

HOMeward

Street Journal



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The problem of power is how to achieve its responsible use rather than its irresponsible and indulgent use - of how to get men of power to live for the public rather than off the public.

Robert F. Kennedy, 'I Remember, I Believe' *The Pursuit of Justice*, 1964

River Cleanup

On September 21, 2002, volunteers and members of the Sacramento Homeless Organizing Committee (SHOC) participated in the Great American River Cleanup for their 3rd year. Despite a small turnout of 16 volunteers, of whom fifteen live outside, two pickup loads of trash were collected. Participants concentrated along the bike trail from the bicycle bridge to the north end of the 12th-16th street bridge.

SHOC adopted mile two of the Parkway as a project in 2000 as an effort to give the area's homeless the opportunity have a positive response to complaints about individuals camping along the river causing a mess.

In February of 2000, SHOC members, lead by Blake and Rev. Snow, decided to cleanup a particularly bad area near Camp Pollock. This area had accumulated years of garbage, including old refrigerators and car tires (and a car), besides the usual camp remains - but those living down by the river were being accused of it all. Over forty individuals participated in that first campaign. By the time of the Great American River Cleanup in September of 2000, SHOC had arraigned to adopt mile two of the bike trail.

Being responsible for a mile of the river parkway requires that participants do at least four organized cleanups during the year, including the annual Great American Cleanup. Paula, the Project Leader, has spent many hours keeping track of and performing cleanups of problem areas near the bike trail. A handful of river area volunteers regularly help with this unscheduled activity.

When asked if the River Cleanup Project was successful, she answered, "The work goes on continuously. Until all of Sacramento's residents learn to pick up after themselves, I'll have a job."

Up-dates on Previous stories:

Fast is Put on Hold as Overflow Opens

The Loaves & Fishes fast for a year-round women's and children's shelter, held weekdays in the waiting room of the County Board of Supervisors, has been suspended because Sacramento County's Winter Shelter Program opened to homeless women and children on Tuesday, October 1, 2002.

see *Overflow* page 6

Charges Dismissed for 8 Arrested at 'Right to Sleep' Rally

Eight participants arrested at 2:15 a.m. on July 11, 2002, in a 'Right to Sleep' Rally at the California Capitol, had their cases dismissed on August 28th.

They were charged under California's 647j anti-lodging law, and refusing to leave the scene of a riot. It took two lawyers over 18 hours to obtain release of the prisoners, despite a judge's order O/R'ing them at 10 a.m. that morning.

Billy Loses Retrial, Appeals Judge's Rulings

On August 8th, Billy McManus won his jury trial on three counts of illegal camping, citing the Eichorn Decision, which allows camping if the individual can prove it was a necessity. The jury found him not guilty on one count, and two counts were a hung jury. Apparently not wanting anyone to defeat their anti-camping ordinances, the City retried Billy on the two counts that were undecided.

see *Retrial* page 6

Who Gets Affordable Housing?

Original Title: What's the Scoop On Inclusionary

by Ethan Evans

Reprinted with permission from the Sacramento Housing Alliance (SHA) Newsletter.

SHA, its members and its supporters, fought hard in 2000-2001 to see that the City of Sacramento adopted an inclusionary zoning policy that actually produces affordable housing for lower income residents. According to the HUD definition, "affordable" means that a household should pay not more than 30% of its total income towards housing costs. The ordinance that passed in 2001 requires that all future developments in new growth areas of the City of Sacramento such as North Natomas have a total of 15% of the newly constructed units which are affordable (10% affordable to very low income (VLI) households and 5% to Low-income (LI) households.) Affordability of housing units is based on a percentage of the area median

income (AMI) for various household sizes. Median income is the level at which half the people in an area earn more, half earn less.

So under this ordinance, if a developer is building 100 units of housing, it must ensure that at least 10 of those units are affordable to very low income households (those earning 50% of less of the AMI) and at least 5 of those units are affordable to lower income households (those earning 80% or less of the AMI). In Sacramento County, the area median income for a four-person household is \$57,300; very low income is \$28,650; and lower income is \$45,840. "Affordable" rents are: Median \$1,433, VLI, \$716; and LI \$1,146.

Since adoption of the inclusionary ordinance, the Sacramento Housing Redevelopment Agency (SHRA)

see *Affordable* page 3

"The myopic view of authorities will not solve the problems of homeless women"

The "Take Back the Night" Rally has been an annual event for over 20 years. Sponsored by several women's groups, such as WEAVE and the YWCA, it has been concerned with domestic violence, safety and other women's issues. This year, Elizabeth was able to bring up the problems of homeless women on the streets of Sacramento. This is the text of the speech given by Elizabeth Holloway during the 'Take Back the Night' Rally at the California Capitol, October 5, 2002.

Hi, everyone. Namaste. I was part of a group of 15 people arrested on the Lutheran Church steps at 17th and L on August 23rd for what is called "unlawful camping", which is another term for being poor and homeless. It's a catch-phrase for the newest type of political prisoners and reminds us of Fascism.

I had a home, which I struggled by myself to get and then lost it because I was out of work too long. There are a lot of people out here who were once successful. There are various artists and many skills. But people drove by the church and called us drunks and crack heads and threw eggs at us. There certainly are drunks and addicts on these streets. They are in ALL walks of life. Yes, they visited the steps, acted like fools and made life harder on the rest of us. But the night of the arrest, none of them were there. No one was drunk and only one person may have had marijuana. All were first-time "offenders", if you will, and only a few had minor warrants. We were all just sleeping peacefully. There are other sleep-sites, and reports conflict as to why WE were assaulted. We did not feel protected or served.

We were told that this was not a warning or citations, but that we'd all go to jail for three days, which turned into five, with no one speaking to a public defender or being arraigned before our release on "time served". People were denied their medications and one crippled woman was dropped on the paddy wagon floor, worsening her condition. She also suffers other limitations and no female of ficer was assigned to help her with bathing and dressing during her whole incarceration. This process interfered with people working, apartment hunting, receiving checks, and seeing doctors, to say nothing of being robbed of freedom and the security the church told us we could have there. Many inmates mentioned that if government spent what it cost to book, house and feed all of us in a homeless shelter, that money would have been better used. It costs approximately \$10,000 a day to prosecute one homeless case.

There was another incident on September 14th at Fort Sutter Park between Park Ranger Butera and people who sleep at St. Francis church. He tried to run the people off who were peacefully gathered there because a woman was sitting on her blanket, which he tried to call "illegal camping". He was corrected by being told it can only be considered camping if a blanket covers a person.

He told me to get a job, a home, and be responsible for myself. I told him he knew nothing about me. He called the police and even they wouldn't back him up. These are only two stories in volumes by the poor. And to keep the record straight, one night I was confronted by a policeman where I slept and he was very nice to me.

This is not like earlier last century when family neighbors and friends were more willing to help. The few shelters are full and some programs for assistance are so convoluted they're almost useless. To date, 1,546 women have been turned down by shelters. Also, some rapes go unreported because of some women with mental disorders being afraid of the police. Would you want to be a homeless woman, often having interrupted sleep on cement, wandering around trying to glue life back together, being the prey of those with evil intent AND having to fight police persecution just to barely survive? Animals are treated better. And the rain is coming. We don't state homelessness on job applications because of the stigma. And a healthy body breaks down out here, but there are women in wheelchairs who can't get to a bathroom in the middle of the night.

The myopic view of authorities will not solve the problems of homeless women. We have to look at these things on a deeper level. Where are we as a community and nation? Why are we talking about tyranny in Iraq when it's in our own country? California touts itself as a state of the

future. I say it represents the dead past. Now I'm looking at the new paint job on this building behind me [the Capitol] and doesn't it look pretty on the Outside? But within, underneath, is every vile thing that allows human beings to exist without hope. There is no heart, no soul, and no love in many of the laws made by men who call themselves Christians. So I'm asking the general public to get involved. Sign petitions, go to rallies, push for permanent shelters, offer that you're privileged to have, and for God's sake, stop looking at us like we're the scum of the Earth. And you street people, be kinder to each other. Stop the rip-offs and fighting. Respect yourselves, and each other. And plead NOT guilty if you're arrested for sleeping outside.

In a 1991 address the Dalai Lama said, "As human brothers and sisters, I have a feeling that deep down we're all the same. Therefore, it's quite natural that when some suffer, others spontaneously develop some sincere feeling or concern. I consider this a hope for the future." And so, it's MY hope that events like this will bring attention to homeless women and others you see on your street every day. When you see us, you see what's wrong, symptom of a disease. But you're also looking at the great potential for life to be right again. And please remember that when you attend ANY kind of consciousness-raising gathering, you ARE taking your power back. Thank you.



Hello, there. You may not recognize me, but I've always been around you. I've been carefully dogging your steps ever since you were a baby. I've made sure that everybody taught you to have the greatest respect for me, because I want you to be a success and give me everything. I gave you everything, so you owe me everything. I don't owe you anything at all- because it's all mine. Without me, you couldn't be important at all.

I value you so little that what is best for you is to be me. But, of course, that can never happen, because no matter how hard you try to fit in, I will always be everybody but you. And that is all your fault for not being able to totally forget that you exist and be a ghost like me.

So, if you haven't guessed, I'm your nosy neighbor, your boss, your co-workers, your friends, and the politicians you elect to tell you what to do, your dear constant companion, Mr. Society.

The Ghost of Never-llas, pretending to Be

Two Cities continued

Individuals are carted away for a night in jail or are told to move south of downtown. Ultimately, nobody leaves the head-count believing they've gotten even a semblance of an accurate figure. But it doesn't really matter, because everybody knows that the goal is to paint the gravity of a homeless population explosion as far less chronic than it actually is. Not a politician, not a council member, not a City commissioner, nobody of relative political importance makes an appearance on the night of the count.

In contrast, Boston Mayor Thomas Menino, who gave the NASNA conference's opening address, told a crowd of 200 gathered for his speech at Boston University that he typically takes part in his city's homeless count. "This isn't a photo opportunity," he emphasizes. "I'm actually out there doing it. I've made a number of friends in our homeless community, and that's important." Menino added that between 200 and 300 Bostonians, college students, socialites, millionaires, politicians and ordinary citizens, participate on what he says is "one of the coldest nights of the year."

Boy howdy! From that moment on, I decided I'd never again give pause to conservative extremists who curse the "Massachusetts liberal" as symptomatic of everything bad, because any city that turns a homeless count into a citywide neighborhood watch party is bound to be better than the carpeting of propagandists who get chicken whenever they figure the hippies are going to rise again and take it all back. During my short four-day visit to Boston, I couldn't help but see a healthy community instead of the de facto subject population that comprises an apathetic city called Dallas.

Although Menino, a rare mayor who considers Boston's community of 6,000 homeless people part of his political constituency, has actively made affordable housing his top priority, boosting affordable housing starts 135 percent in 1999, he also believes that, in his own words, "We're starting to lose ground. Not just in Boston, but in the rest of the country as well. Boston's homeless have doubled in the last 10 years. In some cities, I've heard it's tripled."

Mayor Menino, one of America's most prominent politicians, who is serving as President of the United States' Conference of Mayors, is adamant that we'd better solve this affordable housing crisis before homelessness overwhelms America's cities. His words prompted a buddy who'd also come from Dallas to mutter, "Can you imagine the Dallas City Manager wandering around in a South Dallas vacant lot at eleven at night without half the National Guard there to protect him?" This was a typically Texan comment, the kind I hear almost all the time on the streets. The Boston Mayor's words also prompted Endless Choices editor and publisher, Clara Hogan, to approach the venerable Bostonian, just to tell him about the Dallas homeless count, and of her amazement that he actually participates in his.

Late one evening several of us strolled through a park that abuts the famed Boston Commons. Amid the elaborate pickets and gentle hills all decked out in lamplight, I spotted a homeless man, fast asleep, right there in the open, his head on his backpack, sawing enough timber to heat the entire Northeast. "Well, there's a homeless person," I said. "What do you do about public sleeping here in

Boston?"

Fran Czajkowski, publisher of Boston's Spare Change newspaper, didn't seem too perplexed about it. In fact, she smiled. "When people here see a homeless person asleep, they probably think, 'Well, there's somebody sleeping in the park.'"

Apparently, in Boston, public sleeping isn't harmful, although I didn't see much of it, mainly because most city shelters allow residents to stay indoors if they want. Still, I couldn't help but think that, in Dallas, the reaction to a public sleeper usually is "Call 911! Oh, Lordy Mercy! There's a bum asleep in the park!"

Indeed, there were so many differences between the mutual predicaments regarding homelessness that both divide and unite Boston and Dallas that I practically felt I'd entered another country. Indeed, the civic climate of Boston differs vastly from that of Dallas, but then cities like Boston are far older than ours, some of them having seen plenty of waves of homelessness as economic circumstances changed over the course of 400 years.

Speaking about organizing the conference, Czajkowski mentioned that this national conference, sponsored, organized and funded by Spare Change and Boston's Homeless Empowerment Project, wouldn't have been possible without a number of grants, much of it coming from companies like Microsoft, but also plenty of it coming from the nation's leading financial companies, local department stores, and individuals. Money for dozens of airline tickets, money for nationally known guest speakers like Howard Zinn, money for breakfasts and lodging and i-shirts and conference guidebooks and auditorium rentals and a whopping 10th anniversary party for Spare Change at which the crème-de-la-crème of Boston society turned out for awards ceremonies honoring vendors who have been out selling papers, every day, for ten years straight. What a difference 1,500 miles makes.

In further contrast, an announcement in Dallas, Texas' Endless Choices urging readers to donate frequent flier miles to help fly vendors to the conference appeared with nary a response. Four of us attended, but surely more deserved to be rewarded for a year of hard, dedicated work. Is everything bigger and better in Texas?

But these differences make cities unique, which, to me, was the big lesson of the 2002 NASNA conference. Because the conference theme was "Organization Builds Strength," a red flag popped up in my mind and I was reminded that even in NASNA cities have developed between two schools: Those who want confrontation and those who believe in cooperation. Of course, when you have 46 different cities with 46 different approaches to homelessness in North America, you're bound to have razor-thin disagreements that lead to weird alliances, the development of factions, and a few angry words. Most of the time, I simply listened, learning little by little, hoping to bring home a few ideas and comparisons that might make our leaders think and act for change. One person told me something we all really ought to think about: When the Pilgrims arrived at Plymouth Rock in 1621, most of them had been homeless in Europe's big cities for years. That's a legacy of suffering we should honor. It wasn't all pointy hats and turkey gravy.

Affordable continued from page 1

reports that 238 affordable VLI, and 84 LI units have been approved to be built solely as a result of this ordinance. A surprise bonus is that, in addition to the required units, an additional 38 affordable VLI units and 147 affordable LI units are included in these developments. So far, a total of 271 VLI units and 231 LI units have been approved to be built.

So, what is the scoop on these units?

SHRA has provided the Housing Alliance detailed information for four of the six developments (Atrium Court, The Lofts, Natromas Park, and Teracina Meadows). These account for a majority of the new affordable units to be built. From this information we have been able to determine a number of things: The number of units to be developed; amount of SHRA funds used to make units affordable; rents for those units; and income needed to afford those units.

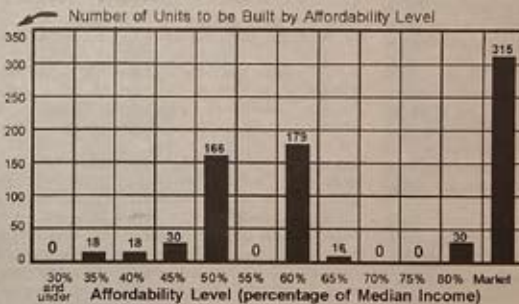
These four developments will produce a total of 772 new units of rental housing in the Sacramento area. The total amount of SHRA dollars used in these projects is \$3.8 million. For this money, 44% of the units to be produced will be affordable for those with incomes at 50% and 60% of AMI. The average rent charged for the 70 two-bedroom units included in these developments at the 50% level is \$597. These are only affordable to a household earning an annual salary of \$23,880. Of the 81 two-bedroom units affordable at the 60% level, the average rent is \$716. These are only affordable to a household earning an annual salary of \$28,640.

It is clear from this chart that relatively few of the units being produced as a result of Inclusionary Zoning are affordable to those in our community who make 35% of the median income. Residents in the Sacramento area who make up this income group are households most in need of secure affordable housing.

Seniors on a fixed income of \$900 a month have an annual income of only \$10,800. Of the four one-bedroom units to be produced at the 35% affordability level, none will be affordable to such a senior citizen. With a rent of \$335, a single person would have to make \$13,400 for the unit to be considered affordable at 30% of a household's income. One person working for the California minimum wage earns less than \$13,000 annually.

Inclusionary Housing policies can be an effective tool to ensure that affordable housing is included in new developments and Sacramento is one of the best in the region. Indeed, as the numbers demonstrate, Sacramento's policy actually leverages more affordable units than strictly required by the ordinance. However, the numbers also demonstrate that as Sacramento and other jurisdictions implement inclusionary policies, and as additional jurisdictions follow their lead, there remains a

critical need to more fully address the housing needs of seniors, persons with disabilities and low wage workers whose incomes fall far below 50% of median. To date, those households making incomes over \$45,850 are the ones who will have access to almost all of the units to be built.



This year's National Low Income Housing Coalition *Out of Reach Report* has been released. The data from this report paints a grim picture regarding the housing needs of low wage workers, seniors, persons with disabilities, students and others. It shows that the average rents for the Sacramento area far surpass the income that these groups earn.

Average Rents: (Fair Market Value)			
One Bd	Two Bd	Three Bd	Four Bd
\$597	\$747	\$1037	\$1222

Income Needed to be Affordable:			
One Bd	Two Bd	Three Bd	Four Bd
\$23,880	\$29,880	\$41,480	\$48,880

Number of hours Work Hours/Week Necessary at Minimum Wage to Afford (CA=6.75 per hour)			
One Bd	Two Bd	Three Bd	Four Bd
68 hrs	85 hrs	118 hrs	139 hrs

STREET NEWS SERVICE

www.streetnewsservice.org

North American News Digest

Molly Rhodes, John Hubbard

Sucks to be homeless in Orlando, Florida. In earlier August, the Orlando City Council approved an ordinance that could land anyone found sitting or lying down on downtown public sidewalks with a \$500 fine and 60 days in jail, according to the Orlando Sentinel (www.orlandosentinel.com). Giddy with the pleasure of criminalizing homeless people, the council's next vote will be on whether to limit the number of days a year volunteer groups can hand out free meals. Turns out some organizations have no sense of propriety and are dishing up lavish grub "as often as once a week." By removing extravagant perks like unlimited access to concrete pavements and food once every seven days, the council appears to believe that Orlando's homeless population will finally concede theirs is not the luxurious, sophisticated lifestyle they once thought it was.

Speaking of throwing homeless people in jail, New York City has skipped the step of actually finding a homeless person guilty of any illegal trespass, under the premise that unused jail space can double as emergency shelter. According to the New York Times, The Bronx House of Detention for Men will house 80 to 100 families in addition to the 8,400 families already in the city's shelter system every night. New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg concedes that a former jail is not the ideal accommodation, but notes that it beats sleeping on the floor of the Emergency Assistance Unit, where many families have previously spent the night. The Commissioner of homeless services, Linda Gibbs, stresses that the city hopes to only use the detention center for a month or two, after which homeless families will be free to return to the city streets just as winter begins.

Another "tent city" of homeless people has popped up, now in Eugene, OR. About 45 homeless people have been camping out since the beginning of September on the plaza of Lane County Courthouse, according to reports in the Register-Guard (www.registerguard.com). They are protesting the city's recent sweep and confiscation of homeless people's property at several unsanctioned camps on city land. Portland, OR, and Seattle already have Tent Cities, Dignity Village and TentCity3, that have become successful models in providing shelter with respect and making a responsible stand for homeless people's right to a place to sleep. The Eugene Tent City has already faced several warnings from police and city officials to break up their group, but no direct action has been taken against them yet.

Tent City as both political action and community gathering is nothing new to homeless veterans in the San Francisco Bay area, who came together as they do every two years for the East Bay Stand Down. The four-day event held the begin-

ning of September provides veterans with a chance to shower, eat, and meet other people who have also experienced homelessness after fighting for their country, according to the Oakland Tribune. Not only do homeless veterans share their own stories, but they are also given the chance to air their grievances and hopes with current officers in the military, like Lt. Col. Frank Marrero. "Our country did not give them the respect welcoming them back from war, and that had some psychological effects ... They had the feeling that they were rejected and not part of the community," Marrero told the Oakland Tribune, adding, "I also look at them, and I think, 'That could be me.'"

Homeless people in New Haven, CT, can't even rely on city-run shelters anymore. Earlier this month, the city placed a 90-day limit on all shelter stays, according to the Hartford Courant. To show they meant business, the city also closed a shelter set up to house people who couldn't find a bed in any other space. Officials said they took the step after a two-year study revealed that some residents were treating the shelter as a permanent home, staying for several years and not using any of the employment training and drug treatment programs designed to help people move on to more secure housing. Now, anyone who comes to a shelter and expects to stay there more than 30 days has to set future employment and housing goals. Exceptions to the shelter limit will only be granted if a resident proves he or she is working towards their goals.

A Midwest survey of homeless youth paints a sobering picture of why kids become homeless and what happens to them as they become adults. Researchers in the \$3 million study interviewed 455 homeless youth in eight Midwestern cities and found that most of the youth escape abuse only to find fresh abuses on the streets, according to the Washington Post. Many youth traded sex as a way to survive, behavior that could have lasting effects in adulthood. Lee Whitbeck, a social professor at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln who is leading the study, found that 54 percent of male runaways and 34 percent of females have conduct disorder, compared to about 10 percent of the general teenage population. Also, 23 percent of males and 43 percent of females showed symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder. While many studies have interviewed the homeless, this is the first to track their lives over an extended period of time. Whitbeck said.

Holland: A city authority has admitted dumping dung in two empty houses to stop homeless people squatting in them. Police are investigating, saying Hengelo Council in Holland may have broken environmental laws. The council has promised the smelly houses will be cleaned up as soon as possible. Alderman Goert Ter Ellen said the decision was taken by a city worker without the knowledge of councillors.

A Tale of Two Cities

by Gordon Hilgers

Released through the NASNA Street News Service. Reprinted from the August, 2002 issue of Endless Choices, Dallas, Texas.

light before I hopped on a DC-10 and just flew away, something most of the homeless of Dallas, Texas, would love to do. I had an interesting conversation with one of my homeless buddies. We were standing on the plaza out front of Dallas City Hall, and I wanted to know what he thought about the City's plans to move the Dallas Day Resource Center out of downtown. But before I'd gotten who have been silenced into apathy, resignation and political decay. This disconnect begs a disturbing question: What's going to happen when this disparity turns into two adversarial worlds as it has in many Third World nations?

"If them folks think moving the Resource Center out of downtown is going to keep it out too," he quipped. "they're out of their mind. I mean, they're in La-La Land. What are they gonna do? Seal police cars around to give everybody a lift to the ghetto? Profile anybody with dirty clothes as 'homeless' and cart them away? I didn't know taxpayers were gonna pay for a police-run taxi service for the homeless. I thought we were supposed to get government out of our lives."

In the blazing sun, only a week after Independence Day, the grassroots take on local politics was having its say. Of course, this wasn't an official view. It wasn't a viewpoint the local papers, those guardians of democracy of the pay-as-you-go kind, bother to print, nor was it something the social set would think "decorous." Rather, it was an observation that runs curly counter to what we're fed daily by gilded hands, a voice Texas patriot, Mirabeau B. Lamar, proclaimed "the guardian genius of democracy."

Looking at my homeless buddy as I'm picturing him in my memory, you'd probably laugh yourself. He lifts his hand to his forehead, makes an "L" shape with his forefinger and thumb, and then he shouts at the faceless machine of City Hall's politicians and bureaucrats, his tsangy voice echoing against expensive limestone and mirrored glass. "Losers!!!!!!!!!!!!!!"

The next day I left Dallas, a city that wants the world to think it's got a better idea when it can't even muster the gumption or the competence to take care of its local obligations to address the affordable housing crisis. My destination was Boston, Massachusetts, host to this year's conference of the North American Street Newspaper Association (NASNA), an alliance of 46 street newspapers just like Endless Choices from around the U.S. and Canada.

By the way, if anyone is wondering what talking about the City's plans for its community of citizens too poor to afford a \$675 a month apartment has to do with a street newspaper conference, the answer is that street newspapers generally have as their mission the dissemination of the grassroots point of view in a mass media world dominated by newspapers, magazines, and radio and television stations that have lost touch with what could be called, "the American street." That's a voice the plutocracy would do well to hear before it starts getting rough for them again, the way it did in the 1930s.

You see, after years of talking to dozens of groups as widely divergent as street people, intellectuals, poets, artists, workers, churchgoers and activists; after years, in turn, of reading local newspapers and listening hard to respectable and incoherent commentators, I've noticed a palpable disconnect between people and hearing from average people and what I'm experiencing at the hands of the paid horsemen who are disparagingly referred to as "the establishment." Yes, a gap, not one of income levels or hierarchies of cultural sophistication, but a yawning crack that divides those who have been allowed to make a sanctioned stab at public discourse, and those who have been silenced into apathy, resignation and political decay. This disconnect begs a disturbing question: What's going to happen when this disparity turns into two adversarial worlds as it has in many Third World nations?

It seemed appropriate, then, that Boston was host to editors, publishers, writers and vendors of a continental movement of like-minded grassroots journalists intent upon bringing the public voice back to the public. Untrammelled by ties to corporate advertisers with agendas and money to make them stick, employers to people paid so little that the only sane rationale for their presence on the page is they're dedicated to ideals that have nothing to do with boosterism, street newspapers such as Endless Choices, in their own way, have a lot in common with the men who dumped tea into Boston Harbor one cozy winter night in 1775.

Call it serendipity, but for me, those waters are by far the greatest memorial to people who told the robber-baron noblesse of the British Empire what they could do with all that pointlessly self-centered luxury and proclaimed to the world that this was going to be a country free of what that creates. If you doubt that, read your history books. Moreover, our forefathers proved protest works. Even the King of England had to admit he'd been beaten hands down by radicals.

As Dallas mutates into a worst-case scenario in which local powerbrokers and politicians deny homelessness is everyone's problem, Boston is quietly becoming a role model for the nation. Need an example? Take a look at how differently the two cities conduct annual homeless counts.

Approximately 50 Dallasites venture into the inner city, flashlights in hands, looking for "hoohoes." Although those personally acquainted with the homeless community indicate that police escorts provided by the City are going to scare away public sleepers, they're countered with a warning: This is a safety precaution. And when the police cars roll up to know homeless campsites, cherry top lights illuminating the shadows, people can be seen scattering into the darkness like raccoons at the scent of a hound dog. But it gets worse: On the other side of town, in an apparent case of the left hand not knowing what the right hand is doing, the Dallas Police begin another "homeless initiative," a sweep, and even as a few dedicated souls are desperately trying to get an accurate count,

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Poetry

by Morgan W. Brown

Poetry is a brook from which I drink by,
fish and swim, wade through, lay near and listen;
envisioning the distant stars of the night sky;
that it reflects, forever twinkling, upon to glisten;
always satisfied, yet something is oft a miss 'n.

HITTING BOTTOM

by Morgan W. Brown

dwelling within a quiet moment,
afforded during a mid-morning's
pause; lost in now forgotten
thoughts; telling reflections
of a face, not at first easily
recognized, found staring back
from down the bottom of a mug

so many questions began spewing forth:
whose tired, sullen, old eyes were these?
how did this person manage to get like
this; so worn out, poorly and sickly
looking? what happened? how? why?
or is it simply a case of being
'but for the grace of God'? does
anyone really care what happens to them?

so many unanswered open questions,
curious about and desiring to inquire;
only to pull away, exercising caution,
being fearful; less one get too close,
facing alone this strange mirror image
found hopelessly hitting bottom

then, upon further reflection, one
realization struck; is it not far
better, finding oneself on the bottom
somewhere, like this; rather than
being on top someplace, never really
caring for anyone or anything else,
except oneself and one's own; which
sometimes is how one ends up hitting
these murky, lonely, depths; even
among lots of well intentioned company

next time around, there will instead be
heartfelt, friendly, understanding greetings
offered and smiles given; no questions asked,
nor needing to be answered; letting it be
known that they are accepted and understood
for who, what and where they are at that
moment;
even when they are the one looking back
from the inside of a morning's drinking cup



Illustration: Overflow '02 by Lee

A Place

by Adrian

A place, or a journey's end.
Where hope - is given with a false promise
For the strong feed upon the weak .

And here
Where the cry of the lucky
May be spared the coldness of the winter's
night.
O'Lord
As I look upon those
Who have been spared the night's coldness
Only to be separated by this

What speaks louder then -
the bitter cold wind of night
a daughter's cry to her father-
"O'why must we be apart?
"Why father!
"I do not understand."

All awhile, he speaks not.
For I see only tears of confusion.

I can not help ponder
What has brought us to this place.
An island of despair.
Where husbands and wives must remain apart,
to be spared the coldness.

Yet there were those
Who were not as lucky,
For I have heard of those
Who have died from the cold
For that of which I find I was spared.
For here -
I find myself at a crossroad.

From here I take in hand all of which I own,
And leave - forthwith.

For hope without a future
Is but a Journey's End

Obituary

Letroit James
August 8, 2002
of prolonged illness

**Dennis Robert
Abrams**
August 26, 2002
of prolonged illness

**Martin
Velasques**
September 10, 2002
in care home

Correction:
The name of the deceased
recorded as "Johnny Rock" in
our last issue, should have
read "Johnny Brock"

No matter how rich you
become, how famous or
powerful, when you die the
size of your funeral will
still pretty much depend on
the weather.

Michael Pritchard

Retrial continued from page 1

The case was ramrodded through. Judge Gail D. Ohanisian disallowed the necessity defense, and set such strict rules of evidence that Billy's attorney, Kelly Tanalepy, was unable to present anyone to testify on Billy's behalf. In one day the case went to jury. He was quickly found guilty.

In sentencing, Judge Ohanisian barred Billy from the American River Parkway for life (how can a misdemeanor net a life sentence?). He must prove that he is looking for a \$900 a month job at least 5 times each week. He was also put on probation. Enforcement of the sentence has been deferred pending an appeal on the judge's disallow of the Eichorn Decision.

It used to be the District Attorney's office that prosecuted camping tickets, but lately the City Attorney's office has been doing it. City

Attorney Sam Jackson, head of the department, personally prosecuted Billy's case this time around. Mr. Jackson makes \$135,000 a year, that's \$2,596 dollars a week, \$370 for every day in court. He has an entourage that always follows him around wherever he goes, usually 3 staff members that are paid around \$40,000 a year. Court cost is \$10,000 a day, not including staff salaries.

Tommy Clinkenbeard, of the Public Defender's Office, estimates that if 4 or 5 tickets per year go to jury trial, it would cost as much as providing enough shelter for all the homeless people in Sacramento. The question is, what sort of tactics is the City Attorney's office using, that the police could issue nearly nine hundred camping tickets (as reported in the Bee), and only one not guilty plea gets to go to jury trial?

Overflow continued from page 1

The fast began when the Winter Overflow Shelter closed last year. Since then, over 300 people participated by fasting for one day or up to three days, sitting in the waiting room of the County Board of Supervisors. Joan Burke, Director of Advocacy for Loaves & Fishes, reported that hundreds of people also sent in letters, phone calls, and e-mails to the Supervisors in support of a year-round shelter. All though there have been rumors of some progress behind the scenes, Loaves & Fishes is already prepared to resume the fast on April 14, 2003.

The shelter will be open to men on November 19. It will remain open for men until March 31 and for women and children until April 30.

At full operation, the shelter can accommodate 228 adults and children and consists of 12 modular dorms, a dining trailer, one shower trailer, and two restroom trailers. Two meals a day will be served, dinner and something for breakfast.

Transportation to and from the shelter at Cal Expo is provided from a staging area near downtown. Last year the staging area was in Friendship Park, which proved to be inconvenient for staff and difficult for the shelter clients waiting in the weather. This year the staging area has moved inside to the old Loaves & Fishes thrift store. Intake for each night begins at 3:30 PM.

The Winter Overflow Shelter Program was designed to meet the immediate shelter needs of homeless individuals and families when other local shelters were full. Originally, anyone could sign up for the shelter for as long as they needed, as long as there were beds available. However, it has been policy for the last few years to put a time limit of two weeks on a person's stay, as if winter were only two weeks long. Clients of the shelter are also required to meet with county social workers. The social worker's task is to help shelter residents address their housing needs, and provide counseling and referral services. In past years, at the direction of the social workers, all the clients end up signing up for everything available, swamping all the other shelter and housing providers with too many people who have too little money. Residents have to do it in order to get extensions after the initial 14 day stay runs out.

Volunteers of America is administering the program under contract to the Department of Human Assistance for the second year in a row. Last year, according to the County, 1,247 men, 768 women, and 352 children used the shelter for an average stay of 16.7 days. The County states the cost to operate the shelter is approximately \$1.2 million annually, but that is not always only County money, often federal and state grants are available for funding emergency homeless services.



Homeless Joe Finds a Dollar

Politics is the art of looking for trouble, finding it whether it exists or not, diagnosing it incorrectly, and applying the wrong remedy.

Ernest Benn



Welcome to HOMEWARD:

Please help us make a difference!



Homeward Street Journal has been publishing since 1997 as a non-profit project of the Sacramento Homeless Organizing Committee, which is a part of the Sacramento Housing Alliance. The paper's mission is to alleviate miscommunication between communities by educating the public about housing and poverty issues, and by giving the homeless a voice in the public forum. Homeward also informs the homeless of shelter and occupational assistance, and acts as a creative self-help opportunity for those individuals who wish to participate.

The opinions expressed in Homeward are those of the authors, and not necessarily the Sacramento Housing Alliance or SHOC or Homeward.

Submissions and Editorial Policy
We welcome any participation or contributions: Articles, poems and other writing can be submitted at our office in the Loaves & Fishes complex, or mailed to the address below.

All writing submitted for publication will be edited as necessary, with due respect for the authors' intent. The editors will attempt to consult with an author if changes are necessary, however, the paper will go to print with the story as edited, if the author is unavailable.

All Letters to the Editor must be signed to be published. If the writer wishes to remain anonymous s/he should so state, but the letter must still be signed.
Poetry and graphics will not be edited, either the paper will publish the submission or not.
In submitting articles to the paper, authors give their permission to print their submissions in accordance with the above stipulations, as well as publishing excerpts on Homeward's webpage and possible reprinting in NASNA member papers, with due byline. Any requests for stories outside the above three will be referred to the author.

Subscriptions are available with a \$15 contribution. Make checks out to SHOC.

All correspondence can be sent to Homeward Street Journal, PO Box 2430, Sacramento, CA 95812

For information please call: 442-2156

The paper may also be E-mailed at Homeward2@yahoo.com

excerpts from the paper are published on the web at <http://users.comnet.com/~shochome>

MAX'S VIEW

by Max Biddle

Are Local Authorities Ignoring Constitutional Rights?

This is a transcript of a speech made by Max at a rally sponsored by SHOC in Sacramento at the State Capital on November 11, 1999, and originally printed in Homeward 3.5. Max asked that it be reprinted, because the issues he spoke about are still relevant today.

We are here to focus on California and Sacramento's response to the homeless situation. Let me read you one report

"On August 15, 1990, police officers in Santa Ana, California, arrested sixty-four homeless persons in the city civic center area. Police officers stationed atop buildings spotted homeless individuals with binoculars and radioed their location to officers on the ground. Officers on the ground arrested homeless individuals, hand-cuffed them and drove them to a nearby stadium for booking and fingerprinting. Police chained the homeless to benches for up to six hours without food or water. The police used markers to write numbers on the arms of the homeless that were arrested. At the conclusion of the six hours detention, the police loaded the homeless into vans and drove them to the edge of the central city and dumped them off."

This is a report that you would expect to read in your history books referring to how citizens were handled in Nazi Germany or the former Soviet Union or in South Africa during apartheid.

But it wasn't and isn't; this conduct by local authorities happened in California and similar conduct is occurring throughout the nation.

In the beginning of this country our Forefathers put forth in our Declaration of Independence that "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights..." - that is God given rights. Although

that goal and purpose was the aim of our Founding Fathers, it was never achieved right away. For over two hundred years of our history, the citizens of this country had to rally and support many movements and causes to bring about this moral purpose in our Declaration of Independence.

It took legal action to end indentured servitude in the early part of the 19th century; it took a civil war to end slavery; it took the suffragette movement to include women in the political process. As reactionary forces tried to halt progress towards inclusion in our political progress, the civil rights movement of the 50's, 60's, 70's, and the inspiration of the likes of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., drove us towards greater freedom and brought us closer to fulfilling our nation's declared goals that are expressed in our Declaration of Independence.

But now we come to our times of so-called economic prosperity and the obvious fact that distribution of this prosperity is not getting to many of our citizens. Reaction to this inequitable distribution of the economy has brought about another form of repression - that repression is the way local authorities are dealing with the homeless.

The Sacramento County and the City authorities have fashioned programs that are failing to deal with these situations. Their programs under General Assistance and job programs usually end up with people back on the streets before they know what's happened to them.

The city's dismantling of single resident occupancy (SROs) is forcing people of limited income back on the streets.

City after city is limiting affordable housing which is creating a new transient population that will eventually remind us of the Great Depression. Campsite communities made out of shacks and tents will erupt everywhere.

The combination of no housing; pressure from illegal camping laws, private industries determined not to hire people with police records, drug laws that are making criminals out of large segments of our young population; jobs that the not-so-educated could do in small factories that are sent overseas for cheap labor; lack of education in the high-tech fields that really only employ a small part of the working force; ALL these pressures are creating the increase in homelessness.

But the real problem is how local governments are responding to this situation. In the County of Sacramento there are public officials who have stated they have a "0" tolerance towards the homeless and are bound to force them into repressive programs that treat them like criminals, or drive them out of town if they don't subscribe to the county's plan for them.

They are denied legitimate camping facilities, to exist the only way they can. People living in cars, vans or buses because their incomes are too low for housing are not permitted parking facilities. The homeless themselves have been disenfranchised of their rights as citizens and are treated as aliens or worse.

The results of all this is that local authorities are laying waste to our Constitution. First, the 14th Amendment which guarantees due process under law, equal enforcement of the law, rights to personal property, and protection against unlawful search and seizure, does not exist for the homeless. Enforcement of local misdemeanor laws by the local authorities are using racial profiling and social economic profiling to target the homeless. The end result is what we call the economic cleansing going on across America.

But it is not enough for local authorities to deprive homeless of their Constitutional rights. In their fierce desire to rid the community of the poor and homeless they are harassing the religious and the spiritual community who are providing food, clothing and other services.

It is not enough to do damage to our Declaration of Independence or the 14th Amendment and in many instances the Bill of Rights; local communities are also depriving our religious and spiritual com-

munities their 1st Amendment rights to carry out their scriptural obligations to the poor. The use of permits and codes to harass the churches across the country clearly borders on 1st Amendment violations. Local governments throughout California are depriving churches of permits to dispense food, clothing and other services. Ministers and Clerics are facing criminal and misdemeanor prosecution in the exercise of their 1st Amendment right of Freedom of Religion.

At the time of the Great Depression and the collapse of the farming communities in the South which brought about the mass movement of Americans to the West, they were greeted by local authorities with guns, billy clubs and road blocks determined to keep the poor and homeless out of their communities.

The Federal Government had to step in to create camping grounds to protect American citizens from other Americans. It seems the time is coming when the Federal or the State Government may need to step in to protect American citizens from local authorities bent on repressing homeless citizens.

I know that the homeless have been turned off from voting, but you must realize that in a society that listens only to Money, or large blocks of voting power, you must participate in the political process. It may turn out that the homeless and their voting power may be the vital beginnings in restoring our Constitution to all its people.

America is losing its soul to materialism, and the poor have a greater responsibility to remind America that the Face of God can only be seen in their faces. The poor remind the community at large that bankrupt souls are running the community. Its only concern is about creating a tourist trap out of Sacramento.

Their desire not to want to look upon the face of the poor implies they do not or would not look upon the Face of Christ. The Scriptures are very clear about this and the role of the poor in our society. Surrendering the community at large to the money lenders builds a society that exists upon a foundation of sand that Scripture reminds us is spiritually bankrupt and doomed to failure.

Joining SHA

The Sacramento Housing Alliance is a network of concerned citizens which promotes decent affordable housing for low income households and homeless people through advocacy and participation in public discourse.

The SHA does not itself provide or manage housing.

You may call for info: (916) 442-1198

Annual Membership dues:
Standard, \$35,
Low-income, \$15

Organizations:
Full, 0.1% agency budget;
Associate, \$100

Send donations to:
Sacramento Housing Alliance
PO Box 2430
Sacramento, CA 95812

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