

Weekly SchNEWS

www.schnews.org.uk

Friday 12th September 2008

Free/Donation

Issue 646

ALL THE PRECEDENT'S MEN

AS CLIMATE CHANGE DEFENCE WINS IN KINGSNORTH COURT CASE

In a massive victory for climate campaigners and other protest groups across the UK, six protesters arrested at Kingsnorth coal power station in October 2007 (see SchNEWS 627) were all found not guilty of charges of criminal damage. They successfully argued that any damage the group caused through scaling the massive chimney and painting "Gordon" down it's side was absolutely nothing compared to the destruction which will be done to the environment by the planned new coal plant on the site.

Whilst the government has paid only lip service to the urgent need to cut CO2 emissions, they have given the green light for the new power station which will emit as much carbon dioxide in a year as the 30 least polluting countries. Yep, fairly obvious but logic like that has never previously worked in UK courts... until last May when something similar did happen after two anti-war protesters accused of damaging a B-52 plane were acquitted after showing that they just were acting to prevent war crimes (see SchNEWS

589). All hail the precedent!

In what we hope is a new trend, with juries showing they can flex their powers for common sense, the court agreed with the Kingsnorthers and, for the first time ever, climate change was used as a successful legal defence.

The victory was no doubt helped by the clout that Greenpeace wielded, with star witnesses including NASA scientist and Al Gore advisor Jim Hansen, and celebrity climate campaigner (and prospective Tory MP - what's all that about, eh?!) Zac Goldsmith giving evidence. They were also able to call Aqqaluk Lynge, an Inuit with first-hand experience of the destruction climate change can cause.

However achieved, this verdict gives a huge boost to direct action groups facing increasingly draconian police attempts to crush protests, and will perhaps open the floodgates (well, it's a good metaphor for climate change, inuit!) for waves of new direct action protest.

To join the campaign against Kingsnorth visit www.nonewcoal.org.uk

CRAP ARREST OF THE WEEK

For being in the USA...

Further to last week's SchNEWS report on the police overkill against protesters at the US Republican National Congress (SchNEWS 645) ... it's not only Americans who suffered.

In a clear example of that 'special relationship', Uncle Sam is just as willing serve up some of it's famed (in)justice to Brits too. Dave Mahoney, one of the many who had peacefully protested outside the RNC, was cycling with his girlfriend to get some groceries when swooped on by an FBI van and dragged off by two goons. Dave now faces ridiculous evidence-lite charges of Assault and 'Conspiracy to Riot with a Furtherance of Terrorism' which carry a possible 12 year jail sentence and a \$24,000 fine.

Dave's friends in the UK have rallied round to form a campaign group to support him. With his family already having had to conjure up \$25,000 bail, supporters are urgently requesting financial aid and other help in the fight against these charges. To help or for more, contact helpdave@mail.com

** The UK Coal Authority's AGM was disrupted this week when three protestors unfurled a banner reading "Coal: Leave it in the Ground" from the main entrance of the Cardiff Hilton, while campaigners managed to get inside the venue and challenge delegates on the industry's role in climate damage. Local residents affected by the Ffos-y-Fran opencast mining scheme even interrupted a back-slapping awards ceremony to present Miller Argent with a special award of their own- the "Community Award for Global Climate Crimes". See www.thecoalhole.org

TWIN OBSESSIONS

AS SchNEWS REMEMBERS A DARK DAY IN HISTORY...

In case you forgot, yesterday was the anniversary of the day etched in everybody's minds - September the 11th... yes, exactly 35 years since lefty Chilean democrat Salvador Allende was overthrown in a bloody coup led by Thatcher's best buddy General Pinochet, leading to mass state murders and many thousands of 'disappeared'.

What followed was Chile's 'lost decade.' In the immediate days after the coup over 13,500 civilians were arrested - and soon after bodies began appearing all over the country. These measures ensured that opposition to the government were halted and the state was free to impose the policies that it wanted. By the time Pinochet was kicked out 3,000 people had been murdered by the state and thousands more imprisoned and tortured.

Elected in 1970, Salvador Allende had dared to bring about fairly innocent sounding social reforms aimed at undoing some of South America's gross inequalities. This was too much for the US, who paid and trained the Chilean army to 'take care' of him. Allende was something of a rarity amongst politicians, he was prepared to risk his own well-being for the people who elected him. He died as Pinochet's death squads invaded the presidential palace.

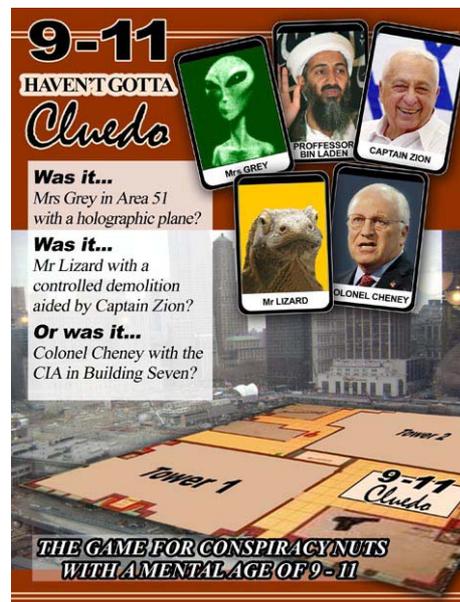
By September 12, the final details of the nation's new economic policies had been drafted into legislation. The newly installed leader of the junta, General Augusto Pinochet, faithfully followed the ideas of Nobel Prize Winner Milton Friedman, the acknowledged godfather of neo-liberalism. Until that time Friedman's economic theories had been

confined to universities and right-wing thinktanks, but the coup afforded him the opportunity to test his ideas out on real people.

Friedman advocated the privatisation of state run companies, removal of social spending, "liberalization" of the economy and removal of trade barriers (all sounding a bit familiar?) which protected Chilean manufacturers. As regards Chile's economic success, these policies didn't work but, as far as US business interests were concerned, things couldn't have gone better. US multinationals (chief amongst them ITT) made a mint out of the exploitation of Chile's people and resources.

By 1974, inflation had reached 375 percent, the highest in the world, and twice that ever reached under Allende. Families had to spend three quarters of their income on bread alone. By 1982, despite (read, because) of Chile's strict adherence to Friedman's theories the economy collapsed. Hyperinflation ensued and unemployment hit 30 percent. Ultimately, Pinochet was forced to re-nationalise many companies and the financial legacy of The Chicago School policies still haunt Chile.

Pinochet was eventually ousted (to a comfortable life in the UK) in a period of mass protest and resistance to the dictatorship, which resulted in a compromise that removed the death squads but left globalisation intact. Since then, as Latin Americans have struggled



for justice and equality, Chile has slowly and painfully shifted further leftward. The country once infamous for rightist dictatorship is now part of the 'pink tide' of Americas that's seen socialist and socialist-leaning parties in government in some two thirds of the region.

Their new president, Michelle Bachelet was herself a victim of Chile's torture chambers and she's a symbol of a movement that's slowly un-

Continued overleaf...

doing the damage of the Pinochet years. Her achievements to date include liberalising contraception and abortion laws (the morning-after pill is now legal thanks to her), strengthening intra-Latin American links (i.e. sticking up for radicals Chavez and Bolivia's Evo Morales) and reforming the country's healthcare and welfare programmes (although this last one has more than a touch of Blair to it). After a 30 year intermission, Chile's become a fairly tame liberal democracy, but then, it's not just about where you're at but how far you've travelled.

Oh, yeah, and on the same date 28 years later, in another of the world's other most economically unequal countries, a bunch of government-funded black-flagged reptilian aliens flew holographic missile-planes into a couple of skyscrapers already primed with explosives.

SAB IN THE BACK

The Hunting (i.e. Sabbing) season has begun again. The EastEnders-watching majority may think it was outlawed in 2005 under the Hunting Act, but hunts have of course carried on regardless, killing foxes and digging out badger sets (see SchNEWS 623).

While the police turn a blind eye to the illegal animal cruelty (or are even involved in the hunt – see SchNEWS 640), they continue to nick Sabs for Aggravated Trespass, nabbing their equipment to boot.

As one South Downs Sab told SchNEWS: “Yes, the stereotypes are real – every weekend Sabs roam the countryside to stop bloodthirsty toffs in their murderous game. But Sab groups are always skint so any cash would be appreciated. Or even better, get involved in Sabbing.”

Send yer cash/cheques to South Downs Anti-Blood Sports, c/o Cowley Club, 12 London Rd, Brighton, BN1 4JA * See www.huntsabs.org.uk

SHELL SHOCKER

The heroic saga of the battle to halt work on Shell's oil pipeline at Rosspoint, west Ireland continues. After the protest camp was re-established last month next to the works compound at Glengad beach, and with dramatic – and dangerous – direct action on sea happening on a near-daily basis since (see SchNEWS 643, 645), this round of the fight may be close to won.

Shell are using a hired pipe-laying ship, the *Solitaire*, but time is rapidly running out before it moves to its next job. Having finally arrived at Broadhaven Bay, County Mayo, this Wednesday (10th), work was suspended when Shell claimed that the *Solitaire's* pipe-laying gear had been damaged by the weather and that the ship would have to return to Killybegs Harbour, Donegal, for repairs. But could it be that its captain, Simon Van der Plicht, is responding to persistent pressure – the latest being one local teacher, Maura Harrington, on hunger strike since Tuesday at the gates of the compound after having a letter passed to the ship demanding it abandon the work.

On Monday, Three Shell To Sea activists – part of a five-person group in five vessels – boarded the *Solitaire* in Killybegs to deliver letters of request and intent, ask Van der Plicht why he hadn't responded to previous communication, and invite him to come ashore to hear the concerns of the community about the project.

The heavy security presence at the site has increased with not just Gardai, Shell security and Irish Water Police, but also the Irish Navy, and

LEDBURY BALLOON

Last Saturday (6th) saw the Carnival Against Vivisection at Ledbury, Herefordshire. The primary focus was Sequani, a medical research company with a vivisection lab, in Ledbury, Herefordshire – and it was a day of action about both animal cruelty, and the oppressive SOCPA laws which target animal rights protesters, such as the recently imprisoned Sean Kirtley.

Around 200 protesters were at the carnival – the first of its kind – and with the green dress code was seemingly inspired by Smash EDO's all-red Carnival Against The Arms Trade in Brighton June 4th (see SchNEWS 634). From the meeting point near the lab, the protesters had the choice of marching into town – which had police permission – or go the other way towards Sequani. Some attempted to, but were outnumbered and met by a line of coppers, which saw five arrests after the ensuing argybargy. The police surveillance FIT Team were there filming, being thwarted by their nemesis, FIT Watch (see SchNEWS 639).

Prior to the demo, the local Ledbury Fox Hunt was inconvenienced by local Sabs. As well as this, the Cargill/Sun Valley chicken abattoir (who supply McDonald's) was disrupted and the Bobby Roberts Circus – still using exotic animals – which was about to set up on the local racecourse had their posters vandalised.

Anti-Sequani campaigners have been heavily suppressed by the police, starting in May 2006 with the arrest of thirteen under Sections 145 and 146 of SOCPA – laws specifically introduced to protect 'animal research' facilities. After an eighteen week trial, Sean Kirtley got a four and a half year sentence for conspiracy to interfere with Sequani's 'lawful' business, when all he did was run the campaign's web site (See SchNEWS 634). See www.smashsequani.wordpress.com

* If you saw any of the arrests contact NETCU Watch see www.netcu.wordpress.com

** Fit Watch – www.fitwatch.blogspot.com

ARMS FAIR DINKUM

An arms fair in Adelaide, South Australia, due to start – tactfully – on Remembrance Day, November 11th, has been cancelled due to fears of violent protests. Police gave the state government a report which outlined what they knew about the planned protests – plus a large bill to cover their operation – and the Asia-Pacific Defence And Security Exhibition was called off.

Acting state premier Kevin Foley spoke of "these feral anarchists that would be descending on Adelaide", referring to the nationwide rent-a-mob who have wreaked havoc at summit events in recent years, naming two direct action groups, Mutiny and Arterial Bloc. At the 2006 G20 meeting in Melbourne, protesters attacked and outnumbered police, while the 2007 APEC meeting in Sydney also saw a large demo and was further embarrassed when people from the satirical TV programme *The Chaser*, driving a fake motorcade, breached the APEC security zone.

The APDSE was to be the first arms fair held in Australia since the AIDEX Arms Fairs in Canberra, running between '89-91 – with attending demonstrations. The planned 1993 event was cancelled after the scale of the 1991 protests. www.apdsexhibition.org

BLINDING DATA

Two weeks ago a German anti-fascist group called Daten Antifa hacked into the encrypted online forum of one of the world's largest neo-nazi groups, Blood & Honour. After cracking the access codes for the site, 800MB of data was downloaded, including the IP addresses of 31948 registered forum users and information on up to 1,200 German neo-nazis. The data has been published on the web.

Daten-Antifa claim that the hack was the result of a "laboriously prepared cloak-and-dagger operation" which involved a "house search".

Blood & Honour started in 1987 in Britain by Ian Stuart Donaldson, leader of the notorious skinhead band Skrewdriver. It has been banned in Germany since 2000, and the Spanish division was closed in 2005 after the arrest of many of its main leaders.

But in the biggest cop-out ever, the police won't be using the data for evidence because it was acquired illegally!

To download the data yourself, see <http://de.indymedia.org/2008/08/225641.shtml>

...and finally...

When is a robbery not a robbery but a mere redistribution of wealth? This is the question being tested in a wave of supermarket hold ups in Greece.

With food prices soaring, Greek anarchists have decided to do something about the problem by becoming modern day Robbin' Hoodies.

The latest in a string of raids came last Thursday (4th) when around 20 unarmed people carried out the midday robbery of a supermarket in the northern city of Thessaloniki.

The typical modus operandi features black-hooded figures bursting in with ambush tactics to take everyone off guard, asking staff to remain calm while proceeding to strip shelves. But the twist is they only take packets of pasta, rice and cartons of milk – which are all later left in the surrounding streets to provide a free (if Spartan) meal for some of the local needy. No money is taken and nobody has been hurt, leaving Police somewhat bemused.

The uber-macho police obviously can't understand the thinking of this off-their-trolley but sensible lot... which is less surprising when you consider that the majority of these raiders of the last aisle are in fact women.

Disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all readers – we don't even think the twin towers were ever there – they were holograms. Honest!

SKANDELOUS! Benefit gig for Circus2Iraq, 19th Sept at the Brighton Coalition (171-181 Kings Arches on the seafont), 9pm til 6am. A big bash to support those fearless clowns. with live music, DJs, circus, cabaret and more. £9/7 in advance. See www.drinkinbrighton.co.uk/brightoncoalition
* Local pirates Radio 4A will be there and streaming it live – see www.radio4a.org.uk

Subscribe! Get SchNEWS free every week by email in pdf or text file – visit our site, or send us stamps and we'll post it to you. Copy and distribute! Keep SchNEWS free with donations (via website or cheques payable to Justice?). Posted free to all prisoners. SchNEWS, c/o Community Base, 113 Queens Rd, Brighton, BN1 3XG. Tel +44 (0)1273 685913 Email schnews@brighton.co.uk Web www.schnews.org.uk