

“HALF A BISCUIT” IS NOT ENOUGH

“The Other Coast” comic strip published in Monday’s Telegram (July 22, 2019, page B4) is creative, clever, and funny but also a cause for concern. It depicted a rescue dog doing a good job, but receiving only half a biscuit, leading the dog to ask, “Haven’t you heard of a living wage?” That dog is not the only one being asked to settle for a “half a biscuit”. So are many people who earn no more than minimum wage.

A recent report from the Canadian Centre of Policy Alternatives, highlighted in the media, indicated that it is virtually impossible for anyone earning the minimum wage to afford a two or one bedroom apartment in most Canadian cities. People may have had to get by with half a biscuit to live on during the Great Depression, but that should not be the case today.

Despite the serious financial situation in which the province finds itself, we can do better than “half a biscuit”. Both the federal and provincial governments have parts to play. The Religious Social Action Coalition of Newfoundland and Labrador (RSACNL) advocates a minimum wage that is a living wage – enough for a family to live on – and measures that will lift people out of poverty. There will be a federal election in October. This is a good time to talk to all candidates seeking election in Newfoundland and Labrador about a federal policy that ensures fairness for all - for everyone who lives in Canada.

The RSACNL is a multi-faith group of Jews, Christians, Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs and others established to eliminate poverty in our province and country, with one of our focal points being a living wage. Half a Biscuit is not enough. We can change. Let’s begin now.

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