

## Poverty Walking Tour Successful: Organizer

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A&E Editor



[Editor's Note: This story was inadvertently omitted from the last issue of The Cadre; our apologies to the organizers of this important event.]

UPEI student Susan Fitzpatrick is very impressed with the turnout of the Poverty Walking Tour that took place last Monday. About 100 people took part in the event, which began at the Farmer's Market on Belvedere Avenue and ended in downtown Charlottetown.

"I was very impressed with the success of the Poverty Walking Tour. There was quite a good turn out of "walkers", despite the possible scheduling conflicts and the rainy weather."

Fitzpatrick, who is an active member of the local Make Poverty History Campaign that organized the tour, said the tour was enjoyable, and the speakers were quite considerate of their audience.

"The March was very engaging and the speakers were very interesting. They kept their speeches brief so that the March could continue on its path, and people wouldn't get too cold."

Fitzpatrick was also pleased with the connections made during the tour, and the exchange of information between the speakers and the event participants.

"We covered many different areas of poverty and made some very strong connections throughout Charlottetown. We were able to see all the different ways that poverty affects our community and the walk gave people a chance to talk about these issues and search for ways that we can

be involved in the eradication of poverty."

The most poignant moment during the tour for Fitzpatrick was when speaker Marie Burge, who represented Cooper's Institute, challenged MLA Wayne Collins' position that the government was working on poverty issues, and even offered that there could be a silver lining to poverty, said Fitzpatrick.

"Marie Burge made it very clear that there is no silver lining for the people affected by poverty and that it was outrageous and inappropriate to offer one up at a rally for the eradication of poverty."

Burge encouraged the participants to do their part in the fight against social justice, and that the tour participants had already taken a step in the right direction.

"Her speech was one of the most passionate speeches I've ever heard on P.E.I. She made it clear that we had taken a step forward on October 17 and that we, as concerned citizens for social justice, would not take a step back. She encouraged everyone there to continue to push for social justice and the protection of fundamental human rights. It was incredibly moving."

Burge's speech seemed to emulate Fitzpatrick's own thoughts regarding poverty on Prince Edward Island, adding not only are Island residents citizens of the province and Canada, they are citizens of the world as well.

"I hope that Charlottetown continues to be an active space — a space where people are not afraid to stand up, and out, for their rights and the rights of other residents of P.E.I. I hope that Charlottetown continues to make the connection between our citizenship of P.E.I. and our citizenship of the world."

Fitzpatrick said the tour gave her a sense of empowerment, that she, as a citizen of any community she chooses to join, could affect change in a positive way.

"The Poverty Walking Tour was meant to get people thinking about poverty locally as well as globally and I know that I left the march with a much stronger sense of identity as a global citizen, capable of effecting change in all of my communities."

Christian Ledwell, a UPEI student who also participated in the tour, said he learned something from most of the presenters who participated. Some speakers who stood out most in his mind included farmer James Rodd, Marie Burge, and John Mackenzie. Some presenters were less informative than others, he critiqued.

"The thing I found most surprising was farmer James Rodd's speech that explained how farmers are getting the same prices they were (receiving) in the 1970s (for their products). Another striking fact was that minimum wage has actually been decreasing when you factor in inflation ... the politicians who spoke didn't say very much (that was concrete."

Ledwell also pointed out that the crowd was quite attentive to the speakers despite the cold and rainy weather, adding he would definitely attend another walking tour next year.

"People were very attentive to the speeches despite the wet weather. I think (the tour) would definitely be worth doing next International Day for the Eradication of Poverty."

### Continued from page 5

Canadian Forces bases. Hold the phone there Gilles. So, you'll secede completely from Canada and be totally autonomous, except you want to still use the Canadian Dollar, Canadian Passports, and use our old Army Bases? Uh, can't see it. If you leave, you're gone. You don't get our money or passports or NAFTA or our old Sea Kings. OK, maybe you can have the Sea Kings. A Québec Spy Service though? I can't see that being all that successful. In my experience with Québec tourists they do not integrate all that well with local populations. Sure, many of them can speak impeccable English, and I'm sure spies could be trained to adopt local customs, but there's something about the way they look at non-Quebeckers as if we bathe in our own feces that would blow their cover. Although Duceppe argued that a Québec Army would have no trouble recruiting, I again would have to disagree. Québec has lost every major war it has ever fought in, and ever since has bitched about joining with Canada in any international conflict, World War I, World War II, etc. It is worth noting that the Québécois are descendants of the French, and as was once said about their ancestors, "Going to war without France is like going deer hunting without an accordion," is much the same for them. Check you stats Duceppe. I'll bet your sovereigntists would be much happier sitting at home smoking cigarettes and complaining about Canada than running around spying on their cultural inferiors.

And finally the Notorious BIG released a song last week with some of his best rapper buddies and apparently is not at all discouraged by the fact that he still dead.

Have a good one!

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