

Guaranteed Living Income Toronto Newsbreeze



June 18 2017

contains;

A whopping ten items in HOTLINKS this week. Summer reading and listening

There were three events worth attending last week, with groups who may become supportive of a BI.

An article about hanging out with the \$15 and Fairness crowd, after they won their important victory. We need to learn from how they did it.

Attended a meeting with the local LEAP committee. This is an NDP initiative, remember. It was interesting, but the core LEAP group does not seem too interested in BI. They are more concerned with climate change and some labour issues. However, the broader membership of LEAP is likely a lot more interested in BI.

The local labour council held a workshop on the Federal Poverty strategy. They are planning a response to the Federal Government poverty reduction initiative.

back issues at; <http://www.livinggrant.ch/oldbreezes/top.html>

change subscription at; https://admin.hostpoint.ch/mailman/listinfo/toronto_livinggrant.ch

contact publisher at; me@gaz.ca

Livinggrant web site at; <http://www.livinggrant.ch/>

HOT LINKS

Here seems to be the definitive piece on federal poverty consultation so far.

We have tough work still to do on poverty in Canada, by [@publicjustice](https://www.huffingtonpost.ca/joe-gunn/poverty-in-canada_b_17053232.html) http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/joe-gunn/poverty-in-canada_b_17053232.html ... via [@HuffPostCanada](https://twitter.com/HuffPostCanada)

As mentioned above, “Dignity for All” has a simplified form to help people communicate to the Federal government about “Poverty Strategy” You will find my own letter to the federal government elsewhere in this newsletter. Find this website at:

<https://dignityforall.ca/contribute-to-canadas-anti-poverty-plan/>

They’re going to get piloted in BC now.

http://www.basicincomecanada.org/ndp_and_greens_agree_to_do_basic_income_pilot_in_b_c

What is the core 'basic income issue'? | Basic Income News
<http://basicincome.org/news/2017/06/core-basic-income-issue/>

Here is something for enthusiasts of “experiments” to take careful note of! Current Basic Income Experiments (and those so called): An Overview | Basic Income News <http://basicincome.org/news/2017/05/basic-income-experiments->

[and-those-so-called-early-2017-updates/](#)

Here is something well worth downloading for BI enthusiasts.

Watch "ISAC June 15" by @CLEOLegalRights on #Vimeo
<https://vimeo.com/221794633>

Here is ISARC urging us to speak in favour of the provincial labour reforms. BI people should be right in here speaking in favour of these reforms. Follow their advice on getting signed up to speak. The things to say to the committee that bring the Basic Income angle into it will be discussed in this newsletter in coming issues. <http://mailchi.mp/094f78072070/take-action?e=3b5289e7b9>

What it is Like to Win; \$15 and Fair.

Recently I was at a sort of "victory celebration" of the \$15 and Fairness campaign. You should have read by now in this newsletter what it is they have won. They even broke out some wine bottles and toasted each other, before doing some strategizing about nailing down the gains they had made.

One of them said that she had worked over ten years at advocacy of government and had never seen anything like this. I have worked a lot longer than that at advocacy and have rarely seen the like of it. It is impressive for them to get what they have out of these neoLiberal provincial Liberals.

They did it by having specific demands and by not letting

themselves get distracted or 'B.S.ed'. The chant is now "can't stop, won't stop". The government now has to open the act up to do this, which gives F&F some protection from backsliding.

Deena Ladd spoke up. She said that people are scared now, and buying into the scaremongering the business lobby is doing. This must be overcome. They need to make deputations as soon as they know where the committee, meaning the "labour and Employment Committee of the provincial legislature, is going.

Some people are saying they won because the government is weak and facing an election. But the counter is that they are weak and facing defeat because of strong organizing.

"When employers retaliate, and they will..." what will the strategies be?

Yet some employees will be onside. "A fast food CEO says that profits soared after a minimum wage hike", someone said. I am not caught just where this was, but it is the kind of anecdotal arguing that is needed.

The lesson for Basic Income advocates and the anti-poverty movement is that you get things by strategizing, organizing, and demanding. These people were not going to government wheedling for an agreement to get a strategy to reduce wage theft by some percent over so many years.

Of course, we do have to consider that unions have some actual resources with which to organize. How to develop a funding base for a BI movement is a good question.

But one of these years I would love to be able to sit with a good group of BI activists and celebrate a substantial victory like this. Wouldn't you?

LEAPing

I also attended a meeting of the LEAP manifesto people. The LEAP had included a clause about “discussing” a BI, as well as many social issues. It also held a pretty sizeable discussion at OISE on a BI. However, it seems to have been pretty much taken over by the “global warming” crowd.

In future, the LEAP people may be helpful as allies of a BI movement, especially when the “degrowth” aspect of a BI is considered. But the global warming thing is the ultimate “go nowhere” issue. That is a damned shame.

If there are readers of this newsletter of a total “climate fanatic” frame of mind, you can stop reading now and unsubscribe from this newsletter. I do not think there are many here, because such people are so one track obsessed. But there are a lot of people who are just afraid to talk against them because they are such aggressive and extreme people.

I am writing a short piece rebutting the climactic climate catastrophists and will put it up later. I do not want to take up space here discussing this issue. An advocate for an income guarantee or anything else should have a good ability to analyze issues and their relevance to other issues, and to not be drawn into B.S. issues which end up

discrediting his or her own issue.

It might not seem like it from the perspective of ideological left politics and especially in central Toronto, but there is far from full support of the “warming” trope, even among left, progressive people. There is growing impatience with the fanaticism and alarmism of the “warmers” and it will grow. Tagging warming onto the BI movement will not increase support in the short run and will backfire in the long term.

The most peculiar thing about this hysteria about the ‘survival of life on the planet’ is that the real danger to that survival is completely ignored. That is, nuclear war. Some of the same people who are frantic about ‘carbon’ are also the ones howling for a military confrontation between the United States and Russia. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bISlrij7zAw>

No, the LEAP meeting was not just about global warming. It was without any discussion of Basic Income. They also discussed the usual nonsense issues that only a narrow section of the population are interested in.

For example, there was a nod to the “good jobs” thing from the orthodox trade unions. The good jobs were in the last century and we really need freedom from ‘jobs’.

Transit issues were mentioned. This tends to be a local issue that does not interest political parties. However, most of the problem with transit is caused by the disfunction of local government, which is partly caused by the lack of political parties in local governments the size of Toronto's.

This led to one of the few really good ideas floated at this assembly. Some people were talking about developing their own slate of candidates to run for city council. I hope to be able to hear more about that. I couldn't catch them after the meeting.

If you spend some time actually watching the Toronto city council in operation, the need to develop political parties is screaming obvious. Yet for some reason there is an intense hostility to parties and slates in Toronto from certain elements.

Another pretty good idea was for the development of a local LEAP manifesto. Apparently Thunder Bay LEAP was dissatisfied with some elements of national LEAP and came up with their own. It was thought that more new local LEAPs were needed.

As well, someone volunteered to compose a new LEAP anthem.

But some of the less imaginative people present brought things back to earth with a

dull splat. I think they were aligned with OCAP. They talked about the “criminal industrial complex” and were concerned that more noise be made about poverty issues. Social assistance rates must be made high enough to survive on. Ah, yes, we all have to merely survive, don’t we?

Racial justice was brought up! Why do you think we have racism? As some suggested, all that would go away if....

The local labour council held a workshop on the Federal Poverty strategy, June 12 at Steel Worker’s Hall

Indigenous poverty and our poverty

The first thing we learned was about indigenous poverty. It is different from other poverty in Canada.

The Indian act is unique to Canada. It overrode all previously signed treaties based on cooperation between peoples. The Aboriginals did not have capitalism. Their society was basically socialist; a resource sharing, conserving society.

The rest of society needs to come to grips with this colonial legacy if it really wants to create a more just society. Or, I must add, a BI. The question to ask is; what will a decolonized Canadian society look like?

Now, we are all starting to get treated like the aboriginals.

Pop up issues

There are a technical problems in trying to hold a meeting in three different cities. They could not get the connections to work.

“You hearing me now, Toronto?”

“Oops! We lost Winnipeg”.

Someone in one of these cities popped up with a question about the failure to “reference” disabilities. He was disappointed as that was not referenced that night. As another disabled person, I was also somewhat disappointed.

I could also have said that I was disappointed at the continuing failure to recognize that talk about “poverty elimination” denigrates the poor. Talk about equalization goes a lot further.

Another hot point; someone asked about “eliminating child poverty”. She asked how they expected to get her kid out of poverty without getting her out too?

Another topic that popped out is that The System has learned to deal with pressure by declaring a strategy but committing no money. Yes, we have noticed that, especially in Ontario. It is frustrating that people keep letting themselves be manipulated that way.

Some folks thought that government should be funding community groups to hold them to account. This is totally unreal. That is basically what we have had. It has not worked well. What we need is to fund ourselves by building a member base.

We got onto “racialized poverty”. This does not mean just newcomers. People born here also experience poverty. They are four times as likely to be poor if they are “coloured”.

Toward the end of the general discussions we got into making what amounted to a long list of pre Harper age stuff

everybody wanted brought back. I am not much interested in looking backward, however. Things were not so great before Harper.

Making it stick

So we got to the questions session. We got these paper icons in various colours and shapes and we wrote out answers to various questions and used sticky wax to attach them to a large sheet of paper. Sometimes these workshops feel a bit like kindergarten again, but thats okay.

Here were my answers.

Question; what do I want in a poverty reduction plan?

Answer; Guaranteed Living Income!

Q. Who should a poverty reduction Strategy target? (Bulls eye icon)

A. No one! Create Equity. Do not stigmatize anyone.

Q. Who should be part of the Solution to ending poverty?

A. The people who best understand the problem. Not just those who have direct experience and understanding of the problems, but with the best character development and thinking skills.

Q. What current wise practices have been successful? (Weirdly shaped icon, hard to write in)

A. Regarding poverty elimination, there have been few wise practitioners so far. There is a need for a fundamental rethink of the problem.

Q. What are the current gaps?

A. We are missing a dimension of post modernism, specifically post industrialism, post capitalism.

Q. What policies do we need? (Nice light bulb shaped icon)

A. Guaranteed Living Income.

Q. What are the roadblocks?

A. Class, Capitalism, and Inertia.

Q. What are the Hammers? (This came with a nice hammer shaped Icon)

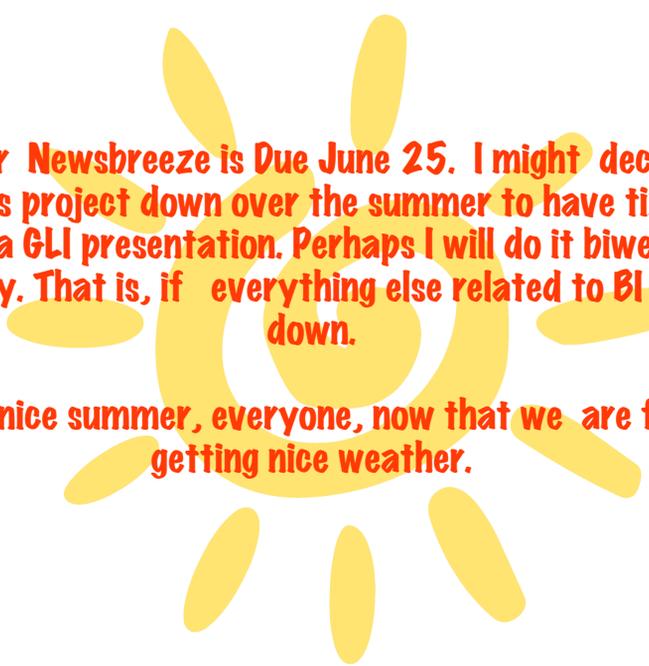
A. A powerful social movement with a clear idea of what it wants.

Q. When do you want all this done?

A. Tomorrow!

I wonder what use they are going to make of all this? Are some node heads deep in the bowels of labor council HQ going to unroll all these sheets and plot the average positions of all the icons? Then do statistical analysis of all the comments? What are they trying to learn?

It is interesting that Sheila Regehr from Basic Income Canada Network showed up for this. I think these people are catching on to the need to try to link up with other social organizations if they are going to get anywhere. Blindly supporting the provincial pilot has not helped them. I have had to partly disassociate myself from them in order to be listened to. That is sad.



Another Newsbreeze is Due June 25. I might decide to slow this project down over the summer to have time to work on a GLI presentation. Perhaps I will do it biweekly or monthly. That is, if everything else related to BI slows down.

Have a nice summer, everyone, now that we are finally getting nice weather.