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# Outraged Protesters Blast G20 Police Tactics in Toronto

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**Jesse Ship**  
AOL Canada

A peaceful crowd of about a thousand protesters gathered outside Toronto's police headquarters Monday evening to decry the controversial crackdown that took place during the G20 summit.

Riot police on horseback waited in the wings, but the hundreds of protesters who gathered outside were not going to tolerate a repeat performance of last weekend's police action.

Torontonians of all walks joined together in "jail solidarity" on College Street between Yonge and Bay Sts. Monday night for an angry but non-violent protest of police conduct during the world summit in downtown Toronto which resulted in more than 900 arrests.

## G20 Protests in Toronto



Lisa Yeung/AOL

53 photos



A protester who did not wish to be identified decries the police action taken against anti-G20 demonstrators at a rally on Monday June 28.

(Note: Please disable your pop-up blocker)

The rally was led by well-known local activists, including political author Naomi Klein, rabble.ca writer Judy Rebick, as well as protesters who were detained over the weekend.

Speaking to the crowd, an incensed Klein blasted Toronto police and the federal government,

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accusing them of over spending on a billion-dollar security budget, and playing politics and PR games with the lives of protesters who were being detained in a makeshift detention centre in eastern Toronto.

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"I'm not a rally speaker, I'm just a boring writer," she modestly confessed, "but I'm pissed off at what has happened in this city."

Politicians and police, she said, used the G8 and G20 summits "as if it was their personal ATM machine."

The crowd followed up by voicing its outrage with a number of expressive and at times expletive-laden chants, shouting "We won't, we won't shut the f--- up," "Shame! Shame! Shame!" and "Let them go" -- referring to detained protesters.

One protester was seen vocalizing his displeasure directly to some of the police officers, who were lined up by the dozens on foot, on bicycle, and -- further up Yonge Street -- in full gear on horseback.

"I told them, 'You lost a lot of ground on the weekend,'" said Randy Brown, a teacher at George Brown College who attended Monday's rally. Brown told officers he would be pressing for an inquiry into the weekend's actions.

"When I saw what they did I was completely disgusted," Brown, 66, said. "I was in the sit-ins and strikes against the Vietnam war. [The police] were never pushing us around.

"I never saw anything like this," he said, referring to the massive police presence at the protest. "It's like we're all killers or something."

Brown however, was pleased at the strong turnout of protesters at the rally. "I didn't expect this. It's like, 'Right back at ya.'"

Writer and prominent social-activist Rebick reminded the crowd of past activist victories.

"We ended Vietnam, we won freedom of speech, the right to freedom of choice, and the right to assemble. Nobody but nobody is going to take that away from us! It makes me sad that I have to fight a fight that I thought parents won in the 1950s against McCarthyism."

Other speakers included Ben Powless, a Mohawk activist and photographer who had spent time in

the detainment centre as well as Farrah Miranda of "No One Is Illegal".

They told tales of horrible conditions and sexism experienced at the detainment centre, dubbed, "Torontonomo Bay Prison".

Detainees were said to have spent an average of 24 hours in jail, going for up to 10 hours at a time without food and water.

Women were reportedly denied the use of sanitary napkins, forced to bend over during strip searches, and teen-aged girls were forced to use the porta-potty facilities with policemen present in the booths with them.

Another young protester, Marcus, strolled through the rally, still bearing his police detainment number. He claims he was trapped by the police outside of the detainment centre, where he stood in solidarity with hundreds of others.

"They promised us safe passage, but it was a trap and we were all arrested. We went from a spacious triage room to smaller and smaller over-packed cells, brightly lit so nobody could sleep. I think they thought that by making us miserable, they could destroy our morale, but they don't understand the solidarity that we have for each other."

Marcus and his friends used pieces of debris found in their cells to carve the names and badge numbers of offending police officers on their Styrofoam water cups.

When he was released, Marcus was not allowed to put on his shoes until he reached the detainment centre's perimeter, forced to walk through puddles of vomit and pouring rain in his socks.

Other accounts of police brutality came from Social Justice PhD student Jean McDonald, whose finger was shattered by a police baton in a scuffle at Queen and John.

"I was in Quebec and Seattle, and this is the worst case of police violence I have ever seen," she said, referring to past incidents of police crackdowns at summit protests. "They moved in on the crowd without warning, and all I had time to do was pull my partner out of the way."

Jean's cast was decorated with a sign, written: "1 billion on security and all I got was this lousy fracture."

Not all who attended the rally had violent stories, but all were distressing.

Kitty Wong hosted a couch surfer from Winnipeg at her home, but he didn't come home last night because he was detained. "They're giving up a lot to be here, so I wanted to do something for them. I really hope he gets back OK."

Monday's protesters eventually moved out westward in style and solidarity to University Ave., heading south to Queen St., and plowing through the Toronto TD Jazz Festival to make themselves heard at Toronto City Hall in Nathan Phillips Square.

The group then moved back north to College Park, settling in on the lawn in front of provincial buildings, chanting a myriad of slogans, from the simple, "Fire [Toronto police Chief Bill] Blair," to, "No justice, no peace, no sexist police."

After a brief 15 minutes of noisemaking, the crowd dispersed and was encouraged to go down to the detainment centre out of solidarity but told not to cross the sidewalk and breach its property line.

The closing comments led by rally marshal Taylor Flook announced the unfortunate arrest of two more protesters in a nearby mall who had been detained while "straying from the path to buy a pack of gum."

Flook and other rally leaders pleaded with the crowd not to hate the police themselves but to find








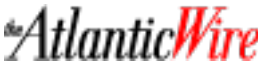


fault in the system that is giving them the orders.

With files from Lisa Yeung

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