

G20 protesters produce spoof FT

Anti-capitalism campaigners hand out copies of fake Financial Times at London's Waterloo station ahead of G20 summit

Stephen Brook

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Anti-capitalism campaigners have published a spoof edition of the Financial Times today as the prime minister, Gordon Brown, prepares to host next week's G20 summit in London.

The 12-page paper, complete with the slogan "We live on Financial Crimes" - a parody of the FT's advertising strapline "We Live in Financial Times" - was handed out to commuters from dawn today at London's Waterloo station.

A full-colour replica of the "Pink 'Un", the paper features spoof British and international news. A pdf version, photos and videos are available at www.ft2020.com.

The front-page splash announces that "Civilisation is 'more or less unlikely to collapse this century', world leaders warn, despite the inconvenience to companies from global carbon rationing".

Other stories include "This year's Nobel peace prize has been awarded to the British entrepreneurial leader and former head of the CBI, Nigel Feasting-Piranha", and "BBC swear quota gets star journalists cursing, reports Violet Frotting, political entertainment correspondent".

The paper's famous "Lunch with the FT" is also parodied: "When Britain was 'nine meals from anarchy', Franny Armstrong was hungry. Now she's the world's favourite brain candy, but she still has the stomach for Septuma Nosebag."

"Tens of thousands of copies were printed - almost as many as the FT sells here daily," anti-capitalism campaigners said in a press release handed out with the spoof paper at Waterloo.

"This coup was aimed at everyone's excuses for apathy. Unless we change the way we live radically, we'll make our world uninhabitable within decades. It's time for drastic action, and if governments won't take it, we have to do something ourselves."

"Journalists frame public debate, and the City frames public policy," said Raoul Djukanovic, who edited the fake FT. "If they reframed their thinking, they could help build a different world instead of conning us with lifestyle porn and bubbles."

Djukanovic told MediaGuardian.co.uk he completed the project largely on his own after teaching himself to use the computer programs InDesign and Photoshop.

"I think it is to encourage journalists to think about what they can do to promote constructive solutions," he said. "It's their job to support facts and not opinions, but a lot of what's reported as facts are actually the opinions of powerful people. If the prime minister says something, it's news. If I say something, it's not news."

Djukanovic, who described himself as a former journalist who used to work in Belgrade, wrote the content with an unnamed colleague. "We batted ideas back and forth on the internet. I did the stories and he did the jokes. It is something that we worked on in our spare time. We didn't even meet," he said.

The project cost less than £10,000 and was partly funded by internet donations and handed out by volunteers, he added.

Djukanovic said he personally delivered 200 copies to the Financial Times' Southwark headquarters this morning dressed in a balaclava.

"This isn't the first time that this has happened," an FT spokesman said.

"We will continue to focus on reporting and analysing the G20 summit next week. It's not the FT, no comment."

A blog on ft.com said the Financial Times had been subjected to the "sincerest form of flattery".

"It is a mix of jokes and arguments, of varying quality, but the production is superb. They have reproduced the look of the FT very impressively," the Financial Times energy editor, Ed Crooks, wrote on a blog.

"The best bit: the leader column, which writes 'Frankly, the Financial Times is more honest than most, both about its bias and the state of the world. Investors tend to want their news less filtered, even if they still like it framed to serve their interests.' Perhaps we should use that in our advertising."

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