

Rescue flag exhibition teases government over rescue plan 21/10/2008 00:00

Artist: "Art should always be a part of political life."

Berlin -- While German banks began queuing up for a handout under the government's 500-billion-euro plan for shoring up the financial sector, rescue flags begun emerging across the lawn in front of the nation's parliament building, the Reichstag.

Swiss-born artist Enrico Centonze hopes to set up 500 flags altogether with each flag representing 100 billion euros of the rescue package that the government rushed through parliament last week.

"Art should always be a part of political life," said the 27-year-old artist.

However, Centonze had not asked for official permission to mount his artistic commentary on Berlin's rescue plan so he found himself battling to set up the flags in the face of police action to remove them.

But while Centonze's exhibition took the parliament's administration by surprise, passers-by reacted positively to his exhibition, saying that they thought his exhibition drew people's attention to the financial crisis.

Indeed, Centonze said he hoped his action would generate debate about the crisis, adding that people had been surprised by the scope of the upheaval that had recently sent global shares tumbling.

After all, he said, it is the people who will end up pickup in the bill for the rescue operation.

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