

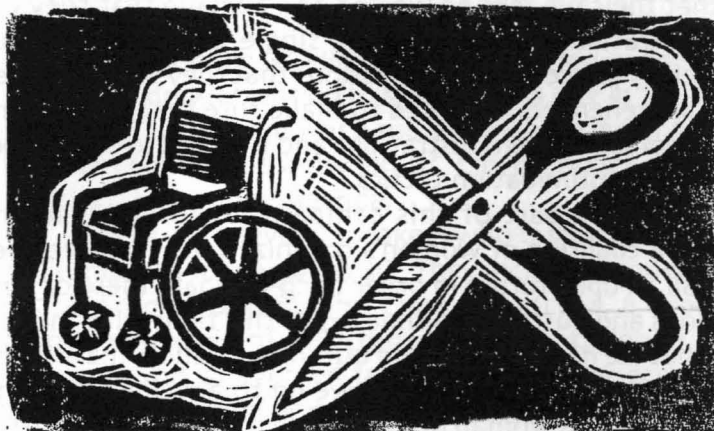
# Anti-Poverty Committee News #9

42 Blood Alley Sq. Vancouver, BC V6B 1C7 604-682-2726 apc@resist.ca Nov 02

## Resist and Survive the Cuts to Disability!

The Liberal Government continues its escalation of attacks by targeting the most vulnerable segments of the population. The Ministry of Human Resources has sent out 18 000 letters demanding people previously entitled to disability benefits (DBII) be subjected to a long and complicated reapplication process. They have to prove AGAIN that they meet the government's requirements as disabled. By cutting funding for all community services, the Liberal Government is eroding the support and resources people with disabilities should be able to count on and putting people's lives in very real jeopardy and danger.

As Cheryl Leyden said, in an open letter to the Comox Valley Record, "Not only must we, the disabled, live with constant pain but we're now experiencing more stress, confusion and duress with this new legislation by a cold, unfeeling government, which justifies robbing from the poor, the handicapped, the aged and the defenceless to pad the pockets of the very rich."



In response to the distress and general confusion people with disabilities and their allies are expressing, the Vancouver Status of Women and the Anti-Poverty Committee have joined efforts to organize a Disability Forum. We are bringing together people with disabilities, their advocates, health care providers and lawyers to strategize on how to survive and resist the cuts with education, participation, networking and alliance building, the forum is aimed at addressing the most concrete individual issues, as well as providing a space to co-ordinate a united community fight to this crisis.

- Vero

### Disability Forum: Survive & Resist 6:30 pm Wed Nov 20th at the Roundhouse

181 Roundhouse Mews, Yaletown. Transportation available, meet at the Burrard Skytrain station at 6 PM.

The Forum is wheelchair accessible. There will be ASL translation, childcare, and light refreshments provided.

For information call: The Vancouver Status of Women at 604-255-6554 or The Anti-Poverty Committee at 604-682-2726

## Give It or Guard It!



On October 26th, the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty called a national day of action around social housing called "Give It or Guard It". The Anti-Poverty Committee participated in this action by the launching of the APC housing campaign. Members of APC compiled a list of publicly owned vacant buildings. The addresses of six of these empty buildings were publicized as possible locations for social housing in a leaflet and at a press conference which was held in front of the closed down Van-

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## Training Wage Campaign Demo Against the BCRFA

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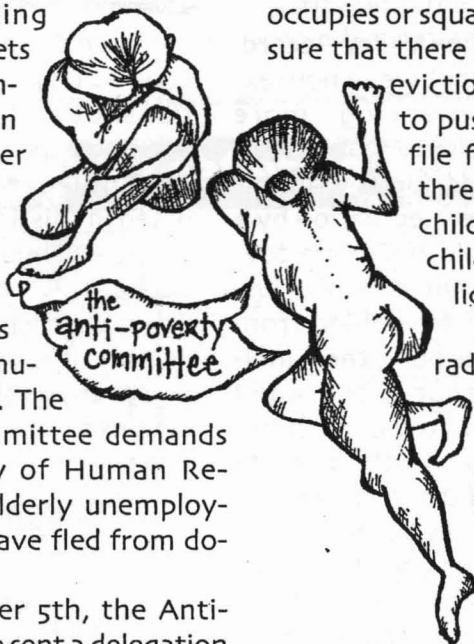
**defeat this government!**

## Casework Action

### APC MAKES COURT INJUNCTION THREAT TO MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCES

Some of the workers in the Ministry of Human Resources are forcing families back into domestic violence. The Ministry has already recognized that Heidi McKay\*, a Person with Disability (PWD), is a survivor of domestic violence. After an arbitrary period of seven years, the Ministry is demanding that Heidi seek a division of assets and family maintenance or go homeless. Domestic violence does not have an expiry date. Forcing women to seek assets and develop financial dependency on their violent former spouse puts them in an unnecessary, dangerous, and vulnerable position. This goes against their basic human right to safety. The Anti-Poverty Committee demands that the Ministry of Human Resources protect elderly unemployable people who have fled from domestic violence.

On November 5th, the Anti-Poverty Committee sent a delegation to the Head Regional Office of the Ministry of Human Resources to hand deliver a letter demanding a stop to the family maintenance process that is currently endangering Heidi McKay. The following is a quote from the letter: "Older women are most often killed by family members, 51% of whom are spouses, 27% by sons, 18% by non-immediate family members, 4% by daughters (Statistics Canada, 2000). It is thought that in many cases of homicides of older women, long-standing spousal abuse is a factor. (BC Institute Against Family Violence)."



## Campaign Against the Cuts to Women's Services

A campaign that deals specifically with women's issues has been a long time coming in APC. The Liberals are pushing all women down into jobs with lower wages, no benefits and less security, but it is the women already on the bottom, women on welfare or working women getting less than the minimum wage, that are most effected by the cuts. The Liberal government is also eliminating the small amount of social services that women have fought long and hard for, services that were traditionally women's work, such as care for the young, sick, poor and elderly. Again the Liberals are forcing women to provide these services for free.

The first part of this campaign is to make sure that women's issues are at the forefront of all of APC's other campaigns: welfare, low wage workers, housing, legal defense, and outreach. We need to demand that women stay on disability benefits, and that childcare is provided for single mothers who are forced into training programs or into low paying jobs. When APC occupies or squats buildings for the fight for social housing, we need to make sure that there is a safe place for women. When women are the victims of eviction without just cause and have to file for arbitration, we need to push that their file fees be waived and demand that they can file for arbitration by fax. Recently single parents have been threatened by police at demonstrations that they will have their children apprehended. We need to make sure that women and children feel safe at demonstrations and we need to call the police on their intimidation tactics.

The second part of this campaign is to mobilize and radicalize a coalition of women's organizations. First we need to call an open forum in order to co-ordinate these organizations and push the boundaries of this fight with the tactics that we have already laid out: direct action, mass mobilization, and casework. When we go to a welfare office to demand that a woman not be forced to ask for money from her abuser, when we occupy buildings to demand safe, affordable housing, when we picket businesses demanding that they pay their workers a living wage - we need hundreds of women with us. We need all the women's organizations in BC with us.

-Kara

Locked office space, security guards, and requests to get off private property greeted the delegation at the government office. Undaunted, the delegation remained in the building and increased the pressure by requesting back-up supporters to call the office and repeatedly fax the letter. The following day, lawyer Pat McDonald reminded the ministry of the enormous responsibility they hold and advised them not to take a serious risk of breaching this responsibility until legal counsel had been confirmed. To date, the Head Regional Office remains unresponsive to this urgent request. On November 7, an APC caseworker increased the pressure to respond by giving the ultimatum: back off on the Family Maintenance Program and Division of Assets in the Heidi McKay case or face a court injunction. The struggle continues.....

\*name changed for her protection

-Debbie Krull

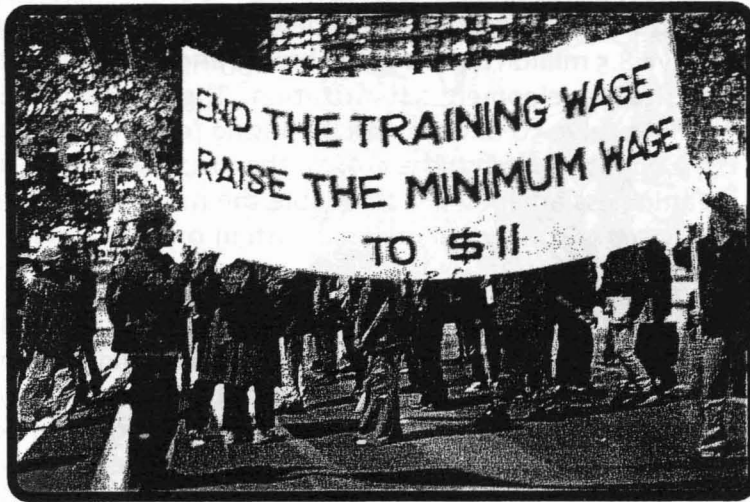
**end the forced family maintenance program!**

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# BCRFA: We Will Fight You All the Way

On November 4th APC organized a small but spirited demonstration of about 100 people including low-wage workers, students, union organizers, and unemployed workers, marched against the \$6 training



wage at the Hyatt Regency Hotel. The target was the BC Restaurant and Foodservices Association (BCRFA), who were having their annual Gala Awards dinner inside. We organized this action to expose the business groups that are behind the BC Liberals attacks on low-wage workers. We especially wanted to draw attention to the BCRFA's role in the push for the \$6 training wage in BC. The event was a success because it showed that people are making the connections between BC Liberal policy and what is driving these policies: the business agenda.

There were several speakers who talked about the effects of the training wage on poor people in BC. They included Jagdeep Singh from the Simon Fraser Student Society and Craig Ballantyne, a Woodward's squatter and former employee of Milestones restaurant. Benita Benjun from the Vancouver Status of Women talked about the effects of BC Liberal policy on women and people of colour, while Jeff Keighley of the CAW highlighted the changes to the Employment Standards Act and Labour Relations Code that are hurting workers in BC. Mike Krebs of APC spoke about the Campaign to End the Training Wage and the push for an \$11/hour minimum wage.

Inside the Hyatt Regency, the BCRFA granted the Stellar Awards to Graham Bruce, the Minister of Skills Development and Labour. The "stellar" accomplishments of Bruce in the eyes of the BCRFA include the \$6 training wage, the gutting of Employment Standards, and the attacks on organized labour. The BCRFA will continue to lobby for lower wages and less benefits, unless we effectively fight back and stop them.

There was an enormous police presence at this demonstration, including a horse patrol. This was clearly to intimidate the Anti-Campbell movement with the threat of violence.

It was also an attempt to reinforce the myth, being pushed by the Liberal Government, the police, and the media that the APC and other Anti-Campbell groups are violent thugs. But we will not be intimidated by this harassment: we will continue to mobilize and organize against the government's attacks on poor and working people.

-Mike Krebs

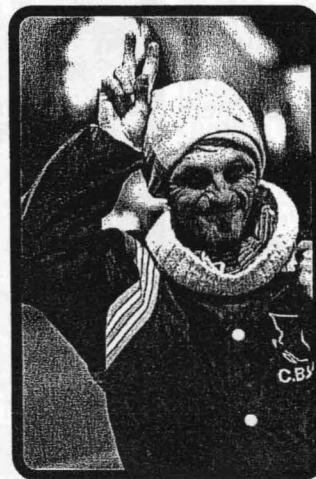
## APC Actions

### APC Goes to the Police Board

On Wednesday, October 16, the Vancouver Police Board held a public meeting at the downtown Vancouver library where they forcibly limited public attendance to two or three representatives of a few organizations (including APC) and about ten other members of the public. The police, who had about fifty riot cops at the ready outside the meeting room, made the excuse that there was limited space. When I entered the meeting room, I saw a room with the capacity to hold sixty to eighty people comfortably. The distance in that room between the public and the police board just illustrated their fear of us.

The four members of the public, including Anton Pilipa of the APC, and Theresa, Justin and Shane of the Woodward's squat, were given a few minutes each to address the board. They spoke firmly and assertively, demanding accountability and an apology for the thuggish behaviour of the Vancouver police during the Woodward's squat and the Britannia police riot. The public asked several

questions to the board but they answered none. The chair's attempts to silence and undermine us were met with loud chanting and yelling. One member of the public demanded answers about the beating of a cab driver by an off-duty police officer who was being protected by the police. At the time, he was yet to be charged. Many members



of APC, VANDU, and COPB gathered outside the entrances holding banners and disseminating information that captured the attention of a substantial crowd.

- Mark

**stop Gordon Campbell's training wage!**

## Other Actions

### APC Goes to City Hall

The Anti-Poverty Committee, Woodward's squatters and supporters from the Woodward's Coalition, filled the room at the October 22nd City Council meeting. We attended to oppose the proposal from city staff to sell the historic Woodward's building to a private developer represented by Geoffrey and Tanya Hughes. The APC opposes any private development of the Woodward's building and we see the current proposal as a tool to further the gentrification of the Downtown Eastside.

An APC organizer took the microphone during Council's discussion of the proposal and demanded that they hear speakers from the public. Council was forced to concede to the demand. Aaron Vidaver of the Friends of the Woodward's Squat said, "If the civic, provincial and federal governments do not make a move towards the real development of social housing by this Friday, October 25th, we will take action. We are a moderate organization, but if you refuse to do anything we will endorse, encourage and support the APC and their involvement in the nation-wide 'Give It or Guard It' social housing campaign."

Despite major opposition from the public present, Council unanimously approved the proposal in principle. The proposal stated that there would be a mix of retail and residential with 80% slated as market priced but, if funding can be secured, 50 units of housing would be at welfare price. The proposal was amended to recommend to the developer to double that number. The proposal is an insult to the severity of the housing crisis. There are over a 1000 people that need adequate housing in Vancouver alone. We need to hold accountable the government and demand that they implement realistic solutions to the housing crisis.

- Shannon Bundock

## Tents in the Heart of the City: An Update on the Woodward's Squat

**Tuesday, October 22nd:** City Council puts forward a proposal to recommend selling Woodward's to a private developer, Geoffrey Hughes. Hughes would receive 8.5 million dollars in tax breaks and another couple million worth of "off-site" development authorization. The Downtown Eastside community would receive 50 units of social housing for a fixed period of time. Despite fiery opposition from the crowd, the proposal passed unanimously with a meaningless amendment to double the number of units which NPA members later said they only agreed with in order "to quiet things down". (see sidebar)

**Monday, October 28th:** A "memo" delivered to the Woodward's Tent City by City Engineering Manager, Dave Rudberg said, "I demand you remove all tents, structures and objects from city streets, including sidewalks, by Wednesday October 30th at 12 noon." APC organizers called Rudberg and after a long argument, he admitted that on Wednesday at noon, he would

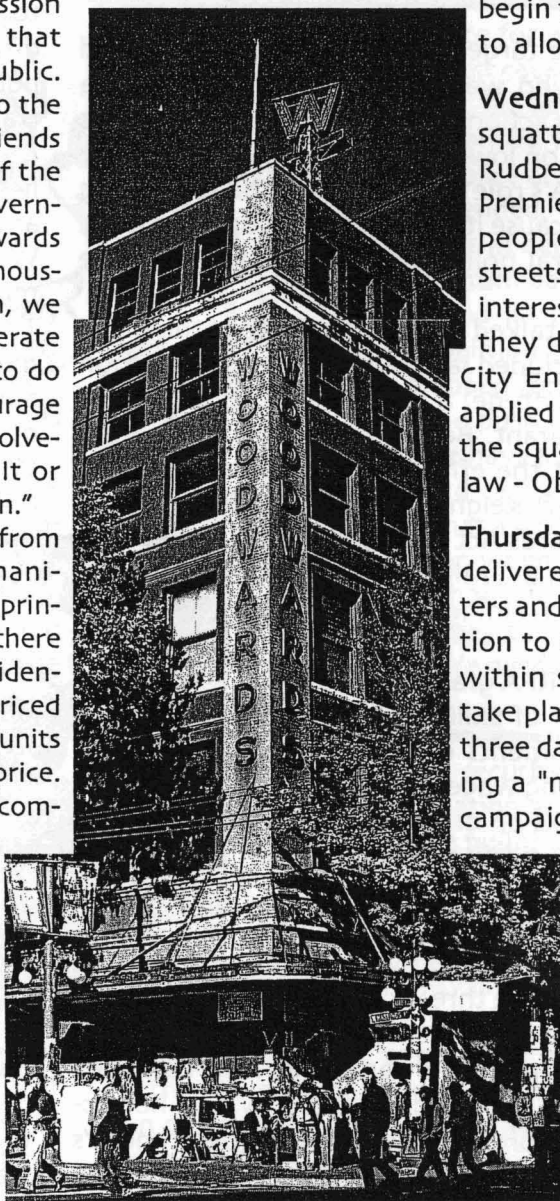
begin the application process for an injunction to allow forced removal of the squatters.

**Wednesday, October 30th:** A delegation of squatters and supporters delivered a letter to Rudberg and Mayor Owen, and faxed it to the Premier. The letter demanded that the City give people housing; not disperse them to the streets. Rudberg responded that the City is not interested in securing people housing because they don't consider it their responsibility. The City Engineers, in conjunction with City Hall, applied for a Supreme Court injunction against the squatters based on the violation of the by-law - Obstruction of a City Sidewalk".

**Thursday, October 31st:** Police and City officials delivered a "Writ of Summons" calling for squatters and others potentially affected by an injunction to submit a letter of defense to the courts within seven days. The injunction hearing will take place in Supreme Court on November 19th, three days after the Civic Election, neatly avoiding a "nasty incident" in the midst of electoral campaigns.

The Liberal Government and their business allies are not fighting homelessness; they are attacking the homeless. They are not interested in getting people off the streets; they are interested in breaking the survival-based organization of homeless people, in breaking the momentum of the political movement against poverty.

-Ivan Drury





# Give It or Guard It: APC Launches Housing Campaign

## Other News

### Woodward's 54 Update

-cover Residential Tenancy office. The leaflet was distributed by APC members to receptive people at locations throughout the city. At Broadway Skytrain station, a leafleting group was intimidated by a large contingent of police officers who remained there throughout the leafleting. Despite the fact that the actions taken by APC were primarily educational, the reaction of the media and government was to label us violent criminals.

On this day, in Montreal, Halifax, Toronto and other places across the country, people attempted to take buildings as housing. Nation wide the state response was the same: excessive police brutality and intimidation. In BC the freezing of social housing is being

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November 7th was the first court appearance for the 54 squatters and their supporters arrested at Woodward's on September 21st (charged with civil contempt). Crown Lawyers acting in consultation with lawyers from BC Housing (who originally brought the civil injunction against the Woodward's Squatters) had considered criminal contempt charges, which is more serious than civil contempt. However, at the last minute they decided not to proceed. Lawyers for BC Housing then announced they would be dropping all charges against the 54. In other words, we won!

The legal battle, however, is not over. Many of those arrested inside Woodward's have lost personal possessions, such as sleeping bags, clothing, and tools, which the police have never returned. Additionally there is the property belonging to the outside squatters which the police and city workers crushed in garbage dumpsters on the evening of September 22, when Vancouver cops sealed off the streets, demanded everyone leave immediately, then started brutally arresting people (the police kicked and stepped on homeless people and dislocated APC Organizer Ivan Drury's shoulder). In total, 11 people were arrested (including Pivot Lawyer John Richardson who was handcuffed and detained when he arrived on the scene to advise his clients). All were released the next day without being charged.

We are now considering legal action against the Vancouver Police Department and the City of Vancouver for the theft/destruction of people's property, for the unnecessary and excessive use of force on September 21,



incorrectly presented as a necessary fiscal measure, but all across the country, when given the choice to either spend money to build social housing or spend money guarding publicly owned abandoned buildings, the government chooses to guard. All levels of government are responsible for under-funding social housing and people across this nation, all who share the need adequate and affordable housing, are fighting back.

APC is determined to launch an strong and effective housing campaign which includes outreaching to communities all over the Lower Mainland and building networks with organizations across the province and country. We will identify our targets,

clearly communicate our intentions and demands, and use innovative, militant tactics that are effective. These tactics include, but are not limited to, rent strikes, strategic demonstrations, homeless encampments, residential tenancy casework, occupations and squats. The goal is to mass mobilize a fight for safe and adequate housing for all but we recognize housing is part of the larger struggle. We know we cannot win in the fight for social housing without also winning the fight for women's services, for universal childcare and healthcare, and for adequate welfare.

- Shannon Bundock Illustrations by Donovan



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## Other News

### APC Goes to Penticton



On Saturday, October 26, around 15 APC members and Woodward's Squatters hopped a bus to Penticton to stand in solidarity with our fellow union and rural protesters. We went there to let Gordo and his Liberal accomplices know that whenever and wherever they go in this province, the people will meet them with force and defiance. We joined a crowd of over 1500 people and marched together through Penticton to show that our numbers are growing along with our resolve to defeat this government. - PPMB

### QUAK Attacks Liberals

On Thursday, October 17th, over 150 queers and allies gathered at the Pan Pacific Hotel to protest Liberal MLA Lorne Mayencourt. Queers United Against Kapitalism (QUAK) organized the demonstration around five demands, which were endorsed by over thirty queer, women, anti-poverty, labour and community groups:

1. The restoration of the BC Human Rights Commission.
2. Funding for queer youth support programs.
3. Health care for people living with HIV and AIDS.
4. Health care for trans- gender/ transsexuals.
5. Re-funding of social services.

Mayencourt, an out gay man, has supported every initiative of his government, that directly harm the

## PIVOT Releases Damning Report of Police

On Monday, November 4th, PIVOT held a press conference to introduce their report on police brutality in Vancouver: "To Serve and Protect." Although the conference was well attended by mainstream media, the testimonies in the report they released were almost totally suppressed.

PIVOT has been able to put faces and badge numbers to the police brutality conducted in dark alleys by collecting affidavits (sworn statements) from Downtown Eastside (DTES) residents over the last eight months. Maybe the most disturbing find in this study is that twelve out of the fifty affidavits taken, report such extreme accounts of violence that they meet the UN definition of torture. Those who live in the DTES and are subjected to the Vancouver Police Department's (VPD) brutal tactics everyday were not so surprised by the studies statistics: 36 of the 50 people reported incidents of excessive force, 7 people were given "starlight tours" to the other side of the city, and 7 others were forced to undergo illegal strip searches. The report goes on in detail about these disgusting displays of a police department allowed by the city to function as a paramilitary force.

PIVOT and their supporters know that the VPD are a political force with a mandate in the DTES to police poverty. Because the city has direct responsibility over the VPD, it is to the city we need to demand change. PIVOT recommends that such changes be made, first be accountable within the system. They suggest that monitoring be put in place to report on all uses of force and detention. They also recommend there be access to police reports, and a community based outreach program to collect complaints. These recommendations as well others made in the report can only be implemented under the pressure of a social movement demanding justice. The report and all the affidavits are available at [www.pivotlegal.org](http://www.pivotlegal.org) as well as at the APC/PIVOT office at 42 Blood Alley Sq.

- David Cunningham

queer community. QUAK once again succeeded in raining on Mayencourt's parade, much like earlier this year during Vancouver Pride.

Despite recent public relation attempts, it would appear that government and police are no closer to being impartial supporters of the queer community. It also seems that the queer press (who avoided covering the demonstration), wishes to carry on this masquerade, perhaps more interested in gay advertising dollars than issues which have huge ramifications for the queer community such as Human Rights, Healthcare and Social Services.

QUAK is committed to exposing those responsible for attacking queers, whether from outside or within the community. QUAK will continue to build on their successful mobilizations to organize and activate the queer community. QUAK: (604) 682-3269 ext. 9915 or [quak@resist.ca](mailto:quak@resist.ca) - Blain

### To Serve and Protect

A REPORT ON POLICING IN VANCOUVER'S DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE



**stop all police brutality, harassment and intimidation!**



# Hands Off Iraq!

In British Columbia a broad based demonstration is building under the banner - November 17th Peace Coalition. A major "March For Peace - No War Against the Iraqi People" is planned for Sunday, November 17th, in Vancouver. Tens of thousands of people are expected to show the Canadian government that people in Canada want peace not war. The Anti-Poverty Committee has endorsed both the Nov. 17 action and the coalition.

## Say NO to WAR ON IRAQ



From photographs taken by Vancouverite Irene, a member of CESAP, while touring Iraq in 1999  
War on Iraq will kill Iraqi people.

The United States is moving rapidly toward a war against Iraq. The US administration is pushing for an invasion of a country who's poverty-stricken population has already suffered 12 years under a UN Security Council sanction. Iraq owns the second highest proven oil reserves in the world, but despite this wealth, Iraq has witnessed continuous economic deterioration since 1991, and has become one of the least developed countries in the Middle East. This due mostly to the sanctions imposed after the Gulf War.

According to the UN, over 1.2 million Iraqis have died since June 1997, half of which were children, as a result of the

## Woodward's 54 Update

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and for the violent and false arrests of September 22. In addition, an injunction has been applied for to remove the squatters from their make-shift homes by "legitimate" means.

We still need funds to fight these battles. The Woodward's Legal Defense Committee has so far raised over \$4000.00. More money is needed however, if we want to effectively challenge these attacks on the homeless and their supporters. These types of attacks happen every time poor and working people challenge the pro-business agenda of governments, and we must fight back. Together, fighting in the courts and in the streets, We Will Win!

In addition to having their charges dropped, all defendants who showed in court were awarded \$100.00 as compensation for BC Housing and the Crown deciding to drop all charges at the last minute. - Calvin

**LET'S MARCH FOR PEACE**  
**Sunday November 17th**  
 12 noon Gather at  
**Peace Flame Park** OR **Sea Bus Terminal**  
 Burrard & 1st Ave Richards & Cordova  
**March to Sunset Beach**  
 for Rally with Music & Speakers 2pm

Join a broad base group of people of conscience: community organizations, church groups, unions, students, peace activists, academics, business owners and professionals and many more

sanctions. According to UNICEF, many Iraqis live on as little as \$3 to \$6 a month. Close to half of children under five, suffer from diarrhoea and fevers. More than half of pregnant women are anaemic due to malnutrition. Canada continues to support the sanctions and spends \$35.9 million per year to provide a ship for the blockade of Iraq's port. Two former UN Humanitarian Coordinators in Iraq, Dennis Holliday and Hans Sponeck, have called for Canada to take a leadership role in mediating an end to this mass murder and injustice.

If the United States goes to war against Iraq, the cost is estimated to be between \$8 to \$9 billion a month. If the US devoted each year this money improving the living conditions in poor countries and to programs, we would not live in a world where more than a billion people do not have access to clean drinking water, and about 2.5 billion people lack proper toilets or sewage systems. Hunger daily stalks some 780 million people worldwide. Every day some 31,000 people die from preventable causes, half of them hunger-related.

- Ali

Correction for Newsletter #8: Gordon Campbell was not invited to speak at the East Side Family Place.

Comic by Trevor

**Legal Support for the Woodward's 54**  
 Please make cheques payable to the Woodward's Legal Defense Fund P.O. Box 21552, 1850 Commercial Dr. Van, B.C. V5N 5T5



Jennifer Clark reveals her new "drug treatment strategy" for the Down Town East Side.

# What is APC?

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 attacks under the capitalist system and these attacks have only intensified under the BC Liberal government.

The BC Liberal's brutal policies — the cuts to welfare, the six dollar training wage, the privatization of public services, the cuts to social programs, the restriction 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 these brutal policies through direct action, mass mobilization, and casework. The APC opposes racism, sexism, homophobia and all other forms of oppression. We are an independent organization that is 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.

## McDonald's Leafleting Against \$6



Starting November 16th, the Anti-Poverty Committee will be leafleting outside of McDonald's to expose their role in undermining wages in BC and abroad. McDonald's contributed \$11 000 to the BC Liberal election campaign, and is benefiting greatly from the \$6 training wage that the Liberals brought in last November. Every McDonald's in BC is using the training wage against their workers, and we must bring attention to this. We will be leafleting at the McDonald's restaurants in Downtown Vancouver, located at Granville and Dunsmuir, starting at 1 PM. Everyone is encouraged to come and participate in this direct action against the \$6 training wage.

## Problems with welfare, landlord or boss? Maybe you need Direct Action Casework

Contact the Anti-Poverty Committee  
tel: 604-682-2726, fax: 604-687-4347  
email: [apc@resist.ca](mailto:apc@resist.ca)

Office Hours: Mon-Fri 10am-6pm, Sat 12pm-5pm  
42 Blood Alley Sq., Vancouver, BC V6B 1C7  
b/w Water & Cordova, off Carrall in the DTES

## APC Events

### Disability Forum

Wed, November 20th, 6:30pm  
Roundhouse Centre  
181 Roundhouse Mews

### Leafleting McDonald's

Saturday, November 16th, 1pm  
Granville and Dunsmuir

### APC Annual General Meeting

Tuesday, November 26th, 6pm  
Location to be announced

## Get Involved...

### General Meetings

Every other Tuesday, 6pm  
November 26th & th  
327 Carrall Street  
Childcare and coffee provided

### Training Wage Campaign

Leafleting every Saturday, 12pm  
call for locations  
Meetings every Thursday, 5:30pm  
at the APC office

### Welfare Campaign

Every Monday at 5 pm  
at the APC office

### Legal Defense Campaign

Wednesday, Nov 13th, 7:30pm

### Housing Campaign

Saturday, November 16th, 6pm

### Outreach Campaign

Monday, November 18th, 7:30pm

### Cuts to Women's Services

Thursday, November 21st, 7pm

## Financial Support Needed!!

Can you help financially support the work of the Anti-Poverty Committee? We can accept cheques made out to "Anti-Poverty Committee" or direct deposit through any VanCity Credit Union.

**house the homeless! feed the hungry! care for the sick! 8**