

Britannia Nine Solidarity & Legal Support (by APC)

The first appearance for the seven adults arrested at the Britannia Police riot on October 3rd will be: This **Friday October 18th, 9am**, Courtroom 100, Main St Courthouse (222 Main, at Cordova St.). The first appearance for the two minors arrested at the same event will be: **Monday October 21st, 9am**, Robson St Couthouse (800 Hornby).

All these people are being charged with either assault police or obstruction police. In fact, all these people and many more were brutally assaulted by the police at Britannia Community Centre and are being charged to cover up and defend the violence used against them. The most blatant example of this police repression is in the case of the 13 year old Britannia High school student who was punched in the face by officer # 2072 and then charged with assault against this same officer. Others were driven to a vacant parking lot and threatened physically by circles of uniformed officers before being taken to jail, strip searched and denied phone calls.

The Anti-Poverty Committee is asking:

1. People from across the city to come to the court appearances to show support for the people arrested and defiance to the police, courts and government that are trying to persecute and isolate people to defeat our movement.
2. We need money for Legal Defence of these arrestees and all those arrested at the Woodward's Squat. It is likely that many of those arrested and charged will not qualify for legal aid under the Liberal Government cuts to the program. The government not only sends police after poor people, it insures that we cannot defend ourselves against the charges levelled against us; we have to stand together to fight back, in the courts as in the streets. It is estimated that for each day of trial, legal defense will cost \$2000 per person. This means a lot of money. The Anti-Poverty Committee is raising money to cover the costs of all those charged. Please send your cheques to: Anti-Poverty Committee; Re: Britannia Legal Defense, 42 Blood Alley Sq, Vancouver BC Canada V6B 1C7 or deliver them to the same address.

3. ALL THOSE WHO WITNESSED THE POLICE VIOLENCE AT BRITANNIA.... FILE COMPLAINTS!!! One of the demands of the Anti-Poverty Committee following the Britannia riot is for a full inquiry into police actions there and at the Woodward's Squat. To pressure the police complaints commission to do this, it is ESSENTIAL that everyone who witnessed the violence and brutality that day submit an official complaint form. If the commission receives enough complaints, they will be forced to conduct an inquiry. People are also encouraged to submit complaints on police conduct during the squat eviction and the sidewalk cleansing at Woodward's. Please C.C. any complaints forms to the Anti-Poverty Committee for records. You can pick up complaints forms at the APC office (42 Blood Alley Sq) or over the internet at: http://www.qp.gov.bc.ca/police/r202_98.htm

W.O.O.D.S.Q.U.A.T. #20



“Access for All” – Motto of the Vancouver Public Library



“We strive to enrich the life of every person in our community by providing access to the world's ideas and information. We maintain the finest possible collections, services, and technology. We provide caring and expert service supportive of human differences. We promote lifelong learning, the love of reading and exploration of ideas, culture, and knowledge in a welcoming, lively atmosphere.”



“We belong to the community and are accountable, active participants within it. We encourage involvement from the broadest spectrum of users. We shape our collections and services in order to be sensitive and responsive to community needs and aspirations.”

REPORTS FROM THE POLICE BOARD MEETING
AT THE VANCOUVER “PUBLIC” LIBRARY

DAY 34 – THURSDAY – 17 OCT 02

Report from Inside the Police Board Meeting (by Shane)

(transcribed from audio report: <http://vancouver.indymedia.org/news/2002/10/19306.php>)

So you spoke today at the Vancouver Police Board on behalf of the Woodward's Squat?

Yes I did. I asked a few very direct questions. The questions were:

What is the status of the items confiscated in the police actions September 21st and 22nd? There was a lot of stuff that went missing that was unaccounted for. We've been given no explanation. That's over and above the fact that they came and evicted people from a building that's owned by the public. That's another thing. I'm just talking about issues that people have given me to address.

Why are the City and the Vancouver Police Department trying to remove peaceful homeless people from a public street? Why are they trying to get an injunction to do that? If they are using safety issues or concerns for safety of the other members of the public, I stated to them that we are one of the safest areas in the downtown eastside and that there are far more pressing police concerns in the area. People come to the Woodward's Squat when they get injured because they know that we can take care of them. They know that we're a safe place. There's 158 people on average sleeping there every night. And they feel safe sleeping there. There aren't many places where people feel safe in that part of town and it's a crying shame.

Basically what the response that I got - there were four of us speaking - they wanted to give us five minutes for all four of us. Not five minutes apiece. We managed to squeeze a little bit extra time out of them. But then whoever is the head of the police board said that "now we're going to move onto other agenda items. I've heard your concerns." He would not give us an answer in regards to my questions. He wouldn't even give me an answer if they he would give me an answer at a later date. He gave me a number. I got the number of someone to call so that we can be on the agenda for the next police board meeting. So that's what I'm going to try and do. To talk to these people you got to fuckin play their game.

I saw so many people that were not let into the meeting that I knew should be there. They let a delegation of three speakers talk. We managed to get four up. There were ten of us in the audience. Each one of those ten should have been able to get up and address the board. There were probably 50 people, 60, here, that should have been addressing the police board.

It's not a public meeting. It's bullshit. If it were a public meeting we would have been given the agenda. We didn't have the agenda for the meeting. If it's so public they should be handing out at the door. At the meetings I go to the agenda is written on a board and we speak to the agenda. If it's so public then why isn't that information public? And why was there a one-hour closed-door meeting before the public meeting took place? And why is it necessary to have "crowd control" officers - that's what they're called - they're not riot police. They're VPD "crowd control." But they have 4-foot batons. I'm not an unruly person. I'll leave when asked. But it's not necessary to have that sort of presence at a public meeting. That just provokes people into a more militant stance, in my opinion.

Report from Outside the Meeting (by Homes Not Jails)

Outside of the meeting room there were 17 riot police to prevent public entry in addition to 22 regular officers guarding the stairs down to the room. An additional 12 "yellowjacket" officers were stationed outside two sets of main library doors; six at each door. An unknown number of special private security forces, City of Vancouver library security staff, police senior managers and undercover officers were present.

The riot police were adorned in military-style fatigues with combat boots, shoulder-holsters with a small quantity of unidentifiable metal projectile-like pieces of equipment, 4-foot wooden truncheons, guns, and over-sized hip-pouches with an unknown quantity of concealed objects. The pouches were suspected to contain chemical spray weaponry and other hand-held assault devices.

Photographs of officers and badge numbers were taken to ensure safety of the public present. While attempting to take photographs of officers in the library concourse, as three police surveillance cameras were rolling, a gang of officers surrounded our photographer and asked him to cease his documentation and leave the building immediately. A police representative claimed that no recording devices were permitted in the public concourse in accordance with a city bylaw that the officer was unable to specify at the time. Photographs of the officers and guards have been withheld at this time under threat of legal action from the City of Vancouver.

Homes Not Jails recommends that participants in future community meetings where a police presence is expected should not leave the meeting in groups of less than six persons.