

Issue 152

Friday 30th jan 1998

Free/Donation

RESPECT

TO THE LIVERPOOL DOCK WORKERS

"You have all been an inspiration to workers throughout the world, this struggle has united workers on a level unknown before"

Email tribute

Two years, three months and twenty nine days after they were sacked for refusing to cross a picket line, Liverpool dock workers voted on Monday to end their marathon dispute with the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company. A short statement issued on Monday reads:

"At a mass meeting the Liverpool Dockers decided to call an end to their long running dispute on a recommendation from their shop stewards. The decision to end the dispute was taken after hearing about a number of very important and significant developments which made it more or less impossible to continue. We ask the comrades to appreciate the difficulty that confronts us at this stage and understand that all the relevant details of the final settlement will follow in due course.

Thanks for all your magnificent and wonderful support."

Yours in Solidarity,

Jim Nolan

Merseyside Port Shop Stewards Committe

As SchNEWS went to press shop stewards were still meeting and we will give more details when they follow. We at SchNEWS say respect to the dockers and Women of the Waterfront. The dispute was surely one of the most imaginative and creative responses to Globalisation in trade union history. It not only crossed international boundaries, but united different struggles. The dockers fight might be over but the fight against low-pay, crap jobs and a world where people don't get shafted for trying to get a decent standard of living continues....

For a potted history of the strike, see SchNEWS 136 or check out the Labourwebsite www.Labournet.org.uk.

* "While Elton John makes a song and dance about a dead princess, Polygram continues to profit from the misery of the workers at M & S"

Polygram is a multinational company operating in 40 countries. It is one of the three biggest music companies in the world, controlling 20% of the worldwide market. In 1996 it made £2.965 billion sales !Elton John's 'Candle in the Wind' - the best selling song of all time - is published through PolyGram but packaged by M & S (Packaging) of Blackburn. M & S pay their workers just £3.80 an hour with no holiday or sick pay and 12 hour shifts. People employed at M & S through a local agency on a 'when needed' basis are paid even worse - just £3 per hour.

However, when one of the workers, Nigel Cook, started to argue against low pay and poor conditions and set up a union he was sacked.

So a campaign has been set up not just to re-instate Nigel, but also to highlight the crap jobs and casualisation that the dockers were also fighting against. There's gonna be a picket and protest of Polygrams Britannia Music Awards (the Brit Awards) at Docklands Arena, London on Monday 9th February letting people know that it's not all glitz and glamour behind the music industry. Ring 0171 837 1688 for details of the picket. There will be transport from Brighton - ring 01273 685913 to book a place.

Nigel Cook Campaign, PO Box 14, Accrington, Lancashire, BB5 1GG 01254 679605.

* Meanwhile pool old Elton John has been told by his accountants of a looming cash-flow crisis. It seems his weekly spending bill of £280,050 is causing some concern With five homes across the globe (with two florists making 240 flower arrangements a week for his homes) and a fleet of cars worth almost £2 million, SchNEWS wonders just how the poor old musically-challenged twat is manages.

CRAP ARREST OF THE WEEK For cleaning your bowels: Stoke Newington police nicked two party organisers and confiscated a two-kilo block of clay. The clay was meant to be consumed as a way of cleansing the colon, but the down-to-earth officers found this difficult to digest, and apparently mistook it for hash. Some people are full of shit.

- * This week the government told the nation that it had spent £126,000 on refurbishing 10 and 11 Downing St since the General Election. Now what was that about us all having to tighten our belts because there's no money in the pot?
- * Belgians are facing a second weekend without money as a strike of security-van guards puts their country on the verge of becoming Europe's first cashless society. The strike following the murder of three security in armed robberies, is over low pay (they earn on average £700 a month) and has left banks, shops and their customers short of cash, with virtually all cashpoint machines closed days ago. With teachers and health workers also on strike and near-daily demonstrations, the self-styled capital of Europe is in danger of sinking into chaos...

THESE PEOPLE STILL NEED YOUR SUPPORT

*350 **Magnet Workers** have been on strike now for 18 months over pay and conditions (see SchNEWS 151). If you'd like to make a donation contact the Strike Committee c/o Ian Crammond, 109 Jedburgh Drive, Darlington, DL3 9UP.

*Hillingdon Hospital Workers have been in dispute for as long as the dockers (see SchNEWS 136). Sacked after refusing to take a 20 pay cut and worse conditions, they have been abandoned by their union UNISON and are desperate for donations. Donations to HSSC c/o 27 Townsend Way, Northwood, Middlesex, HA6 1TG

IN NEXT WEEKS SCHNEWS

The Free Party clampdown continues - last Saturday in Stoke Newington it was the turn of five sound systems to have their rigs confiscated. So next week SchNEWS is gonna do a double-issue on what's been happening round the country in the past six months. Give us a bell if you've got any gossip.

CARRY ON UP THE BOTTOM

"Dead Womans Bottom has taken a slapping but we're still holding on".

12 days after bailiffs moved in and evicted protesters, there's still plenty of activity up Dead Womans Bottom. People are trying to stop a link road being built to make it easier for Tarmac to mine more of the Mendip Hills. (see SchNEWS 151) Although all the trees have been felled and two security compounds have been set up, protesters are still 'avin it'. despite 30 arrests, a 5 mile exclusion zone and the destruction of the on route camps. "If we cant stop the road, we can make it cost millions". Two camps exist at O.S. co-ordinates ST 716463 and ST 717461 between Nunney and Chantry Lane, with the road blocks lifted and police presence minimal. Info line 01749 880 144/ Prisoner support 01373 452 777.

PRESSMENAN WIN!

DIRECT ACTION SAVES ANCIENT WOODLAND

After another attempt to fell Pressmenan Woods ended in failure two weeks ago, the 'Management Committee' has thrown in the towel, and announced that 'an indefinite hold has been put on the feeling of the oaks'.

The campaign to save the ancient WoodLand has been covered extensively in SchNEWS over the last two years; BMW wanted to destroy a significant proportion of the remaining one per cent of ancient woodland in Lothian for use in their cars, but a combination of direct and legal action has won through. According to Marina, involved in the campaign since day one:

"We never gave up, even after two and a half years. Direct action has saved the wood. When the police refused to 'protect' the chainsaw crew from 'activists' we knew we could win it. Although it's not definite yet, it looks like the wood is saved."

Hello Taxi?

Cab drivers in Eastern Germany are facing prison sentences of up to two years for ...well, for driving their cabs. 46-year-old Bernd Ludwig of Goerlitz in Saxony was found guilty of aiding and abetting 3 refugees from the former Yugoslavia and sentenced to 15 months in prison; even though when he picked up the passengers he didn't know they were immigrants who had illegally crossed the EU 'border.'

In the Zittau region of Saxony, police are investigating another 22 cab drivers and throughout the border region taxi drivers are being taken to court.

German border guards are handing out leaflets asking cab drivers to watch out for 'clients of foreign appearance', with 'lots of luggage or wet clothes'. Drivers are recommended to check their passengers' identity papers and -in case of suspicion- alarm the police immediately via a special code word over their radios.

Taxi Co-operatives from across Germany announced their resistance to this practice and stated they were not going to exclude any people from their vehicles.

SchNEWS in brief

The Anarchist Teapot are holding a Direct Action Training Day at the Anarchist Teapot (next to McShit, London Rd, Brighton) on Saturday 7th Feb. Give them a call if you wanna know more - 01273 570465, or turn up by 11.30 on the day***The WoodLand Action Society in Ireland, set up after the destruction of Glen 'o' the Downs, needs your dosh [any amount] with S.A.E, in return you get their newsletter: Woodland Action Soc. 4 Blinkbonnie, Currie EH14 6AF***The Sexual Freedom Coalition are having a campaign meeting at the Plough, Museum St, London WC1 (3 ins from Tottenham Court Rd tube) @ 8pm sharp on Tues 10th Feb. Contact: PO Box 4ZB, London W1A 4ZB; email: sfc@dircom.co.uk; Fax 0171 493 4479. **Brighton-based Natty Trust are holding a Natty Carnival @ Concorde on Wed 4th Feb, 9pm-2am. Amongst the attractions are face painting, a full organic menu, live art, and music of course: Live Latino Percussion, Carnival Collective etc. But best of all - a 5x5m piece of land will be secured forever by your (f.4/f.3)£2.50-fancy-dress) For info on the Natty Trust call 01273 564291*** There's a free street party in Worthing Town Centre as part of Love the Earth Day. Appropriately it's on Valentines Day (Feb 14th) 12 noon meeting on the Green by Heene Terrace on the seafront *** A Slough Borough Councillor chained herself to the railings on a Town Hall balcony this week with a banner proclaiming 'Save our Greenbelt'. This was after the Council decided to build another 1,000 homes on greenbelt land ***

Bristol Green Party is holding its second Green Futures conference on Saturday 28th February. Entitled'Food for Thought, Land for Living' it's at Friends Meeting House, 126 Hampton Road, Redland, Bristol. Tel: 0117 9246894 *** The next Groundswell meeting of claimant groups, is on 28 Feb - 1st March at the Secular Hall, 75 Humberstone Gate, Leicester, LE1 1WB 11.30 am start *** Activists disrupted a Shell Recruitment Conference in Portsmouth on Thursday, letting everyone know about the companies involvement in Ognoni land, Nigeria. And if you missed that one, Shell are hosting a meeting on Monday 9th February, 6.30pm, at the Shell Centre (next to Waterloo BR). They will be highlighting the environmental benefit of destroying more rainforest - this time in Peru - in an attempt to extract more fossil fuels

SchNEWS PRESENTS: * MARK THOMAS * * as seen on that TV thing * @ Pavilion Theatre, Brighton 10th Feb '98 to launch our sexy 3rd book "SchNEWSannual" featuring issues

Hunt Sab Saga's

Those loveable rouges who like to play hard at the Crawley and Horsham Hunt have been busy just lately , at the Cowdry House meet Lord Cowdry served an injunction on a Sab which basically said if you dont tell us the names of the passengers in your van we'll nick yer , as an injunction is a civil matter this Sab considered this a violation of his right to silence and refused to comply *** C and H also managed to upset their mates in the Sussex Constabulary when they joined forces with the Chiddingfold Hunt.

Sabs and Shoreham protesters also joined forces and the resulting policing bill sent the Old Bill potty. At a meeting between Plod and the Hunt Master it is believed the Police said they were not prepared to spend any more of their (sic) money on a 'sports event' and would probably send the hunt a bill next time, the hunt responded by threatening to sue (what for ?)***

all those who got 3 months at the Daventry fracas (see Sch150) have been released until their appeal hearings

VEGAN VASELINE

Anti-fur campaigners protesting against a Mink Fur Farm in Ponteland Northumberland responded to Injunctions served against them under the new Anti-Stalking laws, by staging a no clothes protest on Thursday. With full media coverage and the private security videoing furiously, (we're looking forward to the sell thru), the police were reluctant to tackle the naked and vegan Vaseline covered frolickers so not surprisingly noone was arrested.

INSIDE SCHNEWS

'Inverness' John Davies and Ian Williamson were found guilty this week of violent disorder and criminal damage to a fence, during the Manchester No Runway II airport campaign They were given given 12 months each and could do with some letters of support. Write to them at HMP Altcourse, Higher Lane, Fazakerly, Liverpool, L9 7LH. John's prison number is CH4539, Ian is CH5067

Help! We're not joking - we really need some new people to help with SchNEWS. So if you fancy having a go why not come along to our training day on 18th February. Or pop in sooner if you just can't wait to get involved.

...and finally...

The Corrections Corporation of America has emerged as the McDonald's of private prisons. CCA is now worth \$3.5 billion, and is among the top 5 performers on the New York Stock Exchange. Much of this success is due to the philosophy of co-founder Thomas Beasley, who tells us just what this prison business is all about "You just sell it like you were selling cars or real estate or hamburgers."

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