



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Olympic Bid Protest and March:
Thurs., April 2nd 5:00 pm, Federal Plaza
Interviews w/speakers and organizers
available beginning at 4:30 pm
Additional details below

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Federal Plaza Rally and March to Greet International Olympic Committee (IOC)
upon their arrival to inspect Chicago as potential 2016 Olympic Host City

**No Games Chicago Holds Demonstration to
“Shut Down the Olympic Bid”
During IOC Visit, Thurs., April 2nd at 5 pm**

Author, Olympic Expert, and No Games Vancouver Activist Chris Shaw to Join Demonstration

April 1st (Chicago, IL)-- No Games Chicago will be holding a rally and march on Thursday, April 2nd to send a message to the International Olympic Committee (IOC) that rather than paying for a two week, debt-drenched spectacle, Chicago taxpayers want “Better hospitals, housing, schools, and trains—not games!” The IOC will be visiting Chicago April 2–8.

“The Bid Committee was quick to try to shout us down, and they never delivered when they said they’d welcome a public debate, despite several requests,” said a No Games organizer Bob Quellos. “They aren’t interested in public debate, so we decided Chicagoans should be able to speak directly to the IOC.”

- WHAT: SHUT DOWN THE OLYMPIC BID Rally and March**
- WHEN: Thursday, April 2nd 5pm**
- WHERE: Federal Plaza, Adams & Dearborn Streets in the Loop**
- MARCH ROUTE: From Federal Plaza to the Chicago 2016 Offices (AON Building)**

The history of the modern Olympics has been one of debt, displacement, and corruption. Chicago’s Olympic bid for the 2016 Summer Games is on course to be no different as the City and state have lined up hundreds of millions of taxpayer’s dollars to fund a the three week party. A coalition of individuals from throughout Chicago called **No Games Chicago** believes that the time, money, and energy placed into bidding and hosting the Olympics would be better spent on things that would actually improve the lives of average Chicagoans – including hospitals, housing, schools, and trains.

Chris Shaw, a resident of Vancouver and author of *Five Ring Circus: Myths and Realities of the Olympic Games*, discussed the similarities between Vancouver, as 2010 host city, and Chicago.

We heard the same promises about ‘no public money’ and the rest of it—the exact same song and dance. And you can see the result: once we got the games, they couldn’t spend our money fast enough. None of the economic forecasts, promises of transparency, or environmental and social promises came true in Vancouver. In fact, in all cases the outcome was the complete opposite. Most Vancouverites now wish they hadn’t supported the Games. People were displaced, and we’re preparing for a militarized zone to appear in our town. Chicago has a chance to stop all that before it starts.

In an effort to stop this potential boondoggle, Chicagoans from every part of the city will rally to send the IOC the message that the people of Chicago have a different set of priorities than the 2016 Bid Committee.

Shaw will be joined by a variety of Chicago citizens who will be speaking to the demonstration on how the Olympics will effect everyday citizens, including; Tom Tresser (speaking on the privatization of Chicago parks), Dorian Breuer of the *Green Party* (speaking on the environmental issues in the city of Chicago), Carole Steele of the Coalition to Protect Public Housing (speaking on the issue of public housing and the “Plan for Transformation”), Jim Vail, Chicago Public School teacher and member of the *Caucus of Rank and File Educators* (speaking on Renaissance 2010), and more.

Background on the Olympic Games and the 2016 Bid:

- The overall cost of London's 2012 Games has quadrupled, from an originally projected \$2.35 billion pounds to \$9 billion pounds, while the construction of the 2010 Vancouver Olympic Village athlete housing alone has put the entire City of Vancouver at risk of bankruptcy
- The City of Chicago has pledged \$500 million towards the Games as an emergency fund, despite running an approximate \$200 million deficit; a similar fund set up in London for the 2012 Games has been nearly depleted
- Despite an \$11.6 billion deficit the State of Illinois has put \$250 million of taxpayer dollars on the line for the games
- Extreme violations of civil liberties have occurred in numerous host cities: 1984 saw the jailing of thousands of young black men in Los Angeles in the infamous “Olympic Gang Sweeps;” 1996 host Atlanta criminalized homelessness and produced pre-printed citations for African-American males; in Athens in 2004 psychiatric hospitals were compelled by the government to lock up the homeless, the mentally ill, and those who suffered from drug dependency
- On housing: Atlanta's 1996 games also coincided with the decimation of public housing there; at least 1.5 million Beijing residents were displaced from their homes by the Olympic Games, while Native Americans in Canada are currently facing the development of ancestral hunting and fishing lands

For more information, visit www.nogameschicago.com or contact Sarah Macaraeg at sarah.macaraeg@gmail.com or 312-315-8476 to arrange an interview or discussion with No Games organizers or author Chris Shaw.

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