

Welfare can happen to anyone

Even you

by Cheryl Croucher

According to popular belief, people on welfare are lazy, no-good bums out to make a fast buck off respectable, law-abiding, tax-paying citizens.

Yet Eighty-eight percent of people on welfare are utterly incapable of earning a living. These are "the elderly, the sick, the disabled, and women in charge of families which require their presence in the home." Those getting "something for nothing" constitute less than two per cent of the total number of people on social assistance in all of Canada.

Accounting for the other twelve per cent are the "unemployed-employable," those men who probably work at jobs that pay modest wages, but who sometimes find themselves unemployed because of lay-offs, job eliminations, little or no education and trade skills, or those with psychological problems that prevent them from even holding a permanent job.

Welfare in Alberta is divided into two categories - city and provincial. To be eligible for city welfare persons must have resided in Edmonton and been self supporting for at least a year; otherwise they have to apply for provincial welfare. Edmonton city welfare is mainly for short term assistance and the provincial for longer terms.

Individual circumstances, such as family size and children's age and sex, determine the amount of assistance provided, be it full or supplemental, in which case the person may be employed but



So bloody cold today...wish we still had the car...Hell, I'd have to park it anyway....Finally, some warmth...where's the elevator? Would you look at him...Just cause I pressed that button he thinks I'm some kind of dirt or something! Just you 'wait, mister...someday you'll get yours... ..Gees, I gave her my name and they new I was coming down...what's with this waiting?.....I'm sure I've got time to sit here all day and look at these crummy old magazines...What the hell's he doing calling my name out in front of all these people? Think the whole world should know I'm here?God, this cubby hole of an office...great view of the parking lot Don't like her...questions, questions, good grief they got my name three times, think I'm going to change it or lie or somethingwhat do you mean empty my pockets...Hell, all I want is a little help, you'd think I was some kind of criminal or something...Lady, if I had any income I wouldn't be in this goddamn place...what do you mean I got start selling my stuff, and move...what does she think I am some rat...I'd like to see her live in those holes they pass off on us...All I want is a decent place to live, not some dirty old rat hole. All she have to do is let me have 10 bucks more and I could make...hey, you can't even feed chickens on this amount, want my kids to starve to death? Goddammit what do you mean I have to have the phone cut off...No paper?..... What's this, \$4 a month for clothes...That wouldn't even keep my kid in diapers let alone pants and a shirt...Good Lord, how the hell am I going to manage?..... They're so afraid I'm going to get something from them and I'm not even getting anything...How do they expect me to live...I feel like crawling in a hole...Here we pay into this goddamn thing, then come the time when you need it and they won't give anything....oh yeah, that is gratitude for you....Dammit, I should have listened to mother and never married that no good rat...Look what he's got me into now...I suppose they end up taking him away from me too....You know, the least they could do is smile when they kick in the teeth.....

What is Scientific Theory

The Department of Philosophy will sponsor two lectures by its visiting professor Arne Naess, D Phil, founder of Oslo School of Philosophy, today at 3:30 p.m. in Tory Lecture-11. Professor Naess will speak on "A Defence of Unscientific World Views." He will speak again Thursday, March 16, at 3:30 p.m. in TL-11 on "What is Scientific Theory?"

Professor Naess has published many books in the areas of Science, Scepticism, as well as books on Ghandi and Spinoza; he is editor-in-chief of Inquiry.

Ontario Gov't to slash student aid

TORONTO (CUP)-- Reversing a previous decision and rejecting key recommendations of the Wright Report on Post-Secondary Education, the Ontario Government will slash student aid next year according to a confidential cabinet document.

Funds for the Ontario Graduate Fellowship Program will be cut by \$500,000 reducing the program's funding to \$3 million.

Undergraduates can also expect to lose a lot of their Ontario Student Award Program grant money under secret treasury board recommendation revealed to a closed meeting of the Ontario Committee on

is not earning enough. The Department budgets according to "arbitrary" guidelines. For example, the food allowance for a woman is less than for a man. Sufficient medical grounds may warrant exceptions for special diets. The limit on rent dictates the type of housing the welfare recipient is able to obtain. Allowances are not made for telephone services. The City of Edmonton Social Assistance Department would not release the exact guideline figures).

The welfare system is a failure though and the lutor most responsible for this is the deduction of extra income from the total monthly allotment should it exceed the allowable amount.(\$25!) In other words, welfare recipients pay 100 per cent income tax. Thus there is no chance or incentive for persons to get out. This, is the Welfare Trap.

Some efforts have been made to change the present system however.

In 1971, the City of Edmonton Social Assistance Department finished a 3 year Special Project that dealt with

the unemployed-employable .

A total of 109 families voluntarily participated in the project. Their progress and final results were compared with a corresponding control group on the regular welfare program.

The project based itself on the "hypothesis that, given intensive counselling, encouragement, and mobilization of existing resources, a social assistance client can be channelled into a satisfactory job placement that will result in eventual reduction of dependency and the need for financial assistance."

Usually the first time a person applies for welfare, it is a last resort after all other means of financial aid have been exhausted. Shame and embarrassment typify the applicant's emotional state, for he is very anxious to get back on his feet.

But, as time drags on and the disappointments pile up, the welfare way of life or life style becomes more ingrained. Each return happens to welfare becomes a little easier, a little more often, and each stay a little longer than the last.

This process is a self-perpetuating downward spiral that breaks down and steals away the individual's dignity and self-respect.

Studies indicate that someone on assistance for three years will ninety per cent of the time remain on the rolls.

The project attempted to treat the people as responsible individuals rather than merely numbers in case histories. People were called by their first names, and offered a cup of coffee when they came in. The warm friendly atmosphere seemed to cut down barriers and gave people a feeling of acceptance as persons. Clients participated in budget planning, and formed committees to discuss problems and to make their own decisions. At the same time persons had their education upgraded or were retrained in other jobs if they wanted this. Several

reccomendations to the government come out of this study as well.

Social workers and persons involved in the project suggested that intensive counselling and use of its services such as marriage and psychological counselling and legal services could be used to much greater advantage than at present. Increased expenditure at the beginning of the cycle would help the person back on his feet immediately with the end result that people would remain off the welfare rolls.

Before any advancement can be made though the public misconceptions about welfare must be changed. The stigma of welfare must be relegated to the past. After all, welfare can happen to anyone, even you.

U of A excavating in Italy

This year four courses will be offered - Roman Archeology and Civilization, The Art of the Baroque in Rome, Topics in Papal History, L'Histoire dans l'antiquite - as well as archeological studies at Monte Irsi, in southern Italy where the U of A is excavating under the direction of Dr. A. M. Small of the classics department.

Courses in Rome have the same value as those taught on campus and for the same duration - six weeks. Classes are limited to twenty-five students and stress lecture - excursions. They are organized to leave students as much time for private study and sight-seeing as possible.

Interested students should contact Dr. G. Hermanses, Department of Classics.

Australian judge to speak here on law

The inaugural speaker for the John Alexander Wier Memorial Lectures will be the Right Honourable Sir Victor Windeyer, an eminent judge of the High Court of Australia. He will deliver a lecture in two parts entitled Public Law and Legal Institutions--An Australian Viewpoint on March 13 and 14 at 8:00 p.m. in the Jubilee Auditorium Social room. He will give a lecture on The Place of Law in History and of History in Law the following week.

Sir Victor completed his education in Sydney, and was admitted to the Bar of New South Wales in 1925. He lectured at the University of Sydney Law School for many years, and was appointed to the High Court of Australia in 1958 and to the Privy Council in 1963. Among his publications are a leading text on Lectures on Legal History and many scholarly articles on legal and historical topics.

The sponsor of these lectures is the Institute of Law Research and Reform which operates by agreement between the U of A, the Law Society of Alberta, the Law Society of Alberta and the Provincial government. The two aspects of the Institute's work are (1) the achievement of Law reform and encouragement of general research in the law. For further information and complementary tickets please telephone the Institute offices at 432-5291 or call in at +402 Law Centre, U of A.