



Frivolity on the run. Prague, Czech Republic

Global Day of Action

September 26th 2000

S26 – Balls to the IMF – Prague, Czech Republic

On S26 European movements pick up the gauntlet that N30 had thrown down for the meetings of the

World Bank and IMF in Prague, in September 2000. Activists successfully besiege the conference centre despite the presence of 11,000 police and members of the FBI and UK's special branch who have been sent to Prague to 'advise' the Czech forces.

Meanwhile, although the Czech state turns many activists away from its borders, there are no borders to the imagination of those who take actions in 110

cities in solidarity with the demonstrators in Prague. Early morning commuters are greeted with banners hung from motorway bridges in Frankfurt and Seattle. Despite bans on S26 demonstrations in Moscow, activists put out a spoof press release saying they will destroy a McDonald's, and baffle the pursuing media when they pay a noisy visit to the World Bank offices instead. Similar colourful visits



S26 solidarity actions in Caracas, Venezuela and...



Tute Bianche pad up in preparation to push through police lines. Prague



São Paulo, Brazil

happen in Ankara, New York, Dhaka, Paris, Calcutta, and Kiev. Mirroring the events in Prague, World Bank employees are blockaded into their offices in Delhi, while in Geneva a symbolic sculpture of flesh, bones, and money is built in front of their doors. Meanwhile in São Paulo, Brazil, 1,000 people occupy the streets around the stock exchange, where a banner declares: "Seattle, Prague, São Paulo: We are

Everywhere." IMF 'delegates' in pig masks play football with a globe, and a capitalist monster covered in corporate logos eats people in the crowd. When paint and stones are thrown at the building, and a corporate media van is destroyed, the police attack the crowd.

Four other Brazilian cities take action, including Belo Horizonte where a Citibank branch (Citigroup is a

major investor in World Bank bonds) is blockaded, while in Berkeley, US one loses its windows, and in San Francisco a 'Shitigroup' float parades through the streets with bankers sitting on planet-shaped toilet bowls. In Wellington, Aotearoa/New Zealand, police attack a carnival against capitalism after people occupy a branch of the Westpac Bank. Over 150 different actions take place across India,



Cobblestones fly through water cannon jets. Prague

including in Mumbai, where people invade a brand new luxury shopping mall, surrounding the McDonald's inside and shouting, "We want food, not burgers, first give us water before you feed us Coca Cola!" In Chennai, Tamil Nadu, 400 women demand the abolition of the World Bank and IMF, and in Pakistan, a caravan made up of 30 organizations visits 31 towns where they are greeted by large

crowds.

The joy of resistance is brought to at least five cities in Australia and over 40 in the United States as well as to the streets of Buenos Aires, Bangalore, Capetown, Brussels, Toronto, Warsaw, Belfast, Bergama, Zagreb, Istanbul, Johannesburg, Bawalpur, Izmir, Belfast, Montreal, London, Bristol, Tel Aviv, and beyond...

On the cobbled streets of Prague itself, a new generation of radicals from the Czech Republic, Poland, Hungary, and other Eastern European countries – where visible resistance to capitalism has been snuffed out since 1989 – come together and begin to build new networks.

Despite the efforts of the Bank, the Fund, the corporations, the authorities, and their assembled



Police defend all routes to the Congress Centre. Prague

press to discredit anticapitalism, to paint the Prague actions as a failure, and the movement as divided, violent, and out-of-control, many within the movements see S26 as a resounding success: it is the first time a summit is not just blockaded but actually shut down a day early. According to a World Banker, the sound of police firing concussion grenades led to a high state of tension inside the conference

centre on the first day of their summit. And on the second day, a great number of delegates were too scared to leave their hotel rooms and attend the meetings. A week later, smoke bombs greet World Bank head James Wolfensohn at a conference in Amsterdam, where he complains, "I'm getting so tired of all the security."