



Testimony of an Arrest

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OUT OF THE MOUTHS OF “CASSEROLES” *textes qui bougent au rythme du carré rouge*

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Testimony of an Arrest

Editors' note: Following the May 18 enactments of Law 78 and the Montreal municipal bylaw against masked protesters, police began arresting Quebec citizens by the hundreds. On the evening of Sunday, May 20 alone there were over 300 arrests (Le Devoir)¹ including the detention and fine imposed on a Concordia alumnus and part time faculty member. What follows is his account of the arrest, which he wrote and posted briefly that night on Facebook for his friends and family but shortly after removed for legal reasons. He has given us permission to republish his text. For it demonstrates first hand the intersection of state brutality, racism and civil disobedience.

Sorry to worry folks on Facebook.

It's not the ideal medium to be talking about this, but I don't want to worry people any more than necessary. So this is what happened:

Yes, I was arrested tonight in a mass arrest of around 70 people that were kettled on Parc and Milton. About 5-10 minutes earlier, I had just arrived and joined a part of the protest on Sherbrooke. We turned north on Jeanne-Mance when I realised we were being chased by riot police. We turned onto Milton and then were violently pushed/beaten by police onto Parc where we were kettled and later separated into two groups on the sidewalks. Several bystanders who were just standing outside the Second Cup were also rounded up into the kettle. We were detained for about an hour or more, one woman was forced to urinate in a bottle, before we were read our rights/arrested, handcuffed and (aggressively at times) loaded onto "special" STM buses. Our belongings were taken and all our red squares were removed.

During my arrest, I was treated to blatantly racist attacks, with an officer saying I was Kim Jong Il's son, making weird "Asian" noises at me, and telling me that they were going to send me back to Korea, while others chuckled. When I attempted to speak back to them in a civil manner about their racism and my Quebec citizenship, force was applied to my handcuffed arms. In general, we were all treated with uncalled for disdain and disrespect.



Once everyone was finally loaded onto the buses, we were taken to a police station, I'm not sure which one, way out in the East end, and processed.

I had some lovely birthday presents on me including a copy of "The Coming Insurrection" and "Le Petit cahier d'exercices de désobéissance civile" and one of the officers was quite intrigued by that. They even took pictures, heh...

We were ticketed for "participating or being present at an illegal assembly, march or crowd, putting public safety and peace in danger" and eventually released, placed back on a bus, and dropped off at Langelier metro (which was closed).

I have been in contact with media (CTV) and my union (CUPFA). I had many friends supporting me virtually during my arrest. Thank you. I spoke with legal counsel and other detainees, and we plan to collectively contest the charges. The fine is over \$600.

I am home now, and I am physically fine, if a bit sore and a little shaken up. Definitely angry.

As soon as my belongings were returned, I pinned my red square back on.

May 21, 2012

Note

1. The United Nations has also raised concerns about Law 78, violence and mass arrests, particularly on May 24 when over 700 arrests were made across Quebec. See [Gervais, L.-M. \(2012, May 31\), L'ONU fait la leçon à Québec sur sa loi spéciale, *Le Devoir*](#) and [Manifestations nocturnes de la fin de semaine: plus de 360 arrestations, \(2012, May 21\) *Le Devoir*](#).

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