

BASIC INCOME

Newsletter of the Basic Income European Network

N°15 January 1993

The 1992 BIEN Conference

gathered a wide variety of French and foreign friends and foes of basic income.

See pages 3–4 for a selective report on the Paris conference.

National networks change names:

The British Basic Income Research Group becomes Citizens Income, while the Dutch workshop becomes an association. Further details on page 5.

The next BIEN Conference

will be held in London on 8–10 September 1994.

See page 4 for further details.

BIEN's Executive Committee

spreads to London and Budapest: Malcolm Torry joins as the conference organizer, while co-chairman Guy Standing moves to Hungary.

Addresses on page 2.

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PUBLICATIONS

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BIEN's EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

• Co-chairmen:

Guy STANDING, International Labour Office, Mozsár utca 14, H-1066 Budapest, Hungary, Phone: (36)(1)1533520, Fax: 1533683.

Edwin MORLEY-FLETCHER, Lega Nazionale delle Cooperative e Mutue, Via Guattani 9, I-00161 Roma, Phone: (39)(6)844391, Fax: 84439406.

• **Secretary:** **Walter VAN TRIER**, UFSIA, 21 Bosduifstraat, B-2018 Antwerp, Phone: (32)(3) 2204182, Fax: 2204420.

• **Treasurer:** **Alexander DE ROO**, Greens in the European Parliament, Rue Béliard 97-113, B-1047 Bruxelles, Phone: (32)(2)2843052, Fax: 2307837.

• **Conference organizer:** **Malcolm TORRY**, Citizens Income Study Centre, St Philips Building, Sheffield Street, London WC2A 2EX, UK, Phone: (44)(71) 9557453; Fax: (44)(71) 9557534.

• **Editor:** **Philippe VAN PARIJS**, Université Catholique de Louvain, Chaire Hoover, 3 Place Montesquieu, B-1348 Louvain-la-Neuve, Phone: (32)(10) 473951, Fax: 473952.

THE EDITORIAL BOARD

• Assistant editor:

Christian ARNSPERGER, 3 Place Montesquieu, B-1348 Louvain-la-Neuve, Phone: (32)(10) 473513; Fax: 473952.

• Area representatives:

Jan-Otto ANDERSSON, Abo Akademi, Department of Economics, SF-20500 Turku, Finland, Phone: (358)(21)654162.

Marc HEIM, 52 Boulevard St-Marcel, F-75005 Paris, Phone: (33)(1) 43314343.

Stefano SACCONI, Via di S. Pancrazio 5A, I-00152 Roma

Bill JORDAN, Perriton Farm House, Whimble, UK-Exeter EX5 2QY, Phone: (44)(404) 822809 (week-ends only).

Robert VAN DER VEEN, Universiteit van Amsterdam, Vakgroep Algemene Politologie, Oudezijds Achterburgwal 237, NL-1012 DL Amsterdam; Fax: (31)(20) 5252086.

Georg VOBRUBA, Hamburger Institut für Sozialforschung, Mittelweg 36, D-2000 Hamburg 13, Phone: (49)(40) 41409732; Fax: 41409711.

• Overseas correspondents:

Jeff MANZA, Department of Sociology, University of California, Berkeley, CA 94720, USA, Phone: (1)(510) 6424766.

Peter TRAVERS, School of Social Sciences, Flinders University, GPO Box 2100, Adelaide 5001, Australia, Phone: (61)(8) 2752325; Fax: 2012566.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

1. Keep us informed. Send promptly to the editor any news, announcements, books, pamphlets, working papers, etc. that may interest other people in the network. *Deadline for next issue: 15 April 1993.*

2. Circulate the Newsletter. BIEN members can ask for back issues and additional copies, which will be sent free of charge.

3. Recruit new members by asking interested people to fill in and return the form on page 12.

This issue of
Basic Income

was prepared with the help of Jan-Otto Andersson, Jeff Manza, Alexander de Roo, Malcolm Torry, Robert van der Veen and all those who spontaneously sent relevant material. Many thanks!

PAST EVENTS

**AU-DELA DU R.M.I./
BEYOND THE WELFARE STATE
(PARIS, 18–19 SEPTEMBER 1992)**

Over 200 people attended the fourth international Conference of the Basic Income European Network. The Conference was chaired by Yoland Bresson and Pierre Lavagne, both professors of economics at the University of Paris-Val de Marne and coordinators of the "Association for the introduction of an existence income" (AIRE), and by Edwin Morley-Fletcher, member of the Directorate of the Italian League of Cooperatives and co-chairman of BIEN.

Speakers

Plenary sessions were addressed by Meghnad Desai (Labour member of the House of Lords and professor of economics at the LSE), Philippe Van Parijs (professor of economic and social ethics at the Catholic University of Louvain), René Dumont (author of many books on ecology and the Third World), Alain Lipietz (economist at the National Centre for Scientific Research and economic adviser to the French Green party), François Ewald (former assistant of philosopher Michel Foucault and author of a major book on the welfare state), Anthony Atkinson (professor of economics at Cambridge University and chairman of the European Economic Association), Bruno Lévy (graduate student at the University of Paris-Val de Marne), Walter van Trier (researcher at Antwerp University and secretary of BIEN) and Patrick Viveret (member of the evaluation Commission of the RMI).

Workshops were organized on (1) the French RMI (Minimum Insertion Income) and basic income ; (2) ideas for a European basic income ; (3) alternative funding proposals ; and (4) historical roots and theoretical foundations. A reception took place at the Paris City Hall at the invitation of Jacques Chirac, Mayor of Paris, with the participation of Yves Chottard, chairman of the Board of Governors of the International Labour Office.

General Assembly

The Conference ended with BIEN's General Assembly (minutes available from BIEN's secretary), which reviewed BIEN's activities,

financial situation and membership, decided on the place, date and format of the next conference (see page 4) and renewed the executive committee and editorial board (see page 2).

As usual, the conference was a precious opportunity to exchange information and suggestions, hopes and fears, doubts and convictions—so numerous and of such different natures that there is no point in trying to summarize them. Among the impressions with which the editor of this Newsletter returned home, here are two that are likely to be widely shared.

Two impressions

One is that awareness of the idea of a basic income and of the arguments behind it has obviously made considerable progress in France. True, politicians such as Alain Lipietz, who are intellectually committed to the idea, still feel that it would be far too risky to make basic income a prominent feature of their electoral programme, because political opinion is not ripe for it. (Paddy Ashdown, leader of the British Liberal-Democrats, also a fully explicit advocate of basic income, would not have contradicted him on this point.) There is still a huge task ahead if the idea of basic income is to become widely known and understood by the general public. And this should keep taking priority in our endeavours over direct lobbying and political action. But it is comforting to see that an increasing variety of people have heard of the idea, thought about it, talked about it.

The second impression is that there is still considerable uncertainty about the best way forward. An easy consensus may be found about indirect steps such as the introduction (in those countries in which this is not yet in place) of an unconditional income for children or for the elderly. Such steps are achievable at the level of individual countries. But there have long been serious doubts as to whether a sizeable unconditional income for people of working age could be achieved at this level. Such doubts are founded, as emphasized by Anthony Atkinson, not because of any serious economic obstacle to achieving this in relatively small open economies, but because of the formidable obstacle provided by the rhetorical use of allegedly damaging economic consequences. Such an obstacle could be overcome if the change took place on a European scale. But doubts may arise as to

whether mutual trust and solidarity are sufficient between the nations of the EEC to make room for any ambitious redistributive policy at that level. Basic income, in other words, can live with nationalism but then without the fears prompted by immersion in the single market. And it can live with the single market, but then without a nationalist brake on EEC-wide redistribution. But it cannot live, it seems, with both the single market and nationalism. In the months and years to come, it will be one of BIEN's central tasks to show the way out of this apparent dilemma.

Proceedings

A more extensive report on the Paris conference can be found in a special issue of *Alternatives Wallonnes* (see page 11 below), and selective proceedings are expected to appear as a special issue of *Futuribles* (53, rue de Varenne, F-75341 Paris Cedex 07, France). For further information, contact Yoland Bresson, Faculté des Sciences Economiques, 58 avenue Didier, F-94210 La Varenne Saint-Hilaire, France.

SYMPOSIUM
"STAAT, BURGER EN BASISINKOMEN"
(AMSTERDAM, 4 DECEMBER 1992)

At this well-attended conference, hosted by the University of Amsterdam and organized by the research group of the Dutch basic income network, two main topics in the foundational debate on basic income were discussed, following an exploratory paper by Robert van der Veen: (1) How can a neutral state (one that treats different lifestyles and personal preferences even-handedly) justify the granting of unconditional tax-financed and basic needs-covering incomes, despite the fact that such incomes obviously impose costs on people who prefer to maximize income, and favor people who would rather maximize leisure time (presentation by Philippe Van Parijs, Université Catholique de Louvain)? (2) Can one expect the citizens of a society in which basic income is granted on grounds of neutral justice to actually behave in ways that stabilize this institution over a long period of time (presentation by Jos de Beus, University of Twente and University of Amsterdam)?

For further information, contact Robert van der Veen at the University of Amsterdam, Department of Political Science, Oudezijds Achterburgwal 237, NL-1012 DL, Amsterdam. Phone: (20) 5254783; fax (20) 5252086.

FUTURE EVENT

BASIC INCOME EUROPEAN NETWORK
FIFTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
(LONDON, 8-10 SEPTEMBER 1994)

BIEN will be holding its next international conference at the University of London, Goldsmiths College, on 8-10 September 1994.

Conference organizer: Malcolm Torry, Citizens Income Study Centre, St Philips Building, Sheffield Street, UK-London WC2A 2EX, England. Phone: (44)(71) 9557453. Fax: (44)(71) 9557534.

NEWS FROM THE NATIONAL NETWORKS

UNITED KINGDOM:

BIRG BECOMES CI

The London-based Basic Income Research Group (BIRG) changed its name at the end of 1992. BIRG is now called "Citizens Income" (CI). This is mainly because basic income is nowadays frequently referred to as a citizens income, and because citizens income has become an important part of a wider debate about the nature of citizenship. CI is now located next door to the London School of Economics. The address is: Citizens Income Study Centre, St. Philips Building, Sheffield Street, UK-London WC2A 2EX. Phone: (44)(71) 9557453; fax: 9557534.

NETHERLANDS:

WERKPLAATS BI BECOMES VERENIGING BI

The Dutch Werkplaats Basisinkomen has merged with the Dutch society "Friends of basic income" to form "Vereniging Basisinkomen" (basic income association). The address is the same as before: Herman Heijermansweg 20, NL-1077 WL Amsterdam. Phone: (31)(20) 5731801.

In addition, the University of Amsterdam has a documentation centre on basic income, which contains all the most significant Dutch publications on the subject. Once a year, an updated catalogue is available on request. Address: c/o Robert van der Veen, Algemene Politologie FSW, Binnengasthuis, Oudezijds Achterburgwal 237, NL-1012 DL Amsterdam, Netherlands.

UNITED STATES:

WHY NOT AN AMERICAN BASIC INCOME NETWORK ?

Jeff Manza of the Department of Sociology at the University of Berkeley, California, one of the Newsletter's overseas correspondents, would like to help publicize the idea of basic income in the US by starting an American basic income network, possibly linked to BIEN. Under Bill Clinton's administration, the idea of a "welfare reform" will once again be on the agenda, and this may be an opportunity to give a new impulse to the basic income debate.

If interested, please contact Jeff Manza: Department of Sociology, University of California, Berkeley, CA 94720, USA. Phone: (1)(510) 6424766.

BELGIUM:

CCF ARCHIVES

In the last ten years, the Clectif Charles Fourier (which organized the first BIEN conference in 1986) has accumulated a considerable amount of material around basic income in several European languages, including most of the items reviewed in this newsletter. This material is accessible daily from 9am to 3pm for consultation and photocopying at the following address: Chaire Hoover d'Ethique Economique et Sociale, 3 place Montesquieu, B-1348 Louvain-la-Neuve. Phone: (32)(10) 473951; fax: 473952.

If you are coming from far away, it is strongly advisable to phone beforehand.

PUBLICATIONS

DUTCH

CENTRAAL PLANBUREAU. *Nederland in Drievoud*, SdU Publishers (Antwoordnummer 15, NL-2501 XD Den Haag), 391p., Dfl 89.00, ISBN 90-399-0292-5.

The Central Planning Bureau, a forecasting agency and think tank of the Dutch government, had published a report, entitled *Scanning the Future* (SdU Publishers, 1992, Dfl 79.00, ISBN 90-399-2024-6) with four scenarios of possible developments in the world economy between 1990 and 2015, based upon the economic perspectives of Adam Smith, J.M. Keynes and Joseph Schumpeter. Of these four, three scenarios have been selected in this new report for a study of their consequences for the Dutch economy, under the general assumption that to each of these respective scenarios, there will correspond a characteristically plausible mix of labour market and social security policies. In the "Global Shift" scenario, the focus of the world economy shifts to the US and Pacific Basin, and the Netherlands shares in the meagre fruits of a general "Eurosclerosis", in which the current (still rather generous) Dutch welfare system and rigid labour markets are left untouched. The unhappy consequence is a near-collapse of the welfare state around 2015. Almost the opposite occurs in "European Renaissance", the scenario that has the United States lagging behind, and Western Europe locked into a dynamic process of integration. Here, a revitalized corporatism produces the consensus that enables the Dutch welfare state to maintain its high levels of benefit, but with a strongly tightened regime of eligibility conditions and strict Swedish-type "active labour market" measures. This scenario is especially relevant for the Dutch Labour Party, since it describes the optimistic hopes of the Party's official Welfare Commission's report *Niemand aan de kant* ("No one excluded": see *BI* 13: 6). Finally, and perhaps surprisingly, a basic income in the form of a negative income tax (though one whose level is raised gradually to only one half of the 1990 social minimum in 2015, and completely shorn of supplementary conditional benefits) is the centrepiece of the third scenario entitled "Balanced Growth", which has the "wealth of all nations" developing favourably. Balanced growth is achieved by a rather enlightened mix of liberal market economics and ecological restraint, notably a heavy worldwide tax on energy consumption.

With the welfare state much leaner and simpler to administrate, the poverty trap much reduced, and means-testing finally eliminated, the Central Planning Bureau here paints a familiar picture of basic income as a pivotal device of liberal social engineering. Considering how far basic income is still removed from the political agenda in the Netherlands, this part of the CPB-report may well contribute significantly to establishing its respectability among the (always influential) community of economic advisers in the country, as well as among the liberal Right. (Address: Centraal Planbureau, c/o SdU Publishers, as above.)

GEURTS, R., ET AL. *Een basisinkomen in drievoud*, Report of a research training programme undertaken at the Department of Political Science, University of Amsterdam, mimeo, Vakgroep Algemene Politologie PSCW (Oudezijds Achterburgwal 237, NL-1012 DL Amsterdam), november 1992, 143p.

Following David Purdy's 1988 statement that the political feasibility of any substantial basic income reform imposes the threefold necessary condition of being "ethically desirable, historically opportune, and economically viable", this report (supervised by Robert van der Veen) discusses each of these three requirements in the context of the Dutch experience, with guardedly positive conclusions. The section on economic viability contains some interesting "informed guesswork" on the labour supply responses of different job categories, and a novel analysis of the long-term impact of a basic income on growth, informed by endogenous growth theory. The chapters on historical opportunity compare basic income to the currently dominant "active labour market" reforms, with respect to desiderata of simplicity, individualism in entitlements, and social participation, while the section on ethical desirability assesses the capacity of theoretical justifications of basic income based on notions of reciprocity and equal (or maximin) real freedom to build a politically potent popular case for unconditional income entitlements. (Author's address: c/o Robert van der Veen, Algemene Politologie FSW, Binnengasthuis, Oudezijds Achterburgwal 237, NL-1012 DL Amsterdam, Netherlands.)

NIEUWSBRIEF BASISINKOMEN no. 3, Werkplaats Basisinkomen (Herman Heijermansweg 20, NL-1077 WL, Amsterdam), October 1992, 24p.

This issue of the newsletter of Werkplaats Basisinkomen (the Dutch basic income network, now called "Vereniging Basisinkomen", see page 3 above) contains, apart from a large book section by Paul de Beer, a highly critical discussion, by Greetje Lubbi, of the Green Left Party's long-overdue proposal on social security. The proposal (*Tijd voor zelfstandigheid*—"Time for Independence"—Groen Links, Postbus 700, 1000 AS Amsterdam, 1992, 47p.), which was endorsed by the Party in October, aims to achieve a new social benefit structure composed of a flat-rate Beveridge type conditional benefit, topped by a simplified scheme of social insurance, and with at the very bottom an individualized negative income tax of 2400 Dfl (less than one-fifth of the social minimum). As Lubbi comments, the Green Left Party has settled on this fairly minor role for basic income after a long period of unproductive indecision. Yet, the Green Left is the only political party in the Netherlands that has incorporated basic income in its reform programmes at all, up to now. The (bitterly disappointed) official response of the Society for Basic Income can be obtained from the Vereniging Basisinkomen. (Address: see above.)

VAN ROIJEN-SLUIJTER, Maïke & VAN DER VEEN, Robert. "Basisinkomen in Nederland: een chronologische bibliografie", Universiteit van Amsterdam, Faculteit der Politieke en Sociaal-Culturele Wetenschappen, April 1992.

A very substantial compilation of articles and books written by Dutch authors, mainly in Dutch but also in English. The document begins with a few general references on basic income and then goes on to list items by year of publication (1967-1991).

(Authors' address: Algemene Politologie FSW, Binnengasthuis, Oudezijds Achterburgwal 237, NL-1012 DL Amsterdam, Netherlands.)

VAN STOKKOM, Bas. *De republiek der weerbaren*, Wiardi Beckman Stichting/Bohn Stafleu Van Loghum (De Molen 77, NL-3995 AW Houten), 1992, 144p., ISBN 90-313-1485-4.

In this well-written and lively book, sociologist Bas van Stokkom attempts to give a normative argument for a conception of 'active citizenship' from a point of view which seeks to integrate elements of communitarian (republican) and liberal political philosophy. The notion of active citizenship is very much alive in current political discourse in the Netherlands in connection with such issues as the mobilizing role of political parties, the right to work, social security reform, and the prevention of crime. It has been repeatedly used by Dutch politicians to stage an appeal against the so-called "erosion of norms and values" among the populace, and against self-seeking attitudes in which rights of citizenship are being claimed, while the corresponding duties are conveniently neglected. Van Stokkom argues against such moralistic interpretations of the citizenship concept. His aim is to discuss proposals for institutional reforms which may establish both a liberal type of principled unconditional citizenship rights (resembling those outlined by German sociologist Ralf Dahrendorf) and encourage responsible participation of rights-holding citizens in politics and work (paid as well as unpaid). Among these is an (admittedly sketchy) proposal for a partial basic income, interpreted as a "starting subsidy for participation", which would be insufficient to live off 'passively'. Such a basic income should be combined with a state programme of optional "civic service" (*burgerdienst*), which would be open to all adults, but would create entitlements to supplementary income for the long-term unemployed, on top of the basic income. This supplement, however, would also be forthcoming on condition of following a re-training programme with the duty to accept jobs offered on the labour market after completion. (Address: c/o Wiardi Beckman Stichting, Nicolaas Witsekade, 1017 ZT Amsterdam, Netherlands.)

ENGLISH

ARNESON, Richard (ed.). "Capitalism, Socialism and Equality. A Symposium", in *Ethics* (University of Chicago Press, PO Box 37005, Chicago IL 60637), vol. 102, April 1992, pp. 447-511.

This is a small set of articles stemming from an East-West dialogue held in Berlin in 1991. John Roemer (University of California at Davis) explains what he views as an attractive and feasible form of "market socialism" (public

ownership, decentralized decision making, social dividend) and what he believes to be its ethical foundations. Philippe Van Parijs (University of Louvain) does the same for "basic income capitalism" (a market economy with the highest sustainable unconditional income). Richard Arneson (University of California at San Diego) comments critically on both by discussing the criteria that are being proposed for evaluating socio-economic regimes.

(Editor's address: University of California, Department of Philosophy, 6126 Wolfstar Court, San Diego CA 92122, USA.)

ATKINSON, Anthony. "Towards a European Social Safety Net?", in *Fiscal Studies*, vol. 13, no. 3, pp. 41–53.

In this lecture, given at the Institute of Fiscal Studies in June 1992, Cambridge economist Anthony Atkinson expounds his views about the possibility of giving a social dimension to the European Community after 1992. Current systems, Atkinson argues, have "to date enjoyed only partial success", mainly because "the limits on coverage and incomplete take-up means that a sizeable number of people fall through the net". After 1992, national safety nets will come under increased pressure to lower both taxes and benefits because of the threat of labour and capital flight and of claimant inflow. As a result, there is a strong rationale for an EC-level safety net. The author describes some possible features of such a safety net given current social and political conditions, and concludes that most of the difficulties faced by national systems are likely to persist. Nothing explicit is said about an unconditional basic income, but there is at least a hint: given the difficulties just mentioned, "we should perhaps look wider than an income-tested social assistance. Although it is the latter which is apparently envisaged in the Social Charter, it is not obvious that the Elisabethan Poor Law provides the best model for Europe of the next century".

(Author's address: Cambridge University, Faculty of Economics, 4 Petersfield, GB-Cambridge CB1 1BB.)

BLACKBURN, Robin (ed.). *After the Fall. The Failure of Communism and the Future of Socialism*, London & New York: Verso, 1991, 327p., ISBN 0-86091-5409 (paperback), £ 11.95.

This collective volume is part of the attempt of the Left to come to terms with recent East-European history and draw lessons for the future. For some of the contributors, reshaping the Left's image of a desirable future involves giving a central place to something like a basic income. Thus André Gorz argues that the post-industrial proletariat must become "able to transform the frequent interruptions to their wage-labour relationship into new areas of freedom", and "for this purpose, they need the right to a sufficient basic income which permits new lifestyles and forms of self-activity". Along with Gorz, Diane Elson (University of Manchester) sees a basic income as part of a package of citizenship rights and duties. The latter, in her view, would include availability for jury service or for fulfilling functions in

decentralized democratic institutions "in return for the benefits of citizenship, such as a basic guaranteed income". Robin Blackburn himself (editor of the volume and also of the *New Left Review*) mentions basic income among the relevant ideas recently put forward by various Green and New Left parties. If it is to tackle the poverty of the destitute and alleviate the dependency of workers on employers, he points out somewhat sceptically, "the guaranteed basic income would have to be set at a generous level". But he finds interesting that the proposal links up with the classical market socialist concept of "social dividend" (as outlined by Oskar Lange and refined by John Roemer) and that it contributes to providing ultimate objectives to today's movements and struggles. (Editor's address: c/o *New Left Review*, 6 Meard Street, UK-London W1V 3HR, England.)

GEORGE, Robley. "Socioeconomic Engineering and Socioeconomic Democracy", paper presented at the 4th Annual International Conference of the Society for the Advancement of Socio-Economics, March 1992, 15p.

Basic income is a central feature of Robley George's concept of socioeconomic democracy, defined as a system "in which there is *some form* of minimum guaranteed income for all (...) set and adjusted democratically." A universal guaranteed income, it is claimed, whether it be in money or in kind, is essential "before simultaneously fundamental and peaceful transformations in present economic systems can take place." To underpin the idea of a social minimum, George briefly alludes to two very distinct approaches: Rawls's theory of justice and Islamic economics. However, the appropriate level of the basic income is by definition the one for which a majority of citizens would vote.

(Author's address: Center for the Study of Democratic Societies, Box 475, Manhattan Beach, CA 90266, USA.)

HOOGENDIJK, Willem. *The Economic Revolution: Towards a sustainable future by freeing the economy from money-making*, Merlin Press (10 Malden Road, London NW5 3HR, UK), 1991, 205p., ISBN 1-85425-072-8, £ 6.99.

In this provocative and lightly written book, the author pleads for an interruption of all-out growth as a way to begin relieving "environmental degradation and human suffering". The main motor of current growth is what Hoogendijk calls the "money-must-grow system", in which production is oriented principally towards commodities that yield quick profits. Changing this orientation would require, among many other things, making employment conditions more flexible; employment "should no longer be linked to the production of a single product or service, nor tied mainly to production for the market". In such a context, "a basic income would make it much easier to employ people (or rather: allow them to participate)". However, Hoogendijk seems unwilling to accept full unconditionality: "To my mind, a basic income for everyone should be linked to a package of basic tasks. Everyone should contribute to the productive work needed in their own country or region."

(Address: c/o Merlin Press, as above.)

ROCHE, Maurice. *Rethinking Citizenship*, Polity Press (65 Bridge Street, Cambridge CB2 1UR, UK), 1992, 280p., ISBN 0-7456-0307-6.

This substantial book by Sheffield sociologist Maurice Roche is concerned with the analysis of

the "social dimension of citizenship", meaning those rights and duties of citizenship that affect the welfare of persons as citizens. The author describes what he sees as "a crisis affecting the material basis and social reproduction of citizenship in modern societies": long-term unemployment is growing, the welfare state is viewed as being less and less effective in relieving poverty, and there is a general breakdown of the family and the work ethic. Roche views basic income as the most relevant "radical reformist response" to this post-industrial crisis. Basic income, he explains, can "create a new social right of citizenship" and would "institutionalize citizenship principles and the social rights of citizenship to an historically unprecedented degree". He provides a detailed discussion of the pros and cons of basic income, and concludes optimistically that "one of the benefits of the debate about citizen income schemes is the way it has revealed common ground across the political spectrum. Thus it has revealed at least the potential for radical social reform which could be based on some sort of consensus". According to Roche, "supporters of citizen income strategies make a powerful case that guaranteeing a right to a basic income is probably the only way to prevent these profound problems of unemployment and underemployment from generating an increasingly divisive, conflictual and morally indefensible distribution of income".

(Author's address: Sheffield University, Department of Sociology, Sheffield, UK.)

SACCONI, Stefano. "An Outline of the Debate in Italy on the Hypothesis of a Basic Income", mimeographed conference paper, Rome, June 1992.

A useful guide to recent academic and political debates about basic income in Italy since 1989. Sacconi reviews the debates that have taken place at the BIEN Conference in Florence in 1990, and also within cooperatives, trade unions and the main Left parties (PSI and PDS). He also describes in detail the various bills about citizenship income that have been presented (mainly by Left-wing parties) to the Chamber of Deputies in the 10th and 11th legislatures. The picture emerging from this overview is one of increasingly intense discussions about various versions of citizenship income, with however a tendency to stop short of true unconditionality: most concrete proposals include means tests, age restrictions, or the requirement to perform social work or follow training.

(Author's address: Via di S. Pancrazio 5A, I-00152 Roma, Italy.)

FINNISH

LAHTINEN, Ilpo. *Perustulo, kansalaisen palkka (Basic Income, the Citizen's Wage)*, Hanki ja Jää, Helsinki, 1992, 165p.

This comprehensive book results from the discussions that have been going on within the Finnish Basic Income Group. The first chapter presents the historical, ideological and ethical roots of the idea. The subsequent chapters discuss the pros and cons of a basic income in different spheres of life: social policy, labour market, civil society and national economy. The book then attempts to identify winners and losers, concentrating on women and young people. It ends with a proposal for implementing a partial basic income along the lines suggested by Hermione Parker for the UK. The book's analysis builds heavily on discussions abroad, especially within BIRG and BIEN, and less on the earlier Finnish discussion. In an appendix, five members of the Basic Income Group offer their comments. Jan Otto Andersson, of the Left-Wing Alliance, claims

that basic income cannot effectively replace existing social security systems. Pentti Arajävi, of the Social Democratic party, would like to see a broad, constitutionally guaranteed basic security system, of which basic income would only be a part. Pete Pakarinen, of the conservative National Coalition Party, feels basic income would be the best way to realize "individual-centrism". According to Osmo Soinivaara, of the Green Alliance, there should be at first a very low partial basic income, which could be raised gradually. Her experiences with helping claimants through the intricate present social security system make Marjatta Stenius-Kaukonen, of the Left-Wing Alliance, a supporter of basic income. The book has not, so far, stirred up any discussion, no doubt in part because of the appalling economic situation in Finland since 1991.

(Authors' address: c/o Jan Otto Andersson, Abo Akademi, Department of Economics, SF-20500 Turku, Finland.)

FRENCH

AULAS, François. "Travailler, c'est trop dur", in *L'Autre Journal*, no. 27, September 1992, pp. 55-57.

A stimulating article written in the style of a science-fiction story: "Today is 21 March 2010. In ten years, unemployment will be abolished..." In the face of astronomically rising rates of unemployment, Aulas claims, the connection between income and work must be substantially loosened if social unrest is to be avoided. The solution, contained in a fictitious "Liverpool Treaty", is described as follows: "Give each European citizen a guaranteed minimum from birth to death, proportional to produced wealth (which increases with productivity gains), in exchange for a professional work load determined over the individual's whole lifetime". Although the rationale suggested smacks of basic income, the actual proposal stops short of unconditionality: it consists of a means-tested "negative income tax", along with an obligation to work a minimal amount of hours over one's lifetime ("on average 1000 hours per year"). "The true challenge", according to Aulas, is "to succeed in arranging individual activity over the life span in exchange for the per capita income" and to make sure that "those who want to work more than average are justly rewarded" in order to avoid a loss of work incentive

(Author's address: c/o *L'Autre Journal*, 8 rue du Mail, F-75002 Paris, France.)

GENET, Michel. "L'allocation universelle: une idée pour vivre autrement", in *Convergence* (rue Muzet 3/3, 5000 Namur, Belgium), no. 8, April 1992, pp. 4-9.

A brief and accessible presentation of the general ideas behind basic income, with a balanced discussion of some of the pros and cons.

(Author's address: Rue des Acacias 14, B-4000 Liège, Belgium.)

TRAVAIL ET REVENU POUR TOUS, issue no. 84 of *Alternatives Wallonnes* (Avenue Général Michel 1B, B-6000 Charleroi, Belgium), December 1992, ISSN 1-0321.

Under the title *Work and Income For All*, the latest issue of the journal of the organization Solidarité des Alternatives Wallonnes is devoted to critiques and defenses of basic income. Dominique Bauwens, in an article that uses economic tools in a somewhat loose (and sometimes questionable) manner, strongly criticizes basic income because it would eventually lead to an "infernal spiral of pauperization", due to increased impoverishment of the less qualified workers. Discussing the social theory of André Gorz, Angelo Basile portrays basic income as "nothing but a modified, Left-wing version of the

negative income tax" and expresses doubts about its practical feasibility and its effectiveness as a tool for changing the organization of society. In the aftermath of the BIEN-AIRE Paris Conference of September 1992, Vincent Trovato feels that the debates that took place "aroused awareness and stimulated reactions concerning the recent political and economic changes in Europe and about the role that a basic income could play in this context". Trovato reproduces talks by Alain Lipietz—who insists that basic income should be truly universal and not exclude poor countries, and expresses doubts about its political feasibility—and François Ewald—who believes that basic income can be successfully defended only if it is seen as a radical step beyond the currently prevailing mentality of social assistance. This argument is echoed in Philippe Van Parijs's contribution (a

modified version of his opening address at the Paris conference), which stresses the need to conceive of basic income as an alternative to Bismarckian or Beveridgean social security. In Van Parijs's view, basic income is grounded in Thomas Paine's conception of fair access to material resources, and this implies a radical break from the present welfare state mentality. This view is put into question in another article by Trovato, a discussion of Jacques Duboin's idea of a "distributive economy" developed in the 1930s. He claims that basic income is only a transitory solution to uphold an increasingly defective capitalist system, whereas "distributionism" (distribution of income to all citizens who perform a socially useful, but not necessarily waged, activity) would be a more radical solution.

(Address: see above.)

GERMAN

**OPIELKA, Michael. "Arbeit und Einkommen—
Perspektiven eines komplexen
Zusammenhangs", in *Unser Dienst, Zeitschrift der
Katholischen Arbeitnehmer-Bewegung*, June 1992,
vol. 26, no. 3, pp. 117–124.**

Sociologist Micheal Opielka addresses the broad question of the links between income and work. He analyzes the various orientations that are present in social democracies, and places the idea of an unconditional basic income within the "existence orientation": it is justified directly by the individual's very existence as a citizen. Basic income represents "the highest degree of socio-political uncoupling between work and income". This poses several well-known ethical problems for social cooperation, which the author briefly reviews. These problems lead Opielka to recognize that the full severance of the work-

income link implied by basic income may not be practically feasible. A partial solution, he argues, would be to "introduce, alongside the basic income, a form of civil service. All citizens between 18 and 35 would have to devote one to three years of their lives to work in the social sector". Besides the various socio-political obstacles, the authors sees as a significant obstacle to the introduction of a basic income the position of the Christian churches: "They stick to the principle of a wage-earning-oriented social policy, and they seem unable to even imagine that man could obtain income not only through waged labour, but also through his existence as an active member of a political, social and spiritual community".

(Author's address: Institut für Sozialökologie, Wiedershall, D-5202 Hennef 41, Germany.)

WHAT IS BIEN?

The Basic Income European Network was founded in September 1986 to serve as a link between individuals and groups committed to, or interested in, basic income, i.e. an income unconditionally granted to all on an individual basis, without means test or work requirement, and to foster informed discussion on this topic throughout Europe.

Address:
Walter Van Trier
BIEN Secretary
Bosduifstraat 21
B-2018 Antwerpen, Belgium
phone: (32)(3) 2204182 (office)
(32)(3) 2711642 (home)
Bank account: 001-2204356-10
at the CGER, 21 rue Archimède, 1040 Brussels

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