

WAKE UP!! WAKE UP!! IT'S YER ON THE SCENT...

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HOUNDED

SchNEWS ASKS WHO'S HARASSING WHO AS HUNT SEEKS GIANT EXCLUSION ZONE

"If we can get this, it will be a massive victory for hunting and will set a precedent for other hunts to follow." Simon Bonner – Countryside Alliance chairman.

"This is nothing more than a flagrant attempt to use the anti-stalking laws - which were drafted to protect vulnerable individuals - to prevent the monitoring of hunting because the hunt believe the Hunting Act does not give people the right to monitor." - Simon Wilde

Yes, repression via the Protection from Harassment Act is back! (see SchNEWS 581). The Crawley and Horsham Foxhunt are trying to take out an injunction against local hunt monitors Simon and Jaine Wilde, along with the rest of the West Sussex Wildlife Protection Group. They've received the now familiar black ringbinders of 'evidence' from Timothy Lawson Cruttenden (aka TLC)* and are now due in the High Court on the 15th July.

The hunt want an outright ban on "old sabbing tactics — balaclavas, sprays, whips, hunting horns and tape recorders", or so says senior master Anthony Sandeman. "But the main thing is the continual trespass. Farmers are getting fed up with it." Of course trespassing isn't usually a criminal offence under English law but if the injunction goes through it will give the police a power of arrest over a huge swathe of West Sussex. The hunt also want to prevent 'loitering on footpaths' for the purposes of filming and, crucially, they even want to prevent hunt monitors from filming from public roads. Other clauses in the proposed injunction include an exclusion zone around the hunt kennels and a demand that monitors inform the police 24 hours before any planned activity. Breaching any of these clauses could mean arrest and prison.

To recap for those of you who weren't paying attention: injunctions under the Harassment Act create criminal offences out of civil law. An 'interim' injunction - which can be obtained on the flimsiest of evidence - has the full force of law behind it. In this case something as simple as standing on a footpath taking photos could become a criminal offence, punishable by up to five years in prison.

But why are the C&H Foxhunt - adamant that they are only carrying out legal activities - so camera-shy? One hunt monitor who attends the hunt is in no doubt: "We know the C&H are hunting, they cast the hounds into woods, and frequently chase foxes. What they do bears no resemblance to drag-hunting. We've been watching hunts for years and we know what hunting looks like." The League against Cruel Sports discovered the C&H breaking the hunt ban in February 2007, saying, "The reality is

caught on film in horrifying detail. A fox is pursued by the Crawley and Horsham over the Sussex countryside. It seeks refuge in a small hole on the edge of a field. Twenty minutes later - and after a frantic dig out involving three men, spades and two terriers - the fox is dragged to the surface, held aloft and thrown to the waiting hounds. After ten minutes of being savaged by the hounds - encouraged by watching huntsmen - almost nothing remains of the fox."

Of course according to Lawson-Cruttenden, "We're not trying to stop anyone who wants legitimately to monitor the hunt, but we think that means people are entitled only to photograph the master and huntsman while they are engaged in legal hunting activities." What this means in practice is that if anyone else at all is within the camera angle then monitors could find themselves under arrest. All others (including the C&H's thirty-strong squad of stewards) will have the status of 'protected persons'. Our hunt monitor told SchNEWS: "Effectively filming will be obstructed and potentially made illegal. All they'll have to do is have a protected person with them whenever they're up to anything dodgy and we'll have to put our cameras away."

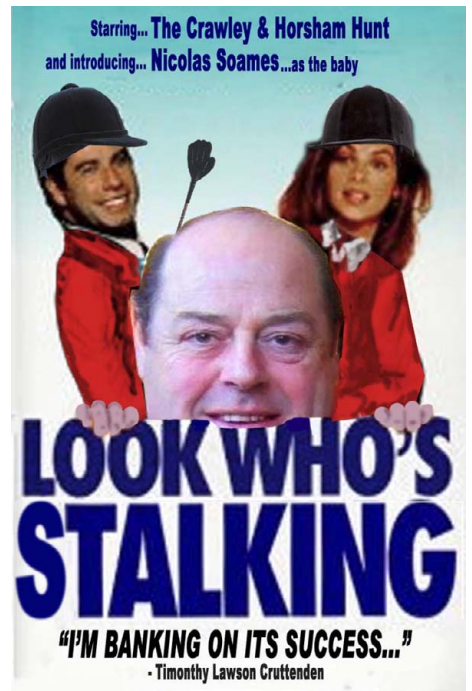
TOFF WITH THEIR HEADS

This attempt to strangle the rights of hunt monitors to document the abuse of wildlife showcases the balance of power in the countryside. On the one hand you have some of the UK's richest landowners/grantees - including the likes of Nicolas Soames MP, grandson of Winston Churchill - backed to the hilt by the wealth of the Countryside Alliance and the Master of Foxhounds Association, and on the other a group of slightly more down-to earth individuals who go out every weekend to try and gather evidence of the abuse of wildlife.

Unfortunately civil court cases cost money and it's possible the landed classes may be able to bulldoze this through by sheer weight of bulion. If they lose then, hey, it's just this year's agricultural subsidies down the pan and one less tin of caviar at Christmas - but if Simon and Jane lose then they lose their home. Of course 'Fatty' Soames has every reason to stay away from the lens: on the strength of film from the monitors he was fined for riding a quad bike on the public highway without a crash helmet. But with an injunction in place the monitors might have been arrested for filming in the first place, preventing any inconvenient court appearances.

The real irony is that the notorious C&H

Continued overleaf...



THE FRUIT OF ALL EVIL

Carmel Agrexco's UK depot was shut down last Saturday in another action against the Israeli company, who import produce grown on occupied Palestinian land. Early in the morning activists d-locked onto the gate, vehicle barrier and a lorry, while others climbed on the lorry. The Israeli flag which normally flies over the building was replaced with a black flag, representing the Palestinian deaths in Gaza.

The depot was blockaded for six hours, and the protesters were forcibly removed at 12 noon - but again, with no arrests. While police ignored the violence by security against the protesters, the police sergeant told protesters that the instruction to not arrest was an order from 'higher up'. In fact, like on previous occasions, Carmel don't want court cases and scrutiny of their illegal activities in the Occupied Palestinian Territories put under the spotlight. These actions are becoming a regular thorn in the side of the Israeli-owned company. The sustained campaign against Carmel is a win-win for the protesters- without arrests there's nothing stopping protesters from coming back time and time again.

Spokesperson Tom Hayes said, "Agrexco is responsible for human rights crimes against the Palestinian people. The British supermarkets which buy produce from Agrexco are also complicit. Handling stolen goods is an offence whether the offender is a supermarket or an agribusiness. Agrexco must be held liable for its 'unlawful business'."

This action commemorated 60 years since the Palestinian 'Nakba' (Catastrophe) - the theft of Palestinian land, massacres, expulsions and creation of over 700,000 refugees with the founding of the state of Israel in 1948.

This is just the latest action against Carmel - earlier actions saw protesters having charges dropped, and later, people just weren't arrested, to avoid Carmel's activities being brought up in court. See SchNEWS 529, 571, 597, 600, 620, 624

* For more see www.bigcampaign.org.uk

hunt are no strangers to the 'stalking' game themselves. Pro-hunt websites such as Moochers.org carry photos, profiles and addresses of those they refer to as 'antis'. In recent years, monitors have captured on camera C&H huntsmaster Kim Richardson warning monitors, "You're all fair game now ... I've fucking told everyone" - before assaulting one of them. Richardson is the son of the late Sir Michael Richardson, who was known as 'Mr Privatisation', one of the highest ranking freemasons in England and a 'darling' of Lady Thatcher.

During the run-up to the ban, supporters of the C&H achieved a publicity coup by ramming the monitors van off the road - while it was occupied by a film crew from 'Tonight with Trevor McDonald'. Hunt supporter John Hawkins was convicted of GBH after breaking a female monitor's arm in two places on 29th January 2005. During the same incident a hunt whipper-in and steward were cautioned for assaulting the driver and stealing the group's van keys. More recently, terrier man Jeremy Charman was fined £80 for throwing a dead rabbit at monitors in November last year. Meanwhile hunt steward Christopher Curtis received a warning for blocking footpaths - under the Harassment Act!

Simon and Jane have suffered a great deal over the years due to their commitment to the fight against bloodsports. As well as being a continuous presence at their local hunts they were leading voices supplying evidence to the various parliamentary inquiries, which eventually provided the evidence required to back an outright ban. They've had attacks on their home, carcasses dumped in the front garden and been the victims of repeated vicious beatings in the field.

As one hunt monitor told us: "This injunction under the Harassment Act is nothing more than an attempt by some very rich men to buy themselves an exemption to the law of the land. If granted it will be a charter for abuse of wildlife and monitors alike. A video camera is often our only way of protecting ourselves when under attack by hunt thugs. It's also our only way of documenting the horrific treatment dished out to wildlife by this organisation which claims to be hunting legally."

* For more about TLC and the tender loving care he puts into injunction cases against animal rights, as well as anti-arms trade and climate change activists see SchNEWS 581, 531, 509, 492, 471
** For more about Hunt Sabbing see www.hsa.enviroweb.org

SchNEWS IN BRIEF

The farmhouse squatted on the **proposed open-cast coal mine in Derbyshire** (See SchNEWS 636) has received eviction papers and will be in court on June 30th, 10am at Derby Court Centre, Morledge. Get down there and in the meantime the site needs people and tat. Help save the land from demolition. Site mob 0750 333 5870 www.leaveitintheground.org.uk ** **Bath Bomb** - the local muck-raking monthly-ish newsheet from the Bath Activist Network, has issue #11 out now. For more info see www.myspace.com/bathbomb ** **Nerve** - Liverpool's quality political magazine, has a new issue out - this issue on the theme of immigration. There will be a launch party, June 28th, 8pm, at the Next To Nowhere social centre, 96 Bold Street, Liverpool. See it at www.catalystmedia.org.uk ** Where is **CRAP ARREST OF THE WEEK?** With new laws coming in thick and fast, it's surprising that the crap arrests aren't! So if you hear about one please send it in, or else go out yourself and do something daft (but not that daft!)

STARVING FOR JUSTICE

Gassed by Union Carbide, poisoned by Dow Chemical, betrayed and beaten by their own government, the people of Bhopal, India know a thing or two about injustice but still they refuse to accept it. Four months ago, 50 survivors of the world's biggest industrial massacre (after 23 years, 23,000 dead and counting - see SchNEWS 580) walked 500 miles to Delhi and have been living on a sliver of pavement near the Indian parliament ever since. For the last 18 days, seven of them, plus three of their supporters, have been on indefinite hunger strike, and are now showing developed signs of starvation.

They say they won't eat again until Prime Minister Singh ensures a special commission to finally take care of the medical, social and economic needs so badly neglected since 1984: around 120,000 in Bhopal are severely ill due to the tonnes of lethal gas released by Union Carbide, with thousands too disabled to earn a living.

Another 25,000 are still being poisoned today by highly toxic chemicals oozing from the abandoned pesticides factory. Brain damaged and malformed children are rife around the plant. 54-billion-dollar company Dow, which owns Carbide, says gas survivors' £500 per head compensation money should cover the clean up costs.

Inconveniently for Dow, Indian law employs the 'polluter pays' principle. Undaunted, Dow's CEO set up private meetings with Indian officials to demand they drop a legal request that Dow pay up, with \$1 billion investment as a carrot. The Prime Minister's office quickly set about doing the necessary.

In addition to fighting this treachery, the Bhopalis also demand the Indian government fulfil its duty as prosecutor by extraditing Dow's 100% owned subsidiary Carbide, charged with mass homicide but refusing to turn up in court. To get things moving, they've taken peaceful direct actions at the PM's house and offices. For asking the law to do its job, police dragged 36 Bhopalis to a station and beat them up, including girls as young as six and eleven. The next day, the Bhopal ten stopped eating.

The Bhopal survivors are asking people everywhere to join them in solidarity. On Saturday June 28th, cities around the world will observe public fasts. You can find out more at www.bhopal.net.

MAC ATTACK

Over a decade after the famous Mclibel trial victory (See SchNEWS 124), and despite endless 'greening' exercises, takeovers of slightly-less-hated brands, falling profits and the closure of stores as the empire recedes, the multi-billion dollar corporation is still peddling its resource/worker/health exploiting junk food up and down every High St.

To mark this year's anniversary, on June 21st, campaigners entered a McDonald's branch in Cambridge to distribute some new leaflets outlining the company's many sins, and to encourage brain-challenged consumers to boycott the chain.

The police were swiftly in attendance, keen as mustard-flavoured sauce to defend the rights of McCrap sellers as ever. One of those removed from the premises was then arrested under section 5 of the Public Order Act for refusing to give his date of birth, despite no legal requirement for him to actually do so.

He has been charged and bailed to attend Cambridge Magistrates Court 613 at 43 Hauxton Road, Cambridge on the 3rd July, at 9.30am. Any support will be appreciated - don't let the burgers get you down...

* History of the monumental libel case at www.mcspotlight.org

TREATED LIKE ANIMALS

Since Gestapo-like raids on May 21st, ten animal rights activists have been held without charge under vague anti-terror laws in Austria (see SchNEWS 636). They have not even been told what they are accused of. In protest at their treatment, one of the detainees, Dr Martin Balluch, has been on hunger strike and his health is now deteriorating.

A solidarity human rights demo is being held outside the Austrian Embassy on Friday 27 June from 10am-12pm. Meet in Belgrave Square (nr tube: Victoria and Hyde Park Corner). After noon, protest will move to the Austrian National Tourist Office at 9-11 Richmond Buildings London W1D 3HF. For more info tel: 07866 879851, 07724 002054 or 07899 775493. For more on prisoners and details of the police actions, see www.vgt.at

PARTY & PROTEST

June: 28th - CCTV Camera Appreciation Outing - Bring your own camera to point at the lenses that have been pointing at us since 1996. Celebration of Big Brother's Birthday, combining 12th anniversary of Worthing's CCTV and George Orwell's birthday. Meet Worthing train station, 2pm ** **28th** - Demo with bike ride at **Campsfield detention centre** - to give support to the detainees imprisoned there. Come and make some noise! This event is on the last Saturday of every month. Bike riders meet 11am, Martyrs' Memorial, St Giles, Oxford, demo is 12pm-2pm. www.close-campsfield.org.uk ** **28th - National Rally For Badgers** - Badgers in Wales face extermination on the false pretext that it will prevent the spread of bovine TB (See SchNEWS 610). Meet outside the Welsh Assembly Building (Debating Rooms), 1pm. 0117 944 1000, http://viva.org.uk/badgers ** **July: 3rd - Talk on Sequani trial**, where 12 peaceful protesters were arrested under new SOCPA laws and put on trial for 20 weeks for doing nothing except waving a banner (See SchNEWS 634). Vegan food provided. 7pm at LARC, 42 Fiedgate St, Whitchapel, E1 1ES, tube Whitchapel ** **4th - I Spy A Spy** - Independence from America demonstration, at the entrance to the US base at Menwith Hill, near Harrogate, Nth Yorks. With talks, music, food. Come dressed as a spy, 5pm-10pm, 01423 884076 or mobile 07949897904 www.caab.org.uk ** **5th - London Fete Against The G8**, Japan, July 7th-9th - Croydon: targeting Lunar House, the nerve centre of the UK Border Agency where people claim asylum and where their claims are refused, as well as Electric House, an immigration reporting centre. For times and places see http://londonfete.ucrony.net ** **For full listings see www.schnews.org.uk/pap**

...and finally...

A group in San Francisco has come up with a fitting way to mark Dubya's disappearance down the U-bend of history. Past presidents have been associated with such public monuments as the JFK airport and the Woodrow Wilson bridge - but the Presidential Memorial Commission of San Francisco have come up with something a little more appropriate for the current incumbent - The George W. Bush Sewage Plant. They are applying to rename the local sewerage works, and claim to have enough signatures to force it through.

The plan is for the name change to happen on January 20th, the day the new president is inaugurated, coinciding with a mass "synchronized flush". They're not the only ones who can't wait to pull the Cheney on the Bush presidency.

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SchNEWS warns all readers - we'll fight them in the beeches. Honest!

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