

Teddy Bear Catapults and Corporate Overlords

by Stephen Elliott-Buckley - Wednesday, May 26, 2010

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Creative resistance to global corporate overlords and their comprador governments will hopefully move to a new level next month during the G8/G20 meetings in Ontario.

I know the stakes are high as at least one group [or agent provocateur] has asserted its tone with the [RBC firebombing](#).

[I'm reading](#) of rebel clowns, watching a video on the G8 and the Group of Seven, and remembering the teddy bear catapult in Quebec City's FTAA protest in 2001. And I've reviewed [Judy Rebick's commentary](#) on the context of the catapult as well as an example of [how to effectively extend](#) the media life of creative resistance!

Then I recalled protesters throwing teddy bears onto the floor of the House of Commons, and found the connections here: [New Form of Protest in Canada: Teddy Bears - ABC News](#).

Two anti-free trade protesters were arrested Wednesday at Ottawa's House of Commons after they unfurled a banner reading "Decriminalize Democracy" in the public gallery. The pair began throwing teddy bears onto government benches occupied by parliamentarians.

Security guards quickly subdued and charged them with causing a disturbance.

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Government House leader Don Boudria refused to see the humor in the situation. "This is Parliament, not a recreation center, not a demonstration hall, or not a barricade, and any use of the building for anything other than parliamentary purposes is wrong," he said.

I'm finished with this perspective. The House is the people's House. I find it galling when MPs behave like petulant children because of some absurd notion that the theatre of parliament is entertaining or valuable to society somehow, yet enforce strict silence for citizens in the galleries.

When they have lost a sense of public servanthood, they are asking to be mocked. Teddy bear protests seem to fit. Creative resistance is a valid tactic.

Regarding the teddy bear catapult at the FTAA from the ABC article:

The group also issued a statement saying: "The catapult was a prop which was used in an absolutely non-violent manner to mock the absurdity of holding the secretive and undemocratic summit within a walled fortress."

I also remember a photo in a paper of a protester with a hockey stick shooting either a tear gas canister or teddy bear back toward the police line. That was my inspiration for taping my protest signs for rallies to a hockey stick.

But McTeague warned the protesters about Wednesday's teddy bear attack, saying, "All kidding aside ... this kind of tactic should never be used in the House of Commons. If you have a statement to make, make it by the ballot or make it verbally, write us a letter or do what you have to do, but throwing stuff at us doesn't accomplish anything," he said.

Like Boudria above, McTeague has no standing to demand public decorum when MPs refuse to abide by the same or even a higher standard: after all, they run our country!

The electoral system is not a level playing field. Letters are hardly compelling when corporate interests control both parties that have ever run our country. Throwing stuff at them does, I think, accomplish a great deal.

With action heating up already with [arrests in Vancouver on Friday](#), I hope to see more creative resistance next month in Ontario.