NO COVID EVICTIONS
8 MONTHS IN THE FIGHT FOR TORONTO
BY PATRICK HOBSON

I moved to my building in Toronto’s Parkdale neighborhood in 2011. It was the only place I could afford. It still is. Timbercreek, a big corporate landlord, bought it in 2018 from the Wynn Family—notorious Toronto slum lords.

AS OF SPRING 2020, OVER 150 UNITS ARE BEING HELD VACANT. THE ORIGINAL TENANTS ARE SLOWLY BEING SQUEEZED OUT.

FOR SALE
PARKDALE
BIG PROFITS WITH MINOR DISPLACEMENT OF WORKING-CLASS FAMILIES.

2020: March 16
WHY AREN’T YOU DIRECTING ONTARIANS TO PRACTICE SOCIAL DISTANCING?
I ONLY HAVE TWO SHIFTS THIS WEEK.
EARLY PANDEMIC, MY ROOMMATE AND I WATCH DAILY UPDATES. TRUDEAU SAYS “NO ONE WILL BE LEFT BEHIND.” WE KNOW THAT ISN’T TRUE, ESPECIALLY IN PARKDALE.
I’M NOT ELIGIBLE FOR CERB YET. IT WILL BE WEEKS BEFORE CHANGES ARE MADE AND STILL NOT EVERYONE WILL BE COVERED.

MARCH 17: ASHLEIGH FROM PARKDALE ORGANIZE

WE DON’T BELIEVE WE’RE IN THAT POINT YET.
YEAR, ALL MY CLIENTS ARE DWELLING PROJECTS

MARCH 18:
DOUG FORD FINALLY BANS EVICTIONS DURING THE STATE OF EMERGENCY BUT REMAINS SILENT ON WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE BAN IS LIFTED. WIDESPREAD JOB LOSSES WILL MEAN WIDESPREAD RENT DELINQUENCY.

MARCH 20:
WE LAUNCHED THE GROUP “KEEP YOUR RENT” (KYR). OUR MESSAGE: KEEP YOUR RENT YOU MAY NEED IT. OUR DEMANDS: RENT FORGIVENESS AND NO COVID EVICTIONS

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ORGANIZING!
IT’S HARD! BUT!! IT’S SIMPLE. EVEN DURING COVID.

REACH OUT
CONNECT AND BUILD TRUST

MAY 13: AFTER SIX WEEKS OF SILENCE FROM MOST MAJOR LANDLORDS, ORGANIZED TENANTS FROM PARKDALE, THE ANNEX, EAST YORK, AND SCARBOROUGH HAND-DELIVERED DEMANDS FOR RENT RELIEF TO THEIR LANDLORDS’ HOMES.

LANDLORDS COULD USE COVID TO EVICT THOUSANDS OF TENANTS AND MAKE TORONTO MORE UNAFFORDABLE!

HELTERSHELTER.COM

Landsllords could use covid to evict thousands of tenants and make Toronto more unaffordable!

AS: I HEAR YOU ARE INTERESTED IN A RENT STRIKE AND MAKING A POSTER?
ME: Hey, Yeah! HOW SOON?

ASH: ASAP

MAKE PLANS TOGETHER
SO, WE’LL GO TO THE OFFICE AND DELIVER THE LETTERS!

Yeah!
TORONTO SITES OF STRUGGLE

JULY 9 - 1 BEDFORD RD.

WE ARE SERVING YOU WITH AN EVICTION NOTICE, JOHN TORY!! COME DOWN FROM YOUR MILLION-DOLLAR CONDO!

PROTECT TENANTS!

NO BILL 184

JULY 20 - EAST YORK
PINEDALE OFFICE OCCUPATION
INCREDIBLY, STAFF FLED AND TENANTS TOOK THE BOARD ROOM.

RICH TORONTONIANS ENJOYING THEIR SUMMER PROPERTIES.

WE AREN'T LEAVING UNTIL OUR LANDLORD COMMITS TO NO COVID EVICTIONS AND RENT RELIEF.

JULY 31! PROVINCIAL EVICTION MORATORIUM LIFTED!!

AUG 7: DOWNTOWN SHERIFFS BLOCKADE

SHERIFFS OFFICE CLOSED! EVICTIONS TODAY: ZERO

SEPTEMBER! SCHOOLS OPEN AND CASES ON THE RISE!

JOHN WAS IGNORING OUR DEMANDS, SO WE CRASHED HIS PRESS CONFERENCE.

BAN EVICTIONS IN TORONTO!

DISCOURTEOUS!

JOHN! YOU CAN:

2. CALL ON THE ONTARIO GOVERNMENT TO REPEAL BILL 184 AND TAKE EVICTION & REPAYMENT PLANS OFF THE TABLE FOR UNPAID RENT DURING THE COVID-19 CRISIS.

3. DIRECT TORONTO SERVICES NOT TO ENFORCE NON-PAYMENTS INCLUDING EVICTION ENCAMPMENTS.

JOHN! YOU CAN!
THE ACTIONS MAKE THE NEWS, BUT THE REAL WORK IS HAPPENING BACK IN OUR NEIGHBOURHOODS. (AND TAKING A TOLL)

SEPTEMBER HAS FELT LIKE A YEAR. I SPENT ALL DAY TALKING TO NEIGHBOURS.

YOU BETTER LEARN TO CHILL, YOU'RE GOING TO BURN OUT!

I KNOW.

I CAN'T IMAGINE HOW EAST-END FOLKS ARE FEELING. I'M GOING OUT TOMORROW TO HELP WITH THE BLOCKADE.

MORE TENANTS ARE ORGANIZING ALL THE TIME AND WE HAVE WON BEFORE. IN 2013, METCAP TENANTS IN PARKDALE SUCCESSFULLY Fought AN ABOVE-GUIDELINE RENT INCREASE WITH A RENT STRIKE.

MAY 1ST RENT STRIKE

TENANTS ARE GAINING THE CONFIDENCE TO PUSH BACK. THIS IS HOW WE WIN.

PARKDALE SAYS NO AGI'S

WORKING-CLASS PEOPLE CAN REPLICATE THIS ALL OVER TORONTO. BEYOND COVID, BEYOND LANDLORDS. WE CAN SAY NO TO ANYONE WHO THREATENS OUR COMMUNITY.

SEPT 21: PEOPLE'S DEFENCE (PD) AND TENANTS PUSH BACK POLICE & SHERIFFS, PREVENTING AN EVICTION IN CRESCENT TOWN AND THEN A SECOND IN TEESDALE TWO WEEKS LATER.

NOVEMBER 11TH EIGHT MONTHS!

NO CORPORATE LANDLORD HAS OFFERED RELIEF. WE ESTIMATE 30 PERCENT OF TENANTS IN PARKDALE ARE BEHIND ON RENT.

MASS EVICTIONS ARE COMING.

LANDLORDS VS. TENANTS

LET'S GET READY TO RUMBLE!!

PD HOLDS THE BLOCKADES FOR WEEKS. A TESTAMENT TO THEIR COUNTLESS HOURS ORGANIZING IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD.

OCT: BOTH EVICTIONS ARE ENFORCED BY POLICE. ONE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT. POLICE PROTECT PROPERTY, NOT PEOPLE.

NOV 4TH: GOOD NEWS! THE TEESDALE TENANT WINS HER HEARING AND GETS HER APARTMENT KEYS BACK.

PINEDALE'S LAWYERS COST MORE THAN THE RENT THE OWNERS MIGHT HAVE MANAGED.

LANDLORDS DESPERATELY WANT TO SQUISH OUR ORGANIZING AND THEY'RE WILLING TO PAY FOR IT, BUT WE GET STRONGER EVERY DAY.

NOV 30, 2020

HEARINGS ARE UNDERWAY, PEOPLE ARE BEING EVICTED, BUT LESSONS ARE BEING LEARNED AND THIS IS FAR FROM OVER. WHEN WE BUILD TRUST & POWER IN OUR NEIGHBOURHOODS WE BEGIN THE PROCESS OF RECLAIMING THOSE PLACES FOR THE PEOPLE WHO LIVE THERE. WE HAVE THE POWER TO BUILD THE WORLD WE WANT!

(START ORGANIZING!) THE END BEGINNING!

PATERNSON IS A COMIC MAKER AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZER LIVING IN PARKDALE, TORONTO.