

Subject: Woodward's Squat  
Date: Tue, 29 Oct 2002 22:59:37 -0800  
From: Leslie Campbell <bellcampbell4411@shaw.ca>  
To: dave\_rudberg@city.vancouver.bc.ca  
CC: Susan Lindenberger <slindenb@telus.net>, Barry Morris <bkmorris59@hotmail.com>, Simone Carrodus <carrodus@sfu.ca>, Keith Howard <keithhoward@shaw.ca>

I heard, with alarm, earlier today your stated position that you have found "shelter beds" for the "genuinely homeless" people at the tent city around Woodward's, and that you have delivered an injunction to them to move cooperatively. If they refuse to do so, the lawyers for the City of Vancouver will request authority for the police do remove them.

As you are well aware, a "shelter bed" is a one-night stand, usually with no facilities for food preparation or available meals, no shower, no place to store even meagre belongings. People are out on the street the next day to begin the demoralizing cycle over again. Shelter beds are designed to be only an emergency shelter, a temporary place to go until someone can find a permanent place - they are NOT a home. The only accommodation people can usually find on their meagre income is too small, over- or under-heated, dirty, unsafe hotel rooms, and these are NOT homes either! The people who have risked themselves for this peaceful and orderly civil action will still not have safe, affordable, accessible accommodation.

I expect you feel that the provision of affordable housing is the responsibility of the other levels of government. Homeless people are residents of Vancouver, and it is our responsibility to find/provide decent housing for them. The action should not be forced to end until this provision is met for the long term, not a quickie solution in order to clean up the streets for business.

There are some people working with the residents of the tent city who do have homes, and the media, police and others have made much of this. To work alongside the people most effected by societal policies is a time honoured aspect of justice work, and should not be denigrated. We should be celebrating that there folk in our society prepared to take action for what they believe, and walk with others.

Sincerely,

Leslie Campbell