

WHAT MORE HUMAN RESPONSE COULD THERE BE TO A FINANCIAL DISTRICT—AN URBAN SPACE DEVOID OF LIFE, DEPRIVED OF AFFORDABLE RENTS, SCOURED OF AUTONOMOUS LIVELIHOODS, SUBORDINATED TO THE NEEDS OF TRAFFIC AND COMMERCE, HELD UNDER THE EYE OF SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS, OCCUPIED BY POLICE, AND PLAGUED WITH CORPORATE OUTLETS AND BANKS —THAN TO DESTROY IT?



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SUPPORTING THE PRISONERS OF THE G20 POLICE STATE



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Published in July, 2010

For a thorough analysis of the conspiracy charges and police infiltration of anarchist communities read [G20 Conspiracy Case: The Inside Story](#) at crimethinc.com

To read the collective statement of the 'G20 Main Conspiracy Group', individual statements of co-defendants, and statements read to the courts, visit conspiretorest.wordpress.com

Guelph Anarchist Black Cross is providing some of the support for these comrades. For more info: guelphprisonersolidarity.wordpress.com

*Because none of us are free
until all of us are free.*

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we have yet another experience of putting up with total surveillance and control, of being disciplined to get used to it.

This is their vision of the future: cops and security cameras everywhere, preemptive arrests for simply planning or talking about resistance, people with masks or spraypaint or eye wash for the teargas being treated as terrorists. We can either get used to this future, and continue to believe in the validity of their rules, or we can fight back. For just as there is no difference between dispossession and disempowerment, there can be no line between opposing what the G20 stand for and showing solidarity to those who have been arrested for fighting against it.

One of the best ways to keep up the pressure on the banks, the oil companies, the war profiteers, the media, and the politicians, is to support those who are facing charges for organizing resistance.

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THIS WEEK, MY MIND IS WITH THE sixteen Canadians who will be transported between their maximum security jail cells and the court to determine whether they will be held in prison until trial or released on extremely restrictive bail conditions. They are accused of organizing the protests against the elite G20 summit of world leaders that took place in Toronto at the end of June. At these protests, thousands of people took to the streets in opposition to specific policies of these twenty leading world governments or in negation of the global political and economic system in its entirety. Protestors enacted their disagreement and outrage in a variety of ways that included protest, counterinformation, and property destruction targeting the summit security forces and several major corporations.

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In all, over 1000 people were arrested during three days of protest, many of them detained based on their appearance, put in

cages, sexually harassed or assaulted, injured, denied food, water, legal and medical attention, and otherwise abused. Of those thousand plus detainees, these sixteen are facing the heaviest charges, accused of conspiracy as the supposed ringleaders of the mayhem.

Some of them were arrested in early morning raids, forced half-naked out of bed at gunpoint, assembled on their lawns and handcuffed in the pre-dawn darkness, and hauled off to jail. Others were picked up while biking or walking around town, sometimes by plainclothes cops making lightning grabs, a tactic perfected by the Stalinist police (the cops are internationalists, you see, and their methods for control travel across borders with much greater ease than they allow the rest of us).

None of this should be surprising. Powerful men in suits convening to discuss

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workers died, when all those people were evicted, when all that money was taken from us by the banks, when all those bombs fell, when all that air and water were poisoned, no one in power was punished and it didn't matter whether rules were broken or followed. To speak of rules and laws is to perpetuate one of the greatest lies of our society.

What matters is that a great many more banks and cop cars will have to be thrown on the trash fire of history before we can talk about a new world, so we'd better stop getting so upset by such a modest show of resistance.

What matters is that the \$1.3 billion security budget that accompanied the G20 summit is not a concern of the past. The police still have all that new crowd control weaponry and training, and they still have yet another experience of grinding their boot in our face and getting rewarded for it, while

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To talk about broken windows when the G20 come to town is to participate in a policing operation that has our doors broken in and guns pointed in our faces, regardless of whether we justify this collaboration with a discourse of nonviolence or one of security. It is to contradict even that most tepid of progressive clichés: people over profit.

To consider questions of guilt or innocence in the case of these sixteen people facing conspiracy charges is to indulge in all the hypocrisy of a judge, a prosecutor, or a cop. It doesn't matter that most of these people were already arrested when the property destruction occurred, and it doesn't matter that they didn't lead any conspiracies because we anarchists don't have leaders, and we certainly don't need them to carry out a little bit of vandalism.

What matters is that when all those

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world problems; heavily armed police kicking down a door and sticking a gun in your face—this is the most ordinary juxtaposition imaginable in a democratic society.

The G20, just like the G8 and just like the International Monetary Fund or World Trade Organization and just like capitalism as a whole, is an act of exclusion, and when the stakes are this high, exclusion is always a violent thing. The governments that compose the G20, like all governments everywhere, base their power on forcibly excluding anyone else from making decisions that affect their lives. When the G20 convene to talk about global warming or financial crises—problems which they largely created, which they profit from immensely, and which they will escape the worst effects of—they are not making decisions in any positive sense, so much as preventing all the rest of us from addressing these problems.

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Unfortunately, the policies of the G20, and the tactical question of the protests against it, generally appear as separate issues in the progressive alternative media. But in reality, it is impossible to draw a line between the harmful consequences of governmental and corporate policy, the elitist way in which they determine that policy, and the extreme level of police control that accompany their summits.

The fact that the global economy functions simply to keep capital moving, regardless of who is harmed in the process, the fact that elite institutions and politicians can respond to capitalist crisis by funneling billions to the banks and kicking normal people out of their houses, and the fact that people who protest this are surveilled and brutalized through a program of counterterrorism, are all aspects of the same truth: being robbed of our ability to live with health and dignity

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than to the elite.

The pragmatic justification is that the violence distracts from the real issues, but it is long past the point where we have to recognize that the media will never talk about the issues, except to allow them to be reframed for the benefit of the economy and the government. This police operation only works if dissidents participate. If we continue to focus on the reasons for fighting back against the system by whatever means, and there will always be an uncontrollable diversity of means in a diverse struggle, then there will be no distraction, except for the distraction of the corporate media, which is ever present. Either the media will pull their hair out about our violence, or they will turn the spotlight on the latest celebrity news, the latest politician's speech. To talk about anything else, anything real, is up to us.

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Anarchists are great organizers: some of us participate in the community groups you admire, set up the alternative media you rely on, arrange housing and logistics for the protests you attend, carry out the direct actions that revitalize the campaigns that are important to you. It should be safe to assume that at least sometimes we could manage to commit a little property destruction without the help of police infiltrators.

It might also be safe to suggest that those dissidents who mirror the police and politicians in their sycophantic denunciation of “violence” share some other points in common with the authorities. Namely, they assist in the same project of democratic government, which is to convince people to participate in their own exploitation, whether through elections or profit-sharing or whatever other gimmick, and to insist on the validity of rules that will always be applied more harshly to us

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and being prohibited from intervening in our own lives are the same thing. The gun in the face and the televised speech are two motions in the same process.

Because this kind of authority always provokes resistance, another fundamental process of authority is not to beat down resistance so much as to discipline it to follow the rules. So, RBC can fund gentrification and oil drilling, British Petroleum can kill their workers and destroy the Gulf of Mexico, border guards can murder immigrants, cops can torture youths, the normal functioning of the Canadian economy can murder over three times as many people through workplace “accidents” as are claimed by homicides, but if protestors smash a bank window or light a cop car on fire, they are denounced as violent.

And above all, this operation is carried out by fellow protestors, who echo the

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media and Canadian politicians in describing the property destruction that occurred in downtown Toronto as a tragedy. But downtown Toronto already was a tragedy. What more human response could there be to a financial district—an urban space devoid of life, deprived of affordable rents, scoured of autonomous livelihoods, subordinated to the needs of traffic and commerce, held under the eye of surveillance cameras, occupied by police, and plagued with corporate outlets and banks—than to destroy it?

Yet curiously, a chorus of liberals are reproducing the tired lie that only agent provocateurs could possibly be audacious enough to attack the system, that the Black Bloc is comprised partially or entirely of infiltrators.

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I can assure these liberals that there are thousands of anarchists in North America who would love to trash a police car or a

bank. There are millions of other people who would love to do these things as well. The fact that so many liberals denounced these actions would suggest that liberals, along with rich people, are one of the few demographics who don't harbor any rancor for cops or banks, or that they are the political equivalent of Victorians, suppressing their appreciation of something that is both healthy and necessary. This level of denial reminds me of the hacks who decried the violence in the Canadian newspapers, speaking of provocations by an irresponsible minority, while the accompanying photographs, careful to always to show only individuals or small groups damaging property, could not hide the huge crowds gathering around the delinquents, composed of unmasked, normally dressed people, taking pictures and smiling as they watched the destruction. Those bystanders knew what anyone who is still human knows well: *that a burning cop car is a beautiful thing.*

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