

From: anton@resist.ca
To: apc-announce@resist.ca
Subject: [APC-Announce] Victory Squat
Date: 16 Aug 2003 00:40:39 -0700

"Thornton Park
Press Release"

Just a heads up to folks about Victory Squat stuff.
In solidarity,
Anton

Media Advisory
Anti-Poverty Committee
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 15, 2003

Victory Squat Press Conference

The homeless encampment at Thornton Park has been served with an injunction and spokespeople for the homeless encampment will be there to address the issue of the injunction and the issue of homelessness.

Location: Thornton Park
South side, in front of the BC Housing Office.
Time: 11 AM

All corporate and independent media are welcome. We request that that Jon Ferry of the Province and David Carrigg of the Vancouver Courier not be sent by their respective media outlets, due to concerns over the accuracy of their stories. Note: Please respect the privacy of the squatters and ask before taking pictures of people or trampling around their space.

The designated spokesperson for the Victory Squat is James Mickelson. He can be reached at 604-780-5117. The designated media contact person for APC is Tony Ruzza. He can be reached at 604-682-2726.

News Release
Anti-Poverty Committee
Phone: 604-682-2726 Fax: 604-682-2652 email: apc@resist.ca

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 15, 2003

Injunction will not stop homeless protests

The homeless encampment at Thornton Park has been served with an injunction, but the protest is not over. According to spokespeople for the homeless encampment, the protest will continue, though how and where is not known. "We will leave at 12 noon tomorrow, but we will not end it here," says James Mickelson, the official spokesperson for Victory Squat.

Today at 10 AM, BC Supreme Court Justice Ian Pitfield granted the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation an injunction against homeless people erecting structures in the park. According to the terms of the injunction, all tents, shanties, and shelters have to be removed by 12 noon tomorrow, Saturday, August 16th. After the deadline, the Parks Board staff accompanied by police will begin dismantling and removing the shelters homeless people have been sleeping in since they moved to the park on July 26th.

"We are not pleased with this ruling, and we are angry that the Parks Board would choose to do the dirty work of the BC Liberals," says Mickelson. "They had many alternatives to seeking an injunction. They say

that they want to help the homeless, but they evict them from city parks. City council and Parks Board are conspiring to hide the homeless, and they are doing this under the pretext of protecting the sanctity of parks. What is more important to them -- a park or a homeless person? Two parks or one hundred and fifty homeless people?"

"Clearly the COPE dominated Parks Board and City Council would rather throw homeless people out of one of the few safe places to sleep in their own community, than assist them in finding decent, affordable housing. So far, all they've offered are platitudes, rooms in run-down SRO hotels, injunctions, disinformation, and contempt for the homeless and their supporters."

"This is an open air shelter run by the homeless for the homeless. This makes Victory Squat a political act," says Tony Ruzza, an APC spokesperson. "This is political protest against the BC Liberals. It is about welfare legislation that has seen more than 70,000 people forced off welfare. It is about a two-year-out-of-five welfare rule that will see more than 40,000 more thrown off welfare on April 1st. It is about the lack of adequate and affordable housing. What does city council and the parks board think will happen on April 1st?"

"This encampment has provided shelter and security to Vancouver's homeless since July 26th. Over 50 people have been sleeping here the last few nights. We peaked at 80 last week. Before that at Victory Square, we had almost one hundred."

The Victory Squat started on July 2nd in Victory Square, the same day it was announced that Vancouver would be hosting the 2010 Olympic Games. On Saturday July 26th it moved to Thornton Park after a loud and energetic march through downtown Vancouver. The protest has two central demands addressed to the provincial government:

1. End the two-year welfare time limit.
2. Social housing for all in need.

There will be a press conference at 11 AM tomorrow, Saturday, August 16th, at Thornton Park on the south side in front of the BC Housing office. Spokespeople for the homeless encampment will be there to address the issue of the injunction and the issue of homelessness.

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- 30 -

Sincerely, Anton Pilipa, APC

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