



Free Robert Lovelace!

FEBRUARY , 2008- Robert Lovelace, former chief of the Ardoch Lake Algonquin First Nation, has begun a six month jail sentence for his role in peacefully resisting uranium exploration near Sharbot Lake this passed fall. He and his community will also have to pay \$35,000 in fines. Frontenac Ventures, A uranium exploration company has claimed 30,000 acres of land in eastern Ontario around the headwaters of the Mississippi system, which feeds the Ottawa River.

Uranium mining poses a serious threat to the integrity of the region's ecology, as well as the health of inhabitants. It also compromises the sovereignty of the Algonquin first nations, threatening to poison their traditional territory, all of which legally belongs to them, and is officially unceded to the Canadian government. Uranium is an extremely dangerous

radioactive element and its extraction from the earth requires violent destruction: surface stripping, clear cutting, and blasting are all common practices of the process. The residents of the Ottawa valley, from both native and settler populations, have been resisting this unwanted exploitation and are standing in the way of Frontenac Ventures, the Ontario Government, and all those who wish to destroy and exploit the earth for profits.

Grandfather William Commanda and Honorary Chief Harold Perry, respected Algonquin elders, have called for a halt to uranium mining, and many thus interpret resistance to mining as a necessity under Algonquin law.

"I am in a dilemma. I want to obey Canadian law but Algonquin law instructs me that I must preserve Creation. I must follow Algonquin law", declared Lovelace before being taken away in handcuffs.

Resistance has been a constant since Frontenac Ventures first began



exploration. A drilling site was blockaded by a coalition of Ardoch Algonquins, Shabot Obaadjiwan Algonquins, and settler groups for 101 days, and other protests have been numerous. "It is now time to take direct action again to secure the area so that no further encroachment occurs on our ancestral homeland", said Lovelace a few weeks before his trial.

Activists, from both native and settler groups are demanding a complete moratorium on uranium mining in Ontario. The Community Coalition Against Uranium Mining (CCAMU) is the main settler group working against Frontenac Ventures and there destructive enterprise.

Words Free Will

ONLINE

SUPPORT 'EM>> www.ccamu.ca



A Living Wage>>

A Hamilton contributor takes a look at the issue of the working poor and what a living wage means...



Mujeres Libres >>

Martha Acklesberg, in Free Women of Spain, reviews the history of the struggle for women's emancipation in Spain...



Compelled to

Remain Alien >>

We look at the history of Chinese Immigration to Canada...

about us>>

Putting In The Dues

At our founding conference in September, 2007 we decided to put in place a dues structure. This means that as members of Common Cause we agree to, as our constitution puts it “pay 1% to 3%” of income according to the number of people financially dependent on the member concerned. , explains **Alex D**

We realize that this form of funding runs counter to most activist groups and the general activist culture in Ontario. The following 10 points are thus meant to explain why we choose to pay dues and why we think it's so important.

1. Let's start with the basics. It takes resources to do what we want to do such as having a mass distribution of Linchpin and a great website. Before putting in our time and effort it's nice to know we actually have the resources to carry out these projects. With dues, we have a good idea ahead of time of what we can reasonably achieve.

2. It's less work. Instead of spending our time fundraising we can focus on organizing. A little bit from everyone each month adds up quick so we get a decent budget without having to go from one fundraising event to another with zero resources in between.

3. All activist groups pay dues anyways, it just doesn't get called that. Instead of paying out of pocket on an ad hoc basis, we have a formal structure which means stability, makes long-term planning possible, and isn't dependent on how generous we happen to feel at a particular moment.

4. It's really not that much. For example, 3% of \$12,000 (roughly the income of someone working full-time at minimum wage minus taxes and deductions) is about \$7.50 a week. 1% of that is a little over \$2 a week, if you have dependents. Of course, some of us truly can't spare this, which is why we make exceptions until people are in a better position. No one is turned away because they really can't afford dues. If you're doing the math and find yourself paying \$15+ per week, it might seem like a lot

but then you can most likely afford it. We don't want to be insensitive but let's be honest. With very real exceptions, for the vast majority of us in this relatively privileged part of the world, dues means having one or two beers less a week at the pub. Not a big sacrifice for building an effective organization that can have a real impact in our movements and communities. Again, without denying that some of us really can't spare the dues, for most of us it's about priority not ability.

5. Dues allow us to accumulate a war chest over time so that when money needs to be spent immediately it's already on hand. The informal “putting your hand in your pocket” method can't cover that sort of need anything as easily as it can deal with day to day spending. Before going into a campaign or struggle, it's nice to know we already have a war chest that we can rely upon as the need rises.

6. Dues prevent inequality sneaking in through the back door. Without dues those with deeper pockets will ultimately have a bigger say over the organization since they will be doing more things like attending far away events, workshops, or are better able financially to deal with police oppression. With dues, how much you make doesn't affect how much or how little you can participate and those of us with little means can participate to a greater extent than would be possible otherwise.

7. Dues tell people and organizations we'd like to work with that we are a stable organization, with some resources, able to make a meaningful contribution within our means to whatever struggles we are involved with. A stable dues structure says we are reliable and can be counted on to stick around beyond the short-term.



8. Dues build the organization beyond providing stable funding. First, dues force us to work to maintain an effective and accountable financial structure (local treasurers, budgets, dues collection). Second, dues build and maintain commitment to the organization. When you contribute your hard earned money, and all the sacrifice that this entails, you want to make sure that it's being put to good use. In short, you now have a bigger stake in the organization. No one wants to pour their blood and sweat into something and see it go to waste. Collectively, this means a high-level of commitment to the organization.

9. Dues allow us to contribute to the organization even when we may not be able to put a lot of time into it. The amount of time we have to give goes up and down depending on whatever else is going on in our lives. With dues, we're able to maintain a minimum level of contribution and ties to the organization when life doesn't allow us to do more than this.

10. They're our dues! We're an anarchist organization which means we practice direct democracy and so we all decide how our dues will be used. According to our constitution, half the dues stay at the local level to be used by the local as they democratically see fit. The other half goes to the Ontario treasurer to be used as the entire organization sees fit via our general assembly and delegate council.

argument>>

A Living Wage

A full time job should keep you OUT of poverty, not IN it! Is that not the cure prescribed by politicians and much of the public for poverty: to merely have people who are homeless and on assistance get a job? **Meaghan Ross** looks at the issue of a living wage.

Although never a sufficient solution to end poverty, the attainment of a full time job used to provide some recourse for the reduction of the intensity of poverty experienced.

However, this is no longer so as the 'working poor' are the fastest growing population experiencing poverty. In the last fifteen years, real wages have fallen significantly for middle and low income earners, especially for women, immigrants and youth. In 2005, 41% of Canadian low income children lived with families where at least one wage earner was employed full time (2007 Report Card on Child and Family Poverty).

The downward pressure on wages contributing to increasing poverty has become a defining characteristic of the last three decades. It is representative of the global polarization of income and concentration of power and wealth in the hands of a few elite.

This concentration is facilitated through the adoption of neo-liberal policies accompanying economic globalization which favor profit over people. A key component of such policies is the reduction of the costs of labour, primarily wages. Governments and businesses adopt these policies at the

"The downward pressure on wages contributing to increasing poverty has become a defining characteristic of the last three decades."

expense of workers, especially those already marginalized in society. As a result, workers in Hamilton and around the world are struggling to provide food, shelter, health care, education and child care for themselves and their families. The increasing levels of poverty and number of working poor provide living proof that it is time for a living wage.

We must challenge the ideologies of the elite, businesses, and government officials. We must also hold them accountable for their cost cutting actions that rob people of decent standards of living. The people of Hamilton, especially those living in poverty, along with other student groups, members of the labour movement and social justice activists must join together to secure an environment within the city that upholds human dignity for all.

Although not an easy



task, it is by no means an impossible task. A living wage campaign has already taken shape in the city and action plans are being carried out. This initiative is a city wide, inclusive movement that seeks to secure wage rates that enable workers to support their families above the poverty line and maintain a dignified standard of living. The coalition is providing a multi-pronged campaign of public information and mobilization to compel prominent decision makers in Hamilton to change their wage policies. The living wage coalition is closely linked to the Coalition for Fair Income and Employment at McMaster University, and living wage movements across the country and North America.

The times of greatest success for social change have been the times when people throughout an entire community have come together to pursue a common goal, despite their differences. It is has been their shared consciousness that has enabled them to overcome elitist employer and governmental barriers that relegate them to

impoverishment and the margins of society. It will be our shared consciousness that overcomes Hamilton's pursuit of profit over people. It will be our shared consciousness that compels businesses and the government to become responsible for the standard of living of those they employ.

The movement begins when we meet to share ideas and forge common ground; it continues when we act against the decreasing wage rates and increasing poverty rates. Our work in this area ends when every worker in Hamilton is guaranteed fair and living wages.

ONLINE

GET ACTIVE>> To join the Living Wage Coalition of Hamilton, contact Deirdre Pike, Social Planner at the SPRC at 905-522- 1148

(Original version of article published in Poverty Watch, Spring 2006, Volume One, Issue 4, a publication of the Income Security Working Group).

ASIAN IMMIGRATION>>

COMMUNITY >>

IMPERIALISM>>

HISTORY>>

PIONEERS>>

Compelled to remain Alien Chinese Immigration & Capital

In the wake of racist remarks made by Toronto city councillor Rob Ford, where he essentializes Asians and rhetorically suggests a 'take over' by Asians, it is imperative that we look at the history of discrimination and racism directed towards the Chinese, perpetrated by governments and business interests, here in Canada.

Edward W glances back...

The Chinese community in Canada was dehumanized, criminalized, and made the other, without any recognition of the Euro-Canadian imperialist past that had, for centuries, driven the Chinese and other subjugated peoples to leave their countries. Unfortunately, with greater influxes of Chinese immigrants into Canada, such prejudices have remained. In fact, these processes can be traced back to the formation of Canada. There has been a long history of prejudice, institutionalized and systemic discrimination, directed towards Chinese immigrants, affecting both the community and the migratory flow to Canada from China. These issues must be understood in the context of racialization and capitalist imperialism, especially since the major reason for migration out of China was and is the plundering of the country by imperialist nations – ie. European countries and Japan.

immigration, there was limited discrimination directed at these new settlers. The British government was fairly disinterested, "allowing the same rights, liberties, and privileges as other immigrants". The predominantly English community in Victoria reacted to the immigration with mixed feelings – curiosity, prejudice, condescension, and spite – but were generally unconcerned, preoccupied with the gold rush, though, the Chinese were never accepted as part of the community.

When a head tax was proposed during a public meeting on 5 March 1860, Governor James Douglas assured the Chinese community that there were no plans to implement such measures. He claimed that a head tax would not be the interest of Victoria, seeing as Chinese merchants would aid in the promotion of Victoria's economic prosperity and Chinese labourers would help meet the demand for workers. Ironically, the same capitalist, imperialist processes that led to such hardship in the home country, which brought these immigrants here in the first place, had also resulted in a lack of discriminatory policies in the 'new world' – though this would not be a permanent condition.

The British Columbian Gold Rush from 1958-1866

The first occurrence of Chinese migration into Canada began around 1858, in response to the gold rush on the British Columbian mainland. During these early years of Chinese

(Continued on page 5)

LINCHPIN.CA

FULL ANALYSIS>> The full version of this article analyzing migration to Canada is available for download on our website.

(Continued from page 4)

The Economic Recession from 1866-1881

The mood of the European British Columbian community towards the Chinese would change for the worst when an economic downturn was experienced during 1866, caused by the end of the gold rush.

Many Europeans began to perceive the Chinese as competitors during these times of high unemployment, and to see them as the reason for the undercutting of wages for white people. Others charged the Chinese with coming to Canada simply as sojourners, taking away wealth back to China and not providing any long-term benefits for Canada herself. In response to these allegations, Huang Tsun Hsien, the Chinese Consul General in San Francisco, would express before the 1885 Royal Commission on Chinese Immigration:

This depends wholly upon their treatment in any country they emigrate to ... Chinese immigrants coming to this country are denied all the rights and privileges extended to others ... the laws compel them to remain alien.

While, a great number of Chinese did wish to return to China, it had much to do with the discriminatory conditions and legal perimeters put in place in Canada and not down to any personal inclination. Ultimately, many stayed in Canada but mainly because of even worse conditions at home.

These negative views towards the Chinese were reflected with the countless examples of discriminatory government policies against the Chinese. A striking example was the amendment to the Qualification and Registration of Voters Act, in 1874, which disenfranchised Chinese and First Nations people, though Chinese were still obligated to pay taxes and were not immune to conscription. In 1876, further legislation barred Chinese from employment in government projects.

It is clear that the division of the working class was successful, as seen by some of the characterizations made of Chinese, namely, the reconstruction

of these individuals from fellow men to "labour machines". An American Congressional committee investigating Chinese immigration in 1877 concluded that "the 'cute' Yankee was quick to discover that John Chinaman was a mere labor machine, and utilized him accordingly". This type of characterization disallowed solidarity between European and Chinese workers.

The Construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway from 1881-1885

The main bulk of Chinese immigrants would arrive between 1881 and 1885, in response to a shortage of workers to construct the Canadian Pacific Railway in British Columbia. In 1881, 2939 Chinese immigrants had arrived; in 1882, 8083; and in 1884, 2223. The employment of Chinese workers by Onderdonk, would save him 4 million dollars in labour costs. During this period, no prominent government legislations affecting the Chinese community and migration were passed. However, discrimination and racial divides were perpetuated by Onderdonk's policy of promoting anti-Chinese propaganda written by various journalists and politicians to white workers, and the organization of Chinese and White workers into different work groups, in order to prevent workers from cooperating.

The First World War and Further Economic Recessions from 1885-1924

A second period of economic depression would occur with the completion of the railway in 1885, as the railway workers were no longer needed. In response to growing unemployment, in 1884 and 1885, the British Columbian government attempted to pass legislation that would virtually bar all Chinese immigration into the province and allow the prosecution of individuals that assisted in bringing Chinese into the province. Although deemed unconstitutional by the Supreme Court for the same reasons as earlier attempts, the British Columbian government would be able to pass legislation restricting the Chinese from certain occupations, like the Coal Mines

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Act of 1890, which disallowed Chinese employment in the coal mining sector. Unlike the provincial government, the federal government would have no problems passing similar legislation. Legislated at the start of a recession, the Chinese Immigration Act of 1885 was said to be an attempt to discourage further Chinese immigration into Canada through the imposition of a head tax. When first imposed in 1885, the head tax was set at \$50; each individual of Chinese descent entering into Canada would be made to pay the amount. The Head Tax was then increased to \$100 in 1900, and to \$500 in 1903. Interestingly, merchants and their families, diplomats, clergymen, men of science, students and tourists were exempt from paying the head tax.

The Chinese Immigration Act did not completely stop the immigration of Chinese into Canada, as some business owners, especially in the railroad industry, were willing to pay the head tax in order to obtain cheap labour. As soon as the economy picked up, immigration would once again increase, from 1891 to 1900, 26,345 immigrants would arrive, from 1901 to 1910 – 23,495, and from 1911 to 1920 – 32,244. This brings into question the stated aim to prevent the movement of Chinese into Canada. Instead, the Chinese Immigration Act was only effective in limiting the number of Chinese women and children entering into Canada to rejoin their spouses or fathers. There is a possibility that, instead, the intended aim of the Chinese Immigration Act was to give an impression of government action against

(Continued on page 6)

the perceived 'threat' of Chinese immigration to satisfy the demands of white workers, while, at the same time, keeping open, a source of cheap labour for capitalists, which was necessary at the time because of labour shortages during the first World War. In addition, the act may have been passed to ensure that the Chinese population in Canada would, by preventing natural increase and hence limited long-term prospects of staying in Canada, remain alienated from the community, as they could not settle down without family, at the same time, internalizing the idea that they were 'others'.

This again, maintained divisions between workers.

With a third period of economic depression at the end of the first World War, in 1923, the Chinese Immigration Act was replaced with the Chinese Exclusion Act. This act conclusively banned all Chinese immigration except for merchants, diplomats, and students. It was not until May 14, 1947, that this legislation was repealed and Canadian citizenship was made eligible to the Chinese who had paid the head taxes. However, lasting damages have already been done to the Chinese community.

Conclusion

Economic and social processes of capitalism have had and continue to have a large impact on the migration of people and the circumstances faced by the Chinese-Canadian community; indeed, migration from China itself would not have likely occurred had it not been for imperialism.

The externalization of racialization, for example, discriminatory legislations and racist editorials, would ensure the survival of capitalism, with the Chinese scapegoated as the cause for economic hardship, and also, with the working class divided as a result of the internalization of these racist ideas by both Europeans and Chinese.

These processes would occur in relation to economic circumstances, during times of economic prosperity and labour shortages, Chinese immigration was allowed; but during times of recession and unemployment, Chinese immigration was restricted. Though much has changed, many racist immigration policies exist to this day and must be challenged.



movement>>

Online forum culture

Anarchist Black Cat

Anarchistblackcat.org is a moderated discussion board, set up by platformist anarchists. It was set up for a number of different reasons, here one of the moderators gives us her take on why the site was set up and what role it can play in our movement.

Firstly I live on an island which has no anarchist culture. There aren't a whole lot of anarchists here. Usually to meet other anarchist I have to travel abroad to bookfairs or conferences. I do a bit of that because its very useful talking to other anarchists. You soon learn that although our local conditions are different, in lots of ways we are fighting similar battles. We face similar problems. By talking to other anarchists we can learn about other ways of doing things, share experiences and maybe avoid continually re-inventing the wheel. I first started to post on forums a couple of year ago, and at first I was very excited by the possibility of having this type of discussion without having to get on a boat or a train. But then I quickly discovered that the level of discussion on most forums was very low. There was a lot of bullying and play ground behavior. Online discussions were much much worse than anything I had experienced in real life. I then became worried

that for new people, just coming across these sites by accident, would think that this is what anarchism was all about. I think to build a new society we have to be able we to listen to other people, to learn from them. We have to be willing to experiment, even if that means we might make mistakes. We have to be able to convince people that anarchist ideas are useful and make sense. Instead, a lot of online forums seem to be based on cliches trading insults and point scoring. It's a million miles away from the type of free questioning dialogue that I think has to form the basis of any anarchist society. So I thought to myself, you're an anarchist, experiment, try and build a different type of virtual anarchism. So I did, I got some friends together and we set up anarchist black cat. It's early days yet, but I think so far it seems to be working the way I imagined it would. Fingers crossed it will continue to succeed.

Launch Statement of Anarchist Black Cat

Ever wished for an anarchist discussion board dominated by an exchange of argued out political views rather than insults? So did we, so we decided to do something about it.

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Inspired by the Organise discussion list of the mid 1990s (the first serious anarchist discussion list) and Anarkismo.net, we have launched AnarchistBlackCat. We are building a home for serious anarchist discussion and strong moderation of anything that falls below this according to a set of detailed, transparent and publicly available rules.ceremony.



radical media>>

The Dominion Magazine At 50

After its recent very special edition on the tar sands, Greg McDougal picks up a copy of the Dominion and looks at how considers its radical media making.

At 50 issues, the Dominion paper is on their Own Your Media tour across

Canada this March. The name of the tour implies the concept they're trying to get across - building awareness and support for the coop model the Dominion now functions under.

The Dominion is a monthly Canadian paper and online source of news and analysis that has been operating since May 2003. "It aims to provide accurate, critical coverage that is accountable to its readers and the subjects it tackles." Its website cites its coverage of Afghanistan, climate change, and Canada's involvement in Haiti as examples of where Dominion offers a significant change from what appears in the mass media.

The Dominion Media Solidarity Cooperative, "Canada's first multi-stakeholder media outlet jointly owned and democratically controlled by its readers, writers and editors", was launched last year and is now the focus of

this cross-Canada tour. There are three levels of coop membership: Supporter, Subscriber, and Sustainer. All members are entitled to vote in the Dominion's annual general meeting as well as elect (and even run for) the board of directors. They also play a vital role in enabling the Dominion to carry out it's ambitious five year plan.

The vision and specifics of the plan are up in the Forums section of the Dominion's website. A primary focus is on finances, seeking to transition from a miniscule budget to a member-supported ability to pay for staff and some articles. There is also the goal of encouraging 'locals' across Canada to create a grassroots media network that encourages and strengthens both media and movements. Other aspects of the plan range from maintaining and improving editorial quality, to solidifying and increasing readership, printing and distribution of the paper.

The plan also calls for two special issues per year, focussed exclusively on one topic or issue. This past autumn, the special issue was dedicated to the Tar Sands in Alberta, addressing an important set of issues

that "the world's largest industrial project" brings forward. The Dominion explores the tremendous costs in water, land, air, energy and labour that the rapidly-expanding Tar Sands

projects will rack up. It details the mega pipelines, both planned and existing, that stretch to the North coast, the West coast, and the United States. The health problems for people, fish, livestock and other animals are documented, as is the context of the Tar Sands in terms of continental energy security and the collusion of governments and energy corporations, and in terms of climate change, global warming and greenhouse gas emissions. Violations of unceded land and treaties with Indigenous peoples, as well as the need to include these peoples in the opposition movements to the Tar Sands, are addressed. Finally, the Dominion gives a platform for affected people to label what's going on: "crime against humanity" and "getting away with murder".

Definitely media worth supporting.

ONLINE

READ IT AT >> Visit www.dominionpaper.ca for articles, to subscribe, to find out more about becoming a coop member, or to check for tour dates/locations. March tour dates in Ontario: Ottawa (6th), Toronto (9th, 10th), Guelph (11th), Waterloo (12th), Hamilton (13th, 14th), Windsor (15th).

book review >>

Free Women of Spain

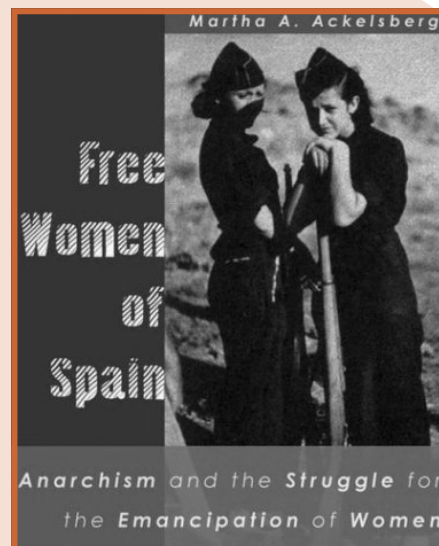
The Free women of Spain strikes its readers into thinking about equality, empowerment community and revolution, Karine from the Hamilton local delves in further to what sounds like a brilliant book.

Martha Acklesberg, in Free Women of Spain, reviews the history of the struggle for women's emancipation in Spain, before and during the Spanish Revolution (1936-1939), focusing on the major anarchist women's organization, the Mujeres Libres (Free Women) a group of libertarian women in many parts of Spain.

She introduces us to their struggle by interviewing some of the women of Mujeres Libres who explain their role and contribution during the

revolution, but also the difficulties they encountered within the male-dominated organization, (such as CNT, FIJL and many others) of getting their voices heard. Nevertheless, they always believed in the importance of working together within these organizations while having their own organization in order to develop their sense of self and the skills they would need to believe in their own capacities.

This book is about empowerment, equality and the need to build community organizations. Mujeres Libres was a group that was able to reach up to 20,000 women, by, but not only, distributing their newspapers and offering courses and programs for women's interests. Many of us can learn a lot from their experience by reading this book because it reminds us to have to fight inequality, not only outside in the society, but also within our own organizations. It is book that I, myself, felt very empowered by and I hope it can reach you in the same way.



READ ON

BUY IT>> AK Press carry this book at their site <http://www.akpress.org/>

READ ON>> There's an archive of a talk based on the book given to the Irish Workers' Solidarity Movemnet at <http://www.wsm.ie/story/3131>

The paper is one arm of Common Cause publishing, the other is our website. There you will find dozens of additional articles and photographs from Common Cause members, as well as announcements and events our members are involved in.

Read more at the Common Cause web site.

www.linchpin.ca

Report On OCAP Emergency Housing Demo

On Tuesday, as a result of the death of another homeless person, an Aboriginal who froze to death in a stairwell at Yonge and Charles, the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty organized an emergency action at Toronto City Hall. .

2010 Olympics Interview

Our Ottawa Members interview with Pete St-Antoine of Peoples Global Action (PGA) Bloc Ottawa, to establish why we should oppose the 2010 Olympics.

Blogging South of the Border Speaking Tour

Anyone who made it to one of the six 'Building a popular anarchism' talks CC member Andrew Flood did in Ontario over the summer may be interested to know he's currently repeating them in the USA and blogging all the way.

Land Reclamation Anniversary

On February 28, on the second anniversary of the start of the Six Nations land reclamation at Caledonia, McMaster University was the site of the important event, "The Land Reclamation at Caledonia/Kanonhstaton: Two Years Later..." The day-long event brought together many of the major figures of this historic and ongoing struggle. Our site contains a brief report on the event.

So What Do You Think?

Now that we are well into our third issue of Linchpin we want to hear what you think. Give us a reaction over at <http://linchpin.ca/Forums/Linchpin-Feedback>

campaign>>

The Colour Of Poverty.

Racism is not just an individual problem of attitude toward a particular group: it is also systemic and structural, inherent in institutions such as the education, health, and justice systems. The Colour of Poverty Campaign (www.colourofpoverty.ca) raises awareness of these inequalities and suggests ways to work toward equality and inclusion in Ontario, explains **Kathryn Hunt**

The campaign argues that racism and poverty are inextricably linked, feeding into each other and into racialized disparity and inequality more generally, and need to be considered in relation to each other.

An increasing proportion of the population of Ontario come from what the Colour of Poverty Campaign calls 'racialized groups' – those of non-European background or heritage. Currently, 13% of Canadians are non-European, and projections suggest that ten years from now, people of colour will make up a fifth of Canadians and well over half of Toronto's population.

However, among Canadians of colour, poverty levels are disproportionately high, affecting their quality of life on all levels, including education, health, employment, housing, immigration and integration, and interactions with the justice system. In Toronto, people of colour are three times more likely to be living in poverty, and one study indicates that between 1980 and 2000, while poverty rates among non-racialized Canadians dropped by 28%, the poverty rates among racialized families rose by a startling 361%. Related studies show that people of colour are routinely discriminated against in schools, in the workplace and the courts, making the cycle of poverty even more vicious.

The Colour of Poverty Campaign was launched in September of 2007, from several ethno-specific and community-based service providing organizations as well as human rights advocacy groups who recognized these trends and felt the need to address them collectively. With initial funding support from the Department of Canadian Heritage, they are building knowledge and awareness through a series of educational fact sheets, a short documentary film available on DVD, their website (an expanded version of which will be re-launching around March 21, 2008 – the UN International Day For The Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination), an e-list and other advocacy tools available online.

In their series of fact sheets, the Campaign gives statistics, gathered from dozens of sources (which are listed on their website for reference) showing the imbalances and growing disparities between racialized and non-racialized Canadians, and the relationship between the colour line and the poverty line. While many



people may have heard that, for example, a large number of newcomers to Canada arrive with education and qualifications that are not recognized by governments, institutions, self regulating trades and professions as well as other potential employers, thereby restricting them from working in their particular fields of expertise – while most people know the story of the janitor with a Ph.D. – these fact sheets give numbers to the stories, fleshing out the reality.

Members are travelling to communities around the province, beginning with Hamilton, London, Ottawa, Toronto, and Windsor, to build partnerships with other equity advocacy and anti-poverty organizations. The goal is to create an engaged community that can share knowledge, experience, strategies and assistance among each other and with the general public. From that initial dialogue, a multi-sectoral work group will be created that will involve members of the affected communities, governments and social development policy institutes and anti-poverty representatives, the media and other affected people.

The work group will develop an implementation plan to ensure that the ongoing and accelerating racialization of poverty in Ontario becomes a major focus in the relevant institutions and government ministries and departments – to make change happen across in the system, on a causal rather than a symptomatic level. The long term goal of the campaign is to eliminate racially rooted poverty as well as the underlying racialized inequality and disparity across Ontario.

—ONLINE

CHECK IT OUT>> <http://www.colourofpoverty.ca> is the campaign's site where you'll find lots more on their work.