



WAKE UP!! IT'S YER NOT REALLY IN A NEW ERA...

SchNEWS

www.schnews.org.uk

Friday 29th June 2007

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Issue 594



DANCING ON THE CEILING

AS TWO SMASH-EDO PROTESTERS ARE ACQUITTED AFTER ROOFTOP OCCUPATION

Two anti-war activists who scaled the well-trodden roof of Brighton arms dealers EDO MBM for a rooftop occupation were acquitted on a charge of Aggravated Trespass this Wednesday at Brighton magistrates. Last August during the Israel/Lebanon conflict they hung a banner from EDO's roof reading '16 Children Killed In Qana, Lebanon. EDO Profits From Murder'. (see SchNEWS 557)

During the trial, EDO boss Peter Davies was caught contradicting his own company's website, and denied that the company was acting unlawfully, or had supplied components to the Israeli military. Anyway, he added, even if they had done so it would not be wrong - even if those components had been used in war crimes in Lebanon.

The District Judge refused to consider arguments showing links between the company

and war crimes but found that the two intrepid edificeers could not have heard police warnings to come down from the roof, and did not believe they'd intended to disrupt the operation of the factory. She said that the occupation was clearly a publicity stunt designed to attract media attention and had been very successful in doing so, having gained international coverage in the UK, France, Germany, the USA and even Iran (Well done, lads!)

The rooftop raid at EDO was the third since 2004, and again, protesters have been acquitted, now making nearly thirty failed prosecutions of campaigners protesting against EDO MBM in Brighton. One of the protesters M. Heyman said, 'the court's decision today proves that peaceful protest is not a crime. Sussex Police's attempts to stifle protest have failed yet again.'

* For more see www.smashedo.org.uk

Carry On Campus

Another US cultural import has crossed the Atlantic and may start mushrooming in popularity here in Blighty. No, it's not another Channel 4 quirky comedy drama about sex-starved professionals, but a protest about the lack of funding for higher education. Tent State Universities have been springing up on campuses in the US since 2003, where students and faculty workers alike are sick of a system which can continuously slash funds for education whilst pouring an ever increasing gigantic amount of cash into the war machine. Sounds familiar? Well a group of students at Sussex University thought so and set about planning the first UK Tent State on their campus.

The idea is for people to pitch tents and take over an area of the campus as an autonomous 'alternative university', highlighting the policies which harm higher education, the lack of true democratic influence in school governance, and rejecting the annual excuse of a budget crisis. Their official slogan is the easy to like 'Education Not War'.

Even though a conscientious group of students and staff had attempted to organise the event months in advance and gain the university's agreement, in return they were showered with refusals, threats, beaurotsacles and warnings from the police that if they went ahead and cops were required to attend they'd face heavy fines. Obviously Uni bosses must have been delighted with the general decline in student political action in recent years, and didn't want to encourage a resurgence by allowing this group to incite other students with their protest - especially when they are so annoying keen to publicise that Sussex Uni have themselves got some significant sums invested in 'defence' companies.

Forced to officially cancel the planned week long event - apart from the kudos-enhancing video link up with Noam Chomsky they'd organised - they defiantly went ahead last Wednesday anyway. Having told uni security goons to get stuffed, they set up a marquee and occupied the main campus square for three days. Participants were treated to a range of guest speakers each day, followed by discussions and acoustic music in the evening for those sleeping over.

Ellie, first year Development Studies student and tent state organizer said, "The truth is that there is no budget crisis. There is a crisis of priorities. The UK spends millions a day on the war in Iraq whilst the cap on tuition fees is set to be lifted in 2009. By investing in arms companies, Sussex is making money off the back of conflict and human rights abuses whilst promoting liberalism and internationalism on campus. Such double standards can only be remedied through institutional change with the active input of students and staff to determine how their university is run."

* See www.tentstate.com

* Keep an eye out for endless re-runs as 15 other UK universities now have a Tent State planned.

Disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all readers - this week's SchNEWS went up in a spooof of smoke... Honest!

INSIDE SchNEWS

Mark Taylor, currently serving four years for demonstrating against customers of Huntingdon Life Sciences, urgently needs someone to offer a foster home for his two beagles. The dogs, aged 1½ and 3, are friendly but need to stay together and get six months of care until his partner (inside for the same offence) gets out in Jan 2008. Mark will reimburse the kind soul for expenses upon his release. If you can help please call the Vegan Prisoners Support Group on 0208 292 8325 for more details. For details of how to offer support and write to prisoners, see www.vpsg.org

GONE TO GROUND

The Common Ground squatted community garden in Reading is still open (See SchNEWS 590)! With an eviction date set for June 20th, bailiffs arrived but didn't attempt to close the site down. The council is now trying to offer two possible sites as a community garden, but both are not viable, and the council don't entirely own one of them. The centre is at Silver St, Katesgrove, Reading. For more info email katesgrovegarden@yahoo.co.uk

HALF HEARTED

Campaigners agreed unanimously this week to reject Southend Borough Council's latest proposal to deflect resistance to the planned A127/A1159 Priory Crescent 'scheme F5' road widening in Essex (See SchNEWS 573).

In response the Council's announcement that they would scrap 'half' of the road under a new proposal called 'F5 phase 1', Parklife declared "Newly elected Council leader Nigel Holdcroft had the opportunity to do the right thing for all concerned against the road, but has managed to do 'half a job' by cancelling only half of the F5 scheme."

Their fight to stop the road will continue and the Blingers are staying put up their trees to protect the East Saxon King's burial site... www.savepriorypark.org & www.ppps.org.uk

GOT THE HUMP

This week a US-Australian wargame exercise off the Great Barrier Reef, Queensland, was halted... ominously by a white whale. Hundreds of campaigners under the name Peace Convergence had held a non-violent protest in the region last week, with some taking direct action and entering the test area, evading capture for days. But then along came Migaloo - the only recorded white humpback whale in the world, hence the first-name terms - who forced a military retreat. Nearly 30,000 US and Australian military personnel, with 120 aircraft and 30 warships including nuclear aircraft carriers and submarines, were involved in Exercise Talisman Sabre, near Rockhampton, but the sonars used in this kind of warfare are known to kill whales and dolphins, as well as other fish and turtles.

The International Whaling Commission condemned the use of sonar in the Great Barrier Reef marine park last month, citing the lethal effects of the low frequency sonar used by military submarines on marine mammals, which causes them to panic, surface too quickly, suffer the bends with sometimes lethal consequences. But it's not just 'noise pollution', as the navy emit heavy metals, perchlorate and other contaminants into the water during underwater manoeuvres.

Migaloo - an aboriginal word meaning 'white fella' - is something of a celebrity cetacean, and the only whale we know of with his own blog (www.migaloo-whale.org). He migrates annually from the Antarctic to the Great Barrier Reef, but will not be rewarded for his anti-militarisation action and faces possible harpooning as the Japanese begin the 'scientific' slaughter of 50 humpback whales in the Southern Ocean Whale Sanctuary at the end of this year.

* For more see www.peaceconvergence.com

INFORMATION FOR ACTION



PEOPLES REVOLUTIONARY COURT OF JUSTICE?

CHARGE SHEET

Name of accused: BLAIR, ANTHONY CHARLES LYNTON
D.O.B: 06/05/1953
Address: ~~10 Downing St, London N.F.A~~
Occupation: Professional Liar
Religion: ~~Church Of England Catholic~~
Ethnic Grouping: X1 Lizard



The above named person is hereby charged with the following offence/s:

DATE OF OFFENCE/S: From 2nd May 1997 to 26th June 2007

MURDER: On MARCH 21st 2003 You did conspire with others to murder civilians of Iraq contrary to the Offences Against the Person Act 1861.

KIDNAPPING: From September 11th 2001 you participated in a scheme of abduction and torture known as 'extraordinary rendition' contrary to Common Law.

TERRORISM: (i) It is charged that you were an active member of proscribed terrorist group, namely *THE COALITION* (ii) that you created fear or 'terror' for ideological goals, attempting to force political change with violence, or the threat of violence, and deliberately targetting non-combatants, contrary to the Prevention of Terrorism Act 2000.

FALSE IMPRISONMENT: You knowingly oversaw the construction of 30,000 new prison places and six new detention facilities for refugees, contravening Section 5 of the The Human Rights Act 1998.

CHILD ABUSE: You are charged with incarcerating 3000 children in prison contrary to Section 5 (iv) of the Guardianship of Minors Act 1971.

FRAUD: You are charged that you willfully and knowingly led the country to war on false representation with malice of forethought contrary to Section 2(ii) of the Fraud Act 2006.

THEFT/ATTEMPTED THEFT: Namely that you introduced laws which robbed U.K citizens of basic civil liberties. Furthermore you conspired to introduce a National Identity Register with the intent to permanently deprive all U.K residents of the last shreds of their privacy contrary to Section 2(iii) of the Theft Act 1968.

DAYLIGHT ROBBERY: Namely that you orchestrated the sale of the last remaining public industries contrary to Section 1(i) of the Theft Act 1968.

CONSPIRING TO PERVERT THE COURSE OF JUSTICE: Namely that you intervened in the investigation of the British Aerospace-Saudi Arabia arms deal to enable the destruction of evidence.

CRIMINAL DAMAGE: You authorised the use of incendiary devices (i.e. white phosphorus), in Fallujah, Iraq, contrary to the Criminal Damage Act 1971.

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR: In July 1997 you killed Brit-Pop by schmoozing with Noel Gallagher at Downing Street, contrary to Section 4 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003.

BAIL CONDITIONS

The defendant is required to immediately surrender himself to the custody of the SchNEWS Kangaroo Court.

....*Jo Makepeace*.....

Signature of Prosecuting Custody Officer

Jo Makepeace

GUILTY