

Urgent Appeal!

Please forward Widely.

On October 16th, 2002, Chief Jamie Graham made statements to the effect that the people down at the Woodward's Squat aren't really homeless and that they are really radicals trying to score cheap political points. These statements are intended to create divisions and provide a pretext for attacking a peaceful homeless encampment.

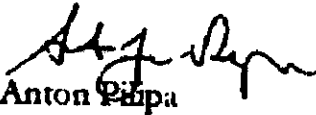
Supporters of the Woodward's Squatters need to speak up now and tell the Vancouver Police Department to back off. If your organisation already endorses and supports our cause, please fax a signed copy of the attached letter. If you are an individual who would like to tell the VPD to back off, please do so. You can call in person if you want.

Supporters of the Woodward's Squatters are being asked to endorse and sign the attached letter and fax it to the Chief Constable Jamie Graham c/o the Vancouver Police Board.

Please also phone, fax, or email the Anti-Poverty Committee so we can publicly say that your group support these points. Our phone number is (604) 682 - 2627 and our fax number is (604) 687 - 4347. Our email address is apc@resist.ca.

The attached letter has already been endorsed by the representatives of the Woodward's Squatters, the Anti-Poverty Committee, the Simon Fraser Student Society, the Western Aboriginal Representation Society, and the Sociology Anthropology Student Union of Simon Fraser University.

Thank you for your solidarity,


Anton Pipa


Theresa Gray

Here is the Contact number for the Vancouver Police Board.

Chief Constable Jamie Graham
c/o Vancouver Police Board

Tel: (604) 717-3170
Fax: (604) 257-3878

Letter of Support for the Woodwards Squatters

We the undersigned are writing this letter to support the Woodward Squatters in their struggle for social housing and social justice. In response to recent statements made by Chief Constable Jamie Graham and others, we would like to make four points that he and others need to understand, if they truly want to achieve a peaceful resolution to the situation.

- 1. There are over 150 homeless people camped in front of Woodward's.**
Squatters and their supporters have been keeping count of the numbers and origins of the people sleeping outside, and we know that the overwhelming majority of Squatters are homeless and in need of housing. We know that it is one of the most peaceful blocks in the Downtown Eastside.
- 2. We oppose the police attacking homeless people.**
The Vancouver Police Department should spend their time and money policing real violent crimes that go on in our city every day. Should they attempt a violent solution to this political crisis, they will only provoke a public backlash and entrench hostility to the police. Both times that the police have used force and violence, it failed to deter people from continuing, and failed to shift public support and opinion away from the Squatters.
- 3. We oppose the eviction of homeless Natives from unceded Native land.**
We are all living on Coast Salish land, a people that have signed no treaty to extinguish their sovereignty over the land. Over one third of the people sleeping around the building are homeless Native men and women. This should not be surprising given the high levels of aboriginal poverty in the DTES, Vancouver and Canada as a whole.
- 4. We demand decent and dignified housing for all.**
Winter shelters are an inadequate response to homelessness. Shelters are, by themselves, just a Band-Aid. Winter shelters are simply a Band-Aid on a Band-Aid. We the undersigned demand that the Police do not attempt any removal of homeless people camped around the Woodward's building without finding decent and dignified housing for all of them.

Signature

Print Name

Name of Organisation