

OCT 18 1999

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OCT. 15, 1999

Real CHANGE

VOL. 6, NO. 20, OCT. 15, 1999

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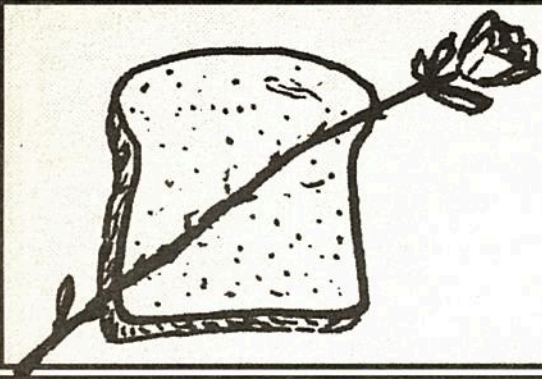
SCARY MONSTERS

SUPERCREEPS IN SEATTLE

News,
Poetry,
Stuff that
Matters

- Tag n' Trak Must Go
- WTO Ruckus Raising
- Mauling Rainier Valley
- The Billy Biff Theory

Puget Sound's Newspaper of the Poor and Homeless



Real CHANGE

*Puget Sound's
Newspaper of the Poor
and Homeless*

2129 2nd Ave., Seattle, WA 98121 (206) 441-3247 www.realchangenews.org rchange@speakeasy.org



THE VIEW FROM THE TOP. PHOTO BY DANIEL CAPLAN

The Mauling of Rainier Valley

Is Rainier Valley's redevelopment a boon or a boondoggle?

BY ADAM HOLDORF

Next time you go down to the Rainier Valley, walk up onto the pedestrian overpass next to Franklin High, at the crossroads of Martin Luther King Jr. Way and Rainier Avenue South. This is what you'll see from a train window six years from now, as you roar south over an elevated track toward the airport before touching down in the middle of MLK.

This top-down view is how Sound Transit, Southeast Effective Development, and the Seattle Housing Authority look at the valley already.

Sound Transit's light rail line would raze the entire intersection and expel many of the businesses that have clung to this auto-addled corner for years. Down the street, Southeast Effective Development would attract chain stores to a new shopping center at Rainier Avenue and Charlestown Street. Further along, SHA would rebuild the Rainier Vista housing project and sell hundreds of houses to middle-class buyers.

A train, a new neighborhood, and a new shopping mall are coming to the Rainier Valley, all

thanks to more than half a billion dollars in federal money — one of the largest public investments in any one Seattle neighborhood in decades. It's the kind of boon the three agencies say the Rainier Valley has missed for too long. City politicians celebrate its arrival. At a public meeting last month in Columbia City, Deputy Mayor Tom Byers crowed that "Success is assured. The broad outlines of the future of the valley are here, but the details have yet to be worked out."

"Over the years, with all the drugs and crime, we stayed. Now those things are

gone and we're supposed to be gone, too."
Vivian Sung,
Rainier Valley small
business owner

Details like: what happens to the people who live and do business down here now?

Long time coming

Luong Du owns a strip of blacktop-fronted property on MLK just south of the pedestrian overpass, where he runs Tuyet Hanh, a clothing store. Next door, printer Kim Pham edits the 10-year-old *Vietnamese Weekly News*, which distributes papers across the state. Pham and Du are part of the Vietnamese merchant corps that set up business in the Rainier

Valley when property was cheap. Their customers come by the hundreds to one of the seven Buddhist

Continued to page 5

It's Just a Step to the Left ...

An interview with Curt Firestone

BY KRISTEN BLUM

Seattle City Council candidate Curt Firestone pulls up for the interview in his modest small car with the red "Curt Firestone" posters glaring from each window. Firestone, though, seems unassuming, an ordinary guy who is here for an interview. He doesn't shake hands or pass out literature in the cafe where we meet, but he does wear a Curt Firestone nametag.

Firestone is 58 years old. After living in California and then traveling around the world, Firestone settled in Seattle in 1986 and established a business as a tax consultant. This profession, he says, allows him to devote time to one of his passions—politics. He helped form the Seattle Progressive Coalition and is the Coalition's candidate for City Council.

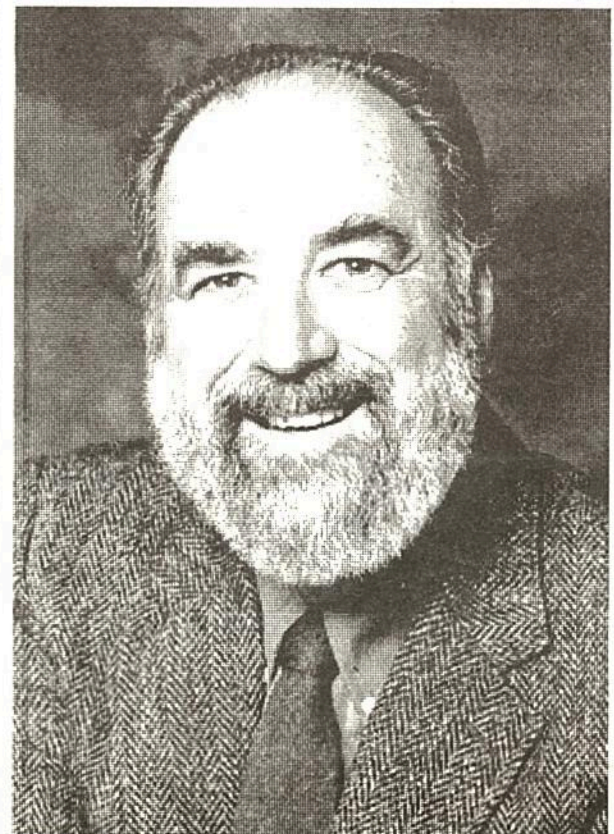
REAL CHANGE: Why are you interested in politics?

FIRESTONE: The basic premise I value is that part of living in the society is contributing to the society, and if you aren't making contributions to it then you're being very greedy, and it's important to make contributions and help improve it (society)... I've always been interested in electoral politics and have been involved in electoral politics off and on for a long time in my life. Even as a young child, I was into it.

RC: What has been your experience with electoral politics?

FIRESTONE: I've worked on campaigns. This is the first time I've ever run for public office myself. I've always been the person helping out. After I was in San Francisco, I spent six years in Mendocino County... And while I was there, I worked with

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Real CHANGE

Puget Sound's Voice of the Poor and Homeless

Real Change is published the first and fifteenth of each month and is sold by the poor and homeless of Seattle. Annual subscriptions are available for \$35. All material is copyrighted to the authors.

Submissions are encouraged and should be mailed to "Real Change," 2129 2nd Ave., Seattle, WA 98121. Tel. (206) 441-3247.

On the Web at
http://www.realchangenews.org
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ISSN 1085-729X

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

Mission Statements:

Real Change organizes, educates, and builds alliances to find community-based solutions to homelessness and poverty.

Goals

Provide a foundation for grassroots organizing.

Publish the views of marginalized communities.

Create direct economic opportunity.

Build bridges with a broad range of allies in the struggle against poverty.

The Real Change Homeless Empowerment Project is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that sponsors the StreetLife Gallery, StreetWrites, and the Homeless Speakers Bureau. The RCHEP raises the voices of the poor by supporting cultural, artistic, and literary expression to place a human face on homelessness and poverty. All donations to the RCHEP support these programs and are tax-deductible to the full extent of the law.

Editorial Policy

Articles appearing in Real Change reflect the opinions and perspectives of the authors. We encourage the submission of journalism, opinion, fiction, poetry, and artwork, and hope to create a forum where the many perspectives on 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.

MAILBAG

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

Gulag Americano

Dear Real Change,

Although crime rates have been stable or falling since the 1970s, prisons take a larger portion of our tax dollars every year, reducing the funds available for schools, roads, and other vital public services.

This is no surprise given that the percentage of our citizens in prisons has approximately tripled both in Washington and nationwide since 1980. We now have five times as many of our citizens in prison as Canada (which has comparable crime rates except for murder by gun) and seven times as many as most European countries.

Of course all of us want public safety, but we need to find ways to achieve it that are cost effective. For example, studies have repeatedly shown that greater public safety is achieved per dollar spent on community placement, treatment, and prevention programs. This is particularly true for non-violent offenders, who now make up more than a third of our prison populations.

We often hear our elected officials posturing about being tough on crime. Since these are often the very same ones in favor of smaller government, why don't they start discussing ways to save money by substantially reducing our reliance on prisons?

Jonathan W. Brown
Seattle

Free Briseus!

Dear Perfess'r Harris,

Classics Corner is a great new column! One small cavil, though, about your characterization of Briseus as Achilles' new girlfriend. The word "girlfriend" implies a relationship of mutuality and, ideally, equality between two people. Briseus' and Achilles' thang was no such thing. She was a concubine, a sex slave whom Achilles "won" when he and Agamemnon & Company conquered a town on the way to Troy.

The Iliad teaches us (among other things) that ethnic cleansing has a long pedigree. Maybe a few centuries hence some Balkan bard will articulate an epic on the theme of warlike Milosevic's tragic valor and godlike self-absorption.

Keep up the good work!

John Shaw,
Seattle

The Perfess'r replies: Quite right. I was being characteristically glib. The gender equality you describe was largely absent from the world of Homer. Even Penelope, that paragon of virtuous womanhood, seemed a distant concern to Odysseus in comparison to his house, land, and cattle. Clytemnestra, the assassin of Agamemnon, of course represents the famil-

iar Eve-archetype of the fallen woman who smears her entire gender. And then there's Helen, who knew all about teflon long before Reagan brought this non-stick substance into our political vocabulary. As for your other point, we needn't go all the way to the Balkans to find contemporary genocidal mythology. Witness Columbus, Custer, Colin Powell, et al.

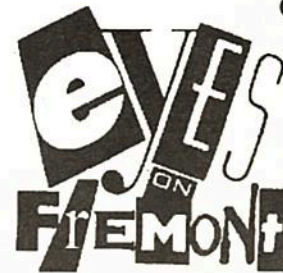
We Write Good

Dear Real Change,

I just wanted to tell you how much I enjoy the poetry in Real Change. In this last issue, the poem entitled "The Church in the Basement" (C.D. Runyon) was terrific. Really good writing.

Diana Smith
Seattle

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Tag n' Trak

Safe Harbors resolution a very flawed blueprint for action

The best we can say about Safe Harbors, the city council's blue print for action on homelessness, is that they probably meant well. Councilmember Steinbrueck, responding to the grassroots concerns of Seattle's homeless, started out to address the number one and most obvious problem we have: where do the rest of us go after the shelters are full? If public camping is not allowed, then what is?

Timothy Harris

But somewhere along the road to consensus, Safe Harbors lost its way. The document that remains offers neither safety nor harbor. Instead, we are presented with a vaguely worded testament to good intentions that offers precious few new resources.

In a rare departure for our normally process-happy city council, Safe Harbors ran toward a final vote like a scared greased pig. No one we know saw the plan until after it passed through committee. An a matter of days, Safe Harbors passed the full council unanimously. There was no opportunity for public comment. While the plan refers to a number of "human services groups" that were consulted, these are mostly city agencies, city-sponsored groups, and, oddly, the Downtown Seattle Association. We were blindsided.

While Safe Harbors does offer an immediate, albeit nonquantified, commitment to expanding emergency winter shelter, and works to better coordinate existing services, the plan presents as many problems as it

purports to solve. The problems are not very hard to find or describe.

Where is the Safe Harbor?

Safe Harbors has very little money behind it, and the funds that are provided are spent in the wrong places. It is a hard, stubborn fact that Seattle has about 2,500 shelter beds for 5,500 homeless people. Even these are inadequately funded. Adding a few hundred beds for the winter months is cold comfort to those who lose the nightly lottery. Shelters for women and children have the highest turn-away rate of all. Addicts looking for treatment must wait for months to begin, and are forced to jump numerous weed-out hurdles in the process. The city's plan may do a better job of coordinating inadequate resources, but without new commitments, they will remain inadequate resources.

The plan simply ignores the reality that sleeping outside is dangerous. The prospect would seriously frighten any one of us, and with good reason. Yet, it appears to be good enough for the homeless. Safe Harbors pays lip service to decency by collecting data on crimes against the homeless to see if "additional policies" are needed. People have been stabbed, burned, shot, run over, and kicked to death while sleeping out. Honestly, how much data does the city need?

Operation Nightwatch is where those hoping for a mat on a floor sometimes turn after the shelters close. Nightwatch identifies the vacancies, and is usually able to get another 35 or so people into shelter for the night by filling every last bed. I

asked their Director, Rev. Rick Reynolds, about winter plans. "We ordered 2,000 blankets," he said. "They won't last long."

Safe Harbors looks a lot like a complex rationalization for holding the line against new year-round shelter.

Tag n' Trak is exclusionary

The centerpiece of Safe Harbors is a city-wide computer database that monitors what services individual homeless people use. I find that "Safe Harbors" poorly conveys the essence of this initiative. I prefer to call the monitoring system Tag n' Trak.

Anyone who actually works with homeless people can tell you that computer tracking is rife with problems. Apparently, no one asked them.

While most of the homeless are not mentally ill, there is a significant minority who believe they are being followed by the CIA, that they have micro-chips embedded in their body, that rays from space control their actions, and so forth. Many of these people avoid shelters and other services because "they" are part of the conspiracy. A computer tracking system will do little to alleviate their concerns. So count out the paranoid and delusional — no mats or soup for them.

Count out next anyone hiding from immigration agents. If illegals are good enough to work our fields and clean our yards, then they ought to also rate a mat on a floor somewhere. But Tag n' Trak will relegate our underpaid brethren to the woods. There is no legal reason to deny police access to the database upon demand. Ditto the INS.

And speaking of police, count out anyone with a criminal warrant. These are common among the homeless. Thanks to City Attorney Mark Sidran, sitting or lying on a sidewalk or sleeping in a park is a ticketable offense. Homeless people also get tickets, perhaps more often than the rest of us, for jaywalking and littering. Also, not terribly surprisingly, some homeless people get behind on their child support payments. Do you suppose homeless people promptly pay their fines? Not usually. These tickets often become arrest warrants. The threat of jail is a fairly compelling reason to go underground.

This all adds up to a huge potential for exclusion. Beyond this is the issue of whether this database will be used to punish the noncompliant. What happens to those who refuse the good advice of the database managers? How will they be labelled? Tag n' Trak may be the

technological front for a moralistic retrenchment that separates the "deserving" and "undeserving" poor.

One argument offered for computer tracking is that it will give a more accurate idea of the need. Given the issues outlined above, I don't see how the database can avoid a serious undercount. Tag n' Trak will create a quasi-scientific excuse for official complacency.

The plan is anti-democratic

Our concerns with the process for developing this plan are only the beginning. Safe Harbors calls for the formation of a Homeless Action Group (HAG), made up of Human Services Director appointees. As much as we admire Ven Knox, we have concerns about any hand-picked group claiming to represent our views. Where are the opportunities for organized homeless people and their advocates to be heard? If we are heard, will anyone care? If the process for Safe Harbors itself is any precedent, there is plenty of reason for concern.

Safe Harbors does not deserve this community's support. Let's send this blueprint back to the drawing board right now. Tell our city council that they can and must do better. ☐

You Can Help Be a Part of the Solution!

This little paper, which now publishes twice a month, receives no foundation or government support, and your donations matter a lot. *Real Change* depends upon the grassroots support of our readers to do a lot with very little money. Your contribution goes beyond simple charity. *Real Change* helps people help themselves while they work for a more just world for everyone. Donations to the Real Change Homeless Empowerment Project (RCHEP) are tax deductible and support our work with StreetWrites, StreetLife Gallery, the Macworkshop computer lab, and the Homeless Speakers Bureau. Checks written to *Real Change* are not tax deductible, and support the newspaper itself.

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Virtual Harbor

Anatomy of a city council irresolution

On Wednesday, September 29th, Peter Steinbrueck introduced the "Safe Harbors" plan to his housing committee. By the following Monday, three resolutions had been approved unanimously by the City Council. No public comment was allowed.

Bob Redmond

Though it bears the same name, this Safe Harbors plan is radically different from the one that Steinbrueck had proposed this summer. Steinbrueck says it's a watershed for the homeless, given the new resources, fresh approach, and political consensus to address the problem.

But there are few new resources (SHARE even says there's a net loss of shelter); the fresh approach is mainly a new computerized system to track the poor, and any consensus, suggest other critics, includes those eager to weed out the "undeserving poor" from those eligible for help (see lead editorial, page 3). As a *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* (10/11) editorial in favor of the plan succinctly phrased it, "there's no free lunch," not even for the broke and hungry.

Steinbrueck says there's lots of time for input, but given the marked lack of public discussion about the plan, folks are suspicious. In fact, they're downright furious. As we go to press, SHARE is planning a meeting and possible occupation of the Mayor's office to get their point across: what the homeless need right now is housing.

Not too long ago, Steinbrueck agreed.

His original resolution, initiated in the heat of the Parks Exclusion debates from last spring, went through at least 8 drafts and was approved by the City Attorney's office. It addressed directly the plight of the homeless. The last version — we'll call it the July draft — called for "establishment of 'Safe Harbors' around temporary/permanent housing locations for homeless people to assure safety for those sleeping at such locations, as well as for the neighboring communities." That is, the city would establish places where people could merely exist without being harassed or arrested for having no homes.

Why? In addition to the obvious (there aren't enough homes), the resolution gave the following rationales: "The City of Seattle should be a place

where everyone, particularly children and youth, have a place to call home that is safe and secure... Homeless people can become prey to predators if scattered throughout the City in greenbelt areas and neighborhood parks... It is dangerous, unhealthy and illegal for homeless people to form encampments in these areas."

The new Safe Harbors plan has none of this. Instead, three separate resolutions respectively "affirm the goal of Safe Harbors;" detail the new computer tracking plan; and make slight improvements to the city's winter response shelter plan.

Steinbrueck says he couldn't get five votes for the original, and instead, took a "broader, systemic" approach—which got unanimous council support. "We have not abandoned the goal of increasing capacity and developing innovative forms of housing," Steinbrueck says. But he also equivocates: "More money, more shelter has not thus far reduced the number of homeless on the street."

To see how much the city is prioritizing real safe harbor, consider the first resolution, all that's left of the original plan. Though the resolution "affirms Safe Harbors," all of the language noted above is gone. In fact, of the 11 "WHEREAS" clauses of the July draft, 6 were deleted, 4 were weakened significantly, and one was mentioned in passing. The responsibility that the city embraced in the earlier draft was replaced with

recognition of the city's existing efforts and the announcement that homelessness is a regional and national problem which the county and other cities are addressing. It reads like a defense, not an initiative.

The action plan was completely rewritten so that the only effective action taken is this: "to monitor the occurrence of crimes against homeless persons and... collect relevant data to determine whether policies are needed to reduce the victimization and vulnerability of homeless persons." While the first draft talks explicitly about the dangers of homelessness, the new plan questions the danger, or at least whether or not it merits City attention.

Resolution #2 details the new computer tracking plan, another data-collection effort. The *P-I* defended the computer system and its emphasis on "outcome-based" solutions. Without data, the argument goes, social ser-

vices are a waste of money. Why are people so upset?

People are upset because in the parlance of social service and politics, "outcome-based" means that if you can't count it, it doesn't exist. It is in the city's interest to narrow the categories of who deserves public assistance, and prove that they are helping those people. If some don't comply to standards of behavior, they don't deserve services; they are undesirable, expendable people who brought misfortune on themselves.

No way, says Steinbrueck. "There is no language about [that] in the resolution... the 'outcome' is to see fewer people on the street."

Yet in the *P-I* (10/5/99), he also said, "We have to track these folks so we don't have people drifting through the system who are using services on an ad hoc basis."

This is more to the point. At the very least, the Safe Harbors plan will force providers, who will now be reliant on quantifiable results for funding, to prioritize their most "servable" clients. It's as if teachers were told to spend all their time with the best students.

Policies like these make the homeless fearful. They don't want to be tracked, or scored, or forced to conform in a traumatic environment. They want their own place. For them, the Safe Harbors plan holds them accountable for systemic problems: problems like lack of housing, not enough drug and alcohol treatment beds (real treatment, not a tile floor for a night), or public resources being directed towards sports teams.

Without comparable resources directed towards social needs, how are the homeless supposed to feel about their every move being documented?

The *P-I*, as do other proponents of the plan, pooh-pooh critics who invoke the "big brother" argument. But the truth is that in the rhetorical gap between drafts, it is easy enough to interpolate the city's reasoning: we'll prove to you that we are doing enough, they say. The homeless people you see are not our fault.

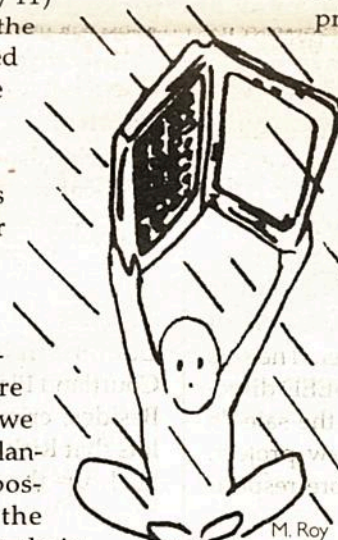
Again, Steinbrueck protests: "It's a way to get the city more engaged," he says. "This is going to get more money for services." Steinbrueck says he "regrets" the missed opportunity for public discussion over the new Safe Harbors plan, but stresses that the real process has just begun. "Nothing is going to

"At the very least, the Safe Harbors plan will force providers, who will now be reliant on quantifiable results for funding, to prioritize their most 'servable' clients. It's as if teachers were told to spend all their time with the best students."

happen overnight, and there will be plenty of opportunities for input."

At the moment, members of the homeless community are looking for outcomes of their own. How much more money for services? How many opportunities for input, and of what variety? And most importantly, where can people go when there are no shelter beds, alternatives are illegal, and winter fast approaches?

In other words, where's the safe harbor? ☐



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RAINIER, CONT. FROM PAGE 1
temples in the area for daily prayer services, then shop or dine somewhere along MLK. Du says Sound Transit's two-year construction period will scatter his customers and force him out of business.

Vivian Sung, who owns a fish-and-chips restaurant at the crossroads, has worked in the neighborhood for 20 years. She can remember the problems outside her door, but "those things have gradually left. The Rainier Valley has improved a lot."

She gestures north across the street, at the new brick flank of Eagle Hardware that abuts Rainier Avenue. The proposed route won't affect Eagle's property. Sound Transit will seize her property and tear down everything on her side of Rainier. "They're not going to touch them," she says, "but only the small, family-owned businesses." Over the years, "with all the drugs and crime, we stayed. Now those things are gone and we're supposed to be gone, too."

Du says there's little chance he can relocate his store within the neighborhood, certainly not within the newer shopping centers. "When they build a shopping mall, they invite Starbucks, McDonald's," he says. "We can't afford the rent."

Du has seen changes like this before, in his home country. "When the communists come, they destroy everything." Like there, recovery from the light rail construction will take decades. "20 years to build. Four years to tear down. Then, 20 years to build again. What happens if we say no?" He jokes wryly, "Maybe they get the tanks in here."

Big-box blight

Bigger retailers are doing business within a mile of Du's store, but they are worlds apart. Besides the Safeway, Eagle Hardware, Rite Aid, and QFC, other corporate occupants have moved in; a few months ago,

Starbucks opened its first Columbia City store down the street from a homegrown coffee shop. The big-box retailers have arrived, and they love Southeast Seattle's burgeoning middle class.

Darla Morton, director of the Rainier Valley Chamber of Commerce, says that 10 years ago, the Safeway by Holly Park was remodeled — to striking results. On a given weekend afternoon, "Every single checkout line would be open and the lines would be down the aisle. It proved you could make some money in the Rainier Valley."

Several years later, Eagle Hardware became the area's first "destination retailer," the kind of store for middle-class people working on their newly-purchased fixer-uppers. Mercer Island residents won't come to Rainier Valley to bargain-hunt at Chubby and Tubby; they will make a trip to buy paint at Eagle Hardware. Eagle is a semaphore for homebuyers looking to put down roots; it means that homes in the valley are changing hands. "The third store they opened was in the Rainier Valley," said Morton. "They didn't do that because they're stupid."

But smart corporations don't necessarily make good neighbors. Morton says that the Rainier Valley Square's boxy shape is far better than the days when Pay 'n' Pak, "the worst store you can imagine," let the property turn into a graffiti-marred dereliction. But the new absentee owners just do the bare minimum.

"Some large corporations have the opinion that places where there are people of color don't need maintenance. We fight that a lot," says Morton. "They suck money out and don't give back. Even if the manager does live in the community and care about it, the corporation doesn't. There's no room in their job description for helping out in a school."



VIVIAN SUNG SAYS REDEVELOPMENT HAS NO ROOM FOR HER. PHOTO BY DANIAL CAPLAN.

SEED of discontent

The architect of the Rainier Valley Square was SouthEast Effective Development. The Columbia City agency develops and manages housing and retail space for the community's poor. In 1996, SEED sold Rainier Square for \$15.8 million to a California-based owner. The sale angered some residents. SEED director Earl Richardson calls the sale "a mistake" and says the new project, Rainier Court, will be more responsive to the community.

He has some new design ideas as well. Rainier Court will mix apartment units with retail shops to create a mixed-use "civic center" with sit-down cafes — a place where people get out of their cars and spend an afternoon. NBA legend Earvin "Magic" Johnson, who helped open the Columbia City Starbucks earlier this year, is considering adding a multiplex movie theater.

Thanks to a recent HUD award, SEED will spend several million dollars cleaning up industrial pollution on the property. Supported by the promise of HUD low-interest loans, it can now go out and negotiate with owners to buy up the rest of the property.

George Curtis, a founding activist with Save Our Valley, has openly criticized SEED's plans. He says the building will be just another asphalt-paved mall. And he says SEED is out

of touch with what the neighborhood wants.

Richardson counters that SEED's application had letters of support from the Courtland Place Apartments owners, the Genessee Merchants Association, the Columbia City Revitalization Committee, the Mt. Baker Community Council, and the Courtland Place Community Council. Besides, crime festers in the vacant lots that Richardson would buy. "Go back up there," he says. "There's drugs, there's prostitution, there's gangs. Anyone who's stopping this is saying 'We want this to continue.'"

To many residents, Rainier Square brought some of the services they've been missing for years, like a full-service grocery store and a video rental place. But there's room for more. "We don't have a Kinko's, we don't have a bookstore, we don't have a Mailboxes Et Cetera [postal service store], we don't have a sporting goods center," Richardson says. "When I want to do some serious printing, I go downtown."

A lot of conflict

Used car dealer Steve Mycon has other needs in mind. "There's no Ford store, no Pontiac store, no Oldsmobile store, no Chrysler store, no Jeep-Eagle store. There's probably 15 car companies that used to be in the downtown area that aren't anymore."

Continued to page 7

Globalize This!

Activists prepare for the WTO Ministerial at the Ruckus Society's Action Camp

BY GRETCHEN KING

WHO WILL BE DEMONSTRATING on the streets of downtown Seattle November 29 - December 3 to protest the World Trade Organization? A number cruncher from Berkeley, a graduate student from Gainesville, and a locked-out steelworker from Spokane. Not your typical anarcho-radical burnt out hippies—as mainstream media suggest.

The truth is that many activists have vested interests in the upcoming Ministerial because the WTO's agenda threatens their livelihoods and beliefs. I spent a weekend with 160 activists attending the "Globalize This!" Action Camp on a farm outside Arlington, Washington. Classes at the free training camp, organized by the Ruckus Society, prepared activists for the upcoming WTO Ministerial.

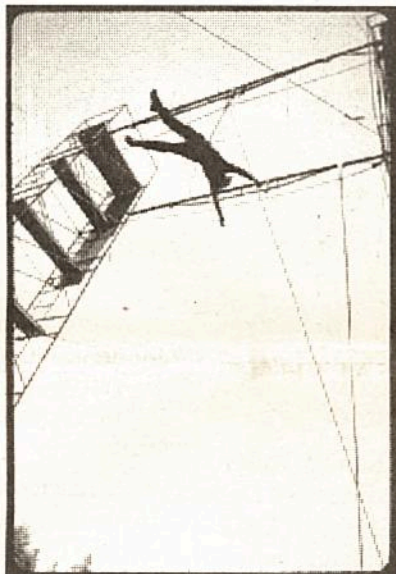
Activists at the camp hope to use banners, street parties, and other direct action tactics to shut down the WTO on November 30. Gandhi's campaigns in India and the U.S. Civil Rights movement exemplify the successes of direct action. And even though most teachers would never call it that, the Boston Tea Party is the most famous direct action effectively leading to the American Revolution. Camp participants recognize that they can borrow from past direct actions in planning actions around the upcoming Ministerial. Ruckus educated activists at the camp about the role of direct action in the Northwest with a slide show presentation that began with the Seattle General Strike of 1919.

At the camp, activists worked on peacekeeping skills and jail solidarity tactics to ensure successful nonviolent direct actions at the WTO Ministerial. Camp participants also had opportunities to sharpen their political understanding as they discussed slogans they use. Activists shouting, "The WTO is undemocratic!" for instance, need to say precisely *how* the WTO is undemocratic—because free trade, according to Bill Clinton and other elected leaders, is the highest expression of democratic society. So activists will explain the overwhelmingly corporate-friendly rulings of the WTO, which favor multinational corporations over the environment, la-

bor, human rights, and the sovereignty of local governments. "Our response," said Antonia Juhasz during a discussion of WTO basics, "is [that] we believe in democratic institutions that are answerable to people, that are transparent (we know everything that goes on inside of them), citizens have a right to participate, and everything is done in public. That's what democratic means."

Direct Action 101

FOR ONE WEEK STUDENTS WERE trained in the skills they need to plan and to pull off "high profile" direct actions. In classes on scouting,



RUCKUS: DIRECT ACTION WITHOUT A NET. PHOTO BY DANA SCHUERHOLZ.

students learn the skills they need to survey the physical qualities of potential sites for a demonstration or hanging a banner. Ruckus trainers provided tips on how to prepare a proper "scouting kit," which may include blueprints, binoculars, carpeting (if thrown over barbed wire, fence crossing is made easier), measuring tape, a hard-hat and clipboard (as a universal disguise), and gloves. The practice

of scouting out a site prior to an action is one step in a planning process that may take six months.

Scouting a site to hang a banner involves selecting a structure and determining wind conditions. Ruckus trainers held a banner-hanging demonstration as part of a class on banners. Trainers led a discussion about the process of selecting a building or bridge, choosing nylon or net for the banner, and organizing communication and ground support teams. The demonstration required six trainers working together to hang the banner. Two people climbed the scaffolding that served as the structure for the demonstration. Each climber had two support people working with them—one acting as the climber's eyes to communicate if the banner is too low or backwards, the other in charge of fending off anyone trying to interfere.

Activists with experience in direct nonviolent confrontations shared their techniques with other activists in classes like Peacekeeping Training. One trainer commented to the class that she often attends peacekeeping classes because she always learns something new. Students learn the

skills they need to remain within their nonviolent goals by role-playing heated confrontations. Tools like "puppy piles" enable activists to protect a fellow activist from an attack by "tackling" them. Before breaking for lunch, the class facilitator said, "Remember that these tools exist, but we mostly don't have to use them."

But the participants will be prepared nonetheless. During a mock raid, Ruckus trainers dressed as cops disrupted lunch as they called for everyone's cooperation. With men and women divided into separate groups and handcuffed, the class facilitator yelled out, "Everyone has been arrested for blocking traffic." As the cops moved in to take out individuals, puppy piles of tangled bodies formed as arrested activists tackled their friends singled out by the cops. The negotiation process began when the cops proved successful in pulling two people from the piles. The activists refused to answer questions and refused to stop chanting and singing until the police reunited the group with those taken away.

Through these non-cooperation techniques, the activists also demanded to see the prosecutor. The facilitator stopped the role-play for a moment to list the procedural non-cooperation techniques activists can use when negotiating with the prosecutor. Activists faced with an arrest can demand a court-appointed lawyer and refuse to "waive time" for a speedy trial (both non-cooperation techniques can clog the court system).

The Ruckus legal team gave each student a 20-page packet that defines terms of the legal system and the rights of individuals in the court system (including a reminder that "the authorities are legally allowed to lie when they're investigating!"). The class facilitator also prepared an additional packet on "handling difficult questions" from the media. Activists have to prepare to answer or refuse to answer questions from reporters because what you say "can and will be used against you." The handout advised students to watch out for the usual questions — "Did you come

Continued to page 11



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RAINIER, CONT. FROM PAGE 5

Mycon sells cars from a four-acre property straddling Rainier, just north of the Rainier Valley Square. He owns the property SEED wants. He'd like to bring big American brands back to Seattle by making better use of his gravel lot — an integral part of the planned Rainier Court. He's not interested in selling. "I don't care how much money they have. It's not for sale, it's never been for sale," he said. "I'm glad they're planning. I'm planning too."

Mycon was a founding member of Save Our Valley, but his main concern over surface rail is long gone: Sound Transit rerouted the line to run down MLK instead of Rainier, leaving his land unmolested. Nobody can force him to sell his gravel lot to SEED.

Property owners along MLK should be so fortunate. According to the current plan, Sound Transit will widen the street, buy their properties, and pay them to move out. Vietnamese businessmen like Du and Pham are part of a new merchant association that's asking for better compensation for relocated businesses. It's the first Asian-run neighborhood group to sprout along the corridor's weedy lots.

Sound Transit is convening meetings with the group. And the city is also helping mollify the business leaders. City transportation planner Jared Smith says the Vietnamese community would also like more amenities, like the community center a Filipino association enjoys on MLK. "They're intrigued by the opportunities that could give them a critical mass" in the neighborhood, he said.

Morton blames Save Our Valley for agitating the Vietnamese. SOV members "were very passionate, and they told them they were going to lose their homes," said Morton. The immigrants "come from environments of fear and mistrust, where they were forced to go to meetings. How easy is it to scare people like that?"

But Morton admits that the Chamber of Commerce has never successfully recruited Vietnamese businessmen. "They're really not joiners," she said. "They're very concerned about acculturation." Besides, she says the Rainier Valley Transit Advisory Council, the group she operates with funds from Sound Transit, was never charged with doing outreach.

A contract signed between RV-TAC and Sound Transit in April 1998 says differently. It charges RV-TAC with the task of convening meetings between public officials and local business and property owners, and to help with "outreach efforts to coordinate with local businesses ... to maximize the retention of local businesses and institutions that contribute to the long-term stability and well-being of the community."

And no Asian businesses are joiners in the Chamber of Commerce. So the Chamber, and its subsidiary RV-TAC, could never represent the Asian businesses that are now up in arms.

When asked how important Asian-American customers are to Southeast Seattle, Morton replied "Well, they're important to the Asian community."

It's plain to see that surface rail won't split the Rainier Valley down the middle. It's divided already.

Mall-ified

Even if the Vietnamese are in opposition now, Curtis has seen Sound Transit oil the squeaky wheels with money. Not only is RV-TAC dependent on Sound Transit for its funding; another group stopped its protest after

getting what it wanted.

The Filipino Community of Seattle association wrote angry letters to Sound Transit about the fate of its MLK Boulevard headquarters — until it received a \$40,000 HUD "planning grant" to begin the relocation process. The money is well above the \$20,000 that Sound Transit has pledged to relocate each business. Curtis says the association's opposition was bought out.

Despite the traffic problems, despite the urban removal of long-standing businesses, these groups say the surface rail will bring the biggest boon yet to the valley: a \$50 million revitalization fund that Seattle Mayor Paul Schell and County Executive Ron Sims pledged this spring. If \$40,000 was intended to buy off the Filipino community, \$50 million was the massive shush money for Save Our Valley. It didn't work. But more moderate groups, like RV-TAC and SEED, are pleased with the money and embrace Sound Transit's plans.

The money could build more housing and retail within walking distance of stations — contracts that SEED, as a major neighborhood developer, could effectively win. These are "opportunities that ought not be missed," says Curtis. "We're building new retail, new housing. Would it happen if light rail went underground? Probably not."

Curtis says he and SOV are being painted as the radical fringe by groups happy with the \$50 million promise. If the money helps community developers like SEED, says Curtis, that's cold comfort to people who feel SEED doesn't represent their interests.

"There are these quasi-yuppies who say 'Light rail will bring us all this development money,'" Curtis said. "But the Asians, the Blacks, they are immediately in tune with what's going on."

The vision thing

Late in September, a month after HUD announced its awards to Rainier Vista and Rainier Court, SHA, SEED, and Sound Transit held a "community forum" on the three developments. The meeting was largely intended to inform the public about the three projects, not to challenge them. Save Our Valley held its board meeting that same night — an unlucky coincidence that kept SOV members away. The atmosphere was so cordial that nobody spoke up when Earl Richardson cited the local Taco Del Mar franchise as a sign of Columbia City's commercial attraction. The Taco Del Mar had closed down two weeks before.

The meeting illustrates the imperfections of any planning process. Local government convenes meetings to hear different views. Ideally, it's an orderly system where everyone is heard.

But the best-laid plans are distorted by a fortuitous pile of free money. If a large landowner announces that it got \$35 million to redevelop one of the largest tracts of residential land in the area (as SHA did this summer), local planners incorporate such cataclysmic change. If federal money plops a transit line down the traffic corridor, the neighborhood will try to work around it. This money doesn't just appear out of nowhere. Somebody goes after it, gets it, then lets their neighbor know. And the planning process begins.

Planning is a ritual of democracy. It abolishes the influence of the powerful. In political lingo, the winners plan. The losers gripe.

The planners should come down to street level. Down there, things look differently. ☐

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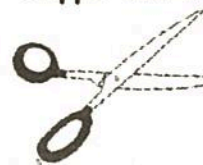
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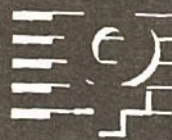
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And Naturopaths for All ...

Will alternative health care be available to poor people, too?

BY KRIS WEBER

You might not remember Seattle's Sound Health Clinic, a downtown facility which once provided free alternative health care to low-income people and the homeless. But if you talk to former patient K. Maia Rose you will understand why she loved the place, mourned its 1996 closure, and supports activists who are now working to reopen it.

Maia's story begins with a 1996 trip to the emergency room for treatment of severe pain. Although she'd been ignoring the pain in her body for years, it had finally reached a point where it had become, as she puts it, "unmanageable." The doctors eventually diagnosed her with fibromyalgia, a chronic rheumatic disorder. They also told her that her disease was largely "psychological," and suggested treatment with psychotropic drugs. Maia declined.

Maia wanted to do what many others have done when faced with a disease that seems to baffle conventional doctors. She wanted to join the one-third of the American population that has tried some form of alternative medicine (as estimated by a 1993 Harvard study). But Maia lacked the money to pay for treatment out-of-pocket. Surviving on a small disability benefit and part-time work, she was barely managing to pay for rent and food, and her medical coupons did not cover alternative practitioners.

Then she discovered the Sound Health Clinic, staffed by an all-volunteer team of medical doctors, naturopaths, acupuncturists, nurse practitioners, chiropractors, and massage therapists. She says, "I was so very, very grateful to have found Sound Health Clinic. It fit so well with what I was looking for — the whole integrative medicine idea." Maia says she found more at the clinic than just pain relief. "They gave me hope and encouragement."

Dr. Paris Preston, a naturopathic physician, says she saw many patients like Maia "blossom" with the care they received at the Sound Clinic. "What was unique about Sound Clinic was that we took time with patients to understand what was going on in their lives. Sometimes for the first time someone sat with them for an hour and listened to their story." She notes that, "many low-income people have been marginalized because of their health. If you can offer tools and a helping hand to change diet and lifestyle, it can go a long way."

Preston points out that it's difficult for people to make positive changes in their lives when they are tired, depressed, and in pain, and that these problems can often be alleviated by naturopathic methods, especially changes in diet. She also in-

sists that, in contrast to the stereotyped view of poor people as unwilling to help themselves, her Sound Clinic patients were very willing to work hard and make necessary changes in their lives.

Unfortunately, the excellent care delivered by Sound Clinic and the gratitude of its clientele were not enough to protect it from the not-in-my-backyard attitude of successive landlords. "Nobody wanted a homeless clinic in their building," says Preston. This led to harassment from landlords and steep rent increases. One sharp rent increase forced the clinic to move from a warehouse building that they had renovated through all-volunteer labor and all-donated materials. The next sharp rent increase forced them to close.

Patients like Maia were deeply affected by the closure. "It was a huge, huge loss to me. I think I'm just barely now getting over it." Although there are still several places where poor people can access alternative care in Seattle, none duplicate the comprehensive care and downtown location of Sound Clinic. Maia says she was given four referrals to get the same services she had been getting under one roof, and that was too overwhelming at the time.

One important resource that does exist is the Kent Community Health Clinic. Opened in 1996, the same year that Sound Clinic closed down, the Kent clinic is the first publicly funded natural medicine clinic in the United States. It is currently staffed by two medical doctors, two naturopaths, an acupuncturist, and a mental health counselor. Services are offered on a sliding scale (which slides as low as \$5) and are free for one year to anyone who is homeless. And if you can make the one hour bus trip to Kent, the clinic is only one block from the bus stop.

Meanwhile, a group of Seattle activists has launched a new campaign to increase access. They hope to generate support both for new services (such as reopening the Sound Clinic or replacing it with something similar) and for changes in government policies that would promote access. (Getting Medicaid and Medicare to cover alternative practitioners, for example.)

Chris Flanagan, a volunteer with Seattle's Food Not Bombs and a student of acupuncture, is one of the organizers of the new effort. She says, "We believe that health care is a right, not a privilege, and alternative medicine is becoming an important option for preventive and general health care. Homeless and low-income people have the right to choose what type of health care they are receiving."

The access campaign will start up in earnest with a first general meeting on Wednesday, October 20 (see p. 15 for listing). Organizers hope to attract a diverse group of community members, health care providers, and government officials. Says Flanagan, "We want to see what kind of interest is out there and who is willing to work on this problem." Maia and Dr. Preston are both applauding the new effort. ☐

Health Alternatives

Following is a list of facilities that provide alternative care at reduced cost (or free). Many have income ceilings to qualify. In many cases services are provided by supervised students. Information is as current and accurate as possible, but please inquire with each clinic about specific details. This list is not necessarily complete.

Kent Community Health Clinic (Kent, WA)

425-277-1311

Sliding scale: \$5 - \$150

Naturopathy, acupuncture, massage (off-site), counseling

Homeless: free health care for one year; free medicine for 3 months

45th St. Clinic (Wallingford)

206-633-3350

\$5 acupuncture on Saturdays with referral from 45th St. Doctor

Free naturopathy, acupuncture, and massage for homeless youth on

Tuesday and Thursday evenings, drop-in

Country Doctor Clinic (Capitol Hill)

206-461-4503

Naturopathy on Friday mornings: sliding scale \$5 - \$195

Acupuncture on Wednesday mornings: sliding scale \$5 - \$20

(both require referral from a Country Doctor M.D.)

Free acupuncture and massage for homeless youth (and youth in transitional housing), drop-in, Fridays 6 p.m. - 9 p.m.

Yesler Terrace Health Clinic (First Hill)

206-625-9260

\$10 acupuncture on Friday afternoons

Stonewall Recovery Services (Capitol Hill)

206-461-4546

Free acupuncture for chemical dependency withdrawal and detox

Special focus on lesbian and gay community (but all are welcome)

M - F 9-10 a.m. and 4-6 p.m.

NW Inst. of Acupuncture, Fremont

206-633-5581

Sliding scale acupuncture: \$22-\$28 first visit; \$11-\$22 follow-ups

Bastyr Natural Health Clinic (Wallingford)

Low-income and senior citizens (62 and over) usually pay: \$35 for

Naturopathy; \$30 for Physical Medicine (incl. massage)

No reduced rates are available for the following services:

Acupuncture: \$25; Counseling: \$15; Nutrition: \$40

Three free visits per month (any dept.) for low-income HIV+ patients

Harborview Complementary Clinic

206-731-3241

Massage and acupuncture: \$10 for half hour; \$20 for one hour

(Requires referral from a Harborview doctor)

Kang Wen Acupuncture Clinic (Capitol Hill)

206-322-6945

Acupuncture for HIV+ patients, Tuesday mornings and Thursday afternoons

FIRESTONE, CONT. FROM P. 1

Dan Hanberg, who was on the county council—what they called the county board of supervisors. He went on to be a congressman and then most recently to be the Green Party of California's candidate for governor. And earlier before that, I was a delegate to the national convention of the Democratic party in 1972, pledged to Shirley Chisolm. And then I worked on campaigns of people like Mayor George Moscone and San Francisco Supervisor Harvey Milk and other people along the line.

RC: So, even after serving on those campaigns, you decided to run for office?

FIRESTONE: Here, just two years ago I was Peter Steinbrueck's campaign scheduler, so I understood what I was getting into. At least I thought I did.

RC: How has this campaign been different than other campaigns?

FIRESTONE: Well, everybody talks about the intensity, but until you live it, you don't understand how intense it is. And I think the thing that nobody really talked about is the great diversity. There are issues that are important to me as an individual—service and housing issues... But there are issues that are critical to the governance of the city that normal people don't take much time to think of, like how we get our water and how we get our electricity and painting the streets and paving the streets and making sure that traffic flows...

And as a candidate, I find that there's always someone out there that expects I know how each part of the government works... And I think there are areas you're forced to learn about and find exciting. That's been the most pressure but also the most exciting is learning about things at some level of depth....

RC: Why did you want to run for city council?

FIRESTONE: Well, there are some issues that come out of the progressive agenda. This city over the past two decades has truly spent an enormous amount of its resources in benefiting corporate Seattle, corporate America... I want to see the resources of the city go into helping people, and that all residents get some benefits from this really rich economy that we are currently enjoying. I think that there's no reason in this rich society that everybody doesn't have a home someplace, whether it be shelter or hotel room, someplace they can call home. There's no reason in

this rich society that everybody shouldn't have a job with a living wage. And I don't mean just a job where you get \$5/hour and then you end up potentially being homeless because you've got enough money for food and clothing, but you don't have enough money for housing.

There's no reason in this city that we don't have an adequate transportation system. I mean we have the money for these things. It's where we put our priorities. My priorities are that we create human services as compared to corporate services.

RC: Do you think your issues are popular ones or will you be fighting an uphill battle to act on your ideas?

FIRESTONE: I think that we have a couple of factors working here. One is we have a long history since the end of World War II, going back to when I was growing up, of corporate America dictating the agenda for America. The bottom line is to have a comfortable middle class and an

extremely wealthy upper class and not be too concerned about a lower economic class and we, since, 1980 and Ronald Reagan became president, we have really backslid on where we could potentially go.

We gained some real headway especially under LBJ and the war on poverty here and during Martin Luther King's life, and then things really started sliding back rapidly. I think corporate America got really scared during the anti-war years, and all the people really came up and made a direction in changing the difference in this country.

It's a long answer but as such, we have created a majority of middle class being very complacent because they have theirs. They have the two cars in the garage and the nice home and food on the table and all the clothes they want and whenever they want the entertainment, whether it be sports, movies, they can afford it, and they go to it. They get their vacations and all that type of stuff. So that part of America is difficult to get to.

Yet, I say that at the same time I believe that there is within the city of Seattle a real compassion for people. I think it shows in the diversity of the city, and I think that it needs to be appealed to and then there may be some changes.

RC: Do you believe a progressive candidate can get elected?

FIRESTONE: Yes. Nick Licata and Peter Steinbrueck showed that and Velma Veloria shows that and Larry Gossett shows that. We have people who are

progressive who are getting elected and look at just this final. Judy Nicastro is definitely considered progressive. I'm considered a progressive. Dawn Mason is considered a progressive. Look at where the challenge is coming from. It's moving the political agenda to the left in the city just by us making it through the primaries and challenging. Some of us are going to get elected. I don't suspect we'll all get elected. It may be only me, and the rest don't, but some of us are going to get elected.

RC: If elected, what do you hope to accomplish on the city council?

FIRESTONE: In my first four years in office, if I accomplish the following two things I can die in peace. One, if we can amend and revoke the discriminatory sections of the laws that were sponsored by the city attorney and championed by my opponent, I will be extremely happy.

RC: What is the second thing?

FIRESTONE: The second thing is that in this rich city of ours that builds stadiums and garages... I want to build some housing for the homeless. That to me is more important than low-income housing and middle-income housing. When you have people that don't have a place to sleep except outside, that's got to be the first thing. I favor having temporary housing of a tent city, and I would support that, not as permanent housing but as temporary housing with sanitation facilities. One of the main reasons I support it is because it has sanitation facilities and gives some safety and security to people. And the second would be to build a hotel-type room housing for

people—not shelters but their own room that is their own. They could lock it up, and they could leave or go in and do whatever a person does in the privacy of their own room as well they should like every other human being. I assume you have a home. You don't sleep on the streets. I have a home. It's important.

RC: Are you emphasizing this because this article is for *Real Change*?

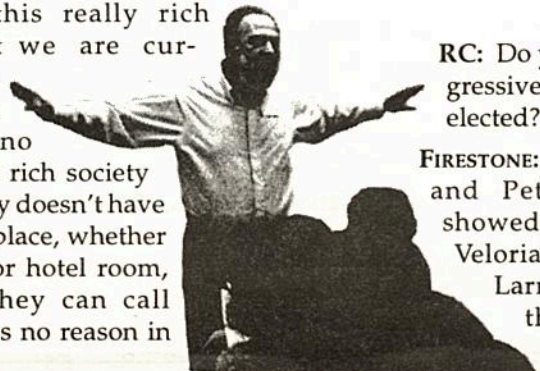
FIRESTONE: You come to the 37th District Democrats. They're having an endorsement meeting and the 43rd District Democrats... you'll hear me saying the same thing. This is why I'm running. I'm going to be saying the same things through the rest of the campaign. I am the only candidate so far that has brought up the civility laws in every single campaign function. Not one has been missed. The homeless thing—I don't get to say that every time. If we accomplish those two things, I'll be satisfied.

RC: What happens if the progressive agenda is not the majority?

FIRESTONE: If we're in a minority, then it comes to being a great arm twister, coercer, debater, always putting it on the table, never letting people forget it. Compromising will go on. Where


Continued to page 14

"I want to see the resources of the city go into helping people, and that all residents get some benefits from this really rich economy that we are currently enjoying."



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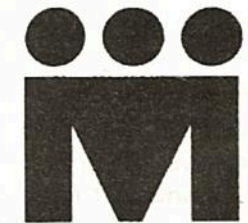
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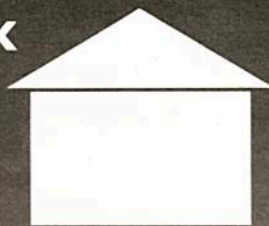
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Tenant Talk

Legal Action Center

By Mark Chatten and David W. Friedman



Buyer Beware: Each individual tenant situation involves factors that cannot be addressed and people who may react differently. My responses are based on a general application of the law to the questions raised, and it cannot be assumed that following these responses will resolve the issues in the way that the law would seem to indicate. Hopefully the responses will give you an idea of how to proceed to protect your rights.

Dear Tenant Talk,

I applied to live at the New Holly apartments owned by the Seattle Housing Authority. My credit check went fine. But a former landlord said bad things about me. I rented a condominium for five years and always paid rent. When I moved out, though, the landlord said I owed \$700 for cleaning and painting and a bunch of other bogus charges. I told the landlord that I did not owe him any money and would not pay. The landlord never sent me to collections, and never sued me for the money. Now the landlord says I owe the money and SHA will not rent to me because of this. How can I solve this problem?

Betty

Dear Betty,

Unfortunately, there is not much you can do in this situation. You have a couple of choices: 1) pay the money or 2) dispute the validity of the landlord's claim with Seattle Housing Authority. You understandably may not want to pay \$700.00 for what you believe are bogus charges.

The Landlord Tenant Act states that a tenant shall not be responsible for "normal wear and tear." Unfortunately, that is not clearly defined either in law or in practice. However, since you were a tenant for five years, it is safe to assume that your tenancy was long enough so that repainting and at least some of the other charges may be covered

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under wear and tear.

Seattle Housing Authority has a grievance procedure that you can utilize to contest the denial of your application. You can explain to them that you dispute your former landlord's charges. You can also explain to them that the landlord never took you to collections and never sued you for the amount. If you have any witnesses or pictures to bolster your claim, you may be able to use them to support that there simply was not \$700.00 worth of damages.

Dear Tenant Talk,

I live in Seattle with my girlfriend and her children. We have not had water for two weeks. My girlfriend is disabled, and having no water makes it even harder for her to care for herself. The landlord never gave us the bill when we asked for it and the contract requires him to pay all utilities anyway. The water department never gave us a notice except a one-day notice that our water would be shut off. By the time we called the water people it was too late. The credit people at the water department will not take our money. How do we get the water turned back on?

Please help, Joe

Dear Joe,

Your first step in getting you water turned back on is to find out whether your water provider is a public utility or a private utility. You can call the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission to find out; their number is 1-800-562-6150.

Since you are in Seattle, it is most likely that your provider is a public provider. It is lawful for public providers to shut-off your water if your landlord does not pay, so long as you receive notice of the termination and a chance to appeal the termination.

A water department should have given you a written notice of the pending shut off with the opportunity to put the water bill into your own name. Courts in the past have found that 24 hours notice is sufficient.

Once you put the bill in your name, you have the responsibility for paying all future water bills. After the bill is in your name the provider can not make you pay the late bills that your landlord or prior tenants incurred. However, the water department may require you to put down a security deposit or pay a reconnect fee. With proper notice to the landlord, you should be able to deduct the water bill from future rent payments.

Be sure that you keep records of your payments and a copy of the notice that you give the landlord. Before making these deductions, review your lease or rental agreement to make sure that you are not responsible for the utilities. If you do not want to put the bill in your name you should request that the water company gives you a chance to appeal the termination.

You will want to speak to your landlord and find out why your water bill was not paid. If by any chance the bill was not paid intentionally by your landlord for retaliatory reasons, you may seek damages. For instance, your land-

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lord may be required to pay actual damages for the money you spent as a result of having no water, and up to \$100.00 for each day you went without services, along with court cost or attorney fees (RCW 59.18.300). [E]

Got a Tenant Problem? Get Help

Seattle CSOs (police matters only)	684-4790
Legal Action Center (low income only)	324-6890
Tenants' Union	723-0500

CLASSICS CORNER



BY PERFESS'R HARRIS

As the "protest of the century" gets underway here in Seattle to greet the ruling-class conspiracy that is the World Trade Organization, our thoughts naturally turn toward Thersites, the humble and lovable underdog of the *Iliad*.

We, the outspoken, disorderly, pain-in-the-ass truth-tellers of the world have, if not a hero in Thersites, then at least a martyr.

Imagine the scene. The Greeks, who have been fighting in Troy for nine years, are keen to go home after a speech by Agamemnon backfires miserably. A mad rush to the ships is stemmed by the Goddess Athena and Odysseus the master diplomat. Odysseus speaks "soothing words" to his fellow noblemen and berates the others. The troops noisily reassemble.

Enter Thersites: "Now the rest had sat down, and were orderly in their places, but one man, Thersites of the endless speech, still scolded...."

To get this, one has to understand who the *Iliad* was for. Homer was ruling-class entertainment. He told the nobility the stories about themselves that they loved to hear. So, Homer's view of Thersites of the endless speech reveals something about class conflict circa 1200 B.C.

Thersites is described as ugly, bandy-legged, stoop-shouldered, pointy-headed, and nearly bald. Ignoble. As a commoner, he is beneath respect. Thersites "knew within his head many words, but disorderly; vain and without decency, to quarrel with the princes with any word he thought might be amusing to the Argives."

Thersites, like a good organizer, rubs raw the sores of discontent: Agamemnon's insatiable lust for loot and women comes at the expense of the common soldier. He has stupidly and vainly dishonored Achilles, again at the expense of everyone else. Agamemnon, says Thersites, should be left alone to enjoy his treasure.

Like some kind of proto-Quaker of the distant past, Thersites is speaking Truth to Power. Odysseus, however, will have none of that. He whacks him across the back with his scepter, makes him cry, and threatens him with more violence and humiliation if he doesn't shut up. This plays well with the troops, who all have a good chuckle at Thersites.

Or so Homer thinks. I suspect a few revolutionaries were born that day.

When the WTO protests come to town, I imagine local authorities will defend their rulers in similar fashion. Like Odysseus, they will not debate the issues. Like Thersites, the protesters will be considered rabble without legitimate standing. Police will just whack those unsightly demonstrators with their scepters.

The *Wall Street Journal* is where our nobility tells the stories about each other that they like to hear. Ominously, a Seattle Police spokesperson was quoted there regarding preparation for the protests. "We have access to pepper spray," he said. ☞

Be an armchair classicist. The Northwest Society for Classical Studies seeks fellow freaks. Call 325-1787 or email NSCS@home.com for information.

RUCKUS, CONT. FROM PAGE 6

here to get arrested? Do you feel that your beliefs entitle you to break the law?"

Future shock

FOR US," SAID JOHN JORDON of Reclaim the Streets, "direct action is not a last resort, it's not a tactic, it's a philosophy, it's a way of life, a way of doing things." Jordon narrated a slide show presentation for camp participants on RTS, an international phenomena that has mobilized the largest actions against globalization in history. Methods used by RTS include carnival-style street parties and spoof newspapers. As Jordon defined RTS' approach to direct action, he also contrasted the media methods of RTS with some of those he saw at the camp. "Direct action is not about representation in the media." Jordon said, "We spend all of our time putting out our own media instead of kissing the butts of the corporate media." Some groups organizing against the WTO are planning to print their own newspapers and broadcast their own TV and radio shows to counter any "disinformation" that may attempt to keep people away from street parties and mass demonstrations.

Jordon also said that direct action is a means of empowerment because individuals represent themselves "without the need for mediation or control by bureaucrats or professional politicians." The camp promoted this kind of dialogue about direct action because it exposed activists to new models of organization used to create direct actions. One such model used at the camp and by RTS brings a small group of people with similar interests together to form an "affinity group." Several affinity groups form "clusters" to work on a single issue that draws on their various interests. This form of organizing came to the US as a reaction to the hierarchy in movements that rally masses of people behind one leader. "Clusters of affinity groups," said David Solomon, a member of Art and Revolution, "are able to directly involve thousands of people in democratic decision-making."

Activists planning direct actions

around the WTO Ministerial will be borrowing from the past and looking to new forms of resistance that are developing — like the successful street parties organized by RTS. The Ruckus Society's objective for the camp is to "help ensure that the nonviolent confrontation with the WTO unfolds in a safe and meaningful way that will inspire the global public." By fostering theoretical discussions of nonviolent ethics and providing instructions in direct action tactics, the camp provides a forum in which activists

can teach each other. This camp is one of dozens that the Ruckus Society has organized since its foundation four years ago.

Protests around the WTO Ministerial are an opportunity for people working on a number of different issues to plan actions together. Peasants, blue-collar workers, environmentalists, and many other people are organizing together because WTO rulings have

had far reaching effects on the majority of the world's population. Activists at the "Globalize This!" Action Camp represented various human rights, environmental, women, and labor organizations. The camp not only united them as anti-WTO activists, it also served to create a forum in which they could discuss their critiques of the WTO and plan direct actions. Such extensive preparations could mobilize the largest protest of globalization in U.S. history. ☞

Continue to check Real Change's Calendar for dates and times of WTO events. The Ruckus Society maintains an excellent website which includes an Action Camp Gallery and Training Manuals for direct action techniques (www.ruckus.org). Thanks to the camp participants and staff for allowing me to take part in classes. I also appreciate their allowing me to make recordings of some of the activities, which will be aired on Mind Over Matters (KCMU 90.3).

"For us, direct action is not a last resort, it's not a tactic, it's a philosophy, it's a way of life, a way of doing things."

John Jordon,

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Broken in Spirit
Broken with sorrow

Broken by
the cruelties
the selfishness
the material religion
the endless wars and hatreds
the blindness
the RAPES (of all sorts)
the FEAR
the ignorance
the poisons

the lack of Faith and Trust
the lack of Respect
(much less, Rever-
ence...)

Broken by mankind
Upon this earth
Gift/ from/ God
At the end of the millennium

II
I am buoyed up
Only by my Belief
That it didn't HAVE

To be this way...
He gave us Free Will
— His greatest Gift —

and
We used it
Against Him...
I no longer forgive
Does He?

—Marion Sue Fischer

It Puzzles Me

Where it comes from
this great resentment of being asked for money
by strangers on the street
puzzles me

We all ask for money from someone
all our lives
from our parents
employers
the government
wives
husbands
God

Anyone playing the lottery is asking for
begging for
money

So why being asked for it
straight out on the street
is so distasteful to so many people
puzzles me

By their reaction some people
seem to think being asked for spare change
is the same as being robbed
terrified they look down make no reply
hurry on

Others are indignant
they earned their money the hard way
working for it
no need for anyone to go without
plenty of jobs these days
these people just drink it away
stick it in their arms

Others just tighten up clench their jaws
look straight ahead walk on
without acknowledging a request for spare change
a handout a dime a quarter a dollar bill
more than they can bear to part with
it's the principle of the thing no one gets anything
for nothing it isn't right

The direct approach
so admirable
in romance
politics
business
fails on the street because
I suppose
aloofness is our rain coat
against the continual human drizzle
the steady drip drip drip of pain
contained in a dozen eyes
following us down the street

Have a nice day

We are disturbed by empty hands
reaching out
and the voices asking for a touch
of the luck we so obviously carry
fearful of contact
of what might rub off

I guess we'd rather not think about how our money
came to us
or what postures we took to get it
resentful at being reminded
that begging is just another way of making a living
and we all have to make a living
as best we can

So why get so pushed out of shape
so huffed up and rancid
over being asked for money by strangers on the street
after all you can always walk on

Forgetful of the need plants
and other growing things have
for water
however it reaches our roots

—David Thornbrugh

Big Heart

I have the nitro nestled snug and close at hand
a rocket in my pocket
stealing my Promethean fire
shooting me down to earth
with broken wings, stranded again.

No pacemaker to get under my skin
keeping me in the life support line.
No wires dangling like a Pinnocchio
tied to some Gepetto
with no imagination
who laughs and makes me dance to his tune.

Patience? Life is too short.
I still smell the roses
while I run by their beauty
I see more than if I stop.
Their fragrance fills me while I pass.

Different drums? I am a conga-bonga-tabla-
timpani man
signaling the stars
singing along with passion.
Love is the music of my soul.

If I grow feeble
point me to a distant mountain
in dark wet rainforest woods
with no path.
Give me no compass
No food.
No drink.
I will eat sweet huckleberries
I will drink from cool creeks
I will lay down smiling at treetops and
stars.
Raccoons and bears and mountain cats
will devour me.

No more strong women to love?
No more sweet songs to sing?
No more drumming the rhythm of life?
Depressed?
Distressed?
Balderdash!
Succotash!
I am eternal!
I am my own light.
Icarus Ascending.

Listen...
Late at night
something calls to you
from deep in the forest.
It's a conga-bonga-tabla-timpani sound
My spirit is moving
in the cool dark night
where the bears are dancing
in the pale moon light.

—Lon McKinney

in possession

You know them for your reasons, not
their sides. The best, are in...
they own the homes, their own, So, stay
inside. They've always been

those persons in churches—and, in
time—who really, choose
our best ways to protect themselves
with children. Wearing shoes!

—Stan Burriss

ADVENTURES IN POETRY

by © Dr Wes Browning

The Billy Biff Theory



Another satisfied reader writes:

Dear Copyright Doctor —

You know what's wrong with you poor people?
You're poor!

I mean, what do you think? That you don't deserve it? You're exactly where Jesus flang you! You reap what you sow, and you must have sewn nothing but [deleted]! Why should anybody care about any of you!?

Since I know you're an artsy freak, I wrote an artsy freak poem to explain it to you:

You're a loser and it ain't no accident—
All your karma has come, and it has went.
You had free will
but ignored the drill,
so don't cry for me to give you a cent!

—Billy "Biff" Pill (an assumed name).

Thanks Biff! I really love to hear from my readers, and I can't get enough of your poetry! .

Your letter also touches on a subject that is near and dear to my heart — to what extent *am* I responsible for all the stuff people pile on me? Did I *really* bring it on myself? If so, should I flog myself, or should I seek help? If so, who would I know that's good with a whip?

That brings to mind Mike Riley, Superintendent of Bellevue Public Schools. Not the whip part, the pil-ing on part. As has been widely reported, Mr. Riley is an educator with a vision, and his vision has entailed doubling the book load on middle-and-high-schoolers

in Bellevue. Come to think of it, that does call to mind whips, too, doesn't it?

So my question is, did the middle-school kids have it coming?

That is not a rhetorical question! If it isn't the kids fault that they have received this fate, why would the Bellevue Schools have passed rules depriving those same students of the means they have of coping? I'm referring, of course, to the banning of extra-large backpacks at several middle schools.

Let me see if I can understand this in terms of the Billy "Biff" theory that seems to be operating here. The school administrators see the students coming in with giant backpacks. They even know *why* the students are using the big backpacks: the immediate reason is that they have more books. The administrators know that the students are just dealing with the situation.

But, in spite of knowing that, the administrators conclude that the students are doing something wrong! They define what that wrong is by passing rules against the use of extra-large backpacks!

So the blame for carrying too many books around ends up heaped on the students. Why? Because the additional books prove they had evil thoughts when they were six? Because anyone unfortunate enough to grow up in a district where a Mike Riley is superintendent must be working off bad karma from their last life?

Absolutely. Biff says so. That's how Biff's theory works.

You may not even have a complaint. You may be, for example, homeless but happy, just pleased as a pet pig in a butcher shop to sleep on public dirt and get rained on every night. You may have never even asked Biff for that cent he was talking about.

But say the government passes a law that says that, whereas it is bad for your health to sleep on public dirt and get rained on every night, and besides it's public dirt and we don't want to see you sleeping on it, and besides we don't want you breathing our air anyway, therefore you're going to get a ticket every time you get caught, and eventually go to jail when you can't pay the tickets.

Biff's theory says that the mere fact that your means of coping has been ruled criminal proves that you had it coming.

People need to believe that sort of thing. Otherwise they couldn't possibly justify holding the homeless responsible for the natural consequences of their homelessness. They couldn't justify sending them to jail, just for doing what it takes to get by.

And you can see just how hard it is to stop people thinking that way, when they apply the same kinds of arguments to innocent children.

Thanks for the illustration, Bellevue! And I hope you kids out there have all learned your lesson! ☹

"Biff's theory says that the mere fact that your means of coping has been ruled criminal proves that you had it coming."

FIRESTONE, CONT. FROM P. 1

we may need 2,000 homeless beds, we may only be able to get 500. But 500 is better than nothing. That's part of governing. And I know that. I've been in government. I know how to work with people. I know how to bring people together, and I also understand the art of governance and the art of compromise, and I understand that unless you have an absolute majority, you make compromises. That's unfortunately what I think hasn't happened for a long time... there hasn't been enough compromising for human services.

RC: What committees do you want to serve on?

FIRESTONE: I want to serve on the budget/fiscal financial committee because that's the committee where all the money goes, and you have to make

all those hard decisions and in the end that's where we need to redirect the resources. Also, I have some skills there. We want to redirect more of those resources for housing for homeless and community centers and things to help people. After that, there are a variety of committees that I would probably enjoy working on.

RC: What would you bring to the council that's different?

FIRESTONE: What I offer is a progressive. The typical progressive is just a social activist and somebody out there on the streets. And what I bring is somebody who has a fiscal background, a budgetary background, a management background, an executive background with a progressive perspective. So I would bring actually far more sophistication than

the typical progressive experience.

RC: What keeps you pursuing your ideals?

FIRESTONE: You know what keeps me going the most? There are two things. I continually remember that I'm doing this for a lot of disenfranchised people who are not participating and don't have the wherewithal any longer to participate in our governing city. So that drives me. It also drives me in that I have been just humbled by the amount of support that I've gotten from the city for this campaign. The huge amount of endorsements by individuals and organizations who have said yes, you are right, Curt. We want this change. We're not in the majority, but we're fighting like all get out to make these changes happen, and we appreciate you being out there. [E]



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OCTOBER

NOTABLES

Benefit for political prisoner Mark Cook 10/15
 imprisoned for 23 years for his involvement with the George Jackson Brigade. Hosted by the Washington Prison Project. Speakers: Christian Parenti, author of "Lockdown America: Police and Prisons in the age of Crisis," and Ramona Africa member of MOVE and leader of the International Concerned Friends and Family of Mumia Abu-Jamal; the only adult survivor of the 1985 bombing of the MOVE home in Philadelphia by the Philadelphia Police Department in which 11 adults and children were killed. 7 p.m., Seattle Central Community College rm 1110; info Matthew Sanaker 206-323-6783

Seattle Public Theater presents "Words Can Kill: Hate Speech" Theater of Liberation Ensemble Performance. 9 p.m., at SPT, 915 E. Pine 4th Floor; pay what you can; reservations 206-328-4848

4th Annual Tenants Union Bowl-a-thon, the biggest fundraiser of the year for the Tenants Union, sign up, get sponsors, and come bowl, pizza and great prizes. 2 - 6 p.m., at Imperial Lanes, 2201 22nd Ave. S; info Arlen 206-722-6848 x109

Seattle Human Rights Film Festival, premiere of video "Turf" by Sonya Boothroyd, based on video interviews with women in prison, homeless youth, Police Chief Stamper, and others, a documentary about human needs and SEARCH FOR COMMUNITY in our lives. Info. 206-720-0943

2nd Annual Church Council of greater Seattle **Conference on Children, Youth, and Families**. Congregations and Communities Partnering for Youth, followed by 3 - 5 p.m. intergenerational service project. 9 a.m. - 2:30 p.m., at Fautleroy Church, 9260 California Avenue S.W.; info Michelle Reitan 206-525-1213 x4229

Bill Frisell, voted guitarist of the year by Downbeat Magazine, innovative yet accessible guitarist in jazz music, will play a special solo performance and proceeds benefit Real Change/RCHP. 2 p.m., at Benaroya's Nordstrom-Ilseley Recital Hall; tickets \$20 available now through Wall of Sound, Ticketmaster, and the Benaroya Ticket Office, info rchange@speakeasy.org or 206-441-3247

Urban Action School class taught by Sharon Alexander, **Activist Theater Skills**, activism as articulated and performed in the radical theater tradition including a brief survey of revolutionary greats, participants will make their own short plays, emphasis on production resources available to activists, participants should bring photocopied excerpts of their favorite literary or political material for cut-up. 6 - 9 p.m., at University Baptist Church, 4554 12th Ave NE; Sliding Scale fee \$7.50 - 30, info Urban Action School 206-464-9129, waal@toolsforchange.org, or http://www.endgame.org/uas.html

Women's Programs Noon Lecture Series 10/20 presents **Rev. Harriett Walden, founder of Mothers for Police Accountability, discussing the Virtues Project**, universal values found in all cultures and sacred traditions; their value to touch the human spirit and transform our communities. Noon at Seattle Central Community College, room BE 1110, Broadway just north of Pine. Info. 329-2033.

Alternative Healthcare Access Campaign, first general meeting. **A new group is forming to promote alternative medicine for low-income people and the homeless**. All concerned parties are invited. 7 - 8 p.m. at First United Methodist Church, 811 5th Ave. Info. Kris Weber at 322-9254

Nonviolent Action Community of Cascadia 10/21 presents an **Urban Action School class in organizing a public demonstration**. Learn

how to organize marches, rallies, vigils, pickets, and blockades safely and effectively, includes logistics, outreach, permits, relations with police, peacekeeping, nonviolence training, dealing with hecklers and provocateurs. 6:30 - 9 p.m., at University Baptist Church, 4554 12th Ave NE; Sliding Scale fee \$6.25 - \$25, info Nonviolent Action Community of Cascadia 206-547-0952, Urban Action School 206-464-9129, waal@toolsforchange.org, or http://www.endgame.org/uas.html

AfroCubaWeb is bringing film director Gloria Rolando, Afro-Cuban filmmaker, for a viewing of **Eyes of the Rainbow documentary of Assata Shakur, Black Panther who exiled himself to Cuba**, and discussion. 7 - 9 p.m., at University of Washington, 220 Kane Hall; info Angelyn acfrazier@u.washington.edu

4th Annual National Day of Protest to Stop Police Brutality, Repression, and the Criminalization of a Generation. Rally and March, meet at Seattle Central Community College, Broadway and E. Pine. Call 264-5527 to volunteer and for meetings and building actions.

Nonviolent Action Community of Cascadia 10/28 presents an **Urban Action School class in Media: Getting Your Message Out**. Learn nuts and bolts to prepare all in your group to work with and talk to the media, including press releases, developing relationships, interviews, press conferences, and follow-up. 6:30 - 9 p.m., at University Baptist Church, 4554 12th Ave NE. Sliding Scale fee \$6.25 - \$25; info Nonviolent Action Community of Cascadia 206-547-0952, Urban Action School 206-464-9129, waal@toolsforchange.org, or http://www.endgame.org/uas.html

Rev. G. Simon Harak S.J., author and ethicist, now working full time to end the deadly sanctions against Iraq, will speak on **Behind the Headlines on Iraq**. 7 p.m. at Schafer Auditorium, Lemieux Library, Seattle University, near 12th and Marion. Info. Fellowship of Reconciliation 206-789-5565

Urban Action School class taught by Mayet Dalila, Margo Adair, and Bill Aal: **Creating and Sustaining Activism**. Maintaining a positive vision, issues of trust, community, justice, heart, and spirit, creating just and honest relationships that take into account dynamics rooted in race, class, and gender; self-care and stress through the long haul. 7 - 10 p.m. Fri and 10:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. Sat, at Rainier Valley Unitarian Church, 4620 S Findlay. Sliding Scale fee \$25 - 100, info Urban Action School 206-464-9129, waal@toolsforchange.org, or http://www.endgame.org/uas.html

Critical Mass, an organized coincidence of bicyclists who ride around the streets of Seattle en masse. It happens when a lot of cyclists happen to be in the same place at the same time and decide to cycle the same way together for a while. Come join the fun! 5:30 p.m., at Westlake Park, downtown, 4th & Pine. More info http://www.oz.net/~nic/cm.html

Radical Women Halloween Party with comedy spoofs, dancing, costume contests, and fall buffet. All welcome, 8:30 p.m., at New Freeway Hall, 5018 Rainier Ave S, 4 blocks south of S. Alaska St. on the #7 bus line. Info. 206-722-6057 or 206-722-2453

General Election, remember to vote! 11/2 Voter's pamphlet online http://www.metrokc.gov/elections/

Seattle **WTO 10/17**
 Women Act for Peace

and Women's International League for Peace and Freedom present a **light brunch and educational meeting planning for action on the WTO** - Danger to Human Rights. 11 am at 3842 NE 90th St. near 35th Ave NE. Info. 206-523-1127

Meeting of Seattle Chapter Fellowship of Reconciliation, with **Sally Soriano speaking on opposition to WTO on grounds of human rights, environment, and democracy**. 5 p.m. potluck, 6 p.m. announcements, 6:30 program, at Woodland Park Presbyterian Church, 225 N 70th near Greenwood. Info. 206-789-5565

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom meeting with a speaker from People for Fair Trade, on the WTO opposition. 7 p.m. at 522 32nd Ave S; info 206-720-0430

Meeting of the **Ballard / Fremont Neighborhood group of the NO WTO effort**, working to educate and protest the WTO. 7:30 pm at 3011 NW 75th St.; info. 770-9044

Meeting for nonviolence trainers and others willing to help plan NV trainings for participants in protests against the WTO. 7 p.m., at 2903 S Massachusetts (SE corner Mass. & 29th). Info. Patty 206-323-5295 or plyman@aol.com

Regional Meeting of Direct Action Network to oppose the WTO. 1 p.m., at University Baptist Church, 12th NE and NE 47th; info 206-632-1656

Mondays: Nonviolent Action Community of Cascadia general action planning meeting; everyone welcome, 7 p.m., at University Baptist Church, 4554 12th Ave NE; info 206-547-0952

Tuesdays: Planning meeting of National Lawyers Guild, No to WTO and others to prepare a group of people to act as legal observers, legal support people and to track police misconduct, including plans for videotaping demonstrations to prevent any curtailing of first amendment rights, excessive use of force, unnecessary arrests during protests of the WTO meetings. 7 p.m., at the NO to WTO Office, 1914 4th Ave downtown

Special Thanks to Jean Buskin at bb369@scn.org
For complete listings with meeting times for local advocacy & peace groups, see her fine calendar at http://www.scn.org/activism/PJ-cal.txt

www.realchange.org October 15, 1999 Real Change

Call Bullshit on That "Safe Harbor" plan needs amending

The CPP seeks to provide you with the views and concerns that homeless, poor, and working people's organizations have about pending legislation, both local and national, in a clear, concise, and meaningful way.

Our hope is that the information provided here will inform you about the issues, motivate you to participate in the legislative process, and help make our democracy more representative.

ISSUE: The Safe Harbor plan passed by the City Council has some serious deficits (see p. 3 and 4). Chief among them is that there was no public process about it. As in, zero. Zip. Yet this could be the most important human services legislation passed by the city council ever. As Peter Steinbrueck says, "there has never been policy [made] at this level and [with] this level of coordination." And the proposals were rushed through committee and full council without so much as a public hearing. With no apology for the colloquialism, it's time to call bullshit on that. And fix some of those gaping holes.

BACKGROUND: As we discuss elsewhere in the paper, the main concerns emerging about the plan are three: First, it disavows Steinbrueck's original intent of creating real Safe Harbors: places where people on the street can go without being arrested because of their circumstances.

Second, not only did it get approved with no public process, the community representatives to the new Homeless Advisory Board are not necessarily representatives at all, as they will be hand-picked by city staff. There is no guarantee of public debate either, about the report the council will receive from

its new database developer.

And third, that database. Certainly something we all have to address in this technology age: what information about us do we want public, and what control do we have over it? For those forced to use social services, it is even harder to control the gathering or dissemination information, and the stakes regarding its use are much higher—affecting their ability to find a home, keep their kids, eat.

The council's legislation should have anticipated these issues and addressed them.

Councilmember Nick Licata, usually the voice of caution on the council, voted for the Safe Harbors plan. "I don't think it went far enough," he said. "But it's better than nothing... I don't see it doing any harm."

That depends on who you talk to.

ACTION NEEDED: Call the Council. Start with the Housing Committee: Peter Steinbrueck (chair) (684-8804), Richard McIver (vice-chair, 684-8800), Martha Choë (684-8802), and Sue Donaldson (684-8806). The rest of the council is: Richard Conlin (684-8805), Jan Drago (684-8801), Nick Licata (684-8803), Margaret Pageler (684-8807), and Tina Podlodowski (684-8808). Emails are firstname.lastname@ci.seattle.wa.us

RECOMMENDED MESSAGE: "Amend the Safe Harbors legislation to ensure a measurable increase in emergency shelter; to guarantee grassroots, public input; and to incorporate protections so that the database will not deter anyone from receiving services, or be used punitively."

Real Change/RCHEP
2129 2nd Avenue
Seattle, WA 98121

Seattle Public Library, Serials Unit
1000 Fourth Ave.
Seattle WA 98104

