THE LAST WORD

THE WORKING POOR!

Sometimes you will read an article or a book and certain words will jump out at you and hit you on smack dab where you simply don't want to feel, see or hear them. The words I am sharing with you now did just that for me the other day as, by chance, I picked up a little book whose title will remain nameless, and read the following:

"Expecting the world to treat you fairly because you are a good person is like expecting a bull not to charge you because you are a vegetarian."

In our world today we have many people who seem to think that "The World" owes them a living and they get upset when this does not quite happen according to their expectations. Over and over again in the news and press we see examples of this, and I have to think that for some people who complain loudly enough it works. Now I am not a vegetarian and I do not expect anyone to provide me with a living.....I am far too naïve for that, but I do take issue with the growing trends in our society for employment opportunities to offer less and less in the way of security and longer term financial benefits like, for example; health benefits and pension accrual.

Obtaining a REAL job today is not easy as more and more organizations opt for providing 'part time' employment opportunities which relieves them of much gov-

16 S- (P - LEND) -OUR PUZZLE LAMB - ASTED (anag. dates) SOLUTION EX - TRA (art rev.) ILL - ITERATE - NESS 24 PAT - RIOT TUTORED (anag. RUDE TOT) CHOWDER DI - (RTY (anag. try) R - 1) - CK **PENS** ARSON SPLENDOUR DOWN IN - FLA - TABLE EXTRA AMBASTED 2 CHA- (I) -R 4 IODIDES (anag. I died so) RE - (CI - T) -AL **PRONOUN - CEMENTS** ODD MEN OUT (anag. doomed IRTYTRICK nut) EAR - L **ACROSS** ACCOUNTABILITY (anag. about city clan I) 1 IT-C-H **BROAD - SIDES** MICROPHONE (anag. echo in S- (T) -IMULATOR prom) **TWEETER** FI- (N) -ANCES 11 C-HOW-DER D - RASTIC (anag. racist) 22 E - ERIE 12 AIR-CONDITIONED (anag. I 23 SPUD tried in condo) 14 A-R-SON

ernment legislation, particularly in respect of termination. In addition, "contract positions," lasting periods of months to even years also remove some of the more 'onerous' responsibilities faced by employers in respect of employment law. What does this tell us? Have our governments been acting in the best interests of the people or have they been legislating in favour of the organizations that are providing employment? Make up your own mind on this question, but I know what I think and feel.

In our society in the year 2006 we see, more often than not, both parents working in a two parent family. Is this from choice or from necessity? I have to think it is the latter as REAL wage spending power diminishes, and REAL costs like taxes, transport, food, power are all on an upward trend. (look at County taxes/revaluation and be concerned about the next 5 years) Looking ahead, if this trend continues, we are seeing the beginning of a society in which the majority of the people will be relatively poor, and will have great limitations on their ability to correct their financial situation due to government approved restrictive company employment policies and cost increases that bear no relation to the rate of inflation.

For single parent families whose numbers are on the increase, the situation is even more bleak. Just how do you provide housing and care for a family of one or two children on a wage of \$8 to \$12 per hour? Simple answer...you can't, and the result is more children living on the poverty line and families caught in a poverty trap. We all cannot be 'professional people,' whose job security and conditions are, in the main, vastly superior to those who, through no fault of their own, diligently work for their miniscule hourly wages with little or no hope of improvement.

As a society we need to try to ensure that EVERY child in grade school is gradually and effectively made aware of the relationship between education and attitude, to income and future comfort. Then to my mind, the Government at both provincial and national level has to kick in the other half of the equation and encourage (perhaps even legislate) more employment organizations to provide permanent employment opportunities that do offer reasonable benefits AND SECURITY to those who are prepared to work responsibly for the privilege.

"Expecting the world to treat you fairly" is, in my opinion, not unreasonable when, with a government that is working for the people by establishing legislation creating fair conditions of employment, we reciprocate by giving of our best.

Bill Yates, Friend of The County.