

# BASIC INCOME

## Newsletter of the Basic Income European Network

N°17      September 1993

**BIEN's 1992 conference is now accessible**

to those who could not attend. The proceedings of the Paris Conference have just been published.  
See page 3.

**The Dutch Labour Party** proposes a negative income tax as an experimental step in the direction of basic income.  
See page 5.

**Nobel laureate James Meade restates his case for basic income** in a memorandum published on the occasion of the "Full Employment Year".  
See page 8.

**BIEN's 1994 conference (London, 8–10 September 1994) is taking shape.**  
Suggestions are welcome.  
Further details on page 4.

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**4. Why not become newsletter editor ?** The present editor will be retiring in September 1994. If you are interested in the job (however tentatively), please contact him *now*.

### 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 December 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 persuading more people to return the form on page 12.

THE EDITORIAL BOARD
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This issue of  
*Basic Income*

was prepared with the help of Sue Black, Marouan el Boustami, Alexander de Roo, Walter Van Trier, and all those who spontaneously sent relevant material.  
Many thanks!

## NEWS FROM THE NATIONAL NETWORKS

### AMERICAN ARCHIVE ON BASIC INCOME AT BERKELEY

BIEN's overseas correspondent Jeff Manza visited the basic income archive in Louvain-la-Neuve in July 1993 and gathered an extensive set of publications on basic income. These are at the disposal of U.S. scholars. If interested, please contact Jeff Manza at the Department of Sociology, University of California, Berkeley, CA 94720, USA. Tel: (1) (510) 6424766.

### FRENCH NETWORK LAUNCHES NEWSLETTER

The French association AIRE (Association pour l'Instauration d'un Revenu d'Existence) published the first issue of its "lettre de liaison" this summer. This newsletter (in French) aims at recapitulating the main news concerning the promotion of an existence income. It is open to all those who would like to send information or written pieces. Members of AIRE are to receive the newsletter automatically, but non-members

may subscribe as well. The fee is FF200 per year. Further information and subscription forms may be obtained from Ms H. Boussata, Faculté des Sciences Économiques, 58, avenue Didier, F-94210 La Varenne Saint-Hilaire. Phone: (33)49768098; fax: 48852993.

AIRE's next General Assembly is to be held on 7 October from 5 to 6.30 pm at C.E.D.I.A.S., 5 rue Las Cases, F-75007 Paris.

### VERENIGING BASISINKOMEN ANNUAL MEETING IN UTRECHT, 19 JUNE 1993

The Vereniging Basisinkomen, the Dutch basic income network, used this opportunity to reformulate its strategy as follows: (1) The network aims at establishing a full basic income in the long run but supports other associations which propagate a partial basic income; (2) it views a partial basic income as a temporary goal; (3) it aims at a better distribution of paid and unpaid work; (4) it supports those who want to establish a basic income via a negative income tax. For more information, contact Vereniging Basisinkomen, H. Heijermansweg 20, NL-1077 WL Amsterdam.

## PAST EVENTS

### BASISINKOMEN IN DRIEVOUD AMSTERDAM, 14 SEPTEMBER 1993

To present and discuss the new book *Basisinkomen in drievoud* edited by R. J. van der Veen (see below, p. 6), a panel debate took place at the Oost-Indisch Huis in Amsterdam. It was chaired by P. de Beer and participants included C. A. de Kam (Rijksuniversiteit Groningen), B. van Ojik (Green Left Party), C. J. M. Schuyt and R. J. van der Veen (Universiteit van Amsterdam) and G. Zalm (Centraal Planbureau).

### BIEN 1992 CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS NOW AVAILABLE

The French basic income association AIRE has now published the detailed transcriptions (in French) of the addresses and debates that took place at the Paris conference of September 1992 (see *BI 14*: 11 for detailed programme), in particular the presentations by Philippe Van Parijs ("Ethical foundations"), Anthony Atkinson ("Problems of implementing a basic income in Europe"), Bruno Lévy ("Basic income and time-value"), Walter van Trier ("Obstacles to the breakthrough of basic income") and Patrick Viveret ("The French R.M.I. and citizenship income"). Also reproduced are the

various round table discussions and commission reports. Chantal Euzéby's personal synthesis of what she learned from the conference is contained in a striking article published in *Futuribles* (see this issue, p. 10).

Copies of the proceedings may be obtained from A.I.R.E., c/o Futuribles, 55 rue de Varenne, F-75341 Paris Cedex 07, by sending a cheque for FF100 plus FF20 for postage and handling, to the order of A.I.R.E.

## FUTURE EVENTS

### REVENU D'EXISTENCE ET PLEINE ACTIVITÉ

PARIS, 7 OCTOBER 1993

This meeting on "Existence income and full activity", organized by the French existence income association AIRE, will host speeches by Guy Aznar, Yoland Bresson, Denis Clerc, André Courtaigne, Annie Dreuille, Jean-Marc Ferry and René Passet, among others. The meeting is scheduled from 2 to 5 pm. From 5 to 6.30 pm, AIRE will be holding its General Assembly. The address of the meeting is C.E.D.I.A.S., 5 rue Las Cases, F-75007 Paris.

### INCOME AND TAXES: A QUESTION OF VALUE – FOR CITIZEN, SOCIETY AND NATURE

CHOLSEY, 13 NOVEMBER 1993

Do incomes and taxes reflect the value we place on people and how their activities affect society and nature? This is the question to be addressed in this seminar organized by Turning Point 2000, where several recent proposals will be discussed, among which Citizen's Income. The seminar is to take place from 10 am to 5.30 pm. Attendance is limited to 20. For practical details and booking forms, contact Alison Pritchard,

The Old Bakehouse, Cholsey, UK – Oxon OX10 9NU, tel: (0491)652346.

### BASIC INCOME EUROPEAN NETWORK FOURTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

LONDON, 8-10 SEPTEMBER 1994

The conference will start at lunchtime on Thursday 8 September 1994 and finish on Saturday 10 September after lunch. Goldsmith College is easily accessible with the Underground. Meals and accommodation will be provided on location. Further practical details and a call for papers will be published in the next newsletter. Suggestions and queries should be addressed to the conference organizer: Richard Clements, Citizens Income Study Centre, St Philips Building, Sheffield Street, London WC2A 2EX, UK. Tel: (44)(71)9557453; Fax: 9557534.

### CITIZEN'S INCOME AND THE LEFT

LONDON, 9 OCTOBER 1993

A one-day conference organized by the Socialist Society (25 Horsell Road, London N5 1XL, tel: (071)7003853). Organizer: Stephen Quilley, 106 Lauriston Road, Bethnal Green, London E9 7HA, tel: (081)9865380.

## PUBLICATIONS

### DUTCH

DE BEER, Paul. *Rapport inkomensbeleid. Deel I: De feiten*, January 1993, 91p.; *Deel II: Het ideaal*, January 1993, 87p.; *Deel III: De*

*toekomst*, March 1993, 128p. Amsterdam : Wiardi Beckmanstichting.

A most impressive report on facts, principles and policies in matters of income distribution by Paul de Beer, an economist working for the Dutch Labour Party's think tank and a prominent member of the party's pro-basic income lobby. The report covers many topics besides minimum income guarantees, but basic income is a key stone of the preferred policy package. The essence of modern social democracy, according to de Beer, consists in providing all with maximal choice possibilities, also outside the sphere of work and income. This entails—among many others things—a commitment to securing a firm minimum income, preferably in the form of a full basic income. Given the uncertainty surrounding the effects of introducing a full basic income, however, it makes sense to phase it in gradually, first by introducing a partial basic income, i.e. one that would fall short of minimum subsistence requirements and would remain supplemented by means-tested benefits.

(Author's address: Paul De Beer, Acaciastede 40, NL – 1112 EZ Diemen.)

**NIEUWSBRIEF BASISINKOMEN** n° 5 and n°6, Werkplaats Basisinkomen (Herman Heijermansweg 20, NL – 1077 WL Amsterdam), March 1993, 20p., and June 1993, 28p.

These two most recent issues of the newsletter of the Dutch basic income network contain, as usual, a set of relevant excerpts from the national press, book reviews (e.g. of Hermione Parker's *Citizen's Income and women*), short contributions to the debate on the implications of basic income, and characteristically lucid pieces by Paul de Beer on the Planning Bureau's report (see *BI 16: 5*) and on the conference on Basic Income and the State (see *BI 16: 3*).

(Address: see above.)

**PARTIJ VAN DE ARBEID. Wat mensen bindt**, Verkiezingsprogramma 1994–1998, Amsterdam, September 1993, 54 p.

Dutch parties are now publishing their detailed programmes for the forthcoming general election (3 May 1994). The text just published by the Labour Party (one of the two parties in the ruling coalition), the final draft of which was written by economist Jos de Beus (see *BI 14: 4*), briefly mentions the main advantages and disadvantages of a basic income. "The Labour Party," it pursues, "regards an integral choice between the current system and a basic income as sterile at the present moment", because uncertainty is still too great about the implications of both systems for the labour market. "In these circumstances it is far preferable to opt for a no-regret policy, which leaves options open for the future and first

concentrates on the most concrete and pressing problems. Furthermore one can experiment with a basic income on a limited scale and subject to certain conditions." More specifically, the Party "advocates that the tax-free allowance in the income tax system should be turned in the short term into a tax credit, and that the latter, if it can be adequately implemented, should subsequently take the form of a negative income tax."

(Jos de Beus's address: Universiteit van Amsterdam, Department of Economics, Roetersstraat 11, NL–1018 WB Amsterdam.)

**RIETHUYS, Jan-Willem. "Klassieke recepten werken niet meer! Arbeid en inkomen groeien uit elkaar"**, in *De Morgen* (Brussel), 14 August 1993.

A presentation of the case for basic income in the light of an interview with BIEN secretary Walter Van Trier. This piece was preceded, in the same (most prominent Flemish socialist) daily newspaper, by a review by Walter Van Trier of James Meade's most recent book (12.6.93) and followed by further reactions to the idea of an unconditional basic income, whether hostile (article by Socialist Party researcher Hans Bonte on 18.8.93) or favourable (interview with Green Party leader Jos Geysels on 21.8.93; article by Brussels University sociologist Eric Rosseel on 27.8.93). This series illustrate the strong upsurge of interest in basic income on the Flemish Left.

(Address: *De Morgen*, Brogniezstraat 54, B–1070 Bruxelles.)

**VAN DER VEEN, Robert J. (ed.). Basisinkomen in drievoud**, Amsterdam: Het Spinhuis (Ouderzijds Achterburgwal 185, NL – 1012 DK Amsterdam), 1993, ISBN 90–73052–60–2, 213 p.

Twenty years ago, basic income was mainly defended in the Netherlands by critics of the work ethic and of the illness-generating virtue of employment. Now that such official organs as the Scientific council for Government Policy and the Central Planning Bureau have made it respectable, it has grown into a "discussable utopia". This useful book, which is the product of a collective project realized by politics students at the University of Amsterdam under the leadership of Dr Robert J. van der Veen, brings the discussion forward by exploring three crucial conditions which basic income proposals must satisfy if they are to play a significant role in political decision-making: (1) they must provide an answer to the main problems currently faced by the welfare state; (2) they must be financially sustainable, taking all their effects into account, (3) they must be perceived as fair by both net contributors and net

beneficiaries. Each of the three parts of the book is devoted to one of these three conditions. "A basic income at the level of half the current means-tested minimum income for a childless couple will solve many of the problems of our welfare state", the book concludes. "It can be financed if it is accompanied by appropriate policies. And it can be justified. (...) Hence it forms an attractive possibility for a strengthening and renewal of the welfare state." (Editor's address: Universiteit van Amsterdam, Alg. Politologie, Oudezijds Achterburgwal 237, NL-1012 DL Amsterdam.)

**VAN TRIER, Walter.** "De herverdeling van de vrije tijd", *Universiteit Antwerpen* 22, June 1993, 23-25.

A short presentation of the case for basic income in the Antwerp University magazine, by BIEN Secretary Walter Van Trier.

(Author's address: UFSIA, 13 Prinsstraat, B-2000 Antwerpen.)

**WERKLOZEN**, special issue of *De Vijgeboom. Tijdschrift voor strijd en inkeer* (Hertsdeinstraat 25/2, B-2018 Antwerpen), n°105, May 1993, pp. 66-91, BEF 75.

In this dossier on unemployment in a left-wing Christian Flemish magazine, Walter Van Trier and Toon Van de Velde (both from Antwerp University) argue for an uncoupling of income and employment. Van Trier focuses on the notion of full employment and ends with an interesting quotation on this topic from Keynes's famous "Economic Possibilities for our Grandchildren." Van de Velde insists both on the right to perform (not necessarily paid) work and on the pedagogical function of a duty to work (e.g. in the form of a limited compulsory civil service), but also insists that, given economic and technological developments, the

legitimacy of our socio-economic system urgently requires that the right to a fulfilling activity be dissociated from the right to paid employment.

(Both authors' address: UFSIA, 13 Prinsstraat, B-2000 Antwerpen.)

**ZWAAP, René.** "Basisinkomen: Het laatste wanhoopsoffensief van de verzorgingsstaat", in *De Groene Amsterdammer*, 14 July 1993, pp. 4-5.

For a while, the idea of a basic income appeared to many as a socio-economic variant of the Esperanto dream: an idea dogmatically driven by a small group of monomaniac fanatics and taken seriously by no one else. But in the Netherlands at any rate, the climate has changed, among other things as a result of the publication by the Dutch Planning Bureau of a report that claimed (some variant of) a substantial basic income to be perfectly feasible (see *BI 16*: 5). Even prominent members of the Labour Party, such as Marcel van Dam and Flip de Kam have come out in favour of it, and "no postmodern managers conference can be complete if it does not include some discussion of it. But what if the people on a basic income cannot supplement it with any earned income? Would our society not become even more dual than it currently is? And does the introduction of a basic income not require a 'fortress Europe' tightly protected from immigration?" The only way to make a basic income a successful remedy for the problems of our times would be to use it as a world concept.

(Address: *De Groene Amsterdammer*, Postbus 353, NL-1000 Amsterdam.)

## ENGLISH

**BIRG/CI BULLETIN n°16**, July 1993 (Citizens Income Research Group, St Philips Building, Sheffield Street, UK - London WC2A 2EX), 36p., ISSN 0954-8246.

In the opening contribution to this issue, former Thatcher adviser Christopher Monckton lists various defects of the existing welfare system in Britain and goes on to propose some reforms, one of which is the introduction of a basic income. Monckton argues that the public sector accounting principles currently used are false, and that "unless the Treasury is forced to mend its ways, it will always block the consideration of any universal benefit scheme, erroneously believing it to be in all circumstance unaffordable." — In an article that summarizes his recent paper on Beveridge (see *BI 16*: 6),

Cambridge economist Anthony Atkinson pleads for a non-means-tested but not fully unconditional "participation income." His argument is based on the fear that full unconditionality would receive too little political support. — Anne Gray, a labour economist, discusses various ways of avoiding the unemployment trap and argues that basic income (along with a minimum wage) would be superior to current workfare arrangements. With her proposed "universal hourly benefit," the unemployed would keep a fraction of their benefit upon return to work. — EEC consultant Beresford Hayward suggests that European social programmes should aim at developing what he calls "citizen capital," which measures "the potential of the individual not only in the

economy, but in other spheres of life as well." In this context, he argues, children are the first priority, and "a commitment to assure the income of children is likely to require some form of Citizen's Income." — Timothy Whitton of the University of Caen (France) indicates that the French "revenu minimum d'insertion," a benefit conditional on insertion into the formal labour market, has had only very limited success due to insufficient monitoring of individual "insertion contracts." He indicates that an unconditional basic income may be put back on the agenda and that with the forthcoming parliamentary elections "citizen's income will give French MPs food for thought, because it is going to become a very tangible issue." — In Spain, however, as Luis Ayala of the University of Castilla-La-Mancha explains, basic income is barely on the parliamentary agenda as the country does not even possess a full (means-tested) national minimum income system.

(Address: CIRG, see above.)

**HOBSON, Ruth. "Taking back power over the world of work", *New Economics* 23, Autumn 1992, p. 10.**

Charles Handy's analysis of socio-economic trends in his two books *The Future of Work* and *The Age of Unreason*, seemed to provide him with a strong case for basic income. In the interview on which this article is based, he holds on to his views about the dangers of polarization in the society of the future: "It could be a new servant society with a whole class of people cooking, gardening, driving and maintaining for the busy rich – a privileged exclusive world inside the organizations for some and more perilous, exploited and lonely life outside for most". We can avoid this outcome, he still claims, "above all by refusing to allow the paid job to dominate our lives". "But since Hardy wrote *The Age of Unreason*", Ruth Hobson notes, "the one means with which we might have challenged the power of paid work over our lives – a guaranteed citizen's income or basic income – has been dropped from his scenario", except as a basic pension for the elderly. "As a concept, citizen's income is fine for the whole population", Handy explained, "but it's just not practical. To get it big enough to be called basic income, you'd have to have a marginal rate of tax of about 60 per cent". The article indicates no alternative means for the stated purpose. Ever heard of a partial basic income?

(Author's address: c/o New Economics Foundation, 88-94 Wentworth Street, UK – London E1 7SA.)

**LOVITT, Jeff. "Spitting in the wind", in *Tribune*, 9 July 1993, p. 2.**

In the aftermath of the recent general election, basic income seems to be gaining support within the British Labour Party. Income-related transfers have come under increasing criticism because the money "goes to those who do not need it, pushing down the level of benefits paid to the poorest", and basic income could be a major candidate in the Party's debates on welfare state reform. There is some discussion as to whether the basic income should be financed by an extension of VAT to previously exempted goods. Some Party members rather argue in favour of abolishing tax allowances and instituting a "modest" basic income (around £40 a week). "However," Lovitt argues, "to afford such a system without inflicting high marginal rates on middle-income earners, an end to the high levels of unemployment and the accompanying burden on the social security budget would almost certainly be required."

**MANZA, Jeff. "Postindustrial capitalism, the State, and the prospects for economic democracy", *Journal of Political and Military Sociology*, vol. 20, n° 2 (Winter 1992), pp. 209–241.**

Berkeley sociologist Jeff Manza discusses the problems that would arise in the American economy during a transition from post-industrial capitalism to what he calls economic democracy, understood as "a set of economic and political arrangements whereby all forms of economic power are democratically accountable, and all citizens have sufficient resources to make uncoerced economic decisions." Because it provides all citizens with an income guarantee and thus gives them more freedom to turn down undesired jobs, basic income is an important part of economic democracy (the other main components being workplace democracy and vocational training). Manza argues in favor of establishing basic income in stages, starting with a partial basic income roughly pitched at the current level of the poverty line (implying the need for low tax rates near this income to avoid the poverty trap). To justify his preference for avoiding a full basic income at first, the author relies on the familiar mechanism according to which "as citizens come to expect the benefits from a social program, powerful political momentum develops for expanding such programs over time." Given the currently low tax rates on high incomes (which, Manza argues, could be raised without creating too much capital flight) and given the expectation of a "peace dividend" flowing from reductions in defense spending, "funding partial basic income, along with other important programs (...), is feasible."

(Author's address: University of California, Department of Sociology, USA –Berkeley CA 94720.)

**MEADE, James.** "Fifteen propositions", paper published by the Employment Policy Institute (Southbank House, Black Prince Road, UK – London SE1 7SJ), June 1993, 23p.

In this pamphlet prepared for the Full Employment Year of the Employment Policy Institute in London, Professor James Meade sets out the conditions he considers necessary to achieve full employment without inflation in a free, but fair, market economy. One central element, he claims, will be the reduction of money wages, but only on the condition that there be "some other form of income which supplement[s] low rates of pay." Making the distribution of ownership of wealth more egalitarian would be one measure, but to reach a larger portion of the working population "some more direct supplement would be needed." Meade explicitly mentions a tax-free basic income as the most adequate such supplement. This measure would "divert attention from rates of pay on to the political question of what rates of Citizen's Income could be afforded." Since the cost of providing every citizen with a sufficient basic income would be "hideously high," however, one must accept the view that "in the case of a Citizen's Income a half loaf is better than no bread." Several propositions are advanced to lessen the cost of an adequate basic income, both in the medium run (reform of the tax system) and in the long run (budgetary efforts to switch from a national debt to a national asset). In a detailed and rigorous appendix, Meade conducts a graphical analysis aimed at showing how "to find the extra budgetary revenue to finance a universal Citizen's Income." These ideas are further expanded in a new collection of Meade's writings, *Liberty, Equality and Efficiency* (Macmillan, 1993), to be reviewed in the next issue.

(Author's address: 40 High Street, Little Shelford, UK–Cambridge CB2 5ES.)

**PURDY, David.** "Review of *Arguing for Basic Income. Ethical foundations for a radical reform*", in *Renewal*, vol.1, n°1, January 1993, pp. 75–77.

In this review of the book recently edited by Philippe Van Parijs (see *BI 14*: 8), David Purdy summarizes the main advantages of basic income and sketches his views about its feasibility. Rather than focusing on specific advantages, proponents of basic income should show, as is done in the book, that it is part of "a comprehensive conception of a society which would be more just or otherwise better than the

one in which we live". But it is no less important to investigate the "political dynamics of social policy".

(Author's address: University of Manchester, Department of Economics, Manchester M13 9PL.)

**THE INDEPENDENT.** "Moral dilemmas of capitalism", 1 September 1993.

On 31 August, former British Chancellor of the Exchequer Nigel Lawson addressed the annual meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science and urged the current government to retract its commitment to universal social benefits. Such benefits, Lawson argued, hamper the development of market capitalism, and well-functioning markets remain the most effective means of alleviating poverty. The next day, the prominent daily *The Independent* (one of Britain's main quality newspapers) reported Lawson's speech while strongly taking issue with his claim that anyway "there is clearly no principle of equality that has any conceivable merit." For "when newspapers and television make sure that even the poorest know how the rich live, inequality run amok can be corrosive. How to limit that inequality without economic harm is a dilemma that faces many industrial countries. Traditional unemployment and supplementary benefits have tried to redress the problem only at the price of distorting labour markets. More radical thinking is called for." What is, then, the way forward? "A good starting point might be Samuel Brittan's proposal for paying a basic wage to all adult members of society, whether they work or not." Most readers of this newsletter are unlikely to disagree.

**VAN PARIJS, Philippe.** *Marxism recycled*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993, 250p. ISBN 0-521-41802-X, £27.95 (hardback).

The Marxist tradition does not need to be dumped any more than it deserves to be dutifully conserved. What it needs and deserves is ruthless recycling: some of its components are well worth retrieving, providing they are appropriately cleaned up and thoroughly reshaped through the use of modern intellectual tools. This is, at any rate, the attitude that permeates this collection of essays initially published during the 1980s. The final part, entitled "Forward without socialism!", focuses on basic income as a key component of the Marxist ideal (duly reconstructed) relevant to today's world. It includes the controversial article (written jointly with Robert van der Veen) on "A capitalist road to communism", followed by a comprehensive reply to the criticisms it aroused ("Universal grants versus socialism").

Other chapters explore the connection between the demand for a basic income and the libertarian challenge, the class structure of

welfare capitalism and the twin concepts of scarcity and abundance.

(Author's address: Chaire Hoover, 3 place Montesquieu, B-1348 Louvain-la-Neuve.)

## FRENCH

**BODART, Myriam. "Les mesures de résorption du chômage: Approche critique",** in Point d'Appui Travail-Emploi-Formation (Rue de Bruxelles 39, B - 1400 Nivelles), *Lettre d'information* n°2/1993, pp. 3-10.

This law-oriented article presents and critically discusses various employment policy measures recently introduced by the Belgian government. One of its main conclusions is that the stringent administrative constraints imposed on the unemployed and the recipients of minimum income (minimex) can, in many cases, act as a deterrent to these persons' (re)insertion into the labour market. Such constraints include a limit on the proportion of minimum income recipients who can receive employment through the social services and the requirement to wait six months to receive the transfer again once it has been interrupted (even if the interruption came from taking on an occasional job). Young people are particularly penalized, and due to the high degree of conditionality of minimum income transfers "it appears to be becoming more and more difficult for the young to find a small place on the labour market." Since the article only aims to analyze the existing legislation, no remedy is proposed. But whoever has heard of an unconditional basic income will need no prompting to keep thinking of it as the analysis unfolds.

(Author's address: Centre de Recherche Droit et Sécurité d'Existence, Faculté de Droit, FNDP, Rempart de la Vierge 5, B - 5000 Namur.)

**DELPLANQUE, Bernard. "Partager le chômage",** in *Problèmes Économiques* n°2324 (c/o La Documentation Française, 29 quai Voltaire, F-75007 Paris), 5 May 1993, pp. 8-11.

Today's unemployment, Bernard Delplanque claims, is so persistent that we should no longer maintain the illusion of a return to full employment. "Policies aimed at developing employment at all costs, that is, without any technological or economic justification, in order to decrease unemployment, are doomed to failure and jeopardize the mechanisms that make us prosperous." What is needed is rather a strategy of "unemployment sharing." One of the main components of such a strategy is the total disconnection of access to social benefits from any requirement to work. "The notion of a minimum wage must be replaced by that of a

guaranteed minimum income" and, as is particularly important in the current context of the R.M.I., "we should stop attaching [to this guaranteed minimum] the connotation of insertion." The author's analysis strongly points to a basic income, even though many basic income supporters will find some of the author's suggestions for implementing such a system are questionable, for example the increase in tax pressure on two-job households and the promotion of citizenship rights (as opposed to worker rights) in order to prevent immigrants from taking advantage of the French social system. His general stance is however interesting as a platform for confronting the existing R.M.I. and the idea of a fully unconditional basic income.

(Address: c/o La Documentation Française, see above.)

**EUZÉBY, Chantal. "Du revenu minimum d'insertion au revenu d'existence",** in *Futuribles* (55 rue de Varenne, F - 75341 Paris Cédex 07), n°177, June 1993, 41-53.

Chantal Euzéby is one of the most influential and competent French specialists of social policy. In her early writings, for example her little book *Le revenu minimum garanti* (see BI 11: 11), she displayed considerable confusion about basic income and was very sceptical about it. She participated actively and open-mindedly in the Paris BIEN conference. The present article is the result of the thinking prompted by this encounter: it is an articulate, qualified but firm plea for basic income as an alternative to existing R.M.I.-style guaranteed minimum income schemes. The version of basic income towards which Euzéby seems to lean could be combined with supplementary social insurance transfers, modulated according to age (FF 1600 per month for adults, FF 1000 for children, FF 3000 for pensioners) and financed by taxation rather than social contributions. "The potentially favourable consequences of the introduction of a basic income should feed the political debate and prompt more detailed research on the issue. (...) It is at any rate a road worth exploring if one is to escape the logic of wealth accumulation and the dynamics of social exclusion imposed by unbridled capitalism." Even if this article had been the sole outcome of our 1992 conference, the latter would have been worth organizing.

(Author's address: 22, rue de Turenne, F – 38000 Grenoble.)

**LORTHIOIR, Jacqueline (ed.).** *Le Travail en questions*, Special issue of *POUR: Revue du Groupe de Recherche pour l'Éducation et la Prospective* (L'Harmattan, 5-7 rue de l'École Polytechnique, F-75005 Paris) n°137/138, June 1993, 208 p., 110FF.

A set of articles on the present and future of work and its place in society. The final section ("Enjeux et stratégies") includes four converging pieces (by Guy Aznar, Guy Roustang, Philippe Van Parijs and Patrick Viveret) along the following lines: neither growth nor a general reduction in the length of the working week provide a solution to the problem of massive exclusion. What is needed is a softer strategy of employment sharing through systematic incentives, from the generalization of parental leave, partial retirement or sabbaticals to Aznar's second cheque and Van Parijs's unconditional basic income.

(Editor's address: GREP, 13/15 rue des Petites Écuries, F-75010 Paris.)

**ROSANVALLON, Pierre.** *La nouvelle crise de l'Etat-Providence*, Notes de la Fondations Saint Simon (91 bis rue du Cherche-Midi, F-75006 Paris), n° 55, September 1993, 31 p.

The earlier crises of the welfare state, as described by Pierre Rosanvallon in his influential book *La crise de l'Etat-Providence* (Paris: Le Seuil, 1981), were first financial (public spending on social transfers was rising much faster than GNP) and later ideological (is the state better suited than the market to provide social services?). The current crisis, the author claims, is at the same time technical and philosophical. It is technical because the progress of actuarial techniques has induced a differentiation of risk categories (why should a school teacher and a builder pay the same towards their pensions if one has a life expectancy ten years shorter than the other?). And it is philosophical because the increasingly sharp distinction between insurance and solidarity that emerges from this process calls for fresh thinking about the very foundation of the welfare state. Rosanvallon distinguishes three main models for reconstructing the welfare state. The utopian model consists in the introduction of an unconditional basic income on the ground that employment involves the capturing of rents. "There is an interesting intuition in this idea of dissociating the

economic from the social. (...) But the social foundations of work risk being undermined." The (American) liberal model rests on the idea that people are owed compensation for having been wronged, either individually or collectively. Finally the European model is based on the notion that the members of the nation recognize a debt towards each other: "The nation defines itself ultimately as an accepted space of redistribution." The challenge, today, is to give this notion a new and acceptable shape, different from the old workhouses. Somewhat elusively, Rosanvallon suggests that this will have to involve the recognition of the guaranteed minimum income (RMI) as being at the very heart of the welfare state, and also the "cleverly organized presence of non-productivity in the productive sphere, i.e. a certain type of service employment." Some basic income supporters will no doubt point out that this is exactly what Rosanvallon's "utopian model" would achieve.

(Author's address: c/o Fondation Saint Simon, see above.)

**RUWET, André (ed.).** *Pour une politique du temps*, dossier Greenpeace, in *Greenpeace*, Summer 1993, pp. 14-27.

This special issue of the French-language magazine of the international organization Greenpeace focuses on the question of how working time should be conceived if ecological concerns are to be adequately taken into account. Following Gorz, André Ruwet's introduction insists that an ecologically and socially acceptable economy must contribute to "a society in which one shall live better by working and consuming less." In an interview, French economist and Green Party spokesman Alain Lipietz defends the French Green's proposal to reduce working hours. In the final piece, Philippe Van Parijs argues that a "soft" basic-income-based version of a reduction in working hours is far better suited than the "hard" working-week-limiting version to the concerns which should inspire present-day working time policies: sharing employment for the sake of social justice, restructuring working patterns for the sake of economic efficiency, and reducing productive labour for the sake of ecological well-being.

(Editor's address: Greenpeace, 317 rue du Progrès, B-1210 Bruxelles, Fax: (02) 2151950)

SPANISH

**VAN PARIJS, Philippe.** *¿ Que es una sociedad justa? Introducción a la práctica de la filosofía política,* Buenos Aires: Ediciones Nueva Visión (Tucumán 3748, 1189 Buenos Aires, Argentina), Colección Diagonal, 1992, and Barcelona: Editorial Ariel (Córcega, 270-08008 E-Barcelona), 1993, ISBN 84-344-1686-7, 251p., 2200 pesetas.

Two (different) Spanish editions of the critical introduction to contemporary theories of justice previously published in French (see *BI 12*: 10). Starting from Rawls's theory, chapters 8 and 9 sketch the case for making an unconditional basic income a central component of a defensible conception of a just society under contemporary conditions.

**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.**

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