

Summary of Media Coverage of Aug. 4th 2010 Roundtable on Poverty Eradication Winnipeg, Manitoba

- ✚ **Toronto Star** article published **04/08/2010** <http://www.thestar.com/news/ontario/article/843635--coyle-poverty-absent-from-premiers-agenda>
- ✚ **Winnipeg Free Press** Op-Ed published **03/08/2010** written by Sid Frankel, Social Planning Council of Winnipeg <http://www.winnipegfreepress.com/opinion/westview/provinces-need-to-pull-children-out-of-poverty-99821394.html>
- ✚ **Nova Scotia Chronicle Herald** Op-Ed published **03/08/2010** written by Mike Savage <http://thechronicleherald.ca/Letters/1195050.html>
- ✚ **Toronto Star** Op-Ed published **24/07/2010** written by Laurel Rothman and Trish Hennessey <http://www.thestar.com/opinion/editorialopinion/article/839720--fight-poverty-to-spur-recovery>
- ✚ **YouTube Video of the Winnipeg Roundtable**
A news-style video on the Winnipeg Statement on Poverty Eradication (by Donald Benham of Winnipeg SPC): <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tdZ4LAVTXKM>
- ✚ CJOB (Winnipeg) Radio interview with Laurel Rothman of Campaign 2000, Aug. 3rd, 2010

Winnipeg Free Press - PRINT EDITION

Plight of poor puts Canada's social fabric at risk

By: [Lindor Reynolds](#)

6/08/2010 1:00 AM | [Comments: 8](#)

If you've worked all your life and never been poor, why should you care about people who rely on food banks, minimum-wage jobs and social assistance?

Art Eggleton said yesterday Canadians need to take a long look at the future of our economy and understand ignoring the needs of the poor will hurt everyone.

"Poverty affects us all," said Eggleton. "I'm trying to reach middle-class people who have no experience with poverty."

Eggleton, the former mayor of Toronto, Liberal MP and now a senator, was in Winnipeg to join forces with several anti-poverty groups calling for the federal and provincial governments to eliminate poverty.

Eggleton was chairman of a Senate committee charged with studying poverty, housing challenges and homelessness in major Canadian cities. The committee's report, *In >From the Margins: A Call to Action on Poverty, Housing and Homelessness*, was released this spring.

He said a focus has to be elevating disadvantaged groups such as aboriginals, new immigrants, the disabled and single parents from poverty. If the effort's not made, he said, we're all going to suffer.

"We need to ensure future prosperity," he said. "If we help give these people the tools they need to lift them up -- education, training, support services, child care -- they are contributing to our social programs. We've got an aging population and if we don't have workers contributing to CPP and EI we're in trouble."

The press conference coincided with the Winnipeg meeting of Canadian premiers.

"I think our best hope are our premiers," Eggleton said diplomatically. "The one message I hear is that the federal government needs to be at the table too."

But the trick is getting poverty (and its related ills) onto the agenda. The same people have been fighting the social justice fight for decades. As for the poor? Most politicians seem to believe they don't vote. If we don't have the political and social will to change, the status of the poor won't improve. None of us benefits. Eggleton has read an estimate that poverty costs Canadian taxpayers \$30 billion a year. That's everything from justice to health care to shelter. The poorest people make up one-quarter of the community yet use twice the average health-care services, he said.

Eggleton said Canadians need to understand that poverty will hurt us all. Taxes may have to be increased, he said, or health care cut. If we don't get as many people as possible (including new Canadians who are barred from immediately working in their professional fields) contributing to our social-welfare system, we will lose it.

The poor are much more than the beggars you see downtown. They're everyone trying to survive on minimum wage, every family that can't afford to have friends over for dinner once a month and every person who is one paycheque away from disaster. We can give them a leg up or watch everything we take for granted gutted.

One of yesterday's panellists called on Canadians to "focus on the human cost of this recession." She didn't mean people who watched their stock portfolios shrink. She meant those who can't find affordable places to live in Winnipeg, where the vacancy rate is minuscule and 15 per cent of us live under the poverty line.

Jim Derksen, a disability activist, spoke for his community. "A disability is to be poor and to be poor is a disability," he said wryly.

It's not us and them anymore. It's us and us. Until we realize that, we're whistling past the graveyard, forgetting tomorrow really will come.

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Republished from the Winnipeg Free Press print edition August 6, 2010 A12

Activists call for war on poverty

By: Sandy Klowak

6/08/2010 1:00 AM

A coalition of activists asked the country's premiers Thursday to ramp up the fight to eradicate poverty in Canada.

Representatives from business and community groups across Canada, as well as provincial and federal politicians, came together for a round table in Winnipeg Wednesday to discuss a nationwide strategy to eradicate poverty.

Taking advantage of the meeting of Canada's premiers in Winnipeg this week, they presented the Council of the Federation with a draft of their comprehensive anti-poverty strategy at a press conference Thursday. The group is asking the Council of the Federation to create a working group on poverty reduction, to report back at the council's meeting next year, and to pressure the federal government to do its part to reduce poverty in Canada.

"It's clear that any effective poverty-reduction plan in Canada has to involve the federal government in a major way," said Sid Frankel, chairman of the Manitoba chapter of Campaign 2000, an anti-poverty education group born in 1989.

Poverty activist Harry Wolbert says every day is a challenge when you're dealing with a disability and the barriers that come with it.

"We're struggling day to day. Some things need to change."

Wolbert and his wife both live with disabilities. He describes himself as working poor. His epilepsy means he can't drive a car and is thus overlooked for many jobs.

"There's a misconception that the poor are lazy," said Wolbert, who wants to work more.

Wolbert participated in Wednesday's round table and strongly supports the group's requests. He said with upcoming elections, now is a crucial time for change.

"There's a window of opportunity to do something, finally," he said.

"The province and the (federal) government both need to take leadership on poverty on and off reserves."

Wolbert said some of the worst examples of poverty in Canada can be found on aboriginal reserves.

"It's sad for a country as well off as ours to allow this to continue," he said.

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Republished from the Winnipeg Free Press print edition August 6, 2010 A12

**Aug. 5th update on the Council of the Federation meeting
(from Laurel Rothman of Campaign 2000)**

**The Council of the Federation “will continue to promote . . .
reducing poverty”**

The August 4th Roundtable on Poverty Eradication, sponsored by the Social Planning Council of Winnipeg and Campaign 2000, in collaboration with Council of Canadians with Disabilities and Canadian Council on Social Development



ratified the Winnipeg Statement: The Provincial and Territorial Road to Poverty Reduction, which Premier Greg Selinger, Chair of the Council of the Federation, received on Aug. 5 (See attached photo; Premier Selinger on the left receives statement from Wayne Helgason, E.D. of Social Planning Council of Winnipeg). The roundtable included a wide range of participants from low-income communities, labour, business, women's groups, people with disabilities, Aboriginal communities, faith communities, recent immigrants, lone parents and others in the meeting in Winnipeg, and more than 15 participants from across Canada participated by webinar (combination of conference call and online access through computers). We were very pleased that Senator Art Eggleton and M.P.'s Mike Savage (Liberal, Dartmouth-Cole Harbour), Tony Martin (NDP, Sault Ste. Marie) and Yves Lessard Bloc Québécois, Chambly—Borduas)

Joined the roundtable discussion in Winnipeg on strategies to move toward a poverty-free Canada. This roundtable was held on the eve of the Council of the Federation's annual meeting which Manitoba hosted. The roundtable provided an opportunity for dialogue among levels of government, civil society and Aboriginal organizations.

Despite some complications with the technology of the webinar, a robust discussion was held and participants across Canada re-affirmed the importance of strong and appropriate public policies and funding by the federal, provincial and territorial governments as essential to eradicating poverty in Canada.

The communiqué of the Council of the Federation is encouraging. For the first time since Campaign 2000 began its annual communication with the Premiers in 1997, the Council of the Federation explicitly cites poverty.

The August 5 statement says "Premiers will also continue to promote sustained economic recovery by fostering a culture of innovation, encouraging continued private sector investments, removing barriers to economic development, expanding trade, strengthening Canada's labour market, and reducing poverty."

(see http://www.councilofthefederation.ca/pdfs/Prem_Working_to_Sustain_Economic_Recovery.pdf)

Collectively we've put poverty on the radar screen of the premiers! Thanks to all who participated. We look forward to continued work together to achieve progress. Special thanks to Jonathan Perkins of the Leadwell Foundation and Martin Itzkow of face2face for their invaluable technical leadership.

La lutte continue!

Laurel Rothman

National Coordinator, Campaign 2000 & Director of Social Reform, Family Service Toronto

Interest groups jockeying for leaders' attention

By: Bruce Owen

5/08/2010 1:00 AM | [Comments: 0](#)



JOHN WOODS / THE CANADIAN PRESS [Enlarge Image](#)

Manitoba Premier Greg Selinger (centre) takes leaders on stroll along the shores of Hudson Bay Wednesday.

LABOUR and environmental groups will jockey to get the attention of Canada's provincial and territorial leaders today as the leaders gather in Winnipeg to discuss issues ranging from the ongoing economic recovery to protection of the nation's water resources.

Climate Action Network Canada wants the provinces to take a bigger leadership role to reduce emissions and promote wider use of clean energy, including the creation of "a provincial-territorial climate action secretariat" to foster inter-provincial collaboration on climate change.

"The creation of this institutional capacity is a prerequisite to the kind of provincial collaboration and leadership that Canadians need," Climate Action Network executive director Graham Saul said in a statement.

The Climate Action Network, a coalition of national and regional environmental groups, will release a report card today tracking the five worst and five best actions on climate change by each province and territory.

Gaile Whelan-Enns, director of Manitoba Wildlands, said a number of rallies are planned at the Hotel Fort Garry where the premiers meet until Friday afternoon.

One is a rally sponsored by the Manitoba Federation of Labour, Canadian Labour Congress and other groups to push for changes to Canada's public pension system.

"It is key that the premiers hear our message and commit to taking effective action to convince the Harper Conservatives that this is the right thing to do and the right time to do it is now," MFL president Kevin Rebeck said.

Also Wednesday, a coalition of poverty activists asked the country's premiers to ramp up the fight to eradicate poverty in Canada.

Representatives from business and community groups across Canada, as well as provincial and federal politicians, came together for a roundtable in Winnipeg to discuss a strategy to eradicate poverty.

They will give the premiers a draft of their comprehensive anti-poverty strategy, asking the premiers to create a working group on poverty reduction, which will report back at the council's meeting next year, and to pressure the federal government to do their part to reduce poverty in Canada, said Sid Frankel, roundtable organizer.

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Republished from the Winnipeg Free Press print edition August 5, 2010 A4

Winnipeg Free Press - ONLINE EDITION

Premiers meet as protesters gather outside

By: Bruce Owen

5/08/2010 10:23 AM | [Comments: 13](#)



WAYNE.GLOWACKI@FREEPRESS.MB.CA [Enlarge Image](#)

Premier Greg Selinger (left) talks to Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty today prior to a meeting in Winnipeg of Canada's premiers and territorial leaders.

WINNIPEG-- Canada's premiers started their annual summer meeting in Winnipeg this morning at a downtown hotel as protesters outside demanded everything from wider treatment options for multiple sclerosis to a more concentrated effort to wipe out child poverty.

Environmentalists and labour unions take the stage later today outside the Hotel Fort Garry to urge the premiers to take a bolder role on climate change and to push Ottawa for reforms to the Canada Pension Plan.

Moments before the premiers met on a seventh-floor ballroom, people with multiple sclerosis and their families held a small protest outside to get Manitoba Premier Greg Selinger to approve a new treatment—but untested in Canada—that they say relieves the symptoms of the debilitating disease.

It's known as "liberation therapy" and is based on work by Italian neurologist Dr. Paolo Zamboni, who argues that a narrowing or blockage of veins in the neck which drain blood from the brain may cause MS symptoms in some cases.

Zamboni contends a procedure similar (known as CCSVI treatment) to balloon angioplasty that unblocks coronary and other arteries widens these narrowed or blocked veins, improving blood flow and, with it, balance and walking, while reducing dizziness, fatigue, muscle spasms and incontinence.

Manitoba and other provinces do not recognize the treatment so patients travel to Europe or the United States at their own expense. Steve Dyck said his wife Edith had the 45-minute treatment in Poland a month ago at a cost of \$15,000. "The walker has been parked ever since," Dyck said.

Dave Riches said his wife will travel to Albany, N.Y. in January at a cost of \$5,000. "We should be doing this here," Riches said. "Even if we have to pay for it."

Recently Saskatchewan Premier Brad Wall said his government will fund clinical trials of a controversial treatment for people with multiple sclerosis, despite two new studies from Europe raise doubts about the procedure.

A spokesman for the Manitoba government said the province would fund a study into the treatment if local experts recommend it. "We want to do whatever we can as a province to move the diagnostic and treatment research along as quickly as possible and certainly we offer support to any local doctors as well as the nationally-coordinated research strategy to achieve this," the spokesman said.

"We would all like to know today if CCSVI treatment is the silver bullet many hope it is, but we need to listen to medical experts who decide how to design and stage research studies and advise on when a procedure is safe and effective to put into regular practice."

Meanwhile, Winnipeg's Social Planning Council released its plan to eradicate child poverty in Canada.

They want the premiers to create a working group to look at how such a plan could be rolled out across the country and present it at next year's premiers' meeting.

The Social Planning Council also wants to present its ideas to Selinger, who before he got into politics in the early 1990s worked for the Social Planning Council.

At noon the premiers will visit the Manitoba Legislative Building where they will take a quick tour and look at an original 800-year copy of the Magna Carta, considered the foundation of modern democracy.

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