

## No riots, but laughing gas

THE Bums Not Bush protesters were not the only ones who left their posteriors exposed during the Sydney APEC circus last week.

The Chaser team in spectacular and predictable style didn't just breach the exclusion zone - they managed to smuggle in "Osama bin Laden" as well.

So much for the Great Wall of Sydney and the iron-fisted lock down trumpeted by our security chiefs.

You'd think that thousands of police deployed at APEC would have preferred to be doing their real jobs, catching crooks and safeguarding our communities rather than doing the dirty work of our testosterone-charged politicians and world leaders.

The Chaser stunt exposed fortress Sydney and what amounted to the declaration of martial law for a week, as just a big, expensive snow job aimed at convincing the people that these measures were aimed at protecting world leaders and the city from terrorism.

It was actually intended to perpetuate a climate of fear, reinforcing the agenda of both State and Federal governments in taking away citizens' rights and handing more and more powers to the military and police.

I even got the distinct impression that some in government wanted a bit of biff so that they could justify their authoritarian frolics.

I lost count of the number of times the new police chief warned the community of just how he would crush the inevitable violence, even though it never happened.

If anyone else had said it they would have been charged with inciting a riot.

So when the Chaser boys lifted the lid on this charade no-one above the rank of chief inspector was laughing. What, exactly were they going to do, shoot a bunch of comedians?

Now that the Government has declared it isn't funny, will humour be added to the list of summary offences?

Overkill is an understatement, just ask the photojournalist thrown to the ground, head and back they banished the people from their own city and ended up with not only egg on their sorry faces but pancakes with maple syrup as well.

The real question we should be asking is how did some of these world leaders pass the good character test and obtain an Australian visa?

Take the self-styled Russian Czar, Alexander Putin. Apart from his apprenticeship in the KGB, the man has plenty of form in Chechnya and a somewhat poisonous, though short-lived relationship with dissidents. In short, the perfect guy to sell our uranium to.

How about Chinese supremo Hu Jintao? The leader with a real soft spot for Tibet and who ensures Chinese workers don't have too much spare time on their hands.

Then there is George W Bush. This guy thought he was at an OPEC summit (oil is close to his heart).

The leader of the free world is responsible for the slaughter of thousands of people in Iraq, not to mention the ones that weren't on his side. Now here is a man whose regime has backed almost every right-wing tin pot dictator in the world, at least once, and then expects the world to believe that his motives in Iraq are really about democracy and spreading the love.

With such company who can argue that John Howard wasn't the perfect host of the OPEC, I mean, APEC Summit.