

BC Liberals' Homelessness Non-Solution

by Stephen Elliott-Buckley - Saturday, March 07, 2009

<http://politicsrespun.org/2009/03/bc-liberals-homelessness-non-solution/>

The neoLiberals are such anti-social, free marketeer, social darwinists that when polling shows people are very concerned about homelessness and poverty in BC, they come out with a thoroughly, cynically empty plan full of insubstantial optics that is insulting to people in need and those who advocate for them.

How do we know this? Beyond the empty rhetoric and Rich Coleman's desire to be the saviour/czar of the homeless [after being the aggravator of those eager for affordable housing], we turn to BC's auditor general. Whew!

When the neoLiberals first got elected they did two things to signal that they were not as interested in transparent, open government as their rhetoric indicated. They de-funded the auditor general's office and Elections BC. But in a nice twist of irony, it is the auditor general who came out with some objective truth: the emperor has no clothes because the homelessness plan has no "clear goals and objectives," "accountability for results is missing," and they government has "not identified success."

This is no surprise. [I've written about the useless Rich Coleman](#) periodically while the government has sworn off recognizing the need to count the homeless in BC to figure out the extent and breadth of the problem. This is especially embarrassing as NDP MLA David Chudnovsky toured the province as housing critic to do just that. Whoops, Minister Coleman, do your job, hey?

In his report, the auditor general's comes up with one of the best arguments around, if it weren't for the neoLiberals' actively ignorant and blind social darwinist ideology keeping them from buying it: "The cost of public services to a homeless person is significantly higher than to that same person being provided with appropriate housing and support services."

So the neoLiberals are willing to waste taxpayer money--normally repulsive to them--because they can't bring themselves to admit that the free market forces people to the streets. This is why "pathetic" fits so well.

And it's also why Rich Coleman won't be able to rub two sticks together to solve anything before the election. It's all optics designed to appeal to that element of their base that are actually repulsed by the party's disdain for the poor or bothered by the presence of such poverty in the streets. Now that they hear the neoLiberals are serious about solving homelessness, that's good enough. They can show up to vote and believe they aren't voting for poor-bashers.

It's just too bad that they're wrong.