

Account of the *Wake* eviction

Around 9 pm, while we were all chilling in the lounge room of the *Wake*, a squatted social centre in Coburg, Spot*, the resident dog, started barking crazily, and not long after there were loud banging noises coming from the back gate. The five of us that were home went to the back door to see what was going on, and saw torches being shone at the gate and us, and heard someone say something along the lines of 'this is the police, get control of that dog'.

While one person went to grab 'Spot' and bring him inside away from the police, the rest of us were waiting by the door. When it became clear that 'Spot' was not being co-operative (an example to us all!), we shut the door to try and stop the police from entering, as they had cut the padlock off the back gate and were heading to the door. While this was happening we were asking the police why they had come, what right they had to be on the property, and other such questions. The police refused to discuss things with us until they had control of the property, so they sent for a sledgehammer.

While we all stood holding the back door, a cop smashed the back door open with a massive sledgehammer, sending a piece of glass into one person's eye (who was luckily uninjured), after which what seemed like 50 police stormed in.

The police were mostly uniformed, with a few undercover (from taskforce *Salver*) filming and taking photos. The police leader refused to say anything about why they were evicting us, or enter into discussion, until the 'officer in charge' arrived roughly 10 minutes later. During this time we were made to sit in the lounge room, surrounded by police, while more police went through the space, and our stuff.

Once the officer in charge came, it was claimed that we were being evicted on behalf of the owners (and on the owners' request), though the police could not name the owners, or provide information about the owners. There was just the threat that if we made them get the owner we would all be charged with trespass and whatever else they could slap on us, and we would not be allowed to take our things (and as this was a social centre, there were a lot of things).

It was also made clear that we were being evicted as part of the police campaign against g20 protests (and protestors), with the police telling us we were the third squat to be evicted in their campaign against g20 protests.

A group decision was made to leave the space, as with the sheer number of police that were already in the space there was no hope of holding onto the space, so there was little point delaying the eviction by demanding the owner be brought. The process of moving things out of the *Wake* continued until 4am, the Saturday morning of the g20 protest.

*name changed to protect his identity...