

Group Occupies Apartments in Housing Protest

By Patricia Camp

Washington Post Staff Writer

With several 3rd District policemen looking on, Katherine Johnson, 28, the mother of two children, broke a bottle of malt liquor on an outside wall of the Columbia Heights apartment building she has been asked to vacate. That signal led the takeover of the property yesterday by five of her neighbors in a dramatic protest against what they call real estate speculation.

Two women and three men moved mattresses, a table, a chair and themselves into the five-unit apartment building at 2542 13th St. NW without the permission of the owners.

Their takeover was organized by the Columbia Heights Community Ownership Project, a self-described neighborhood land trust dedicated to halting real estate speculation. The organization, which believes in collective ownership of property, has purchased three buildings in the community through donations, according to its president, Harold Moss, who was one of yesterday's squatters.

Yesterday's peaceful takeover was one of the most extreme of various actions taken recently by tenants in the District of Columbia. All over the city, tenants are organizing to stave off evictions and condominium conversions, and in many cases are trying

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By Tom Sica—The Washington Post

Squatters move furniture into building at 2542 13th St. NW after protest.

**Columbia Heights
Community Ownership
Project
1345 Euclid Street N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20009**