

Anti-Poverty Committee Basis of Unity

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The Anti-Poverty Committee is an organization of poor and working people who fight for poor people, their rights and an end to poverty by any means necessary. The poor face constant attack under the capitalist system and these attacks have only intensified under the BC Liberal government.

The BC Liberals' brutal policies – the cuts to welfare, the six dollar training wage, the privatization of public services, the cuts to social programs, the restrictions of democratic and human rights – all are designed to transfer wealth from poor and working people to the rich and powerful.

APC is committed to fighting the brutal policies of the BC Liberals through direct action, mass mobilization, and casework. APC is an independent and democratic organization open to anyone who agrees with our basis of unity. We are committed to working in solidarity with the struggles of other progressive movements – locally, nationally and internationally – to end poverty and injustice.

Our Mission Statement...

The Housing Action Committee (HAC) is an organization of poor people fighting back against poverty. We understand that:

- ★ Our conditions and positions within this system are constructed by people with power. Those who abuse their power to exploit and discriminate against us must have their power removed by us.
- ★ We must empower ourselves as well as our brothers and sisters so that we can struggle against injustices and have real control over our own lives.
- ★ The housing crisis, which marginalizes and dehumanizes us, is only one aspect of the class war. Homelessness is no accident – keeping the poor in destitute and miserable living conditions is key to keeping them oppressed and silent.

We refuse to remain silent. We know that only together can we fight back and win, so we organize in our streets in our shelters and our hotels. We fight against racism, classism, sexism, homophobia and all forms of oppression.

We will pick our fights and win them by every means necessary.

FIGHT TO WIN



defeat this government

Poor and working people of this province are at war with the government.

The BC Liberal regime is dead-set on destroying any rights and protections many of us once took for granted. Alongside the cuts of budgets and the re-structuring of infrastructure is the malicious attitude in which the Liberals carry out their new era. The changes to the employment act, the disability review and the racist referendum around aboriginal land claims are just a few examples of how the Liberals are carrying out their agenda. Equally as disturbing is their lack of action regarding the conditions of poverty in British Columbia.

One of the first tasks of the Liberals when they came into power was to place a moratorium on funding towards low-income housing. Campbell and his cronies put 1700 units of social housing under review. 650 units not yet allocated at the time were abolished. There has been a freeze on all new social housing projects including those previously approved. All this while the number of homeless expands, overtaxing a shelter system that is totally inadequate (at least 500 people turned away each month by the 4 largest shelters). The net result of the actions of the Liberal government is that individuals and families are being forced into the streets, abandoned by social services that have been gutted by funding cuts.

We say any government that attacks the people in such a way is a government that must be defeated!

We have erected the Tent City to draw awareness to the assaults upon poor and working people in this province. We have two demands that we make from this Tent City to the government both federally, provincially and municipally:

SOCIAL HOUSING FOR ALL IN NEED!

END THE TWO-YEAR TIME LIMIT NOW!

It is deplorable that so much money and publicity was given to the Olympic bid at a time when the BC Liberals are doing everything in their power to undermine the dignity and lives of the poor. Going ahead with the notion Vancouver would win the Olympic bid the attack on the poor intensified. Increased policing, welfare cutbacks, rent increases all to make this province appear to be safe. But so long as profit for the few is more important than the lives of the many no one is safe with this government in power.

Our federal government has not created one unit of social housing since 1993 although 25% of Vancouver's population qualifies for it. Our municipal government applauds the Olympic bid while at least 85 residents of hotel room is thrown out yearly due to tourist conversions. Our provincial government, that with the two year time limit will force former welfare recipients into a depleting job market in order to undermine collective bargaining in the Liberals' favour.

We refuse to stand aside and remain silent

We call on all levels of government to:

- ★ The federal and provincial governments must begin funding social housing and build over 2000 units of housing a year in BC
- ★ The city must develop an anti-vacancy by-law to seize and convert privately owned abandoned buildings and property into social housing
- ★ The province must re-open all closed residential tenancy offices and make no changes to the residential tenancy act that would negatively affect the rights of renters.
- ★ The city and the province develop the Woodward's building with all units to be social housing immediately.
- ★ The province recognizes that welfare is a right and must be available for all in need, no questions asked, no exceptions made.

The Anti-Poverty Committee and the Housing Action Committee with the solidarity of our supporters will continue fighting back by all means necessary against this government. When the BC Liberals open the legislature this fall, we will all be there standing together to shut them down. We call on you to join our common front and defeat this government.