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Subject : Remake of COPE E-leret (Aug 14)
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Please forward this e-mail widely.

ONLY THE TRUTH CAN STAND UP UNDER THE LIGHT OF DAY.

Following is a remake last weeks COPE Council E-leret by the CRAB Park Squatters. Please read it and respond to the COPE E-mail address on the bottom of the page.

COUNCIL RE-leret 08/13/03: City Working to push the homeless back into the alleys and under the bridges.

The Aboriginal CRAB squatters are sorry this has had to be a process we must use to overcome the COPE info control machine. We hope you will come to understand that it is essential for you to communicate with the citizens as issues develop. Democracy and citizen involvement is something which must happen on a daily basis in the daily lives of voters, rather than just during occasional THINK CITY weekends.

The CRAB Squatters are saddened that their overtures to work with the Cope Council were responded to by setting an environment where the only possible outcome can be conflict and police enforcement. We would much rather have worked with COPE council to take on the regressive Campbell Liberal and the Federal Liberal policies. But make no mistake about it. The fall-out from the CRAB Park Squat as of today's action rests solely at the feet of the Cope councillors who voted regressively.

Homelessness

WHAT'S REALLY HAPPENING?

-Vancouver City Council and Parks Board are working to ensure parks are accessible to the whole community, except the homeless and the urban aboriginals by escalating injunctions against tent city protests at Crab Park.

. What a difference a year and some power makes. One year ago they were standing shoulder to shoulder with Woodward's Squatters and saying that applying injunctions against the homeless was inhumane. In an effort to avoid having to deal with the potential embarrassment of facing their own hypocrisy, Vancouver City Council voted 5 to 3 in favour of granting custody to Parks Board for ~~the~~ allowing them the capacity to seek injunctions and police action against the homeless in Crab Park and to oversee the care and management of Crab Park, to the extent of making rules and by-laws for the control, regulation, protection and government of the park.

-City staff continues to work to find housing for the homeless in the camps, thereby side stepping what they know to be an important political action by the homeless and their advocates. Although no one has approached the Crab Park squatters to engage in formal communication about their plight, they are claiming to be concerned over their general well being, and offer assistance in moving belongings which are a visible symbol of homelessness. for those accepting accommodation.

On Wednesday the Crab Squatters called upon the Cope Council and parks board to formally meet with them before taking any further action to eliminate the homeless from the pristine green space which they claim is for the use of the entire community presumably except the homeless.

-Council instead called on the provincial government to restore support for non-profit housing, and designated a senior staff member as the city's homelessness policy co-coordinator with a mandate to monitor homelessness in the city, and recommend additional measures necessary to tackle this problem, without democratically consulting with the homeless community as to their needs or preferences.

WHAT IS YOUR COPE MAYOR AND COUNCIL DOING?

-COPE created more housing units in its first 90 days in power than the NPA did in an average year, with \$3,300,000 committed to affordable housing.

-The Liberal government offered the city the opportunity to purchase the Woodward's hot potato and resecured the 100 units of social housing offered by the province to the NPA Council, and secured

temporary housing for the Woodward's squatters at the Dominion Hotel and substandard permanent housing without support services at the Stanley New Fountain.

-Council approved investing \$428,000 to renovate The Central Residence in bringing 65 renovated single-room-occupancy (SRO) hotel units back into operation, did they know that according to City of Vancouver standards... SROs do not qualify as housing. They do not offer the essentials. and approved \$300,000 for 23 units in Taylor Manor on Boundary Road, \$400,000 for 36 units of recovery housing in the proposed Triage project at 39th and Fraser, and \$200,000 for 22 units of first nations family housing in Lu'ma's project at 8th and Clark. We applaud these actions, but they must not be used as camouflage or justification for the abuse or marginalization of the homeless.

-Council continues to speak out on provincial policies relating to housing and poverty including expressing concerns over income assistance rates and increasing shelter costs for SRO residents, urged a stop to eligibility reassessment of assistance benefits for people with disabilities, and outlined concerns that the new provincial Residential Tenancy Act changes will negatively impact Vancouver renters. The Vancouver city council's silence or meagre mutterings have been painful to watch. Who do they speak out to? We have seen no evidence of verbal fortitude on their part. When invited to join us in a campaign to do just that, their response was to set the grounds for an injunction. Currently the only people we have seen them speak out against are the homeless. Action speaks louder than hollow political rhetoric.

-Council also increased development cost levies on new developments to provide a greater source of funds for community benefits, including affordable housing.

-COPE councillors have also committed to legalizing secondary suites throughout the city to increase Vancouver's rental housing stock, and are currently developing an anti-conversion and demolition control by-law to prevent market driven evictions of SRO hotel tenants until other housing is built. Once you've finished making it possible for homeowners to exploit the poor maybe you can set some standards for these suites.

QUESTIONS?

When you were offered the chance to move forward on a campaign to get the Provincial and Federal governments to address the homeless issue as allies with the homeless at CRAB Park why did you slap them in the face by instead setting the grounds so that the park board could quickly move towards an injunction?

When you were told that there had been no contact with the CRAB squatters by either elected politicians or significant bureaucrats, why did you still push through the vote to enable the parks board to move towards an injunction which will ultimately result in police action against the homeless?

When you were earlier sent an e-mail indicating our concern for the misinformation which was being promoted by the media and Ray cam Community Centre why did you proceed with the meeting before investigating our allegations. Marginalization has always been perpetrated by the establishment and enforced by the compliant inaction of the elected?

Finally, our most important question which we intend to formally pose to the Parks Board...

GIVEN THAT THERE HAS NOT YET BEEN COMMUNICATION WITH THE CRAB SQUAT will you formally meet with the squatters to discuss the cooperative options which exist beyond police enforcement and autocratic governance.

COALITION OF PROGRESSIVE ELECTORS - VANCOUVER'S VOICE

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