

Making the Links: Poverty, Inequality, and the Fight for Economic Justice

The Human Rights Agenda

Most of our current rights and freedoms were won through struggle with the powers that be:

- Workers created unions in the mid 1800s and used them to win basic civil and economic rights;
 - The suffragettes won women's political rights in the early 1900s;
 - Following World War II and the horror of the Holocaust, the United Nations championed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
 - During the 1950s and 60s the American civil rights movement won political and some economic rights for African-Americans;
 - The second wave of the women's rights movement in the 1960s and 70s won more respect and fairer treatment for women;
 - The gay rights movement grew in the 1970s and 80s attacking the civil and social exclusion of gays and lesbians; and
 - In the early 1990s, Canada's Aboriginal rights movement gained strength; but unfortunately, extended legal rights, and social and economic rights were slow to follow.
- Recent decades have seen increased globalization and restructuring of the Canadian economy (e.g. Canadian exports grew from 27% to 46% of GDP between 1988 and 2000);
 - Downsizing in the public and private sectors have left many working people with insecure work, unemployed or underemployed;
 - The reduced role of the state means that Canadians have a greater reliance on market forces;
 - We are now witnessing a large contingent workforce – most of these workers are under 35 or new to the labour force;
 - The only consistent salary growth has been for top income earners (top 10% of earners now take 28% of total income generated compared to 10% of total income generated a decade before);
 - Bottom 10% of earners take 1.6% of total income (1% over a decade before); and
 - There has been increased employment for those at the bottom, but a great deal of that work is contingent in nature; less UI benefits and welfare (a focus back to the 1600's British Poor Laws notion of the deserving versus undeserving poor).

Economic Trends

As the Canadian economy responded to globalization and economic restructuring a small number benefited – however many, many more fell behind.

Poverty Trends

While some working people have seen modest improvements in income, the number of people in low-income sector has increased. Even though the Canadian economy grows by more

than \$480 billion a year, many people do not benefit from its growth.

The state, historically responsible to try and equalize levels of inequality, abandons this role in favour of cuts to taxes and social supports.

- There has been some improvements - single moms a little better off now than a decade ago because they have greater access to work, and elderly women have greater access to private pensions;
- Unfortunately child poverty has not changed in over a decade (18% of children live in low income families);
- Immigrant families saw fastest rise in child poverty (from 20% to 27%);
- More and more people are falling further below low income line;
- Most family incomes are not keeping pace with costs of living;
- Canadian government increasingly sees its role as addressing “economic fundamentals” (e.g. inflation and interest rates) not unemployment or underemployment;
- We have witnessed a rolling back of employment standards (e.g. increased work week) and workers rights (restrictions on trade union activity) in the last decade;
- There has also been a consistent attack by most governments on public income support programs (UI, social assistance benefits, public disability benefits, and worker compensation benefits);
- Tax cuts are increasingly becoming the principle economic tool used by government for wealth distribution;
- Tax cuts are not delivering in terms of their own rationale – while there is more economic growth it is not being shared equally;

- For high income earners the tax cuts proposed are never enough; and
- Tax cuts restrict the ability of government to intervene in economy or with social programs.

Can't Move without Movement

The labour movement must increasingly put issues of economic and social justice on the agenda.

- We need to pressure governments to act – after all, their economic and fiscal capacity to act has never been greater than in the last 25 years;
- It's about jobs, but it's also about access to the basics – housing, schooling, health care, child care;
- We need to focus on what we want, not what we oppose; and
- We are an aging population (most dramatic in the world), which means greater reliance on the existing workforce in coming years.

The contents of this Fact Sheet are based on a presentation by Armine Yalnizyan to the National Union's 2003 Equality Leadership School. Armine is a progressive economist who has worked with the National Union on a number of occasions. She recently became the first recipient of the Atkinson Foundation Award for Economic Justice.

NUPGE
www.nupge.ca

Homelessness: Our national disgrace

A Crisis in Our Nation's Streets

Many Canadians felt that positive change would follow November 2001's signing by the federal government, provinces, and territories of the Affordable Housing Framework Agreement. The federal government committed \$680 million over five years to pay for new housing initiatives, with the provinces and territories agreeing to match funding. Unfortunately, the actual implementation has not matched expectations:

- While the \$680 million was targeted to low and moderate-income renter households, some provinces use average market rents to determine an affordable rent;
- Some provinces have used loopholes in the framework agreement to not provide matching dollars; and
- Research shows that six of the ten provinces have actually cut housing spending in 2002-2003, meaning that the new federal money is simply replacing provincial dollars, leading to no net gain in new housing.

The One Percent Solution

The One Percent Solution was launched in 1998 by the Toronto Disaster Relief Committee (TDRC). It calls on governments to restore and renew housing spending to one percent of the total budget—approximately the level spent in the mid-1990s.

Three Recommendations:

- \$2 billion from federal government matched by another \$2 billion from the provinces and territories;
- Restore and renew all government programs aimed at resolving the housing crisis and homelessness disaster; and
- Extend the federal homelessness strategy with immediate funding for new and expanded shelters and services.

Five Key Components of the One Percent Solution:

- supply (new social housing supply);
- affordability (rent supplements for low-income households in new and existing social units);
- supports (additional supportive housing units);
- rehabilitation of substandard housing; and
- emergency relief (double annual spending on services and shelters for the homeless).

There is broad agreement regarding the key elements of a new national housing program. For instance, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities has the following recommendations:

- 20,000 units of new housing, 10,000 units of rehabilitated housing;
- \$300 million to support the Affordable Housing Framework Agreement;
- \$150 million for homelessness initiatives; and
- \$500 million over five years for a new housing rehabilitation fund.

Positive Momentum

Education and advocacy by the Toronto Disaster Relief Committee, the National Housing and Homelessness Network, and other allies, have led to significant responses by the federal government:

- Additional funding for the rehabilitation of substandard housing through the Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program;
- Development of the federal homelessness strategy in 1999 (\$753 million for services and temporary shelters over three years);
- Establishment of the Affordable Housing Framework Agreement in 2001 (\$680 million for new affordable housing over five years – the first new federal funding since 1993);
- Growth in the number of housing and homelessness initiatives in a number of Ontario municipalities (Ottawa, York, Waterloo, London, Hamilton, and Toronto);
- Positive developments at the provincial level in Quebec and Manitoba in the past few years; and
- Although total funding is still short of the \$2 billion goal, a growing number of housing projects and services have been created across Canada. There is positive momentum, especially at the federal and municipal levels, for more funding and stronger housing programs.

The Community Needs to be Involved

The One Percent Solution campaign will provide an opportunity to refine the specific elements of the program design, details, and costs. Community based groups that provide housing and services for the homeless, those at risk of homelessness, and low-income tenants, will be part of the policy formation and program design process.

The contents of this Fact Sheet are based on a presentation by Libby Davies to the National Union's 2003 Equality Leadership School. Libby is the NDP Member of Parliament for Vancouver East and has been advocating for national affordable housing strategy for over two decades.

NUPGE
www.nupge.ca

An Anti-Poverty Agenda for Persons with Disabilities

Poverty and Disability

People with Disabilities (PWD) are far more likely to be unemployed or underemployed than other Canadians leading to higher levels of poverty.

Adults

- Between 12-14% of those living in households have a disability;
- There are approximately 15,000 persons with intellectual disabilities living in institutions;
- More than 55% of adults with disabilities live below the low income cut-off (LICO) as compared to 19% adults without disabilities; and
- A majority of adults with disabilities have incomes below \$15,000/year.

Children and Families

- Between 5-7% of children 0-19 years old have a disability;
- More than 17% of children with disabilities live in households dependent on government assistance (compared to 8% of non-disabled children);
- More than 28% of children with disabilities live in households in lowest income bracket - compared to 17% of those without disabilities; and
- Over 14% of children with disabilities live in households that rely on food banks (compared to 8% of non-disabled children).

Factors Affecting Poverty

Most people with disabilities face barriers to education and employment. In addition, social supports that could overcome these barriers are either non-existent or have been seriously eroded over the last decade.

Education

- 40% of children with intellectual disabilities are not integrated in regular classes and 15% of all children with disabilities do not attend regular school;
- This should be of major concern since participation in social activities increases with education level attained;
- Employment income also generally increases by level of education;
- Those children who attend special education (as opposed to being integrated into 'regular classes'), have a lower level of education; and
- Regular education early in life is associated with favourable economic outcomes later in life.

Employment

- Only 41% of working-age males with disabilities and 30% of females with disabilities are employed year-round; compared to 76% of males without disabilities and 63% of females without disabilities;
- Workplace barriers range from discrimination in recruitment and hiring practices, lack of

access to employment and workplace supports, to a lack of access to training opportunities; and

- For 64% of two-parent families with a child with a disability, one parent has to leave the labour market to care for their child, 40% of parents with children with disabilities find themselves only able to work at reduced hours, and over 70% pass up promotions.

Supports

- Less than half of the 2 million persons with disabilities access the support services available;
- At least 100,000 people with disabilities in Canada need modifications in the home;
- Some 80,000 children with disabilities have medication expenses that their parents are not insured for and therefore must pay themselves;
- Over 70% of personal supports to persons with disabilities are provided by family members; and
- Women are the main provider of unpaid support (65%), with many women facing the 'triple burden' of domestic responsibilities, work outside the home, and caring for a disabled family member.

Income Programs

- At least one third of those Canadians relying on social assistance benefits are persons with disabilities;
- Often rigid employable/unemployable distinctions do not allow for work programs adapted to individual needs of a person with a disability; and
- Medications and other benefits available through social assistance for persons with disabilities are often denied to them when they enter the workforce, often providing

persons with disabilities with an economic penalty if they enter the paid workforce.

An Anti-Poverty Agenda

An anti-poverty agenda for people with disabilities is desperately needed. It needs to involve all levels of government to address the need for greater social investment in individuals with disabilities, along with their families and communities.

The labour movement must adopt a disability rights agenda that includes lobbying all levels of government to focus on:

- Increasing access to employment, support, and decent wages;
- A national children's agenda to meet the needs of all children with disabilities;
- A national income security program that recognizes the costs of disability as a collective cost to society;
- A national comprehensive public system of disability support services;
- A family supports policy strategy;
- A national inclusive education strategy; and
- Making accessible design an important element of any infrastructure development.

The contents of this Fact Sheet are based on a presentation by Michael Bach to the National Union's 2003 Equality Leadership School. Michael is the Executive Vice-President of the Canadian Association for Community Living.

NUPGE
www.nupge.ca

Racial Inequality in Access to Work and Incomes

Big Changes

Canada's changing population, immigration, and labour force

Canada's population is dramatically changing as a result of increasing levels of immigration. Significantly, many of these newcomers to Canada are people of colour.

- Canada welcomed an annual average of close to 200,000 new immigrants and refugees over the 1990's;
- Immigration accounted for more than 50% of population growth between 1991 and 1996;
- Immigration accounted for 70% of the growth in the labour force, over the same period;
- Over 75% of new immigrants in the 1980's and 1990's came from what is called the 'Third World'; and
- The 2001 Canadian Census data, based on individuals self-identifying, found Visible Minorities make up 13.4% of the Canadian population while immigrants accounted for 18.4%. Those figures are projected to rise to 20% and 25%, respectively, by 2015.

Social Exclusion

We are seeing increased levels of 'social exclusion' of people from non-European backgrounds (people of colour or also known as 'racialized immigrants'). Social exclusion is defined as:

exclusion from participating in civil society through legal sanction and other

institutional mechanisms; the denial of access to social goods (health care, education, housing) and economic exclusion.

In the Labour Force

- The fastest growing forms of work are non-standard jobs such as contract, temporary, part-time, piece meal, shift work, or self-employment - there are fewer good jobs;
- There is an over representation of people of colour in low-income sectors and occupations;
- Proportion of income from government transfers fell from 19% in 1995 to 11% in 1998; and
- In 1998, racialized immigrants with university education experienced 10.4% unemployment rate compared to 6.6% for non-racialized immigrants and 4.2% for non-racialized Canadian born - the rate for racialized Canadian born was 6.3%.

The Racialization of Poverty

- Throughout the 1990's, racialized group members and new immigrants were twice as likely as other Canadians to live in poverty;
- The rate for racialized children under six years of age living in low income families was 45% - almost twice the overall figure of 26% for all children living in Canada (1995); and
- In 1998, the annual wages and salaries of recent immigrants were one-third less than those of other Canadians.

Racializing Crime

After the terrorist attack of September 11th, 2001, national security has led to racial profiling and targeting of groups in the workplace and in the community – most notably Muslims, Arabs, West Asians, and South Asians;

- There also has been an increase in deportations and attacks on people of Muslim, Arab, and Asian background;
- Racialized groups, especially those from low-income and marginal communities, bear the brunt of the law and order agenda; and
- Discrimination in the criminal justice system has led to higher levels of incarceration of racialized youth.

Segregated Neighbourhoods in Urban Canada

- There is a concentration of poverty or residential segregation intensifying along racial lines.

Social Exclusion and Health

- Discrimination in the health care system is often characterized by language barriers; lack of cultural sensitivity, absence of cultural competencies, barriers to access of health services, and inadequate funding for community health services.

Policy and Organizational Responses

The labour movement must increasingly commit itself to:

- Involvement in coalition building and community mobilization;
- A renewed commitment to organizing the unorganized, especially in those workplaces made up predominantly of racialized immigrants;
- A continued lobby for employment equity legislation in all Canadian jurisdictions;
- A lobby of governments in Canada to more readily recognize the work and education credentials of new immigrant workers;
- Better forms of democratic representation to ensure that racialized immigrants can participate in our political process;
- Campaigning for higher minimum wage levels; and
- Lobby for public universal child care.

The contents of this Fact Sheet are based on a presentation by Grace-Edward Galabuzi to the National Union's 2003 Equality Leadership School. Grace-Edward is a political scientist at York University and author of Canada's Creeping Economic Apartheid.

NUPGE
www.nupge.ca

Canada's Aboriginal Peoples Social Inclusion and Communities at Risk

A History of Exclusion

Canada's Aboriginal Peoples have experienced many injustices in their homeland since the arrival of Europeans in North America over 500 years ago:

- The entire Beothuk First Nation in Newfoundland, was wiped out by 1829;
- In the 19th century, settlers often gave blankets infested with small pox to Aboriginal peoples resulting in thousands of deaths;
- Aboriginal people were forced on to reserves until the early 1900s;
- The Indian Act of 1876 assumed control over First Nations affairs, outlawing cultural activities, restricting self-support (hunting, fishing, and trade), and removing status from Native women who marry non-native men;
- Amendments to the Indian Act in 1894 led to the forced placement of tens of thousands of children in residential schools. The last of these residential schools closed in 1988;
- More than 50% of Aboriginal children, who attended those residential schools, were forcefully taken from home, not allowed to speak their languages, and subjected to extreme emotional, physical and sexual abuse;
- Aboriginal people were denied the right to vote until 1960 (1968 in Quebec); and
- Centuries of built-up grievances of Aboriginal people exploded into national attention with the 1990 "Indian Summer", when the military suppressed a Mohawk community at Oka.

Poverty and Social Exclusion

As a consequence of Canada's racist policies, Aboriginal peoples and their communities have been confronted by a host of social problems. Just a brief review of some of the problems would include:

Income

- Unemployment rate for Aboriginal people in the labour force rose from 15.4% in 1981 to 24.6% in 1991, despite advances in education – on some Aboriginal reserves rates are as high as 80% and 90%;
- Earned income for the average Aboriginal individual in 1991 was \$14,561 compared to \$24,000 for all Canadians - a \$1,000 DECLINE since 1981;

Crisis for Aboriginal Children

- The Infant mortality rate among First Nations people is more than double the Canadian rate (17.2 compared to 7.9 per 100 babies);
- The suicide rate is 3 times higher than the national rate – 7 times higher for youth 17 to 24 years old;
- Only 42% of Aboriginal children complete grade 12 compared to 61% of Canadian children; and
- Death rates from injury are 3 to 4 times higher among Aboriginal children than among Canadian children in general.

Health

- The incidence of TB and diabetes is 17 times and 3 times higher, respectively, among the Aboriginal population - in 1991, 75% of the TB cases reported in Canada were of Aboriginal origin;
- Over 30% of Aboriginal adults reported a disability - more than double the national rate. Among Aboriginal adults aged 15 to 34, the disability rate is three times the national rate for the same age group; and
- 54% of 74,000 First Nations housing units do not meet basic standards.

Incarceration

- First Nations people make up 3% of the population but more than 10% of the prison population;

Experiences of Social Inclusion

Although faced by many barriers throughout history, Aboriginal people still have been able to make outstanding contributions to Canadian society. There are strong examples of mutual support and shared struggle that members of Canada's First Nations have provided to the rest of Canada.

- Thousands of First Nations men joined in the fight against fascism during the second world war;
- Thousands of students, environmentalists, trade union activists and women's organizations have been involved in international

human rights campaigns and have fought alongside First Nations for justice in places like Oldham River, James Bay and Oka;

- Some unions, including the National Union, have passed resolutions creating aboriginal equity seats on their executive boards;
- The growing Aboriginal Rights movement is having significant influence on public policy; and
- Many First Nations people are playing a highly visible role in Canada's cultural, political, and economic spheres.

The contents of this Fact Sheet are based on a presentation by Lisa Allgaier to the National Union's 2003 Equality Leadership School. Lisa is a consultant on Aboriginal Issues and has worked with the National Union's component, BCGEU/NUPGE, on a number of Aboriginal workshops.

NUPGE
www.nupge.ca

Moving Toward Equality

Legal Victories and Equality Struggles of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered (LGBT) Communities

That was Then

Historically gays and lesbians in Canada faced a wide range of social and political repression:

- Criminal law was used as means of policing Lesbian, Gays, Bisexuals, and Transgendered (LGBT) people instead of being used as an instrument of equality;
- From 1892 to 1969, homosexuality was considered a crime under the Criminal Code of Canada;
- Between 1952 to 1977, Canada's immigration law barred LGBT people from entering Canada – many foreign-born Canadian LGBT people were often threatened with deportation;
- Until 1973, homosexuality was considered a mental illness by most of the medical profession, with a number of intrusive conversion “therapies” which included electroshock;
- Transgendered people are still subject to psychiatric diagnosis under the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual; and
- LGBT people were banned from the Armed Forces until the 1990's.

This is Now...

With the American civil rights and women's movements came an increased emphasis on human rights, and removing legal and social barriers to marginalized groups.

- In 1968, homosexuality was finally decriminalized;
- Quebec became the first province to adopt human rights legislation in 1977;
- Ontario implemented human rights legislation in 1986, to be followed by all remaining provinces and territories;
- The first gay and lesbian protest on Parliament Hill was in 1971;
- The 1981 police raids on bathhouses led to a number of protests and is often considered the Canadian equivalent of 1969's Stonewall Riots in New York City;
- In 1982, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms was passed as part of the Constitution (with equality guarantees coming into effect in 1985);
- In 1985, a Parliamentary Committee traveled across Canada to hear public submissions on how laws should be changed to comply with the equality guarantees of the Charter of Rights. This resulted in the Committee recommending that the Canadian Human Rights Act be amended to include “sexual orientation” as a prohibited ground of discrimination;
- The Government of Canada, in 1986, pledged to take “whatever measures are necessary” to prohibit sexual orientation discrimination;
- In 1996, “sexual orientation” was finally added as a protected ground in the Canadian Human Rights Act;

- In 1999, the Ontario Court of Appeal rules, in *M versus H*, in favour of same sex couples equality;
- Over the past few years, there has been many legal gains made by gay and lesbian people across the country;
- Provinces now recognize adoption rights, inheritance, and spousal support;
- Astounding cultural gains with the growth of Pride celebrations; LGBT community organizations hitting their stride, union and worker groups flourish, popular portrayals more frequent and brought into mainstream; and
- In 2003, the Supreme Court of Appeal in British Columbia, Québec, and Ontario rule that it is unlawful to ban same-sex marriages.
 - abandoning school, depression, self-abusive behaviour, suicide;
- Censorship of LGBT literature still continues (Little Sisters Bookstore, internet filters in schools); and
- Anti-LGBT hate propaganda is not recognized as hate crimes (although there currently are attempts to have it included in Canada's hate laws)

Larger Issues

LGBT movement needs to address ways to move their agenda beyond a narrow rights focus to one that looks at fostering diversity:

- We need to recognize that minority rights are not just a numbers game;
- Diversity in Canadian society needs to be seen as a value added;
- The next frontiers for the LGBT community are: reaching out to youth, addressing poverty, age-ism and trans-equality, remaining vigilant and unsatisfied with the status quo and formal equality, taking a holistic approach to health and wellness, and incorporating a truly intersectional approach.

The Myths and Barriers Continue

Despite all these positive gains made by the LGBT movement, full equality has not been achieved.

- Negative stereotypes continue to endure (child predators, inability to maintain relationships, all about sex, outrageous behaviour);
- Same sex relationship recognition is still limited to formal legal recognition in all but three of Canada's jurisdictions – Ontario, Quebec and British Columbia (as of September 2003);
- Discrimination against LGBT people is often 'underground';
- There still remains a social stigma against LGBT people;
- LGBT youth are particularly affected by insults, bad jokes, threats or attacks: all leading to insecurity, anxiety, shame, and worse still

The information in this Fact Sheet is based on a presentation by Gilles Marchildon to the National Union's 2003 Equality Leadership School. Gilles is the Executive Director of the Ottawa-based, EGALE – a national advocacy organization for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered people in Canada.

NUPGE
www.nupge.ca

Poverty and Democracy

Limits on Third Party Election Spending

The Problem

It is becoming a generally accepted fact that the political party who can spend the most on an election does better. But this diminishes the fundamental principles of a democratic system. Furthermore, it means that the interests of the majority of people are not as important as the interests of the elite.

- According to the Chief Electoral Officer, under the current system 3% of donors account for 45% of all money raised by the political parties;
- Of the top 25 government contractors, two thirds are major donors to the governing party, and they donate to that party, versus all other parties combined, at a ratio of six-to-one (at the riding/candidate level, that ratio is 30-to-one);
- This is not direct proof of corruption in the political process, but it is a strong indicator that major donors give, not simply out of a sense of civic duty, but with the expectation that they will get something in return;
- Research in the United States shows that, for last three election cycles, 94% of the time, the highest spender in a Senate race won;
- Currently in Canada, the candidate who spends the most isn't always the winner – but it is moving in that direction;
- The Mayor of New York spent \$89 million – more than all candidates combined in federal elections in Canada or the United Kingdom;

- In the United Kingdom, there are relatively small amounts of money involved in campaigns and the debate tends to focus more on issues of policy;
- The United States voter turnout is less than 50% of eligible voters – people are giving up on the system as it becomes clear that only the rich can win; and
- The lack of access to wealth is fast becoming the way to exclude people from the democratic process.

History of Attempts to Limit Third Party Spending on Elections

There have been a number of attempts by the federal government to limit third party spending. Unfortunately, the federal government appeared to only offer lukewarm resistance to challenges presented by right wing organizations (notably the National Citizen's Coalition). This was demonstrated by repeated refusals to appeal court decisions.

- In the early 1990's, there were initial moves by the federal government to limit third party spending (money spent by non-party organizations during election campaigns);
- The first challenge was from the National Citizen's Coalition (NCC) on the grounds that it violated principles of free speech – the court decision which ruled in favour of the NCC was not challenged by the federal government;

- The federal government amended the Elections Act in the mid-1990's and that was challenged by the National Citizen's Coalition. Again, the court ruled in favour of the NCC and the federal government did not challenge; and
- The third challenge to the federal government's latest attempt to limit third party spending was brought forward by Stephen Harper (head of NCC at the time and currently leader of the Canadian Alliance) and is currently before the Supreme Court of Canada.

What the Right Has Against Third Party Limits

While historically opposed to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the National Citizen's Coalition successfully used it to appeal third party spending legislation in the Supreme Court on the issue. NCC's arguments have been:

- Limits on third party spending on elections, limits an individual's right to free speech;
- Elections are, by their nature, about free speech;
- The Charter allows only justified limits on free speech;
- There is no justification for limits as there is no Canadian social science evidence indicating that third party spending has an impact; therefore limits placed on spending are inappropriate.

Our Response

We argue that the NCC's position is essentially a question about corporate rights to free speech. The free speech envisioned in the

Charter is for individuals in a democratic society and not necessarily for legally created corporations. On the other hand, third party spending on elections appears to drown out individual voices in the election process thereby undermining an individual's ability to exercise the right to free speech.

- Corporations are not necessarily entitled to the same level of free speech given to individuals;
- Third party spending tends to drown out smaller, less funded, voices and thereby undermining their free speech rights;
- There is significant social scientific evidence from other countries that suggest that third party spending can have an effect on election outcomes – this should be accepted in Canadian courts; and
- Obviously third party spending has an impact otherwise why would so much money be spent on trying to keep it from being regulated.

The information in this Fact Sheet is based on a presentation by David Baker to the National Union's 2003 Equality Leadership School. David is the senior partner in bakerlaw. David also helped establish Canada's first legal aid clinic for persons with disabilities, the Advocacy Resource Centre for the Handicapped (ARCH) and became its founding Executive Director. David was active in securing the inclusion of persons with disabilities in human rights legislation and in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. David is currently representing the National Anti-Poverty Organization and Democracy Watch—both organizations have joined forces as interveners to oppose the NCC case against third party spending in the Supreme Court.

A Different World Is Possible

Globalization, International Solidarity, Human Rights, and Poverty

How Did We Get Here?

Over the past twenty-five years, a handful of huge multinational companies have quietly, but effectively, moved power away from sovereign nations with the assistance of a variety of right-of-centre governments.

- The 'holy trinity' of corporate globalization is:
 - the International Monetary Fund (IMF),
 - the World Bank, and
 - World Trade Organization (WTO).

All three of these organizations are working to move global economic control away from sovereign nations to multinational corporations;

- With an absolute faith in global free markets, the multinationals and governments are establishing global and regional trade agreements restricting the ability of government to regulate businesses;
- These agreements restrict the policy choices available to governments—for example, governments are often prevented from favouring local companies, or from helping workers adjust to new economic conditions;
- Multinationals use their ability to locate (or relocate) production, to squeeze concessions from countries and workers; and
- Countries compete to offer corporations the most concessions of workers' protection, environmental protection, and even basic democratic rights.

The Results

The results have not been good for the majority of the world's people.

- Globally there has been massive job losses;
- Social programs are cut, downsized, privatized or completely eliminated;
- A global push by governments for weakened labour and environmental standards; and
- The privatization of many necessary services like water, electricity, and health care.

A Brief Global Trade Lexicon

Washington Consensus

- The policy adopted by most governments, international banks, and trade bodies which advocates privatization, free trade, reduced public sector, and deregulation.

International Monetary Fund (IMF)

- The IMF was created in 1944, as a pillar of the post-war economic order. Developing countries borrow huge sums from the IMF. The terms usually require countries to adopt structural adjustment programs that are based on 'free market' principles;
- The evidence shows that IMF policies, supposedly intended to 'stabilize' economies through such prescriptions as cuts in public spending, privatization, and deregulation,

has inflicted damage on many countries, and impoverished many people; and

- The IMF's resources come from the quotas or capital subscriptions of member countries, its capacity to borrow from lenders, and its ability to draw on a line of credit from various countries.

World Bank

- International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, usually called the World Bank, was intended to reduce poverty and improve living standards by promoting sustainable growth and investment in people;
- The World Bank provides loans, technical assistance, and policy guidance to developing-country members;
- The World Bank is accused of being undemocratic in decision-making, ignoring the views of developing countries, funding environmentally unsound projects, and a market-oriented approach strictly applied.

World Trade Organization (WTO)

- Established in 1995, the WTO supposedly helps trade flow smoothly in a system based on rules, settles trade disputes between governments, and organizes trade negotiations;
- The WTO administers the international agreement dealing with trade in goods among countries – the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs;
- The WTO is attempting to accelerate corporate globalization with the negotiation of: the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) and the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS), which deals with such issues as copyright, trademarks, patents, and trade secrets.

What Is To Be Done?

1 Make the Global Economy Work for People

- The protection of public services, including health care, education, social and environmental services, free from WTO rules;
- The assurance that trade agreements include a commitment to the principles of democracy and full respect for labour and other human rights; and
- A global strategy to fight poverty, hunger, illiteracy, and disease (e.g. providing affordable medicines to fight the AIDS pandemic).

2 Fair Trade NOT Free Trade

- The protection of national sovereignty;
- The reform of the world trading system to benefit the poor in developing countries;
- Better regulation of the international financial system (including a restructuring of the IMF and the World Bank);
- Controls on currency speculation (instituting a "Tobin Tax");
- Making the international trade process more democratic and transparent (e.g. consultation with unions & other civil society organizations).

The information in this Fact Sheet is based on a presentation by Larry Brown to the National Union's 2003 Equality Leadership School. Larry is the National Secretary-Treasurer of the National Union of Public and General Employees.