



October 11, 2013

Poverty - an Electoral Issue

Provincial Forum – Roads out of poverty and Walk to commemorate the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty

The Common Front for Social Justice closely monitored the process leading to the adoption and implementation of the NB Economic and Social Inclusion Plan.

In 2010, the Shawn Graham government passed a law to reduce poverty, namely the *Economic and Social Inclusion Act*. Yet, more than three years since the legislation, there are still close to 90,000 persons in low income in NB.

Who are those thousands of people?

They are, mainly, low-salary workers, most of whom are earning minimum wage, working either full time or part time, in the sectors of retail trade, accommodation and food services and seasonal industries. Since 2011, these workers are generally paid \$10 an hour but their salary is not indexed to the cost of living. Consequently, their purchasing power has decreased ever since. Another important group of people living in poverty are the close to 40 000 citizens relying on welfare. Finally, there are also seniors who receive the Guaranteed Income Supplement, students and artists.

The provincial government took some positive steps to reduce poverty. They have implemented the Healthy Smiles, Clear Vision program for children of low-income families, increased the basic rates for Social Assistance recipients by 4% this October and 3% next April and modified some policies, but it is not enough.

The Common Front is hosting a **Provincial Forum** entitled **Roads out of poverty** in order to pursue the discussion and, more importantly, involve the different political parties in the search for solutions.

The provincial forum will start at 10:00 at the Moncton Lions Community Centre on October 17, 2013, which is the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty.

Doctor Cathy Rogers, sociology professor at Crandall University and UNB, will talk about the poverty situation in the province and propose a few solutions. A round table, regrouping the representatives of the political parties, will follow her presentation.

We are really pleased that the following persons accepted our invitation to answer our question: ***What does your party recommend to reduce poverty among the thousands of citizens now living in poverty?***

- **Madeleine Dubé**, Minister of Social Development, Conservative Party
- **Brian Gallant**, Leader of the Liberal Party
- **Dominic Cardy**, Leader of the New Democratic Party
- **David Coon**, Leader of the Green Party

A question period will follow the round table.

At 14:00 p.m. we will hold our annual ceremony in front of the monument erected against poverty, located at Riverfront Park, near the Rogers building. Afterward, we will walk toward Moncton Town Hall where the City invites us for coffee.

This public event is part of our campaign to make poverty an electoral issue during the next provincial election of September 2014.

You will find, in you information kits, a document containing the different propositions made by the political parties in their 2010 electoral platform, a series of information sheets with concrete propositions to reduce poverty and our Plan for making Poverty an issue in the next Provincial Election.

For more information:

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The Common Front for Social Justice is one of the largest democratic and popular organizations in New Brunswick, with close to 75,000 group and individual members. The Common Front brings together individuals as well as local, regional and provincial organizations to work towards the eradication of poverty.

