 98121



Who Owns Westlake?

Consortium of Area Merchants Make Bid for Control

“We know sadly that the appearance of homeless and poor people causes consternation among some businesses. This plan could provide local businesses all that much more leverage to remove people that they don’t want nearby from the areas proximate to their businesses.”

*Joe Martin,
Social Worker*

STORY BY LAURA BUZARD
PHOTOS BY JOHN MOSTROM

Seattle City government is considering a plan to create a private non-profit that would manage Westlake Park, the small downtown public park on Fourth Avenue at Pine Street. Many citizens are concerned that the plan could be a step toward corporate control over public space, and are worried that the proposed private security would target the poor people and youths that frequent the park.

If the City Council approves the proposed plan, a private non-profit entity would gain control of programming, landscaping, clean-up and security at Westlake Park. This plan was created by the Westlake Park Management Task Force, an offshoot of the Pine Street Advisory Task Force in a report issues last summer.

“The board of the non-profit would include residents, park users, and businesses. It would be subject to recommendations by the parks department and input from the public,” said Ethan Melone, facilitator of the task force and Downtown Development Coordinator in the Office of Management and Planning.

The Westlake Park Management Board met January 21st to discuss the proposal. Diane Lee, concerned citizen and representative of Operation Homestead attended the meeting. “At this time 90% of the board is businesses. The city will be giving money to a private entity,” she commented. “To me it is corporate welfare.”

Funding sources for the new non-profit management entity would include not only existing City funding, but also money from the Downtown Seattle Association coffers, as well as “revenue-generating events held in the park.” Thus, some park events will involve admission fees. Currently, park events are free to the public.

Underutilized?

The proposal states that the privatization of park management should, “Create a sense of ownership of the park by its neighbors. The management group should involve neighboring businesses in Park management decisions and give them the opportunity to make a difference.”

Currently under the auspices of the department of Parks and Recreation, Westlake Park is a small grey parcel of space that is used by the public — from lunching business people, street musicians, skateboarders to those who want to sit and rest amid the bustle of urban life. During the summer months the park is host to free special events including concerts and political demonstrations.

Despite this daily bustle, the report argues that Westlake Park is underutilized. The “lacks adequate landscaping, cleaning and event programming to fulfill its role as a central civic gathering space,” states the report.

Rebecca Hale, press secretary for Mayor Rice agrees. “A lot of people believe that area [Westlake Park] has never achieved its potential through the parks department,

due to such problems as budget constraints.” Privatizing management of the park could “create a more inviting atmosphere,” she said.

Opponents of the plan argue that a new management entity is not necessary; city government should manage city space. Many citizens are worried that the proposed park management would give the neighboring businesses more power than the park users. A private organization should not be responsible for issuing park permits, they argue.

“When they were building the park area, it was touted as public, open space,” said Joe Martin, social worker at the Pike Place Market Medical Clinic. “It should not become the private domain of the neighborhood business coterie. Businesses should not have jurisdiction over public space.”

A Park for Who?

Since the plan states that a portion of the funding would come from the Downtown Seattle Association, some are concerned that businesses might have undue fiscal power over the management entity.

Some of the concern is over the report’s call for heightened security, possibly through a private security service.

“We know sadly that the appearance of homeless and poor people causes consternation among some businesses,” said Martin. “This plan could provide local businesses all that much more leverage to remove people that they don’t want nearby from the areas proximate to their businesses.”

Diane Lee has served coffee to homeless people two mornings a week for six years at Westlake Park. She believes that the park is safe and doesn’t need private security. “What we really need is bathrooms that open before 9 AM,” she said.

“In six years I’ve never had a problem with anyone at the park, even at 6 AM in the pitch dark. The only person who ever bothered me was a security guard hired to guard the Christmas carousel. He harassed my husband and I and the homeless people we were giving coffee to,” she said. Lee worries that security guards might target the homeless people who sit in the park. She is concerned that a private management team could remove the benches in the park.

Supporters argue that a more attractive, well-programmed space can only help the public perception of downtown and Westlake Park.

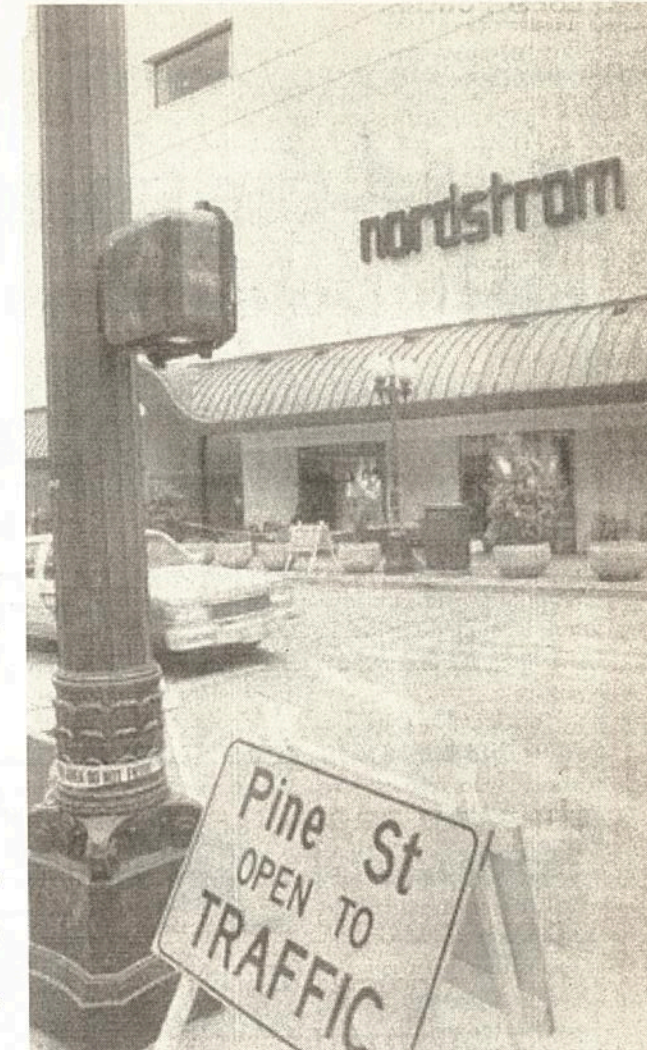
The task force report says that the

creation of a non-profit park management team would “create an opportunity to increase programming, more frequent cleaning, extensive landscaping. It would involve the community in general, and the immediate neighbors.”

“Everyone should benefit from these [proposed] changes,” said task force facilitator Melone. “If you’re spending time there, you should benefit from a cleaner park.” However, one of the goals of task force is more programming and activity in the park. Melone said, “When there is more activity in the area, there will be fewer places to just sit in the park.”

Melone stressed that the proposed increase in security in Westlake Park, “Couldn’t be something where people get treated differently. The intention is not to use force to keep anybody out. Security would be to make people feel safe and enforce parking and skateboarding rules. Nuisance things like that were the focus [of the committee’s concerns].”

Before the proposal can be approved, it will go through two stages of public hearings, Melone said. First, before the Board of Park Commissioners, and second, before City Council. Then the Seattle City Council will decide whether or not to give management control over Westlake park to a private non-profit, or to



WILL WESTLAKE PLAZA BE THE NEXT PUBLIC SPACE TO GO PRIVATE?

keep the park under the jurisdiction of the Parks department.

In the meantime, the Westlake Board plans another meeting on February 27.

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Self-help in the CD

Black Dollar Days Rises to the Challenge

BY TIMOTHY HARRIS

Campaign 5000, the Black Dollar Day Task Force initiative to help capitalize inner-city entrepreneurs by establishing a revolving loan fund, enters its second year this February with a mandate to more than triple its fundraising over last year or lose a \$90,000 matching grant from the City of Seattle.

Black Dollar Days was founded in 1988 to "achieve economic parity for African Americans." In addition to Campaign 5000, the organization publishes the widely used African American Business Directory, sponsors the annual Black Dollar Days Week (see sidebar), is offering Nursing Assistant training to qualified members, and is organizing an unemployed union to provide self-help to community members.

According to a Task Force brochure, Campaign 5000 the first African American Endowment Fund, "where the community creates, owns, and shares the benefits of their own development capital."

The Campaign has a goal of raising \$1.5 million by asking 5,000 individuals to contribute a minimum of \$200, although smaller donations are accepted. BDD plans on raising the remainder of the money by asking institutions to donate \$1,000 or more.

The revolving loan fund offers community entrepreneurs low-interest loans for short terms of 3-5 years. Loans are made out of interest only, leaving the actual contributions untouched. The Campaign figures that 8% interest on \$1.5 million will

generate \$120,000 annually to fuel inner city economic development.

Yet, one year after Campaign 5000's kick-off, according to Black Dollar Days Director Dr. Robert Jeffrey, fundraising, "has not moved along at the speed we'd like." So far, 1,300 stakeholders have contributed \$220,000 to the endowment.

During the initiative's first year loans totaling nearly \$10,000 were given to three inner-city businesses: Hauling Inc., Mama's

Kitchen, and J&B African Market.

According to Dr. Jeffrey the Campaign must raise at least \$780,000 this year, bringing the total endowment up to \$1 million, to keep a \$90,000 matching grant from the City.

The Campaign has accomplished its work so far with virtually no staffing, and this year hopes to add a part-

time fundraiser and part-time volunteer coordinator to increase its effectiveness.

Negotiations are also occurring with local foundation A Territorial Resource regarding that organization handling fund investment to bring a higher return on the funds. Currently, the fund is banked at 8%

interest.

Black Dollar Day's Newest initiative is to "unionize" the unemployed through the creation of an Unemployed Workers' Association. "With welfare reform, we believe there will be a bigger problem for unemployed people," said Dr. Jeffrey. "We can't allow a situation to exist where those with no jobs have no organization to meet their needs."

The worker's association will work to get health insurance for unemployed and underemployed, will pressure corporations for jobs and training, and will provide personal assessment at Black Dollar Day's Readiness Center.

The Readiness Center offers a 3-day personal assessment to evaluate a member's personal strengths and help them make career choices. The Center offers monthly career development meetings which create on-going "peer group monitoring."

"The idea is to get away from case worker monitoring, the idea that people need a social worker, to people making a commitment to monitoring themselves," said Dr. Jeffrey.

While Black Dollar Days will provide training and direction, staff support, and credibility for the new organization, Dr. Jeffrey said the organization will run on the union model and be member controlled.



"We can't allow a situation to exist where those with no jobs have no organization to meet their needs."

*Dr. Robert Jeffrey, Exec. Dir.
Black Dollar Days Task Force*

Black Dollar Day Week

While Black Dollar Days promotes businesses 365 days a year, Feb. 1-7 is Black Dollar Days Week, when all of us are asked to support businesses in the African American community.

Feb. 1-2, Sat. & Sun

Super Shopping Day: Grocery shop at Martin Luther King Market, 6040 MLK Way S.

Feb. 3, Monday

Automobile Day: Get gas, oil change, and lube at an African American owned service station. Suggestion: BP Station, 2801 MLK Way S.

Feb. 4, Tuesday

Take a favorite person or your family out to eat at an African American restaurant. Also, Community economic Development Rally at 7 pm, Garfield High Auditorium.

Feb. 5 Wednesday

Support African American retailers. Buy a hat, gloves, or a valentine's day gift for a special person.

Feb. 6, Thursday

Art Reception at La Maison Bleu, 2000 S. Jackson St.

Feb. 7, Friday

Call your florist. Place orders for Valentines Day with an African American owned florist

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It's the Liveable Wage, Stupid!

KCOP Uncovers the Issue We Care About

CHUCK VAN WEY

To hear the politicians, corporate flacks, pundits, policy wonks and assorted other think-tank bottom-feeders tell it, we regular folks are most concerned about issues like the balanced budget amendment, a capital gains tax cut, affirmative action, and public financing for the Mariners' ragtop stadium. But these "issues" hardly registered during the hundreds of house meetings sponsored by the King County Organizing Project (KCOP) in some of the area's most economically challenged neighborhoods. What was the issue most widely and passionately discussed?

"Without a doubt, the need for jobs paying a living wage with benefits was strikingly important," says Lucia Faithfull, a community organizer with KCOP. "People want to know how they can make their full contribution to the community, to their children, when they have to work two or three jobs. And who is there with the kids?"

KCOP is a broad-based umbrella organization of community and church organizations that conducted the house meetings to find out "what is important to people, what makes them angry. What are the pressures on the family?" Faithfull said.

KCOP in conjunction with Job Web and Pacific Associates also places people from the "enterprise community" (a Federal funding designation for poor, inner-city areas) with firms such as QFC, Telemark, UW and others that are committed to creating living-wage jobs. KCOP is always in need of volunteer "mentors" for employment candidates, Faithfull said. She can be reached at 762-9830.

The singular fact of American politics today is that a lot of people are working for a living, but not making a living working. This violation of civilization's basic contract - breeding cynicism, despair and rage as it inevitably must - will have far reaching,

ominously unpredictable consequences for everyone, even those at the top. "They are eating the seed corn and calling it polenta," said Eric Franklin, an organizer for Lathing, Acoustical, Insulation and Drywall Systems, Local 1144, and Political Vice Chair for the 36th District Democrats.

Franklin's concerns are well-founded. While real wages have been dropping steadily for more than a decade, the impact has been the cruelest on those at the low end of the scale, and the low end of the scale is swelling. According to Donald Barlett and James Steele of The Philadelphia Enquirer, 45% of taxpayers fell into the category of "working poor" in 1993, compared to 39% in 1970.

That's a bunch of people sinking slowly into a swamp of debt, worry and increasing hopelessness, a descent hastened by President Bill's Wall-Street-friendly welfare "reform" program. 93% of everything that has been done recently to balance the budget, according to syndicated columnist Molly Ivins, is being squeezed from the "pittance of low-income families and individuals."

Franklin likes Ms Ivins' expression, "welfare deform."

"Right-wing Republicans and Democrats have highjacked words like *reform* (as in welfare) and *liberalization* (as in regulatory) and *free* (as in trade). The proof of the pudding in this so-called reform is the living wage. If people can't earn enough to live a

decent life, a family life, a community life, and they can't rely on a safety net to make up the difference, what are they supposed to do?" Franklin said.

Franklin believes that "a coalition of Labor and community action groups is the only countervailing force right now. There needs to be upward pressure economically and politically. Everything in our consumer society tells us that we're autonomous buying units. But how can we be? We all use the same roads, the same schools, listen to the same music, watch the same TV shows. You can be driving the best, German-engineered car on the market, but you're still going to have to stop for gas."

The word is getting out. California voters strongly supported a higher state minimum wage, and, in Oregon, the efforts of such grassroots organizations as Portland Jobs with Justice helped to sway voters in favor of a living-wage ballot initiative in the face of stiff corporate opposition. Franklin sees promise both in the revitalized Labor movement's emphasis on organizing and in a growing feeling among Democrats that the party's efforts should focus on issues rather than candidates.

"We need to let prospective candidates know that we will support them not because we know them or because they happen to call themselves Democrats, but because they sincerely support our issues. And right now a living wage for working Americans is the most important issue of all." □

"If people can't earn enough to live a decent life, a family life, a community life, and they can't rely on a safety net to make up the difference, what are they supposed to do?"

Eric Franklin, Labor Organizer

Waiting to Pee

Mayor and Council Take Their Sweet Time

You have probably heard several variations on the theme of "how many (fill in the blank) does it take to change a light bulb?" But, how about this for a new twist in 1997? - "How many special Mayoral committees & city council meetings does it take to provide hygiene services in downtown Seattle? The answer seems to be "as many as you want so long as you do not actually come to a decision!"

However, it seems that after more than a decade of study, review, discussion, and even identification of appropriate sites, the city's Housing and Human Services Committee is about to take an historical step on Wednesday, January 22nd, by making a final decision on where downtown hygiene services will actually be located. Of course, the full City Council then has to accept this recommendation or delay the decision for even longer, but let us hope that they understand the wisdom of moving forward - one small step toward solving the problem of public urination downtown could be one large step for human dignity.

Not everyone agrees that there is a lack of public restrooms downtown. According to a list published by the Downtown Seattle Association (DSA), restrooms open to the general public are available at the following locations: Nordstrom, Niketown, Bon Marche, Century Square, United Airlines Building, Newmark, etc., so please consider yourself welcome at any and all of these sites and call Kate Joncas, (623-0340) President of the DSA, if you have any problems.

The Housing and Human Services Committee will be reviewing four main options at the 1/22 meeting. These options are: 1) the original proposal from the Low Income Housing Institute (LIHI), submitted in response to the city's Request For Proposals (RFP), to site hygiene services for men and women in the basement of the Glen Hotel, a building that the LIHI owns, located on 3rd Avenue, between Pike and Union; 2) a proposal from the Mayor which offers a hygiene center for men at the

municipal annex, on 5th and Cherry (a site slated for redevelopment in about five years), a hygiene center for women in the Denny Regrade (presently the City does not have site control), with a provision that toilets could be sited at the Glen Hotel; 3) an alternative proposal from LIHI to provide hygiene services for men and women at another of its sites at 9th and Lenora; and 4) a combination of women's hygiene services at the Regrade site, with men's hygiene services to be provided at the Glen Hotel along with toilets for both men and women.

Admittedly the range of options makes it difficult for the Housing and Human Services Committee to come to a determination, especially as some sites, like the two owned by LIHI are permanent locations, whereas the municipal annex and the Regrade site, should they ever gain site control, will probably exist for less than ten years, if at all!

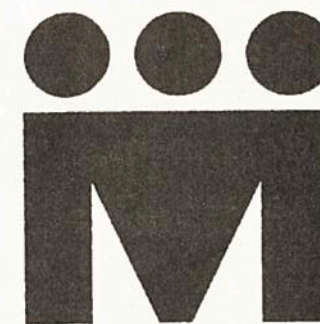
Cheryl Chow, Chair of the Housing Services Committee, and committee member, Tina Podlodowski, asked intelligent questions about siting, funding availability, longevity, and desirability of the various proposals before them, and want to look at an 'apples for apples' comparison before finally making up their minds.

Presumably other city council members will take a more reasonable and objective approach to the problem, assess the level of services provided for the dollars spent, as well as the practical nature of location, longevity of the site and how the facility will be operated.

It would be a relief if this was the last 'toilet paper' you were ever to read, and even more of a relief for patrons of downtown if they had easy access to toilets and other essential hygiene services in the very near future. Please consider calling all the members of the City Council (their numbers are in the front of the white pages) to urge them to make a final decision soon that best meets the needs of people who will use these hygiene facilities. □

The Millionair Club Thrift Store

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Nordstrom Hosts Hygiene Center!

Facilities Considered Substandard by Bathers

STORY BY SHAUNA CURPHY
PHOTOS BY DANA SCHUERHOLZ

On January 21, thirty people gathered outside the Westlake Nordstrom to demonstrate the need for a downtown urban rest stop equipped with laundry and shower facilities. The demonstration was planned by the Nonviolent Action Community of Cascadia in response to the Downtown Seattle Association's suggestion to the city council that the hygiene center is unnecessary due to the availability of public restrooms in downtown government buildings and retail outlets.

Concerned citizens donned robes and shower caps and headed for Nordstrom's restrooms to brush teeth, do laundry, bathe, or otherwise occupy themselves with the daily business of personal hygiene, which contributes, in a small way, to human dignity.

As demonstrators approached the store entrance, Nordstrom's personnel welcomed them to use the restrooms inside. In response to questions as to whether or not one could shave or do laundry, the store representatives responded by demanding that Nordstrom's sinks were for hand washing only. With this advice, demonstrators quietly proceeded to the nearest bathrooms. People were threatened with removal from the store for attempting to use the sinks for anything other than the explicitly stated purpose of washing hands.

Participants reconvened outside to fill out a survey evaluating the facility as an adequate provider of public hygiene needs. The event concluded with a few words from John Fox with the Seattle Displacement Coalition. Fox stated a reflection of the sentiments of all who had tried to wash up at Nordstrom, "The D.S.A.'s proposal is a sham and a shame." ☐



Looking for the Urban Rest Stop... Jane Lee, left in the Shoe Section at Nordstrom, just wanted to prove the point, we need a Hygiene Center! 1/21/07



Joe Martin explaining to the press the purpose of our non-violent direct action at Nordstrom and Neiman. 1/21/07

Merchants of Misery

Legal Scams Make Big Bucks Off Poor

BOOK REVIEW:
MERCHANTS OF MISERY
HOW CORPORATE AMERICA PROFITS
FROM POVERTY
COMMON COURAGE PRESS
REVIEW BY ANITRA FREEMAN

Check cashing outlets. Pawn shops. Used car lots advertising "No credit? No problem!" Familiar sights in Seattle, or in any city of any size. Often a welcome sight: when you have a disability check but no checking account, or the check's run out and you need to turn some of your belongings in storage, that you can't use, into money that you can use.

Reading Merchants of Misery gives a different perspective on these services. This book is a collection of articles by national-level journalists for such publications as U.S. News & World Report, the Wall Street Journal, the New York Times, Barron's, and other major newspapers and magazines. It is edited by Michael Hudson, whose reporting on the problems of disadvantaged consumers has won a John Hancock Award for business reporting and a Sidney Hillman award for social justice journalism, among others. These folks have credentials.

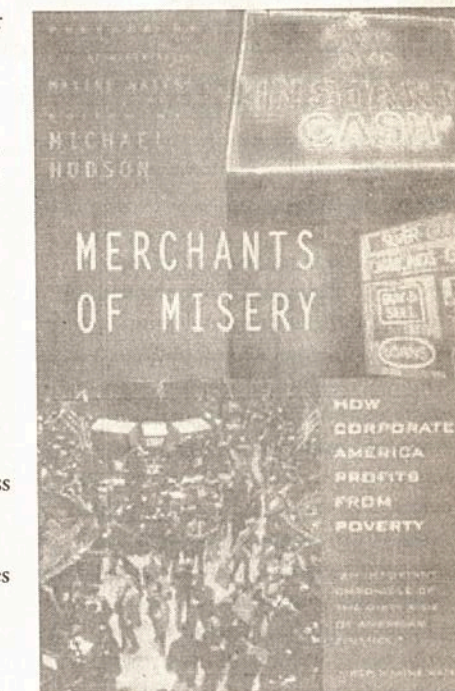
The book has scope. It is not an all-

opinion rant, nor an expose on one abuse or one abuser. The articles collected cover the uses and abuses of the "fringe economy" through banking, check cashing outlets, pawn shops, home repair rip-offs, car loans, insurance, low-income rental housing, rent-to-own plans, trade school scams, and - woven through it all - politics.

Businesses that target the "fringe economy" make \$200 to \$300 billion a year off of the marginalized - the poor, the working-class, and often the minorities - who can't get loans from traditional institutions. And yet, many of the traditional institutions that deny service to the poor - by not placing banks in working-class neighborhoods, by refusing mortgages in minority neighborhoods, etc. - these same institutions own a majority of the businesses that profit from the poor, through the nontraditional market.

Not every merchant who markets financial services to the poor is exploitative. Many do provide a needed and wanted service.

But others take a ruthless advantage of people in no position to "credit shop". A woman who borrowed \$2000 for car repairs from Associates Financial Services, owned by Ford Motor Company, found she had bought \$1,200 of add-ons she had never



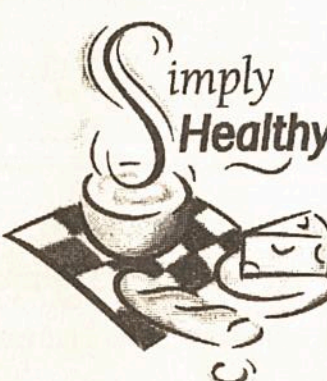
heard of, let alone approved, and she was paying 33.99% interest.

She sued. Associates settled out of court.

One of the standard responses to abuses by lenders is, "The buyer should have just been more careful." But we don't

Continued next page


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MISERY, CONT FROM PAGE 13

shrug off victims of burglary or armed robbery with, "Well, you should have been more careful." If you left your keys in the car, your insurance company may penalize you — but the law will still go after the person who stole your car. We don't tell people who suffer food-poisoning in a restaurant, "No one forced you to eat there." We force the restaurant to clean up or close. We consider the government to have a duty to protect its citizens, and that duty is often carried out even to an annoying extreme — unless those we need to be protected against have a great deal of money.

Private trade schools can be good avenues to a paying job. They can also be rip-offs. Julie Shorter, a single mother with two children, signed up at Connecticut Academy in Atlanta, Georgia, to train as a medical assistant. Waste disposal was cavalier, and needles commonly reused all around the class. But she stuck with the program, staying up late at night to learn medical terms, buying clean needles to practice with herself. When she graduated at last, no one would hire her with a Connecticut Academy diploma. The careless methods of the Academy were common knowledge. One doctor told her he'd be asking for a malpractice suit if he hired her.

Yet this school was accredited, and received federal funds through student loans. Moreover, Shorter soon found that while telling her she was applying for a grant, the school had actually had her sign a loan application — and she was now obligated to repay a \$5000 loan, for a

"We consider the government to have a duty to protect its citizens, and that duty is often carried out even to an annoying extreme — unless those we need to be protected against have a great deal of money."

worthless education. Julie Shorter has an income of \$235 a month, in federal aid.

The federal government was supposed to be helping Julie get paying work and get off of welfare. Julie did her part. But the government, instead of doing its part, aided and abetted con artists to keep her trapped.

Legal reform that will prevent financial abuses is difficult if not impossible to get passed, in any arena. In 1992, a bill to put a cap on the interest rate that homeowners — usually poor and minorities — paid on second mortgages fought through the Georgia Senate Banking Committee and through the Senate, only to stall in the Georgia House — in a panel chaired by a banker, in which each of the five members of the panel had received \$8,000 in campaign contributions from lenders.

Minority borrowers are usually forced to go to fringe institutions, when it is difficult for them to get loans from more traditional — and far less abusive — banks.

Most people will argue that current antidiscrimination laws prevent minorities from being refused loans. But mortgage loans are based on appraised value of the home. Racial bias still skews mortgage appraisals, as evidenced by this story:

"Joseph Boyce, a black editor at the Wall Street Journal, wrote in 1992 about

trying to sell his house in Atlanta. When white appraisers came in, Boyce's family was present. The appraisers set the value of the house at just over \$70,000. Before a second set of appraisers came in, Boyce removed all his family photos and had his secretary and her son, who are white, be there instead of his own family. The second time around, the house appraised \$12,500 higher."

Merchants of Misery does document successful reform movements. The final chapter lists ways that the reader can investigate the poverty industry in your own city or state, and actions you can take on abuses.

In future issues of the Real Change, we are going to follow the tips in that chapter, and publish the results of our own investigations. We welcome tips and reports from our readers. ☐

DONATE YOUR OLD CAR
 Boat, RV, Truck or Van to non-profit
EL CENTRO de la RAZA.
RECEIVE A TAX BREAK AND FREE TOWING! We want it even if it doesn't run! Your support will help children, youth, seniors and families.
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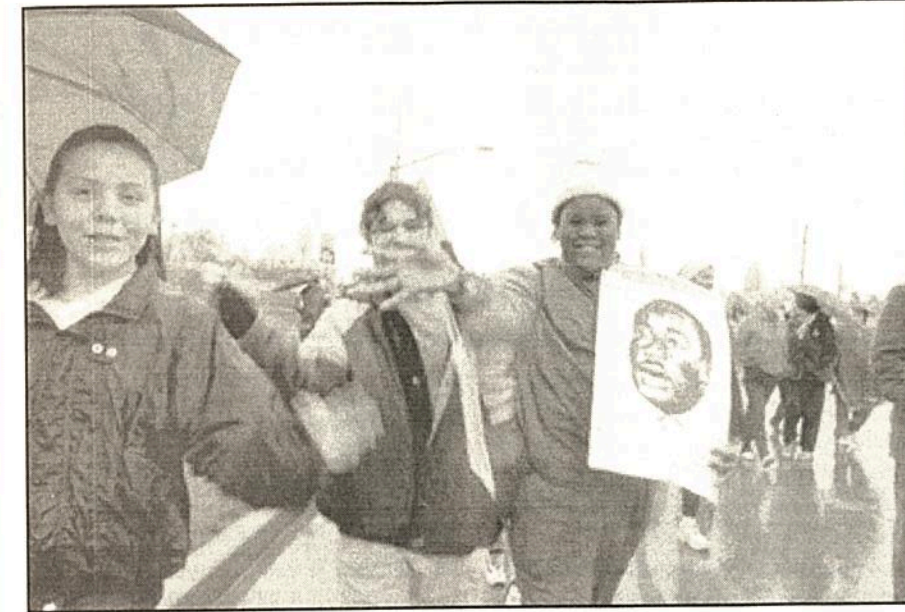


Matrix
 Symbolic-Kinesthetic Translation Movement

Pa Kua Martial Art Dance
Dai Scott, instructor 559-6776

Keepers of the Dream

Rally Speakers Call for Work that Pays



A DAY TO SING ABOUT. PHOTO BY DANA SCHUERHOLZ

BY SANDI LUESCHER

Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King would have been proud. In commemoration of both his birth, death, and, most importantly, his life's work, an estimated 1,500 people rallied at Garfield High School and then took to march the streets of South Central Seattle. The crowd never seemed to notice cooler temperatures or rain ranging from a mist to a steady stream.

The weather may have been damp, but inside the gymnasium of Garfield High School, the spirits were high as the rally opened with Anton Palmer leading the

SHADES youth gospel choir in rousing tunes.

On hand to comment and participate in the 4 mile march to Rainier Vista were local Seattle movers and shakers including Mayor Norm Rice, City Council's newest member, Charlie Chong and County Commissioner Bob Santos.

Larry Gossett announced news of the Valentine's Day Rally and March at the Capitol Building

in Olympia. "Tell your lawmakers to do the right thing and create real welfare reform that doesn't leave anyone behind."

And, that was the real message of this day. What Rev. Dr. King had started was just that- a start. A lot of real work remained to be done. A lot of recent setbacks need to be reversed.

State Legislative Representative, Velma Veloria, said it best, "Wages are too low to lift families out of poverty. We want an increase in minimum wage, access to childcare, good healthcare, and transportation to the jobs. In other words, we want to give more to the needy and less to the greedy."

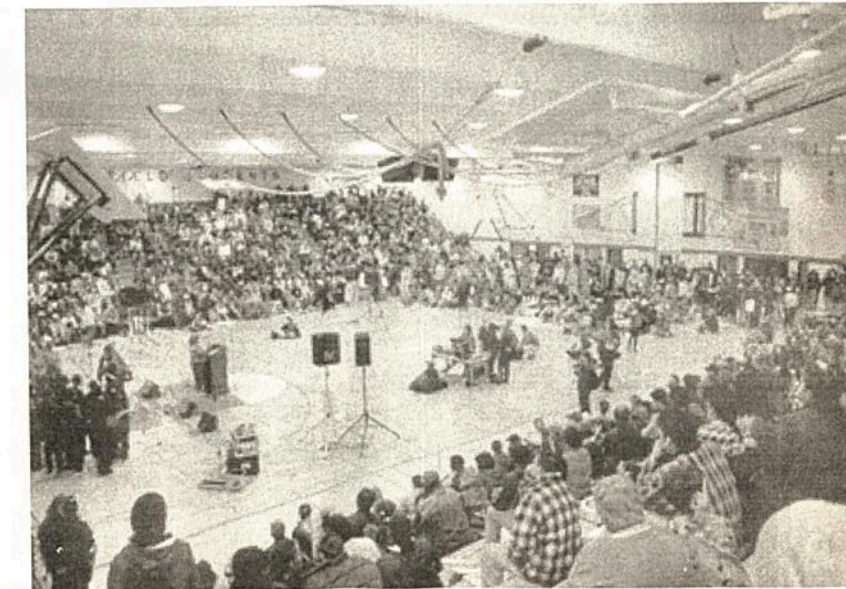
On a national level, over 10 million Americans and their families work and still live in poverty. Two and a half million of these people worked at year round full-time jobs, according to the most recent statistics from the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, part of the AFL-CIO. Another seven and a half million poor lived in households that included a member who was employed full-time throughout the year.

The reality is that work doesn't allow people to pull themselves out of poverty. At a time when our communities wrestle with the question and practicalities of welfare

Continued to page 19

"I don't want to tell young people to train for jobs and then have no jobs to point them to."

Sam Beards, Director,
 Ranier Vista Boy's and Girl's Club



FULL HOUSE AT GARFIELD HIGH. PHOTO BY SANDI LUESCHER

Poor Little Rich Kids

I thought I had a safe place to park for the night and get some rest. I won't name the street but the area overlooks Lake Washington. I went there mostly on week nights because I had found that, during the spring and summer months mostly that area is too heavily trafficked. But one Saturday night I parked there because I needed to be near Capitol Hill and I wanted to save gas. I was awakened about 1:30 a.m. by loud noises.

Victoria Marshall

A group of teenagers were throwing garbage cans over the embankment by the park, shouting and laughing. They must have seen my car and came running to bang on the trunk. I popped up with my heavy duty flashlight shining and they ran away screaming and laughing. I thought no more about it.

Two weeks later I went there again on a Saturday night. It was a mistake. At around 2:30 a.m. I was sharply awakened by a loud crash. I thought I had been rear-ended. I looked out my back window which I discovered was gone! The "kids" had apparently loosened a traffic sign from the ground and thrust it, post end first through my window which was completely shattered. A youthful prank. Again they ran screaming and laughing away. I got out to get a better look. The post had hit where the window meets the roof; if it had hit a little lower my head would have received the force of the blow. Lucky me.

Now, understand, this is not a deserted lonely road. There are houses not twenty feet away. Yet no one came to investigate.

As it happened a car came by with four young men from the University in it. They stopped at my signal and were concerned at what they saw had happened. One of them stayed with me while the others went to get help. When they returned they said the police would not come unless there was an injury. If the car was capable of being driven, they said, I should go to a phone and call them.

I did not want to move my car without

"I was sharply awakened by a loud crash. I thought I had been rear-ended. I looked out my back window which I discovered was gone!"

an official police report as witness to this crime so I asked them to try again which they did. While the young man and I were waiting we heard noises in the woods down the embankment which did not sound like animals.

The other young men returned saying that the police still refused to come. I pleaded with them to try again saying they thought I might be hurt and that the perpetrators seemed to be still at the scene, anything that might make the police come. They reluctantly agreed but this time only one went for help and three stayed with me because of the apparent presence of the kids. They saw them and gave chase though I asked them not to. They were shocked at the idea that kids who might be from the Bush school, which they themselves, had attended would do such a thing.

After about half an hour the police still had not come. The young men again chased the kids away. Finally after about forty-five minutes a police car arrived. We told them what had happened and that the college men had chased the kids. We thought more might still be in the woods. The police seemed unaffected

by this. I insisted that the officer write a report though he seemed reluctant. I left numbers where I could be reached and the college left their names and numbers also.

About a week later I called the precinct to see how the investigation was proceeding. The detective in charge of the case said it was closed. When I asked why he said they had had no way to contact me. This in spite of the fact that I had left three numbers with them.

When I told him this he seemed surprised. I also asked him if he had the names and numbers of the young college men who had been my witnesses. He said he did not. I gave these to him again and he said he would reopen the case and get back to me. I heard nothing further.

CHANGING GEARS

Bicycle Tours and More

We are a small, women owned bicycle touring company, now in our second year. Our first season was filled with good friends, laughter, fabulous food and incredible journeys. In addition to our cycling extravaganzas, our second season will bring some new and creative adventures including Lopez Island ride, herbal seminars, a Victorian Tea, host a murder mystery party week-end. Discount prices for early registrations.

Call (206) 824-3401



Do Something

FRESH PRODUCE TO LOW INCOME PEOPLE Lettuce Link makes gardening and produce accessible to low income people. You can help with weekly deliveries of fresh produce to Seattle food banks, help grow vegetables in P-Patches for donations, or plant extra in your own garden to donate. Call Kara Evans, Coordinator at 548-8344. 1/11

VOLUNTEER DRIVERS NEEDED! SHARE, a grassroots organizing effort of homeless men and women, facilitates nine self managed nighttime shelters throughout Seattle. We seek volunteers to drive blankets and soup to and from these shelters in the early morning and evenings, especially on weekends. This is a practical way to help homeless people help themselves. Contact Michele at 448-7889. 12/20

THE WASHINGTON LOW INCOME HOUSING NETWORK seeks one or more Mac-oriented computer volunteers for data entry/database work. Flexible schedule. The Network is a statewide, nonprofit information and advocacy organization for low income housing. Call Kris or Laura at 442-9455. 12/9

ARE YOU COMMITTED TO HELPING the homeless? If so, we need you! Rose House, transitional housing for homeless women, has a variety of volunteer opportunities on-site and off. For more information contact Ashley at 328-5730. 11/1

IMMEDIATE STIPEND OFFICE VOLUNTEERS NEEDED Seattle Habitat for Humanity has openings for two positions in our office: Volunteer Coordinator and General Office. These are full time positions offering a stipend equivalent to \$600 per month in a casual and friendly office. Come join the Habitat Family! Call Linda at 292-5240. 11/1

WHIP YOUR LANDLORD INTO SHAPE! volunteer for the Tenants Union hotline or just learn how to make landlords make repairs, return deposits, respect your privacy and stop illegal evictions. January training sessions. Call Rich at 722-6848, ext. 111. 1/11

JOIN THE FIGHT FOR TENANTS RIGHTS! The Tenants Union needs volunteers to work on our newsletter, do

legislative work, organizing, fund raising, outreach and office work. Fun, committed staff and flexible schedules. Call Rich at 722-6848, ext. 111. 1/11

MEDIATION SERVICES FOR VICTIMS AND OFFENDERS, a nonprofit agency, is looking for a volunteer editor to oversee quarterly newsletter. Qualifications: knowledge of desktop publishing and software, writing and editing skills, commitment to social justice, layout skills, and a sense of humor. Call 621-8467. 1/5

BECOME AN ADVOCATE FOR ABUSED and neglected children in court; learn how the legal system works for these children. Must be 21 or older with excellent references; participate in training prior to case assignment. For information of a program in your area, call the WA State Association CASA/GAL at 667-9716. 12/9

LEGISLATIVE NETWORK Educate lawmakers to support sound public policies regarding tobacco, clean air, health care and lung disease. Contact elected officials to support or oppose specific legislation. Make

phone calls from the comfort of your own home and make Washington a better place to breathe! Call Megan, American Lung Association of Washington at 441-5100. 11/1

HELP HOMELESS CHILDREN by volunteering at First Place, an educational program for children in transition. Volunteers are needed in the classrooms and for office support. Hours from 9 a.m. to 2:30pm M-F. Commit 3-4 hours a week. For more information please call Michelle at 323-1047. 12/20

VOLUNTEER CLOTHES SORT AT SEATTLE GOODWILL -individuals and groups sought to help sort clothes on Saturday, January 25th from 9am-3pm. Come on down, enjoy lunch on us and get a behind the scenes look at Settle Goodwill. For more information, to find future dates, or to volunteer please call Carol at 329-1000. 1/11

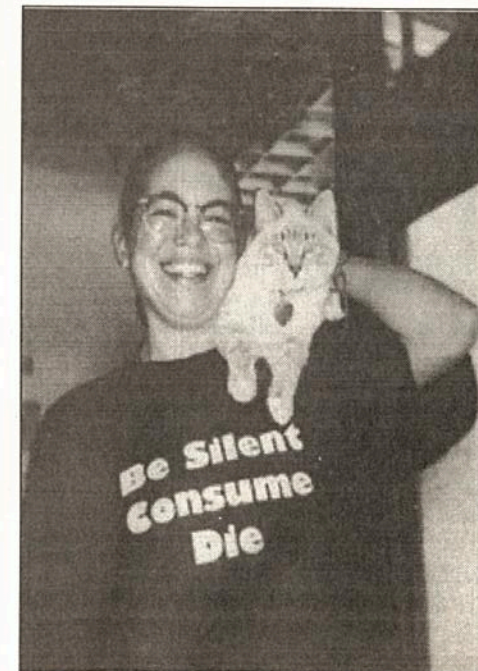
From Seattle Volunteer
<http://www.speakeasy.org/~seavol>

Sid Wants You ...

to buy a Real Change T-Shirt

Yep, we printed a T-Shirt, and we're using a cute kitty to market it. Shameless? You bet! 100% cotton black T with a pithy anti-consumerist slogan on the front and the Real Change logo on the back. \$15 each. Now in both Large and extra-large.

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REAL CHANGE STAFFER OZULA SIOUX SPORTING A CAT AND A FETCHING T-SHIRT, AVAILABLE ONLY FROM US.

A Call for Action

Grassroots Response to Balanced Budget Amendment Needed

BACKGROUND: As we mentioned in our special alert, dated 12/20/96, the constitutional amendment to balance the federal budget will be at the top of Congress' legislative agenda this session. The Senate Judiciary Committee will be holding hearings next week. Treasury Secretary Rubin will be testifying in opposition to the BBA, because it would pose a risk of government default. Both the Senate and House are expected to vote on the BBA in early February.

If there is any issue that low income advocates should be concerned about right now, this is it. The BBA, if enacted (and ratified by three-quarters of state legislatures), would likely cause serious damage to the economy. Low income people would suffer the most from a recession or economic slowdown. Moreover, the BBA would make it much harder to raise taxes or eliminate corporate tax subsidies and loopholes—and much easier to simply slash spending to social programs, housing and education.

The BBA would give the Congress and President little flexibility to deal with unforeseen events, such as the recent floods in the Northwest. The requirement that three-fifths of Congress must vote to waive the BBA would allow a small minority of members to hold the economy hostage.

Many argue that, since Congress and the President have agreed to balance the budget anyway, there's nothing wrong with a constitutional amendment that locks them into this commitment. However, the BBA would actually allow Congress and the President to walk away from their responsibility to make tough decisions and choose priorities in balancing the budget. Rather than debate complex budget issues openly, policy makers could simply hide behind the BBA.

ACTION NEEDED: The fight to defeat the BBA must be waged now, and it must be a grassroots battle. By the end of February, it will already be too late. The possibility of defeating it is strong in both the House and Senate.

Contact your Senator and Representative and urge them to oppose the BBA.

MATERIALS AVAILABLE: To receive any of the following documents, dial our automated Fax-on-Demand system at 703/716-7349.

- Impact of the BBA on Minorities and the Poor (CBPP), 2pp — doc # 1227
- The Balanced Budget Constitutional Amendment (reasons to oppose it) (CBPP), 8pp — doc # 1228
- If Everyone Agrees We Should Balance the Budget by 2002, What's the Problem with a Constitutional Amendment? (CBPP), 3pp — doc # 1226
- The BBA is a Bad Idea, (OMB Watch), 1 page — doc # 1229

Public Housing Reform

BACKGROUND: Just when you thought it was safe to go back in the water . . . Representative Lazio [R-NY] has introduced HR 2, the "Housing Opportunity and Responsibility Act of 1997." This 316-page bill picks up more or less where negotiations left off at the end of the 104th Congress, when a conference committee failed to reach compromise on bills to overhaul public housing and tenant-based section 8 (HR 2406 and S 1260).

Similar to last year's bill, HR 2 contains a block grant to public housing authorities, and a requirement that phas submit five-year plans. There is a provision requiring the conversion of distressed developments to vouchers. The targeting provisions are substantially weaker than current law, and

the rent provisions include an option for households to choose between the 30% of income formula (Brooke amendment) or a flat rent established by the PHA. A more detailed summary will be available in the next alert.

HUD Silent on Clinton Budget Plan

After Departing Secretary Cisneros was chastised by his superiors for publicly challenging the HUD budget plan proposed by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), HUD staff has been mute on the current status of the budget, except to say that the agency is pleased with some of the changes that OMB has made.

Hundreds of advocates flooded OMB and Clinton's office with phone calls, urging the Administration to support HUD's budget request. HUD requested \$32 billion for FY 1998, and OMB had proposed roughly \$8 billion less. The President will not make his overall budget plan public until after his State of the Union address, the first week of February.

House Rule Arises From Istook Attack on Nonprofits

The House has approved a new rule that will require individuals testifying before House Committees to list the source and amount of funds their organization or they have received from the federal government in the last three years. The so-called 'truth in testimony' rule comes out of last year's GOP attempts to stop nonprofits that receive federal funds from engaging in advocacy.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Lisa Ranghelli, Center for Community Change, 202/342-0567, e-mail ranghellil@commchange.org

MLK, CONT. FROM PAGE 15
reform and creating policies that attempt to bridge the gap between dependence and work, this fact should be a wake up call.

In a recent report from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the low wage work is a key reason. This is a trap that keeps this vicious cycle alive for millions. Many jobs in our society pay less than \$7.49 per hour. That is the hourly equivalent of the poverty level for a family of four.

It is not easy to relate personal earnings to the poverty status since family size and needs vary. For example, a minimum wage job may generate approximately \$8, 840 per year—the poverty level being \$ 7,934 for a single person- but add any dependents to the equation and that is not the case. For a family of four, the subsistence level is set at \$ 15, 580 per year.

In addition to unemployment, involuntary part time work is also a contributor. That is, a person seeking full-time employment may have to be content with only a part-time job, or no job.

Another statistic gleaned from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development indicates that an average of one in five of the homeless have jobs; and others, who are also homeless, work sometimes.

Add to these complications, the questionable impact of NAFTA (North American Trade Agreement) on the job situation in America. Mentioned by several speakers at the rally, consensus seems to be to bring these jobs back to within our borders.

Sam Beards, director of the Rainier Vista Boy's and Girl's Club where the march ended, had this to say, " It's important to get jobs back into this country. I don't want to tell young people to train for jobs and then have no jobs to point them to."

After the first full year of NAFTA implementation, the U. S. Department of Labor had received 321 petitions involving 34,799 dislocated workers who cited NAFTA as the cause of their unemployment. For these workers, it is unlikely for them to find opportunities with pay and benefits anywhere near the level of the job lost. This seems to hit more workers with years of seniority rapidly approaching retirement age. So, this may be only the tip

of the iceberg when effect is evaluated. Another complication is the slowdown of exports to Mexico due to their


economic slowdown and peso devaluation. When Congress cited the number of estimated jobs created by NAFTA — 170,000 — the presumption was that exports would also increase. It is clear that with this not being the case. The job estimate is nothing more than smoke and mirrors.

A highlight to the Martin Luther King Rally was not only the free chicken dinner at the end provided by Ezell's but the guest speaker from Australia, Ray Jackson. In Seattle to bring awareness to concerns of his country's Aborigine population, he returned thinking to King and his dream.

For the last 40,000 known years, "Dreamtime" has been important to the Aborigine. In this dimension, they walk toward the future and the future dreams back. Jackson expressed it this way, " Our dreamtime is our culture. It is our land. We understand Martin Luther King's dream. If you want a dream to come true, then you must be true to that dream."

**APARTMENTS AVAILABLE:
NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS
FOR SENIOR (62 OR OLDER) LOW-
INCOME HOUSING AT PIKE PLACE
MARKET.**

HUD-subsidized Studios and One Bedroom Units are currently available at two Pike Place Market Bldgs: **STEWART HOUSE,** phone 441-7188 and **LIVINGSTON BAKER** APTS phone 441-1002. Must be HUD-eligible. Tenant pays 30% of adjusted monthly income as rent; most utilities included in rent.

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15th Annual Memorial Service To remember the poor and homeless who have died in 1996

Frank Alexander	Preston Klingmun
James Monroe	John Kondratyk
Anderson	Kenneth Krause
James R. Anderson	Clifford Law
Norris Anderson	Iosefo Leota
Donald R. Barnes	Gordie Luke
John D. Bauer	Mark Stephen
Carlos Bedia	Mansfield
Scott Bisgrove	Roy McClendon
Albert Bryant	Harold McKenzie
Rhay Butler	Ray Moony
John Burke	Geroge Morgan
Richard Campbell	Troy I. Muth
Ray Cheer	Jerry Nowlis
Richard Coen	Ron Olson
Willie Curtis	Louis Owens
Bobby Davis	Pat Patterson
Erven Day	Ramon C. Ramirez
Kathleen M. Day	Charles Rearden
Clarence Dill	John Rhodes
George Douglass	Henry Rivet
Dave Edwards	Herman Schreib
Anne Ekelund	Michael Severson
George Embry	Ray Snyder
Jose Mendoza	William Stephens
Garcia	David "Rainbow"
Richard Gerdes	Two Hearts
Bill Gore	Guy Vance
Robert M. Greenwood	Tom Vincet
Louise Haldane	Bob Warner
Ed Hansen	Clarence Webb
Rita J. Hanseth	Drew E. Wiley
Vincent Hennessey	Gary Wilson
Janice Hilbert	... and those who
William Hosea	remain unnamed.
Herman Hunter	
Lai D. Huynh	<i>Special Friends of the</i>
Daniel Iniquez	<i>Homeless</i>
James M. Jackson	Don Oldham
Philip J. Johnson	Edward Ottum
Jack Jones	John David Young
Mollie Kerbs	

Truth in a Flame

About forty people gathered in the cramped Compass Center chapel on January 3rd for the 15th annual Memorial Service for poor and homeless people who'd died the previous year. The service was delayed one week due to severe weather—snow, cold and rain which had caused additional hardship for homeless people and mud slides responsible for the death of at least one homeless man on Queen Anne Hill.

The service began with a prayer: "We remember before you today these our brothers and sisters. We thank you for giving them to us to know and love as companions in our pilgrimage on earth."

Stan Burriss, poet laureate of the streets, said, "When you're homeless you're on the cutting edge. Moment to moment and face to face it varies, and sometimes you fall into the haze that is too heavy to breathe." The Memorial Service was an attempt to give clarity through the haze, and life to the stories and struggles of individuals, our friends and companions.

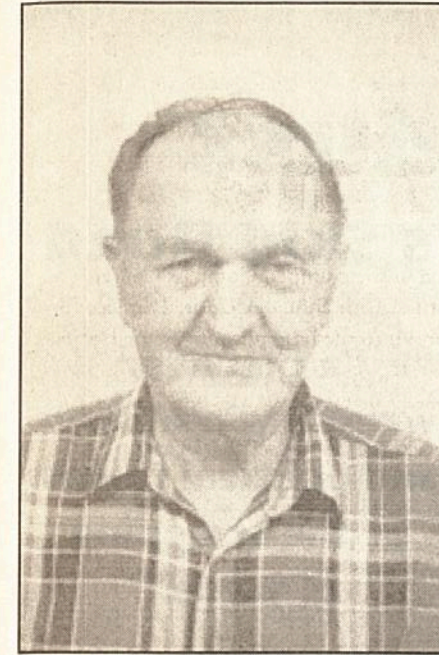
After a sermon by Rev. Jean Kim and music by Catherine Condeff, people read the litany of the names—70 names long this year. As names were read, a candle was lit for each person.

During the time of sharing afterwards, Stan Burriss spoke more about what he saw: "I could see the list in those candles. Not nearly everybody who could've been on that list was. It could've been me. There's so much in those candles, including the people who remain unnamed." Joe Martin, a social worker at the Pike Market Clinic, talked about the flame of the spirit which lives forever. The theme of this year's service seemed to be contained in the flame, and in the paradoxes of life and death.

Stan Burriss saw children in those candles—each of the people represented was once a child in his or her mother's arms. But, he pointed out, "It's a mistake to think there is no violence in that candle." Many of the people on the list this year were known only by their street name, and some died violent deaths on the streets. Marion Sue Fischer once said, "The plural of paradoxes is paradise." But for this to be true we have to see and hold them all—the kid in that candle and the violence therein.

—Michele Marchand, with special help from Stan Burriss,
photos by Steven Sattergren

CATHERINE CONDEFF



JOHN KONDRATYK

B. 5 MAY 1922 D. 20 DECEMBER 1996

John Kondratyk, friend and thorn in the homeless community, died from complications after a heart attack in late December. He was 74 years old, and had been homeless in Seattle for many years, staying at St. Martin de Porres Shelter off and on for ten years. Everyone seems to have a story about "Dumpster John."

The thing about death is it often brings the community together. Real Change is all about community-building, and putting a real face on homelessness as it pertains to individuals. Starting this month, Real Change will be running a new regular feature: an obituary column.

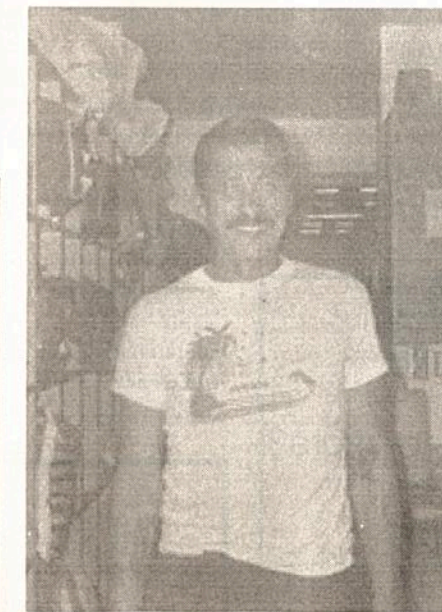
Please contact us when someone close to you in the homeless community dies, and we will do our best to run an obituary in the paper. What better way to remember those who were dear to us?

For more information, please contact Michele Marchand, c/o the Editorial Committee at Real Change.

John, the quintessential irascible street character, was known for his charm and for his peskiness. He was prolific in his gathering of dumpster jewels, and personified the cliché that one man's trash is another's treasure. Joan Clough, former director of St. Martin's, remembered the time John found an old LOTTO ticket in a dumpster worth nearly \$2,000. He and a buddy took a cab to Olympia to redeem the ticket.

He was a scammer and a pleasure-seeker; he needed attention. "But what do you expect," asked Doug Hobkirk, who had worked with John at St. Martin's and the Lazarus Day Center, "He was born above some sort of honkytonk." John's parents were Russian immigrants; his father worked hard but was stern and unloving. His mother "took in ironing" or some such work to help raise the family—they lived next to the tracks in New Jersey.

He was married once and is survived by one daughter. But he could wear out his welcome faster than anyone, and was thrown out of every place he lived. John had a selfishness in him—perhaps born of being raised in poverty during the Great Depression.



CARLOS BEDIA

B. 28 MAY 1938 D. ?

One of the names that appeared on this year's Memorial Service list was that of Carlos Bedia, another friend of St. Martin de Porres Shelter, who died sometime last year.

He was nothing if not persistent, but take a few letters out of the word persistent and you can spell pest. He felt no remorse whatsoever about running up hundreds of dollars in phone bills on the shelter phone, or insisting shelter staff deliver a fresh pair of pants to him at a tavern on the South End when he'd ripped a big hole in the pants he was wearing. John made many, many demands on the people around him, and more often than not they delivered, out of a sense of hope that a difference could be made in his life.

According to Marge Barrett of St. Martin's, John had a heart attack on the street. Everyone thought he was passed-out-drunk, and so passed him by. Finally an off-duty medic happened by and realized it was more than that. John was in Harborview for several weeks, and died in the Branch Villa Nursing Home. He will be remembered, if not missed. None of us ever thought Dumpster John would not be around.

—Michele Marchand, with help from
Rita Peterson and Joan Clough

Carlos was well-known and remembered at St. Martin's, although he'd gotten his own place a few years back. He was born in Cuba, and was very dignified and gentlemanly. He was also quiet—asked nothing of anyone at the shelter, kept his struggles to himself, and finally, quietly arranged for an apartment of his own.

His apartment was across the street from my busstop; I would ride the bus downtown with him every once in a while. Carlos never failed to ask after my health and remind me not to work too hard. He was a thoughtful man.

St. Martin's staff remember him fondly. In particular, people remember him as a devoutly religious person. Carlos had Our Lady of Guadalupe tattooed on his back—all over his back.

Joan Clough, former director of St. Martin's, remembers Carlos as grateful and always kind. She has several gifts from him: one a large cloth butterfly, another a pin with jewels, glass, metal and Jesus who, instead of hanging on a cross, is hanging on the face of a watch. Carlos meant it as a gift of profound meaning—Christ crucified over time. Godspeed, Carlos.

—Michele Marchand

Down on the Sawdust

The Faded Beauty of Seattle's Skid Road

Not enough can be written about Skid Road and the infamous dividing line of this northwestern paradise - the "Deadline" of a city - separating the men from the gentlemen in a shakedown of economics and politics, left Down on the Sawdust.

It begins in the fall of 1852. Forty-two year old Henry J. Yesler steps onto Seattle's shores and walks along a 60 foot bluff (eventually becoming Commercial St. - or 1st Ave). Approached by town founder, Doc. Maynard, Yesler points to the only flat spot in town as a possible site for his sawmill.

Maynard can't resist the economic potential of a mill in town, and convinces his neighbor homesteader, Carson Boren, to re-stake their claims and allow Yesler a waterfront umbrella-shaped piece 450 feet wide, extending up and fanning out to cover the rugged, forested present-day Capital Hill.

Yesler immediately begins logging his property, skidding logs down a 49% graded path - the skid road (now Yesler Way)- to

his mill where he planks them and ships them to booming San Francisco, fetching \$60 per thousand square feet. Seattle now has its first payroll employing whites, as well as natives. In fact, nearly every Seattle pioneer will work for Yesler.

A community grows around the mill - literally - known as Maynardtown, the Lava Beds, the Tenderloin, Down on the Sawdust, and, eventually, the Skid Road. Yesler employs Nel Jacob Ohm, with his wheelbarrow, to spread the mill's sawdust around the muddy tide-flats (now Pioneer Square, the International District, and part of South Seattle) to create real estate. "One day we will be able to drive a wagon all the way from Yesler to Jackson St.!" is the dream. Brothels, saloons, hotels and other businesses spring up on the sawdust, others on stilts, and the neighborhood flourishes. It is the heart of the city where most of Seattle's newcomers live and thrive.

Meanwhile, Yesler's skid road, now called Mill St., is re-graded to 15% and planked in 1879. Once the original dividing line between the claims of Maynard and Boren, it is now the northern boundary of the Skid Road district.

However, the district has its reputation with the land owners up on the hill as "the

"a place for wrestling matches and political rallies or the swapping of yarns."

restricted district" - home to the lower, transient class of "flops."

Yet after the fire of 1889, the citizens declare that "Skid Road" will be a world-class city center. They hire architect Elmer H. Fisher to design homogenous, Late-Victorian solid, brick buildings. It is now the hub of transportation, the focus of commerce, a melting pot of ethnic communities; as well as "a place for wrestling matches and political rallies or the swapping of yarns."

It isn't until after W.W.I that businesses move north of Mill St. (now Yesler Way). The area becomes neglected, depressed, and stigmatized. Police corral transients here and make occasional raids.

Once the location of the birth of a community, and the center of the city for over 50 years, it has become an underground memory, toured from a distance, and nearly forgotten.

—by Chris French

Social Security

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30 years experience

James A. Douglas

Peter H. D. McKee



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PROMOTES SOCIAL JUSTICE FOR ALL PEOPLE BY
ORGANIZING IN THE COMMUNITY ...
"AN INJURY TO ONE IS AN INJURY TO ALL."



Baloney & Wine

I'm 12 years old in 1961
and it's early Saturday morning
and I wake to the familiar smell
of bacon and eggs and toast and grits
and my favorite - fried apples.
Mama calls me to come eat
and she teases me about how late I sleep
and later when I follow
my Daddy out the door
she makes me wear a hat
cause its winter in Virginia.

Me and daddy git in the truck
and he noses it slowly
thru the cold empty streets
of our small Southern town,
past the tall smokestacks
belching black down at the mill.
The bad heater is cranked on hi
but I can still see those
small puffs of his breath
as he talks to me quietly.
He needs to hire a few men
to help us dig a drainage ditch.
So he drives on down to the spot
by the railroad tracks where
the down and out congregate.

There is no word in 1961 for homeless,
except maybe "bum."

Warming their hands
around a fire in a barrel,
young men, old men,
with nicotined lungs
like tenement slums
stand on the corner
after a fine breakfast
of baloney & wine
and they wonder if
they'll work today -
scrub some man's floor,
push a wheelbarrow,
rake some leaves.

It seems to me their talk
drops out of their mouths like
tuff chunks of raw meat,
impossible to chew.
A cloud of cigarette smoke
hangs around them

making them appear
as ethereal as angels.
They hold cups of coffee
like they would hold babies,
cradling them in two hands,
smiling and staring at them
with tired amazement.
Small red cheek veins
crack their faces
like earthquake fissures,
and I wonder,
with my boy's imagination,
will they shatter into dust?

The man I am today knows
what the boy only sense:
as hard and fragile
as a porcelain plate,
in feast or famine,
we face our fate.
30, 40 years later,
these men live in me still.

On a Saturday morning in 1961,
on a cold street corner
down near the tracks,
a young boy watches
as a man listens to
the mindless jingle of
keys and pocket change,
as a man enjoys the warmth
from a fire in a barrel,
as a man stands still,
accommodating his arthritis,
as a man savors the taste
of baloney & wine
on his tongue and palate.

Yesterday and tomorrow
surround them like
rows of tombstones.

And when my Daddy hails them?-
calling all of them
by the generic name "John"?-
they politely git in
the back of our truck,
and he chauffeurs them
to the ditch that
30, 40 years later,
they, and I,
still dig.

—Todd Steven Davis

**Dawn of the Living Dead,
Seattle, March 18, 1996**

Above gray stone
dawn glows
distantly

Faces close
in on anger

Faces close
down on pain

Faces
close

staring out the windows of the high-rise offices
staring at the table in the homeless missions

Faking it

Faking it

Faking their deaths

—Anitra Freeman

In a Hilltop Alleyway

In a Hilltop alley-way,
Sunflowers and tomato plants
bring pride
to fenced-in yards
with cowering dogs.
Untouched by Heroin
pimps,
pink trees
trampled by children
fill their dreams
with seeds.
I hope to plant radishes.
Pushing my palms into dirt,
plotted serenity—
three feet by four.

—Jude Rosowski

Random Graffito

what scares me the most is
That NOTHING happens!
They are ready
for DISTURBANCES.
They have machine guns
and soldiers
But this SMILING SILENCE
is uncanny.
The business men
Don't understand
That sort of weapon.
It is your SMILE
That is upsetting
Their reliance

On artillery, brother!
It is the garbage wagons
That go along the street
Marked EXEMPT
by STRIKE COMMITTEE
It is the milk wagons
that are getting better daily,
And the three hundred
WAR Veterans of Labor
Handling the crowds
WITHOUT GUNS
For these things speak
Of a NEW POWER
And a NEW WORLD
That they do not feel
At HOME in.

—from the SEATTLE GENERAL STRIKE
[taken from a note on the wall—Black Cat Cafe
10-24-96]

Morning Designs

Ducks fly across the water,
pick up rattles by on gravel road
coyote's bark cuts along the foothills.

Spider webs quietly lash rocks,
cling to April grass
and the morning.

I listen to the stream, draw a design
on the dusty dashboard and pawprints
darken the earth.

—Earle Thompson

Untitled

Our chances are bright broken
toys upon the sidewalk
shining in the filthy yellow
of the setting sun.
Insubstantial,
gray as smog they flap
disconsolate as sheets
on the line.
They lap listlessly as a skinny dog
at a puddle, swallowed
as coins in a machine
anonymous, untraceable.

—Elizabeth Romero

Time

The clock
Takes its OWN time

Now s-l-o-w
Now fast

Who SAID
Minutes/are/equal?

(...NOTHING is EQUAL...)

—Marion Sue Fischer

Welfare Reform

CHILDREN are
the FIRST casualties

and

MOTHERS will
find ANGER
and COURAGE

they
never
knew...

with

NOTHING/MORE/TO/LOSE

—Marion Sue Fischer

Bonding

Her deep brown eyes plead,
Silently.
Reflecting her home of alleys
And damp streets.
The curvature of her body,
Spoke of another's abode,
Yet unborn.
Awaiting physical life,
Amidst an environment
Of strife.
Seeing her depth of need,
I offer my hand and heart...
Smiling shyly, she grasps both,
With shuddering relief.
We walk down the street,
In search of a phone,
And something to eat.
The three of us knowing,
We're no longer alone.

—Janette Moening

The Wanderer

She walked alone,
Within the night.

Finding the lake,
She washed her
long, silken legs,
And hair that
Tumbled to her waist.

Though cold,
She was glad
To be clean.
And feeling refreshed,
She slept...

Beneath a silent
Tree that
Had no eyes.

Tomorrow,
She would go
To the shelter.
And feed
Her slender
Frame.

But now sleep
Owned her,
And she gave
Into her dreams.

—Janette L. Moening

Untitled

Only a few remained
wandering aimlessly about

In this obvious dissolution of order
We were uncertain of what to do next

The war was over
We lost
They lost
It was all lost

No longer enemies
We could not look into each other's eyes

The smoke cleared and the fires died down
The last shrieking siren
Groaned and fell silent

It was all over but the waiting

—Sally Johnson

Seattle

Waiting for the bus, a woman remarks, "Before
in Oklahoma, I believed I'd become accustomed
to the rain. Sometimes I still wish for long summer
nights and fireflies in the evening.

"Funny I can remember nights
fireflies creating a universe
under a blackoak and I,
in a poem, wrote of it," I reply.

She nods, under a carapace of metal
and dulled plexi-glass,
Rolling wheels disrupt dark puddles
where raindrops, lit by amber streetlights,
briefly create illuminated concentric circles;
We huddle, watching them disappear.

—Earle Thompson

LETTERS, CONT. FROM PAGE 3

I buy *Real Change* every month. No
more. Helping the homeless is one thing;
destroying nature, another.

Barbara Birnbaum
Seattle

*Note from the Editor: You were one of several
people who either wrote, called, or complained
to our vendors about this sentence. Real
Change does not advocate the destruction of
nature. Sally's "mean trees" were a reference to
the spiked shrubs planted about the municipal
building as a means of preventing the homeless
from sleeping on city grounds. This was
unclear in the article, and we apologize that
we seemed to generally have it in for local
flora.*

*It is interesting that this one, rather
offhand, remark has generated more angry
letters than anything else we've ever written.*

*I'm reminded of "treeman," a homeless
man who dogged a pro-environment, anti-
poor candidate at the Democratic Convention
this year. Garbed in a tree suit, he wore a sign
around his neck saying, "Would you care for
me if I were a tree."*

Dear *Real Change*,

When people read about the homeless
or homeless or poor people or the disabled
or the unemployed they make an image in
their mind, a negative stereotyped image.
Homeless people is an abstract term and
creates an image of people who are homeless
because they are mentally ill and nothing
anyone could do would help them anyway;
unemployed because they are too lazy to
work; poor because they are not willing to

Catherine Ketrick
Seattle

Dear *Real Change*,
Enclosed please
find an article
clipped out of the
latest edition of
Real Change
[Statement by
SHARE following
the 1996 Queen
Anne mudslide]. I
have also enclosed
an article from the
January 7, 1996
edition of the Post-
Intelligencer [City
Council OKs \$336
million for M's
Ballpark].

The reason I've

work hard and make something of them-
selves like we did. We make these images
because we don't know individual people's
stories.

So here is my proposal. Stop writing
about the homeless, homelessness, homeless
people, the hungry, the unemployed.
Instead write about people who don't have a
place to live, people who don't have any
money, people who don't have any food and
people who don't have a job. Yeah, I know,
it takes a lot more type space, but try out
the two images in your mind: the homeless
versus people who don't have any place to
live; the hungry versus people who don't
have any food. I know which one I think is
more powerful.

done this is to show the difference of
opinion between your organization and that
of the general public. If they can raise \$414
million so the fat cats can kick back their
overstuffed seats with their hands full of hot
dogs and soda pop while they enjoy adult
games, why can't they do the same to build
a commune out in the country somewhere
for the homeless?

To me this is a shame and it shows me
just how much our local councils and
county voters don't care about the homeless
problem.

James N. Kohl
Seattle

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- Abortion, Birth Control, Reproductive Health Care for Women
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- Feminist Environment

Cedar River Clinic, Renton - 206-255-0471
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509-575-6422/800-572-4223

WAIRJ

The Washington Alliance for Immigrant and Refugee
Justice proudly presents its 1997 annual conference:

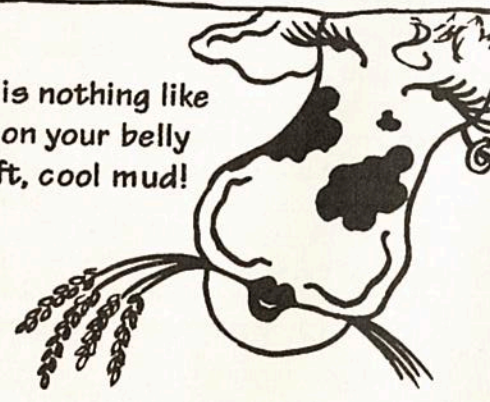
**IMMIGRANT RIGHTS:
NEW ALLIES, NEW STRATEGIES**
Saturday, Feb. 15, 1997
North Seattle Community College

KEYNOTE: MARIA JIMENEZ
American Friends Service Center
Immigration Law Enforcement Monitoring Project
Houston, TX

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Services, The Labor Center at The Evergreen State
College, The Northwest Immigrant Rights Project, The
Social Sciences Division at North Seattle Community
College, The Washington Association of Churches,
and The Washington Welfare Reform Coalition.

There is nothing like
lying on your belly
in soft, cool mud!



Graze at Mae's
65th & Phinney 782-1222



Die, PC Wimps!

The controversy over hygiene centers is still raging. As always there are people working hard trying to break down stereotypes about the homeless. It seems like everyone wants to tell you it's wrong to stereotype, that you should see people as they really are.

I say they're all a bunch of PC wimps! Stereotyping is great! It's fun, it's creative, and educational too. The only thing wrong with the stereotyping I hear about the homeless is that it's mostly dull and unimaginative. Let me show you how it's REALLY done.

Something Needs To Be Done About Those people

by (c) Dr. Wes Browning

Something needs to be done about those people.
Everyone knows it.
Look at how they whisper as they pass.

Always something to hide.
Riding in cars with tinted glass.
Buying land out of sight.
If they're not drunks they deal drugs.
If they're not muggers they're murderers.
Like that guy that killed and buried those kids
in his basement.

You know the kind I'm talking about.
They don't hide behind those walls just to stay warm.
You read it every day how they beat their own children.
Something needs to be done about those people.
Like that cannibal guy that tortured and raped and ate those boys

Disgusting.
They're all like that. They're all trouble.

Always something to hide.
Their crimes are in every paper.
The alleged Oklahoma Bomber, the woman who drowned her two sons,
the Lynnwood mutilator, are all just typical examples.
Everyone of them's a criminal of some kind.

Always something to hide.
Why else would they live like that?
In houses, apartments, behind walls.

Something needs to be done.
Those homeless people have really gotten out of hand.

Wasn't that instructive? Try it yourself, pick out a bunch of people that almost never get stereotyped, like stereotypers themselves, or satirists, or people who eat peanut butter. Make up your own brand new original stereotype for them. It's fun and you'll be amazed by what you learn in the process.

You can stereotype individuals, too, only then it isn't usually called that. It's called caricature, a respected traditional art, especially in its graphic form. An illustration appears at the top of this column, a rendering by my own hand of myself as a carrot. There is nothing wrong with me for doing that. I am not in reality a carrot, I have merely portrayed myself as one in a drawing.

Speaking of caricature and hygiene centers, what's the deal now with our Mayor? He wants to block the building of hygiene centers at BOTH the Glen Hotel AND 9th and Lenora? Where are we supposed to build them, in his office? Is Norm Rice asking for it? Now that I have a whole page to fill I am going to assume the answer is, thankfully, yes!

Thank you, Mayor Rice!

by (c) Dr. Wes Browning

The Deadline looms before my pen,
that time of month's come round again.
Today it's worse than 'twere before,
they made my column this much more:
I got to write ten lines more rhyme
then any other preev-yus time.
I just about gave up the chore
When Norm came through for me once more!
He says he's for a hygiene place
as long as it won't take up space.
"That's been the problem all around.
Those people always use up ground-
If only we could shrink them small
to fit inside a box so tall,
[he gestures low to show us all]
I'd put them in my entrance hall!"*
Why Thank You very much Norm Rice
As always helpful, kind, and nice.
[* Not an actual quote from our Mayor. This is caricature!]

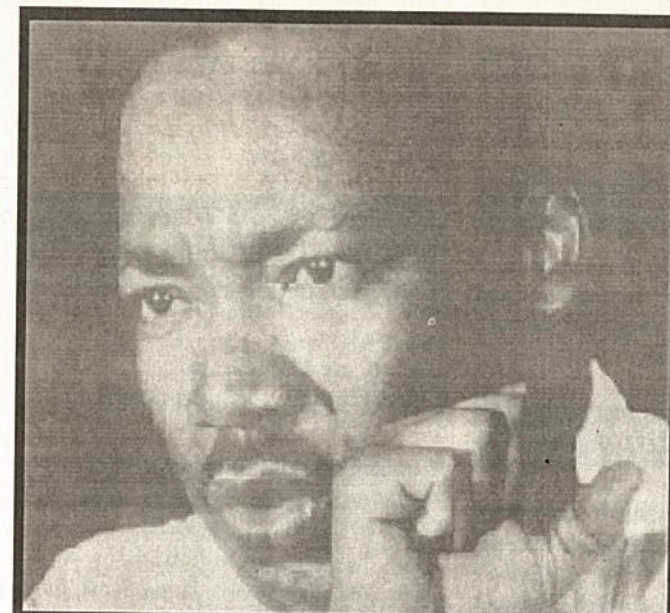
Visit (c) Dr. Wes Browning at
<http://www.speakeasy.org/wes>

FEBRUARY

FEBRUARY 2

Peace between People, Seattle, and Center for Nonviolent Communication, San Diego, present "Compassionate (Nonviolent) Communication," with Marcelline Brogli, M.A., M.F.C.C., learn Dr. Marshall Rosenberg's four steps of Compassionate Communication, make work, meetings, and family communication more enjoyable and productive. 10 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. introduction, 1:30 - 5 p.m. practice, Covenant House, 4525 19th Ave NE, suggested contribution \$25 - 50, info and RSVP 323-3082.

"Shattering the Silences: Minority Professors Break Into the Ivory Tower." A surprising and provocative look at the success and distress of minority scholars in the humanities and social sciences in universities from Seattle to New York. 10:30 a.m., Channel 9, (check listings) PBS program.



February is Black History Month

FEBRUARY 3

Diversity Business Connection, sponsored by KSER-FM, the City of Bellevue Parks and Community Services Department Cultural Diversity Program, and the Snohomish County Diversity Coalition. 4:30 - 5:30 p.m., KSER 90.7 FM radio. For more info, call Heather Thompson at 637-7922 or 637-6109.

FEBRUARY 4

"What do we do when the money runs out?" Welfare reform and changes in other federal programs: Washington State Sex Equity, Teen Parent, Single Parent, and Displaced Homemaker Conference and Carl Perkins Bidders' Meeting. \$50 registration fee includes lunches. Edmonds Community College, Triton Student Union 201 and 202, For registration and info call NW Center for Equity and Diversity at Edmonds Community College, 640-1085 or 640-1029.

Meeting of Citizens for Overt Action, Educating the public about the threat to democracy here and abroad by covert action, told us about the CIA-Crack connec-

tion a decade before the San Jose Mercury report came out. 7 p.m., Upstairs at 4759 15th Ave NE. For more information call 547-7735.

FEBRUARY 5

American Friends Service Committee presents Gideon Spiro, Israeli Anti-Nuclear Activist, on new hopes of abolishing nuclear weapons in light of the Jan '97 Abolition 2000 conference in Tahiti and the strong anti-nuclear statements being made by military leaders throughout the world. Abolition 2000 is an international network of over 650 citizens groups seeking to have a treaty by the year 2000 to eliminate nuclear weapons. 7:30 p.m., University Friends Center, 4001 9th Ave NE, For more information call Elwyn Clements at 632-0500.

FEBRUARY 6

2nd Annual International Day of Solidarity, March and Rally for Justice for imprisoned Native American Activist, Leonard Peltier, 4 p.m. march, 5 p.m. rally at United States Federal Courthouse, 1717 Pacific, marking 21 years of imprisonment, support Campaign for Executive Clemency and Congressional hearings. Features diverse speakers and musicians. March starts at Fireman's Park, 7th & Pacific, downtown Tacoma. For more information call (206)383-9108.

Robert Hoyt and Casey Neill, environmental-folk musicians, in a benefit concert for the Washington Clearcut Ban Initiative. Suggested admission \$10 - 15, no one turned away. 7 pm, University Baptist Church, 4554 12th Ave NE. For more information call 632-2954 or 632-1656.



FEBRUARY 6

Radical Women general meeting, Dinner at 6:30 for \$6, 7:30 p.m. meeting, New Freeway Hall, 5018 Rainier Ave S., For more info call 722-6057 or 722-2453.

FEBRUARY 7

Feminist Round Table Discussion of "Cities and the Wealth of Nations" by Jane Jacobs. 7 p.m., call for location and info, Melissa Devnich 726-8109.

FEBRUARY 8

Seattle Peace Chorus, Adefua African Music and Dance Company, and storyteller Flor Fernandez Barrios present "Mother of Us All", inspiring us to remember our bonds to the Earth and to one another. \$8 - 12, 8 p.m., Seattle Unity Church, 200 8th N., For more information call 525-9743.

FEBRUARY 9

Seattle Women Act for Peace presents "Building Peaceful Communities," a Sunday brunch and video series, showing "Nukes in Space", a powerful video documentary with Food for the Heart, Mind and Soul. Enjoy a home cooked breakfast, meet new friends and community activists and reconnect with old friends. Relax, sit back and watch an entertaining and educational video and reaffirm your commitment to build a peaceful and sustainable world! 11:30 a.m., 5411 Ravenna Ave NE, call for information and carpooling 329-3666.

Free video showing of "Broken Rainbow," award winning documentary detailing background of U.S. government manufactured "Hopi-Navaho Land Dispute", created to allow removal of traditional people from a coal rich area, discussion of how to "Stop The Forced Relocation of Traditional Dine from Big Mountain," relocation set to begin April 1, 1997. 7 p.m., Black Cat Cafe, 4110 Roosevelt NE, For more information call Support for Native Sovereignty at 525-5086.

General Organizing Meeting of the

FEBRUARY 10

Washington Welfare Reform Coalition, CAMP, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m., 722 18th at Cherry, For more information call Aiko Schaefer at 727-0375.

FEBRUARY 11

Olympia, Puget Sound Council of Senior Citizens Lobby Day, leave from Seattle Labor Temple 8:30 a.m., 2800 First Ave in Belltown, or meet in Olympia, For more information call (Seattle) 448-9646.

Conference "WOMEN OF WISDOM: Weaving Our Tapestries, Sharing Our Stories," lectures, performances, workshops, keynote presentations by Angela Davis, Joan Borysenko, Jamie Sams, Judith Cornell, and many Northwest women leaders. Feb. 11- Feb. 17, Seattle Unity Church, For brochure and info call 622-8745 ext.135.

Campus Radical Women presents a Feminist Discussion series, topic "STAND UP TO BIGOTRY: It Is Everybody's Business", a representative from United Front Against Fascism will talk. 12:30 - 1:30 p.m., University of Washington, room TBA, for more information call 722-6057 or 722-2453.

FEBRUARY 12

Boeing Retirees on the Line Seattle, Boeing Hourly, General Office and Salaried Retirees: Protect what you worked for! Plan how Retirees can obtain COLA at last. Feb. 12 and subsequent second Wednesdays, 751 I AM District Headquarters, 9125 15th Pl S. (an interpreter for the hearing impaired will attend) For more information, hnoble@eskimo.com or Jackie Terrell 938-0163.

"Town Meeting" with guest speakers, panel discussion and Q & A session, on "Issues Facing the Asian Community" with topics: racism, employment, youth violence and crime, and immigration. 12:30 - 2:30 p.m., Crossroads Community Center, 16000 NE 10th, Bellevue, For reservations call 455-6884, info 637-6109.

Democratic Education Enhancement Project presents a program on The Clearwater School opening in fall 1997 for students ages 4 to 19. It is a Democratic school, based on the model of the 29-year-old Sudbury Valley School in Framingham, MA. In it students and adults have an equal vote in the school's democratic process. 7 p.m., University of Washington, room TBA. Free, but please RSVP cel@halcyon.com or Bob Howard, Center for Ethical Leadership 328-3020.

FEBRUARY 13

Feminist Research Forum, an informal presentation and discussion, series "Contemporary Issues of First Nations Women," featuring Pamela Creasy-Neel, Kwakiutl, Department of Anthropology, "Considering Boas: A Kwakiutl Woman's Perspective." 3:30 - 4:30 p.m., University of Washington, Cunningham Hall Conference Room, Free and open to all, For information call 543-9531 or email nwcrow@u.washington.edu or web http://weber.u.washington.edu/~nwcrow/ for disability accommodations, ten days in advance 543-6450 (voice), 543-6452 (TDD).

Earth Save monthly vegetarian potluck and educational program. Organization works to educate about the effects of our food choices on the environment and our health. Bring your own dishes and utensils and label potluck dish ingredients. 6:30 p.m., call for location and information at 781-6602.

FEBRUARY 14

Welfare Reform Coalition Lobby Day to Get Welfare Reform with Justice on the state level, counteract inhumane federal budget cuts. Olympia, Rally at 11 a.m., March at 12 noon, Carpool from Seattle meeting at Catholic Community Services, 9 a.m., 23rd 7 yesler. For more information call Aiko Schaefer at 727-0375 or Juan Jose Bocanegra at 461-3865.

FEBRUARY 15

Washington Alliance for Immigrant and Refugee Justice 1997 Annual Conferences, "Immigrant Rights: New Allies, New Strategies," presentations and workshops on new immigration laws, the labor movement, theatre as activism, communities of faith, political advocacy. 9 a.m. - 6 p.m., North Seattle Community College, registration \$15 -25 before Jan 24, \$20 - 30 later, includes lunch. For more information on registration and info Soya 587-4009 ext. 43.

University Friends Meeting, Alternatives to Violence Project presents a one-day Workshop, "I Statements" facilitated by Kurt van Fuchs, and others, clarification of Construction of "I" Statements, and practice of Active Listening; organization conducts Nonviolent Conflict Resolution workshops in the community, schools, and prisons. 9:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m., 4001 9th Ave NE, \$35, limited scholarships available, preregistration required. For more information call Peace Between People 323-3082.

FEBRUARY 16

Fundraiser for the tenants' education and advocacy group the Tenants Union, a Float Trip down the Skagit River to view the Eagles, gourmet lunch. For more information call Lisa Herbold at Tenants Union, 722-6848 ext.103.

Seattle Chapter Fellowship of Reconciliation monthly meeting, featuring Bert Sacks on his recent participation in a Listening Project, "Compassionate Listening: Hearing the Voices of Palestinians and Israelis." 5 p.m. potluck, 6 p.m. short business meeting and announcements, 6:30 program, 225 North 70th near Greenwood, For more information call 789-5565.

FEBRUARY 21

Alternatives to Violence Project Workshop, an experiential workshop in nonviolent conflict resolution, \$20 advance registration fee plus sliding \$20 to \$200 workshop fee, organization conducts workshops in the community, schools, and

prisons, participants become eligible for May 2 - 4 Advanced and June 27 - 29 Training for Trainers workshops. 6 - 9:30 p.m. Fri & 8 a.m. - 6 p.m. Sat & Sun, Pacific Lutheran University, Tacoma, For more information call (Seattle) Peace Between People (206)323-3082.

FEBRUARY 22

Tibetan Rights Campaign annual Losar Dinner Celebration, Tibetan New Years. Tibetan dinner, dances, song, auction, benefits Tibetan Rights Campaign. Advance \$8 - 20, tickets available Elliott Bay Books, Wide World Books, etc., Scottish Rite Temple, 1155 Broadway E. 6:30 p.m., For more information call 547-1015.

Radical Women and Freedom Socialist Party co-sponsor a Black History Month Celebration with Award Winning Documentary "Freedom on my Mind," the dramatic story of sharecroppers and young civil rights organizers. Door donation \$3.50, dinner at 6:30 for \$8, All welcome, 8 p.m., New Freeway Hall, 5018 Rainier Ave S. For more information call 722-6057 or 722-2453.

FEBRUARY 24

National Organization for Women lobby day, State Capitol Building, Olympia, For more general information call 632-8547. For information on carpooling call Marianne at 543-6511.

FEBRUARY 26

Center for Ethical Leadership presents a Good City Luncheon with speaker John Stanford, Superintendent of School, Seattle School District, on "Democracy, Education, and the Good City." \$25, 12 - 1:30 p.m., Campion Ballroom, Seattle University. To reserve space send payment to Center for Ethical Leadership, Attn: Luncheon, 464 12th Avenue #320, Seattle, WA 98122, info Bob Howard 328-3020 or cel@halcyon.com.

ONGOING

Hygiene Center
Call the City Council 684-8888. Urge Health Committee members Cheryl Chow (684-8804), Tina Podladowski (684-8808), Charlie Chong (684-8805), and President Jan Drago (684-8801) to support LIHI's compromise plan, TOILETS AND SINKS FOR HOMELESS PEOPLE and all members of the public at the Glen Hotel, & a complete hygiene center at 9th & Lenora! If that costs too much, go back to the original plan, full services at the Glen! voting Weds Jan 22, call ASAP (see Jan 21 noon event)

Tenants' Rights
Call your State Legislators at Legislative hotline 1-800-562-6000 (they can leave the messages even if you don't know your Legislators' names), and tell your Representatives to vote against HB 1043 and your Senator to vote against SB5091, which would repeal and prevent TENANTS' RIGHTS LAWS by cities and counties throughout the state!, info Lisa Herbold, Tenants Union, 722-6848 x103

Westlake Park
Call Seattle City Council member, Sue Donaldson 684-8806, Chair of the Parks Committee, please phone before Council meeting on Feb 24, tell her you oppose privatization of our downtown park, Westlake Park, at 4th & Pine. A private group the Westlake Park Management Company formed by the Downtown Business association wants to take over, which could restrict public access for demonstrations, socializing, and just sitting on benches, they even want to take away the benches, info Diane 726-0864.

Labor
Boycott Gallo and Mondavi wines to support the United Farm Workers union, local info 443-7645

Women
Planning meetings for International Women's Day celebration, Theme "If I Had a Hammer ...", calling for the greatest possible participation by women of all sorts to represent the diversity of our community. 7:30 - 9 a.m., Thursdays, Elliott Bay Bookstore Cafe, 1st Ave s at S Main, info Lexie Evans 587-3890 or Louise Chernin 632-8547.

Legislature Looks at Welfare ... Again

Washington's Legislature began its 105 day session on January 13. This year, we have a new Governor, Gary Locke, and the Republicans in majority of both the House and the Senate. In August, 1996, the President signed the welfare restructuring bill into law. Among other things, the new bill lets the states decide on welfare program without federal oversight or protection. However, states must follow federal restrictions, such as a five year lifetime limit and restrictions on access to education and training.

Current state law

Current state law says that if you have been on assistance for four of the last five years, your grant will be reduced by 10% at the beginning of the fifth year and another 10% each year thereafter. The newspapers make us want to think that someone can stay on 14 years. What they forget is that the old AFDC laws supported a child until he or she was 18. They also forget that most parents leave assistance within 2-3 years.

Current state law also counts English as a second language, basic education, high school completion, skill training and education programs for two years as work activities. The new federal bill limits the number of people in an education program, the length of skill training to one year, and does not count basic education or ESL as work related activities.

Governor's plan

On January 9th, before he left office, Gov. Lowry submitted a plan to the federal government that makes our current state law the state's new welfare program. He does follow the federal five year limit, but he proposes a state only program that will support people who need more education or training than the five years allows.

The Governor's budget replaces most of the dollars lost in food and nutrition programs, including setting up a state food stamp program for immigrants who lose their food stamps. He also funds the General Assistance Program for elderly and disabled immigrants who will lose their Social Security Incapacity benefits.

State House Bill

Rep. Suzette Cooke, (R. 47th District) submitted a welfare bill in early December. She, too, follows the federal five year lifetime limit. She also follows the federal limited exemptions. The bill puts the priority on getting a job, any job, regardless of whether that job will support the family.

Since 1987, our state has recognized that low income parents might not have the skills to compete for jobs that would support a family. Our state has supported skill training and education. Cooke's bill appears to limit access to education and training.

However, the bill does some good things. It increases the value of the car from \$1500 to \$5000, and the resource limit from \$1000 to \$3000. She also provides for universal child care, combining the Transitional Child Care with Employment Child Care, making the programs more similar in their eligibility and co-payments. The bill does not address the problem of limited access to health care because of the freeze in the Basic Health Plan.

The bill also requires parents to sign a contract on what they will do to find work. However, it does not address the need to create more jobs in order for these parents to find work.

Senate plans

We have not yet seen any bill from the Senate, but we have heard some encouraging statements. Sen. Alex Deccio from Yakima supports covering immigrants who lose their federal benefits. He also understands that, in most of the state, there aren't enough jobs for all the parents who are required to find one.

What to do

WROC has a packet of information about a reasonable welfare proposal that you can use in your church, your community college, with your friends. Please call or write us for the information and then let us know what you are doing. (206) 324-3064. WROC, 2212 S. Jackson, Seattle, WA 98144

—Reprinted from the WROC Newsletter

Real
CHANGE
2129 2nd Avenue
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