

Do You Know the Way to Auchterarder? Protest and Policing at the 2005 G8 Summit.

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***Abstract:** Recent analyses of protest policing in Western democracies argue that there has been a marked shift away from oppressive or coercive approaches to an emphasis on consensus based negotiation. King and Waddington (2005) amongst others, however, suggest that the policing of international summits may be an exception to this rule. This paper examines the arguments surrounding protest policing in relation to the 2005 G8 summit in Gleneagles, Scotland. We argue that 'negotiated management' cannot be imported wholesale as a policing strategy. Rather it is mediated by local history, forms of police knowledge and modes of engagement. Drawing on interviews and participant observation we show that 'negotiated management' works best when both sides are committed to negotiation and that police stereotyping or protestor intransigence can lead to the escalation of any given event. In closing we note the new challenges posed by forms of 'global' protest and consider the implications for future policing of protest.*

Introduction

You know for me – I had mixed emotions about Gleneagles. On the one hand I think everybody that got there deserves a medal because honest to God – ... - there was roadblocks, there was a blatant attempt to stop twenty coaches leaving Edinburgh, and when they did – the journey from Edinburgh to Gleneagles is forty-one miles, yet the speedometer, the trackometer/tachograph thing on the bus: 214 miles we had to travel to get there because they sent us across country and back and then again. And we made it and I think that everyone who got there deserves an orienteering medal right (Fox, Interview).¹

Mounting disruption at gatherings of world leaders has increasingly forced a rethink of international conference strategies and locations. Initial attempts to gain democratic legitimacy by conducting deliberations in major world cities - symbolically being 'with the people' – have waned, and such summits now prioritise security and seek less accessible loci (King and Waddington 2005: 264). Following the example set by Canadian authorities in 2002, when the Group of Eight (G8) industrial world leaders came to Britain in 2005 the remote hotel in Gleneagles, Scotland, was selected as the conference venue. As in Canada, where the retreat to the Rocky Mountains split the protests, the choice of Gleneagles presented protest organisers in Britain with severe obstacles. In a replay of the Canadian events, the major protests abandoned the tactic of besiegement and opted to demonstrate in

¹ A list of cited interviews, and the status of the respondent, can be found at the end of this article.

the Scottish capital of Edinburgh leaving a smaller group of protestors to try and take their message directly to the summit leaders.

This strategic retreat, as Scottish Socialist Party convenor Colin Fox notes in the above quote, was central to the approach that the Scottish police adopted to the protests. In pre-Summit interviews and press-releases the police rehearsed arguments in which the competing claims of leaders, local residents and protestors were carefully calibrated and weighed up in the 'negotiated management' style of policing. Their pronouncements lent credence to accounts of protest policing that stress the move away from repressive tactics in favour of consensual and negotiated settlements that minimise the resort to violence. In the event, however, police responses to protest events at the actual summit encompassed an array of tactics from road blocks, military style policing, mixed messages, coercion and facilitation.

Whilst the largest demonstrations surrounding the G8 passed off peacefully in Edinburgh (Gorrington and Rosie 2006) – well away from where world leaders were meeting – this paper focuses on the smaller, more contested, protests that occurred around the actual summit. The aim is to tease out the dynamic interplay between police and protestors during these summit protests to see what this can tell us about the policing of 'global protest'. It is our contention that such 'global' events can only be understood in their local context. A detailed analysis of the protests in Scotland, suggests that disruption and violence were minimised where policing most closely resembled the negotiated management approach, but whether this prevailed or not depended on specific local issues. The paper begins by considering recent accounts of protest policing before turning to data from our research at the 2005 summit protests. In conclusion we bring the data into conversation with the theory and consider the implications of our findings.

Policing Protest

Several studies document the trend towards more democratic and consensual policing of protest and public order in Western democracies (Della Porta and Reiter 1998, Gilham and Marx 2000, Waddington and King 2005). One of the most prominent of the so-called 'soft-hat' approaches to protest policing is the strategy of 'negotiated management' (Della Porta and Reiter 1998, Vitale 2005). This mode of policing moves away from repressive and heavy handed tactics and emphasises the need for greater cooperation and communication between police and protestors. The intent is to avoid the resort to violence and 'de-escalate' sensitive situations. This entails safeguarding (even facilitating) rights to protest, and negotiated solutions include the careful stage-managing of events and the toleration of public disruption.

In effect, negotiated management has entailed alterations in the established 'rules of the game' to allow for greater police discretion in facilitating, responding to and interacting with protest groups. The trend away from the more militarised 'king's police' approaches to public order and the emphasis on community policing maps onto a coherent police philosophy relating to issues of legitimacy and democracy (Della Porta and Fillieule 2004, Vitale 2005). This ties into widespread findings that repressive policing is often counter-productive and can reinforce a protest or become the focus of a new cycle of demonstrations (Earl 2003, Della Porta and Fillieule 2004). Each of the above accounts, however, emphasises that negotiated management is neither universal nor uniform, and there is a great degree of variation within police responses.

Della Porta and Fillieule (2004) argue that one of the key intervening variables in the approach to protest events is 'police knowledge'. Police forces, they note, generate stereotypes and short-hands that give them a sense of 'knowing' a protest constituency and thus anticipating how they will behave and what levels of policing will be required. Based on their research in France, Fillieule and Jobbard (1998) suggest that there are three interrelated influences on protest policing: First and foremost are the perceptions of the police and their analysis of the protest group, the tactics likely to be employed and their sense of whether the protest objectives are legitimate or not. The second variable is the degree to which police come under political pressure to take action in a particular fashion, and thirdly the police respond to the tactics which are actually utilised by protestors on the ground.

Such studies highlight the contingent aspects of policing, but also caution against those accounts which view incidents of disorder as isolated events. Frustrated at frequent references to riots being 'sparked off' by particular incidents, Waddington et al (1989: 2) developed the 'flashpoints model' of public disorder. The model 'combines reference to antecedent conditions (the 'tinder') with a highlighting of interpersonal interaction (the 'spark')'. They reinforce the need to examine the wider context within which public disorder occurs and is framed. The model conceives of six inter-related 'levels of structuration' – structural, political/ideological, cultural, contextual, situational and interactional (D. Waddington et al. 1989: 22) – which are portrayed as a series of concentric circles. A 'flashpoint', thus, ignites or not depending on the specificities of localised interaction, but that interaction is mediated through the broader levels. The model has been applied to global protest (King and Waddington 2005, Sheptycki 2005) and helps to highlight how difference in key variables can affect the outcome of global protest events.

P. Waddington (2003: 411), similarly, highlights how police approaches vary over time and space and offers a useful distinction between 'on the job trouble' – referring to police deployment – and 'in the job trouble', which refers to the fallout from contentious operations. The prospects of the latter can mean that police are inflexible in pursuit of certain objectives: ensuring the security of foreign heads of state for instance. The particularities associated with global protest – when heads of state are in attendance - means that the dynamic interplay between security, the local community and protestors is heavily biased in favour of security. Ericson and Doyle, thus, argue that 'the policing of protest at international events must be understood and researched as a distinctive category' (1999: 605). They point out that such events frequently involve a high degree of government intervention, a preoccupation with security concerns and the mobilisation of different legal frameworks and/or security personnel.

The pre-eminence of these structural and political determinants of disorder means that there is a tendency for policing at international summits to revert to the deployment of 'heavy and repressive police and military control' (Farnsworth 2004: 64. cf. Ericson and Doyle 1999, Vitale 2005, Waddington and King 2005). Reading policing strategies in context, thus, Waddington and King (2005) view protests at international summits as an exception to the general emphasis on de-escalation. Sheptycki (2005: 346) similarly argues that 'when the protest stakes concern fundamental tenets of global capitalism, negotiation seems to give way to escalated force'. He suggests that the policing of anti-globalisation protest has seen a reversion to authoritarian policing strategies (2005: 345).

Emphasising the contextual and interactional aspects of policing, Earl et al (2003: 601) note that the diversity of participants and tactics in global protests has a bearing on whether the

police resort to coercive means or not. They argue that protestors espousing radical goals and employing confrontational tactics are more likely to face a repressive response. Given the tendency for global protests to embrace a range of tactics in pursuit of anti-systemic aims, the move away from dialogue and soft policing is perhaps unsurprising (Juris 2005). King and Waddington, for example, observe that negotiated management as a strategy requires 'demonstrator groups to have some degree of organizational structure, including representatives with the requisite authority to enter into negotiation with the police' (2005: 262-3. cf. Noakes et al 2005). A characteristic feature of what Day (2005) terms the 'newest social movements', however, is that they are premised on a critique of models of representation.

Part of the reason for the increased use of force in such circumstances, according to Farnsworth (2004: 64), is precisely because the logic of direct action poses a threat to the established political and economic order. Ainger (2003), however, argues that this is part of a wider trend in which the rhetoric of the 'war on terror' has been annexed to justify 'increasingly repressive and politicized' policing. Vitale (2005), similarly, argues that there has been a shift in US policing from negotiated management to 'command and control' where police display 'zero tolerance' towards infringements of the law. Other accounts adopt a more nuanced view and point to variations in police strategies which may range along a spectrum incorporating aspects of negotiation and incapacitation (Noakes et al 2005: 251).

The implicit assertion in much of this literature is that there is a uniform approach to policing global protest in which each global summit is regarded as a flashpoint. Reviewing such tendencies, King and Waddington (2005: 262) insist that policing cannot be understood as static or inflexible and that due account should be given to 'lessons learned' from key events. P. Waddington likewise argues that 'civil libertarian pessimism' pays insufficient attention to the mediating impact of political culture. 'Civil liberties', he concludes, lie not on a slippery slope, but on contested political terrain where victories are secured as well as battles lost' (2005: 354). Taking our cue from these accounts we eschew the attempt to analyse global protest in terms of either global civil society or governmentality and focus in on the contextual specificities of policing in and around the G8 summit at Gleneagles to ask what this can tell us about protest policing.

Our Research

The paper draws on a research project conducted before, during and immediately after the G8 summit in Gleneagles. We carried out interviews with senior police officers and protest participants before and after the summit, conducted conversations with dozens of protestors, and undertook a review of newspaper coverage. A series of questions carried on our behalf by the TNS Scottish Omnibus (a monthly poll comprising 1,100 adults across Scotland) provided an insight into public perceptions of the G8. This data is complemented by participant observation at key protest sites and events between July 2nd and 7th 2005. This combination of methods offers us a basis on which to consider the attitudes and plans articulated by police in the run-up to the summit as well as assessing the complex interplay between protestors and police during the course of the protest events. Whilst our participant observation research covered the week-long protest activities that preceded and accompanied the opening of the summit, this paper focuses on the first day of the G8 meeting and the attempts by protestors to take action at the summit venue itself. In light of the above review, however, it is important to begin by setting the scene with a consideration of police attitudes and forms of 'knowledge'.

Police Philosophies

In many ways Scotland is the ideal location for an assessment of negotiated management, because the Scottish police is portrayed as typifying the 'softly-softly', community oriented approach. Indeed, preceding the summit the notion of a distinctive 'Scottish approach to policing' – based on negotiation, consensus and interaction – was prominent in media accounts and our interviews. A senior Tayside police officer opined: "Police by consent" is the Scottish way of policing: "Nicey, nicey: let's not react" (Tayside 1). Furthermore, the Scottish police do not have a history of dealing with public disorder. This means that they do not have officers who are routinely deployed (and thus hardened) as riot police:

We don't have specialised riot police who are housed in barracks and so on, because thankfully we don't have much experience of that in Scotland. But we practice once in a while for those occasions when we may need to react more strongly (Tayside 2).

Our police respondents were adamant that they had learnt the lessons of previous summits and adapted their approach accordingly. A clear example of such adaptation was the posting of a community liaison officer in Auchterarder for the year leading up to the G8. The intention was to have somebody known and trusted on site who could defuse tension, rebut sensationalised scare stories in the media and prepare the local populace for the impending event. One of the major shortcomings of 'negotiated management' as it has been theorised in the literature has been an unnecessarily limiting focus on protest events themselves. Policing, however, as one respondent stressed:

'is a 'balancing act' in which the concerns of locals – who insist that they do not want protestors "in my High Street" must be balanced against security concerns and the rights of protestors. Locals often seem to want security for themselves and not for anyone else, whereas police have to take a wider perspective (Tayside 1).

Similarly, the Orr Report (2005) into Marches and Parades in Scotland concluded that a wide range of local opinion should be consulted when considering whether to grant permission for such events. These accounts emphasise the importance of bringing local opinion back into the analysis of policing. Firstly it is a significant influence on police perceptions, and secondly because it clearly needs to be factored in to the attempts at negotiated management. Concerned residents need to be negotiated with just as much as protestors. The importance of community opinion was highlighted in our pre-summit opinion poll of 1,100 adults across Scotland. Almost three-quarters of our respondents (74%) agreed that the G8 protests would cause major disruption, and two fifths (44%) agreed that they were likely to be violent. Negotiating their concerns, thus, was a key aspect of policing during the G8.²

A dedicated G8 bulletin was established and 6,000 copies were distributed locally. The three issues covered frequently asked questions, tried to allay fears and provide information about road closures, police operations and local services.³ Additionally, One Tayside respondent was engaged in ongoing dialogue with local groups: 'I've been at 60+ meetings with different groups since September at Nursing Homes, Pensioners groups, the Boy Scouts –

² The questions were carried on our behalf by the TNS Scottish Omnibus (a monthly poll comprising 1,100 adults across Scotland). For more details and results see Gorringer and Rosie (2006).

³ To view the 'Updates' see: http://www.taysidepolice.gov.uk/g8/local_newsletter.php

you name it, just going over the ground and trying to address people's concerns (Tayside 3). A further complication for negotiated management is the media. The views of both police and protestors are primarily related to the public by means of the news media thus forming a quadrangular basis for negotiation.

The mass media, therefore, as D. Waddington (1992: 160) notes, are a key player and may indirectly produce public disorder 'by "sensitising" the police and public to the possibility that disorder might occur'. Indeed, when Gleneagles was first announced as the summit venue, as one of our interviewees related, 'there was an outpouring of you know: Genoa, Evian, Seattle' (Tayside 3). The association between G8 summits and police/protestor violence is so established (in the media imagination at least) that the mere listing of conference venues was sufficient to raise the spectre of disorder. Two fifths (44%) of our survey respondents agreed that the protests were likely to be violent compared to around one third (35%) who disagreed. Police respondents insisted that their jobs were made harder by sensationalist coverage (Gorringe and Rosie 2006: 7.1-2). One interviewee bemoaned the lack of engagement on behalf of news-reporters and highlighted the issues this posed for community policing:

No they won't phone me first and allow me to rubbish some of their claims. There's been a steady press build up ... it's been quite intense. We had a, when we did the press thing you know with the horses and that there were hundreds of cameras and journalists just for that. And obviously that raises people's apprehensions (Tayside 3).

A senior cop likewise argued that the 'influence of the media can undermine months of police work'. He insisted that the police are trying to minimise such issues 'by establishing relationships of trust and engaging with people in the media to encourage them to be more responsible' and check reports before filing them (Tayside 1). To this extent, at least, the principles of negotiated management are clearly being applied to the media. An interviewee captured the significance of engaging the media in terms of policing in asserting that 'cops read papers too' (Tayside 1). Police officers, in other words, are not isolated from the rest of society and share the fears, prejudices and concerns inculcated by biased news reports. 'What this means', he continued, 'is that there is a danger that police can over-react'.

Negotiated management, in other words, is partially dependent on prior perceptions and beliefs about the protestors. The Orr Report (2005) recognises as much in its final (38th) recommendation, which insists that:

Police forces should ensure that there is appropriate briefing provided for officers policing processions and that it includes information about the reasons for the procession and the relevant background to the organisation involved.

According to one of our respondents, the internal briefings that were provided were inadequate. Whilst the senior officers were all well versed in consensual approaches, therefore, there is a suggestion that this philosophy has yet to filter down. Analysis of our interviews suggests that even senior officers are yet to be fully persuaded. All our interviewees emphasised the need to 'de-escalate' situations, and many of their examples epitomised the negotiated management approach. One respondent, thus, stressed the fact that tolerating disruption and refusing to implement the law in a draconian fashion made sense:

If 2000 people sit down in the middle of the road what are you going to do? Can't arrest them all. Does it matter if the protest march moves at all? Who gives a shit? Edinburgh will not be moving on those days, so what does a couple of minutes on Princes Street matter? How long are they going to stay there? (Tayside 1).

Negotiating a peaceful conclusion to protests was also seen to extend beyond toleration and include facilitation:

For example, these people want to block the road, we say okay, don't do this bit, go over there and block that one, we allow you to block it for half an hour, we even get the press here, ... [to] take photographs, but in half an hour you pack up and go home. And by and large that works, I don't mean just for this [the G8], it works all over the place. And it works because everybody gets out of it what they want. It keeps the emotional charge down, people don't get excited and escalate the confrontation, they'll get the media exposure for blocking the road, we get the benefit of having it time limited, we know where it's going to happen and when it's going to happen and we can plan around it (LBP 1).

The key to such policing, as this respondent admitted, was building up a relationship of trust. This is where police perceptions acquire particular salience, because these frame the way that police officers approach specific protest groups. Negotiation depends on mutual recognition, as Ellison and Martin (2000) point out, and it was clear that not all protestors were accorded the opportunities mentioned above. This was perhaps best seen in a senior officer's assertion that some protestors had even been 'whisked ... up to the gate [at Gleneagles]'. The facilitated 'radicals' transpired to be Friends of the Earth and Church of Scotland Bell Ringers. When such mainstream, establishmentarian critics are presented as exemplars of protest, we can better understand the police responses to anti-systemic groups.

Most respondents drew a clear distinction between the orderly, stewarded and mainstream Make Poverty History march in Edinburgh (Gorringer and Rosie 2006) and 'illegitimate' protestors who were out to cause trouble. A senior officer, thus drew parallels between 'protest casuals' and the Inter-City Firm (a term derived from West Ham United football fans that connotes hooligans). This categorisation was uniformly applied to 'anarchist' (or anarchist inspired) protestors by our respondents. When the prevalent perception insists that 'anarchist groups ... are just there for a ruck' (Tayside 1) negotiation and dialogue are rendered unlikely. When such perceptions are further reinforced by a clear hierarchy of priorities in which the interests of protestors are relegated to the bottom rung, then the ethos of consensual policing has already started to unravel. Our respondents, however, uniformly emphasised security and the interests of local citizens. The problem with this recurrent emphasis was that it implicitly cast protestors as a threat and failed to see that accommodation of protest aims might be in the best interests of all parties.

Differentiating between protestors is commonly presented as central to negotiated policing (Marx 1998, Reicher et al 2004), but the flipside of recognising that some groups of protestors are law-abiding and peaceful is that others may be seen and treated as a threat in a manner that can become self-fulfilling (Waddington and King 2005). Our research highlighted that differentiation applies not only to groups of people; it is place specific too. Well before the summit date an interviewee insisted that Auchterarder was a 'one horse town' and that a 'babies' pram would gridlock the high street'. 'Go and look at Gleneagles', he told us, 'can you imagine a mass protest happening there – there simply isn't the

infrastructure or space' (Tayside 1). In casting the summit venue as 'too small' the grounds for curtailing mass protests were already being laid. A respondent reinforced this message:

Now the idea is to hold a rally in the park, but numbers have been limited [by the local authority] because there simply isn't that much room. You should go up and see if you can imagine 4,500 people in the park. Now that figure's there to be debated, but the organisers want the impossible, I mean the town simply could not cope with the 20,000 people they are talking about! (Tayside 3).

Such convictions undermine attempts at negotiated management by appearing (at least) to rule out certain options in advance. In such circumstances any negotiation, of necessity, is hampered if not precluded. Colin Fox epitomised the difficulties of negotiating on this basis. As a significant player in the coalition trying to organise the Gleneagles rally he should have been involved in dialogue. Instead he was convinced that 'the police nakedly tried to stop it from day one, even on the day' (Interview). This emphasises how easily the legitimacy of police authorities may be called into question when their tactics are deemed to be unfair or inequitable (cf. Reicher et al 2004). It also highlights the significance of protestor/police relations to the success of negotiated management.

It is important, here, to note that dialogue has to involve both parties and it was clear that attempts to negotiate with more anarchic protestors 'was very difficult, [because] there was no allocated sort of spokesperson' (LBP 1). All senior officers spoke of recurrent attempts to contact such protestors beforehand, often to no avail: 'We did everything we possibly could to open up the obvious lines of communication. Nobody was interested. Quite the opposite; it was a deliberate policy of not telling anybody' (LBP 1). Policing tactics that have been shaped in interaction with the more organised protest factions clearly need to be rethought in the context of deliberately 'dis-organised' events. In the next section we pursue these themes in greater detail by reference to what actually happened on the 6th July, 2005.

Approaching Auchterarder

During the day's protests there were clear examples of both negotiated management styles of policing and a more aggressive response as well. This differentiation in policing did not fully mirror the division in 'anarchist' and 'far left' groups and offers insights into the policing of G8 events. Any account of the protests at Auchterarder, however, has to begin elsewhere. The majority of those hoping to protest at the G8 summit were due to travel to the venue on the day. Stirling and Edinburgh were key sites from which protestors departed. In the former, 'anarchist' protestors from across Europe (including Britain) had set up an ecologically friendly base camp or 'convergence centre' which was closely monitored by police. Where police have not been involved in 'the pre-preparations for an event', as Fox commented, 'they go for ... the hard-faced approach' (Interview). Uncertainty about the aims and objectives of those in the camp, combined with 'intelligence' meant that police tried to prevent protestors from leaving. Indeed, one interviewee's account implicitly equated the centre to a prison:

At 6am there was a break-out from the convergence centre in Stirling. A lot of anarchists had left the camp and tried to block the road network. There were lock-ons at major road junctions. These people were intent on causing disruption (Tayside 2).

News-reports reinforced this image, noting that ‘dozens of officers in riot gear began surrounding the site overnight as a “security measure”’. Protestors were searched as they left the camp and initially only those with tickets to travel away from G8 venues were permitted to leave (BBC 2005)⁴. An essential ingredient of negotiated management is communication between police and protestors. As the G8 Legal Support Group intimates, however, this was absent:

At the Hori-zone ecovillage in Stirling for long periods of time the police refused to let anyone leave. Legal Observers from the G8 Legal Support Group were also detained, preventing us from monitoring some of the protests. No legal justification was provided for this abuse of power.⁵

There were accounts of people being detained in vans without access to toilets, food or water for four hours (ibid.), but also of ‘friendly’ police engaging in negotiations to end road-blocks or liaise with coaches travelling to the summit (Indymedia⁶). Such contrasts in approach characterised events in Edinburgh and Auchterarder too. As our research is limited to these sites, it is to these we now turn. On the morning of the 6th, according to news reports, Edinburgh was gridlocked by protestors blocking roads across the city centre. A mixture of negotiated and forceful policing, however, minimised disruption in most instances. Within 10 minutes of one report, for instance, one of the authors went to investigate the ‘blockade’ in the West End of the city only to find all roads clear. A line of riot police were on hand outside the Sheraton and the Conference Centre where some teams of delegates were staying, but police reported that protestors had been moved on. There was one arrest, but also a sense that ‘they [protestors] got what they wanted with the media coverage’ (Gorringer, Fieldnotes).

The main policing event in Edinburgh that day occurred around 10.30am as coach-loads of protestors prepared to depart for Gleneagles. The atmosphere was good humoured when a police-spokesman boarded the bus that one author was on and announced that the march had been cancelled. When this was put to a Tayside respondent he was forthright:

It was cancelled. Look, let me take you through some of what was happening on that day. At 6am there was a break-out from the convergence centre in Stirling. A lot of anarchists had left the camp and ... were intent on causing disruption. So at 12pm, the march was cancelled. It couldn’t go ahead because the road network was disrupted and there were Black Bloc anarchists on the flyovers either side of Auchterarder. We thought that we didn’t have the resources to safely manage the march. But there were 1,500 people already here at that time and we were in discussions with G8 Alternatives negotiators ... We were committed to getting as many people to Auchterarder as possible. So it eventually happened, but at 2.30pm – two hours later than scheduled (Tayside 2).

The contradictions and ambiguity which typified policing on the day is captured in this quote. ‘Negotiated management’, it is clear, entails adherence to terms set by the police. Whilst the latter half of the quote insists that facilitation and negotiation were paramount, the announcement that the march was ‘cancelled’ did not reflect this. Colin Fox, who was also on one of the buses summed up the protestors’ reading of the situation:

⁴ See report at: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/4658351.stm> (Accessed: 19/06/06).

⁵ <http://www.indymedia.org.uk/en/2005/07/318170.html> (Accessed: 19/06/06).

⁶ See report at: <http://www.indymedia.org.uk/en/2005/07/316516.html> (Accessed: 19/06/06).

11 O'clock news on all the radio stations announced it was off, it had been cancelled ... I think it was a very important day because it was the defiance of those that tried to take away our peaceful, democratic and legal rights. The demonstration itself suffered enormously from the Polices' signalled or quite frankly physical attempts to stop it from happening. And I think you know it was perhaps through good fortune rather than anything else that there was not more frustration and trouble there (SSP 1).

A senior officer insisted that the police 'had to balance the safety and concerns of residents, marchers and police officers' (Tayside 2), but the failure to maintain open channels of communication was the antithesis of 'negotiated management'. This 'mismanagement' was nowhere more evident than on Princes Street shortly after the above exchanges. Some coaches were allowed to depart, others were stopped and in the confusion – believing that the Gleneagles march was off – protestors decided to stage an impromptu rally in Edinburgh. As Esson (2005) reported for BBC news:

Protesters began marching down Princes Street after being unable to get on buses to travel to the G8 Alternatives protest at Gleneagles. Their demonstration eventually lasted more than five hours and caused disruption to numerous streets around the centre of Edinburgh.

The halting of buses at one end of Princes Street clearly constituted what Waddington et al. (1989) refer to as a 'flashpoint'. The significance of such moments, as King and Waddington (2005: 259) argue, 'is that they are invariably interpreted symbolically as indicating a refusal by one or both sides to accommodate the perceived "rights", interests and objectives of their opponents'. In seeking to reduce the operational difficulties – P. Waddington's (2003) 'on the job trouble' – around the summit venue, the police inadvertently opened up a new protest front. The protestors were clear that they were marching in Edinburgh 'because they had not been allowed to go to Gleneagles' (Gorringe, Fieldnotes). Faced by an unplanned and unexpected protest police belatedly announced that the Gleneagles march was going ahead. Following this one demonstrator with a loud-hailer tried to encourage people to return to the buses, but others had not intended to travel or decided that protesting in the capital was preferable to a long bus journey to an uncertain demonstration (Gorringe, Fieldnotes).

Faced by the prospect of more protests in Edinburgh, only days after scenes that the local press had described as 'the battle of Princes Street', the police actions encompassed both toleration and repression. Early on, perhaps hoping to nip protests in the bud, three perceived 'organisers' who tried to negotiate with the police were arrested (Gorringe, fieldnotes; cf. Esson 2005)⁷. The message sent out by such actions was clear: 'we are not prepared to negotiate'. Thereafter, though, police tactics became less interventionist and they appeared prepared simply to monitor the protestors as they embarked on an uncharted route march around the city. As the march progressed the numbers of both protestors and police dwindled, partly due to inclement weather and partly out of fatigue and the lack of a clear objective:

At 3.45pm a ragged bunch of protestors straggled up Middle Meadow Walk [in the large park in the city-centre] headed towards Princes Street. Weary police officers in everyday uniforms traipsed after them. There were more marchers than police officers

⁷ This report was confirmed by those who were on the rally and during the interview with Colin Fox.

and the intent seemed to be to keep an eye on them and let the protest fizzle out of its own accord (Gorringer, fieldnotes).

Meanwhile – en route to Gleneagles – those buses that had been allowed to leave proceeded at a snail's pace. Given that trains to the vicinity were cancelled, however, there were few other means of reaching the summit venue. There were reports of buses being stopped and searched and at times the coaches were going so slowly that passengers could get out and stretch their legs before climbing back on board (Rosie, fieldnotes). As Fox noted, at the head of this paper, most protestors were forced to find alternative and roundabout routes to Auchterarder due to a combination of protestors and police blocking roads. For much of the journey it was unclear whether there would actually be a march at the end or not. It was after midday before it was confirmed that the march could go ahead. Finally, at 2pm, those who had managed to assemble at the park in Auchterarder set off on a pre-arranged route towards the Gleneagles Hotel.

Policing along the route was low-key and helpful and some local residents cheered and waved as the march went past (Rosie, fieldnotes). As the 4-5,000 strong march neared the fence, however, the parameters of protest became clear. When marchers tried to breach the fence or stage a sit-down protest alongside it policing became more heavy-handed. In a dramatic gesture replete with symbolism, groups of police in riot gear were flown over the crowd and leapt out of helicopters in a military display before rushing to reinforce those at the fence. Regardless of their actual intentions, the mode of arrival signalled an end to soft-hat policing and an emphasis of the limits within which protest would be tolerated. Skirmishes in fields around the summit, whilst producing dramatic pictures, were limited and the prevailing sense – from our perspective on the G8 Alternatives⁸ demonstrations at least – was of a polite and reasonably relaxed police approach (Rosie, fieldnotes). Police respondents further pointed out that 'the fact that there were no significant injuries bears testimony to a successful operation' (Tayside 2).

Had we gained access to less mainstream protests/protestors, however, it is questionable whether this analysis could have been sustained. Our interviews pointed to the differential treatment meted out to, and perceptions of, differing protest groups. Where Bell Ringers were ushered to the gates, the G8 Alternatives were reluctantly allowed to march and the 'anarchists' were subject to more 'robust' policing:

There were 97 arrests and G8 Alternatives denied responsibility for most of them. Those arrested were mainly from Belgium, Holland, Germany, Spain – anarchist groups. The G8 Alternatives who are left or far left I suppose ... were facilitated in legitimate protest (Tayside 2).

Concluding Remarks

The protests surrounding the Gleneagles G8 summit offer us a basis from which to engage with the literature on police approaches. The dominant view, as Della Porta and Reiter (1998) observe, is that protest policing in Western democracies has become increasingly democratic and consensual. Our interviews and observations suggest that this is the case in Scotland. All respondents subscribed to the negotiated management school of policing and repeatedly

⁸ G8 Alternatives was a coalition of political parties and extra-institutional groups committed to protesting against, and articulating alternatives to, the Gleneagles summit. See Hubbard and Miller (2005) for a detailed account of their constituents, demands and ideals.

emphasised the need for 'de-escalation'. Protest was tolerated and, on occasion, facilitated during the G8 summit in the conviction that 'draconian policing is bad for mainstream politics' (Tayside 2). Throughout the weeks' protests, however, there were indications that 'negotiated management' had strict parameters. Implicit in most interviews was the differentiation between legitimate and illegitimate protestors, and the suggestion that some groups were simply 'there for a ruck' and could not be negotiated with.

Negotiated management, however, can only work when both sides recognise the other. Police preparations for violence, thus, can become a self-fulfilling prophecy and undermine attempts at dialogue on the ground (cf. Reicher et al 2004). Negotiation from an inflexible position gets nowhere – when police arrested the self-appointed negotiators on Princes Street on Wednesday it hardened resolve amongst protestors to disregard police instructions. In this context we reiterate one of the key recommendations of Jefferson's (1990: 144) study on need for flexible and experimental approaches to policing. Better means of communication *during* a protest event for example. We also echo the Orr Report's (2005) recommendation on the need to brief officers about protest constituencies beforehand to try and foster understanding and breakdown misapprehensions. One of the major shortcomings of 'negotiated management' as it has been theorised in the literature has been an unnecessarily limited focus on protest events themselves – neglecting the insights of the flashpoints model and the need for wider contextualisation.

The easy association between global protest and violence or forceful policing was subject to question in Scotland. Although there were indications (in the use of pens to control the movement activists for example) that police tactics had been 'imported', there were also suggestions that the local policing culture and history had a real bearing on the experience of events. 'What is reacted to violently in one setting, with particular structural, political/ideological, cultural, contextual and situational features, may evoke a less dramatic response in another' (Waddington et al. 1989: 166). The 'flashpoints model', thus, offers a useful corrective to accounts which suggest the emergence of a global convergence in policing tactics, but as King and Waddington (2005) note, the model is not without problems.

These authors highlight the multitudinous factors that help explain why some events 'ignite' whilst others do not. The over-emphasis on the potential for disorder, however, focuses attention away from repertoires of contention and engagement that both shape and constrain protest actions (Tilly 1986). The focus, furthermore, is on protestors and on triggers which spark disorder. In the case of the Gleneagles march, however, police decisions to try and contain people in the convergence centre in Stirling, or stop coaches from leaving Edinburgh, and the use of pens to limit the movement of protestors show that a tense stand-off may not be the result of a 'flashpoint' so much as a police tactic. Additionally, following P. Waddington (1994) it is important to note the fact that police discretion means that there may not be one single event. Numerous encounters over the course of the day could easily have developed into 'flashpoints' had either the police or the protestors reacted differently.

This suggests that the model lacks nuance for the analysis of global protest events. As with other such events, the Edinburgh and Gleneagles protests were characterised by a variety of different groups (police, protestors, media and bystanders), locations and styles of protest and policing. Each group, furthermore, was internally differentiated and what constituted a 'flashpoint' for one faction was not necessarily seen in the same way by others. The rise in 'tolerant identities' (Della Porta 2005) and 'diversity of tactics' (Juris 2005) by global protestors, add complexity to policing encounters in this context. Furthermore viewing the

'levels of structuration' as concentric circles (Waddington et al. 1989: 22) - within which any given event takes shape - privileges the point of interaction. In global summits, as we have seen, concerns over 'in the job trouble' can unduly influence policing.

At the very least the model needs to be updated to better account for contemporary protest. This is clear from Waddington et al's (1989: 167) assertion that the 'possibility of *arbitration*' (emphasis in original) cannot be ruled out. The rationale of anti-capitalist protest, however, is precisely to undermine the legitimacy of the state by flouting laws and refusing to recognise the authority of the police. Arbitration is hampered in such a context. Dialogue here, consists mainly in interaction and the signals (both verbal and non-verbal) that are transmitted on the ground. In this context it is puzzling that the Orr Report (2005) into policing marches and parades contains no consideration of non-formal or non-organised protests. 'Best practice', according to the report, requires 28 days notice of a procession to enable divergent views to be taken into account.

Ignoring the blind-spot with regard to non-organised protest, it seems clear that 'best practice' in relation to protest policing means that the recommendation must work both ways: police need to cooperate and be more open too. 'Negotiated management' is a misnomer when asymmetries of power preclude meaningful interaction, or when 'negotiated' solutions are underpinned by the palpable threat of escalated force. The on/off nature of the Auchterarder march and the mixed messages emanating from police sources merely served to compound problems in Edinburgh. Mismanagement at this level fuelled impromptu demonstrations in the capital. The lessons to be learned from Edinburgh suggest that maintaining clear lines of communication and dialogue are essential.

Conclusion

For all the efforts of the police, though, the key to the relatively low levels of disruption in Scotland arguably lies in the choice of venue. Given that 'in the job' concerns will always trump the interests of protestors when it comes to protecting foreign dignitaries – as reflected in our interviewees recurrent stress on security – 'on the job' difficulties are perhaps best alleviated by removing the focus of contention. As King and Waddington (2005) found in Canada and we found in Scotland (Gorrington and Rosie 2006), protests at one remove from the summit venue were less subject to the overbearing concerns of security. Protest is, in part, shaped by policing and so it will evolve to accommodate such alterations in strategy, but it might take the sting out of key confrontations. As one of our respondents (who wished not to be named) put it:

Whether or not ... the costs involved with moving the G8 round the 8 nations and having it in the middle of a nation, equates reasonably well with what you're trying to achieve from the G8, I don't know. I didn't see things coming out of the G8 that couldn't have been achieved another way. If the 8 leaders desperately want to get together every year, and it really is important then, to my mind, let's just buy a Pacific island, fortify it, surround it with Navies of all 8 countries and let them go there all the time. I'm not sure the investment justifies the cost (Interview).

Underpinning the shift towards a more consensual and negotiated style of policing was the desire for a more accountable and democratic mode of policing. 'Negotiated management', however, as we have seen, conflicts with preconceived opinions and inflexible objectives. Isolating world leaders on an island would free police officers from an over-riding constraint

– to protect the summit. It would also strip the veneer of legitimacy from the unaccountable gatherings of world leaders. Negotiation cannot simply be a policing tactic, it must inform global politics too.

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