



MINGA THE MERCILESS

AS MASS PROTEST MOVEMENT SWEEPS ACROSS COLOMBIA

The sight of 15,000 angry indigenous matching down your main motorway is enough to put the wind up any President, even one habitually referred to in the Western media as a 'Latin American strongman'. And yet a couple of weeks ago President Alvaro Uribe of Colombia somehow found himself standing on a bridge in Cali with a megaphone shouting to make himself heard over thousands of these angry protesters calling him a 'paramilitary son of a whore'. Addressing only the fuming remnants of the protesters after the leaders and most of the marchers had departed, he lamented their lack of desire for genuine dialogue and left in a huff. But this was after the president had failed to show at the appointed time and he also missed several subsequent deadlines.

A few days later another meeting was arranged, this time in the relative calm of the indigenous 'reserve' of La Maria in the department of Cauca, where the protest began. For six hours leaders of the mobilisation discussed their agenda with the president. Following the meeting Aida Quilcué, the Chief Counsel of the Indigenous Regional Council of Cauca (CRIC), announced to the waiting crowd that Uribe had failed to provide a 'clear, concrete, political response' to their concerns and asked them if the protest should continue. The response was a resounding 'Sí' and it was decided that they should march on to the capital, Bogotá.

The protest started as an indigenous mobilisation to demand that the government uphold previous land-rights accords and put an end to the militarisation of their territories and accompanying abuses. The movement has become known as Minga

de los Pueblos (Minga of the People). Of special concern was the recent spate of unpunished assassinations in indigenous communities, 29 last month alone and 1240 so far in Uribe's six-year presidency. However it quickly broadened its base to include other social movements; sugar cane cutters, unions, displaced peoples, victims of state and paramilitary violence, students and anyone else who's not a fan of El Presidente. They then devised an inclusive agenda in an attempt to articulate a formal and organised opposition to government policies. Aside from its original demands, the main points of the agenda demanded that the government address concerns regarding its respect, or lack of, for human rights, its policy of 'Democratic Security' and the movement's opposition to Free Trade agreements.

FARC'D OFF

'Democratic Security' is the electoral name of the policies that furnished Uribe with the Colombian label of 'war president'. On coming to power in 2002, Uribe reclassified Colombia's forty-year conflict against a number of Marxist guerilla groups, the most prominent being the FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia), as a struggle against 'narco-terrorism', fitting in nicely with Washington rhetoric and securing huge stacks of gringo cash in the form of military aid under Plan Colombia (SchNEWS 327).

The FARC have been around in their current form since the sixties, with origins in the century old conflict between Colombia's dominant political parties, the Conservatives and the Liberals. In recent years their policies of kidnapping, extortion and their lack of concern for civilian casualties have seen support for their insurgency steadily erode, even amongst their rural peasant base.

Uribe's first act as president was to abandon the peace initiative of previous president Andrés Pastrana, which had seen the FARC seize control of a third of the country by taking advantage of a demilitarised zone. An increase in military operations drove the FARC back into the deep jungle in many areas of the country. The FARC also suffered a series of high profile blows, the assassination of number two commander Raul Reyes in Ecuadorian ter-

ritory, followed by the death of their leader Manuel Marulanda and the rescue of Ingrid Betancourt, former presidential candidate and their most high profile hostage. With kidnappings down, travel much safer and a drop in homicide rates in the major cities, 'Democratic Security' has served Uribe well and earned him high approval ratings amongst the general population.

On the other side of the political spectrum Uribe has made much of the supposed demobilisation of the AUC (United Self-Defence Forces of Colombia), the umbrella group for various right-wing paramilitary organisations. These groups were mostly started by drug traffickers and ranchers to protect themselves and their interests from the guerrillas and are heavily involved in the drug trade. Although it has provided him with plaudits both at home and abroad the 'Peace and Justice' process has remained highly controversial. The two main issues being the lack of peace and the absence of justice. The high profile leaders of the AUC have faced feeble punishments for their part in massacres, torture and forced displacement along with impunity against extradition to the US due to double jeopardy laws.

At the same time large numbers of AUC foot soldiers merely dipped out of the view only to reappear a year or two later with a new name, the 'Black Eagles', but very similar aims. They still fight the guerrillas by attacking the easier targets of 'collaborators' and 'subversives'. All encompassing terms that are applied to everyone from human rights workers to butchers forced to sell FARC rustled cattle on pain of death.

Uribe's links to the paramilitaries goes back to his time as governor of Antioquia when he pioneered the CONVIVIR programme. The programme provided arms to 'community groups' to combat the guerrillas. Predictably they went on the rampage, slaughtering not only guerrillas but also anyone they decided was a 'collaborator'. The programme was pulled by Pastrana but has been revived in Uribe's reign. Meanwhile Uribe has found himself embroiled in the 'parapolitica' scandal, an investigation into links between the paramilitaries and serving politicians. So far more than 60 congress-

Continued overleaf...

WITNESS APPEAL OF THE WEEK

A man has been charged with assaulting a police officer at the Carnival Against the Arms Trade demo at EDO in Brighton on 4 June. He was the last person to leave the EDO car park and was attacked by four police officers with their batons and pushed on top of a girl on the ground with dark ginger hair and glasses. The police then arrested him and he urgently needs witnesses to the assault by the police. He has long light brown wavy hair, and was wearing a Smash EDO T-shirt and carrying a rectangular violin case. If you saw this, please get in touch by emailing: chrisbluemel@yahoo.co.uk

MINGA THE MERCILESS *continued...*

man and 30 lawmakers, the vast majority of them Uribe supporters, are either under investigation or already in detention, as are some of his closest political allies including his cousin Mario Uribe.

The indigenous movement, which has often been caught in the cross fire between the guerrillas and the paramilitaries and has suffered at the hands of both, has vociferously stressed its independence, despite government accusations of manipulation by the 'bandits' and 'delinquents' of FARC.

TRADING PLACES

The Free Trade issue is one that has been making waves recently in the US. One of the campaign promises of Barack 'Change' Obama, and a key vote winner amongst working class Americans, was his opposition to the proposed Colombian FTA. The agreement is part of the US revised policy of pursuing bilateral agreements following the collapse of the FTAA (Free Trade Area of the Americas) (SchNEWS 432) as country after country in Latin America turned to the left and rejected the Free Trade consensus.

As one of the only remaining rightist and American friendly countries, Colombia was seen as central to retaining an American finger in the South American pie. Obama cited human rights concerns as his reason for opposition, particularly over the persistent assassinations of union leaders, one of the most dangerous jobs in Colombia. More than 600 have already been offed in Uribe's presidency, 31 so far this year. Only last week he was supposedly offered a trade-off by still president Bush; a bail out for the automotive industry in

return for the passing of the Colombian FTA. During the US election campaign Uribe made a series of what now appear to be horrendous gaffs, saying that he 'deplored' the fact that Obama 'ignores' Colombia's progress in human rights, meeting with McCain and all but endorsing his campaign. Although he now claims he was 'completely neutral' in the campaign he may find himself with some explaining to do to the new Mr President.

In Colombia opposition focuses not only on human rights issues but also on economic matters. As has happened in other Latin American countries following similar agreements, the accord would expose small and small-medium sized agro-businesses - who grow quick yield crops like wheat, barley and corn - to potentially devastating competition from the US market. Meanwhile large landowners with the cash to develop such longer to yield crops like African palm oil, lumber and rubber will benefit. And who are these large landowners with nearly 50% of the most arable lands? Well, according to the government land institute INCORA, they're drug traffickers who have bought up vast tracts of land in the last fifteen years.

UR UNDER ATTACK

With these issues fuelling their rage the protest has travelled throughout Colombia, holding meetings, workshops and protests with various social movements and whoever else is willing to listen. Around 10,000 protesters arrived in Bogotá yesterday (20th) and now plan to hold a 'Peoples Congress' in front of the government buildings in Plaza Bolivar.

And now it appears that with the unprecedented scale and organisation of the

protests, the usually icy cool Uribe might actually be rattled. He doesn't take criticism lightly.

He has denounced certain (unspecified) human rights groups as 'writers and demagogues at the service of terrorism who traffic in human rights' while a number of journalists questioning his links to the drug trade and to paramilitary groups have had to hot-foot it out of the country following death threats from, erm, paramilitary groups. With high popularity in the general population and a compliant mainstream media this is the first time he has had to face a co-ordinated opposition from the various sectors of the population who've suffered from his actions.

It remains to be seen whether this will represent a genuine turning point in Colombia's political development. Already the issue is fading from view in the mainstream media. While images of the protesters blocking the highway and allegations and images of violent police responses were dramatic media fodder, peaceful protest just doesn't cut it in the Colombian media. At least not when the Latin Grammys are on. But the protesters are still there, still marching and they seem to be finding a voice. And that is one of the most dangerous things to have in Colombia, both for Uribe and for them.

For more see

Colombia FTA: www.narconews.com/Issue47/article2858.html

Indigenous Proposal: mamaradio.blogspot.com/2008/10/official-proposal-of-indigenous-and.html

Parpolitica: www.hrw.org/en/news/2008/08/03/colombia-proposal-threatens-parapolitics-investigations

SO SOLIDARITY CREW

Three activists with the International Solidarity Movement are beginning a hunger strike in Ben Gurion detention centre, after they were seized by the Israeli navy in Palestinian waters.

The three activists, together with fourteen Palestinian fishermen were seized when their boats were impounded off the coast of Gaza on 18th November. The internationals were accompanying the fishermen with the aim to prevent the routine harassment of fishing boats at the hands of the Israeli navy (see SchNEWS 653). The Human Rights Observers are Andrew Muncie from Scotland, Vittorio Arrigoni, an Italian citizen, and Darlene Wallach, an American citizen.

According to Wallach, "We were fishing about seven miles off the shores of Gaza. The Israeli soldiers came on board the three boats via four Zodiacs. The frogmen came up and over each boat. They used a taser on Vik while he was still on the boat, then tried to push him backwards onto a sharp piece of wood. He jumped into the sea to avoid being hurt more than he already was and was in the water for quite a while. Then they came for me and forced me into the Zodiac at the point of a gun. They kidnapped me and Andrew and Vik and all of the Palestinian fishermen." The fishermen and the human rights observers were then transferred to Israeli warships at gunpoint.

Other Palestinian fishermen reported that the 3 boats were taken north by the Israeli Navy.

Eventually the fishermen were released but their boats remain impounded.

The activists have had deportation orders served against them. However under the Israeli system they have the right of appeal. At court yesterday (20th), Andrew Muncie asked the judge under what law they had been arrested. According to the judge, their detention was authorized by the Oslo Accords "because it is forbidden by military law for you to fish seven and a half miles off the coast. It is a no-fishing zone."

However, the Oslo accords grant Palestinians the right to fish 20 miles off their own coast. When Andrew's attorney handed a copy of that portion of the Oslo accords to the judge, she had no comment.

* For more see: www.freegaza.org
www.palsolidarity.org

....Meanwhile in the UK a lecture by Israeli President Shimon Peres was delayed by a noisy protest on Tuesday (18th). The lecture entitled 'Globalisation of Peace', organised by the Balliol College, was held at Sheldonian Theatre in Oxford where the president was met by at over 100 protesters shouting 'Occupation is a crime/Free, free Palestine'.

FRUITY NUMBER

A big load of shit dumped outside Agrexco expressed exactly what activists feel about the Israeli agricultural export company. The truck load of horse manure was off-loaded at the front gate of Agrexco's depot in Hayes, Middlesex, last Sunday (16th).

Agrexco fruit and veg are grown on illegal Israeli settlements in the West Bank and are delivered to mainstream supermarkets in the UK, in breach of British, EU and international law. Britain represents a large market for the company, providing them with sixty percent of their foreign sales.

The action was part of an ongoing campaign against recurring violations of human rights and international law in the occupied territories of Palestine and to expose Agrexco's illegal activity (See SchNEWS 649).

* See also www.bigcampaign.org



SNAP CRACKLE COP

As we reported some months back, there have been worrying developments in the way police have been focussed lately on cracking down on people daring to take photographs (or video) of the world around them. Numerous cases have come to light around the country of police stopping and searching budding paparazzi and even forcing them to delete the contents of their cameras, despite it being technically legal to take pictures in most public places (see our handy guide – SchNEWS 638).

A couple of weeks ago a 15-year old school-boy on a geography field trip was stopped by police under Section 44 of the Terrorism Act for taking a photograph of Wimbledon train station as part of his of GCSE course. Community Support Officers forced him to give his details and sign a form or face arrest (SchNEWS legal note: You do not have to give your details under and stop and search, despite what lies the police will say and never sign any police notes).

Last week the police stopped four students from

RAIL AGAINST THE MACHINE

A train holding 23 tonnes of nuclear waste is subverted by a mass demo of 16,000 activists on its 940 mile journey from France to Germany. The demonstration is the largest of its kind for over six years, with an eclectic mix of affinity groups, autonomists, farmers, NGOs, clowns and anti-nuclear bravehearts.

The assorted groups descended on the railway line from the forests, in a co-ordinated ambush from the north and south. Many dug rocks under the tracks and layered wood on top of the railway, blocking the route from their vantage points. "I lost count of how many people were suspended from trees over roads and train tracks... for every person that got taken down, several more would appear in their place", said one protester.

Some, with the luxury of a tractor, were able to strategically blockade the rail track; apparently 50 tractors were eventually confiscated. The crux of the delay came from three brave activists at the French-German border, D-locking themselves under the railway line using concrete blocks, holding up the train for 9 hours in Berg.

An extensive police operation ensued with an estimated 30,000 police officers deployed en-route – that is double the amount of protesters – armed with their accessories for assault: riot gear, batons, pepper-spray, dogs and water cannons to disperse and remove protesters.

A fleet of police helicopters escorted the train on the final stretch to Dannenberg, mystifying as all protesters were firmly afoot on the ground. The demo ended with a thousand protesters occupying the street outside the fortified nuclear dumpsite. In total, there were 46 arrests, 293 people held in custody and 2,478 banning orders issued.

Germany sends nuclear power to France where it is processed, the spent nuclear waste is returned to Germany, in this case to Dannenberg in the North where it is stored in an old salt-mine. Anti-nuclear campaigners have long been opposing the proliferation of nuclear power and the danger of its disposal. Another salt-mine dump near Wolfenbuettel has reportedly developed leaks and cracks.

Protesters call for an end of nuclear power plants and that all existing waste is stored without causing damage to people or the planet.

* For more <http://de.indymedia.org/en>

Kingston University from filming an interview with the anti-war Parliament Square protesters as part of their MA in Film Making. The police approached the students and told them they would need a permit from the Council to film. Brian Haw from the Parliament Square peace camp filmed this incident, but the police curiously didn't stop him from filming! Later the students returned with a letter from the University course director explaining their work and that it was not for commercial purposes and the students were covered by the University's insurance. But police would still not let the students film and when challenged refused to check with superiors.

The students finally managed to film a week later and were accompanied by a member of the National Union of Journalists just in case the police tried to interfere again – which they didn't.

The increasing uncertainty over what constitutes a crime in UK law has seen a huge rise in potential police power as vague laws are increasingly 'interpreted' in an arrest-now-argue-about-it-later police philosophy. (Or in the case of the murder of Jean Charles Menezes a shoot-now-cover-it-up-later policy, see SchNEWS 647).

This is not just SchNEWS's own polarised view of it – Home Secretary Jacqui Smith exposed the situation perfectly when she wrote to the Secretary-General of the National Union of Journalists earlier this year to clarify that there is "no legal restriction on photography in public places..." but "Decisions may be made locally to restrict or monitor photography in reasonable circumstances. That is an operational decision for the officers involved based on the individual circumstances of each situation".

And if that's not clear enough for you, things could be about to get even more blurry. The Counter-Terrorism Bill is currently winging its way through the Lords on its way to the Statute book. Section 75 will make it an offence to "elicit or attempt to elicit information about members of the armed forces, intelligence services or policemen, where this information could be of use to a terrorist." This is punishable by up to ten

years in the slammer, and it is up to the accused to prove that you had a reasonable excuse for holding the information. If you had looked at the recently leaked list of BNP members you could potentially be up for terrorism charges as the act even covers ex-coppers, soldiers and spooks.

How broadly this could be interpreted in the field is left open – any picture of a copper could be of use to a terrorist, even if just as source material for making their own fake police uniform for use in a daring bomb plot.

To what extent this will be used against protesters is yet to be seen, but with animal rights protesters already openly viewed as terrorists and other political activists increasingly criminalised, this could be the latest blunt tool used by police for harassment of activists.

In future making notes of police misbehaviour and taking their photos and collar numbers, despite being a perfectly legal (and sensible) thing to do, could warrant arrest. NETCU Watch point out: "None of this has ever been used in order to use violence against the police, let alone terrorism, but we can hazard a guess that they might use this proposed legislation against us."

It is highly likely that websites highlighting the political work of the police will be affected as the legislation also applies to Internet Service Providers, meaning they will have a legal duty to remove all sites perceived to fall under this offence. FitWatch say "This legislation not only attempts to stifle our ability to hold the police force to account for their actions, but also attacks the principles of open publishing on the Internet. It must be resisted." FitWatch are calling for a day of mass action the day the legislation is passed (expected early 2009) by means of a mass publishing of information about police officers. The idea is to get hold of a piece of info about a cop, or a photo or video - and publish it on Flickr, Youtube, your blog, website, myspace/facebook, wherever you want.

* See www.fitwatch.blogspot.com and

www.netcu.wordpress.com

** Report and picture of Smug Ignorant Pig at www.indymedia.org.uk/en/2008/11/412849.html

PARTY & PROTEST

* For full listings updated weekly see www.schnews.org.uk/pap

NOVEMBER: 17-23rd - Right to Education Week. Action Palestine are organising a Right to Education Week to take place across university campuses in the UK, with a speaking tour by Palestinian students www.actionpalestine.org/campaigns/r2e ** **21 - Prosecuting Bush and Blair for Genocide** - Public meeting with Chris Coverdale, members of Make Wars History & Steven McLaughlin, author of 'Squaddie: A Soldier's Story'. At Indian YMCA, 41 Fitzroy Square, London W1 7pm. www.makewarshistory.org.uk ** **22 - 2nd North East Working Class Bookfair** Durham Clayport Library, Millennium Place, Durham City. 12-4pm ** **22 - Southampton's 2nd Go Green Fair** - Green trading, campaigning and info stalls, food, kids stuff and more At Avenue St Andrews Church, The Avenue, Southampton. 10-4pm. www.thearthousesouthampton.co.uk ** **25 - Protest against ID cards** - Biometric ID cards will come into force for non-EU students and spouses from 25th Nov and will be issued from offices in Birmingham, Cardiff, Croydon, Glasgow, Liverpool, and Sheffield. Protest outside the Home Office building in Cardiff – or at one closer to home. At UK Border Agency, General Buildings, 31-33 Newport Road, Cardiff. 12pm. See www.noborderswales.wordpress.com

****Brighton Special:** All events at the city's premier anarchist theme pub: Cowley Club, 12 London Rd, Brighton: ** **22 - Buddhakka Headset sound system** - dub reggae fundraiser. 8pm. Donations. ** **23 - Sunday Roast - Benefit for the Treatment Rooms** - a radical artist activist collective. With a new campaign film about the framed Angola 3. From 2pm. ** **24 - Never Mind The Baracks!** - Resistance in North America Film Season. 'Pickaxe' - A mix of activists take a stand to protect an old growth forest from logging in Oregon, blockading the logging road and repelling the state police. In the Backbuilding from 7.30-9.30pm ** **25 - No Borders meeting** - For freedom of movement for refugees and migrants. Talk, film, discussion and practical organising. 6.30- 8.30pm. See www.nobordersbrighton.blogspot.com ** **29** - Still confused about the credit crunch? Even after reading SchNEWS 647 & 649?! Dayschool on the crisis subtitled ' - is this the beginning of the end?' 2-7pm. Anti-capitalist and libertarian perspectives on the financial crisis with speakers and discussion. Two sessions: 2pm 'What's happening and why' and 5pm 'What it means for us'. Bring your own opinions or look up other people's on <http://sites.google.com/site/radicalperspectivesonthecrisis>

RNC U L8R

The eight people on trial for protesting against the Republican National Convention (SchNEWS 645, 646) are in the dock, still fighting charges of "Conspiracy to Riot in Furtherance of Terrorism". Having been dragged from their beds in the early hours on the day of the riot /demo, the eight (seven of whom were part of the RNC 'Welcoming Committee') are being accused of plotting to kidnap delegates and sabotage the Convention.

The prosecution are basing their case on evidence provided by paid informants and undercover agents who infiltrated the group in the months leading up to the convention. Eryn Trimmer, one of the alleged ringleaders, said "We assumed the group was under surveillance and that that could include informants. It was an open group and we weren't organizing anything."

Second-degree "Conspiracy to Commit Riot" ordinarily carries a maximum two-and-a-half-year prison sentence, but because the alleged crime was intended to "Further Terrorism," the sentence can be doubled to a maximum of five years.

Keen to stamp out protest, and demonise civil dissent in case the general public start getting any ideas, US authorities have stretched post-9/11

legal definitions to new dimensions. Organising acts of civil disobedience (some of them admitted to considering a blockade of the Convention) is taken to mean planning to damage property. Which is now taken to count as terrorism.

This definition goes beyond even the US Patriot Act which defines terrorism as damage to people. This extension to property is made by 'reinterpreting' an obscure state bill rushed through in the aftermath of 9/11. The original bill, proposed on May the 2nd 2001, had nothing to do with terrorism but required morticians and funeral directors to issue death notices for unidentifiable homeless people. One year, five revisions and a twin towers later, the bill had mushroomed into a massive catch-all bill, including the hastily appended terrorism statute. For updates see www.rnc8.org

** Nov 21st - **Save Dave Rave** - Fundraiser for Dave Mahoney, a UK activist facing 12 years in prison in the US for protests at Republican Party convention. Live music and more at the Cowley Club, 12 London Road, Brighton from 7pm. For more info see <http://helpdavamahoney.blogspot.com>

OFF WITH THEIR ARMS

Sussex University students have voted to support a motion to withdraw support for all military bodies on campus at their Student Union AGM.

This follows a series of actions carried out by students against military recruiters on campus (see SchNEWS 649, 650). Anti-war protesters at the recent Grad Fair have been accused of stealing a list of names of possible recruits from the army stand. At the Freshers' Fair a group of ten students dressed as clowns and sabotaged a stand run by the University Royal Navy Unit using paint and glitter. One of the students involved was identified using CCTV and is now facing disciplinary action.

The motion was passed after much debate, however it is likely to go to Council, who will probably call a referendum on the issue.

IDENTITY POLITICS

This Monday (17th), there was a noise demo outside the Stockport offices of French defence company Thales, who are a contractor involved in the planned new British National Identity Register and ID Cards. From next week foreign nationals will have to give personal and biometric information for the register, as it begins to build files on everybody in the UK. The noise demo, with people from the Student Union Campaigns Collective, Manchester NO2ID and Students Against ID, went off without arrests despite a strong police presence. See <http://manchester.no2id.net>

...and finally...

With the tsunami of mainstream optimism sweeping Americaland after B.Ob's election victory, the smell of hope in the air is palpable. To get in before the inevitable crushing wave of disappointment that will probably swiftly follow, alternative journo types have co-ordinated a massive spoof of the New York Times, delivering over a million copies of a fake edition in cities all over the US.

Taking it's lead from the spoof 'good' news Google front page viral email that went around earlier in the year, this NYT edition is dated 4th of July 2009 and is full of celebratory headlines for events as unlikely as the end of the Iraq occupation, a maximum wage cap for corporate CEOs and the abolition of political lobbying.

Maybe a new American dream is making itself known and more people might imagine another world is really possible. But it may take more than pinning all hope on a new leader who, despite being a homeboy from the hood ready to tear up the establishment for the underclass, still managed to climb the oily pole of US politics and get over half a billion dollars in campaign support from the corporate elite class, with the expected return of kissing ass.

Fair play for attracting volunteers to spread a million copies of the mind-messing media around though - SchNEWS struggles to find one person to distro Brighton with our radical rag once a week. Maybe we should cheer up our headlines.

Displaying the legendary lack of irony cherished of our American cousins, in response to the spoof paper the real New York Times would only say, "We are looking into it."

Disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all readers - if you're not forced off you're not paying attention. Honest!

3 REICHS AND YER OUT

Here's a data loss we can all be happy about. The BNP's entire membership (around 12,000 people) has gone online - you can find your local goose-stepping moron at www.bnpmemberslist.co.uk

'Nasty' Nick Griffin, BNP leader, suspects the individual responsible is a disgruntled "hardliner" senior employee who left the party last year. While Nick claims he welcomes the publicity, saying the list contradicted the perception of the average BNP member as a "skinhead oik". BNP spokesman, Simon Darby took it less well: "If we find out the name of the person who published this list it will turn out to be one of the most foolish things they have done in their life".

Additional published information includes addresses, emails, occupations, phone numbers and even supporters' interests, (including a witch and a Crawley based kite-maker). Those exposed include social workers, prison officers, police, military officers, solicitors and even teachers. Extra notes include: "Discretion requested (employment concerns) government employee" and "activist (discretion requested), teacher (secondary school)". Such 'discretion' comes as no surprise as many supporters could now face dismissal from work or disciplinary action.

Despite frantic legal scabbling from the fascists, the list has now been mirrored all over the internet. The BNP is now ironically relying on the Human Rights Act, (which it opposes) to try and protect the privacy of its members.

SchNEWS politely requests its readers not to sign up unsuspecting BNP members to timeshare schemes, catalogue orders, the army etc etc
** The BNP's conference in Blackpool last weekend was met with a 200-strong anti-fascist demonstration. After handing out leaflets along the promenade, the protesters ended up outside the salubrious facade of the New Kimberly Hotel, where, behind the floral curtains, the BNP delegates thrashed out issues like the seating arrangement and dinner menu. Police had ordered the BNP to stay out of sight and the grubby curtains of the hotel were drawn to protect the public from the ugly mugs of the BNP. For full report see www.lancasteruaf.blogspot.com/2008/11/over-200-protest-against-bnp-conference.html

T'RUBBLE AT MILL (RD)

For the last 378 days and counting, local campaigners have managed to thwart Tesco's plans to open an 'Express' store on Cambridge's Mill Road. The street has a large number of mainly independent shops - a rare sight these days when every town centre is an identikit high street set of corporate chains. The proposed site has been standing empty for over a year now.

When local residents learned of Tesco's plans, they formed the No Mill Road Tesco campaign group (www.nomillroadtesco.org). After organizing a petition that raised more than four thousand signatures, they held various demos outside the site and a march along Mill Road that attracted some 500 demonstrators.

In May, the groundfloor of the building was squatted and turned into a social centre (www.millroadsocialcentre.wordpress.com). The space, after being cleared and redecorated, hosted a large number of events, including dance classes, art exhibitions, acoustic gigs and a comedy night.

Breaking promises made at their possession hearing, Tesco called in the bailiffs in July, confident that their appeal to an earlier refusal of their planning application would be upheld. As it turns out, it wasn't. Since then Tesco have launched two further appeals, the first of which was resoundingly rejected earlier last week (12th), on the grounds that twice daily deliveries by huge delivery trucks would cause havoc on this already dangerous stretch of road, used by a large number of cyclists

There will be a second public enquiry, regarding alternative proposals, leading to a further waste of public money. This is Tesco's time-honoured strategy - keep appealing until local councils and residents run out of money or their strength of will.

The new store is obviously sorely needed - why, Tesco only currently take 51 pence out of every grocery pound spend in Cambridge. That's barely a majority let alone monopoly domination! Besides, Tesco want to cash in as the credit-crunched consumer class mistakenly fall for their marketing spin of 'value'.

* For more about Tesco see www.tescopoly.org

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