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from the west  
coast and beyond

# the crow's eye

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## Squat If You Support Housing

A victory for social housing, squatting rights and direct action.

Jaggi Singh, August 9, 2001

MONTREAL: It's been almost two weeks since a group of 500 street youth, punks, anti-poverty and social housing activists, anarchists and their supporters marched through downtown Montreal and literally broke into and re-appropriated an abandoned three-story building on Overdale Street, just around the corner from the Molson Centre.

The public education campaign and squatting action were timely in many respects.

Earlier this summer, even mainstream papers were openly talking about the city's "housing crisis," referring specifically to the over 400 households that had no place to go after their leases expired in July.

Those hundreds represent potentially thousands more who rely on the charity of friends and family for a roof, or who are accepting either substandard housing or expensive rents.

Since the action, there's been a radical change in the way people talk about social housing and squatting in Quebec. A recent article in *La Presse*, for example, announced the intention of FRAPRU - a province-wide coalition of social-housing and tenant organizations - to organize symbolic squatting actions throughout Quebec next spring as part of an increase in pressure tactics ("Le FRAPRU veut squatter dans tout le Québec," *La Presse*, mardi le 7 aout, 2001).

The majority of squatters left the original Overdale Street squat after five days, when the city accepted their conditions for vacating. Those conditions included collective self-organization, the assumption of building costs by the city, as well as an amnesty from any criminal charges as a result of the squat takeover.

Six squatters remained at the site, but were evicted by a municipal police operation involving three busloads of police, the riot squad as well as a special tactics team. In the end, the remaining squatters negotiated their departure without charges, but five supporters, including three medics, were arrested.

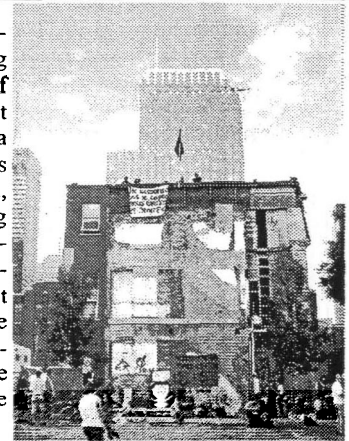
Meanwhile, near the corner of Rachel and Préfontaine streets, there stands tangible proof of the squatters' victory. Two Montreal landmarks are visible in the distance on either side of "Centre Préfontaine" - the Mount Royal cross to the west and the Olympic stadium tower to the east. At least seventy-five squatters now occupy and operate the centre, which is a large red brick building that was reluctantly ceded by the city last week.

The Centre Préfontaine has become a new social centre of activism and alternative culture, as well as "an organizing space to fight the forces of gentrification in Montreal" to quote one of the flyers on site. Each day, squatters and supporters meet in general assemblies. They collectively plan projects at the site, including community gardens, a library, media centre, printing press, communal kitchen, meeting and show spaces and more. The squat is now also the permanent home to at least forty people, including children.

This was once, ironically enough, a former youth drug-rehabilitation centre. One large sign that belonged to the old rehab refers to the "Keys to Success," defined starkly as "Work, Propriety and Temperance." These words were replaced with, "Organization, Freedom and Respect."

The original Overdale Street squatting action on July 27 was organized by the Comité des sans-emploi - the Committee of the Unemployed - a volunteer anti-poverty group based in Montreal's east end. It has been in existence for over ten years, gaining national attention with its Commando Bouffe (Food Commando) in December, 1997. A few members entered the posh Queen Elizabeth Hotel during lunch and appropriated steaming heaps of buffet food, which they served to hundreds of supporters outside. The group has since shifted focus from direct actions touching on hunger and poverty to the issue of gentrification and social housing.

The building that the Comité des sans-emploi chose to squat is highly evocative of the gentrification process that drives the housing crisis. In 1988, an entire block of low-income housing was razed in the neighbour-



### Why Alternative Media?

Would you go to a forest company for independent reporting on clearcutting?

If the answer is no (and we hope it would be!), then why go to a multinational for critical news about globalization?

Can-West Global is a multinational that owns the National Post, The Times-Colonist, The Vancouver Sun, The Vancouver Province, BCTV, CHEK television and UTV.

Bell Global Media is another multinational that owns the Globe & Mail and CTV.

In the U.S., General Electric owns NBC, Westinghouse Corporation owns CBC, Disney Corporation owns ABC and along with Time-Warner, Viacom and News Corporation, virtually every media you read, watch or listen to is owned and produced by multinational corporations.

When you here news stories about anti-globalization protests, cuts to welfare, healthcare, taxes or deregulation, you are hearing the point of view of multinationals and the very rich people who own them.

So what's the alternative? Well, this little newsletter is trying to fill a bit of this void. And here are a few other local (and not so local) alternatives.

Sleeping Dragon Press - Ditch Records, Wildfire Bakery, The Thin Edge Pizza. Or on the web at [www.tao.ca/~resist/Sleeping\\_Dragon\\_Press.html](http://www.tao.ca/~resist/Sleeping_Dragon_Press.html)

Victoria Indy Media - [victoria.indymedia.org](http://victoria.indymedia.org)

Vancouver Indy Media - [vancouver.indymedia.org](http://vancouver.indymedia.org)

TAO Communications - [tao.ca](http://tao.ca)

A-Infos - [www.ainfos.ca](http://www.ainfos.ca)

RESIST! - [tao.ca/~resist](http://tao.ca/~resist)

Rabble - [ww.rabble.ca](http://ww.rabble.ca)

Turtle Island - [www.turtleisland.org](http://www.turtleisland.org)



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## Halfway River First Nation Prevents Access Along North Road to Protect Sacred Hunting Areas

At 12 noon (August 13th, 2001), Chief Bernie Metecheah of the Halfway River First Nation ordered that access be prevented along the North Road, adjacent to the main hunting camp that lays directly in the path of the proposed Petro Canada pipeline. The Chief made this serious decision with the consent of the entire Halfway Community.

For years, the Halfway River First Nation has been frustrated by attempts to negotiate with government and industry regarding exploding resource developments on their traditional lands. Hundreds of letters have been sent and many meetings have been attended. To date, they have been a waste of time - nothing has come out of these actions.

Chief Metecheah states: "Out Treaty 8, signed in 1899, constitutionally guarantees us the right to enjoy our traditional rights, without interference by resource developers authorized by the Province of British Columbia. We had hoped that the Province and resource companies would have learned a lesson from our well known legal challenge that led to the successful Halfway Court Decision against the Province. We are now ready to prove our rights again by all available means ..."

At a community meeting last Friday, the Halfway people expressed concern that the traditional lands, especially the hunting grounds along North Road were "dying a death of a thousand cuts", with the ongoing clearance of the Petro Canada pipeline work - combined with the 30 other companies wanting pieces of Halfway traditional lands for natural gas developments.

They felt that the immediate concern is the specter of the 23 km long proposed Petro Canada pipeline poised to destroy 4 out of 7 hunting camps along the North Road that have been continuously used for generations.

If built, elders fear that the Petro Canada pipeline will open up the area with more lateral or 'feeder' pipelines, roads and gas wells and establish access for non-native hunters on ATVs.

From a conservation biology stand-point, the fastest way to destroy traplines, driving away fur-bearing animals and destroying habitats for elk, moose and deer is to fragment the forest environment. Historically that is what oil and gas activities do.

Elder Edward Achla sums up the impor-

tance of the North ... *Continued from page 1*  
Road hunting areas to the Beaver People of the Halfway River First Nation: "This hunting

camp is one of our most sacred areas and is dear to our people. It is our 'food basket' for elk, deer and moose.'

Support for the actions of Halfway is pouring in from First Nations in Alberta and British Columbia. A letter of support from Cold Lake First Nation pledges strong support and the intervention of an UN team examining conditions and environmental problems in the Cold Lake area.

At a Chiefs meeting, at the protest camps, along the North Road on Saturday, Chief Stewart Phillips, President of the powerful Union of BC Indian Chiefs, offered the unlimited support of the Union, honouring the goals and actions of the Halfway River First Nation ... "your struggle in our struggle. We must fight together to enforce our rights and protect our traditional lands for future generations", said Chief Phillips.

In conclusion, the demands of the Halfway River First Nation are as follows:

1. A total moratorium on all resource developments on Halfway First Nation's traditional lands, until an independent and comprehensive cumulative environmental impact assessment (EIA) be completed, with First Nation's involvement.
2. A demand that the Federal Government, live up to its fiduciary responsibility and negotiate the interpretation and implementation of our treaty rights.
3. All resource developers immediately agree to negotiate agreements with the First Nation relating to proper consultations, avoidance of interference with Treaty rights, mitigation and compensation for damages and guarantees of socio-economic benefits to the First Nation.
4. A stop to the proposed Petro Canada pipeline.

For further information please contact:

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neighbourhood to make room for condominiums. Before the weeks later due to the trauma of the police eviction. As it turned out,

the condos were never built: the site serves as a parking lot. The sole remaining building in the area was saved because of its historical significance. It was the family home of Louis Hippolyte Lafontaine. The building is surrounded by high-rises and hotels, but has remained empty thirteen years, until the squat action this summer. Suddenly, it became a community gathering space, bustling with activity. After the building owner - Westmount art dealer Robert Landau of Grinch Realities - took out a notice of eviction, squatters began to prepare to defend their home. When the squatters didn't budge, public sympathy, along with the upcoming city election, combined to force Mayor Pierre Bourque to offer up an empty city-owned building. He also accepted all of the squatters' conditions. The committee declared their unexpected acquisition an "historic" victory, and a legitimization of the right to occupy and use abandoned and unused property. Now the building that started it all is again boarded up, albeit sporting much more graffiti and mural art than before. The plywood covering what was once an open entrance carries a simple message: "We will return!"

### Ongoing Actions

Grassroots traditionalists from the Dene Su'lene First Nation near Cold Lake, Alberta, have set up a peace camp to protest the loss of their land. It was taken from them in 1952 by an act of Parliament to be used by the military. Since then, the land that was once their winter hunting, trapping and burial grounds has been used for war exercises as well as having been drilled for oil. The people from the peace camp reject the federal government's offer to settle the land claim and since June 3rd, have set up a peace camp to protest the situation.

On July 23rd, 2001 four Skwelkwek'welt Defenders were arrested at the Sun Peaks Ski Resort. The arrests followed an injunction obtained by the resort to remove protesters.

The Sun Peaks resort is located within the Secwepemc traditional territory, as well as the 1862 Neskonlith Douglas Reserve.

A protest and re-occupation camp was established in the fall of 2000 to stop a massive expansion planned by Sun Peaks Resort on land claimed by the Secwepemc. In the winter of 2001, a protest was organized against SnowJob, a Much Music event that was held at Sun Peaks. In June, Native Youth Movement began occupation of a site owned by Sun Peaks at McGillivray Lake.

Since the occupation, the protester's cabin has been torched, a women protester has been beaten up and then subsequently arrested by the RCMP and a reporter for the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network had his video camera confiscated by the RCMP.

After the July 23rd arrests, Native Youth Movement vowed to continue stopping the Sun Peaks expansion.

[Editors Note: This week the IMF/World Bank announced that the meeting was being drastically scaled back to 2 days due to concerns about protests.]

Washington, D.C. police have announced they are considering building a nine-foot high wall around the main downtown corridor to deter people from protesting against the world's most powerful financial institutions at the end of September. The D.C. government is seeking about \$30 million from the Bush administration for weapons and security and will erect the wall to create a massive security zone to



insulate delegates of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank during their meetings Sept. 29-30. The money the district plans to spend to shield the delegates amounts to \$15 million per day, or \$10,417 per minute. Additional money is expected to be spent by federal agencies, such as the FBI, as well.

Tens of thousands of people are expected to converge in D.C. for a week of events and protests.

Organizers have announced their intention to file a major lawsuit against the district, calling the security expenditures and wall a massive waste of money and a violation of their constitu-

## Tear Down the Walls

Anti Capitalist Convergence against the IMF/WORLD BANK Sept 26-Oct 1, 2001

tional rights to protest. A previously filed lawsuit is still pending against D. C. police for massive civil rights violations during protests against the IMF and World Bank in April 2000.

The proposed wall would stretch from the financial institutions to the White House, creating a barricaded security perimeter similar to the Wall of Shame erected in Quebec City, Canada during protests in April against the Free Trade Area of the Americas. Protestors succeeded in breaching that wall with about five minutes of collective labor.

The world's 3 richest people have assets that exceed the combined GDP of the 48 poorest countries

Almost half of all developing country GDP goes to pay debt

## Argentina's Death By IMF

Greg Palast  
Sunday 12 Aug 2001

(On August 9th, 2001 thousands of demonstrators convened in Buenos Aires and throughout the Argentina against new IMF imposed "Zero Deficit" laws. Thirty thousand students, public workers, the unemployed and other people participated in the massive protest in front of the presidential office in Plaza de Mayo (Buenos Aires) on August 8. The following report gives some background to the general strike.)

This is an easy case to crack. Next to the still warm corpse of Argentina's economy, the killer had left a smoking gun with his fingerprints all over it.

The murder weapon is called, "Technical Memorandum of Understanding," dated September 5, 2000. It signed by Pedro Pou, President of the Central Bank of Argentina for transmission to Horst Kohler, Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund.

'Inside Corporate America' received a complete copy of the 'Understanding' along with attachments and a companion letter from the Argentine Economics Ministry to the IMF from ... well, let's just say the envelope had no return address.

Close inspection leaves no doubt that this 'Understanding' fired fatal bullets into Argentina's defenseless body.

To begin with, the Understanding requires Argentina cut the government budget deficit from US \$5.3 billion in 2000 to \$4.1 billion in 2001. Think about that. Last September, Argentina was already on the cliff-edge of a deep recession.

Even the half-baked economists at the IMF

should know that holding back government spending in a contracting economy is like turning off the engines on an airplane in stall. Cut the deficit? As my 4-year old daughter would say, "That's stooopid."

The IMF is never wrong without being cruel as well. And so we read, under the boldface heading, "improving the conditions of the poor," agreement to drop salaries under the government's emergency employment program by 20%, from \$200 a month to \$160.

But you can't save much by taking \$40 a month from the poor. For further savings, the Understanding also promised, "a 12-15 percent cut in salaries" of civil servants and "rationalization of certain privileged pension benefits."

In case you haven't a clue what the IMF means

**In case you haven't a clue what the IMF means by "rationalization" - it means cutting payments to the aged by 13% under both public and private plans. Cut, cut, cut in the midst of a recession. Stooopid.**

by "rationalization" - it means cutting payments to the aged by 13% under both public and private plans. Cut, cut, cut in the midst of a recession. Stooopid.

Salted in with the IMF's bone head recommendations and mean-spirited plans for pensioners and the poor are economic forecasts which border on the delusional. In the Understanding, the globalization geniuses project that, if Argentina carries out their plans to snuff consumer spending power, somehow the nation's economic production will leap by 3.7% and unemployment decline. In fact, by the end of March,

## World Bank 'losing support'

Financial Times; Aug 16, 2001  
By Alan Beattie, Economics Correspondent

Senior World Bank staff believed the bank was losing public support even before the growing backlash against economic globalisation gathered pace this year, a leaked document has revealed.

The report, obtained by the Financial Times, was circulated in January to World Bank senior management by Mats Karlsson, the vice-president for external affairs.

"The openness revolution and the anti-globalisation backlash have brought the bank's poverty reduction mission under global scrutiny," it said. "Support in the authorising environment for the World Bank and other multilateral agencies is weakening."

The report, written before summits at Gothenburg and Genoa were targeted by thousands of anti-globalisation protesters, said the bank must work harder to engage with its critics.

It proposed no let-up in engagement with non-governmental organisations, noting that polls found that "NGOs are often better trusted on governance issues than the public sector or big business".

In the report Mr Karlsson called for a system "to handle concerted e-mail campaigns or attacks and said the external relations department was "exploring ways to play a more active role on the web sites of bank critics".

He said yesterday there was no sinister intent in these plans, and played down the importance of the document, saying it was a routine internal report.

The bank had improved its focus, he said, and had gained widespread shareholder support at the spring meetings in Washington. "This document was produced in January, and we got shareholders to agree to our strategic framework document in April."

Continued on page 8



## Class War & Murder In Ontario

### the crow's eye

On August 14, 2001 Kimberly Rogers was found dead in her Sudbury, Ontario apartment. She had been confined in the apartment in sweltering heat under house arrest. Her crime? She had collected welfare while receiving student loans, a violation of Ontario's welfare policies.

If the Ontario government had gotten its way Kimberly Rogers would have lived out her final days starving to death. Ontario Works (Ontario's welfare ministry) had cut off her welfare while she was under house arrest and paying back \$13,000 in student loan payments.

As reported in the Globe and Mail:

A condition of her sentence required Ms. Rogers to remain in the apartment except for medical or religious reasons. Amanda Chodura, office manager of the Sudbury branch of the Elizabeth Fry Society, said she had many visits with Ms. Rogers, who was allowed three hours out every Wednesday morning to shop. Ms. Chodura said the small apartment without air conditioning in a run-down house became unbearable as Sudbury endured a record-breaking heat wave, with temperatures over 30 degrees for six days in a row last week. "It was like a sauna in there."

Her welfare benefits were reinstated in mid-May after she launched a court challenge to the law that allows the courts to cut off welfare to those found guilty of defrauding the system.

In late May, Toronto lawyer Sean Dewart persuaded a judge to impose an injunction on Ms. Rogers's welfare ban until he could challenge the government's actions on the grounds that they constituted cruel and unusual punishment under the Charter of Rights. That hearing was scheduled for the September. Although it now will not be heard, Mr. Dewart said other women have contacted his office about the same issue, and he plans to launch a similar case.

Any government that would impose house arrest, probation and restitution, and then cut off a pregnant woman from collecting any money for even the most basic necessities, must seriously reconsider whether its policies are democratic, moral and just, Mr. Dewart said. "This is a case which cries out for an inquest."

In his court application, Mr. Dewart wrote "forcing a pregnant woman with a diagnosed disability into abject destitution, if not starvation, on the streets, as a result of conduct for which she has already been penalized, is so grossly disproportionate to any valid social aim or legitimate purpose of punishment as to constitute cruel and unusual punishment.

"Ms. Rogers would have been entitled to more state protection of her physical well-being if she was imprisoned, where she would at least be provided with adequate food, shelter and medical treatment."

When her welfare benefits were removed, she lost access to her depression medication. After

sentencing, a doctor signed an affidavit in late April stating that if Ms. Rogers did not regain the medicine, she could suffer "intolerable migraine headaches, anxiety and panic attacks, depressed moods and reduced daily level of function. "The future good health of Ms. Rogers and her child require that she have a stable home, proper shelter and a source of income to provide for basic necessities like food and clothing," the doctor said. Moreover, "she is behind in her rent and has no other source of income than public assistance and the goodwill of others. "Unless some other source of financial assistance can be found . . . I believe a three-month suspension of benefits from Ontario Works will in all likelihood have grave and lasting consequences for both Ms. Rogers and her fetus."

Since coming into power in 1995, Mike Harris' Conservative government has slashed welfare benefits by 22%, forced welfare recipients to accept workfare programs to receive benefits (jobs whose hourly wage averages only \$2 per hour), and eliminated a \$37 benefit paid to pregnant women.

Under a 5 Point Plan to be introduced this year, welfare recipients will have to undergo mandatory drug and literacy testing to receive benefits.

Since 1995 the Harris government has increase university tuitions by 60%.

Under the Orwellian named Tenants Protection Act, many tenants rights have been eliminated, resulting in an estimated 500 evictions a month in Toronto.

## Ontario justice is two-faced

JUDY REBICK

Thursday, July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2001

I watched two men in Ontario courtrooms last week. It was hard not to compare them.

In Oshawa, John Clarke sat handcuffed and shackled in the prisoners dock for three days awaiting the results of a bail hearing in front of a justice of the peace. On the last day of Mr. Clarke's hearing, Mike Harris sat with briefing book on the witness stand at an inquest into the water scandal in Walkerton.

Anyone who follows the news in Ontario will know John Clarke. He is the controversial leader of the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty, a group whose confrontational tactics have brought down the fury of the chattering classes. Everyone knows Mike Harris. He's the Premier of Ontario, twice elected, whose popularity has been in free fall ever since Walkerton's tainted water killed seven people there.

Mr. Clarke had to wait two weeks—in jail—for his hearing. Mr. Harris made an appointment to appear at his hearing and they began promptly when he arrived. When Mr. Clarke's hearing was

finished he had to go back to jail for another 2? weeks, maybe more (the JP denied bail). After his hearing, Mr. Harris went home to his girlfriend, his golf game.

Mr. Clarke is suspected of messing up somebody's files, pushing desks around and maybe throwing a microwave oven out the window. Mr. Harris implemented policies suspected of causing the death of seven people and the suffering of 2,000.

Mr. Clarke works every day with the casualties of Mr. Harris's policies. Mr. Harris has probably never given Mr. Clarke's work much thought. Has Mr. Harris thought more since the mock office-eviction of one of his cabinet ministers? I doubt it.

Mr. Clarke makes \$20,000 a year. He hasn't had a raise in years, if ever. Mr. Harris makes about \$140,000 a year and he may just get a 70-per-cent raise. Despite his dedication to reducing deficits and taxes, Mr. Harris wouldn't work for \$20,000.

The Crown attorney characterized John Clarke's actions as "terrorism." Mike Harris's actions were called a "business plan." John Clarke is so concerned about the policies of the Ontario government toward poor people that he put his freedom on the line. Mike Harris is so sanguine about the policies of the Ontario government that he thinks testifying at an inquest will increase his popularity.

I was on an antipoverty march with John Clarke. Many of us look away when we see the homeless. He was talking to a homeless man with the respect we usually reserve for a friend who is having a hard time.

Mr. Harris testified for hours in front of people who had lost their loved ones to poison water, or were ill themselves and may never regain their health. He spoke with less feeling an a "pardon me" in the supermarket.

In the law, John Clarke is charged with criminal offenses. He doesn't know yet if he will get more prison time. Mike Harris is just a witness at an inquest. If the judge indicts his policies for causing these deaths and this suffering, he might bring in a Clear Water Act as penance, but he probably won't have to do anything.

And maybe if we are all lucky he will lose the next election and spend the rest of his days on corporate boards and the golf course. John Clarke, without any indictment, or even a real judge to hear his case, has lost his liberty, his freedom of speech, his freedom of association.

In my country, this is what they call the justice system.

Judy Rebick is the publisher of rabble.ca and the author of Imagine Democracy.

## No Disciplinary Action Against Police Involved in Death of Anthony Dawson

com - **the crow's eye**

by: Kalen Marson  
victoria.indymedia.org  
Tuesday 14 Aug 2001

Two years ago this month, Anthony Dawson died after being arrested by Victoria City Police. On Monday, August 13, 2001, police chief Paul Battershill announced that no disciplinary action would be taken against the officers involved.

The announcement followed the completion of an investigation report by Insp. Bill Naughton, which was forwarded to the police chief but has yet to be released to the public or the Dawson family.

Chief Battershill announced that Constables Jonathan Sheldan, Dale Saunderson, Mark Knoop, Larry Hemstad, and Corporal Bill Trudeau acted appropriately and that no action against the officers would be taken by his department.

Nancy Dawson, Anthony's mother and the chief

plaintain against the local police force, has 30 days to request a public hearing with the province's Police Complaints Commission. Commissioner Don Morrison could also decide to order a hearing.

Behind all this is the tragic death of the 29-year old First Nations artist.

Details surrounding Dawson's arrest and demise remain contested. During a coroner's inquest last November, several eye-witnesses testified they saw a police officer strike Dawson with a punching motion while he was lying on the pavement. Other information suggests he was "hog-tied" and placed face down in an ambulance.

However other reports suggest Dawson was running naked through crowded Oak Bay Avenue prior to his arrest. During the inquest, information surfaced suggesting Dawson suffered from a rare genetic disorder that may have affected his behaviour that day.

The coroner's inquest found the manner in which Dawson was constrained to be a contributing cause to his death. At some point following his apprehension in front of a vacant lot on Aug. 13, 1999, Dawson lapsed into unconsciousness. He would never rise again, succumbing to death in hospital two days later.

Since then, Dawson's family, anti-racism advocates, and concerned community members have demanded justice for the native man. They feel questions have not been adequately answered, and accuse the Victoria City Police of racism, suggesting the situation would have been handled differently if the victim were of another ethnicity.

On Saturday, Aug. 11, community members held a memorial walk to the site of Dawson's arrest. A similar event took place the previous August.

With the ball now out of the local police force's court, it is expected that the family will continue to seek the truth behind Anthony's death. In the meantime, it will be business as usual for the police officers involved.

## Stories of Police Abuse During G8 In Genoa Leak Out

by Melinda Henneberger  
Wednesday, August 8, 2001  
the New York Times

ROME — More than two weeks ago, Susan Hager received a telephone call in Portland, Ore., about her daughter, a student who had stopped off in Genoa to join protesters at the Group of 8 summit meeting on her way to a junior year abroad program in Siena.

"Her friend had found her bloody belongings" at the Armando Diaz school complex in Genoa where protesters had been staying, Mrs. Hager said. There, in the early hours of July 22, 92 young people were dragged from their beds by squads of Italian anti-riot police officers who beat and jailed them.

Sixty of those demonstrators — originally described by Italian officials as marauding anarchists but in more recent official reports as mostly peaceful — were injured in the raid. At least two dozen were hospitalized, including Mrs. Hager's daughter, Morgan, and two other Americans.

Witnesses described students crouching as they were kicked, pummeled with clubs and thrown down stairs, and emergency room doctors said a number of the injured would have died without treatment. Television crews arriving on the scene later filmed pools of blood and teeth knocked out during the raid.

Outrage about the police behavior has built across Europe, where the issue has become a major embarrassment for Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi. Thousands of people have marched in protest, governments have expressed concern and newspapers have been filled with accounts of police brutality. One young Italian man was shot dead in the protests at the summit meeting, about 200 people were injured and some 300 were arrested.

One German who was also arrested in the raid at the school in Genoa, a man who asked that he not be identified, described his ordeal in a statement issued

by his lawyer, Dagmar Vogel, in Oberhausen, Germany: "I was hit in the head, the back, and the legs and a hard hit on the head. My skull flattened. I bled badly. I lay in my own blood bath and didn't move at all." After 2 a.m., he was arrested while still in the hospital, and was not allowed to sleep or make telephone calls, he said. During four days of detention, he said he was forced to stand with his hands against a wall for hours, harassed about going to the bathroom and taken from one location to another.

Ms. Thomas was arrested along with two dozen members of the Austrian group Publix Theater. According to the respected Austrian weekly Profil, the conservative Austrian government initially dismissed reports of police brutality and sent Italian officials reports in which Publix performers had been characterized as violent anarchists. But Profil said those reports predated an economic summit meeting in Salzburg in July at which the group protested peacefully with street performances. After reading a full investigation by the Austrian consulate general in Milan, Foreign Minister Benita Maria Ferrero-Waldner is reported to have requested that Italy transfer home the 16 remaining Publix members.

In a summary of the Austrian consulate's report to the Austrian Foreign Ministry, posted on Profil's web site ([www.profil.at/aktuell](http://www.profil.at/aktuell)), several members of Publix described being arrested at gunpoint, strip searched, beaten and berated by officers who shouted in English, "I break you!" and "You monster!"

Ms. Thomas's family has complained that the United States government has not done nearly enough in speaking out against what went on.

"The U.S. is conspicuous by its absence in the list of nations that have protested to the Italian government over the imprisonment and the behavior of the Italian police in their handling of the protests in Genoa," her father, Rick Thomas, said in a message on the family's web site.

A spokesman for the American Consulate in Milan said, "We're doing all we can."

Even some members of Italy's center-right coalition now concede that something went terribly wrong in Genoa, though they continue to point fingers at the left, saying that the former center-left government was responsible for planning security for the summit meeting.

Italian courts have opened at least half a dozen separate investigations into various allegations of police brutality, and a parliamentary inquiry began today.

Testifying at a Senate hearing in Rome, Genoa's leftist mayor, Guiseppa Pericu, said Mr. Berlusconi's government should shoulder the full blame for police misconduct.

Interior Minister Claudio Scajola has removed three top police officials who ran security operations at the summit meeting, but has not apologized. "A state must never lose the monopoly on the use of force," he said recently, "and the ability to guarantee the safety of a summit."

But other members of the government coalition have criticized Mr. Berlusconi directly.

"Who was taking care of the problems of public order?" Mr. Fischella asked. "Who evaluated the impact? Why were necessary precautions not taken? It's too easy to liquidate a few functionaries and consider the question closed."



## Say "I Do"? I Don't

by Alan Sears www.rabble.ca  
July 31, 2001

There was a flurry of publicity at the beginning of the year when the predominantly lesbian and gay Metropolitan Community Church in Toronto married two same-sex couples in January. Not surprisingly, the marriage was not recognized by the Ontario government. A court challenge has now been launched, joining three other marriage-related cases already heading towards Canada's Supreme Court.

It is important to challenge the heterosexual monopoly on official state-recognized marriage. By singling out only straight unions for legal sanction, all other kinds of relationships are by law and implication less legitimate. Last year, even as the federal government passed legislation to increase the rights of same-sex couples, the Liberals included a disgusting clause reserving marriage for heterosexuals only. The religious right has been frothing at the mouth in defence of exclusive heterosexual marriage. And anything that gets these guys worked up has to be good.

But that doesn't mean that lesbian and gay marriages are a step toward real freedom. The recognition of same-sex ceremonies does not queer the institution of marriage, nor does it challenge the regulation of our bodies and our lives by church and by state. Instead, it falls into a larger pattern of recognizing "good" lesbians and gay men while demonizing "bad" ones.

The current focus on marriage and relationships leaves some queers very exposed, particularly those who do not choose respectability or qualify for it. Right now, we are witnessing an increased policing of queer sexual activity that falls outside of the mainstream. In Toronto, the last two years have seen a crackdown on sites of sexual activity unprecedented since the massive police raids on the city's gay bathhouses in 1981. Last September, five plainclothes male officers raided a women's bathhouse night, on the pretext of enforcing liquor laws, while the gay male Bijou Porn Bar has faced repeated raids and shutdowns since June 1999.

The strongest advocates for gay marriage are often conservatives, like U.S. journalist Andrew Sullivan, who argue that assimilation into the compulsory family system will give lesbians and gay men increased respectability and higher moral standards. These voices represent just one segment of a large and diverse community, but they are often treated as the spokespeople for all gay men and lesbians.

Queer liberationist politics are very much marginalized in contemporary debates. These politics emerged out of the most activist moments of queer mobilization. They emphasize visibility, militancy and the elimination of the compulsory family system through which the state and church validate some ways of life and restrict others.

Some organizations, like the Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Rights in Ontario maintain important elements of queer-liberation politics, remaining an honourable exception to the conservative drift of the community. Small clusters of queer activists

can also be found around AIDS activist banners and queer slogans at anti-globalization protests. But many young, radical queers simply avoid the lesbian and gay movement and focus on other struggles.

Queer liberation activism helped open up a variety of spaces, bringing sex itself out of the closet. This was a direct challenge to the hypocrisy about sexuality that surrounds us in contemporary capitalist societies, where sex is everywhere (in every advertisement as an inducement to buy products), yet nowhere (the discussion and practice of real sexuality is completely shut down in public spaces).

The rise of queer marriage is connected to a remarkable increase in the visibility and rights of queers in Canada. But that acceptance is limited. Only some aspects of lesbian and gay life are deemed respectable by the powers that be.

This is increasing the polarization of the queer world. Lesbian and gay couples that can afford to consume the right things (bar drinks, clothes, hairdos, gentrified housing) are doing well. Other queers, who are excluded from this lifestyle, or choose not to enter it, face much of the same old shit. Those with fewer resources and less power are most likely to find themselves on the outside: women, queers of colour, transgendered people and those who are young or living in poverty.

So, pardon me if I don't make it to the church on time.

*Alan Sears is a queer activist and socialist who teaches sociology and labour studies at the University of Windsor. A version of this article appeared in New Socialist magazine.*

## Police Stories: The Not So New Repression of Dissent

The month of August produced a series of reports illuminating the relationship between Canadian police and the populations under their control.

In early August the Final Report of the RCMP Public Complaints Commission (also known as the Hughes Report or the SprayPEC Report) was made public. Behind the lame apologetics was information detailing the relationship between the Prime Minister's Office and the RCMP, including directives ordering the removal of banners and protesters from view of visiting heads of state, such as then dictator of Indonesia, President Suharto. Hidden behind the explanations of "police confusion" was evidence produced during the Commission of RCMP kidnapping protest organizers "with a view towards eliminating some of the high profile members of APEC Alert from the UBC area", arresting protesters for "saying foolish things" and using a megaphone too loudly and of course, pepper spraying protesters and media standing on a road (many of whom were in the process of moving).

All of this happened two full years before Seattle police fired pepper spray, tear gas, rubber bullets and concussion grenades upon WTO protesters. Only by 1999 police, politicians and media in North America would be parroting a new truth - "police use force only against 'violent protesters'".

Clearly what APEC and the later anti-globalization protests had in common was the fact that intimidation and violent repression was being directed against groups of people opposing state policies and global capitalism, regardless of whether they were using violent or non-violent tactics.

So we come to the most recent reports. Information obtained by reporters David Pugliese and Jim Bronskill reveal that in May of this year the RCMP set up a special unit called the "Public Order Program" - "to make better use of "non-lethal defensive tools," such as pepper spray, rubber bullets and tear gas. The Public Order Program is intended to be a "centre of excellence" for handling large demonstrations, allowing the Mounties to keep up with the latest equipment, training and policies, said RCMP Constable Guy Amyot, a force spokesman. "It gives us some more tools to work with ""

Pugliese and Bronskill document an increasing "criminalization of dissent" - "Officers from various police forces and the Canadian Security Intelligence Service have infiltrated, spied on or closely monitored organizations that are simply exercising their legal right to assembly and free speech. Targets of such intelligence operations in recent years, according to federal documents, range from former NDP leader Ed Broadbent to the Raging Grannies, a senior citizens' satire group that sings about social injustice.

"Individuals have been arrested for handing out literature condemning police tactics. Large numbers of Canadians and legitimate organizations, from the United Church of Canada to Amnesty International, have found themselves included in federal "threat assessment" lists alongside actual terrorist groups.

"And in what some consider blatant intimidation, RCMP and CSIS agents are showing up unannounced on the doorsteps of ...Continued on page 7

by Nate Hendley  
August 16, 2001 www.rabble.ca

a federal task force that has been convened to investigate the idea.

is right in front of you," notes the councillor.

Last summer, activists erected 2,000 wooden crosses in a park in downtown Vancouver. The crosses symbolized the number of injection-drug users who have overdosed and died in British Columbia since 1992.

While still a revolutionary concept in North

According to Rae, Frankfurt's injection rooms were opened at the behest of local police, who saw little point in pursuing failed "zero tolerance" strategies, and business merchants, who disliked having addicts hanging around their premises.

## Safe Shooting Rooms

In the near future, organizers might have to plant even more crosses; according to a report issued last fall by the Vancouver-based Harm Reduction Action Society (HRAS), roughly 23 to 30 per cent of the city's estimated 10,000 heroin addicts are HIV-positive. Nearly nine out of ten have hepatitis C.

America, safe shooting rooms are relatively common in Europe.

The federal government is also interested in safe shooting rooms: Ottawa launched a taskforce in the spring to look into the feasibility of setting up injection sites in Canada.

Vancouver, in fact, has the highest rate of HIV infection in western world. Media pundits refer to the shabby downtown east side, where most of the city's addicts live, as the "killing fields."

Since they were launched in Germany, Holland and Switzerland in the 1980s and 1990s, supervised injection sites have been credited with reducing overdose deaths, the spread of disease and petty crime. The main negative impact of such places is that they tend to attract drug dealers, who try to peddle their wares among the clientele.

The task force is headed by Catherine Airth, acting director of the Office of Canada's Drug Strategy, a branch of Health Canada, and Dr. Perry Kendall, chief medical officer for B.C. Rounding out the taskforce are health, justice and police officials, as well as treatment specialists, such as Shaun Hopkins, manager of Toronto's needle exchange program.

The situation in cities such as Montreal and Toronto, while not quite as apocalyptic, is still pretty grim.

**Victoria Services**  
AVI Street Outreach Services (SOS) 3841345  
1220 Commercial Alley- needle exchange  
Outreach Services Clinic 4801232  
2004 Fernwood Rd.- methadone program

Hopkins says the taskforce's research will be included in a draft report on needle-drug use that will be presented at a meeting of provincial health ministers in the fall.

A study by the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) suggests that nearly 10 per cent of Toronto's estimated 15,000 heroin addicts are HIV-positive. In Montreal, the infection rate is about 20 per cent.

Nonetheless, injection rooms are becoming an increasingly popular option among policymakers around the world; authorities in Australia opened a safe shooting site a few months ago, while Spain is planning to establish similar venues soon.

Even if the ministers are okay with the idea, the federal government would have to change the Criminal Code before opening any safe injection sites, says Hopkins. At present, laws against possession rule out the possibility of creating such places.

Drug addicts contract HIV by using dirty needles. Needle-sharing - a common practice among junkies - further spreads the disease.

Vancouver Mayor Philip Owen would also like to open a safe shooting room. The mayor has become a firm supporter of a so-called "four pillar" approach to that city's terrible HIV problem. This approach puts equal emphasis on enforcement, prevention, treatment and harm reduction, and might include injection rooms.

In the end, a concern about the bottom line might be the main factor that pushes the feds to make the change.

There is a way to stem the rate of HIV/AIDS among injection drug users: give addicts clean needles, a safe place to shoot up and medical supervision, so they can be revived if they overdose.

Councillor Kyle Rae has taken a similar position in Toronto. He represents the downtown core and has long lobbied for drug-law reform initiatives, including safe shooting rooms. He even visited a pair of supervised injection sites during a visit to Frankfurt, Germany a few years ago.

According to the report "HIV, AIDS and Injection Drug Use," which was written by a Health Canada taskforce in the late 1990s, the average lifetime cost of treating a single HIV patient runs to over \$100,000.

Such locales are called safe - or supervised - injection sites.

**That's the kind of figure likely to bring around diehard opponents of safe injection rooms, who are otherwise unmoved by the sight of countless crosses in a park.**

The HRAS report defines them as, "controlled health-care settings where drug users inject drugs under supervision and receive health-care, counselling, and referral to health and social services, including drug treatment."

"It was interesting watching people shooting up

*Nate Hendley is a freelance journalist who lives in Toronto. He has written extensively for This Magazine, the National Post and eye weekly, among other publications.*

A growing number of high-ranking officials would like to open safe injection sites in Canada's biggest cities. Some of these officials sit on

## Criminalizing Dissent...continued from page 6

who voice opinions critical of government policy or who plan to take part in demonstrations."

directly employed. in an effort to frighten activists and disrupt their movements. Government agents either concealed their involvement or fabricated a legal pretext. In the case of the Black and Native American movements, these assaults--including outright political assassinations--were so extensive and vicious that they amounted to terrorism on the part of the government."

While the reports are revealing, what is omitted is reference to the long history of state repression against dissent in both Canada and the U.S, not only to "criminalize dissent" but also to "neutralize" dissent. In 1971 the Church Commission in the U.S. revealed the FBI's secret COINTELPRO (Counterintelligence Program). This program would use schemes to "misdirect, discredit, disrupt and otherwise neutralize" specific individuals and groups. When this failed the program turned to extreme methods. As author Brian Glick writes, the FBI used "harassment, intimidation and violence: Eviction, job loss, break-ins, vandalism, grand jury subpoenas, false arrests, frame-ups, and physical violence were threatened, instigated or

These types of campaigns are neither over nor limited to the U.S. Recent evidence from RCMP tapes made during the siege of the Ts'peten Defenders at Gustafson Lake in 1995 reveal what RCMP Staff Sergeant Peter Montague referred to as a "smear campaign". This campaign would include fabricating bullet holes in a police truck and flack jackets, shooting at an unarmed Defender from a police helicopter and reporting it as "self defense" and planning the assassination of indigenous Defenders within the camp.



## IMF...Continued from page 3

the nation's GDP had already dropped 2.1% below the year earlier mark, and nosedived since.

What on Earth would induce Argentina to embrace the IMF's goofy program? The payoff, if Argentina does as it's told, is that this week the IMF lend \$1.2 billion in aid. This is part of an emergency

loan package of \$26 billion for 2001 put together by the IMF, World Bank and private lenders announced at the end of last year.

But there is less to this generosity than meets the eye. The Understanding also assumes Argentina will "peg" its currency, the peso, to the dollar at an exchange rate of one to one. The currency peg **doesn't come cheap.** American banks and speculators are charging a whopping 16% risk premium above normal in return for the dollars needed to back this currency scheme.

Now do the arithmetic. On Argentina's \$128 billion in debt, normal interest plus the 16% surcharge by lenders comes to about \$27 billion a year. In other words, Argentina's people don't net one penny from the \$26 million loan package. Little of the bail-out money escapes New York where it lingers to pay interest to US creditors holding the debt, big fish like Citibank and little biters like Steve Hanke.

Hanke is President of Toronto Trust Argentina, an 'emerging market fund' which loaded up 100% on Argentine bonds during the last currency panic, in 1995. Cry not for Steve, Argentina. His annual return that year of 79.25% put the speculator's trust at the top of the speculation league table. This year he'll do it again.

Hanke profits by betting on the failure of the IMF's policies. But 'vulture' investing is merely Hanke's avocation. In his day job as professor of economics at Johns Hopkins University, Maryland, he freely offers straightforward advice to end Argentina's woe, advice which would put him out of the speculation game: "Abolish the IMF."

To begin with, Hanke would do away with the 'peg' - that one-peso-for-one-dollar exchange rate - which has proven a meat-hook on which the IMF hangs the Argentina's finances.

It's not the peg itself that skewers Argentina - but the peg combined with the Four Horsemen of IMF neoliberal policy: liberalized financial markets, free trade, mass privatization, and government surpluses.

'Liberalizing' financial markets means allowing capital to flow freely across a nation's borders. Indeed, after liberalization five years ago, the capital has flowed freely, with a vengeance. Argentina's panicked rich have dumped their pesos for dollars and sent the hard loot to investment havens abroad. Last month alone, Argentine's withdrew

6% of  
d e -

Once upon a time, government-owned national and provincial banks supported the nation's debts. But in the mid 1990s, the government of Carlos Menem sold these off to Citibank of New York, Fleet Bank of Boston and other foreign operators.

all bank  
posits.

this theme, focusing on the few thousand marching in Genoa, but not the 80,000 in the streets of Buenos Aires last May, nor the general strike honored by 7 million Argentine workers last June.

In Argentina, President Fernando de la Rúa blames violence on the protesters. But the Peace and Justice Service (SERPAJ) charges de la Rúa's government with using hunger and terror to impose the IMF plans. SERPAJ leader Adolfo Pérez Esquivel told me he is document-

*I can not only see another world I can feel another world*  
- protester during general strike in Argentina

Charles Calomiris, a former World Bank advisor, describes these bank privatizations as a "really wonderful story." Wonderful for whom? Argentina has bled out as much as three-quarters of a billion dollars a day in hard currency holdings.

There's more cheer for creditors in the Understanding, including 'reform of the revenue sharing system.' This is the kinder, gentler way of stating that the US banks will be paid by siphoning off tax receipts earmarked for education and other provincial services. The Understanding also finds cash in "reforming" the nation's health insurance system (cut cut cut).

But when cut cut cut isn't enough to pay the debt holders, one can always sell 'la joyas de me abuela,' grandma's jewels, as journalist Mario del Carvil describes his nation's privatization scheme. The French picked up a big hunk of the water system and promptly raised charges in some provinces by 400%.

The Understanding's final bullet is imposition of "an open trade policy." This requires Argentina's exporters, with their products priced via the 'peg' in US dollars, into a pathetic, losing competition against Brazilian goods priced in a devaluing currency. Stoopid.

Still, the IMF's scheme could work. All that is required is 'flexible' workforce, willing to bend to lower pensions, lower wages or no wages at all. But, to the dismay of Argentina's elite, the worker bees are proving inflexibly obstinate in agreeing to their own impoverishment. One inflexible worker, Anibal Verón, a 37-year-old father of five, lost his job as a bus driver; his company owes him 9 months pay.

Verón joined the 'piqueros,' the angry unemployed who blockade roads (39 blockades began just this week). In clearing a blockade in November, the military police allegedly killed him with a bullet to the head.

The death in Genoa of anti-globalization protester Carlo Giuliani was Page One news in the US and Europe. Verón's death was page zero. Nor did you read about Carlos Santillán, 27 nor Oscar Barrios, 17, gunned down in a church courtyard in Salta Province when the police fired on a protest against the IMF austerity plan.

Globalization boosters like Tony Blair prefer to portray resistance as a lark of pampered Western youth curing their ennui by "indulging in protest, misguided" by naive notions. The media plays to

ing cases of torture of protesters by police in the town where Santillán and Barrios died. To Pérez Esquivel who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1980 repression and liberalization are handmaidens. He told the Observer he has just filed a complaint charging police with recruiting children as young as 5 years old into paramilitary squads, an operation he compares to the Hitler Youth.

But Pérez Esquivel, who led protests against the Free Trade Agreement of the Americas, doesn't agree with my verdict against the IMF in Argentina's death. He notes that the economically fatal 'reforms' are embraced with enthusiasm by the nation's finance minister, Domingo Cavallo, best remembered as the head of the central bank during the military dictatorship. For the aging pacifist, that suggests that the untimely demise of the nation's economy wasn't murder, but suicide.

Award-winning investigative reporter Greg Palast writes, Inside Corporate America, fortnightly in the Observer (London), Sunday paper of Britain's Guardian recently threatened by Barrick Mining of Toronto for an expose of that companies questionable involvement in an African mining disaster. Barrick has on its board of international advisors, ex-pres. Bush Sr., whom Palast has also provided with publicity which may have upset them all.

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