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G8 Counter-summit and demonstrations

Victory at Gleneagles! We did not blink!

- News from around the world -

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After months of planning and activity and coming under the most extreme pressure from the state and media, the anti-capitalist movement in Scotland have won a magnificent victory. This is even more important given the recent horrific bombings in London which will be used by the state to try and further erode our democratic rights.

[<https://www.internationalviewpoint.org/IMG/jpg/g8alt.jpg>]

G8 alternatives protest

The prime organisers of the alternative G8 events and the resistance to the state and media onslaught were G8 Alternatives (G8A). G8A is a broad alliance of political parties, trade unions, church groups, NGOs and individuals. There is no doubt that the backbone of G8A was the Scottish Socialist Party. The participation of tens of SSP activists ensured that the campaign was an unqualified success. They provided an open and democratic platform to unite all those who opposed the G8. They also provided the political leadership and organisation skills that kept the campaign going forward.

Their months of efforts materialised in several key events from July 2 to July 6.

- A massive intervention in the Make Poverty History Demo on July 2 to politicise the demonstration, build the march on Gleneagles and offer an alternative to reform via the Alternative summit on July 3.
- The Alternative summit on July 3. This had a wide range of plenary sessions and workshops covering a vast range of topics. It was attended by several thousand people including new layers from the July 2 demonstration who were seeking real answers to the slogan Make Poverty History.
- Two demonstrations specific to Scotland - at Faslane nuclear submarine station and at the Dungavel detention centre. The latter took place despite extreme police intimidation and harassment.
- On July 6 a large demonstration against the G8 at Gleneagles and smaller one on the streets of Edinburgh. This happened despite a campaign on the day and the days before by the state through the police of dirty tricks, lies, harassment and the arrest of leading G8 activists.
- The successful building of an open democratic campsite for protesters in one of Edinburgh's poorest council estates that brought together activists and local residents.

The state waged a war in the months leading up to the July 6 demonstration to stop the right to march and tried to demonise G8A and separate it from the broader movement. But through weeks of democratic discussion and the launch of our own media campaign, G8A did not flinch - despite every compromise under the sun being thrown at the movement.

We were not granted permission to assemble; march and rally at Gleneagles on July 6 until Friday July 1, the day after the SSP Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSP) were suspended from the Scottish parliament for asking for that same right. And still the state did not stop its campaign of dirty tricks.

At the end of all this, the anti-capitalist movement in Scotland is stronger, broader and more experienced.

As part of the campaign to counter the suspension of the SSP's MSPs, the SSP intends to take the parliament to the people through a series of meetings throughout Scotland.

To maximise the effectiveness of these meetings, we should ensure that the meetings take up the alternatives

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offered by G8A and link the arrests of the G8A activists to suspension of the SSP's MSPs as a general attack on civil liberties.

We have an historic opportunity to further build the SSP as Scotland's anti-poverty and anti-capitalist party. It is one we intend to seize.