



DOWN, WEMBLEY WAY

...BUT NOT OUT AS LONDON ANTI CITY ACADEMY PROTESTS CONTINUE IN SHADOW OF STADIUM...

Campaigners against a new city academy in Wembley (see SchNEWS 639) are keeping up their protest despite the camp they set-up being evicted on Wed 16th July. On Tuesday, a court hearing against Wembley Tent City in North London served an injunction against one of the protesters, Hank Roberts, and fined him £3,500. Undaunted Hank and others swiftly returned to the camp and moved their tents on to the roof of one of the buildings facing demolition. He was later joined by other protesters resisting the eviction.

City academies were dreamt up by the government as a way of offloading some of that terribly burdening cost of education, and turning it into a money-making scheme for wealthy types wanting to set up their own schools. As they are privately owned they don't come under the same strict guidelines faced by state schools, allowing them to come up with their own curriculum. And, of course, there is no evidence that they are any more successful than standard state schools.

The Tent City is part of the campaign against the Wembley Park Academy, an American and British educational charity sponsored and run by The Ark, a group of millionaire merchant bankers and hedge fund speculators. It will still require £30 million of taxpayers money as initial funding. If the building gets the go ahead it will see the demolition of a community centre and a sports field used by local children.

On Wednesday, cops turned up to issue an injunction to the protesters with threats of arrest if they were ignored. Displaying their

BODGE UP

The Bodge House occupation in Derbyshire - stopping a proposed open-cast coal mine - are in court this Friday (18th), and could be facing bailiffs soon after then.

After having their eviction case adjourned until that date due to a dodgy name-changing exercise by the mining company (See SchNEWS 638), and with the camp getting visits from National Eviction Team people, next week could see an eviction attempt.

Earth moving has already begun in the vicinity of the protest camp, which has been hampered by some digger-diving direct action. The squatters have been sorting out barricades, but are requesting more people now. A wish list includes water bots, ladders, gardening equipment, scaff, tarps and polyprop. Site mob 07503335870, www.leaveitintheground.org.uk,

Map see www.schnews.org.uk/archive/pdf/640-map.pdf

usual over-zealous tendencies, they even threatened to arrest some journalists who had joined the protesters on the roof.

As well as getting a lot of media coverage for their campaign - with journals from the BBC and ITV turning up to have a nose around, Wembley Tent City has also received a great deal of support. A spokesperson for the camp said there were over a hundred supporters on-site after the court case on Tuesday, and there were still about 50 people there when council bailiffs turned up later in the day. Perhaps in light of the strong support, the bailiffs slunk away without remov-

ing so much as a tent peg.

Much of the support has come from the neighbourhood, with many recognising the good the campaign is doing for the local community. Bailiffs are expected to remove the last of the protesters on Friday at the just plain unnecessary time of 6:30am, but protesters are quick to point out that this is just the beginning of the campaign and on Friday the High Court will decide whether their court case against the company will be heard.

* Find out more about the campaign and how you can get involved at www.tentcity-occupation.co.uk.

THE LOOK OF THE HUNTED

The Crawley and Horsham Hunt's attempts to stop animal lovers filming and disrupting their illegal fox hunting (See Schnews 637) are not going according to plan. Their slimy solicitor, Timothy Lawson-Cruttenden (TLC), had booked a day in court to get a 'temporary' injunction to create criminal offences of trespass on hunt land. Up to his usual tricks, he tried to get the injunction on the flimsiest of evidence - using a shortcut procedure normally reserved for cases with no dispute over the facts. This legal manoeuvre backfired when it was pointed out that virtually every fact was in dispute.

Instead of granting the interim injunction, the judge ordered a speedy trial now set for the 28th July for 4 days. Those members of the hunt able to understand what was going on looked decidedly uncomfortable by the end of the day when the judge ordered them to pay most of the costs of the hearing, due to TLC's underhand delaying tactics.

Hunt monitors are determined to stop this injunction saying, "We cannot let these people get away with illegal animal abuse by buying their own private laws, just because they are stinking rich. Just as we have not been put off by regular violent attacks from hunt supporters, we will not be deterred by attacks to our civil liberties."

The murdering inbreds at the Countryside Alliance have already pointed out that if this hunt succeed in banning effective monitoring then other hunts around the country could follow suit, leaving the foxes totally unprotected.

***Meanwhile in other hunt-related courtroom news**, one hunt monitor was acquitted of criminal damage at Lewes magistrates. The case revolved around the cracked indicator light and bent bumper of a hunt vehicle which had been used to block monitors in (see

SchNEWS 623). The mags accepted that his behaviour in attempting to shunt the Land Rover out of the way with his own vehicle had been reasonable.

The most confusing aspect of the case was the role of PC Caroline Ross, who had been riding with the hunt in the morning when they were observed illegally hunting. Flashing her warrant card she ordered monitors off of private land. At about 4.30 pm, after riders had trampled two female sabs and the hunt had packed up, there was an altercation between hunt and monitors.

Hunt supporters then used vehicles to block in the the monitors. PC Ross was at home with her husband - police sergeant Graham Ross. On receiving a summons via mobile phone from the Lady Master of the hunt, the pair returned in plain clothes and in their own car to direct police operations. Curiously, although all the hunt supporters in court claimed to be acting on orders from the police - Caroline Ross denied having issued any such instructions. Even more strangely she denied being friends with the Lady Master saying she 'wouldn't invite her round for dinner'. Unfortunately her husband rather blew that during his turn on the stand saying, "They're great friends - they go hunting together" (No worries Graham we're sure a bunch of flowers'll do the trick.)

Despite a series of 999 calls from the trapped monitors, cops at Lewes HQ were assured that everything was in order. It took a further 50 minutes for the monitors to be allowed to go on their way, and not before the driver had been nicked for criminal damage!

SchNEWS always knew the police and hunt were in it together but rarely has the conspiracy been conducted with such cack-handed inefficiency.

COPS BEAT MOB RULING IN GENOA

“...The cops had sent in cleaning teams, but it was still a mess. Blood was smeared on walls and the floor, the gear of everyone was torn open and thrown everywhere. Doors and windows were smashed. The computer terminals were lying on the ground in pieces. Absolute chaos.” – *Eyewitness to the Diaz social centre raid aftermath.*

These were some of the scenes back in 2001 when hundreds of thousands used to come out for a spot of democratic peaceful protesting at G8 meetings. Carabinieri cops in Genoa ran riot, injuring many hundreds and shooting one activist, Carlo Giuliani, dead. The extreme force used - tear gas, water cannon, tanks and bullets and beatings – left the city centre a war zone.

After the dust settled, legal battles for justice began. Attempts to bring some of the police responsible before Italian courts, by some of the hundreds of victims as joint plaintiffs, have not been straightforward.

First off, in 2003, the Carabinieri accused of shooting Giuliani, Mario Placanica, was completely cleared without ever going to trial. The presiding judge ruled the fatal bullet had merely “ricocheted off plaster” and, anyway, he had acted in self-defence.

Bizarrely, Placanica claimed later that year that, “I’ve been used to cover up the responsibility of others...” and that the bullet found in Giuliani’s body was not of the calibre or type used by the Carabinieri. He thought the deadly shot had come from somewhere in the piazza outside (ah, the grassy knoll theory!) Shortly after this totally unneeded blabbering, in a completely unrelated incident, he was involved in a serious car accident – days after observing someone tampering with his car. He hasn’t said much else since.

Two trials meanwhile have been dragging on; the “Bolzaneto” trial of police involved in horrific arrestee treatment and brutality back at the cells, and the “Diaz” trial of those involved in the full-force raids on a school-turned-activist social centre.

Last week, after four years of wrangling, delaying, denial, and at least one more mysterious ‘car crash’ of a star witness later, verdicts were finally handed down to the paltry forty-five police up before the beak in the Bolzaneto case.

Unsurprisingly, two thirds of those charged were duly acquitted for ‘lack of evidence’.

The fifteen fall guys who just *really* couldn’t be found not guilty, given all the proof, received mostly light sentences. The heaviest dished out was 5 years and 8 months for the chief of security of the jail, Antonio Biaho Gugliotta. Jail doctor Giacomo Toccacofondi, especially criticized for his violence, was sentenced to just fourteen months.

In any event, the convicted have all announced that they will undertake lengthy appeals, meaning that, according to Italian law, the sentences will be suspended until lawyers get them off at a later date.

Despite the lack of convictions, the judge did rule for ‘immediate compensation’ (of between 2500-15000 euros) for the many victims – obviously untroubled by this tacit admission that events happened as alleged, but no-one is to blame. .

Results are expected in the Diaz trial in the autumn... but with Berlusconi having been so busy lately further dismantling the legal system, who really knows.... Roll on Sardinia 2009!

* This weekend, the seventh anniversary of Genoa will be commemorated with several events. Today (19th) - showing that the authorities’ attempts to crush resistance never work - Haidi Guliani, Carlo’s mother, is holding meetings to make preparations for the protests against the next G8 summit on the island of Sardinia in 2009. Tomorrow, the annual memorial ceremony for Carlo will take place at the Piazza Alimonda., with many international solidarity groups in attendance.

** For a history lesson (or a trip down memory lane), see SchNEWS 314-5 and www.schnews.org.uk/sotw/genoa-eyewitness.htm



Taking the piazza, Genoa G8-style...

SchNEWS in Brief

Animal activists from Brighton have been aiming to liberate eight thousand Chickens this week during their legal liberation event. After 3 days they had rescued over 3000 - sent on to friendly sanctuaries and gardens around the country – and will easily top last year’s 3500 total.

The annual legal liberation has been taking place on a organic free range chicken farm for the past few years. The owner has given permission for the group to spend a week catching and rehoming the chickens at the end of their profitable laying cycle of 18 months. After this time the chickens are sold for as little as 15p and taken off to slaughter. Cock-a-doodle-well-done see www.brightonanimalaction.org

EDO call out: Noise Demo’s are still going on outside the Brighton bomb builders EDO MBM on home farm road every Wednesday from 4 to 6pm. Head down there and show some support - Sussex police have been resorting to making complaints about the noise themselves when EDO MD Paul Hills fails to - so desperate they are to trot out the infamous noise by-law to halt the noise-making. See www.smashedo.org.uk

...and finally...

News just in from the big smoke that LibDem MP for Carshalton and Wallington, Tom Brake, has put forward a Private Members Bill to outlaw cannabis seeds. Will this germinate into the latest government attack on sacred ‘erb?

After even the cops spoke out against the criminalisation of cannabis (saying it took precious police hours away from eating donuts and persecuting minorities), the government first dabbled in a bit of harmless decriminalisation before going back to the hard stuff – mainlining law ‘n’ order hysteria.

Need we say it here of course, it’s all pointless. Researchers, policy-makers and stoners alike all said exactly the same thing during the last ‘debate’: i.e. criminalised or not, it’ll make no difference to whether people choose to smoke. When it was decriminalised the numbers of people smoking went up by exactly 0%. Now it’s criminalised again, the number of puff-heads has gone down by, er the same.

What’s needed is a mass campaign of spontaneous and organised action on the part of the pro-hemp community. A radical campaign of direct skinning-up action, converging on a sit, lie and slouch-in at Westminster. A carnival for dope, possibly sponsored by Dorritos, culminating in a blockade of bong-smokers outside parliament; the chants of “We shall not be moved - we can’t be arsed, and “Whose treats? Our treats?” resonating around central London. Er, OK...it’s stoners we’re talking about here: more likely is a mass sit-in...an-armchair...

Disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all readers - when we want our kicks, last to score is out. Honest!

MEND OF AN ERA IN NIGERIA?

Concerned that not all of the world’s energy-rich areas are violent enough, the British government/military has decided to stick an even bigger, heavier oar into Nigeria. In a not-subtle-at-all way, Gordon Brown publicly announced that the UK military would weigh in to support Nigeria’s Shell-sponsored government in its quest to defeat the insurgency that’s been raging in the Niger Delta.

Brown promised to send equipment, trainers and ‘advisors’ to the Nigerian military to “ensure oil production can bring prosperity” (to Shell & Co), and to make sure that there’s a ‘sustainable peace’ in the area. It’s very hard to make an obscene profit when locals keep attacking your oil platforms, as the oil giants have been finding out to their cost since the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) began its campaign in 2005.

For an insurgency that’s been going on for three years, in one of the world’s top oil producers, the Niger Delta insurgency (led by the MEND) has received surprisingly little attention from the world’s press. It does get reported however in the financial pages; even if the human cost of multinationals’ drilling and poisoning of the area remains strictly off limits for mainstream journals.

But the MEND’s habit of attacking oil platforms & installations gets a mention alongside how it’s caused a further multi-dollar jump in the cost of a barrel of oil. Their insurgency has dropped Nigeria’s oil production by at least a fifth as a result of the direct targeting of the oil industry and in the knock-on effects caused by

the multinationals’ reluctance to exploit such a dangerous area.

And so, it’s Gordon ‘Bulldog’ Brown to the rescue. Willingness to bend over backwards to support the oil industry is perhaps the number one trait in any British PM, and so, true to form, another conflict is duly escalated.

Pretty much as soon as Brown had made his speech at the G8, the MEND responded by saying their ceasefire with the Nigerian government was over, and that British interests would “suffer the consequences.” And they’re not known for making idle threats.

This Thursday, the 47,000 barrels-per-day Eni pipeline was blown up by attackers in what the company, in a rare candid moment, called a ‘community dispute’. The dispute in question is pretty clear; one between the community and the oil industry. Within 24 hours of this attack more than 30 militants attacked the naval boat protecting oil facilities belonging to Shell Petroleum Development Company.

British advisors and mercenaries are getting drawn into fighting a dirty war for control of Nigeria’s oil, and the locals join the dots connecting the UK government, UK oil interests and the killing of their people. If the MEND really take up their threat of targeting British interests, how long can it be before we start seeing an escalation (a ‘surge’) of UK/US/NATO troops into the area, and how long before we start getting told that the War on Terror (tm) is being redirected to West Africa?

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