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10:00 PM

For Immediate Release

Demonstration in support of Woodward's Coalition draws over 500

This evening over 500 people demonstrated out front of the old Woodward's building to show their support for the Woodward's Coalition. The demonstration started at 6 PM, and featured a number of speakers, including several Woodward's squatters, BCGEU president George Heyman, and MP Libby Davies.

The demonstration was called by the Woodward's Coalition to show the wide support behind their fight for social housing. The two attacks by the police on people squatting at Woodward's did not weaken this movement for social housing, and the demonstration proved the continued and growing support for their demands. The crowd was very diverse, and included people from the neighborhood, labour unions, and student groups.

"I never saw so many people rallying for us as I saw today," said Jack VanderHyde, one of the original squatters and an advocate for the Vandu Area Network of Drug Users. "Along Cordova, I saw several people parking their cars to join the rally."

Initially there was large police presence in the vicinity of the building, including dozens of horse patrols and vehicles, but as the demonstration went on, most of them had dispersed. Clearly the police have been forced to ease up on their attacks due to the support demonstrated today.

The people of the Woodward's Coalition have been at Woodward's since September 14th. They are demanding that the provincial government develop Woodward's into social housing and reverse the cuts to social housing and other social services.

For more information call (604) 682-2726.