

# BASIC INCOME 33

## AUTUMN 1999

### Newsletter of the Basic Income European Network

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<http://www.etes.ucl.ac.be/BIEN/bien.html>

BIEN's Executive Committee met in Brussels on 5 November and took a number of important decisions.

1. **BIEN's eight Congress will take place in Berlin on 6-7 October 2000.** Its location, general structure and sub-themes have been fixed. First details on page 4.
2. For reasons explained below, **the secretariat is moving back** from the European Parliament to Louvain University.
3. **Copies of a new brochure** on basic income and BIEN are available from BIEN's secretariat.
4. **This issue is the last one of the newsletter in its present format.** From 2000 onwards, "BIEN news flashes" will be e-mailed at more frequent intervals to anyone who wishes to be on our e-mailing list. In addition, the printed newsletter will be aesthetically improved and sent twice a year to BIEN members only.
5. **Membership is more important than ever for BIEN's development.** To be a member of BIEN until December 2000 costs E 25. To be a life member costs E 100. The list of our first life members features on the back page. So do the instructions about how to join.

No lively network without an active participation from its members. Do keep sending us relevant information and publications.

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### **THIS ISSUE OF *BASIC INCOME***

was prepared with the help of Stuart Duffin, Laurence Jacquet, Loek Groot, Yannick Vanderborght and all those who spontaneously sent relevant material.

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### **BIEN'S LIFE**

#### **Executive Committee meeting (Brussels, 5 November 1999)**

After meeting in Burnham (UK) in January 1999, BIEN's executive committee met again, mainly to discuss the organisation of our 2000 Berlin Congress.

Were present: Ilona Ostner and Guy Standing (Göttingen and Geneva, co-chair), Alexander de Roo (Brussels, treasurer), Claus Offe (Berlin, conference organiser), Steven Quilley (Dublin, recruitment officer), Philippe Van Parijs (Louvain, newsletter editor), Edwin Morley-Fletcher and Walter VanTrier (Rome and Antwerp, honorary members), Stuart Duffin, Loek Groot and Mats Høglund (London, Amsterdam and Göteborg, representing the British, Dutch and Swedish national networks), Laurence Jacquet and Yannick Vanderborcht (Louvain, assistant editors of the newsletter and website).

### **Secretariat**

As a result of having been elected member of the European Parliament and vice-chairman of its environment commission, Alexander de Roo has both less time and less help than he anticipated when he agreed to take over as BIEN secretary. Philippe Van Parijs will therefore become secretary again until our 2000 Congress, and BIEN's secretariat will return to Louvain-la-Neuve's Place Montesquieu, where BIEN was born in 1986.

Not an unfitting address, perhaps, since it is the Marquis de Montesquieu who wrote: "The State owes all its citizens a secure subsistence, food, suitable clothes and a standard of living which does not damage their health" (*L'Esprit des Lois* XXIII, 1748)!

BIEN's new address: Chaire Hoover, 3 Place Montesquieu, B-1348 Louvain-la-Neuve, fax +32-10-473952, [bien@etes.ucl.ac.be](mailto:bien@etes.ucl.ac.be).

Alexander de Roo remains treasurer. The London-based Citizen's Income' Trust will collaborate more closely with BIEN's secretariat, especially as regards the newsletter and the web site.

### **Newsletter**

At the moment, the newsletter has a printed version and an electronic version which are exact replicas of each other. From 2000 onwards, the printed newsletter will be aesthetically improved, sent twice a year by post to BIEN members only and made available at our congresses and other events. The electronic newsletter will take the form of shorter "flashes" sent more frequently as e-mail messages (not attachments) to anyone who asks (by sending the message "Subscribe BIEN" to [bien@etes.ucl.ac.be](mailto:bien@etes.ucl.ac.be)). Both the news flashes and the newsletter will also be downloadable from BIEN's web site (<http://www.etes.ucl.ac.be/BIEN/bien.html>).

## **BIEN's 8th CONGRESS (Berlin, 6-7 October 2000)**

**Place.** The 8th International Congress of the Basic Income European Network will be held in Berlin on 6-7 October 2000. Prof. Friedrich Neidhardt, president of the Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin (WZB), has kindly offered to host it in his Centre's main building. The WZB is Europe's main research centre in the social sciences outside Universities.

**The organiser** is Professor Claus Offe (Humboldt Universität, Unter den Linden 6, D – 10099 BERLIN, tel. +49 30 2093 4270, Fax: +49 30 2093 4271, bien@rz.hu-berlin.de), in collaboration with Prof. Heiner Ganssmann (Freie Universität Berlin), Dr Jacqueline O'Reilly (WZB), Dr Stefan Lessenich (Göttingen) and BIEN's executive committee.

### **Structure**

Friday morning: Four introductory keynote presentations by invited speakers

Friday afternoon: four parallel workshops

Saturday morning: four parallel workshops

Saturday afternoon: Political panel, followed by highlights from the workshops, two invited addresses putting the congress in perspective, and a conclusion

Country survey: in the form of posters

BIEN General Assembly meeting: on the Saturday evening

**Themes.** The general theme of this 8<sup>th</sup> congress is "Economic Citizenship Rights for the 21st century". Four sub-themes have been selected for the parallel workshops and the introductory plenary presentations:

1. Legitimising non-market work
2. Lifetime flexibility and income security
3. Citizenship rights, responsibility and paternalism
4. Basic income and social cohesion in an integrating Europe

### **Call for papers**

It is not too early to start thinking about the possibility of presenting a paper within the framework of one of the parallel workshops. Titles and abstracts will need to be sent to the Conference organiser by **the 1<sup>st</sup> of April 2000**, together with a suggestion as to which of the sub-themes (broadly interpreted) the paper would be relevant for.

## **OTHER EVENTS**

### **Madison (Wisconsin), 8-10 July 1999**

#### **"Globalization and the Good Society. Eleventh Annual Conference of the Society for the Advancement of Socio-Economics"**

Founded by the "communitarian" sociologist Amitai Etzioni, currently chaired by Wolfgang Streeck, director of Cologne's Max Planck Institute, SASE holds one big international conference every year. The theme of this one hardly guaranteed that basic income would play a prominent role in it. Yet, it did.

Among the countless parallel workshops, one was explicitly devoted to basic income, with a critical review of a number of recent books by Karl Widerquist (Levy Institute), a paper on the limits of the work ethic by Michael Lewis (State University of New York) and a paper on political resistance to basic income in North America by Sally Lerner (University of Waterloo), who announced at the end of the workshop her intention of starting an interactive forum on basic income (lerner@watserv1.uwaterloo.ca).

However, the surprise came from the semi-plenary addresses and plenary panels. While Robert Haveman (University of Wisconsin) restated his plea (see *OECD Econ. Papers* 1996) for a comprehensive package including a refundable tax credit at two thirds of the poverty line and employment subsidies targeted at the low skilled, Ronald Dore (Centre for Economic Performance, London School of Economics) made a vibrant plea for a citizen's income at 40% of GNP per capita and predicted that the Blair Government's Working Families Tax Credit (analogous to the US Earned Income Tax Credit) would gradually expand and move in this direction.

At the special presidential session, Joel Rogers (Department of Law, University of Wisconsin and leader of the "New Party") contrasted his new egalitarianism (enabling, empowering, responsibility-compatible, decentralized) with both neo-liberalism and traditional egalitarianism (passivity-inducing, ex-post correcting,

centralized). In reply to comments by Fritz Scharpf (Max-Planck Institut Köln) and Philippe Van Parijs (Université catholique de Louvain), he indicated that his views had been moving away from conditional, "activating" benefit schemes to a non-means-tested unconditional basic income (which would give more bargaining power to its recipients while eroding the hurdles that prevent activity).

Finally, Erik Olin Wright (Department of Sociology, University of Wisconsin), one of the local organizers, concluded the last plenary panel by stating that everything he heard (especially by the Harvard law professor Lucie White and Julie Kerkisick, director of the State of Wisconsin's project "New Hope. Building Bridges to Work") pointed to the relevance of introducing a universal basic income.

As the the next SASE Conference (London School of Economics, 7-10 July 2000) will be on "Citizenship and Exclusion", there is no doubt more than a fair chance that "socio-economics" will be pondering again on the virtues and drawbacks of a basic income.

(For further information: SASE, PO Box 39008, Baltimore, MD 39008, Baltimore MD 21212, USA; Tel. 1-410-435 6617; Fax: 1-410-377 7965; saseorg@aol.com.)

### **Göteborg (Sweden), 30-31 October 1999**

#### **Seminarium om Medborgarlön**

The first international seminar organised by the new Swedish basic income network (Folkrörelsen för Medborgarlön), with the participation of Tony Walter (University of Reading, UK), Per Janson (Lunds Universitet, Sweden), Erik Christensen (Ålborgs Universitet, Denmark), Lasse Ekstrand (Gävle Högskola, Sweden) and others.

For further information: kicki.bobacka@mp.se (Kicki Bobacka), coordinator of the Folkrörelsen för Medborgarlön

### **Paris (France), 5 November 1999**

#### **Impôt négatif, allocation universelle, allocation compensatrice de revenu**

Workshop organised by the Centre international Pierre Mendès-France (Directors : Michel Rocard and Patrick Viveret),

with the participation of Alain Caillé (Université de Paris-Nanterre, director of the Revue du MAUSS) and Roger Godino (Holding international de développement, former economic adviser to Michel Rocard)

For further information: Centre international Pierre Mendès-France, 21 Boulevard de Grenelle, F-75015 Paris, rgodino@club-internet.fr.

### **Brussels (Belgium), 5 November 1999**

#### **Back to Full Employment? Employment subsidies versus sabbatical grants**

Workshop organised within the framework of the inter-university research project "The New Social Question"

Morning : Basic income and negative income tax versus earned income tax credit and wage subsidies

Introduction by Guy Standing, director of the programme on socio-economic security, ILO, Geneva. Comments by Stuart Duffin, Director of the Citizen's Income Trust; Bea Cantillon, Director of the Centrum voor sociaal beleid, UFSIA, Antwerp; Bruno Van der Linden, Professor of economics at the UCL, Louvain-la-Neuve

Afternoon : Basic income and negative income tax versus sabbatical accounts and career interruption schemes, Introduction by Claus Offe, professor of political science at Humboldt University, Berlin. Comments by Ive Marx, research fellow at the Centrum voor Sociaal Beleid, UFSIA, Antwerp; Pascale Vielle, professor of social security law at the UCL, Louvain-la-Neuve; Ilona Ostner, professor of comparative social policy at the University of Göttingen

For further information: Yannick Vanderborght, Chaire Hoover, 3 Place Montesquieu, B-1348 Louvain-la-Neuve, [vanderborght@etes.ucl.ac.be](mailto:vanderborght@etes.ucl.ac.be)

### **Paris (France), 4 December 1999**

#### **Travail choisi, droit au revenu, temps libéré**

This conference is the climax of a series of local forums organised in various parts of France by the Club Res Publica Pluriels, an association of students and other young people which aims to promote "a political commitment inspired by the values of the left and the republican tradition", with a strong emphasis on the European dimension. These forums were all focused on the related themes of free choice of work and basic income. Speakers at this final conference will include Yoland Bresson (Univ. of Paris-Val-de-Marne and president of AIRE), Robert Castel (EHESS, Paris) Roger Godino (Association Pierre Mendes-France) and Philippe Van Parijs (Univ. of Louvain)

For further information: Laurent Geffroy, Res Publica , 9 rue de la Moselle, 75019 Paris, France, [lgeff@club-internet.fr](mailto:lgeff@club-internet.fr) or [respublica@ifrance.com](mailto:respublica@ifrance.com)

**Marseille (France), 14 January 2000**

**Minima sociaux et allocation universelle**

A workshop organised at the IDEP-GREQAM, Marseille, Vieille Charité, Salle 205.

With the participation of Laurent Causat (member of the Conseil d'Analyse Economique, adviser to the Prime Minister Lionel Jospin) and Philippe Van Parijs (Université Catholique de Louvain).

For further information: Prof. Claude Gamel, Université d'Aix-Marseille III

Faculté d'économie appliquée, Centre Forbin — Allée Claude Forbin 15-19, F – 13627 AIX-EN-PROVENCE, France, [claud.gamel@VMESA12.U-3MRS.FR](mailto:claud.gamel@VMESA12.U-3MRS.FR).

**London (UK), 7-10 July 2000**

**"Citizenship and Exclusion" (12th Annual Conference of the Society for the Advancement of Socio-Economics)**

Founded in 1989 at the initiative of Amitai Etzioni, the Society for the Advancement of Socio-Economics is an interdisciplinary organisation with members in over 50 countries on five continents. It aims to support "the intellectual exploration of economic behaviour and its policy implications within the context of societal, institutional, historical, philosophical, psychological and ethical factors".

Its 2000 meeting will be hosted by the London School of Economics and its theme should be very congenial to people interested in basic income: "Citizenship and Exclusion".

For further details about the conference, contact the local organizer: Prof. David Marsden, LES, Houghton Street, London WC2A 2AER, [d.marsden@lse.ac.uk](mailto:d.marsden@lse.ac.uk). Suggestions concerning events, invited speakers, roundtables, sub-themes, etc. should be made to Christel Lane (University of Cambridge, [col21@cam.ac.uk](mailto:col21@cam.ac.uk)).

General inquiries about the association should be addressed to SASE, PO Box 39008, Baltimore, MD 39008, Baltimore MD 21212, USA; Tel. 1-410-435 6617; Fax: 1-410-377 7965; [saseorg@aol.com](mailto:saseorg@aol.com).

**HISTORICAL NOTE**

**JK GALBRAITH: THREE DECADES OF SUPPORT FOR BASIC INCOME**

In the address he gave on the occasion of his being awarded an honorary degree from the LES (and reproduced in the *Guardian*, 29.06.1999 and in the *Toronto Globe and Mail*, 06.07.1999), John Kenneth Galbraith, the 90-year old critical economist and Harvard professor, started off with some thoughts on the ambivalence of work and closed with "two pieces of the unfinished business of the century and millennium that have high visibility and urgency". One is the massive stock of nuclear weapons. The other is the very large number of the very poor even in the richest of countries. "The answer or part of the answer is rather clear: everybody should be guaranteed a decent basic income. A rich country such as the US can well afford to keep everybody out of poverty. Some, it will be said, will seize upon the income and won't work. So it is now with more limited welfare, as it is called. Let us accept some resort to leisure by the poor as well as by the rich."

Galbraith cannot be said to lack consistency. In a little-known essay published over thirty years earlier ("The Starvation of the Cities" [1966], reprinted in *A View from the Stands*), he stated:

"There is no single cure for poverty, but we should not, in our sophistication, be afraid of the obvious. [...] So far, my approach to the problem of poverty has been strongly traditional: we should help them to help themselves. That is good, whereas merely to help them has always been considered bad. Now I venture to think the time has come to re-examine these good Calvinist tenets, which fit so well with our idea of what saves money. We need to consider the one prompt and effective solution for poverty, which is to provide everyone with a minimum income. The arguments against this proposal are numerous, but most of them are excuses for not thinking about a solution, even one that is so exceedingly plausible. It would, it is said, destroy incentives.

Yet we now have a welfare system that could not be better designed to destroy incentive if we wanted it that way. We give the needy income, and we take away that income if the recipient gets even the poorest job. Thus we tax the marginal income of the welfare recipient at rates of 100 percent or more. A minimum income, it is said, would keep people out of the labor market. But we do not want all the people with inadequate income to work. In 1964, of the 14.8 million children classified by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare as poor, nearly a third were in families headed by a woman. And three fifths of the children in families headed by women were so classified. Most of those women should not be working. Idleness, we agree, is demoralizing.

But even here there is a question: Why is leisure so uniformly bad for the poor and so uniformly good for the exceptionally well-to-do? We can easily afford an income floor. It would cost about \$20 billion to bring everyone up to what the Department of HEW considers a reasonable minimum. This is a third less than the amount by which personal income rose last year. It is not so much more than we will spend during the next

fiscal year to restore freedom, democracy and religious liberty, as these are defined by the experts, in Vietnam.  
And there is no antidote for poverty that is quite so certain in its effects as the provision of income."

## PUBLICATIONS

### DUTCH

DE WISPELAERE, Jurgen. "Basisinkomen en het reciprociteitsbeginsel: een analytische benadering", in *Ethiek en Maatschappij* (Universiteitstraat 4, B-9000 Gent) 2 (2), 59-80.

The notion of fairness as reciprocity — or "doing one's bit if one can" — is intuitively plausible, even if a number of difficulties restrict its moral force and practical relevance. One major moral challenge to basic income is therefore whether it can be incorporated into a social arrangement that remains faithful to the intuitive appeal of the reciprocity principle. In this essay (previously published in English as an occasional paper of the Citizen's Income Trust), Jurgen De Wispelaere, a PhD student at the London School of Economics argues that it can, providing one starts from an equal right to non-exclusion to determine the fair allocation of scarce jobs and the corresponding fair distribution of benefits, and subsequently brings in efficiency considerations. Non-job-holders are then viewed as "contributors by restraint", and no exploitation of job-holders by non-job-holders is involved. (Author's address: London School of Economics, Department of Government, J.De-Wispelaere@lse.ac.uk.)

Groot, Loek & van Iperen, Frauke. 1999. "Integraal milieubeleid en het groene basisinkomen" [Integrated environmental policy and the green basic income], *Milieu: Tijdschrift voor Milieuvraagstukken* 3, 152-160.

Adopting an integrated environmental policy means that one does not pursue economic growth and employment using some instruments, while minimising environmental damage by means of other instruments. Instead, "integrated" means that the economic process develops within an institutional framework that leads automatically to sustainable economic growth. In such an integrated framework, the economy, the environment and the social-cultural system are closely connected, because efficiency, environmental and equity criteria jointly determine the distribution of the rights to pollute. Would a basic income partly financed by environmental taxes meet the requirements of an integrated environmental policy? Five arguments are frequently put forward in the basic income literature to argue for the environmental-friendly impact of basic income: (1) BI is a new social-ecological paradigm which transcends the present welfare state, expands the scope for sober lifestyles and new, more labour-intensive, and cleaner ways of production; (2) BI reduces minimum wage costs; (3) BI is an expression of the equal right to pollute; (4) BI is a compensation for non-progressive eco-taxes and (5) a green BI is an alleged double-edged sword of with respect to employment and the environment. After a discussion of the most important pros and cons, the authors conclude firstly, that only (1) and (3) are convincing; secondly, that, although a green basic income could indeed have positive effects on the environment, the same environmental effects might also be achieved with the existing environmental policy instruments, and thirdly, that a green BI entails two different reforms: transforming social security and greening the economy. The advice is to separate the debate on BI and (integrated) environmental policy.

(First author's address: PSCW-Universiteit van Amsterdam, Oudezijds Voorburgwal 237, 1012 DL Amsterdam, groot@pscw.uva.nl)

HET IDEALE EIGENBELANG n° 5(3), 6(1) and 6(2) Stichting UNO Inkomen voor alle mensen (Noordwal 27, 5211 RN 'sHertogenbosch, Netherlands, uno-inkomen@gmx.net), Spring 1999, about 40p. each

These latest issues of the neatly produced magazine of the late Pieter Kooistra's Foundation for a United Nations Basic Income contains, among other articles, a report on some related experiments and discussions in rural India, a reflection on the notion of work, a point-by-point comparison between Kooistra's plan and that of Edward Bellamy's Looking Backward, a discussion (by Jan Juffermans) of how much a "natural basic income" would amount to and an article (by René Heeskens) about how a UN-basic income would help reconcile the economy and the environment.

NIEUWSBRIEF BASISINKOMEN 28, September 1999, 28p.

(New address: Polderweg 110, 1093KP Amsterdam, basic.income@wxs.nl)

This latest issue of the Dutch basic income network's newsletter includes a Dutch translation of a vigorous address to the New Zealand Universal Basic Income congress by Sally Lerner (University of Waterloo, Canada), a puzzled account (by Willem de Jonge) of the experience of "Vivant", Belgium's basic income income party, and a discussion (by Gosling Putto) of a small book by Michiel van Hasselt (De staat van de eenvoud, 1998), followed by the author's reply.

VAN HASSELT, Michiel. 1998. De staat van de eenvoud. Een essay over democratie, bureaucratie en burgerschap. Utrecht: Uitgeverij van Arkel (Numankade 17, NL-3572 KP Utrecht), 1998, 96p., ISBN 90-6224-430-0, Dfl. 25. In this lively little book, sociologist van Hasselt proposes his utopia of a "state of simplicity", a socially minded market society with a lean and transparent government. Part of his blueprint is an unconditional basic allowance pitched at half the minimum wage, and reduced at a 50% rate as people earn additional income (pp.26-27). Those who cannot make ends meet with their basic allowance plus any extra outcome they may have can take part in a "social activation" programme (pp. 31-32), through which their basic allowance is supplemented in exchange for some recognised activity (study, child care, looking after asylum seekers, etc.). One advantage, in the author's eyes, is that the introduction of "social activation" would break the dichotomy between paid and unpaid work.

(Author's address: Postbus 13302, NL-3507 LH Utrecht, [cives@casema.net](mailto:cives@casema.net), [cives@wanadoo.nl](mailto:cives@wanadoo.nl))

VERHULST, Jos. 1999. Het basisinkomen. Antwerp: Nicolaas (Graaf van Hoornestraat 51, B-2000 Antwerpen, [wernerg@glo.be](mailto:wernerg@glo.be)), March 1999, 36p.

This carefully written working paper consists in two parts. The first one is devoted to the philosophical foundations of a universal basic income. According to the author, "the question is not whether basic income provides room for socio-economic parasitism ('free riding', a transgression of the principle "Who does not work shall not eat"). The question is how we move away from today's parasitism on non-marketable activities and society's social capital. And the answer is unequivocal: through the introduction of an unconditional basic income which provides room for living and learning to each individual". The second part of the book is a reflection on work in the form of a reaction, on this background, to a small book published by Professor Josse Van Steenberge (Rector of Antwerp University) and Liliane Delanote (his collaborator at Vitamin W, an organisation for job seekers) under the title Maak er werk van (Turn it into work), Brugge: Die Keure, 1998.

(Author's address: c/o H. Dittmer, Ellebroeken 8, B-2640 Mortsel.)

VERHULST, Jos & VAN BOGAERT, Mark. Basisinkomen en Vrijheid. Een Vivantisch manifest. Brussels: Vivant, 1999, 38p.

A VAT-funded basic income proposal formed the core of the platform of "Vivant", a party founded and funded by Roland Duchatelet which obtained 2% of the vote at Belgium's most recent general election. This is a didactic presentation of the proposal and of its fundamental justification in terms of freedom.

(VIVANT 's address: Zuidlaan 25-27, 1000 Brussel, [vivant@vivant.be](mailto:vivant@vivant.be), <http://www.vivant.be>)

## ENGLISH

ACHTERBERG, Wouter. 1999. "From Sustainability to Basic Income", in *Planning Sustainability* (Michael Kenny & James Meadowcroft eds.), London & New York: Macmillan, pp. 128-47.

Achterberg, who teaches philosophy at the University of Amsterdam and at the agricultural university of Wageningen, has been particularly concerned with environmental sustainability. In this essay, he tries to show "why the introduction of a basic income is ideally suited to overcome the dysfunctions of present welfare states and why that is important to our collective project of making patterns of production and consumption sustainable". He first proceeds in pragmatic fashion. In the last section, he turns to an ethical justification, by arguing that "the efforts to pursue sustainability, the commitment to maintain a welfare state regime and the introduction of a basic income are ultimately a matter of justice, inter-generational and intra-generational". The moral foundation he offers for basic income is a combination of Thomas Paine (in Agrarian Justice, 1796) and Robert Goodin (in Arguing for Basic Income, P. Van Parijs ed., 1992). An equal share in the value of natural resources is owed to all of us, and, in an increasingly fluctuating, mobile way, in as "unpresumptuous" (and hence unconditional) a way as possible, i.e ultimately in totally unconditional fashion.

BAUMAN, Zygmunt. 1998. Work, Consumerism and the New Poor. Buckingham & Philadelphia: Open University Press, 108p.

The influential social theorist Zygmunt Bauman was persuaded by Claus Offe's "cogent and powerful case for a radical solution to the present crisis" (in his Modernity and the State, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1996), more specifically by his plea for a decoupling of income and earning capacity in the form of an individual non-means-tested basic income. It is high time, in his view, to move away from an obsessive focus on paid work: "Humans are creative beings, and it is demeaning to suppose that a price tag is what sets apart work from non-work, exertion from loafing; it mutilates human nature to suggest that without that price tag humans would prefer to

remain idle and let their skills and imagination rot and rust." (p.97). Political feasibility, he admits, is not around the corner: "responsible politicians' would probably dismiss the project of basic guarantee on the ground of its actuarial unaffordability or political and economic 'irrealism', glossing over the dubious realism of the presently fashionable crisis-management expedients" (p.96). It would take a very sharp turn indeed to decouple income entitlement from income-earning capacity. But this is not a clinching argument against it. When asked whether his political projects required him to want to change humanity, the recently deceased French philosopher Cornelius Castoriadis replied: "No, something much more modest: I want that humanity changes, as it has already two or three times." This is, Bauman believes, the appropriate response (p.98).

BUCHANAN, James. 1997. "Can Democracy Promote the General Welfare?", *Social Philosophy and Policy* 14 (2), 165-179.

Democracy, defined by majority rule, does not spontaneously generate decisions which are in everyone's interest. The internal logic of daily democratic politics rather tends to promote, in discriminatory fashion, the interests of the components of the majority coalition. However, this tendency can be kept in check for the sake of general welfare through the introduction of constitutional constraints that prevent, for example, the ruling majority from putting an end to the electoral process, from imposing silence on the opposition, or from applying the law differently to identically situated citizens. As regards the welfare state, James Buchanan, the (rather conservative) Nobel laureate in economics, believes that the general welfare would be better served if a constitutional constraint required it to conform to a generality norm. Least problematic under this norm would be a redistributive system consisting, on the revenue side, in a proportional tax on all incomes (with no exemptions for income from investment or low-level incomes, for example) and, on the benefit side, in "equal-per-head transfer payments, or demogrants": "I submit that a structure of equal-per-head transfer payments, or demogrants, financed by a flat rate of tax in all incomes, if effectively constitutionalized and removed from the agenda of ordinary majoritarian politics, would allow an affirmative answer, of sorts, to the question 'Can democracy promote the general welfare?' Legislative majorities would be empowered to set the rate of the flat tax and, with that, the size of the demogrant, but specific actions aimed at discriminating favorably or unfavorably, on either the taxing or the transfer side of the account, would be out of bounds." (p. 171-2) Buchanan next lists a number of factors that are likely to affect the level at which democratic politics will pitch the flat-tax-financed demogrant, and concludes his discussion of the latter as follows: "The positive political effects of this structure should not be overlooked. majoritarian democratic process is preserved; it is not allowed to degenerate into the cross-group redistributive transfer absurdity that describes the 'churning state'. The welfare state maintains legitimacy because it is seen to be basically nondiscriminatory in its operation. The structure would remain immune to some of the 'end welfare as we know it' attitudes expressed by pundits, politicians and philosophers in the 1990s." (p.172) With this ideal in mind, Buchanan finds the US transfer systems for the elderly (a combination of flat-tax-funded demogrant for the elderly and straight insurance) comparatively far less objectionable than the means-tested food stamps programme or the Earned Income Tax Credit. His aim, however, is "not to plead for this or that policy reform", but to argue that a constitutional constraint of generality can be effective in enabling democracy to promote the general welfare, and thereby to bring about a welfare state that will durably command popular support: "The expressed public dissatisfaction with the modern welfare state may be traced, in part, to the failure to keep transfer programs within the limits of generality that are broadly acceptable. Citizens may indeed tolerate coercive taxes at high rates to finance programs that they consider to promote the general welfare." (p. 179). [A similar argument is presented in chapter 11 of Buchanan, James M. & Congleton, Roger D. *Politics by Principle, not Interest. Towards Nondiscriminatory Democracy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, 170p.] (Author's address: Department of Economics, Center for the Study of Public Choice, George Mason University.)

FARRELLY, Colin. 1999. "Justice and a Citizen's Basic Income", in *Journal of Applied Philosophy* 16 (3), 1999. Is it possible for a society with a market economy to be just? Unlike Marxists, egalitarian liberals believe that there are some conceivable circumstances under which such a society could fulfil the requirements of social justice. A market society need not be exploitative. One proposal that has recently received much attention among political theorists is the suggestion that citizens should receive a basic income. This article critically discusses the liberal-egalitarian justification of a citizen's basic income to be found in Philippe Van Parijs's *Real Freedom for All* (Oxford, 1995). More specifically, it develops three objections inspired by the work of the founding father of contemporary liberal egalitarianism, John Rawls. The first objection criticises Van Parijs's reasons for excluding leisure from the index of so-called "primary goods", which defines the Rawlsian metric of social justice. The second objection questions whether or not the voluntarily unemployed offer fair terms of

agreement no one could reasonably reject. The final objection considers the consequences Van Parijs's basic income proposal might have on the social bases of self-respect, of which Rawls says that it is perhaps the most important among primary goods .

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FITZPATRICK, Tony. 1999. Freedom and Security. An Introduction to the Basic Income Debate. London: Macmillan (<http://www.macpress.com>) & New York: St Martin's Press, 234p., £ 45.00, ISBN 0-333-72194-2.

Ten years after Tony Walter's pioneering introduction (Basic Income: Freedom from Poverty, Freedom to Work, London: Marion Boyars, 1989), here comes a second general presentation of basic income and the debate it has given rise to. How much this debate has expanded in the last ten years can be gathered from the wealth of contributions and arguments surveyed by Tony Fitzpatrick and by the length of his bibliography. Though himself a firm supporter of basic income, Fitzpatrick is acutely aware of the many objections raised against it. One of the features that make his book most useful lies precisely in his attempt to organize, present and critically discuss the main arguments against basic income as well as in favour of it. He does so to some extent in the synthetic chapter that concludes the first part of the book ("The defense versus the prosecution"), but above all in the five chapters that make up the second part of the book. Each of them looks at a particular tradition of political thought (the pro-market and pro-morals radical right, the "welfare collectivism" that has inspired Britain's mainstream social policy thinking, a more radical socialist tradition, feminism and ecologism) and shows how it contains some components that should make us expect to be hostile to basic income, and other components that should make us expect the exact opposite. Throughout the book, the author moves back and fro between philosophical, economic, sociological and political considerations, thus showing how the assessment of this "disarmingly simple" idea (as Professor Chris Pearson calls it in his foreword) requires a complex multi-disciplinary approach. Rather than the contribution of any specific original insight, it is the effective sorting out of this complex intellectual patchwork which makes Freedom and Security an extremely valuable contribution to the growing literature on basic income, indeed an indispensable source for anyone who wishes to have a global picture of the British and, more broadly, English-language discussion on basic income.

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GROOT, Loek F.M. 1999. Basic Income and Unemployment. Amsterdam: Netherlands School for Social and Economic Policy Research, 240p., ISBN 90-393-2145-0.

What is the connection between basic income and unemployment? In this PhD dissertation in economics which was recently granted the highest grade at the University of Utrecht, Loek Groot, a long-standing member of BIEN and joint organiser of its Amsterdam Congress, carefully investigates selected aspects of this large question. Part I argues that the more serious the problem of protracted and large-scale un(der)employment is, the more attractive and relevant the idea of BI becomes. In this respect, unemployment should be taken in the broad sense of job scarcity: not only those who are officially registered as unemployed, but also all those who would have liked to work, had their employment prospects been better. In a situation of job scarcity, a substantial basic income is warranted in order to secure a fair equality of career choices, against a background of diverse opportunities (chapter 2). The basic income received by those who freely choose not to do paid work can then be viewed as compensation for giving up their equal right to jobs (chapter 3). Chapter 4 shows that achieving compensatory justice on the labour market, especially at the bottom end, is greatly facilitated by the provision of a substantial basic income. This argument is particularly relevant in the circumstance of involuntary unemployment, which can be considered as the primary threat to compensatory justice. In this respect, parasitism under the basic income scheme (that is, to allow voluntarily unemployed persons to be on welfare) can be viewed as a price to be paid to achieve compensatory justice. Throughout part I, the justification offered is one that takes the edge off the parasitism objection raised against the idea of a basic income by evaluating freely chosen leisure in terms of forgone production. Accordingly, the voluntarily unemployed do not achieve any advantage in the maximin redistribution of income, when compared to others who do paid work.

Part II discusses an impossibility claim frequently made: A basic income is either too low to be socially acceptable, or too high to be economically sustainable. Chapter 5 contains an outline of an alternative route towards a basic income in which the introduction of a partial basic income (i.e., a basic income that falls short of subsistence) is not the first, but the last step. Further, to reduce the uncertainty around the feasibility of basic income, it is argued that it would be a good idea to conduct a real-life experiment. The outline of a proposal for such an experiment can be found in chapter 6. The last two chapters contain formal analyses and simulation

results of how an economy functions under a basic income scheme, compared with the existing scheme; firstly if firms pay workers so-called “efficiency wages”, i.e wages that exceed what they could get away with but are nonetheless maximally profitable because of the higher productivity they induce (chapter 7) and secondly wages are determined through Trade Union bargaining (chapter 8). The outcomes of these models show that, in all variants considered, the real winners (losers) from the introduction of a substantial basic income are the low (high) paid workers

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HUBER, Joseph. 1999. Plain Money. A Proposal for Supplying the Nations with the Necessary Means in a Modern Monetary System. Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg: Forschungsberichte des Instituts für Soziologie (Abderhaldenstrasse 7, D-06099 Halle an der Saale) 99-3, 45p.

A substantial and unusually well-written English-language summary of the author's recent and impressive German-language book Vollgeld (Berlin 1998, reviewed below), the most economically sophisticated argument ever in favour of a basic income funded by money creation.

(Author's address: Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg: Institut für Soziologie, Abderhaldenstrasse 7, D-06099 Halle, huber@soziologie.uni-halle.de. Copies available from <http://www.soziologie.uni-halle.de/publikationen/index.html>)

JACKSON, W. A. 1999. "Basic Income and the Right to Work", Journal of Post-Keynesian Economics 21 (4), 639-662.

From a Keynesian perspective, the author argues, a state-guaranteed right to a job and an unconditional basic income would have great advantages: “Work-based measures would raise output and employment, and unconditional measures would encourage a more even income distribution. Such policies, as a supplement to demands management, could raise the economy’s macroeconomic efficiency, redistribute employment, and prevent excessive income disparities.” Yet, resistance will be tough: “Employer interests will steer social assistance policy towards the least expansionary and least redistributive of the various possibilities, namely, conditional cash benefits paid at subsistence level. Arguments for higher benefits, unconditional measures, or a right to work will meet strong political and institutional barriers — the same barriers that have blocked the use of Keynesian policies in recent years.”

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LERNER, Sally, CLARK, Charles M.A. & NEEDHAM, W. Robert. 1999. Basic Income: Economic security for all Canadians. Toronto: Between the Lines Press (720 Bathurst St. #404. Toronto, ON Canada M5S 2R4, fax (416) 535-1484, [www.btlbooks.com](http://www.btlbooks.com)), 112 pp., \$14.95, ISBN 1-896357-31-8.

Canadian workers face continuing turbulence as demands escalate for a "flexible" work force. In this context of globalisation and rapid technological change, basic economic security for all Canadians is an idea whose time, the authors believe, has come. They trace in detail the arguments for and against basic income, how it might be funded and delivered, how it could increase employment and offer varied life choice options. Seen as more than a cheque in the mail, basic income is evaluated as a policy strategy for dealing with the realities of the contemporary "great transformation". Contents: 1 New Realities and the Need for Basic Economic Security. 2 What is a Basic Income ? 3 Basic Income in the Canadian Policy Context. 4 A Canadian Basic Income: Needed, Justified and Beneficial. 5 A Canadian Basic Income Model.

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LITTLE, Adrian. 1998. Post-Industrial Socialism: Towards a New Politics of Welfare. London: Routledge.

Among other things, this book discusses at length the Left-libertarian viewpoint on human needs and how it contributes toward a welfare theory for postindustrial socialism. In particular, it explores the utility of the basic income proposal for postindustrial socialists and the potential effects of a basic income policy.

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PIOCH, Roswitha. 1999. “Ideas of Social Justice in the Welfare State in Germany and the Netherlands”, in Social Exclusion in Europe. Problems and Paradigms (Paul Littlewood ed.), Aldershot (UK): Ashgate, 1999 (ISBN 1 84014 717 2), pp. 135-55.

The idea of a (partial) basic income is taken more seriously in the Netherlands than in Germany. Why? Based on extensive interviews in both countries, this article looks at one possible explanation: the conceptions of social justice held by social policy experts.

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ROBERTSON, James. 1999. The New Economics of Sustainable Development. A Briefing for Policy Makers. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities ("Forward Studies Series") & London: Kogan Page ([www.kogan-page.co.uk](http://www.kogan-page.co.uk)), 1999, 168p., ISBN 92-828-7456-7, 21 Euros.

Sponsored by the Forward Studies Unit of the European Commission, this is the latest, most neatly presented and most systematic statement of James Robertson's conception of sustainable development. Ecotaxes, site-value land taxation and a citizen's income feature prominently in his blueprint of the urgently needed reform package. (Author's address: The Old Bakehouse, Cholsey, Oxon OX10 9NU, UK, [robertson@tp2000.demon.co.uk](mailto:robertson@tp2000.demon.co.uk))

SCHALLER, Walter A. 1998. "Rawls, the Difference Principle, and Economic Inequality", Pacific Philosophical Quarterly 79, 368-91.

What socio-economic policies follow from John Rawls's famous Difference Principle, which is meant to defined the just distribution of socio-economic advantages? They are the policies that make the prospects of the least advantaged, in terms of the primary goods they can reasonably expect over a complete life, as good as they can sustainably be made. According to Schaller, this principle provides a strong case for a package of policies that would "ensure that all working-age persons have an opportunity for at least an above-poverty income without thereby creating significant work disincentives" (p. 379), e.g. Robert Haveman's (*Starting Even*, 1988) combination of a universal child benefit, a universal basic pension, a universal personal capital account for the young (to be used for education or training), general employment subsidies for low-paid work (along the lines of Edmund Phelps's *Rewarding Work*, 1997) and a low universal demogrant for all adults (at 1/2 or 1/3 of the poverty line, in the form of a refundable tax credit). Is the demogrant component not inconsistent with Rawls's idea of a justice as fair co-operation for mutual advantage? "If it turned out that the least advantaged representative persons were made worse off because too many people chose to live off their demogrant, then the demogrant would need to be reduced (or even eliminated). But [...] nothing in Rawls's theory appears to prohibit conferring unearned or 'undeserved' benefits on individuals like Smith [who opt for the life of a Bohemian artist]; the only question is whether doing so is in the best interest of the least advantaged representative person." (pp. 380-1)

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VAN DER LINDEN, Bruno. " Active citizen's income, unconditional income and participation under imperfect competition : A normative analysis ", Discussion Paper IRES 9923, 30p.

Various types of (conditional and unconditional) basic income schemes are claimed to alleviate the allocative inefficiencies induced by unemployment insurance systems. This paper develops a dynamic general equilibrium model of a unionised economy where participation in the labour market is endogenous and the budget of the State has to balance. It is shown that basic income schemes do reduce the equilibrium rate of unemployment. But the normative analysis suggests that only the active population, i.e. the workers and the involuntary unemployed, should be eligible to the basic income. Relative to the present situation, introducing a conditional basic income in this sense (an 'active citizen's income') can be a Pareto-improving reform, i.e. a reform that leaves everyone at least as well off as before and at least one person better off.

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VAN DER LINDEN, Bruno. " Fighting unemployment without worsening poverty: Basic income versus reductions of social security contributions ", Discussion Paper IRES 9928, 30p.

Reductions of social security contributions (RSSC) and the introduction of a basic income (BI) (or of the closely related Negative Income Tax) are here examined in a dynamic general equilibrium framework with imperfect competition on the labour market (the so-called 'wage-setting/price-setting' model). It turns out that both policies have a long-run effect on the unemployment rate if they are appropriately designed. If we assume that there are two categories of workers (high- and low-skilled), this proposition holds providing relative wages are rigid and the supply of skills is not perfectly elastic. A welfare analysis shows that introducing appropriately framed RSSC or BI can be Pareto-improvements, i.e. can leave everyone at least as well off as before and at least one person better off.

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VOBRUBA, Georg. 1999. "The End of the Full Employment Society. Changing the basis of inclusion and exclusion", in Social Exclusion in Europe. Problems and Paradigms (Paul Littlewood ed.), Aldershot (UK): Ashgate, 1999 (ISBN 1 84014 717 2), pp. 23-46.

This contribution by Austrian sociologist Georg Vobruba to a collaborative effort by a group of European social policy experts ends with a section on "the basic income debate". This debate, he argues, was right in treating the end of full employment constructively. But it "was wrecked on its two weaknesses: illusions about the possibilities of redistribution on the one hand [it cannot be taken for granted that technical progress will painlessly feed the redundant people], and illusions about possibilities of realising an alternative way of life more generally on the other [a small group's way of life was wrongly taken as generalisable to all]."  
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WALTERS, William. 1996. "The Demise of Unemployment?", Politics and Society 24 (3), September 1996, 197-219.

"Unemployment" loses its salience as political issue, as thinking about the welfare state gets redirected, beyond the unemployment insurance idea, in three distinct directions: basic income guarantees, neo-liberalism, and "human capitalism" (i.e. investment in human capital). The article does not try to assess the advantages and disadvantages of each of these influential strategies, but it does survey their main features. In the case of basic income, it emphasizes, for example, its ambivalence with regard to the fostering of "community": "Perhaps contrary to the desires of those communitarians and social democrats who see in [basic income] a return to the idea of national collectivity, it could strengthen all those movements that seek to withdraw from the 'employment society'[...], whether in the form of squatters' and Autonomien movements in large cities, travelling people, feminist and ecological co-operatives and collectives, local currency trading networks (LETS), or some other way."

WIDERQUIST, Karl. 1999. „Reciprocity and the Guaranteed Income, Politics and Society 33 (3), September 1999.

This paper argues that a guaranteed income is not only consistent with the principle of reciprocity but is required for reciprocity. This conclusion follows from a three-part argument. First, if a guaranteed income is in place, all individuals have the same opportunity to live without working. Therefore, those who choose not to work do not take advantage of a privilege that is unavailable to everyone else. Second, in the absence of an unconditional income, society is, in effect, applying the principle "(S)he who does not work, will not eat". If the application of this principle is to be consistent with reciprocity, it must be applied to everyone. Most modern industrial societies exempt many citizens from that choice. For example, the owners of external assets do not face the work-or-starve choice and do take advantage of a privilege that is not available to others. An unconditional guaranteed income is one way to eliminate that violation of reciprocity. Third, this paper addresses the criticism that the guaranteed income exploits middle-class workers by demonstrating that a basic income will have a positive effect on wages, which will at least partially counteract the effect of the taxes needed to pay for it.

## FRENCH

AIRE, Lettre de Liaison n°21, printemps 1999, 8p.

This issue newsletter of the French network includes an article by Yoland Bresson previously published in *Le Monde* in abridged form, a sceptical account of the radical basic income proposal by the Greens of Castilla & Leon and some information about basic income in the programmes of the parties competing in the June 1999 European election

(AIRE's Secretariat: Mme Ch. Bernard, 33 Av. des Fauvettes, F – 91440 Bures s/ Yvette.)

AIRE, Lettre de Liaison n°22, été-automne 1999, 13p.

This issue newsletter of the French network mainly consists in a synopsis by Pierre Lavagne of an economic model of the impact of basic income on employment by the young economist French Etienne Lehmann ("Replacing unemployment benefits by basic income: a numerical evaluation in a matching model with heterogeneous skills"), and the full text of the manifesto (including a straight basic income proposal) of the small political movement ("Politique de vie pour l'Europe") joined by AIRE's chairman Yoland Bresson at the latest European election.

(AIRE's Secretariat: Mme Ch. Bernard, 33 Av. des Fauvettes, F – 91440 Bures s/ Yvette.)

ARNSPERGER, Christian & al., Le travail en reconversion, special issue of Projet 259, septembre 1999, 140p.

This special issue of the left-Christian quarterly Projet is devoted to the value and future of work. It includes an explicit discussion of an unconditional basic income (vs waged work) from the point of view of recognition (Christian Arnsperger, "Le lien travail-revenu, problème d'interprétation", pp. 77-88). It also includes a discussion ("La valeur travail en débat") between Jean-Yves Calvez (a jesuit, author of a famous book on Marx and member of the journal's advisory board) and Alain Lipietz (the economic spokesman for the French greens and member of the French Prime Minister's economic advisory council) largely on whether care work could and should be turned into waged work. "One can find in Genesis and in the book of Isaiah", according to Lipietz, "a (quasi-stalinist!) productivist objective of levelling mountains. But in the New Testament the sharing of work between Martha and Mary becomes a controversial matter... Fortunately, Isaiah is wrong and Mary — who would be in favour of a universal basic income ("allocation universelle") — is right." (p.98).a

AUBRY, François. 1999. L'Allocation universelle. Fondements et enjeux. Montréal: Confédération des syndicats nationaux, 82p., ISBN 2-89501-015-3.

This balanced and well-documented report on basic income is an official publication of Québec's main Trade Union Confederation (CSN). According to its author, an economist on the CSN's staff, "the incipient debate on basic income ("allocation universelle") is fundamental, because it forces us to reflect on a number of major social issues, such as the place of work in society and the foundations of citizenship". After a description of existing transfer schemes in Canada and Québec and a brief overview of the North-American and European discussion, Aubry presents at some length the versions of the proposal advocated by four francophone authors: Bresson, Van Parijs, Ferry and Gorz. He next focuses on a number of crucial issues, such as the extent to which one can expect the "end of work" or whether even a "sufficient" basic income would suffice to eradicate poverty. In his conclusion, he stresses that "the values of justice, fairness, individual freedom and social solidarity which inspire most basic income proposals cannot but command our allegiance, as they are the values which motivate the Trade Unions' activity. [...] But hell is paved with good intentions and the implementation of a praiseworthy project does not always yield the intended outcomes." It is therefore essential to look closely — as this report has started doing, with competence and integrity — at the very different economic and social consequences of different versions of basic income, and at the very different political, financial and cultural obstacles which lie in their way.

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DE JOUVENEL, Hugues, "Sur les défis du III<sup>e</sup> millénaire, les déficits de la réflexion sur l'avenir et de la prospective en Europe", Le Soir, 20-21 July 1999.

In this interview with Belgium's main French-language paper, the director of the Paris monthly Futuribles (and son of the famous political theorist Bertrand de Jouvenel) predicts that soon only one adult out of three will be at work. He is then asked whether the idea of an unconditional universal income paid to all is utopian. "This is an interesting track, to the extent that can make it possible to simplify our excessively complex system of social protection. In the current mess, there is a considerable loss of energy and money. However I have reservations about the idea of unconditionality. I believe we must avoid generating new types of assistance." How should one then attempt to solve the problem of growing poverty? "A major challenge for the years to come consists in moving from a system of dependence, whether towards the employer or the protecting state, to a system of autonomy and partnership."

(Interviewee's address: c/o Futuribles, Rue de Varenne 55, F – 75341 PARIS CEDEX 07]

LANGIS, Georges. 1996. "Allocation universelle et justice sociale", in Cahiers de Droit 37 (4), December 1996, pp. 1037-1051.

Could John Rawls' approach to social justice justify an unconditional basic income? The author does not believe so, because social justice, as Rawls and other contract theorists conceive it, is about the fair distribution of the benefits of social co-operation, and one therefore needs to be a co-operator in order to make a claim to any benefit. Surfers must not be fed.

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MEDA, Dominique. Qu'est-ce que la richesse? Paris: Aubier, 1999. 423p. ISBN: 2-7007-3676-1

In this book on « what is wealth? », Dominique Méda discusses at length the evolution and future of work, which is said to remain of paramount importance in western societies. In the last pages (401-411), she briefly

examines the case for basic income, a measure which « very suprisingly » — she says — won the support of many French intellectuals these last years, from left to right. According to Méda, there are two kinds of arguments in favour of BI: one presents it as a way of reducing labour costs, the other one views it as a way of providing a decent standard of living to the poor and unemployed. While not expressing a clear-cut opinion herself (« the question of whether a basic income should be introduced is very delicate »), her emphasis is on the disadvantages of the proposal. She particularly stresses the risk of de-coupling income and work: the government should not use basic income as a justification for giving up the attempt to spread jobs more widely.

## GERMAN

FERRY, Jean-Marc. 1999. “Für ein bedingungsloses Grundeinkommen: Einführung des rechts auf Einkommen, um das recht auf Arbeit wiederherzustellen”, in Wege aus der Arbeitskrise (F. Edding & E.J. Lorang eds.), Luxembourg: Editions Saint-Paul, 117-132.

A brief statement of French philosopher Jean-Marc Ferry’s plea for an unconditional basic income as a way of restoring the right to work. (A fuller statement appeared in his book L’Allocation universelle, Paris: Cerf, 1995.) (Author’s address: Université libre de Bruxelles, Faculté des sciences sociales, Avenue Jeanne 44, B-1050 Bruxelles, jean.marc.ferry@skynet.be.)

HUBER, Joseph. Vollgeld. Beschäftigung, Grundsicherung und weniger Staatsquote durch eine modernisierte Geldordnung. Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1998, 452p., ISBN 3-428-09526-X, DM 98.

From Major Douglas and Jacques Duboin to the present day, there have been repeated proposal to fund a “national dividend” or “social income”, not out of redistribution through the taxation of market income, but through the distribution of newly created money. This free-lunch approach to basic income has aroused much suspicion and seldom been taken seriously. But here comes Professor Joseph Huber’s Plain Money. A sociologist and economist by training, Huber is the author of a series of popular, green-leaning essays (Technokratie oder Menschlichkeit, 1978; Anders arbeiten – anders wirtschaften, 1979; Wer soll das andlles ändern, 1980; Die zwei Gesichter der Arbeit, 1984; De Regenbogengesellschaft, 1985; Nachhaltige Entwicklung, 1995). But this tightly argued, scholarly volume is of a completely different nature. It systematically defends two logically independent reform proposal. The first one (which justifies the title) is the introduction of “plain money”. At present, our capitalist societies’ money base consists of two components: one created by the central bank and the other by private banks. Under “plain money”, the latter would be suppressed. This centralisation of the prerogative to create money (cash as well as sight deposits), the author argues, would have a number of advantages in its own right: greater stability of the price level and the business cycle, lower interest rates and stronger growth potential. But it gains some of its importance — and its relevance in the present context — from its association with a second proposal (which is the focus of chapters IV and V): the introduction of a unconditional basic income (Grundeinkommen). Pitched at about 500 Euros per month and phased out at a 66% and next 50% rate as income rises, the basic income would be no substitute for social insurance. It is defended, on the usual grounds, as a more effective way of fighting unemployment and poverty. But the striking feature is that it would be financed in the form of drawing rights issued by the central bank so as to match the annual growth of the real economy. Might such monetary funding of a basic income prove inflationary? Taken by itself, “a plain money system entails far more effective possibilities to control inflation and would be less prone to instability that the current opaque reserve system”. However, in a no-growth economy, the funding of a basic income by drawing rights would indeed fuel inflation, at an estimated 7% rate if the level considered is as above. But, first of all, one can reasonably expect growth to continue for another one or two hundred years. Secondly, a non-accelerating but positive inflation rate (at some point estimated by James Tobin to be 3%) may be a good thing to “grease” cyclical fluctuations and structural change. And thirdly, as growth rates fluctuate, “tax-levied government money and central-bank-issued drawing rights could be combined to any proportion required”. Thus, although plain money and basic income do not need to be combined, Huber is “emphatically in favour of combining the two, because to [him] the plain money proposal is actually a means of rendering possible the debt-free funding of a basic income scheme”. It would thereby enable the government to considerably reduce both expenditure and taxation, and hence put the economic and political viability of basic income on a far firmer footing. Any flaw?

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OPIELKA, Michael. Endbericht zum Teilgutachten 'Hintergrund der Diskussion um ein Grundeinkommen' im Auftrag des Bundesministeriums für Arbeit, Gesundheit und Soziales der Republik Österreich. Bonn: Institut für Sozialökologie, Mai 1999, 120p.

A comprehensive survey of the (mainly) German-language discussion on basic income by one of its early protagonists (see Opielka & Vobruba, *Das garantierte Grundeinkommen*, Fischer 1985), commissioned by the Austrian Ministry for social affairs. It presents and assesses a wide range of common arguments. Basic income has for example been said to further full employment through subsidizing low wages, to bring security to discontinuous careers, to re-value unpaid activity, to strengthen the position of women, to support lifelong learning, to assist a shift of taxation away from labour income and to accommodate ecological concerns. Many of these arguments, he concludes, are strong. But some are weak. As far as income poverty is concerned, for example, an unconditional basic income is not superior to a general means-tested social assistance. And as far as the economic equalization of men and women is concerned, a child-care wage is more urgent (see also Leipert, Christian & Opielka, Michael. Child-Care Salary 2000. A way to upgrade child-care work, Freiburg: Deutscher Arbeitskreis für Familienhilfe, 1999, 160p.)

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PELZER, Helmut. Finanzierung eines allgemeinen Basiseinkommens ("Bürgergeld"). Ansätze zu einer kombinierten Sozial- und Steuerreform. Aachen: Shaker Verlag, 1999, 40p., ISBN 3-8265-5858-8

This is a neat new presentation of the "Ulm model" of citizen's income (Bürgergeld), an unconditional basic income administered as a demogrant given to all (rather than as a refundable tax credit like Joachim Mitschke's "Bürgergeld") and funded out of an ear-marked proportional income tax on a much broadened tax base. An earlier formulation appeared in "Bürgergeld — Vergleich zweier Modelle", Zeitschrift für Sozialreform 42 (9), September 1996, 595-613.

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BLASCHE, Siegfried & DÖRING, Dieter eds. 1999. Sozialpolitik und Gerechtigkeit, Frankfurt: Campus, 408p. ISBN 3-593-36091-8.

If a society's redistributive policies conform to the convictions its citizens entertain about social justice, resistance to taxation may be weaker and the latter's allocative costs lighter. It is therefore important to look at these conceptions and consider to what extent they will facilitate or hamper whatever significant modification of the transfer system we may regard as desirable. Sponsored by Hans Böckler Stiftung, the foundation linked to Germany's Trade Union federation DGB, this whole volume looks at the relation between social policy and conception of social justice. One contribution is of particular interest to basic income (Sesselmeier, Werner. "Negative einkommensteuer und Gerechtigkeit", pp. 356-383). The author argued elsewhere that a shift from Germany's social-insurance-based system to a negative income tax is desirable because of the positive impact it would have on employment ("Negative Einkommensteuer und ihre Auswirkungen auf die Beschäftigung", in Sozialer Fortschritt 46(3), 1997, 63-68). But among the three main goals of welfare states, it would move the focus away from the security of achieved standards of living to basic social security and the equalisation of social opportunities. And the sustainability of such a change requires a change in the underlying conceptions of social justice, for example away from the actuarial equivalence principle.

(Address of the Hans Böckler Stiftung: Bertha-von-Sutter-Platz 1, D-40227 Düsseldorf, <http://www.wsi.de>.)

## ITALIAN

BALZAROTTI, Andrea, PONTI, Marco & SILVA, Francesco. 1996. "Reddito di cittadinanza: un'utopia?", Il Mulino 3, 1996, 545-64.

The authors strongly reject laissez-faire capitalism on grounds of justice. They also believe that the crisis of the welfare state is irreversible. But they see one way out: the introduction of an unconditional and universal citizenship income. This is economically feasible, they argue, providing the public sector is made significantly more productive through privatisation and other efficiency-enhancing measures. It should also prove culturally acceptable, despite the remaining strength of the message expressed in the first article of the Italian Constitution: "Italy is a republic based on work." But both economic and cultural feasibility will require a slow transition. This will involve, among other steps, the trimming of the public sector, the creation of a more effective tax administration, the introduction of a guaranteed minimum pension and that of a partial basic income (of about

200 Euros). We can thereby prepare ourselves, both economically and culturally, for a society freed from the obligation to work.

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MARTUFI, Rita & VASAPOLLO, Luciano. 1999. Profit State, redistribuzione dell'accumulazione e reddito sociale minimo. Napoli: La Città del Sole, 1999, 402p., LIT 32000, ISBN 88-8292-080-1.

This voluminous, resolutely left-wing plea for a guaranteed minimum income is the work of the two very active co-ordinators of the Rome-based Centre for the study of socio-economic transformations (CESTES), the National Committee for a guaranteed minimum income ("Comitato Promotore Nazionale per il Reddito Sociale Minimo) and the National Committee against the pauper's welfare state ("Comitato Unitario Nazionale contro il Welfare dei Miserabili"). Part 1 provides an analysis of the development of capitalism from the fordist to the flexible-production stage. Part 2 contains a substantial (and somewhat meandering) review of guaranteed minimum income proposals from Milton Friedman and Francesco Silva to André Gorz and Andrea Fumagalli. Part 3 has an overview of existing forms of assistance to the unemployed. Part 4 sums up the analysis and spells out the authors' proposal: a heavy taxation of profits combined with an unconditional but means-tested guaranteed minimum income. Part 5 collects a number of documents, including a law proposal which gives a precise shape to the authors' proposal: the guaranteed income would involve a payment of LIT 12 million per year (or about 500 Euros per month) for a person without any earnings, a payment of half this amount for a person with earnings between 0 and 500 Euros, and nothing beyond. The funding would come from business and wealth taxation.

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RIZZI, Dino & ROSSI, Nicola. "Minimo vitale e 'flat tax'", *Il Mulino* 4, 1996, 706-713.

Co-authored by Prime Minister D'Alema's chief economic adviser (Rossi), this article briefly presents a proposal worked out in more detail in the authors' contribution to BIEN's 1996 Congress. They propose a comprehensive tax reform that would combine the introduction of a uniform refundable tax credit, a broadening of the tax base and a reduction of the number of tax brackets to one or two. The effects, they argue, would include a significant reduction in the measured level of poverty, in particular among the self-employed. The reform, they argue, would also make Italy's whole tax-and-transfer system simpler and fairer, improve the net earnings of low-paid workers and shift income from men to women without trapping these in unemployment. Not all questions about its impact may be answerable, they conclude, but only corporatist self-interest can justify the prevailing system.

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TIDDI, Andrea & MANTEGNA, Agostino eds. 1999. Reddito di cittadinanza. Verso la società del non lavoro. Roma: Infoxa Tools (Lab 00128 Viale caduti guerra di liberazione 00128 Roma, [xa@ats.it](mailto:xa@ats.it), [www.tmcrow.org/infoxa/index.htm](http://www.tmcrow.org/infoxa/index.htm), fax 065088565), lire 6000.

A neatly "self-produced" critical presentation of a selected number of approaches to the idea of a guaranteed minimum income as a response to the combined crises of the labour-centred society and of the welfare state. In terms of the authors' own classification, the main authors discussed include "post-labourists" such as Sergio Bologna, "radical reformists" such as André Gorz, Claus Offe or Guy Aznar, "anti-utilitarians" such as Alain Caillé, and "ecologists" such as Alain Lipietz.

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## SPANISH

CUADERNOS RENTA BASICA n°1, Barcelona, Octubre 1999, 32p.

Very smartly presented and printed, this is the first issue of a new periodical entirely devoted to basic income and published at the initiative of the recently founded Spanish network. All articles are written in Castilian, but the name of the journal also features in Catalan, Galician and Basque to express an inclusive conception of the journal's audience. This first issue contains articles by Francisco Jose Martinez (UNED, Madrid) and Antoni Domènech (Universitat de Barcelona) on the philosophical foundations of basic income ("Basic income as the private economic basis of real freedom" and "The right to existence. The proposal of a guaranteed universal

subsidy”), an account of the right to a guaranteed minimum consumption in contemporary Cuba by Barcelona economist Jose Iglesia Fernandez (“Cuba: a country with a basic income”), some reflections on the value of a basic income as a counter-cyclical macroeconomic stabiliser by Antoni Ricart (Eco-Concern) and Mario Firmenich (“The impact of basic income on the economic cycle”), a systematic reply by Daniel Raventos (Universitat de Barcelona) and Rafael Gisbert to a number of objections to basic income (“Poverty, the guaranteed universal subsidy and a reply to poorly substantiated criticisms”) and a plea for the introduction of some sort of guaranteed income by Maria Angeles Expósito (PSUC).  
(Address: EcoConcern, Mare de Déu del Pilar 15, principal, Barcelona 08003 (Ciutat Vella), Tel/Fax +34-93-3190351, [econconcern@troc.es](mailto:econconcern@troc.es))

## **BASIC INCOME**

is an income unconditionally granted to all on an individual basis, without means test or work requirement.

## **THE BASIC INCOME EUROPEAN NETWORK (BIEN)**

aims to serve as a link between individuals and groups committed to or interested in basic income, and to foster informed discussion on this topic throughout Europe.

## **BIEN's MEMBERSHIP**

is open to anyone who shares these objectives. To join, please follow the instructions at the end of this newsletter.

## **BIEN's NEWSLETTER**

will henceforth be mailed twice a year to members of BIEN in a hard-copy version. News flashes will be sent more frequently in an electronic version. To receive these, just send the message "subscribe BIEN" to [bien@etes.ucl.ac.be](mailto:bien@etes.ucl.ac.be).

## **BIEN's NEXT CONFERENCE**

will be held in Berlin on 6-7 October 2000. Its organisation is co-ordinated by Claus Offe (Humboldt Universität, Unter den Linden 6, D – 10099 BERLIN, tel. +49-30-2093-4270; fax: +49-30-2093-4271, [bien@rz.hu-berlin.de](mailto:bien@rz.hu-berlin.de))

## **BIEN's WEB SITE**

contains general information about basic income and BIEN, the latest newsletter, up-to-date information about the next conference and a comprehensive annotated inventory of relevant events and publications since 1986. Its address is <http://www.etes.ucl.ac.be/BIEN/bien.html>

## **NATIONAL NETWORKS ON BASIC INCOME**

### **NEW NETWORK: FOLKRÖRELSEN FÖR MEDBORGARLÖN (SWEDEN)**

The co-ordinator is Kicki Bobacka. Her address is: Väpplingvägen 10, 227 38 LUND, phone: 046-140667 or 046-144545, [kicki.bobacka@mp.se](mailto:kicki.bobacka@mp.se).

### **CITIZENS' INCOME STUDY CENTRE (UNITED KINGDOM)**

Director: Stuart Duffin ([s.duffin@lse.ac.uk](mailto:s.duffin@lse.ac.uk)). Communication and Dissemination: Duncan Burbidge ([d.burbidge@lse.ac.uk](mailto:d.burbidge@lse.ac.uk)). Administration: Carolyn Armstrong, Seeta Persaud ([citizens-income@lse.ac.uk](mailto:citizens-income@lse.ac.uk)). Research: Bill Jordan, Phil Agulnik ([p.agulnik@lse.ac.uk](mailto:p.agulnik@lse.ac.uk)), Jurgen De Wispelaere ([J.De-Wispelaere@lse.ac.uk](mailto:J.De-Wispelaere@lse.ac.uk)). Address: St Philips Building, Sheffield Street, London WC2A 2EX, United Kingdom. Tel.: 44-171-9557453; fax: 44-171-9557534; <http://www.citizensincome.org.uk>. Publishes a quarterly newsletter (e-mail and hard copy).

### **VERENIGING BASISINKOMEN (NETHERLANDS)**

Co-ordinator: Emiel Schäfer, Herman Heijermansweg 20, NL-1077 WL Amsterdam. tel. 31-20-5731803, fax: 31-20-6713541, [basic.income@wxs.nl](mailto:basic.income@wxs.nl), <http://home.wxs.nl/~schafer>

Publishes a quarterly newsletter (in Dutch, available on the web site, by e-mail and in hard copy).

### **BIEN IRELAND**

Co-ordinator: John Baker, Equality Studies Centre, University College, Belfield, Dublin 4, [John.Baker@ucd.ie](mailto:John.Baker@ucd.ie)

### **ASSOCIATION POUR L'INSTAURATION D'UN REVENU D'EXISTENCE (FRANCE)**

Chairman: Prof. Yoland Bresson, Secretary: Ch. Bernard, 33 Avenue des Fauvettes, F-91440 Bures sur Yvette, France.

Publishes a quarterly newsletter (in French, hard copy only).

### **ASSOCIACION RENDA BASICA [AREBA] (SPAIN)**

Coordinator: José Iglesias Fernández, Salvador Espriu 89, 2º, 2a, E – 08005 Barcelona, Fax: 34-3-225.48.20.

Publishes a journal (Cuadernos Renta básica)

### **UNIVERSAL BASIC INCOME NEW ZEALAND (UBINZ)**

Co-ordinator: Ian Ritchie, Private Bag 11.042 Palmerston North, New Zealand, tel. 06-350 6301, fax 06 350 6319, [ian.ritchie@psa.org.nz](mailto:ian.ritchie@psa.org.nz), <http://www.geocities.com/~ubinz/>

### **ORGANISATION ADVOCATING SUPPORT INCOME IN AUSTRALIA (OASIS)**

Convenor : Allan McDonald, PO Box 280 Urangan Qld. 4655, Australia, Fax 07 4128 9971, [allanmcd@cyberlink.com.au](mailto:allanmcd@cyberlink.com.au), <http://www.satcom.net.au/supportincome>

## THE CITIZEN'S INCOME STUDY CENTRE.

Under the leadership of its new director, Stuart Duffin ([s.duffin@lse.ac.uk](mailto:s.duffin@lse.ac.uk)), the London-based Citizen's Income Trust ([citizens-income@lse.ac.uk](mailto:citizens-income@lse.ac.uk)) — as the Basic Income Research Group's successor, the oldest existing basic-income-focused organisation — has undergone significant changes. Here is a brief presentation of its current activities and projects:

The Citizen's Income Study Centre CISC offers a variety of resources (newsletters, academic papers, articles, reviews, reports, research findings, and books) focusing on essential topics in social policy such as poverty, unemployment, and the causes of social disadvantage related to gender, ethnicity, class and the tax and benefits system. The *Citizen's Income Made Simple* leaflets are a useful introduction to the subject and are particularly suited for advice centres and distribution at conferences, seminars, etc..

- *Aspects*, a series of more detailed information sheets are in the process of being updated and will serve as a building block for those interested in developing their knowledge further.
- The *Citizen's Income Newsletter*, is written in an easy to read style and will provide the public with up to date information. It is published four times a year and highlights new developments and partnerships, research-findings, and publications on issues directly relating to a Citizen's Income.

## WEB SITES / INTERNET DISCUSSION GROUPS

### *Citizen's Income Online*

<http://www.citizensincome.org>

CIO is designed to provide a dynamic interface for the exchange of ideas, comments and suggestions. The website gives on-line access to much of the material at CISC whilst, in addition showcasing up-to-the-minute information on current findings, forthcoming events, reviews etc. Please do make contact either by registering or commenting on any aspect of the site using the email, links. An online debate on CI, which is funded by the Social Policy Association, will be a key part of this new development. The aims of this new service is to improve the accessibility of our resources as widely as possible to all members of the public with a view to developing and promoting the debate on a Citizen's Income Scheme. We welcome any ideas and suggestions.

### *Basic Income*

Sally Lerner ([lerner@watserv1.uwaterloo.ca](mailto:lerner@watserv1.uwaterloo.ca)), co-ordinator of the Futurework network and co-ordinator of a recent introduction to basic income, has started a BI list (with a website in the near future). People can subscribe to the list by sending a message to [majordomo@scribe.uwaterloo.ca](mailto:majordomo@scribe.uwaterloo.ca), saying "subscribe basicincome YourEmailAddress".

### *Workfare-Mincome*

<http://www.onelist.com/subscribe.cgi/Workfare-Mincome>

Workfare-mincome is a list that was started by people concerned about the perversion of social welfare into forced labor that is generally called workfare. Most subscribers are interested in strategies that can stop workfare, which means considering what the alternative to workfare is. Social programs seem to go through three stages: (1) The punitive stage of workfare, work houses, and work tests. (2) The welfare entitlement stage that gives people something to survive on, but still sees unemployment as temporary. Assistance usually inadequate and comes with demeaning means tests. (3) The highest stage of evolution, of simply giving people enough to live on and letting them do as they please with their own time. In different countries it is called Mincome, Citizen's income, Guaranteed Annual Income (GAI), and Basic Income.

The question is then how to stop the regression to workfare and engineer the progression to mincome? Many subjects touch on it, from Community Work against Institutionalised Poverty, to Labor and Civil Liberties Law, to the techniques and aims of Public Opinion Polling. It is a moderated list, but no submission will be refused unless it is clearly out in orbit. This is no longer a list for people who have nothing better to do with their time and who want to have pointless debates. It is for serious anti-poverty activists who want to exchange useful

information and experience about how to effectively combat workfare in their own communities, and to turn it into adequate incomes for all people.

The list is fairly international, with eight countries represented, but the bulk of subscribers presently are in Ontario, Canada. To subscribe go to the site or e-mail the moderator at <porcupine@idirect.com>

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- Ilona OSTNER, co-chair and research co-ordinator, Georg-August-Universität, Institut für Sozialpolitik, Platz der Göttinger Sieben 3, D-37073 Göttingen, Tel 49-551-397243, Fax: 49-551-397834, [iostner@gwdg.de](mailto:iostner@gwdg.de)
- Guy STANDING, co-chair and research co-ordinator, International Labour Office, CH-1211 Geneva. Tel/Fax: 41-22-774 2239, [GuyStanding@compuserve.com](mailto:GuyStanding@compuserve.com)
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- Philippe VAN PARIJS, secretary, Université catholique de Louvain, Chaire Hoover, 3 Place Montesquieu, B-1348 Louvain-la-Neuve, Fax: 32-10-473952, [vanparijs@etes.ucl.ac.be](mailto:vanparijs@etes.ucl.ac.be) (with the help of Laurence JACQUET, [jacquet@ires.ucl.ac.be](mailto:jacquet@ires.ucl.ac.be) and Yannick VANDERBOGHT, [vanderborght@etes.ucl.ac.be](mailto:vanderborght@etes.ucl.ac.be))

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