



SchNEWS

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Issue 796

AS COPS PREPARE TO CELEBRATE CLEARING THE STREETS OF STUDENTS AT NOV 9 DEMO...



NOV 9 SUMMED UP

AS 'TOTAL' POLICING ENTERS STUDENT ANTI-CUTS DEMO EQUATION...

Wednesday (9th) saw yet another demonstration against cuts to education and public services, this time organised by the National Campaign Against Fees & Cuts (NCAFC). So SchNEWS donned its best black hoodo and attempted to infiltrate the 'violent minority'. Much to our disappointment, by the end of the day, it was clear that the monopoly of violence was still very much in the hands of the state.

A mixed bag of around 10,000 students, socialists, liberals, workers, unemployed and black block (not necessarily mutually exclusive) left University of London, Mallet St at 12pm. Armed with fiddles, tambourines, drums, sound systems and an extensive collection of placards including "Creed, not Greed", "Tax the wealthy 1%", "I wish my boyfriend was as dirty as your policies" and "Dumbledore wouldn't stand for this".

Three helicopters flew overhead as the assembly got ready to rally. The demo shuffled, zombie-like through the streets of London, with progress severely restricted by a heavy police presence. Effectively the cops had decided to place the whole demonstration in a mobile kettle, with lines of police marching alongside; every side street was barricaded with police horses dictating the pace at the front and a further 15 riot vans, 6 police cars and a dog van bringing up the rear. Overall more than 4,000 cops (nearly 1 for every 2 protesters) were deployed. No one was allowed to join the demo and you certainly couldn't leave - 'Total Policing' was the Met's new buzzword for this particular form of oppressive action.

Friendly bobbies handed out leaflets explaining the new commissioner's latest brainwave and how all this visible policing was just there to help "facilitate peaceful protest". Unfortunately it failed to mention the less visible undercover (who were deployed en-masse), nor did it reference the threatening letters they had sent to people arrested in previous demos (regardless of

whether or not their charges were dropped) and police threats to deploy rubber bullets - which had been issued earlier in the week. Fortunately the threats failed to dampen protesters' spirits and chants of "You can shove your rubber bullets up your arse!" were heard throughout the day.

The use of large numbers of (barely) undercover police was probably the most noticeable deviation from past tactics. Pairs of fairly obvious plain clothed officers walked along with the crowd looking for potential 'trouble-makers'; once they found someone they didn't like the look of they'd single them out for a snatch squad to drag away. Numerous photos of this particularly nasty 'violent minority', along with pictures of cops continuing to hide their ID numbers and masking-up, are starting to surface.

The actions of the police meant there was very little contact between the protesters and the general public. The police couldn't prevent construction workers from showing solidarity however and any time the march passed construction sites there was an evident unity and affinity between the builders who cheered the crowd on - which responded in kind with "Students and workers unite and strike!"

A few bankers also got a glimpse of what's in store for them in the near future as the angry mob passed through the city. Cries of "Tory Scum" and "Banks Got Bailed Out, We Got Sold Out" were directed towards a number of financial institutions. As cops attempted to delay the march at the end of New Fetter Lane, Lloyds staff decided unwisely to bait the crowd from the upper floors of Thavies Inn House, at one point even throwing objects from the windows. A well aimed potato sailed in the opposite direction, taking out a window on its way; staff then beat a hasty retreat.

By Fleet Street, a call travelled from the front of the protest right to the back informing people that 700 electricians were trying to join the demo but were stopped by a police barricade. The sparks have been on strike over pay cuts and had already marched to parliament. The painfully slow progress of the student demo slowed to a halt as attempts were made to join the two blocks together, but these came to nought, so the demo carried on towards Holborn.

The fact that the electricians couldn't join a demonstration when they

hadn't committed any offences to warrant any exclusion may not come as a surprise to regular SchNEWS reader types, but the only positive aspect of yet another example of police tyranny will be that it will make Joe Bloggs and John Doe wake up to hard faced police tactics. Sounds of "Why are they doing that?" travelled through the ether as injustice hit them in the face.

Meanwhile, the portable teapot got piloted as far as Moorgate by a route that avoided all the hot spots such as Parliament and the St Paul's occupy camp. Billy Bragg entertained the St Paul's campers with ole favourite trade union ditties.

At the finish line the protesters were released in small manageable groups. Many were fairly keen to leave by this point, with most of the enthusiasm and energy successfully drained by the police tactics. Others headed down to the Finsbury Sq occupation, while some stayed at the junction of Moorgate and London Wall to dance to the assorted sound systems.

Throughout the day 60 arrests were made, though only 20 of those actually spent the night in the cells. 3 for violent disorder and affray, 3 for going equipped to cause criminal damage (including our hero with a pen - see Crap Arrest), 1 for breaching S60AA (refusing to take off a mask), 1 for possession of an offensive weapon and 12 for breach of the peace.

One of the less successful actions of the day was the attempted occupation of Trafalgar Sq, which consisted of 30 pop-up tents pitching up, followed shortly after by the arrest of their occupants and the removal of the tents. London cabbies had a bit more luck as areas of central London were blockaded in the afternoon by a swarm of black cabs that were supporting the taxi union protest, with the aptly named 'United Cabbies Group'. Around 4,000 cabs descended on different parts of London from 4pm, Trafalgar Sq, Pall Mall, Aldwych, Fleet St, Shaftesbury Avenue and Victoria St had all been on the menu.

In recent times there has been a global trend for waves of protests and demonstrations that are slowly joined by all sorts - not just the usual suspects. People across the board are showing their discontent and experiencing police brutality for the first time. It is not just your black bloc, leftists, brew crew, jobless.... these days the discontented come in all shapes and sizes, from all backgrounds, and many workplaces. Builders, nurses, electricians and Harry Potter fans to name but a few are joining the students, anarchists and seasoned activists in the fight.

So even though the police seemed in control in London it is worth considering that many people there are not experienced in the ways of demonstrations, riots and confronting police. The more exposed they become to police brutality and the reality of who the police really serve the more they may react. Here endeth the lesson. Ah, men.



No, not the 2012 EDL pin-up calendar, but all undercover cops seen skulking at the Nov 9 student protests...

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INFORMATION FOR ACTION

PARTY & PROTEST
For events listings updated weekly see
www.schnews.org.uk/pap

HIGH SIEZE

Considering it's rooted in ancient folklore, the Israel-Palestine conflict has been pretty high-tech this last week.

Two boats, the Canadian Tahrir and the Irish Saoirse, were illegally captured in international waters by Israeli commandos. The ships, part of the civilian Freedom Flotilla movement, were headed to Gaza with a cargo of people and medicine, aiming, as previous flotillas have, to break Israel's murderous siege of the Gaza Strip. Unlike the last flotilla, which was prevented from leaving port, this one got 35 nautical miles from Gaza before the Israeli military boarded and kidnapped its crew and passengers. They were taken to Israel and then charged with 'illegally entering Israel' (a country they had no intention of visiting). Several of them are still in Israeli jails.

In revenge, Anonymous, the high-tech hacker cyberpunks from a dystopian present, shut down the websites of the Israeli Defence Forces as well as the sites of spy agencies Shin Bet and Mossad. On their statement on Youtube they said "Justifying war, murder, illegal interception, and pirate-like activities under an illegal cover of defence will not go unnoticed by us or the people of the world...If you continue blocking humanitarian vessels to Gaza or repeat the dreadful actions of 31 May 2010 against any Gaza freedom flotillas then you will leave us no choice but to strike back. Again and again, until you stop." Nice one.

Meanwhile, on the other side, pro-Israeli hackers shut down the website of the Russell Tribunal on Palestine, an international People's Tribunal of former heads of state, Nobel Prize laureates, a former UN secretary general, and other assorted liberal elites that have gathered in South Africa to deal with the ongoing occupation of Palestinian territories and unrelenting violation of human rights Israel exercises on Palestinian citizens.

* www.russelltribunalonpalestine.com/en/about-rtop

HAVING A FIELD DAY

Hunters continue to flout the law on hunting with dogs, and sabs continue to get in their way every week.

On Tuesday 25th October a hound from the Cotswold Vale Farmers Hunt was hit and killed by a lorry on the A34. The pack was illegally pursuing a fox when it attempted to cross the road, sabs managed to prevent further accidents. The hunt have since accused the saboteurs of causing the death. In case there was any doubt that it was the hunt who were guilty of recklessly endangering their dogs, they repeated the same trick of losing control of the pack on a busy road, this time caught on film by hunt monitors (<http://hsa.enviroweb.org/index.php/news/archive/320-hunt-saboteurs-association-press-release-7th-november-2011>).

On Saturday 5th November the Old Surrey, Burstow & West Kent Fox Hunt was sabbed by a number of different groups. The Burstow has a bit of a reputation for violence and last weekend was no exception. Frustrated hunt supporters attempted to block a narrow bridge that sabs were crossing, other supporters came from behind and one sab was pulled off the bridge and cracked her head on a concrete slab. Police were in attendance and have been given footage of the incident.

The more numbers in the field, the less violence gets inflicted on both foxes and sabs. To find your local sab group and get involved check <http://hsa.enviroweb.org>

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REMEMBER REMEMBER

Saturday 5th of November was not just the 406th anniversary of an attempt by a group of religious zealots to seize power, it was also the 10th anniversary of the death of activist Barry Horne (see SchNEWS 330).

Barry died while on hunger strike in Full Sutton Prison, protesting against Neo-Labour's support of the vivisection industry. This was despite them promising (before they got into power mind) that they would bring the practice to an end. At the time Barry was serving 18 years for firebombing a number of branches of Boots, who were still testing on animals.

Around 200 marched to Huntingdon Life Sciences, while many other demos, actions and gigs (including the SchNEWS benefit) were dedicated to the memory of the man whose commitment brought international media attention and served as motivation for countless activists.

And sadly his battle still needs fighting; HLS are still going - so if you want to carry on Barry's work see <http://speakcampaigns.org>

TOUR OF DUTY

Smash Edo is going on tour around the country gathering support for the 2012 Summer of Resistance. The workshop will include a rundown of the campaign so far, a direct action workshop and a chance to plan actions for next summer in Brighton. Come along and find out how to get involved.

Confirmed dates so far:

NOVEMBER 13th: Manchester – OKasional Cafe, 7pm, see www.okcafe.wordpress.com

14th: Sheffield – Occupy Sheffield, 1pm and 7pm, see www.occupy-sheffield.org.uk

15th: Liverpool – Next to Nowhere, 7pm, see www.liverpoolsocialcentre.org/index.php/calendar/month.calendar/2011/11/28/-html

16th: Edinburgh – Autonomous Centre of Edinburgh, 7pm, see www.autonomous.org.uk

DECEMBER 3rd: Manchester and Salford Anarchist Bookfair, People's History Museum – Time TBA, see www.underthepavement.org/bookfair

4th: Newcastle – Star and Shadow, 4pm, see www.starandshadow.org.uk/on/201/12/04/?os=2

Weekly noise demos are still occurring every Wednesday, 4-6pm outside the EDO ITT/MBM factory in Mouslecoombe

A commemoration demo in honour of long term Smash EDO campaigner Mark Rivers, who sadly passed away on Saturday (5th) will be held soon. Check smashedo.org.uk for the announcement.

MAISON D'ETRE

Around 100 asylum seekers and migrants are now on the streets of Calais after the (latest) Africa House squat was evicted on Wednesday (9th).

Those without papers escaped from the building before the police arrived making the operation mainly peaceful and without arrests. Calais Migrant Solidarity activists and individuals from other associations observed the raid, which has been expected since eviction papers were issued to the occupants of the dilapidated warehouse a couple of weeks ago.

Although the authorities have now shunted the unaccompanied minors and those waiting on French asylum claims into hostels scattered around the country, most of the mainly Sudanese migrants are now rendered homeless. With the bitterly cold coastal weather of the Calais winter looming, it's gonna be tough for those forced to pitch up tents around the city - and attempt to sleep - without police intimidation and violence, or risking illness.

See <http://calaismigrantsolidarity.wordpress.com> and SchNEWS 787, 780

CRAP ARREST OF THE WEEK

For being ink-capacitated...

One student protester got nicked before he got anywhere near the #Nov9 demo when the coach coming down from Leeds and Bradford got pre-emptively pigged by coppers looking to bust anyone they could get their hands on.

The cops stopped and searched everyone on the bus, looking for any old excuse to cart potential marchers away. And they struck gold (well, it was probably black actually) as they uncovered a large felt tip in possession of one student. They swiftly lay down a marker by nicking the pen's possessor, and the city of London could breathe a collective sigh of relief as another evildoer was stopped in his tracks.

* Thanks for Green & Black Cross for submitting this story - their legal team provide legal observers on the ground, a 24/7 arrestee support line and follow-up advice for defendants and claimants. So next time you go to a demo, write down their legal support line (07946 541511) and call them if you or anybody else gets arrested, whether it's a crap arrest or not. See www.greenandblackcross.org/legal

RIP MARK RIVERS

Brighton's irreplaceable rabble-rouser, Mark Rivers, was heartbreakingly killed by a fire in his flat in the early hours of Sunday, 6th November, just days before his 52nd birthday and a scheduled appearance in court for shouting, "child killing scum", at workers inside the EDO factory.

Mark was involved in Smash EDO from its inception and was a vocal, near guaranteed presence at the campaign's blockades, demos, publicity stalls - and held the undisputed record for attending weekly noise demos. He was to be found giving support to other activists during their court cases as often as he was a source of casual mischief at numerous squat parties.

Fostered at 6 months old, Mark was to get involved in agitating in the late 1970s and, during his work soon after as a hospital porter, was a shop steward involved in several workplace disputes which led to him being unofficially black-listed. Later on he was better known as a familiar face at the Cowley Club and in the local gay scene. For those closest to him, he was a modest, deeply knowledgeable, amusingly provocative and genuinely caring character. He was spotted by many, during what was his last day, giving the police an earful - his super strength - at a protest against the criminalisation of squatting.

...and finally...

A contender for Crap Rest of the Week with a case of one too many shots for a City of London Police firearms officer.

After a heavy night on the piss after passing a marksmanship course, PC Gary Withers got chucked out of the upmarket Savoy Hotel; so he ended up crashing out in the only space that he could find in central London - the Occupy LSX camp. The top brass are less than pleased with his choice of boudoir, and the force's professional standards unit (yes, apparently the pigs have one) are claiming that he broke force rules. Not that breaking the rules ever interfered with a copper's career - after all, smashing up cars with baseball bats and killing newspaper sellers in the street are technically against the rules, but nobody lost their jobs over those...

Disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all readers - lest we forget, the 1% are a bunch of war-mongering bastards. Honest.

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