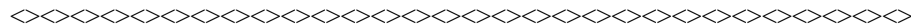


“I believe today’s decision has renewed the faith of many poor people in the judicial process,” said Pivot Legal Society lawyer John Richardson, who represented a number of the protestors, “And it is a lesson to government bodies that use injunctions to silence and punish people who raise legitimate political issues.”

Pivot lawyers John Richardson and Noah Quastel were joined by well-known lawyer Cameron Ward in arguing that costs should be awarded against the Housing Corporation for failing to properly serve materials and documents, and by failing to provide adequate notice of their intention to discontinue the proceeding. In awarding costs, Justice Dillon rejected arguments from the Housing Corporation that such an award would be unprecedented. Dillon found that it is a normal rule of civil procedure that a party who discontinues should be liable for the legal costs incurred by those called on to defend against it even when the reasons for discontinuing are political, rather than legal.

The City of Vancouver is going to Supreme Court on November 19 and 20 to seek an injunction and financial compensation from the protestors camped on the sidewalk outside the Woodwards building.

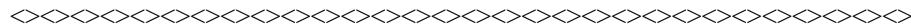


**TO ALL SQUATTERS & SUPPORTERS OF THE SQUAT  
~ Pivot Legal Society WANTS TO HEAR FROM YOU!**

Volunteer lawyers & law students will be taking affidavits from any individuals who are involved with the squat. The affidavits will be used to defend against the injunction application by the City of Vancouver .

**Pivot office on SUNDAY, NOV. 10 Noon until 4 pm 42 Blood Alley**

It will take 30-45 minutes to have your story recorded and legally sworn.  
Free coffee will be provided.



*Please note that Friends of the Woodwards Squat is a material support group. It does not represent the Woodwards Squat or Woodwards Coalition for Social Housing and does not speak for any other of the many groups and individuals currently in the DTES housing action. For a list of groups and contact information visit our website: <http://www.woodsquat.net>.*

*W.O.O.D.S.Q.U.A.T. #38*

**VICTORY!  
WE WON & WE WILL WIN  
AGAIN**

**DAY 56 – FRIDAY – 08 NOV 02**

## Woodwards 54 Update – 07 November

By The Woodward's Legal Defense Committee

682-3269 ext. 9909 | woodwards-legal-defense-admin@lists.resist.ca

On November 7, 2002 the 54 squatters and their supporters who were arrested at Woodward's and charged with civil contempt made their first court appearance since being arrested on September 21.

Apparently, Crown Lawyers acting in consultation with Lawyers from BC Housing (who originally brought the civil injunction against the Woodward's Squatters) had considered criminal contempt charges (which is more serious than civil contempt). However, at the last minute they decided not to proceed. Lawyers for BC Housing then announced they would be dropping all charges against the 54.

In other words, *we won!*

The legal battle, however, is not over. Many of those arrested inside Woodward's have lost personal possessions, such as sleeping bags, clothing, and tools, which the police have never returned. Additionally there is the property belonging to the outside squatters which was simply crushed in garbage dumpsters on the evening of September 22, when Vancouver cops sealed off the streets, demanded everyone leave immediately, then started brutally arresting people (homeless people had their hands stepped on and were kicked; APC Organizer Ivan Drury had his shoulder dislocated). In total, 11 people were arrested (including Pivot Lawyer John Richardson who was handcuffed and detained when he arrived on the scene to advise his clients). All were released the next day without being charged.

We are now considering legal action against the Vancouver Police Department and the City of Vancouver for the theft/destruction of people's property, for the unnecessary and excessive use of force on September 21 (when over 100 cops stormed the building, including the riot squad and members of the Emergency Response Team who wielded automatic weapons), and for the violent and false arrests of September 22. There is also the injunction against the outside squatters which the City of Vancouver has applied for, who apparently do not mind homelessness as long as the homeless do not sleep on City sidewalks.

In short, we still need funds to fight these battles. The Woodward's Legal Defense Committee has so far raised over \$4000.00, but more is needed if we want to effectively challenge these attacks on the homeless and activists

which happen every time poor and working people challenge the pro-business agenda of governments of all stripes. Fighting together in the courts and in the streets, we will win!

(One final note: in addition to having their charges dropped, all defendants who showed in court were awarded \$100.00 as compensation for BC Housing and the Crown deciding to drop all charges at the last minute).

## BC Housing Corporation ordered to pay costs after dropping contempt proceedings against Woodward's Protestors

By Pivot Legal Society | (604) 742-1843

Justice Janice Dillon of the B.C. Supreme Court today ordered the Provincial Rental Housing Corporation, which owns the historic Woodward's building, to pay legal costs to counsel for the Woodward's protestors and the protestors themselves after the Housing Corporation abruptly decided to discontinue contempt proceedings against the 54 defendants. The "Woodward's 54" had been charged with contempt of court after occupying the vacant Woodward's building, as part of a protest for housing for the many homeless people in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside.

The Woodward's defendants cheered when Justice Dillon handed down her judgment, which ordered the Housing Corporation pay \$100 to each person who appeared in court as well as the legal costs of the three *pro bono* lawyers that appeared on their behalf. The discontinuance ended seven weeks of anxiety and uncertainty on the part of the protestors, whose legal defence committee has been desperately raising money to pay for lawyers after the Legal Services Society refused to provide funding for legal counsel.

"This is a victory for social housing, and a victory for poor and marginalized people," said Calvin Woida, an organizer with the Woodward's Legal Defence Committee and one of the 54 defendants, "But we cannot be complacent. We will not stop fighting until everyone has a home."

The decision to discontinue the proceedings followed unsuccessful eleventh hour negotiations between the Housing Corporation and the Ministry of the Attorney General, whom the Housing Corporation had asked to take over the proceedings by filing criminal contempt charges against the protestors. Robert Kuhn, who appeared on behalf of the Housing Corporation, stated that the Corporation was unwilling to proceed independently to prosecute the people that the Corporation was legally mandated to serve.