



WAKE UP!! IT'S YER FULL FRONTAL RIOT PORN...

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G20 SUMMIT EYEWITNESS REPORT



CRAPPING ARREST OF THE WEEK

For giving a shit about the bank crisis...
 What do you do when you feel a rumbling in the guts and there's two thousand cops between you and the nearest khazi? One old punk felt the call of nature in the kettle near the Bank of England on Wednesday but no sooner had he dropped his keks and started to strain than he was snatch-squadded by twenty cops, no doubt to be whisked away somewhere with en-suite facilities.

declared success. "We would never have hoped to get so much," Sarkozy said.

The G20 statement also declared that "the era of banking secrecy is over" with there to be a clampdown on tax evasion. However, it's hard to take that claim too seriously, especially when Britain is already trying to stall on the immediate naming and shaming of tax havens.

Meanwhile, climate change barely got a look in and the chance to reform the economic system to tie in with environmental sustainability issues was predictably nowhere on the agenda.

Gordon Brown, with his knack for modesty and understatement declared that "a new world order is emerging with the foundation of a new progressive era of international co-operation." Right on, Comrade!

BANK STATEMENT

"What is needed from the G20 is a radical shake up of the global economy; what we got was world leaders desperately rearranging the deck chairs on a sinking Titanic." - Julian Oram, World Development Movement.

Quietly ignoring all the noisy protesters outside, leaders of the G20 nations spent the last couple of days attempting to save the world by posturing and cajoling each other into knocking together a statement that Gordon Brown could triumphantly read out.

At the centre of the G20's rescue plan is \$1.1 trillion. This money, designed to jack a bit of life into the imploding economy, will mostly be given to our old friends at the IMF (See SchNEWS issues from J18 to 9/11) to hand out in loans (and them with their exemplary record of success). Just when we thought the IMF was all washed up, along comes the credit crunch and bails them out. Not that they're actually gonna be given a suitcase with a trillion quid in it - it's all on tick. More debt will be created and plans also involve the IMF devaluing its own 'currency' by just printing more IMF 'money' - special drawing credits (SDR's) which countries can cash in for a no questions asked loan from a rich country.

But we all know IMF help doesn't come

for free and the G20 has done little to guarantee that other IMF administered cash won't be accompanied by the usual failed economic policies and stern words about 'good governance'. Not to mention that much of that loan cash will find its way back into the hands of western corporations looking to 'invest' in developing countries to bleed 'em dry in the familiar privatise and profiteer pattern.

With Free Trade still at the centre of the solutions, the top nations seem still determined to maintain rigged trade rules and to continue pushing smaller countries into unfair trade deals. As 17 of the countries that pledged to avoid protectionist policies have already taken action to protect domestic markets it seems the old hypocrisies seem set to go on.

\$50 billion of the money has been earmarked for the worlds poorest countries but given the record of the richest nations delivering on previous aid pledges it's unlikely those poorest countries will be holding their collective breaths waiting for the cheque to arrive.

Much has been made of French president Nicolas Sarkozy and his German counterpart Angela Merkel's supposedly unmoveable position of tax reform and banking regulation. While some concessions were made they completely failed to get their desired cross border 'global regulator' and then promptly

See inside for full G20 roundup

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BOILING KETTLE

Despite the media's apocalyptic predictions, the four horsemen (See SchNews 667) did at least make it to the Bank of England. Whether this was a good idea or not is open to question. It certainly brought a measure of mayhem to the financial heart of London, which seemed largely closed down for the duration. Our numbers were impressive – given the short notice and the media hype of extreme violence. But tactics adopted gave the Met free rein to place a huge cordon around the entire demo – the so-called kettle.

As soon as the final Black Horse (ironically the one symbolising land enclosure) arrived, police lines rapidly snapped into place across the streets surrounding the plaza that the bank sits on. Unfortunately – although many did suc-

cessfully make a break for it – the majority of the crowd, with little idea of what to do (unless they'd read last week's SchNEWS public order guide obviously) stood around as this manoeuvre was executed. Whilst we know that the protests were organised on very short notice, there seemed to be little aim other than simply getting into the area – there were no bust-cards, and no attempts at crowd co-ordination.

At first most seemed happy to be inside the huge kettle – a few soundsystems were blasting out and there was even a bizarre outburst of contemporary dance in front of the The Royal Exchange. As the hours wore on and the few city types caught in the circle had shown ID and got themselves extracted, it became obvious that if the police had their way no-one was

getting out 'til long after dark. No water, no food, not even a toilet. The reason given? – 'to prevent a breach of the peace'.

By around half-one the kettle had been truly brought the boil and fighting had broken out along Threadneedle St. A line of police were pushed back by a crowd shouting, "Let us out". A few bottles were lobbed but even without these the cops were forced to give way to the sheer physical pressure. Alerted by the noise, support streamed over from the other exits to reinforce Threadneedle and push the cops back to the junction with Bartholomew Lane. This left the windows of Royal Bank of Scotland exposed. They were duly smashed, although rioters were outnumbered by photographers by around fifteen to one. However police lines here were too strong to breach.

At around 2.30, the crowd facing a thinner police line across Victoria St suddenly surged forward and by sheer weight of numbers pushed their way through. One of the shovers told SchNEWS, "It was amazing – we were resigned to being in the kettle until midnight but the lines broke right in front of me and confused police were shouting asking each other, 'What's the plan?'" Despite the rapid deployment of riot cops, possibly up to a thousand people escaped at this point. Soon the windows of HSBC on Cheapside had gone in.

SchNEWS has heard reports that others managed to sneak or blag their way out over the next few hours but during the afternoon the noose was gradually tightened with baton charges. Eyewitnesses reported a sense of panic developing inside the pen. People were not allowed out until after 8pm and only then after being photographed.

One man, Ian Tomlinson is known to have died inside the cordon. SchNEWS has heard conflicting reports as to whether he was struck by police. Perhaps a coroners inquiry into his death will expose police tactics to public glare (unless they invoke their handy new powers to keep it all secret of course).

TENTS AFFAIR

As the kettle was boiling at the Bank of England, tents were springing up outside the European Climate Exchange in nearby Bishopsgate, kicking off the day-long Climate Camp in the heart of the city. Soon the street was a colourful sea of pop-up tents, banners, bunting, bikes and fancy dress, with needs met by vegan kitchens, a farmers market and a compost toilet.

A carnival atmosphere reigned as many took respite at the oasis of peace that was the camp after getting away from the police batons and shields at the Threadneedle St. Workshops, live music, and samba were on offer to the couple of thousand thronging Bishopsgate. The mood changed towards office closing time as hundreds of fully-kitted riot police were deployed at either end of the street



and city workers in dress-down gear hurried home making sarky comments about the climate campers supposed lack of employment.

Despite assurances made in the morning by cop Commander Broadhurst to climate campers in a Lib Dem MP's office, the camp was brutally

evicted. Without warning, at 7pm baton-wielding riot police waded in, trashing tents and bikes. Campers swiftly reacted by forming blockades with their bodies. Holding up their hands and shouting 'this is not a riot', campers formed a wall to prevent police incursion. Several were injured and arrested in this unprovoked attack.

Only the restraint of the campers prevented a riot, although not their injuries. One SchNEWS correspondent, who narrowly avoided the cordon and witnessed the attack from outside said, "We are clearly entering a new era of policing. I have never before witnessed such an unprovoked police attack. They felt they could do what they like. It was as if they were taking vengeance on the campers for their inability to keep protesters penned in at the Bank."

After it was clear no further progress could be made, the police kettled those remaining in the camp and turned on those left outside, moving a large group back towards the Bank of England and as far as London Bridge, which was then closed. Another group just outside the camp tried a different approach, sitting down in the road but not blocking any traffic as the police had already closed the road. According to one, "We were sitting on the ground as we had been for hours. Unprovoked and giving no

IF YOU'RE NOT PISSED OFF YOU'RE NOT PAYING ATTENTION

STORMING THE RAMPARTS



in, they're coming in,' we all ran upstairs to the second level, people were getting panicked, some people split to the front of the room, others of us stayed where we were and decided to sit down with our hands in the air."

As dozens of police battered their way through the door, 30-40 activists congregated on the top floor and "sat in a circle with our arms in the air to show the police our non-violent intentions" However, cops in full riot gear brandishing taser guns forced them face down with hands on the floor. People were brought out handcuffed one by one and sat on the pavement whilst police searched the building. Two were taken to hospital with head injuries inflicted by the

police and two others were arrested.

Other cops cordoned off the street while supporters of the detainees kept up a lively protest denouncing the illegal police actions. They were released after giving their details two hours later. At hand during the raid was the cops' latest toy, the urban military-style armoured Ford F450 vehicle. Although police allowed people in one by one to get their possessions, they emptied the building and started ripping up the floorboards.

Meanwhile over at RampArts, it was party time for the FIT throughout Thursday morning as a large number of bobbies gathered to stop and search all traffic in and out of the well known London squat. Anyone leaving the building that morning were pressed for information and filmed with glee by the FIT eager to make ID's and arrests. Shortly after midday, as Earls Street was busted open, bobbies in balaclavas smashed their way in through the roof, assaulting everyone in their way as batons and tasers were drawn. With an embedded ITN camera team in tow, they screamed at everyone to get down on the ground, jumping on them and handcuffing them, firing off insults and taunts like "one of you croaked last night". After checking IDs four were arrested including two who had been injured during the raid. The others were released and the centre remains open, see www.therampart.wordpress.com



Two London squat centres were raided yesterday (Thursday) as police took a swipe at the infrastructure of the G20. The long term squatted social centre Ramparts and the G20 convergence centre at Earl Street in the City were both raided on Thursday at midday in coordinated operations.

The police had kept Earl Street residents awake for much of Wednesday night, banging on the doors and windows and switching their sirens on outside. In the morning they had been searching anyone coming or going and demanding people's names and addresses.

SchNEWS eyes on the ground at Earl St told us "At around midday I heard 'they're coming



warning they forced their way forward swiping at us with batons. I've been hit over round my mouth." Those who continued to sit were kicked whilst others were chased out of the area with the help of some swinging batons.

After several such attacks into the camp, including the use of snatch squads, the police finally cleared the last of the camp, which had for 12 hours turned a stretch of the City of London into part of the climate solution. As Climate Camp 09 put it: "Street empty. They beat us out and squashed our tents. But oh what a world we created! Shame on the powers that be."

* See www.climatecamp.org.uk

PARTY & PROTEST

* For full listings updated weekly see www.schnews.org.uk/pap

REACHING THE SUMMIT

Arriving at Excel Centre - the venue for the day's G20 Summit - at around 10.30am, police had cordoned off a pen on Tidal Basin Road where a rowdy group of Ethiopians took the lead in protesting over the fate of the Ogaden people who are being targeted by the military. By about 1pm the only piece of argy-bargy to be seen was the outing of a known white supremacist who was confronted by Antifa activists and rapidly sent on his way after video-ing his 'outers'.

Half the assembled - numbering about 3-400 then decided to head into the city to Battle of the Bank II, joining up with the thousand or more already there to pay tribute to Ian Tomlinson who died during the protests the previous evening. In the baking afternoon sun tempers flared as police eventually penned in four separate cordons of protesters. Bottles and missiles were thrown as the all new dark blue police riot vans made a blatant posturing parade down Threadneedle St. This was followed by repeated charges from police horses as protesters took over the junction of roads at the front of the Bank. Tame compared to the previous day but at least the City came to a stilted standstill for the day.

By 4pm it looked like the cops had things sewn up with the four cordons of previously up for it activists diminished as people drifted to pubs to regroup...Oh well, the Summer of Rage is a marathon not a sprint...

RAVENS ART

Ravens Ait, the squatted island in the middle of the Thames in Surbiton (See SchNEWS 670), has sent an urgent call-out to SchNEWS readers to phone, email or write to Kingston Council to help swing the debate as negotiations continue with the local council to secure the island as an eco-community and autonomous space for all. The island continued to be used productively throughout the G20 protests with skill shares, workshops, an eco-cinema, a new permaculture garden, music jams and a kids space set-up to provide a creche for activists during this busy period. A wide range of local groups hope to utilise the space for non-commercial activities and networking and save it from being sold off to property developers and lost forever.

There is a call-out for people to come and get involved in any way they can - check out the website www.ravensait.org.uk or www.circlecommunity.org or head to the river from Surbiton station and hail the ferryman for a tour round the island and a welcomed stay. To demonstrate solidarity from further afield let the council know how you feel about their plans to sell off historic common land to make some quick cash. Annoy head man Bruce McDonald, the chief exec. of Kingston council with your sweet support on 02015475151, email him at bruce.mcdonald@rbk.kingston.gov.uk or write to The Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames, Guildhall, High St, Kingston upon Thames KT1 1EU. Others to hit are the mayor at mayoroffice@rbk.kingston.gov.uk and derek.osbourne@councillors.kingston.gov.uk

SPANNERS IN THE WORKS

While protesters were taking out their anger on the causes of the financial crash in London, groups of sacked car industry workers directly affected by British car production dropping by 60% are occupying factories in Britain and Ireland. Some are considering restarting production as worker run businesses, as has been happening in Argentina (see below).

It's not that you'll catch SchNEWS trotting out some old lefty dogma about good 'ol working class jobs being more important than the environmental impact of the industry they are part of – particularly when it comes to the car industry. But what's notable here is workers' attempts to re-take control of their workplaces.

Hardest hit by the protests has been car part manufacturer Visteon who last week announced the winding down of its British operations, a process which will see 565 of its 600 UK based employees lose their jobs. Most of the cuts were to take place immediately - redundancy pay for many workers was slashed or none existent and pensions were frozen.

The protest kicked off in Belfast last Wednesday when all 200 workers were dismissed by an administrator with an hours notice. "The worst thing about it is the way we were treated – that's why we're so angry," one protester was quoted as saying. "There's no humanity in it – they wouldn't even let us stay to empty our lockers". In response, 100 of the workers began an occupation of the building and are demanding action to save jobs and treat workers fairly.

Since then the protest has spread to the mainland. Around 80 workers have now occupied a factory in Enfield while 100 more have been staging a sit-in outside the site in Basildon. Workers have now also descended on Britain's main Ford factory in Dagenham, establishing a picket outside the entrance and appealing for solidarity from the Ford workers.

Until 2008, Visteon was owned by Ford. Although now officially separate companies, Ford were Visteon's sole customers and many of the employees had been there so long that they were still on Ford contracts. Workers claim that Ford had promised that any redundancies from the company would receive the same compensation as employees employed directly by Ford, a promise on which they subsequently reneged. Ford is currently denying any responsibility for the workers and refuses to get involved in the dispute.

If the Visteon workers are looking for something to keep them busy during the occupations they would do well to look to Dundee for inspiration. As SchNEWS reported earlier in the month (see SchNEWS 667) employees at Prisme Packaging responded to a similar situation also by occupying the factory. Already into their fifth week of occupation they are now investigating the possibility of restarting the business as a workers co-op.

In Ireland however, the occupation at Waterford Crystal glass finally came to an end after an eight week stand off. The workers had kept the factory running during the occupation but finally had to admit defeat when the

American private equity firm that took it over threatened to withhold EUR 10m of pension payments. Before its demise the protest caught the imagination of Irish workers and led to a number of actions in support, including a rally of around 10,000 people in Dublin on February 21st - the largest in 30 years.

* Continuing to show the way towards a genuine alternative is the workers co-op movement in Argentina. Towards the end of January SchNEWS reported on the worker seizure of Indugraf – a Buenos Aires graphics company (see SchNEWS 664). Operating under the name of the 10th of December Cooperative, the workers have since recommenced production despite continued threats of eviction.

Meanwhile, workers at another Buenos Aires company 'Disco de Oro' have also occupied the factory after owners tried to close down and strip the premises without informing employees. They have since begun the process of meeting with the Ministry of Work having laid their claim to the business while attempting to restart the factory.

Both new co-ops receive extensive support not only from the network of other worker run businesses but also from their community – one of the reasons there are more than a 150 of these 'recuperated businesses' operating in Argentina. The movement in Argentina began after the 2001 economic crash. In the eight years since, what began out of desperation and necessity has grown into a viable option in Argentina and a potential a model for action here in Britain.

NATO SUMMIT STRASBOURG

The anarchist circus moves on to France and Germany for the NATO summit in Strasbourg on April 3rd-4th. Top of the agenda for the assembled militarys and governments will be a new strategy for the failing war in Afghanistan. The French Interior Minister, Alliot-Marie, declared the countries borders closed to those whose 'looks and clothing' don't fit due to the 'threat of terrorism' and 'unrest of radical proportion'. Dozens of protesters travelling from Germany were forbidden entry into France, Luxembourg and Switzerland. The police has already been questioning protesters, water canons have been moved in to place and helicopters are circling overhead. 3000 are estimated to have gathered at the camp.

On Thursday afternoon around a thousand protesters, including a large black block, marched from the camp towards Strasbourg city centre. As the police fired tear gas, the marchers erected barricades and set rubbish bins on fire. An army barracks had its windows smashed and was paint bombed. Getting carried away some of the black block also smashed bus shelters and car windows. Hundreds were arrested as police chased the marchers back to the camp. Later in the evening the police besieged the camp, firing in tear gas and rubber bullets and making incursions into different areas of the camp.

Meanwhile across the border in Baden-Baden a smaller demo with around 200 was taking place.

* See <http://linksunten.indymedia.org>

CREEPY CRAWLEY

Seven anti-deportation campaigners who locked on outside Tinsley House immigration detention centre earlier this month (See SchNEWS 669) pleaded guilty to 'aggravated trespass' at Crawley Magistrates Court this week. All seven were released on conditional discharge and ordered to pay the court fees. Two others who were also arrested on the action, have pleaded not guilty and are due in court again soon. For more info tel 07506904269 email stopdeportation@riseup.net

MAL MAISON

A group calling itself "Justice Not Crisis" (JNC) have occupied the disused Beechcourt Hotel in Bristol Road, Birmingham. JNC plan to clear up the abandoned hotel, closed after the Council shut it due to complaints of noise, burning tyres and its alleged use for "immoral purposes". They hope to make it a useful community resource and clean up the gardens which are an eyesore to local residents. Email phm@sdf.lonestar.org web www.justicenotcrisis.com

Lady Of The Lakenheath

Lindis Percy, veteran peace campaigner with countless arrests to her name, managed to cause traffic chaos last Monday (30th) at Lakenheath US Air Force base in Suffolk. When she stood outside gate one of airbase with an upside down American flag, the base responded by going on 'lock down' apparently concerned that people might drive at her when exiting the base. After a friendly copper declared Percy's protest to be peaceful and legal, he made it clear he wouldn't intervene the gridlock persisted and the base was forced to open another gate.

* See www.caab.org.uk

EDO Briefs

On the night of March 29th, the prison probation service building of Brighton was attacked with paintbombs and spraypaint signs saying "No War" and "EDO 2". (The HSBC bank next door also suffered smashed windows for good measure.) The actions were taken in solidarity with the 'EDO 2', Robert and Elijah, who are currently jailed for their part in smashing up the EDO factory on January 19th (See SchNEWS 663)

Meanwhile, ITT Corp face a challenge from religious shareholders (holy rollers such as the Dominican Sisters of Hope, the Presbyterian Church (USA), and the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Episcopal Church) to disclose all details of the company's foreign sales of military and weapons-related products and services. The god squad plan to bring the motion at the May 12th ITT AGM – SmashEDO activists will obviously be watching from afar with interest... www.smashedo.org.uk

RIGHT OFF

Luton has resisted yet another invasion from the BNP when their planned march in the town centre during the military parade last Saturday failed to get off the ground (See SchNEWS 670). Activists from trade unions, Unite Against Fascism, Hope not Hate and others gathered to stamp upon the ugly reared head of the fascist front. Anti-fascist leaflets were dropped liberally, a petition was signed by locals and the march fizzled out. Totalitarian policing was put to good use for a change as the pigs stopped and searched BNP members, persuading them to leave the planned demo. Email kittyplant@btinternet.com

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SchNEWS warns all readers - this could be the fall of capitalism, but don't bank on it. Honest.

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