

Saturday 26 October: Two Public Actions

One: Meet at Broadway and Commercial at 12 Noon

APC will be leafletting to expose the federal, provincial and civic government's negligence in addressing the homelessness and housing crisis in BC. We will be announcing the locations of vacant, government owned buildings and our intention to take them as social housing unless the government does it first.

Two: A delegation will leave Broadway & Commercial at 1pm to move to another location for a press conference and to continue distributing the info.

The intention of these actions is to issue an ultimatum; they are not an action unto themselves, but rather the beginning of the Anti-Poverty Committee Housing Campaign and involvement in the nationwide "Give It or Guard It" campaign. As part of this campaign, organizations across the country will be pressuring the federal government as well as the provinces and city governments to build social housing and to either turn their abandoned building into housing or guard them against being opened as squats.

We need people to take part in the actions Saturday to present a strong, unified threat to the government and to carry the full weight of the ultimatum. This really began on Tuesday the 22nd, when we delivered a letter to council, disrupted their meeting and forced them to hear us. It is important that we continue the public presentation of this campaign on Saturday the 26th to show that all across the country we are united and all demanding the same things: decent, dignified housing for everyone.

We Will Win.

Anti-Poverty Committee (42 Blood Alley; 604-682-2726; apc@resist.ca)

CAMPAIGN INFORMATION FOR TORONTO & MONTREAL:

Toronto: <www.ocap.ca> & Montreal: <www.quebec2001.net>

Friends of the Woodwards Squat

www.woodsquat.net

friends@woodsquat.net

604-682-3269 ext. 6315

W.O.O.D.S.Q.U.A.T. #27

GIVE IT OR GUARD IT!

DAY 40 SUPPLEMENT ISSUE
WEDNESDAY – 23 OCT 02

FORECAST: TONIGHT: CLEAR – LOW 5°
THURSDAY: "BECOMING SUNNY" – LOW 5° – HIGH 12°
FRIDAY: SUNNY – LOW 5° – HIGH 12°
SATURDAY: MORNING CLOUD – LOW 5° – HIGH 12°
SUNDAY: SUNNY PERIODS – LOW 6° – HIGH 12°

GIVE IT OR GUARD IT!

A statement from the Anti-Poverty Committee regarding Vancouver involvement in the nation-wide campaign.

The APC joins organizations and people across the country in the call to build and to convert abandoned buildings into social housing. If they are unwilling to build it, they will have to guard it because WE WILL TAKE IT! On October 26th, in solidarity with new squats being opened in Ontario and Quebec, the Anti-Poverty Committee will announce the addresses of the empty buildings in Vancouver that are owned by the city and the province. We will open these buildings and fill them with people unless the Government does it first.

DEMANDS

1. The Federal and Provincial Governments must begin funding social housing immediately and build over 2000 units of housing a year in B.C.
2. The City must develop an anti-vacancy by-law to seize and convert privately owned abandoned buildings and property into social housing.
3. The Province and the City must develop rent controls to ensure that no one pays over thirty percent of their income to housing.
4. The Province must re-open all closed Residential Tenancy Offices and make no changes to the Residential Tenancy Act that would diminish the rights of renters.
5. Develop the Woodwards building into social housing immediately and respect the rest of the demands of the Woodwards Social Housing Coalition.

BACKGROUND

In 1995, the Federal Government cut their funding for social housing, leaving the responsibility to the provinces. British Columbia was one of only two provinces to provide decent, affordable housing to poor and working people who need it and suffer without it. The Liberal Government changed that as soon as they took power; cutting funding for social housing and abandoning responsibility to under-funded, overburdened municipalities who in turn are trying to contract the projects privately. Now, after making applications for arbitration incredibly difficult for renters by closing the downtown Vancouver Residential Tenancy office, they are planning to gut the Residential Tenancy Act. There is now no new social housing being built in the province or anywhere in the country and the rights of market renters are being stolen away.

The Woodwards Squat has brought the issues of homelessness and housing crisis into public attention in B.C. throughout the past month; the same has been true in Quebec with the Squat in Quebec City, in Ontario with the Toronto Pope Squat, and the recent squat in Victoria. Housing issues in Canada go far beyond homelessness, touching the lives of all poor and working people in the country. The struggle for decent, dignified and affordable housing is one that affects everyone and addresses all levels of government as responsible and negligent.