

## SOME BASIC REQUIREMENTS

The following was presented to the Unitarian session on 3CR by Dorothy Davies, and subsequently broadcast. It has been slightly abridged.

I listened with interest to your last three programs on 3CR and found the story of the American minister and his fight particularly inspiring. Because of it, I am surprised that you do not appear to be aware of, or don't speak about, the other equally devout American, the philosopher Henry George, who spent his life crusading against poverty in the midst of affluence. His book, "Progress and Poverty", sets out in detail the reasons for his conclusions and how he reached them.

You asked for responses to your program, and most definitely I reject all of the proposals of the political parties. Basically, there are four requirements:

1. A twenty hour working week for everyone (no overtime);
2. A guaranteed Minimum Income;
3. Proportional Representation for all elections;
4. Citizens' Initiative.

It is very important to disseminate widely the fact that technology and automation have destroyed and are destroying so many jobs that *there will never again be full employment under the current system*. Very few hours are required to manufacture all needs. A permanent pool of unemployed is totally unacceptable. Andre' Gorz in his books "Paths to Paradise" and "Farewell to the Working Class" discusses this in detail and outlines possible alternatives. The democratic one is to halve the working week. A twenty hour working week would put most of the unemployed to work. With the agreement of the workers, rostered hours need to be agreed upon so that husbands and wives can schedule their time for one to work while the other cares for the children, thus dispensing with the need for child care – the best child care is the parent anyway. This proposal needs widespread airing and discussion. It is a recorded fact that productivity has increased throughout the century each time working hours have gone down. Therefore, a 40-hour wage for a 20-hour week should be possible.

In addition to the foregoing, there needs to be a Guaranteed Minimum Income for all from birth to death, abolishing the various pensions that are at present provided. A G.M.I. would allow those who wish to work at art, music, dance and other creative activities of all types to do so, leaving the small number of jobs available to

those who want to do them. This G.M.I. could be paid easily from the revenue the collection of site value rating on all land would provide (see Henry George). This revenue is not being collected at the moment and, because it attacks the assets of the wealthy and the privileged, it will not be introduced without a struggle. No other taxes would be required.

It seems to me that Proportional Representation for all elections, municipal, state and federal, is essential to enable the people to have what they consider fair and just legislation adopted before much change can take place. As well, I believe Citizens' Initiative legislation needs to be drafted and discussed for adoption.