

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

Weekly SchNEWS

Published in Brighton by Justice?

Issue 103

17th January 1997



Free/Donation

REUNION RAMPAGE!

“What’s worse? The temporary end of a bit of replaceable machinery or the permanent end of one of Britain’s most beautiful landscapes? They had it coming.”

Newbury resident

The anniversary of the beginning of work on the Newbury Bypass was marked with a rally of around one thousand people last Saturday. *SchNEWS* had gone along with bits of ribbon to tie onto the fence in “symbolic protest” but as the day unfolded rather more “decoration” happened than many of us bargained for. Fencing was breached, a trickle of activists entering under cover of heavy fog. The trickle became a flood, as more fence surrounding the old Middle Oak camp was cut and pulled down. As police and security looked helplessly on people got more and more cheeky, culminating in a spectacular fire show provided by a dumper truck, a portacabin and the cab of an enormous crane. Youthful campaigners and middle England alike registered their disgust at the wasteland that is now Newbury.

When *SchNEWS* asked Costain to comment on the action they replied, “We have always supported peaceful protest, but unfortunately after Saturday’s events we can no longer support the protesters.”!

Who are the real vandals?

Over the last year some of the most beautiful countryside in the South East has been trashed. Wave goodbye to 3 Special Site of Scientific Interest, an area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, a registered battlefield, 12 sites of archaeological importance, 10 000 trees, a snail’s habitat and a colony of dormice. All this for a £101

million road which even the Dept of Transport and local council admit will not solve Newbury’s congestion problems.

So was it just so-called ‘outside agitators’ that joined in the damage? One Newbury woman said “it’s about time something like this happened”, and later a middle-England resident actually asked one protester, sitting on a digger, “is there some way I can damage this?”

Rally organisers Friends of the Earth, sang a different tune “the few malicious hotheads who ruined what had been a wholly peaceful rally.....betraying the values of the green movement.”

Much has been made of how the roads protest movement has shown its true colours and become violent, descending into “chaos and crime”.

“Violence” is a very emotive word, and easy to band about. No security guards or police were injured, but one protester was hospitalised and another run down by a police horse. In fact the lead up to the ‘Reunion Rampage’ saw overkill police tactics continually harassing anyone in the Newbury area stopping and searching vehicles and nicking people for the most minor offences. So far 950 people have been arrested in a year of protests, some spending time inside on nonsense charges, like breaking the ridiculous bail conditions and

Crap arrest of the week

For not wearing a seatbelt. Thames Valley Police pulled over a carload of “dodgy lookin’ geezers”. After five minutes of being parked by the roadside, Jay decides to take off his seatbelt - and is then arrested and spends 23 hours in Newbury police station...for? Yes, you’ve guessed it, not wearing his seatbelt!

High Court injunctions stopping their right to protest. People had obviously had enough..

Now *SchNEWS* would **never** encourage its readers to take part in such activities, but why is damage to property considered violent? The “Swords into Ploughshares” women were never considered violent for causing £23 million worth of damage to a hawk jet on its way to Indonesia ...

*Some people’s masks were pulled off during the action by other protesters. This **MUST** stop, as people have been sent down in the past after being identified from photos. There are many reasons people may have for masking up (like it was pretty chilly on Saturday) such as outstanding warrants or a desire not want to end up on a Police file. That’s their decision.

*Sharon Locke has been sent down for Newbury protests for 21 days, letters of support and solidarity can be sent too Sharon Locke TG2827, Holloway Prison, Parkhurst Rd, London, N2 0NU.

*Read ‘Battle of the Trees’ a personal account of one mans experience of the Newbury campaign. Available for £2.50 + SAE from God Haven Ink, PO Box HP94, Godhaven, Leeds, LS6 1YJ

*Newbury T shirts are on sale to raise funds for their campaign at £8 or £15 for sweatshirts (plus £2 Postage)). Cheques to Third Battle of Newbury, PO Box 5520, Newbury, RG14 7YW. 01635 45544. All T shirts are fire proof we have been told!!!

*Public Transport faces a further set back as London Transport announce that they received £400 million less than they expected from recent government spending. The Conservatives have also pledged to privatise the tube if they win another term of government.

SchNEWSnight Sat 18 @ Sanctuary 8pm

ATTENTION ALL JOBSEEKERS

You thought the Job Seekers Allowance and Workfare were bad? Well those nice caring people in the gov't have found yet another way of saving a few quid. Contract for work is a new scheme planned that will effectively demolish the welfare state as we know it and extend workfare massively. Under contract work anyone who has been signing on for over two years will be handed over to a private company who will give you the equivalent of your dole for work. If you choose to leave the scheme or employment and turn up at the dole to sign on again you will be sent straight back to the private company. The scheme is soon to be on trial in London, Glasgow, Manchester and Leeds, there will be four schemes in operation two run by the private sector and two by employment services to see what has the best results, no prices to those who guess which will come out on top, especially as the private sector is run purely for profit! So say bye bye Govt run Benefits and jobcentres and hello privately financed schemes pushing you into more shitty unpaid jobs.

HUNGER STRIKES

42 asylum seekers at Rochester Prison, Kent have been on hunger strike since 6th January. Rochester is a prison and people who have committed no crime are being locked up, some facing deportation, others awaiting the outcomes of appeals. The Prison Service told SchNEWS "The immigration detainees are not treated any differently from other inmates. " But this is exactly why they are on hunger strike in the first place - they haven't done anything wrong apart from ask for asylum, with some held for two years waiting to appeal! One detainee complained "I have just gone from one prison (my country) to another". A letter smuggled out of Rochester told of prison staff taking 'pleasure' in unnecessarily "ordering us to give continuous random urine samples, taking our pictures, finger-prints and bodily searches".

*Prison officials are understood to be looking at putting asylum seekers in the soon to arrive prison ship as they are felt to be more 'docile'.

* In 1996 a record number of suicides took place in British prisons, 64 in all - 36 prisoners on remand.

*On January 6th, animal rights prisoner **Barry Horne** began a hunger strike in order to persuade the government to end all links with vivisection within 5 years. Due to deteriorating health, he was due to be moved to the medical centre on Wednesday. 5½ months on a prison vegan diet, and a bout of 'flu meant that Barry didn't begin his strike in the best of conditions. Barry is in good spirits and is extremely positive - and totally committed to the successful conclusion of this strike.

Subscribe!

Keep SchNEWS FREE! Just send first class stamps (e.g. 20 for the next 20 issues) or donations (payable to Justice?) or if you can afford it... SchNEWS supporter's rate, £1 a week. *Mark "original" if you plan to copy.* SchNEWS is post-free to prisoners.

SchNEWS, c/o On The Fiddle, P.O. Box 2600, Brighton, East Sussex, BN2 2DX.

Tel/Fax: (01273) 685913 Email: schnews@brighton.co.uk E-SchNEWS: <http://www.cbuzz.co.uk/SchNEWS/>
Next Justice? meeting: Films about the Liverpoole Dockers. Jan 21, 7:30 pm @ Albert Pub, Trafalgar St.

There is a national vigil outside Bullingdon prison, near Bicester, Oxfordshire at 12 noon this Saturday (18th January). Info: (01954) 230542. Write to: Barry Horne VC2141, HMP Bullingdon, P.O. Box 50, Bicester, Oxon.

65-year-old "category A" prisoner with a dodgy lung **Ronnie Easterbrook** has been on hunger strike since January 1st in protest against "inhumane conditions" - he wants to be de-classified so he can be moved to a better prison. Write (B88459) at HMP Belmarsh, Western Way, Thamesmead, London, SE28 0EB.

HILLS NOT HOLES

On a dark night two moons ago, locals unhappy with the corporate moonscape created by the ARC superquarry at Whatley in the Mendip hills, took action. It appears that a section of the railway line running from the quarry to the Westbury depot was removed. A line is used exclusively for transporting roadstone blasted from the quarry so no life was put in danger. Shortly afterwards an anonymous saboteur claiming to be from "Hills not Holes", was interviewed on Radio Bristol concerning the action. This resulted in Richard Dixon, ex Lib Dem councillor for the East Mendip ward, who is taking the injunction against the quarry extension through the High courts, having his house raided at 8 am. The police spent ten hours searching his house, forensics even going through his Hoover bag, whilst he was dragged down to the station and "Interviewed extensively". Somerset Police had, amongst other things, confiscated all of the paperwork concerning the quarrying injunction, effectively crippling the case against ARC until they are returned. Four other people were also pulled in for "Conspiracy to cause criminal damage", all but one were later released. Mick Ashton (Mick the Hat) was pulled up on warrants resulting from previous Anti-Roads actions and has gone down for a seven month stretch! Write to Mick Ashton (aka Mick the Hat) BC3059, HMP Horfield, Cambridge Rd, Bristol, B27 8PF. "Hills not Holes" can be contacted at "Mendip Hills not Holes", PO Box 2113, Shepton Mallet, BA4.

A30 UPDATE

A special court order was obtained to allow bailiffs to evict Fort Trolheim, the second camp on the A30 route last Sunday, whilst many activists were still at Newbury. A violent dawn eviction, during which air pipes to tunnels containing protesters were cut and activists were hauled up shafts, led to the arrest of 17 people for obstruction of bailiffs. All were bailed on condition of not entering a fifteen mile boundary around the site, making it impossible for many activists to sign on, or even use roads leaving the county.

Fairmile, the biggest of the original 3 camps, is on Red Alert and in need of more support. For directions call 01404 815729

Schnews in brief

Troops of baboons have been ambushing cars along South Africa's busiest highway with showers of rocks, Police are using more rocks to chase the anarchic primates away *** A burial site is being sought for 60 000 cubic metres of nuclear waste. If you have any ideas about where they should stick it call British Nuclear Fuels Limited on 0171 2229717. The next Women's Peace Camp action at Sellafeld is on Saturday 25th January *** Alleged editors of ALF Newsletter and the Green Anarchist magazine have been charged with conspiracy. Their crime? That "Somewhere in the world over a five year period (they're not sure when) I conspired with people (most of whom I don't know) to incite other people (they don't know who) to commit criminal damage (they don't know what) and the conspiracy continued into the day after we were charged...". A tour to raise awareness has been organised. They will be in Brighton on January 29th, at Sussex University at noon and at the Unemployed centre at 7.30pm. For other dates call 01438 749372 *** On Friday 10th January the £5.5 million Wells relief road was opened by John Watts. He was heckled and the stage was rushed, he was unable to officially open the road as a mischievous activist stole the ribbon before it could be cut (presumably to be tied to fences at Newbury the next day).

and Finally

Know of a politician or celebratory that takes themselves to seriously? Well fear not, cos Noel Godin is coming to Britain. The champion flan-thrower and author of 'Cream and Punishment' has spent the past 20 years cruising his way round Europe targeting celebrities who need to lighten up.

Attacks are meticulously planned and require a minimum of four people. 'The crucial thing is not to throw the flan, but place it and, most importantly not to give a damn about finding a safe escape route, even if that means being beaten senseless by dreary security guards. We use only the finest patisserie ordered at the last minute from small local bakers. Quality is everything. If things go wrong, we eat them.'

His "cream crusade" appears to be gathering momentum and he is in regular contact with groups in Paris, Canada and Switzerland where five cabinet ministers were recently flanned simultaneously. Now he's looking to turn his attention to England "We are only just beginning. We feel ready now. We are strong in numbers. A genuine International Brigade Patisserie has been born. We believe that we are capable of achieving great things in the near future. For instance, I firmly believe that we can flan the Pope."

Disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all readers not to do anything naughty with earth moving equipment. Never act upon a burning desire to torch a digger. Keep your matches in your pocket and carry on tying those yellow ribbons to the old oak tree. You will then feel content. Honest.