



230 FIGHTBACK

### Report Back – FRPO Action at Metro Toronto Convention Centre

The Federation of Rental Housing Proprietors of Ontario event was sold out. Business and Cocktail attire required. Corporate Landlords and their friends paid \$3,100 for a table of 10 to watch each other receive awards like Best Amenities/New Development/ Best Suite Renovations – or oops up goes the rent awards. The rich really love giving each other awards.

The event was held at the Metro Toronto Conference Centre. The MTCC is operated by the Metropolitan Toronto Convention Centre Corporation an independent agency of the Government of Ontario. The land is owned by Oxford Properties, established in 1960 by Don Love – Jon Love's father. Small world.

Two dozen people from four organizations (230 Fightback, PHJN, YSWTU and CJT) crashed their December 4th gala. We managed to make our way down three sets of escalators before we were stopped at a fourth escalator by security who asked to see our pass. We explained that we did not have the money to pay to get in and that all we wanted to do was to deliver a message to Tony Irwin and FRPO. Realizing that we were not going to get any further we decided that this was where we were going to make our stand. Three cops, who had been hired for the event, watched as we brought out our `WE WON'T BE PUSHED OUT` banner.

As it happened, the floor that we were on was where the coat check was located and where the guess picked up their passes. Three of our people, armed with a video camera and a mike, were dressed in their Sunday best and were able to mingle in with the paying crowd that was arriving. They introduced themselves as 'tenants who had been fucked over by Bill 60'. They asked the arriving guest - ``Do you see your tenants as human beings or revenue streams`. Organizers of the event quickly caught on and had the cops escort two of our well-dressed non-paying guess out of the building. As they were escorted out they were shouting ``Hey landlords get a real job`.

Meanwhile the rest of us were busy handing out flyers to the people arriving. By now the 6th level massive underground lobby where we made our stand was chaos with security and cops everywhere trying to get us out. The bullhorn that we brought with us only added to the craziness as our voices echoed and could be heard throughout the centre. Negotiations between us and the cops went on for about a half-hour as hundreds of patrons arriving watched on. But despite these negotiations security made it clear that they wanted us out and the cops threatened us with trespass. Several of us refused to leave. We were eventually escorted out of the building by the cops but they were not interested in giving us trespass tickets. Once outside in front of the entrance, but still technically on the property, we again pulled out the banner and protested in front of the doors. We were joined by another small group of people who had been protesting in front of the entrance of the Centre on Front Street. We ended the protest with a group picture with everyone behind the banner while security kept a close watch on us.

We then made our way to Union Station where we debriefed. The next morning York South-Weston Tenant Union put out a clip of the protest on Instagram which by Saturday morning had been viewed 80,000 times. The Toronto Today News also published an account of the protest, [Protesters removed by police for disruption outside landlord award show -TorontoToday.ca](https://torontotoday.ca/news/protesters-removed-by-police-for-disruption-outside-landlord-award-show-1.1234567) . We will continue to protest against those who support Bill 60 and the fast tracking of the Landlord and Tenant Act - WE WILL NOT SUFFER IN SILENCE.