

# Guaranteed Living Income Toronto Newsbreeze



JUNE 25, 2017

contains;

**Hotlinks; some very useful webinars with practical advice about building a movement.**

**Basic income Time, Europe. About how the BI movement is doing in Europe.**

**An interesting letter about the Basic Income conference last month, and the problems the left has in getting their heads around the concept of BI.**

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## Hot links

Here is just about the best defence against Left criticism of a Basic Income I have read yet.

**“Working to Death: Leftist Critiques of Basic Income Fail to Offer Meaningful Alternatives”** by Miles Krauter <https://medium.com/@mileskrauter/working-to-death-leftist-critiques-of-basic-income-fail-to-offer-meaningful-alternatives-8fe2b8ebe6a>

Meanwhile, there is a magazine called ROAR which recently put out what we need more of; an advocacy of BI from an unapologetically left perspective.

**Towards a Post-Work Society**

<https://roarmag.org/magazine/towards-a-post-work-society/>

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## Two interesting webinars from Tamarack

One tells us to be careful about collaboration. As soon as we start working with people we do not really like, we must give up control. Thus, collaboration often does not make sense. The other tells us not to worry, there are ways we can engage with other groups without losing control. This actually is an important topic if we want to achieve something, and not have it coopted by conflicting agendas.

**Collaborating with the enemy**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GloVzauh7AM>

**You don't need to be afraid anymore! How to authentically engage communi...** <https://youtu.be/>

## Here is another webinar worth looking at

Basic Income in Ontario: What low-income people, service providers and advocates need to know

<http://yourlegalrights.on.ca/webinar/basic-income-ontario-what-low-income-people-service-providers-and-advocates-need-know>

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## Guy Caron's BI plans

( Short on details, but clearly a "top up" plan, not a real Guaranteed Income. Still trying to contact Caron, try to arrange a meetup on BI next time he is in TO next. )

[http://en.guycaron.ca/basic\\_income](http://en.guycaron.ca/basic_income)

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## Some more good reads

The toxic glorification of working hard.

<https://www.exceptionnotfound.net/the-toxic-glorification-of-working-hard/>

Is \$17,000 a good enough starting point for basic income?

[https://ca.finance.yahoo.com/news/17000-good-enough-starting-point-basic-income-113048298.html?soc\\_src=social-sh&soc\\_trk=tw](https://ca.finance.yahoo.com/news/17000-good-enough-starting-point-basic-income-113048298.html?soc_src=social-sh&soc_trk=tw)

I follow international events and events in Europe pretty closely. Especially when they have to do with BI. Here is something I wrote back when Universal Basic Income Europe sent me the following message

<http://mailchi.mp/basicincome-europe/it-is-basic-income-time-europe?e=0d68078db0>

## **It's basic income time, Europe!**

No time is a good time to use BI as a hook for other political agendas that might not be supportable. There is plenty of opposition in Europe to the unaccountable Brussels bureaucracy. All such opposition is being framed as “right wing” and “populist” as if here is something wrong or necessarily right wing about populism. The old CCF was a populist party before it became the NDP.

The UBIE people do note that BI schemes are often being used as an excuse to cut social programs. They do not offer any solutions for that.

The UBIE group is interesting. It came about as a sort of rebellion against the undemocratic structure of BIEN. I was at the Montreal BIEN congress in 2014 when a lot of discussion in the corridors was about this new group that wanted to create a Europe specific BI advocacy group.

It was largely built around Enno Schmidt's referendum campaign in Switzerland, and the attempt to get a Europe wide referendum on a BI. The Brussels Mandarinate really hates referendums. The BIEN group did not like the development of UBIE very much either.

The thing is, if I may lecture Europeans from across the

pond, BI has to come from democratic national governments. The big problem in Europe is that an antidemocratic supranational entity has gained far too much power over national governments. That is what all the trouble is about; with “Brexit”, the British trying to leave the EU, and with other left and right nationalist parties rising in Europe.

It is important for all BI advocacy groups to learn how to work with allied groups without being coopted into conflicting agendas.

That gets me to the concern about the “dividend” scheme. Brussels is looking for ways to increase its revenues, and this could be a good ‘in’ for them to create the direct taxes they want. Aside from where it would come from, it is not enough to be useful. As well, It is likely that neoliberal national governments would use it to get away with clawing back their own social security programs.

Think again, UBIE. We do not need more naive do-gooders pushing a Basic Income. We need people with some sophistication, who understand the real object of a BI, what works for it and what works against it.

**Here is a letter that got CCed to me. It is so interesting I thought it should go into this newsletter, as a further note on the BI conference of last month. As near as I can determine, Brian and Richard have no objection to this. Brian Milani has written several books well worth reading. Check the links at the bottom of this.**

Hi Richard,

Just a note to say thanks for your contribution yesterday at the basic income conference.

It was proverbial water in the desert. And seeing the mention of your new book is an additional bonus.

I will be getting ahold of it ASAP.

Otherwise, the conference was mainly depressing, or a wake-up call as to how clueless most of the left is about fundamental social change. I had hoped to at least pick up some useful critiques of BI, but I thought almost all the negative perspectives offered were pretty crass, easily countered. For some lefties, it seemed like their main concerns were saving their own jobs--be it as social workers or (a certain kind) of organizer. As you hinted at, vis-a-vis Deena's comments, even apart from BI's overall economic impact, BI should really be a boon to social activist organizing networks.

The other thing that was depressing was not a single mention about the NATURE of work being done today: the waste and anti-social character of work in most sectors: from the food system, to energy, to manufacturing---all of it contributing to climate change, and undercutting real (qualitative) wealth creation. It's not like humanity's survival is dependent on all this dead-end work. Quite the contrary. Almost all most advanced kinds of work in these sectors must become more commons-based---whether that be rooftop permaculture or wiki-based mass collaboration. Markets won't touch this stuff, so we have to find ways to remunerate this work. BI seems a part of this.

The BI straw man that most of the commentators focused on always seemed to put an "either/or" slant on strategy. Why is BI antithetical to also working on other supports, including free food, shelter, healthcare, etc.? Most of the supporters of BI I know are actively engaged in creating more holistic alternatives in food systems, energy, etc. And BI should be accompanied not by simply "job retraining" but support for whole sectors of regenerative development. True productivity of the commons also creates jobs on markets, but very different kinds of markets than what now dominates.

To me, the mainstream left's aversion to BI may (at least subconsciously) intended to avoid the basic issue of

**guaranteed economic security.** This is where the "rights" dimension emerges. As a species, we are now in a very different situation than that of past BI advocates like Thomas Paine, or Bertrand Russell or even M.L. King: Global humanity is rich enough to guarantee every human being on the planet healthy subsistence. However we meet these needs, they can and should be met. Clearly, not everyone in the BI movement, being so diverse, is committed to the principle of guaranteed economic security (where BI is just one means of this). But it is a very important dimension and intuition for many in the movement, and I believe that dealing with climate change will be impossible without guaranteed economic security. So it is an important dimension to raise. And the environmental dimension raises another thing about the conference---that there was hardly a mention of the environment, except from the audience. I won't go into this any further.

So much for now. Thanks again for your representing some social vision. I'm sure your book will be useful for me, as my focus so far has been on the larger parameters of postindustrial change, not so much the nuts and bolts. E.g.: <http://www.greeneconomics.net/RaisingTheFloorReview.htm>

<http://www.kosmosjournal.org/news/turning-around-the-anthropocene-unleashing-the-potentials-of-abundance/>

yours,  
Brian M., Toronto

Brian Milani [GreenEconomics.net](http://www.GreenEconomics.net)

As promised, I will be slowing down for the summer. I will start putting this out every two weeks. There will still be things going on. Remember the event at 14 Madison this month <http://www.qaz.ca/calendar.html#j17a>

As well, we are working on finding space for Robyn to do her workshops starting sometime this summer. We want to start in Regent park, but that is proving a problem. It is the usual thing with people who would rather say "no" to everything.

**Next GLI Breeze due July 9**