Edinburgh Research Explorer

It's a Long Way to Auchterarder! 'Negotiated Management' and Mismanagement in the Policing of G8 Protests

Title: It's a Long Way to Auchterarder! 'Negotiated management' and Mismanagement in the Policing of G8 Protests.

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 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.

It's a Long Way to Auchterarder! 'Negotiated management' and Mismanagement in the Policing of G8 Protests.[1]

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 […] 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. (Fox, Interview).[2]

Introduction

When the Group of Eight (G8) leaders came to Britain in 2005 a rural location in Scotland was selected as the venue. As in Canada in 2002, where the retreat to the Rocky Mountains split protests, the choice of Gleneagles presented protesters with severe obstacles of access. In a replay of 2002, the major protests abandoned the tactic of besiegement to demonstrate in the Scottish capital of Edinburgh, leaving a smaller group of protestors to take their message directly to the summit. The policing of these protests is the focus of this paper.

Sheptycki (2005: 346) argues that the organisation and policing of summit protests provide insights into the 'character of the global system'. From this perspective, the strategic retreat by global leaders to inaccessible loci highlights a lack

of democratic accountability. This is reinforced by accounts that view transnational protest policing as bucking a trend towards more tolerant and negotiated styles of policing (Della Porta, Peterson and Reiter 2006; Waddington & King 2005). Problems with a global systems approach are discernible in these accounts and evident in our research, highlighting the contingent processes and interactions which shape policing on the ground. Indeed pre-summit, the Scottish police rehearsed arguments in which competing claims of leaders, local residents and protestors were carefully calibrated and weighted in the 'negotiated management' style. In the event, however, police responses to protest encompassed an array of tactics ranging from coercion to facilitation.

Whilst the largest G8-related demonstrations passed off peacefully in Edinburgh (see Gorringe and Rosie 2006) – some distance from where world leaders were meeting – this paper focuses on the smaller protests that occurred on the opening day of the actual summit. Our aim is to disentangle the dynamic interplay between police and protestors during these protests. We draw on ethnographic research to determine the extent to which 'the policies and procedures described [by police] were actually practised' (McPhail, Schweingruber and McCarthy 1998: 50). Our analysis suggests that disruption and violence were minimized where policing most closely resembled the negotiated management approach, but whether this succeeded or not depended on local specificities. We begin by considering recent accounts of protest policing before turning to our research at the 2005 summit. In conclusion we bring data and theory together and consider the implications of our findings.

Policing protest

Several studies document a Western trend towards more democratic and consensual policing of protest. Prominent within so-called 'soft-hat' approaches to protest policing is 'negotiated management' (McPhail, Schweingruber and McCarthy 1998; Della Porta and Reiter 1998; Gillham and Marx 2000; Waddington and King 2005). This relegates repressive 'heavy-handed' police tactics, emphasizing cooperation and communication between police and protestors. The intent is to 'de-escalate' sensitive situations and reduce the likelihood of violence. This entails safeguarding (even facilitating) rights to protest, and negotiated solutions include the careful stage-managing of events and the toleration of disruption to public life.

In effect, negotiated management entails altering the 'rules of the game' to allow greater police discretion in facilitating protests and in interacting with protest groups. This trend away from 'king's police' approaches towards an emphasis on community policing maps onto a coherent police philosophy relating to legitimacy and democracy. This reflects growing awareness that repressive policing is often counter-productive and may reinforce protest or provoke further demonstrations (Della Porta and Fillieule 2004; Vitale 2005; Earl, Soule and McCarthy 2003). Whilst McPhail et al. (1998) chart the US emergence of negotiated management from the 1960s, this analysis has been a touchstone of British policing since the Scarman Report into the 1981 Brixton riots (themselves in part a reaction to oppressive policing). Negotiated management, thus, draws on different sources and is neither universal nor uniform, resulting in variation within police responses.

Della Porta and Fillieule (2004) argue that a key intervening variable here is 'police knowledge'. Police forces, they note, generate stereotypes and short-hand texts in coming to 'know' a protest constituency, anticipating how they will behave, and what kind of policing will be appropriate. Based on research in France, Fillieule and Jobbard (1998) suggest three interrelated influences. Foremost are the perceptions of the police, their understanding of the protest group and their likely tactics, and their sense of whether the protest objectives are *legitimate*. The second variable is the degree to which police come under political pressure to take a particular course of action. The third is the response the police have 'on the day' to the tactics actually utilized by protestors.

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

Similarly, P. Waddington (2003: 411) highlights how police approaches vary and offers a useful distinction between 'on the job trouble' (referring to police deployment) and 'in the job trouble' (which refers to the fall-out from contentious operations). Prospects of the latter may mean that police are inflexible in pursuit of certain objectives. The particularities associated with global protest means that the dynamic between security, the local community and protestors is heavily biased in favour of security. Ericson & Doyle (1999: 605) argue that 'the policing of protest at international events must be understood and researched as a distinctive category' (cf. Della Porta, Peterson and Reiter 2006: 4). They note that such events frequently involve government intervention, a preoccupation with security and the mobilisation of different legal frameworks and/or security personnel with the consequence that local policing priorities may be overruled.

The pre-eminence of structural and political concerns means that there is a tendency for policing at international summits to rely upon deployment of 'heavy and repressive police and military control' (Farnsworth 2004: 64; cf. Waddington and King 2005; Della Porta, Peterson and Reiter 2006). Waddington and King (2005) view international summits as an exception to the general emphasis on de-escalation. Sheptycki (2005: 345-6) argues that 'when the protest stakes concern fundamental tenets of global capitalism, negotiation seems to give way to escalated force' and that policing of anti-globalization protest has seen a reliance upon authoritarian policing strategies.

The security concerns of global leaders and the compulsions of global capitalism, however, are not the sole (if indeed they are the main) determinants of police action. Earl, Soule and McCarthy (2003: 601) emphasize contextual and interactional aspects noting that the diversity of participants and tactics within global protests influences whether 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 (cf. Noakes and Gilham 2006: 115). Their findings rest on media analysis of protest *events*, meaning that the nuances of police/protestor interaction over time are neglected. On the ground, as King and Waddington (2005: 262-3) observe, negotiated management requires 'demonstrator groups to have some degree of organizational structure, including representatives with the requisite authority to enter into negotiation with the police' (cf. Noakes and Gilham 2006: 108; McPhail, Schweingruber and McCarthy 1998). Without these, where can *negotiation* begin?

Many of the 'newest social movements' (Day 2005), however, are premised on a critique of models of representation. For Buechler (2000: 207) such movements privilege decentralized organizational forms aimed at exposing power-relations and undermining the legitimacy of authorities - rather than engaging with them. The increased use of force in such circumstances, according to Farnsworth (2004: 64) and Noakes and Gilham (2006: 108), is precisely because the logic of direct action threatens the established political and economic order. Implicit here is a suggestion that there is an emerging approach to policing which perceives global protest events as flashpoints to be contained (Reiter and Fillieule 2006: 172; Della Porta, Peterson and Reiter 2006: 2). Where this approach conflicts with the policing culture of the

host nation, police autonomy is curtailed by overriding security concerns (Ericson and Doyle 1999: 605; Peterson 2006).

Noakes, Klocke and Gilham (2005: 251) adopt a more nuanced view, describing variations in police strategies along a spectrum incorporating aspects of negotiation and incapacitation. King and Waddington (2005: 262) and Wahlström and Oskarsson (2006: 140) insist that policing is neither static nor inflexible and that due account should be given to 'lessons learned'. Crucially, P. Waddington argues that 'civil libertarian pessimism' pays insufficient attention to the mediating impact of political culture: 'Civil liberties lie not on a slippery slope, but on contested political terrain where victories are secured as well as battles lost' (Waddington 2005: 354). Taking our cue from these accounts, and McPhail et al's call for detailed research of *actual* practices, we focus here on the contextual specificities of policing in and around the G8 summit at Gleneagles.

Our research

The paper draws on research conducted before, during and immediately after the summit. We carried out interviews with three senior and three lower-rank police officers (four were formal interviews and two informal). We also interviewed protest participants, conducted conversations with dozens of protestors and police officers, and undertook a review of media coverage. A survey module in the TNS Scottish Omnibus (a monthly poll comprising 1,100 adults across Scotland) provided some insight into wider public perceptions. This data was complemented by participant observation at key protest sites and events between 2nd and 7th July 2005. This combination of methods offers us an insight into 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 events. Whilst our participant observation research covered the week-long protest activities that preceded and accompanied the opening of the summit (see Gorringe and Rosie 2006; 2008) 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, however, it is important to begin with a consideration of police attitudes and forms of 'knowledge'.

Police philosophies

In many ways Scotland is an ideal location to assess negotiated management since its police portray themselves 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. As senior officers in Tayside Police put it: '"Police by consent" is the Scottish way of policing: "Nicey, nicey: let's not react"' (Ross, Interview). Furthermore Scotland has little recent history of major public disorder. This means that Scotland's police have no officers routinely deployed in (and thus hardened to) 'riot' situations:

> We don't have specialized riot police … 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 (Vine, Interview).

Our police respondents were confident 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 (the town next to the Gleneagles venue) for a full year preceding the G8. Their intention was to have somebody on site to defuse tension, rebut rumours and prepare residents for the event. One of the major shortcomings of 'negotiated management' as it has been theorised has been an overly limiting focus on the protest event. Policing, however

> … 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 (Ross, Interview).

In a similar vein, the Scottish Executive's *Review of Marches and Parades in Scotland* (Orr 2005) concluded that a range of local views should be consulted when considering whether to permit such events. These accounts emphasise the importance of local contingencies for an analysis of policing (cf. Della Porta, Peterson and Reiter 2006: 7). The opinion of locals is a significant influence on police perceptions, and clearly needs to be factored in to attempts at negotiated management. Residents need to be communicated with just as much as protestors. To this end a dedicated G8 bulletin was distributed to 6,000 homes in the Auchterarder area to allay fears and provide information about road closures, police operations and local services.[3] Additionally, the liaison officer was engaged in ongoing dialogue: 'I've been at 60-plus meetings with different groups since September at Nursing Homes, Pensioners groups, the Boy Scouts – you name it, just going over the ground and trying to address people's concerns (White, Interview).

Three-quarters of respondents in our pre-summit opinion poll (74 per cent) believed the G8 protests would cause major disruption, two fifths (44 per cent) feared they would be violent. Reassuring a worried public, thus, was central to G8 policing.[4] Public concerns were fed by, and fed into, media sensationalism that rendered consensus policing difficult. As police and protestor perspectives are primarily presented to the public through the news media we face a quadrangular basis for negotiation. In this context, as D. Waddington (1992: 160) notes, mass media 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, 'there was an outpouring of you know: Genoa, Evian, Seattle' (White, interview). The association between G8 summits and 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.

Police respondents insisted that their jobs were made harder by sensationalist coverage (Gorringe and Rosie 2006: 7.1-2). They bemoaned the lack of engagement on behalf of news-reporters, and highlighted the problems this posed for community policing. Even where police attempted to allay apprehensions through events such as a visit to local school-children by mounted officers, the press accentuated the negatives:

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 … 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 (White, Interview).

A senior officer argued that the 'influence of the media can undermine months of police work' and noted police attempts to minimize such effects '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 (Ross, Interview). To this extent, at least, negotiated management must be played out in the media too. Ross captured the significance of this in asserting that 'cops read papers too' (Ross, Interview). Police officers, in other words, share the fears, prejudices and concerns inculcated by sensationalized news reports.

Negotiating Police 'Knowledge'

Negotiated management, in other words, is partially dependent on prior perceptions and beliefs about protestors. The Orr Report recognised as much in its final recommendation, insisting 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. (Orr 2005:190)

According to one of our respondents, the internal briefings provided to officers were inadequate. Whilst senior officers were well versed in consensual approaches, therefore, it may be that this philosophy has yet to fully filter down. Our interviews

11

suggest that even some senior officers are yet to be fully persuaded. All our interviewees emphasized the need to 'de-escalate' situations, and many of their examples epitomized the negotiated management approach. Ross, thus, stressed the fact that tolerating disruption and being flexible in enforcing the law was crucial

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 does it harm? Edinburgh will not be moving on those days [of G8 protest], so what does a couple of minutes on Princes Street matter? How long are they going to stay there? (Ross, Interview).

Negotiating a peaceful conclusion to protests was seen to extend beyond toleration into *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 (Dickinson, Interview).

The key to such policing is establishing trust - but pre-conceptions may frame how police approach specific groups. Negotiation depends on mutual recognition, as Wahlström and Oskarsson (2006) note, and some protestors prove more 'acceptable' than others. This was transparent in Chief Constable Vine's assertion that some protestors had been 'whisked … up to the gate [at Gleneagles]'. It transpired that those so facilitated belonged to Friends of the Earth and the Church of Scotland. When such conventional critics are presented as exemplars of protest, we may better understand the police responses to anti-systemic groups.

Examining the interplay between police and protestors on the ground reveals slippage between policy and implementation and blurred boundaries between escalated control and negotiated management. Police respondents clearly distinguished between the orderly, stewarded and 'legitimate' Make Poverty History marchers in Edinburgh and 'illegitimate' protestors who were out to cause trouble. In line with escalated force terminology (McPhail, Schweingruber and McCarthy 1998: 52), Ross drew parallels between 'protest casuals' and the Inter-City Firm (originally denoting violent West Ham United 'fans' but now connoting organized football hooliganism more broadly). Similar categorization was uniformly applied to 'anarchist' (or anarchist-tinged) protestors – 'riot tourists' (Dickinson, Interview); 'criminal tourists' (Vine, Interview). The prevalent perception that 'anarchist groups … are just there for a ruck' (Ross, Interview) rendered negotiation and dialogue unlikely. Where such perceptions are reinforced by a hierarchy of priorities (in which the interests of protestors are relegated to the bottom rung) then consensual policing unravels. Our police respondents uniformly emphasized security and the interests of local citizens, but recurrent emphasis implicitly cast protestors as a threat and failed to

see that accommodation of protest aims might be in the best interests of all parties. However, where protestors have no identifiable or willing 'leadership' *with whom to negotiate*, then accommodation is impeded and established modes of police/protestor interaction cease to be viable (Noakes and Gilham 2006).

Differentiating between protestors is commonly presented as central to negotiated policing (Marx 1998; Reicher et al. 2004), but recognizing that some groups of protestors are law-abiding and peaceful has the flipside that others may be seen and treated as a threat. This may become a self-fulfilling prophecy (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 Ross 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' (Ross, Interview). In casting the summit venue as 'too small' the ground for curtailing protest was already being laid. White 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 organizers want the impossible, I mean the town simply could not cope with the 20,000 people they are talking about! (White, Interview).

Such views limit attempts at negotiated management by appearing (at least) to restrict options in advance. In such circumstances negotiation is hampered if not precluded. Colin Fox of the Scottish Socialist Party epitomized the difficulties of negotiating on this basis. As part of the coalition organizing the Gleneagles rally Fox should have been involved in dialogue. Instead, he believed 'the police nakedly tried to stop it from day one, even on the day' (Fox, Interview). This emphasizes the significance of protestor/police relations to the success of negotiated management and how easily trust can evaporate when either side is seen as recalcitrant (cf. Wahlström and Oskarsson 2006).

Dialogue clearly has to involve both parties, and attempts to negotiate with some protestors 'was very difficult, [because] there was no allocated sort of spokesperson' (Dickinson, Interview). Officers cited 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' (Dickinson, Interview). Policing tactics shaped in interaction with organized protestors falter in the context of deliberately 'dis-organized' events and tend to revert to command and control (Noakes and Gilham 2006; Vitale 2005).

Approaching Auchterarder

During the Gleneagles protests there were examples of both negotiated management and more aggressive policing, offering insights into transnational protest policing. Any account of the protests in Auchterarder, however, must begin elsewhere. Stirling and Edinburgh were key sites from which protestors departed for Gleneagles. In

Stirling 'anarchist' protestors had set up a 'convergence centre'. Where police have not been included in 'the pre-preparations for an event', as Fox commented, 'they go for … the hard-faced approach' (Fox, Interview). Uncertain about the aims and objectives of those in the camp, and claiming to have specific 'intelligence' of coming trouble, police tried to prevent protestors from leaving. Noakes and Gilham (2006: 111) term this approach to transgressive protest; '*strategic incapacitation*'. Likewise, Vine's account implicitly equated the centre to a prison:

> At 6 am 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 (Vine, Interview).

News-reports similarly noted that 'dozens of officers in riot gear began surrounding the site overnight as a "security measure"'. Protestors were searched at the camp perimeter and initially only those with tickets to travel away from G8 venues were permitted to leave.[5] Communication between police and protestors, according to the G8 Legal Support Group was minimal:

> 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.[6]

There were accounts of people being detained without access to toilets, food or water for four hours (*Indymedia*[7]), but also of friendly police engaging in negotiations to end road-blocks or liaise with coaches travelling to the summit (*Indymedia*[8]). Similar contrasts characterized the events in Edinburgh and Auchterarder that we ourselves observed and highlight the importance of discretion and interaction. On the morning of 6 July, according to radio news reports, Edinburgh was 'gridlocked' after protestors blocked roads across the city. A mixture of negotiated and forceful policing, however, minimized disruption in most instances. Within 10 minutes of one report, for instance, the 'blockade' in the West End of the city had dispersed. A line of police lingered around hotels where some Summit delegates were staying, although protestors had been moved on. There was one arrest, but a sense that '[protestors] had got what they wanted with the media coverage' (Gorringe, fieldnotes).

The main event in Edinburgh that day occurred as coach-loads of protestors prepared to depart for Gleneagles. The atmosphere was good humoured even when police announced that the march had been cancelled. Tayside's Chief Constable later told us:

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 2.30 pm – two hours later than scheduled (Vine, Interview).

The contradictions, confusions, and ambiguities which typified policing on the day are captured here. The terms of 'negotiated management', it is clear, are 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' belied this. Colin Fox, who was also on one of the buses, provided an alternative reading of the situation:

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 Police's 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 (Fox, Interview).

Vine insisted that police 'had to balance the safety and concerns of residents, marchers and police officers' (Interview), but the breakdown of communication was the antithesis of 'negotiated management'. Negotiated solutions require both sides to act in good faith and fulfil promises (Wahlström and Oskarsson 2006: 125). Given the protracted process by which permission for the march was obtained (Fox, Interview), its sudden 'cancellation' was interpreted (rightly or wrongly) as a breach of trust. The

pitfalls of such 'mismanagement' were nowhere more evident than in Edinburgh. Whilst some coaches were allowed to depart others were stopped and in the confusion some protestors staged a rally there and then:

> 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. (Esson 2005)

The halting of buses constituted a 'flashpoint' (Waddington, Jones and Critcher 1989). 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 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 marching in Edinburgh 'because they had not been allowed to go to Gleneagles' (Gorringe, fieldnotes). Faced by an unplanned and unexpected protest, police announced that the Gleneagles march was, after all, going ahead. One demonstrator with a loud-hailer tried to encourage people to return to the buses, but others decided that staying put and protesting 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 described as 'the battle of Princes Street'[9], police actions encompassed both toleration and repression. Early on, perhaps hoping to nip the protests in the bud, three self-

identified 'organisers' who tried to negotiate with the police were arrested (Gorringe, fieldnotes; cf. Esson 2005)[10]. The police's message seemed clear: 'we are not prepared to negotiate'. Thereafter, though, police tactics became less interventionist and concentrated on monitoring the protestors as they embarked on an uncharted march around the city. As this progressed the numbers of both protestors and police dwindled, through inclement weather, fatigue, and the lack of a clear objective:

> At 3.45 pm a ragged bunch of protestors straggled up Middle Meadow Walk headed towards Princes Street. Weary police officers in everyday uniforms traipsed after them. There were more marchers than police officers and the intent seemed to be to keep an eye on them and let the protest fizzle out of its own accord (Gorringe, fieldnotes).

Meanwhile those buses allowed to leave proceeded at a snail's pace. Given that trains to Gleneagles were cancelled, 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 (or empty their bladders) before climbing back on board (Rosie, fieldnotes). Protestors were forced to find circuitous routes to Auchterarder due to a combination of protestors and police blocking roads, and it was unclear whether a march would happen. It was after midday before it was confirmed that the march could go ahead. Finally, at 2 pm, those who had managed to assemble at the park in Auchterarder set off on a pre-arranged route towards the Gleneagles Hotel.

Policing in Auchterarder tended to be low-key and helpful and some local residents cheered and waved as marchers filed past (Rosie, fieldnotes). As the 5,000 strong march neared the fence, however, the parameters of protest became clear. When protestors tried to breach the fence, or sit-down alongside it, policing became more interventionist. In a dramatic 'show-of-force' replete with symbolism, groups of police reinforcements were flown in low over the crowd in Chinook helicopters. Regardless of actual intention, this signalled an end to soft-hat policing and police determination to 'die-in-a-ditch' to protect the venue if required (cf. Peterson 2006: 68). Skirmishes in fields around the summit, whilst producing dramatic pictures, were limited and the prevailing sense – from our perspective on the G8 Alternatives[11] demonstration at least – was of reasonably relaxed police/protestor exchanges aided in large part by adherence to prior agreements (Rosie, fieldnotes). 'The fact that there were no significant injuries', as Vine noted, 'bears testimony to a successful operation' (Vine, Interview).

Had we gained access to key figures within less mainstream protests, 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 Christians were ushered to the gates, G8 Alternatives were allowed, reluctantly, to march and '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 (Vine, interview).

Discussion

The Gleneagles protests offer insights into protest policing. Della Porta and Reiter (1998) suggest that protest policing in Western democracies has become increasingly democratic and consensual, but summit protests are seen as an exception to this rule (Della Porta, Peterson and Reiter 2006). We suggest the picture is more complicated. All our police respondents subscribed to negotiated management and repeatedly emphasized 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' (Vine, Interview). Throughout the protests, however, there were indications that 'negotiated management' had strict parameters. Most interviews implicitly differentiated between legitimate and illegitimate protestors, suggesting that some groups were simply 'there for a ruck' and *could not* be negotiated with. Echoing Peterson (2006: 73), we find the potential flattening of democratic debate – entailed in the distinction between 'good' and 'bad' protestors – deeply troubling.

Negotiated management can only work when both sides recognize the other. Police (and, indeed, protestor) preparations for violence, thus, may become self-fulfilling prophecies and undermine attempts at dialogue (cf. Peterson 2006: 54). Negotiation from inflexible positions fails – 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 a key recommendation of Jefferson's (1990: 144) study on the need for flexible and experimental approaches to policing, especially better means of communication *during* protest events. We also echo the Orr Report's (2005) recommendation on the need to thoroughly brief officers

about protest constituencies beforehand to breakdown misapprehensions. A major shortcoming 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 (McPhail, Schweingruber and McCarthy 1998).

One crucial aspect of this wider context is the pre-history of police-protestor relations and the knowledge held by each of the other (cf. Wahlström and Oskarsson 2006). The association between global protest and violence, or forceful policing, thus, was subject to question in Scotland. Although there were indications that some police tactics were 'imported', local policing culture and history had a 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, Jones and Critcher 1989: 166). The 'flashpoints model' offers a corrective to accounts suggesting global (at least Western) convergence in policing tactics, although, as King and Waddington (2005) note, the model is not flawless.

These authors highlight various factors that explain why some events 'ignite' whilst others do not. Over-emphasizing the potential for disorder focuses attention away from repertoires of contention and engagement that shape and constrain protest actions (Tilly 1986). The focus, furthermore, is on protestors and 'triggers'. In the case of the Gleneagles march, however, the consequences of some police decisions - containing people in Stirling's convergence centre, stopping coaches in Edinburgh - show that tense stand-offs may not be the result of a 'flashpoint' so much as a police

tactic (cf. Noakes and Gilham 2006). Additionally, following P. Waddington (1994) it is clear that police discretion means that there may not be one single event. Numerous encounters during the day could have become 'flashpoints' had either the police or the protestors reacted differently.

This suggests that the flashpoint model lacks sufficient nuance for the analysis of global protests. As with other such events, Scotland's protests were characterized by different groups (police, protestors, media, public), locations and styles of both 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' and 'diversity of tactics' (Della Porta 2005) adds complexity to protestor-police encounters. Furthermore viewing 'levels of structuration' as concentric circles within which an event takes shape (Waddington, Jones and Critcher 1989: 22) privileges the point of interaction. In global summits, as we have seen, concerns over 'in the job trouble' can dictate policing and influence the form that any interaction takes.

At the very least the flashpoints model needs to be updated to better account for contemporary protest. This is clear from Waddington, Jones and Critcher'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 state legitimacy by flouting laws and rejecting the authority of the police (cf. Noakes and Gilham 2006). Arbitration is hampered in such a context and it is puzzling that the Orr Report (2005) contains no consideration whatsoever 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, emphasising the 'permit culture' on which negotiated management is premised (McPhail, Schweingruber and McCarthy 1998).

Ignoring this blind-spot with regard to non-organized protest, it seems clear that 'best practice' must work both ways: police need to cooperate and be more open too. 'Negotiated management' proves a misnomer when asymmetries of power preclude meaningful interaction, or when 'negotiated' solutions are underpinned by the threat of escalated force. King and Waddington's (2006: 95) phrase 'superficially soft-hat policing' captures these limitations. The on/off Auchterarder march and mixed messages emanating from police sources compounded problems. Mismanagement and/or misinformation encouraged impromptu demonstrations in Edinburgh and eroded trust.

Given this it is concerning (though unsurprising) that Scotland's police view their handling of the G8 as an unbridled success. Tayside Police's (2006:17-18) annual report, for example, focused on 'worldwide praise' for the force. The Lothian and Borders Police website was, likewise, self-laudatory, reproducing appreciative e-mails from the public[12]. LBP's performance report 2005/2006 acknowledged that the G8 protests had been a 'severe test' (Lothian and Borders Police 2006: 7), but argued that this highlighted 'that the police service is of central importance in helping people to exercise their democratic right to protest and be heard' (2006: 1). The Scottish public seem to agree. In our July opinion poll, two-thirds (67 per cent) felt that police handling of the protests was 'about right', with relatively few feeling it was 'not harsh enough' (18 per cent), and even fewer 'too harsh' (8 per cent)[13].

Whilst policing at Gleneagles *was* far less militarized than that seen at recent summits (including Heiligendamm 2007), uncritical celebration of the people's police obscures subtle challenges to democratic accountability. The danger is that 'genuine' protest is reduced to the safe, consensual and permitted modes of expression epitomised by Make Poverty History (Gorringe and Rosie 2006). Whilst such demonstrations appeal to a wider array of participants, the marginalization and criminalization of anti-systemic or non-institutionalized protest constitutes a shrinking of the public sphere (Peterson 2006: 72), and indicates the deleterious impact of global power relations on democracy (cf. Della Porta, Peterson and Reiter 2006: 4).

Conclusion

For all the efforts of the police, 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 a 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 (Gorringe and Rosie 2006), protests removed from the summit venue were less subject to overbearing security concerns. As one respondent (who wished their comment to be anonymized) put it:

> If the eight 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).

If transnational policing offers insights into the 'global system' (Sheptycki 2005), the limitation of protest to 'respectable' actors suggests a curtailing of alternatives. Underpinning the shift towards a more negotiated style of policing was the genuine desire for accountable and democratic policing. Isolating world leaders on an island might free police resources from an over-riding constraint (to protect the summit), but it would strip the veneer of legitimacy from unaccountable gatherings of world leaders. Protestors, thus, play a vital role in testing the limits of 'negotiation', rendering power visible and raising searching questions about the spaces available for democratic debate and contestation.

Notes

[1] We are indebted to the University of Edinburgh Development Trust Fund for facilitating our research. We are grateful to Tayside Police, Lothian and Borders Police, TNS Social, Colin Fox and to the many volunteers who helped us. We have also benefited greatly from the insightful and constructive comments of the editor and the anonymous reviewers.

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

[3] To view 'Updates': http://www.taysidepolice.gov.uk/g8/local_newsletter.php (Accessed 05/10/07).

[4] TNS Scottish Omnibus, June 2005. See Gorringe and Rosie (2006).

[5] See report at: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/4658351.stm (Accessed: 05/10/07).

[6] http://www.indymedia.org.uk/en/2005/07/318170.html (Accessed: 05/10/07).

[7] http://www.indymedia.org.uk/en/2005/07/318170.html (Accessed: 05/10/07).

[8] See report at: http://www.indymedia.org.uk/en/2005/07/316516.html (Accessed: 05/10/07).

[9] The *Scotsman* (05/07/05), for example, led with the headline: 'Batons drawn in the Battle of Princes Street: http://thescotsman.scotsman.com/index.cfm?id=738592005 (Accessed 05/10/07).

---

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

[11] 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.

[12] http://www.lbp.police.uk/G8/positive_stories/index.asp (Link broken October 2007, but see: http://www.lbp.police.uk/G8/ (Accessed 05/10/2007).

[13] TNS Scottish Omnibus, July 2005

Bibliography

Formal interviews Cited:

Dickinson, Ian (interviewed 3 October 2005), Assistant Chief Constable (Specialist

  Operations), Lothian and Borders Police.

Fox, Colin (interviewed 5 August 2005), Convenor, Scottish Socialist Party (SSP).

  The SSP are a key component of Stop The War and G8 Alternatives in

  Scotland. They had, in 2005, six seats in the devolved Scottish

  Parliament.

Ross, Roddy (interviewed 9 June 2005). Chief Inspector, Tayside Police.

Vine, John (interviewed 28 July 2005), Chief Constable, Tayside Police.

White, Fraser (interviewed 21 June 2005). Community Liaison Officer, Auchterarder;

  Tayside Police.

Cited texts:

Buechler, S. 2000 *Social Movements in Advanced Capitalism,* Oxford: OUP

Day, R. 2005 *Gramsci is Dead: Anarchist Currents in the Newest Social Movements,*

  London: Pluto

Della Porta, D. 2005 'Multiple Belongings, Tolerant Identities, and the Construction of

  "Another Politics"' in D. Della Porta and S. Tarrow (eds) *Transnational Protest and*

Global Activism, Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.

Della Porta, D. and Reiter, H. 1998 'Introduction: The Policing of Protest in Western Democracies' in D. della Porta and H. Reiter (eds) *Policing Protest: The Control of Mass Demonstration in Western Democracies.* Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press.

Della Porta, D. and Fillieule, O. 2004 'Policing Social Protest' in D. Snow, S. Soule and H. Kriesi (eds) *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements*, Oxford: Blackwell.

Della Porta, D., Peterson, A and Reiter, H. 2006 'Policing Transnational Protest: An Introduction' in D. Della Porta, A. Peterson and H. Reiter (eds) *The Policing of Transnational Protest*, Aldershot: Ashgate.

Earl, J., Soule, S. and McCarthy, J. 2003 'Protest Under Fire? Explaining the Policing of Protest', *American Sociological Review* 68(4): 581-606.

Ericson, R. and Doyle, A. 1999 'Globalization and the policing of Protest: the case of APEC 1997', *British Journal of Sociology* 50(4): 589-608.

Esson, G. 2005 'Marchers Take to Capital Streets', *BBC Scotland's news website: (Accessed 05/10/07): http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/4657925.stm*

Farnsworth, K. 2004 'Anti-Globalisation, Anti-capitalism and the Democratic State', in M. Todd and G. Taylor (eds) *Democracy and Participation.* London: Merlin.

Fillieule, O. and Jobbard, F. 1998 'The Policing of Protest in France: Toward a Model of Protest Policing' in D. della Porta and H. Reiter (eds) *Policing Protest: The Control of Mass Demonstration in Western Democracies,* Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press.

Gillham, P. and Marx, G. 2000 'Complexity and Irony in Policing and Protesting: The WTO in Seattle', *Social Justice* 27(2): 212-36.

Gorringe, H. and Rosie, M. 2006 '"Pants to Poverty"? Making Poverty History, Edinburgh 2005', *Sociological Research Online, 11 (1).*
http://www.socresonline.org.uk/11/1/gorringe.html

Gorringe, H. and Rosie, M. 2008 'The Polis of "Global" Protest: Policing Protest at the G8

in Scotland', *Current Sociology* (forthcoming).

Hubbard, G. and Miller, D. (eds) 2005 *Arguments against G8,* London: Pluto Press.

Jefferson, T. 1990 *The Case Against Paramilitary Policing,* Milton Keynes: Open University.

King, M. and Waddington, D. 2005 'Flashpoints Revisited: A Critical Application to the
Policing of Anti-globalization Protest', *Policing and Society* 15(3): 255-82.

King, M. and Waddington, D. 2006 'The Policing of Transnational protest in Canada' in
D. Della Porta, A. Peterson and H. Reiter (eds) *The Policing of Transnational
Protest*, Aldershot: Ashgate.

Lothian and Borders Police 2006 *Chief Constable's Annual Performance Report, 2005/06,*
www.lbp.police.uk/freedom-of-information/pl_areport.asp (Accessed 05/10/07)

Marx, G. 1998 'Some Reflections on the Democratic Policing of Demonstrations' in D.
Della Porta and H. Reiter (eds) *Policing Protest,* Minneapolis: University of
Minnesota Press.

McPhail, C., Schweingruber, D. and McCarthy, J. 1998 'Policing Protest in the United
States: 1960-1995' in D. Della Porta and H. Reiter (eds) *Policing Protest,*
Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press.

Noakes, J. and Gilham, P. 2006 'Aspects of the "New Penology" in the Police Response to
Major Political protests in the US, 1999-2000' in D. Della Porta, A. Peterson and H.
Reiter (eds) *The Policing of Transnational Protest*, Aldershot: Ashgate.

Noakes, J., Klocke, B. and Gillham, P. 2005 'Whose Streets? Police and Protester Struggles
Over Space in Washington, DC, 29–30 September 2001', *Policing and Society* 15(3):
235-54.

Orr, J. 2005 *Review of Marches and Parades in Scotland.* Edinburgh: Scottish Executive:
http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2005/01/20583/50696 (Accessed 05/10/07)

Peterson, A. 2006 'Policing Contentious Politics at Transnational Summits' in D. Della
Porta, A. Peterson and H. Reiter (eds) *The Policing of Transnational Protest*,
Aldershot: Ashgate.

Reicher, S., Stott, C., Cronin, P. and Adang, O. 2004 'An Integrated Approach to Crowd

Psychology and Public Order Policing**',** *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies and Management* 27(4): 558-72.

Reiter, H. and Fillieule, O. 2006 'Formalizing the Informal: The E.U. Approach to Transnational Protest Policing' in D. Della Porta, A. Peterson and H. Reiter (eds) *The Policing of Transnational Protest*, Aldershot: Ashgate.

Scarman, Lord. 1981 *The Brixton Disorders, 10th-12th April.* London: HMSO.

Sheptycki, J. 2005 'Policing Political Protest When Politics Go Global', *Policing and Society* 15(3): 327-52.

Tayside Police 2006 *Chief Constable's Annual Performance Report, 2005/06*: http://www.tayside.police.uk/forcepub/annualreport2005-2006.pdf (Accessed 05/10/07).

Tilly, C. 1986 *The Contentious French,* Cambridge MA: Harvard University.

Vitale, A. 2005 'From Negotiated Management to Command and Control: How the New York Police Department Polices Protests', *Policing and Society* 15(3): 283-304.

Waddington, D. 1992 *Contemporary Issues in Public Disorder,* London: Routledge.

Waddington, D., Jones, K. and Critcher, C. 1989 *Flashpoints: Studies in Public Disorder,* London: Routledge.

Waddington, D. and King, M. 2005 'The Disorderly Crowd: From Classical Psychological Reductionism to Socio-Contextual Theory – The Impact on Public Order Policing Strategies', *The Howard Journal* 44(5): 490-503

Waddington, P. 1994 *Liberty and Order: Public Order Policing in a Capital City,* London: UCL Press.

Waddington, P. 2003 'Policing Public Order and Political Contention' in T. Newburn (ed.) *Handbook of Policing,* Cullompton: Willan.

Waddington, P. 2005 'Slippery Slopes and Civil Libertarian Pessimism', *Policing and Society* 15(3): 353-75.

Wahlström, M. and Oskarsson, M. 2006 'Negotiating Political Protest in

Gothenburg and Copenhagen' in D. Della Porta, A. Peterson and H. Reiter (eds)

The Policing of Transnational Protest, Aldershot: Ashgate.