

# Guaranteed Living Income Toronto Newsbreeze



August 20 2017.

contains;

## **Hot Links**

**More Activites and Upcoming events**

**what about this Finsh "test" of a UBI?**

**Do they know they are incompetent?**

**summer almost done, things are coming up this fall**

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## HOT LINKS

Providing basic income to buy basic goods versus providing basic goods — Steemit <https://steemit.com/basicincome/@scottasantens/providing-basic-income-to-buy-basic-goods-versus-providing-basic-goods>

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Baloney Meter: How deep does the Canada Child Benefit cut child poverty rates? <http://nationalpost.com/wcm/afa2fda9-1add-459c-95a8-f782cabe8e21>

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These are the countries that pay the highest taxes in Europe <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2017/08/these-are-the-countries-that-pay-the-highest-taxes-in-europe/>

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Why Finland's Basic Income Experiment Isn't Working <https://nyti.ms/2ti1bA>

## More Activities and Upcoming events

The big union push on Bill 148 is understandable. I think they are a bit pessimistic when they say this is a once in a generation chance to achieve some real progress in workplace legislation. A UBI movement really needs to form a strong relationship with the labor movement.

The unions are asking all supporters to contact their MPPs to put additional pressure on them to protect what is already in the two acts and to get more into them. The thing which UBI activists should focus on and support strongly is the increase in the minimum wage and the removal of all exemptions to the minimum wage. These are all in [Employment Standards Act](#), by the way.

Bill 148 is still a work in progress. It has passed the

consultation stage when the public could make deputations. Now it is in the committee stage where the opposition parties can propose amendments. You can go down to Queen's park any day this week and watch that going on.

Of course, increasing the minimum wage will not help people who are unemployed or working short hours. It will help some people a lot. It will establish a precedent that incomes for mere mortals in this province can go up instead of just decline relative to inflation.

Another topic is the extension of the "just cause protection" to all workers. Right now there is no protection at all for non unionized workers from unjust dismissal. You can be dumped for good, bad, or no reason at all. OFL wants amendments which will at least give you some protection after three months on the job.

Another topic is the lack of protections to 'contractors'. The courts have decided there are separate categories for dependant and independent contractors. Bill 148 still fails to recognize the need of dependent contractors for protections similar to paid employees.

What OFL and the "make it Fair" movement would like us all to do is to contact our MPPs about this. Make it clear that you want to see these reforms added to the act. Make clear that you are speaking as an activist for UBI.

If you need to know more about this, you can download a trove of materials from this web site [http://www.makeitfair.ca/campaign\\_materials](http://www.makeitfair.ca/campaign_materials)

They will help you to e-mail your MPP if you click here;  
[http://www.makeitfair.ca/email?utm\\_campaign=2016\\_08\\_11\\_news&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=ofl](http://www.makeitfair.ca/email?utm_campaign=2016_08_11_news&utm_medium=email&utm_source=ofl)

Or you can get help phoning your local politician here;

[http://www.makeitfair.ca/call?utm\\_campaign=2016\\_08\\_11\\_news&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=ofl](http://www.makeitfair.ca/call?utm_campaign=2016_08_11_news&utm_medium=email&utm_source=ofl)

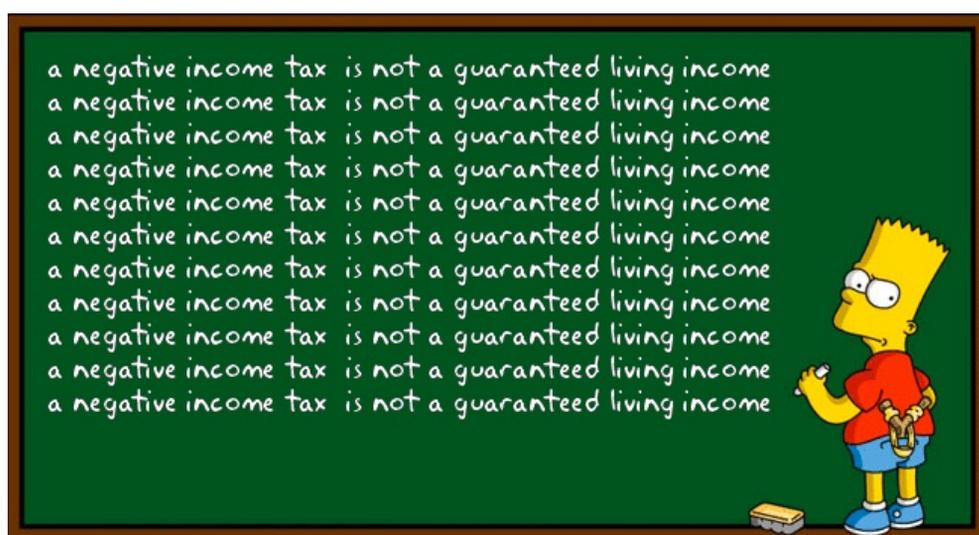
What I dream of is a time when a UBI movement can mobilize a member base to help unions with campaigns like these. In turn, unions tend to help groups who have similar aims and who help them. It is sometimes called 'collective impact'. See how it works?

The unions these days are getting more concerned with equity and justice issues, rather than merely protecting their members jobs. They are starting something new; their first Equity and Justice summit will come this November 17 to 18th.

It would be great if some UBI supporters could get into that summit with some prepared literature to give out, and prepared positions on UBI. That is, ones which clearly denounce, and distinguish us from, those who go along with the provincial 'pilot' nonsense.

Finally, with summer gone us old folks are looking for places to deliver our spiel on the real object of a UBI. The best strategy would be to contact other organizations such as student unions and neighbourhood associations, who can make space available and put the word out about the event.

We are sure that many subscribers of this newsletter have contacts within such organizations and can help with this. So, how about it?



## What about this Finnish “test” of a UBI?

Here is an excerpt from an article about an Iranian program which gives some clues about the effects of a UBI. The original is found at <https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2017/7/20/15821560/basic-income-critiques-cost-work-negative-income-tax>

As usual, this study was obsessed about the “labor market, that disgusting term. ( As though people are commodities.) The conclusion does contain one excellent paragraph;

*Our own understanding of the lives of the poor in Iran is that getting \$1.50 per day, with dubious real value in future years, is little reason for poor workers to quit their jobs, though some in more physically demanding jobs might. But does the reduction in labor supply, if it occurs, represent a real loss of value to the economy? We doubt that many would consider an agricultural worker forced to work with hazardous pesticides without proper equipment quitting his or her job after receiving a cash transfer a bad outcome.*

The big argument against UBI is always that it will make people “lazy”. Since the empirical evidence is great that people do not stop working when they get some money, this objection is really a euphemism for something else. Mainly, that people will get too “uppity”.

That little attention is paid to this program may be because Iran is not very popular with western elite opinion. But I suspect a bigger problem is that this is a demogrant, not a tax rebate, and unlike the Alaska nonsense is, or was, quite substantial.

The excerpt;

International evidence is also encouraging. Iran, believe it or not, has a program very much like a basic income. While winding down the country’s extensive oil subsidies for citizens, President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad implemented a flat cash dividend, paid out to every man, woman, and child

in the country. Social conservatives like Ahmadinejad tend to also be big welfare state and redistribution supporters; that helps explain their support from poorer parts of the country.

The current reformist president, Hassan Rouhani, has opposed the basic income out of concern that it discourages work, and the policy has been dialed back slightly. “Parliament passed a law requiring the government to drop the well-to-do from the roster,” Djavad Salehi-Isfahani, a professor of economics at Virginia Tech and a fellow at the Brookings Institution, told me. “3-4 million of the 80 million [total population] have been dropped.” All the same, he says, “I think it is (or was) very much a UBI program.”

Salehi-Isfahani and a colleague, Mohammad Mostafavi-Dehzoeei, have studied [the Iranian basic income’s effect on work](#). *[scroll down to conclusions]* “Our overall conclusion,” they write, “is that the program did not affect labor supply in any appreciable way.” That’s especially astounding given the size of the benefit: In 2011, when it was introduced, it provided about 29 percent of the median household income on average. In the US, that would mean paying out \$16,390 to the average family.

The benefit has since eroded with inflation, and Iran is economically different from the US in countless ways, but the fact that a basic income that massive caused so little disruption to work is striking.

Below is an article written by Robyn Peterson in her “Sayout” newsletter. Read on.

## **Do they know they’re incompetent?**

A widespread phenomenon of our times may well be something called the Dunning-Kruger Effect. Dr. David Dunning and Dr. Justin Kruger, Cornell University professors of psychology, developed this theory in 1999.

Essentially, this theory states that someone might be quite incompetent in dealing with a given area and yet not realize

they're incompetent. Worse, someone subject to this cognitive effect would believe they have a superior level of competence in the area concerned.

They suffer from an illusion of their own superiority. Let's think about this. If someone is actually incompetent at dealing with something, yet believe they have a superior level of competence in working with that same something, what kind of havoc might they wreak in an organization?

The damaging possibilities expand as the rank of the person suffering from this effect rises.

A team leader or project leader who leads people with higher levels of competence than his own, but insists on believing that his own competence level is actually higher, would breed discontent and resentment. And the performance outcomes for the team or project would likely be poor, even disastrous.

As we look around in our world, how many people might we see who exemplify the Dunning-Kruger Effect? The number could be uncomfortably large. And it could have serious implications for all of us.

Are politicians immune from this effect? Might those who gain leadership positions and advocate for certain policies with strident certainty actually be subject to the Dunning-Kruger Effect?

Entire populations could be led by incompetent people, something many have suspected all along. We live in a society that needs leadership, real leadership, not just designated managers or presidents who obtain their positions through power and influence based on large sums of money.

The fundamental question is: How do we get truly competent leaders?

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This is a topic which needs to be brought out in the open and seriously discussed. It is especially important within activist groups. I have seen a lot of this type of thing over

many years working with anti-poverty and similar groups.

I know many people who fit this description perfectly. Of course they are the first ones who will give you something like, "well, I am glad you are starting to see your own self" when you bring this up. As one old acquaintance of mine put it "the dumber they are the more they want to be the leaders". I have seen a lot of good people quit, and new groups with potential collapse, because it was just impossible to get beyond the jackasses who think they are smarter than everybody else.

Of course, what usually turbocharges the destructive effects of such people is another character defect, the inverted narcissist. That is, the person convinced that his/her well being depends on submitting to the whims of dominant people, that it is somehow wrong to assert ones own rights, and that everyone has to agree with this. New groups usually implode not because those who do not fit are kicked out, but because inverts narcissists try to keep everybody in.

This is something for people new to activism to consider before they become committed to bad habits. Here is a link to another good article about Dunning Kruger people.

### **What know-it-alls don't know, or the illusion of competence**

<https://aeon.co/ideas/what-know-it-alls-dont-know-or-the-illusion-of-competence>

And here is a great little witty song from the 1970s about these people.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zomwyZEYZNE>

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By the way; if you would like to subscribe to the "Sayout" e-newsletter, make a request to: [peterpersonwrite@hotmail.com](mailto:peterpersonwrite@hotmail.com)

## summer is almost done; things coming up this fall.

Summer is almost over and it will soon be time to get back to building a movement for a real Basic Income. Me and Robyn got together at my place last week and worked on her presentation on "BI, where are we now?" Someone from my building showed up to listen and signed up to this newsletter.

I realized a need to work a lot on my presentation skills. Robyn needs to revise her powerpoint presentation a bit. But the two of us are getting a bit old and decrepit. What is really needed is some younger people to get involved in this work. That is, to understand what a BI was originally supposed to be about and start bringing it back to what is really needed.

This fall, we will try again at getting a decent group of people together to hear the revised BI presentation and discuss ways to relaunch a BI movement in Toronto. We still dream of getting a speakers bureau together, of volunteers who can go out to small community gatherings and speak about UBI.

But we have other plans as well. Robyn has been writing a book. She will soon have it done and will start self publishing it. I, on the other hand, am planning to extensively revise my web site as well as create a new blog and start a series of papers on important topics to do with a UBI.

It is slow to get something like this going. I think a lot of small groups across the country are thinking the same way we are. A UBI us at its core a good idea but the way it is being presented is a disaster. It is being turned into something the exact opposite of the original intention.

We suffered a 'misdirection' for awhile earlier this year with the HSAG group. It does not seem to be in existence anymore. The basic problem was that the agency which gave us a meeting space and some resources also mandated

someone to be the facilitator for the group who was not very competent, to put it delicately.

He seemed more interested in his ideas, such as that salt was corroding the earth and that if people have mice in their apartments they can get rid of them by telling them telepathically to leave. I do have some sympathy for this guy, though he has wasted a good deal of other people's time. He inspires me to add the short article following this on the Dunning Kruger syndrome.

Robyn is definitely not a Dunning Kruger example. She is very competent and has a pretty good idea of her competence. She has a very good idea of the problem with the present Basic Income movement in Canada.

Here is a quote from her;

*The BI issue with its 'livable' and 'universal' components is in something of a hiatus at the moment. This is partly due to the folks at BICN embracing the Ontario experiment which is about providing poverty relief in a different way (whilst continuing to starve the overwhelming majority of social assistance and disability support payments).*

More;

*It seems these people are determined to push basic income as a poverty relief programme and nothing more. Clearly, they don't seem to be interested in social or economic transformation.*

*In my view their continuing support for Ontario's approach is despicable. Ah well, that's the world of those who choose not to see the real possibilities.*

And;

*I agree with you that we need a movement for this, not a continued series of speculators and naysayers.*

*The Ontario initiative has thrown me off a fair bit. First, there's the initiative itself which is being touted far and*

*wide as something that it is not. Then there's the enthusiastic response of groups such as BICN, which has disappointed me. Additionally, I'm angered by the insulting approach that's being taken to helping people on low incomes. Premier Wynne herself indicated that there are about 800,000 poor people in Ontario. She's doing precious little to help them and instead seems to be putting her energy into touting the "Pilot" as a wonderful thing. Back in 2009 I attended a number of sessions in which people were enthusiastically talking about how Ontario was going to eliminate poverty. Wynne and Matthews and the others don't seem at all embarrassed that they made big promises then and have utterly failed to keep them.*

*Political cynicism is certainly afoot -- and loudly.*

*Building a movement will take persistence and a refusal to accept second rate 'substitutes'. This is about people and their survival in a new economy.*

*On with the movement!*

**Thats it for this week. The next Livingrant Newsbreeze will be due September 3. Unless there is an increased pace of activities in Toronto, I am going to keep it on a bi weekly schedule. Since I am getting fairly busy these days, I cannot guarantee always having it out on time.**