

bc civil liberties association

L'Association des libertés civiles de la Colombie-Britannique



The Province
Letter to the Editor
provletters@theprovince.com

October 27, 2011

Dear Editor:

The headline and the tenor of the story written about the BCCLA news release concerning the Occupy Vancouver demonstration at the Vancouver Art Gallery seriously misrepresents our message. Our news release is clear. The BCCLA calls on the City of Vancouver to celebrate free expression and demonstrations such as the Occupy Vancouver demonstration. More participation by more people in public debate and discussion is to be celebrated in a democracy. We did *not* call for Occupy Vancouver to immediately withdraw. We acknowledged that the Art Gallery is a traditional venue for demonstrations and that there will inevitably be others who wish to use the space for their public expression. We said there should be respectful dialogue between the City and the “Occupy” demonstrators with a view to working out a fair use of the space for all. Our news release ended with the comment, “Free speech, cooperation and understanding are the hallmarks of democracy. Dialogue in the public square and about its fair use by different groups is key.” We encourage everyone to cherish the right of all to protest, demonstrate and participate in the public forum.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "R. Holmes".

Robert Holmes, QC
President
British Columbia Civil Liberties Association