



COCK & BULL

DISUNITED KINGDOM

Thousands of Britain's finest took to the streets to loot and pillage. The English are revolting.

Revolting?

Well, rioting at least.

What were they rioting about?

Nobody knows for sure. Some scientists say the sun's to blame. A series of solar flares hit the earth at the same time as the riots and there's some evidence that solar storms have a profound effect on human behavior.

So it wasn't just a load of greedy chavs that fancied a bigger telly and a scrap with the police?

Not all of them. A millionaire's grammar school daughter, an Oxford law graduate, opera steward and ballet student are all said to have taken part.

Crikey. Were there any other reasons?

Ex-Oasis guitarist Noel Gallagher blames brutal video games and says more prisons should be built to lock them up.

Wasn't he involved himself?

Apparently not. But his brother Liam's *Pretty Green* clothes store was ransacked in Manchester. The pesky kids stole £272,000 worth of gear but sports fashion store JD Sports came off a lot worse, they reckon the whole thing's going to cost them more than ten million quid.

Did all shops get ransacked then?

Bookshops appear to have been relatively unaffected. Waterstone's and WH Smith said they were unaware of any damage to their stores. Waterstone's even challenged the rioters to loot them as "they might learn something". But then, books don't quite have the same black market sell-on value as plasma TVs and trainers.

So what did the authorities have to say about it all?

Labour MP Gerald Kaufman, who submitted a claim for three months' expenses totalling £14,301 that included £8,865 for a Bang & Olufsen television, asked the Prime Minister to consider how these rioters can be "reclaimed" by society.



Double standards eh. What did the PM say?

He's declared all out war on gangs and says the government will do everything necessary to restore order to British streets.

So he's going to read them the Riot Act?

He's backed the tough sentences of two men jailed for four years each for trying to organise unrest on Facebook.

Is that long enough?

They got off lightly. One woman was jailed for six months after she was caught with ten packets of chewing gum, a college student with no criminal record was jailed for six months for stealing a £3.50 case of water and another man was warned he could face jail after he admitted stealing two scoops of ice cream.

Shouldn't they be old enough to know better?

Not all of them. The Metropolitan Police reported that about half those who've appeared in court charged with being involved are under the age of 18, with children as young as seven reportedly involved. One bloke who should've known better though is a 70-year-old who was arrested and admitted theft from a supermarket in London.

So is the worst over?

For the moment. The solar activity space-weather forecast's calm for now. Besides, all the rioters have gone back to school.