

Anti-Poverty Committee News

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July/Aug 2004 #20

Safe Streets: A Dead End



We live in a world full of shady manipulators pulling the strings of international affairs from ivory towers. It's a class war; they know it, and have for a long time. We are learning, slowly exposing the WTO's, the FTAA's and lifting the curtain on the true "axis of evil." But we are still fighting at the end

of the rope. We will never win this fight until we follow the strings back from the ether of international affairs, where control is firm, to the streets where the fight is ours to win.

The Business Improvement Associations in Vancouver and their counterparts in other cities are local enemies that are leaders in the war on the poor. The Downtown Vancouver BIA is a prime example of the lengths that these enemies will go to further ostracize, humiliate, and attack poor and homeless people in this city. They recently lobbied local media, police and government not to refer to panhandlers and squeegeers as such, but as "beggars." They want panhandlers seen as nothing more than stray dogs. It is a term that is now standard in most local newspapers when referring to panhandlers. They wage paranoia campaigns and fix surveys, nurturing a culture of fear and hate around panhandling and squeegeeing. They employ the Downtown Ambassadors to harass and attack homeless in the streets and they encourage and propagate the swelling ranks of private security goons downtown.

Recently, several of the cities' BIAs, the Chamber of Commerce and several Tourism Boards around the province formed the Safe Streets Coalition. They are lobbying the provincial government to pass the Safe Streets Act, an attempt to further criminalize panhandling and squeegeeing.

It was against this legislation and its supporters that on Thursday June 24th, a small but dedicated group of APC's took the streets of the downtown core to the Wall Center where the DV BIA was holding its annual general meeting.

We were greeted by the elusive Dave Jones; a vocal BIA'er and the "mastermind" behind much of the recent propaganda. The crowd moved to the entrance of the main hall and a banner was erected, blocking the doors. For most of the protest Jones cowered behind the banner and complained to one of the protesters and the cops that he felt threatened, a true hero for his cause.

There was a round of fiery speeches from our allies, End Legislated Poverty, No One is Illegal, Queers Against Capitalism and others, all denouncing the hate mongering tactics of the BIAs. It was then that MP Lorne Mayencourt, the author of the proposed legislation, showed up. A true politician, like a moth to a fire, he was unable to pass up a chance to preach to the gathered media. Unfortunately

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July 1st: A Day of Resistance

On July 1st, the Anti-Poverty Committee marched in solidarity with indigenous, refugee, and immigrant communities as a part of Land, Freedom and Decolonization Day. More than 150 people marched for several hours down Commercial Drive in Vancouver, as well there were actions in Toronto and Montreal. A coalition of organizations planned the march to celebrate resistance to the oppression and exploitation that occurs inside and outside of the colonial borders of Canada.

Canada Day represents the colonization of indigenous nations as well as the genocide that occurred during the occupation of this land. Since the arrival of the colonizers, the land, resources and people of the indigenous nations have been exploited in order to create profits for the colonizers. And while the corporations and government attempt to expand these operations in order to increase their profits, the people from Kanehsata:ke to Cheam are fighting back against the development of ski resorts, golf courses, mining and logging projects.

Canadian corporations and government are also a part of the imperial project which are devastating communities of the Global South,



much like the indigenous communities within Canada. And just as military operations have been used against the indigenous communities to protect corporate interests in Canada, war is propagated throughout the world to protect these same interests. Canadian involvement in the recent overthrow of a democratically

elected president in Haiti is evidence of this agenda.

Meanwhile, refugees and

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we'll only get what we organize to take!

Safe Streets con't

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for him he was one to our fifty and he was surrounded and made the focus of the demonstration's rage. It took a dozen cops to pry him loose from the melee and he scurried like the rat he is, into the building.

The cops threatened to arrest the spirited crowd with "assault by trespass" and when they were laughed at and ignored they just sat back and fumed. When we decided that we had had our say we dispersed, satisfied that the BIAs, Lorne Mayencourt, Dave Jones and the big business reps knew that this was just the beginning. Wherever they meet in the future, whatever Machiavellian coalitions they form and whatever viscous laws they try and pass, we will be there fighting, tooth and nail to expose them for the cowards they are and crush them. This is an enemy we can and will beat.

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immigrants, many of them displaced by the imperial forces which Canada represents, are faced with a racist immigration and refugee process when arriving in Canada. Refugees, particularly from Arab and South Asian countries, have suffered under an increasingly racist process since September 11th, 2001. This exclusion and exploitation of immigrants by the settlers has existed since the formation of the colonial borders of Canada.

Solidarity among indigenous communities and those of the Global South strengthens the struggle against the policies and borders of Canada which serve to protect the interests of the capitalists, imperialists and colonialists.

The Land, Freedom and Decolonization coalition will be organizing a convergence at Sun Peaks during 28th and 29th of August in order to support the fight against development of the ski resort on unceded land.

For more information contact: noi-van@resist.ca or 778-552-2099

**RESISTANCE
WITHOUT
RESERVATION**



**PROTEST
AGAINST
SUN PEAKS**

BUSES LEAVE SATURDAY AUGUST 28th
10:30am from Safeway parking lot @ Commercial & Broadway
demonstration in front of Sun Peaks resort August 29th 2:00pm

bring banners, camping gear and food

FOR INFORMATION OR TICKETS:

Anti-Poverty Committee 604.682.2726 apc.resist.ca
No One Is Illegal noi-van@resist.ca 778.552.2099
Co-op Bookstore 1391 Commercial Drive
Various tables at Under the Volcano

**Organized by the Land, Freedom
and Decolonization Coalition**

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 attack 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 the brutal policies of the BC Liberals through direct action, mass mobilization, and case-work. We oppose racism, sexism, homophobia, and all other forms of oppression. 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.

Get Involved in APC

APC General Meetings

Every Tuesday, 6pm, top floor,
251 Union Street, press 900

Donate

APC relies on donations from individuals & organizations. You can make a cheque out to the Anti-Poverty Committee.

Another New APC Office

APC has moved again. Our new office is in the DERA office at: 332 Carrall
Vancouver, BC
Office hours are by appointment Mon-Fri 1-4

APC website:

<http://apc.resist.ca>

no justice on stolen native land!