



WAKE UP!! WAKE UP!! IT'S YER MOTHER FRACKING...

SchNEWS

www.schnews.org.uk

Friday 16th September 2011

Free/Donation

Issue 788

WORLD'S LARGEST ARMS FAIL

AS SchNEWS PADDLES IN THE MURKY WATERS OF THE ARMS TRADE

This week London's Excel Centre has been hosting the biennial death-fest DSEi – the world's largest arms fair. Part funded and organised by the British government, DSEi is the place where warmongers tool up on the latest guns 'n' ammo. Both the weapons used by Colonel Gaddafi and those used against him are on sale at DSEi. The UK exported £33.8m of military and related products to Libya between Oct 2009 and Oct 2010.

This year the highlight of the weapons wankathon got stopped in its tracks before it even reached the fair. Six protesters in inflatable dingies launched themselves into the path of the HMS Dauntless last Saturday as it was on its way to Victoria Docks ahead of DSEI, causing it to come to an unscheduled stop in the waters near Barking, Dagenham. It finally docked some 4 hours later. Of the 6 protesters, one got away and the other 5 were briefly detained by the river police.

The Dauntless is a Type 45 Destroyer, one of the Royal Navy's latest, most high-tech battleships,

as well as one of the newest, commissioned just last year. Supposedly able to track and destroy jet fighters and other warships, it must have been embarrassing for the captain to be caught by surprise by the tiny blowup flotilla. No doubt it will now be retrofitted with anti-inflatable technology.

DSEi wouldn't be DSEi without several days of creative non-violent protest and a massive pig-fest, and Indymedia have a timeline of the entire thing. (See <http://www.indymedia.org.uk/en/2011/09/484571.html>) A spontaneous die-in was held by activists from Campaign Against the Arms Trade, forcing arms dealers to walk over the restless dead to get to DSEi. One protester has been charged with aggravated trespass, and another nicked for throwing paint. Other protesters got in the way of arms dealers and corporate lobbyists on the trains to the (un)fair.

The group Stop The Arms Fair pulled off a coup after getting word that the delegates would be attending an evening reception at the National Gallery. Whilst delegates struggled to get into the gal-



lery via the back door, around 150 protesters came face to face with the arms dealers, forcing them to run the gauntlet of the baying mob.

Although there was no single large mobilisation this year, there was a slew of actions by small, mobile and creative affinity groups that caused a headache for cops and war criminals alike. Stop the Arms Fair, a coalition of several groups including CAAT and Disarm DSEi, are already planning for 2013.

*For more dsei.org & stopthearmsfair.org.uk

BRIGHTON 9: STICKING IT TO THE MANIKIN

Activists from the Gandhian non-violent, non-smashing shit up direct action campaign UK Uncut are on trial for, er, smashing shit up. The 9 were arrested during an occupation at the Top Shop and Top Man on Western Road, Brighton (yes that Brighton; the local one that's not in Egypt or Turkey or Israel or Palestine or Mexico or the Mezzanine region of Colombia, but Brighton, where we live). They are all accused of causing 4 grands worth of damage to a manikin in Topshop. If this figure seems high its not because of a bullshitting claim by tax-dodging scum Topshop, its because the these particular shop manikins were carved from the single gigantic diamond that Topshop's owners could afford after keeping all the lorryloads of cash the UK government let them have.

In what could be seen as a rematch of last years EDO Decommissioners' trial (see SchNEWS 729), Kellys Solicitors will once again be facing-off against Steven Shay of the CPS. The trial is being held at the Brighton Magistrates for about two weeks from Wednesday 14th. Given that Shay couldn't even get convictions on a group who admitted over £180,000 worth of damage to an arms factory, we're hoping he can't do any better with a much shakier case.

Defendants claim that the damage to the shop was not caused by the speak-truth-to-power peaceniks but rather by a squad of thuggish coppers who barged in their size 10 magnum boots waving their truncheons about. The defendants are also up for superglueing themselves to the shop's windows, which the prosecution will no doubt argue took several sprays of windolene and several wipes with a cloth to remove.

In light of the hammering that people have received after the riots, the defendants are understandably concerned that their protest will be met with punitive sentences. However, the sketchy evidence of the prosecution compares badly with the 'stand up and be counted' attitude of the protesters. Supporters of the Brighton 9 are confident of victory. A friend of the 9 said "this is a politically motivated prosecution, the state clearly has a problem with UK Uncut's ability to make the headlines and are seeking to make examples through cases such as this and the Fortnum 145. Luckily for us their evidence is falling apart already, hopefully it'll be laughed out of court sooner rather than later".

FRACK SHIT UP

Camp Frack is kicking off this weekend in Lancashire, taking action against Cuadrilla's shale gas extraction off the northern coast. Shale gas extraction or 'fracking' is the latest attempt by corporate energy companies to suck the few remaining scraps of fossil fuel out of the earth, and has been known to cause seismic activity, poison water supplies and leach huge amounts of toxic waste liquids (see SchNEWS 771).

Despite the climate movement generally being fairly low profile this year, fracking has been one thing that eco activists have been getting fired up about. As drilling quietly gets underway in the north of the country, a whole

host of groups have formed, taking on outreach work and direct action up and down the country, including a recent banner drop from the Blackpool Tower (see <http://frack-off.org.uk/frack-off-banner-drop-from-blackpool-tower/>).

Although fracking has taken a strong hold in the US, it's still a relatively small operation here. It's vital that we act to stop it in its tracks, before it reaches the size of the other fossil fuel industries that are so hard for the environmental opposition to fight. Cuadrilla is already on the offensive, spouting greenwashing propaganda to those local residents who'll listen, and quickly disputing any attempt by local resistance movements to put across the saner point of view.

As the first large scale action against the drilling, the camp aims to make the UK opposition to fracking visible to the energy companies, politicians and public. Camping right next to the active drilling rig, demonstrators will experience first hand the scale of Cuadrilla's operations, and have the opportunity to meet other people interested in building a co-ordinated resistance. There will be film screenings and workshops on fracking, all culminating in a mass action targeting the rig on Sunday (18th).

So if you're a climate activist that has been resting on their laurels this summer, or got distracted by other worthy causes such as public sector cuts, student fees or looting poundland, then get yerself oop norf to Lancashire and join the fight against fracking in the UK.

See <http://www.campaigncc.org/campfrack> for more info.

CRAP ARREST OF THE WEEK

A father and his teenage daughter had a bad trip in Hereford recently when they were suddenly confronted by angry cops claiming they were carrying "a large quantity of an illegal substance". Imagine the cops' glee as they duly discovered 8 bars of what they suspected was "compressed cocaine" in their car boot. The bewildered pair were then nicked and held for 3 hours while forensics worked up a lather in order to discover that the 'toot loot' was in fact, er, soap that the young girl had made for a school project.

You'd think the cops would've swiftly wiped the smirks off their faces and washed their hands of the affair but no, they done 'em anyway and impounded the car for having recently expired insurance. The dirty soap-dodgers.

INFORMATION FOR ACTION

Copyright Published in Brighton since 1994

NICE ONE GIZA

Egyptian protesters have proven themselves to be a feisty bunch of late – not satisfied with kicking out their dictator, they sent the Israeli ambassador scurrying back across the Sinai Desert.

Hundreds of pro-Palestinian activists separated from the much larger demo against military rule in Tahrir Square and converged on Israel's embassy building in Giza, on the bank of the Nile. The protesters clearly meant business – arriving with sledgehammers and setting to work demolishing the reinforced concrete walls. Egyptian security were completely overwhelmed, and seemed either unable or unwilling to stop the determined mob. Once inside the compound protesters scaled the walls, chucking out thousands of Hebrew language documents from the upper floors. The prize for most impressive act goes to a chap by the name of Ahmed Elshahat, aka "Flagman" who scaled the 22 stories of the building to tear down the Israeli flag. His award – a cartoon him in action by Brazilian cartoonist Carlos Latuff, (and no doubt a personal audience with the Egyptian military's finest interrogators). An Egyptian flag was put in place of the Israeli one.

Egypt doesn't seem to be in any hurry to invite the official representative of colonial Zionism back. Egyptian activists can pat themselves on the back again for sorting out things out by themselves on the streets rather than waiting for their useless leaders to do anything.

Israel is rapidly losing friends in the region, even Jordan doesn't seem safe anymore, where the Israelis withdrew their ambassador on Thursday ahead of a massive demo. For decades Israeli leaders could rely on dictatorships to strike deals with them, whilst arrogantly cawing that they were the 'only democracy in the middle east.' The Middle East is looking a lot more democratic these days, and democratic opinion is very, very pro-Palestinian.

After losing their ambassador to Turkey last week (see SchNEWS 787) and the Egyptian one this week, Netanyahu and his cabinet of racist lunatics must be in a state of panic as Turkish foreign minister Davolgulu meets up with the Egyptian government to discuss the new Middle Eastern order. The rumours flying around are that Hamas may relocate to Egypt (maybe they can use the now empty Israeli embassy building), and that the next flotilla to Gaza will be protected by Turkish warships. And if the Zionists were hoping that they might find a friend in the new NATO-loving Libyan government, they should think again – Hamas leader Ismael Haniyah personally congratulated the leaders of Libya's rebel government, who in turn stated publicly that "*Palestine is the most important issue for the Libyan people*".

PARTY & PROTEST

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

DE-FAULT IS ALL GREECE'S

On Saturday (10th) the Greek PM George Papandreou was due to outline the government's fiscal policy for the year during the Thessaloniki International Exhibition. This resulted in a plethora of demonstrations being called by groups such as the square movement, the socialist union PAME, trade unions GSEE, ADEDY, local football fans (whose team had been relegated due to financial difficulties) and yer protest happy black block.

On the actual day over 6,000 police were deployed in the city of Thessalonika. There were 32 people detained before demonstrations had even begun, numbers reached triple figures by the day's end. According to the Occupied London blog there were at least 10,000 people demonstrating across the city. Scuffles ensued throughout the day between protesters and police with tear gas always at the ready. In Athens 400 people had gathered in Syntagma square in solidarity with Thessaloniki. Police attacked the static demonstration, injuring 15 people in the process. Later on that evening two motorcycle cop units were attacked in the anarchist stronghold district of Exarcheia with Molotov cocktails and stones. The cost of policing amounted to over 2 million Euro (that is 1.74 million pounds to you and me).

School started for high school students across Greece on 12th. School books for each subject are meant to be distributed to students for free but this year thanks to the cuts books won't be available until late November. The 50% reduction of public transport costs for students has been slashed to none. Political speeches have been banned from all high schools as the government fears further occupations. Meanwhile over 300 university departments are being occupied by students protesting against the new reform bill. The bill in question will privatise higher education, bring in tuition fees and introduce university managers.

The European Parliament gathered in Strasbourg for its chin wag session this Wednesday 14th. The EU commission made it clear it had "*no intention of placing Greece under stewardship*", in plain non-politician speak that means "*we are placing Greece under stewardship*".

EDL: TOMMY CHICKENS OUT

Last Sunday (11th) was the tenth anniversary of something or other, but more importantly it gave SchNEWS' favourite meatheads – the English Defence League (EDL) – yet another chance to make tits out of themselves.

It started out as a fairly standard clash of the idiots as around 80 EDL came up against an equally sized and equally fascist group of Muslims Against Crusades (MAC). MAC had gone there to protest against US/UK imperialism by burning an American flag during the minute's silence. EDL were there to get pissed and shout at MAC.

The two groups proceeded to shout at each other for a bit from their policed pens

in Hyde Park, with neither side particularly threatening the thin blue line between them. Both sides were condemned as "sick" and "disgusting" by those attending the 9/11 remembrance. Satisfied they had successfully defended Britain from the imaginary Islamic threat, the EDL retired to a nearby Wetherspoons for a well-earned pint.

When a group of Asians passed the pub things got a bit more fighty. EDL reverted to type and slung insults and furniture at them, and in the ensuing fight two EDL received stab wounds.

Tommy Robinson, the EDL leader, was released on Tuesday (13th). His week of incarceration for breaking bail conditions was action packed with a heroic hunger strike, lucrative legal fund and even a campaign against Amnesty International for not supporting him. The hunger strike was motivated by him being a "political prisoner of the state" as well as his fears that the food was Halal. Unfortunately Tommy's "hunger strike only lasted 24 hours and then he gave up", and once out Tommy celebrated with a meal at Nandos – which serves Halal chicken.

DALE FARM CALLOUT

The eviction of Dale Farm (see SchNEWS 785 & 787) is due to start on Monday (19th). They need as many bodies as possible to hold back the tide of rabid bailiffs so get down there and man them barricades.

For more info see <http://dalefarm.wordpress.com/>

...and finally...

We weren't sure about posting a link to this bit of Israeli propaganda, but once you've seen the two issues of the technicolor Marvel pastiche of a comic that is 'Captain Israel' and 'Captain Israel vs the evil serpent of Boycott Divestment and Sanctions' you'll be left wondering if this is actually an elaborate prank by pro-Palestine activists. So mental it's actually impossible to spoof, the far right (not to mention far out) Israeli "Stand With Us" campaign have commissioned the blue uniformed, star of David shielded Zionist superhero that defeats criticism of Israel with his 'IsraelLight'.

Unfortunately there are only two issues so far (plus a teaser of 'The Battle of the Century' as Captain Israel gets the better of his arch-enemy Foreskin Man – no, really), but once you've read them you'll be wanting more.

We're helping them produce issue 3. We're hoping that they'll go up against his mortal enemy, the embassy-climbing, flag tearing, Amazing Flagman of Carlos Latuff's imaginings.

Disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all readers there's still plenty of fracking puns left. Honest.

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 mail@schnews.org.uk Web www.schnews.org.uk