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G8 demonstrations

29 Arrested in Anti-G8 Protest in Edinburgh

- News from around the world -

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29 people were arrested in Edinburgh on July 6 as protesters took to the streets of Edinburgh after central police command had cynically stopped their transport arriving to take them to Gleneagles. Among those arrested were several key organisers from G8 Alternatives who were snatched from the march by squads of police.

[https://www.internationalviewpoint.org/IMG/jpg/g8_edinb.jpg]

Police snatch protester

Over 450 people with bus tickets and a further 200 without tickets were left stranded at Waterloo Place and at the Jack Kane Campsite as two bus companies failed to materialise. The bus organiser found out they had been told by central police command not to come and pick up the protesters. They had told the bus companies: "Edinburgh was closed; you cannot get out of Edinburgh; the march was cancelled, the march was postponed, there was civil disorder across Scotland".

Central Police command had started harassing the assembly point for buses. Several van loads of police from Greater Manchester Met arrived at just before 10am and cordoned off the assembly point and tried to prevent, but unsuccessfully, people joining the queue for buses. Local Lothian and Borders police worked with the march organisers to try and get the missing buses but they were clearly being over ridden by central police command.

At this point a collective position was taken by the protesters: if we were not allowed to go to Gleneagles to march we would march in Edinburgh.

We assembled ourselves eight abreast; arms linked and marched towards the start of the main street in Edinburgh, Princes Street. The local police quickly formed a line in front of us and began negotiating with us. Our aim was simple: we wanted to go along the main street in Edinburgh and not be diverted off any side streets.

We wished to stay in full view of the public. This was the best way of preventing central police command from attacking the demonstration as they had done with the street carnival on the previous Monday.

As we approached the start of Princes Street we saw and heard the protesters from the Jack Kane Campsite marching to join us. The march was now some 700 strong as we marched towards the middle of Princes Street. At this point the police formed a line with vans. They wanted us to go left off Princes Street.

After a lot of collective discussion we decided to attempt to go through the police line and continue along Princes Street. This we achieved with some considerable ease. Ironically at this point Bob Geldoff was seen coming out of one of Edinburgh's luxury hotels! The police came back to us and agreed to our route.

As we reached the end of Princes Street, the back of the march became uneasy about moving off the main road. The march then turned round and headed back along Princes Street. The police then formed a new line at the middle of Princes Street.

At this point the march had swelled to over 1,000 with many believing it was Geldoff's long march for Justice. At this point the local police were reinforced by the riot squads from Manchester Met. They started to try and break up the march by arresting the key organisers and others.

We had been on Princes Street for over three hours. We did not blink at Gleneagles; we did not blink in Edinburgh. We had not only shown our opposition to the G8 but we had won back the right to march.

29 Arrested in Anti-G8 Protest in Edinburgh

27 of those arrested have been released on bail. The conditions of the bail are draconian -excluding local residents from central Edinburgh as well as Glasgow and Perth and Kinross. A defence campaign has been launched to have all charges dropped. Contact voice.reports@btconnect.com