

WAKE UP!! WAKE UP!! IT'S YER BORDERLINE...



SchNEWS

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Deportations AIRSTRIPE ONE		
EXPECT DELAYS ON SOME FLIGHTS DUE TO DEMONSTRATIONS		
Name	Flight	Nationality
Hussein Khedri	DEPORTED via Campsfield	Iran
Absolom Mashamba	TORTURED DEPORTED	Zimbabwe
Adam Osman Mohammed	DEPORTED	Darfur
Athmane Souhalia	DEPORTED via Yarls Wood	Algeria
Assia Souhalia	DEPORTED via Yarls Wood	Algeria
Yaqda	DEPORTED	Iraq
Sherzad Ahmad	DEPORTED	Iraq
Mohammad Tareq	DEPORTED	Afghanistan

STAND UP TO DETENTION

AND BE COUNTED IN THE FIGHT AGAINST UK IMMIGRATION POLICY

On Wednesday, Home Secretary Jacqui Smith opened the latest addition to UK plc's capacity for locking people up, Brook House - the largest immigration detention centre yet - with space for 426 prisoners. 2,500 people are currently locked up in 13 British immigration prisons and the government want to be able lock up another 1,500. Next up is a 'mega-detention centre' near Bullington in Oxfordshire and one in Bedfordshire.

Last Friday, immigration minister Phil Woolas was treated to a dose of his own detention when two dozen local residents occupied his Oldham and Saddleworth constituency office. The group of migrant rights advocates and anarchists took over for 30 minutes to demand the abolition of all immigration prisons, and specifically Pennine House at Manchester Airport. Opened earlier this year by the Wool-ass, Pennine House can hold 32 detainees for up to a week, until they are either deported or transferred to other detention centres.

Previously, Manchester No Borders had pied Woolas at a debate and targeted council leader Richard Leese over the same issues. They dumped 100 jumpers in front of the panellists of an event entitled 'The Right to the City' in a protest against the Pennine House prison.

Early morning raids by the Immigration Police (See SchNEWS 615) continue to target families fleeing persecution, with some groups being targeted for deportation despite the well-documented political violence in their home countries. Such places as Democratic Republic of Congo and Iraqi Kurdistan are classed as 'safe' to deport asylum seekers to, yet the foreign office simultaneously advises against all but essential travel to these areas for everyone else. Over 350 people have been deported by charter flights to Iraqi Kurdistan in the last six months. Recent deportees have committed suicide, been kidnapped or killed in car bombs.

50 Iraqi Kurds were recently rounded up and held at Gatwick's Tinsley House detention centre. A special deportation charter flight was scheduled from Stansted to Arbil, the capital of Iraqi Kurdistan, last Tuesday.

Determined to stop this collective expulsion, campaigners blockaded the Tinsley House gate on Tuesday morning. Six people locked themselves together and then super-glued their hands to the gates. After six hours they were forcibly removed and arrested, along with three others, for aggravated trespass. Shortly after, a coach carrying between 8 and 12 Iraqi refugees due for deportation left for Stansted. Others were reportedly taken from Campsfield and Dover detention centres, although some had outstanding appeals and judicial reviews. The charter flight landed in Sulaimaniyya, northern Iraq, with approximately 60 people on board. At least two people had won High Court injunctions and were taken off the flight.

One of the deportees, whose name cannot be

used for his own security in Iraq, said earlier on the phone: "I've been in the UK for nine years. I have a partner and an 18-month-old son. If I am deported, all this will be gone. I've made a life for myself here, living as everyone else does in this country, but I'm now being treated like I'm a criminal, imprisoned then deported." He added: "I left Iraq originally because my life was threatened by a radical Islamic group. That same group is now more powerful than they were before. I won't be safe, I won't be safe."

Another Iraqi refugee, deported last month, said: "I don't know when I'll see my partner or my daughter again. I speak to them in tears on the phone every night. I am still in shock after being sent back. I have had to change my name so I'm not targeted by the same people who threatened to kill me before. My entire world has caved in."

Deportation flights to Iraq have been chartered from Czech Airlines and Hamburg International and the coaches transporting the detainees in UK are operated by WH Tours and Woodcock Coaches. The main corporate profiteers of this detention and deportation misery are Global Solutions Limited (GSL), owners of Group 4 Securicor (G4S), who run three detention centres, including Brook House, and provide detainee 'escorting services.' Other detention centres are operated by Serco, Sodexo and GEO.

GSL has been repeatedly criticised by HM Chief Inspector of Prisons over their running of the detention centres. In her 2008 inspection report, Anne Owers expressed "concerns over provision for children" held at Tinsley House, and considered that conditions for the much-reduced number of single women were "unacceptable."

In 2006, Owers said Harmondsworth detention centre near Heathrow "had been allowed to slip into a culture and approach which was wholly at odds with its stated purpose" following the suicide

CRAP ARREST OF THE WEEK

For Manipulating public opinion...

Two people were arrested for unfurling a banner inside the conference of the World Water Forum in Istanbul, Turkey. The activists from International Rivers were arrested for unleashing their fabric-of-society threatening slogan, "No Risky Dams", held all day and night under draconian under catch all 'public manipulation' conspiracy laws and then deported home - one back to Germany, the other to the US. Meanwhile outside, 26 were arrested and three seriously injured as over 2000 police attacked a demonstration of 300. See www.internationalrivers.org

of two detainees in 2004 and 2006. This week the Court of Appeal ruled that the government was wrong not to order an independent inquiry into allegations of mistreatment at Harmondsworth in 2006. Detainees had been denied food and drink, forced to urinate and defecate in front of each other, and strip searched in front of several officers.

One of the latest victims of the deportation regime is Hussein Khedri, a young Iranian detained last week and facing deportation to Greece, despite an independent medical report confirming him to be a minor. Hussein is the youngest member of the Tuesday Night Project at The Square Centre in Nottingham and is widely liked by all who attend.

Adam Osman Mohammed was forced to flee to the UK when his village, in Darfur, was repeatedly attacked in 2005. He was refused asylum, and took 'voluntary return' before being forced back anyway. A few days after he arrived in Darfur he was shot dead in front of his family, by government security forces. The Home Office now want to restart deportations to Darfur.

This Saturday (21st) sees a national day of action against detention centres. A protest march will go 11.30am from Bedford town centre to Yarls Wood detention centre, a demo in Manchester will target Pennine House and in Edinburgh campaigners will picket G4S.

* See www.noborders.org.uk for more details.

US ACTIVIST SHOT IN PALESTINE

Almost exactly six years since Israeli forces killed American International Solidarity Movement (ISM) activist Rachel Corrie in Rafah, Gaza (SchNEWS 397), another US activist is fighting for his life after being shot in the head by the IDF during a demo against the Separation Wall in the West Bank village of Ni'lin. Tristan Anderson was shot at close range by a tear gas cannister fired from the new Ruger rifle, designed to shoot a 'less lethal' 130gram gas cannister 500 metres. He was shot at from 60 metres away by a soldier who aimed directly at his head.

After his ambulance was made to wait for 15 minutes at a checkpoint, he was taken to Tel Hashomer hospital. Unconscious for several days, he is now in a life threatening condition, recovering from a brain operation that involved removing part

of his frontal lobe damaged by cranial bone splinters. His family and girlfriend are at his side, and have said: "We are deeply grateful for the love and support pouring in from Tristan's friends and fellow activists around the world. It is moving to see how many people care for Tristan and are moved by his work championing social justice issues."

Tristan was demonstrating against the building of the Wall in Ni'lin, which will cut the village of the Ni'lin off from one quarter of its land if completed. Four people have been killed at Ni'lin demonstrations - the youngest being 10-year-old Ahmed Mousa, shot in the forehead with live ammunition.

* For more on the current situation and the continued fight for justice for Rachel Corrie, see the Gaza ISM site at www.palsolidarity.org

CARAVANGUARD

The Dale Farm Romany Gypsy site near Billericay in Essex is threatened with eviction this year, but got a temporary reprieve after yesterday having lodged an appeal to the House Of Lords which stalls proceedings. If an eviction does happen – most likely by the violent ‘gypsy eviction specialist’ bailiffs Constant & Co (See SchNEWS 439) – legal monitors as well as those prepared to take direct action will be needed to protect this community. They are also calling out for tents and marquees to provide temporary accommodation for the 90 families (500 people) affected.

After losing a High Court appeal earlier this year (SchNEWS 659), which gave Basildon Council the green light to begin eviction proceedings against the largest Gypsy and Traveller community in Britain, the residents of Dale Farm now wait for the – fortunately slow – process of the Lords. They’ll take 6-8 weeks to decide if they hear the application with a decision in 6-12 months, which could buy some time. But if the Lords refuse to even hear the application, sometime in May or June the community could receive a 28 day notice to quit and the battle to defend Dale Farm will commence.

Dale Farm has been home to Gypsies since the 1960s, when planning permission was granted for 40 families to live on the former scrapyards. Those threatened are the many more families who have arrived since, bought adjacent greenbelt land, and are living on it without planning permission. In May 2005 Basildon Council decided to evict those without planning permission, then in May 2008 this was put on hold when the High Court ruled the council was not offering an alternative site. They also urged the council to not use Constant & Co, after being appalled by a video of a previous violent eviction (See SchNEWS 632). In January this year, the Court Of Appeals overturned this ruling, paving the way for an eviction.

Romany and Gypsy communities across Europe are being violently ethnically cleansed. In the UK the infamous 1994 Criminal Justice Act repealed the Caravan Sites Act, freeing local authorities from the obligation to provide travellers with park-up space. Many communities bought land to live on – but 96% of the applications for permission to settle have been refused. These itinerant communities have been forced to buy land, yet are denied the right to stay there and are subject to extreme racism and prejudice where ever they go. Basildon Council have so far spent more than £750,000 on legal fees, and are prepared to put up to £2million of taxpayers money into breaking up Dale Farm.

Currently there are plans to set up a tent city on adjacent land, owned by some residents and used as pasture for ponies. The Red Cross has donated a large tent and so far they also have several marquees and portaloos left over from the 2007 Heathrow climate camp. Three local churches have offered to open church halls, with plans to move mothers with children and the elderly to these should an eviction start.

Fortifications are in place including two scaffolding towers connected by a bridge over Oak Lane, the private road which is the only entry to the site. Other preparations to defend the site continue. Donations of tat welcome, including: tents, scaffolding, safety fencing, barbed-wire, planks, rope, wire etc.

Soon there will be meeting for Human Rights Monitors at the House Of Commons – or if Whitehall is a bit off your manor email/telephone the contacts below.

* Info: 01206 523528, dale.farm@btinternet.com
* Snapshot on current plight of Romany Gypsies in Europe read ‘Coordinator Information on Evictions November 2008.pdf’ at www.coe.int/t/dg3/romatravellers/Coordinator/default_en.asp
* See www.humanrightstv.com/siege-of-dale-farm

DOING WHIRLY-BIRD

People are being asked to send letters of support to the pilot of the gyrocopter arrested for murder when a hunt supporter ran into its rear propeller – and what was he doing on the runway anyway? (See SchNEWS 668) Send letters to: **Bryan Griffiths** XW8892, HMP Hewell, Hewell Lane, Redditch B97 6QS. (Note: he’s up on serious charges so don’t say anything stupid).

Meanwhile a clue as to why hunt monitors might find it safer to be airborne came as one huntsman has found himself doing time for attacking a 61 year old woman. Christopher Marles, Whipper-In for the East Devon hunt, was described acting like an “arrogant, cowardly, drunken lout” by the judge for riding his horse repeatedly into anti-hunt activist Helen Weeks. He was sentenced to six months. You can view the braying red faced twat in action at: news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/devon/7941882.stm

* See also <http://hsa.enviroweb.org>

BIG TROUBLE

In response to the growing success of the Boycott Israeli Goods campaign, police have been putting more pressure on protesters. Two Swansea activists had their houses searched and were arrested for ‘conspiring to commit racially aggravated criminal damage’ following an action at Sainsburys in Bridgend, when a couple of boxes of Israeli peppers were sprayed with red paint and a ‘Boycott Israel’ slogan spray-stencilled on the floor.

The two arrested, Dee Murphy and Greg Wilkinson, weren’t even at the action, but had previously done a ‘trolley action’ in their local Tescos in Swansea with dates grown in illegal Israeli settlements. Join-the-dots cops conjured a conspiracy out of thin air – obviously the activists in Swansea must have had some connection to the action in Bridgend.

Meanwhile Palestine Solidarity Campaigners in Edinburgh have just been charged for causing ‘alarm and distress... in a racially aggravated manner’ at a picket of the Jerusalem Quartet at the Edinburgh festival last August.

* www.bigcampaign.org, www.palsolidarity.org

PIECES OF AIT

Raven’s Ait, an island on the Thames near Kingston, has been occupied by activists for the past four weeks and turned into an eco-centre. Undeterred, despite being in court yesterday and losing, a planned conference this weekend on Carbon Trading will still go ahead.

The man-made island near Kingston, opposite Hampton Court, has a conference centre whose owners left last year, while the rest of the island is common land. The squatters are repairing the roof of the building, and digging the garden to turn it into London’s first eco-centre, a hub open to anyone for climate related actions, talks and more.

This island also has its place in history, being where the Treaty Of Lambeth was signed in 1217, when Henry III became king, enabling him to ratify the Magna Carta. The squatters even used rights enshrined in the Magna Carta in their (albeit unsuccessful!) defence in court.

Directions: Ravens Ait Island, Portsmouth Road, Surbiton, Surrey KT6 4HN. Opposite Catherine’s Road, Kingston or Surbiton Rail. Phone 07769 791387 or 07900 800055 <http://ravensait.org.uk>

PARTY & PROTEST

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

HOI-DEE-HOI

Activists in Rosssport, Ireland, occupied their local Shell office last Monday in protest against Maura Harrington’s continuing incarceration (see SchNEWS 668). Seven members of the Rosssport Solidarity camp gave Shell staff some verbals for over an hour in support for Maura, to make sure they were aware of local peoples’ continued determination to stop Shell tearing up unspoilt coastline to build their gas facility. Shell have colluded with the Irish state to use any heavy-handed means necessary to intimidate or arrest any opposition to the scheme.

Talking of which, this week prominent anti-Shell fisherman Pat O’Donnell (see SchNEWS 646) mysteriously had the windows of his boat smashed by assailants unknown. Funnily enough, his was the only boat out of 20 moored to fall prey to the ‘vandals’.

The Solidarity Camp, now into it’s forth year, is gearing up for another summer of action - as you can be sure of Shell’s intentions to resume pipe-laying work so dramatically blocked by protesters last year (See SchNEWS 634).

So if you’re bored of Butlins or Centre Parks spring breaks (dependin’ on yer class!), why not take a week or two’s break this April or May in beautiful western Ireland, at a holiday camp with oomph. There’s plenty of group activities on offer and plenty of entertainments from the resident Guardia ‘bluecoats’...

* See www.rosssportsolidaritycamp.110mb.com and www.corribos.com

==== STOP PRESS =====

POLICE OVER THE MOON AT EDO

As SchNEWS goes to print, stalwart anti-militarists still brave the brisk March night at the first (of many) all night demos outside EDO-ITT – the Brighton bomb parts factory. Marking the 6th anniversary of the invasion of Iraq, a terrifying mob of protesters - at times nearly numbering in double figures - still managed to provoke Sussex police into complete overkill. Five police vans, dog teams, regular searches of the woods by the factory and constant sweeps with spotlights. Nice overtime for the lads in these crunching times eh?

Earlier in the evening, EDO employees cowered under a police escort against a vicious assault by the angelic anti-war voices of the Sussex Peace Choir.

Weirder still, EDO’s masochistic MD Paul Hills, fresh from a stint having a grilling in court about the legality of his business, turned up for all the fun and stayed til past 11pm – he just can’t get enough of being called a murderer (hasn’t he got any life to go to?!).

The whole operation must be costing a bomb – it just goes to show how scared the old bill and EDO/ITT are of the Smash EDO campaign. They’ve had a terrible year - mass demos, carpark invasions (or ‘riot’ if you prefer SchNEWS’ incendiary rival Brighton rag, *The Argus*), and of course, a thorough smashing up back in January (See SchNEWS 663).

Last we heard, a hardcore of three still remain, huddled under a blanket, eating cake. Some of the most expensive cake in history if we factor in the cops costs...how long can they justify such exorbitance?

* See www.smashedo.org.uk

Disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all readers - don’t get involved in any of these issues, just sit at home glued to news about celebrity deaths, it’s much more important. Honest.

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