



## THE COALITION OF PEERS DISMANTLING THE DRUG WAR

The unceded and stolen homelands of the Coast Salish people, lands belonging to the Squamish, Tsleil-Waututh, and Musqueam nations

### CPDDW Response to a Recent Donation to the VPD

**March 1<sup>st</sup> 2021**

A recent donation of a million dollars was given to the Vancouver Police Department's charity foundation; in part, to increase community policing in and around the Downtown Eastside (the DTES). *Mr. Moneybags*, AKA real estate developer Peter Wall, says the city has failed with its "misguided approach to drug use and homelessness".

Well, I say it's fucked up that the wealthy can donate money and dictate how it is used for the public good. Peter Wall sees the DTES as a problem in saying that "Vancouver's current city officials' answer to the homeless problem for the people on the Downtown Eastside is to buy up or rent dilapidated old hotels that are rodent-infested and lack proper plumbing and heating, and their answer to mental health and addiction problems is to open more injection sites throughout the city where adults and youth can bring their contraband drugs which kill them." Evidence has shown that not ONE DEATH has occurred at Insite or any of the OPS. They save lives. Folks can be supervised while using & if someone does overdose, staff that are trained in OD response.

The donation would have been more helpful if it was donated to community groups and front line workers who work in the DTES community. The money then could be driving into needed programming.

By having a wealthy individual donate to a police budget, which we have already asked to cut or eliminate all together, is beyond questionable. Mr. Wall has put more money into policing and "securing" the DTES when it is already over policed. Those using and/or selling drugs, unhoused people, and sex workers are criminalized for trying to ***fucking survive***. It goes to show that the police care more about corporate property than human lives, and that the rich have a vested interest in this.

It's time policing funds went to community groups that know how to keep the community safe. Those that work and live in the DTES are better equipped at handling what goes on in the community than police who use their power for excessive force and target substance users and the poor.

VPD is at the beck and call of Mr. Wall's 'cause he donated a lot of money. It's fucked up the wealthy get a say in how policing should be done for substance users, sex workers, and impoverished populations. It's time to take their money and budget and put it where it belongs, **in the community**.

Kali Sedgemore

President

*Coalition of Peers Dismantling the Drug War*