



PUT THE KETTLE ON

AS SchNEWS REPORTS BACK FROM THE G8 SUMMIT IN GERMANY

Now the cheap red wine hangovers have faded it's time for some critical reflections on the G8 Summit party and protest - and some endless rambling war stories. SchNEWS has collated the accounts from several of our roving reporters on the ground and kicks off coverage with the 70,00 strong Rostock march on **Saturday 2nd June** (see SchNEWS 591).

The march was followed by a 'Move Against the G8' concert in Rostock harbour. Thousands of riot police entered the harbour area. When the crowd stuck together to resist the arrest attempts a pitched battle began between cops, armed with tear gas, pepper spray and water cannons, and assorted throwers of rocks, bottles and sticks. One car was torched, but while all this was going on, thousands of people continued to watch the concert, described by one as "the most surreal in my life: a riot with a sound track". 164 were arrested, with hundreds of cops and protesters injured. Two people are facing prison sentences for the Rostock demo who have undergone accelerated trial processes that allow no time for them to prepare a defence.

When German fascists asked permission to demonstrate in the city of Schwerin near to the summit, trying to present themselves as the 'only real anti-capitalists', a large anti-fascist contingent moved in to stop them. People from the camps around Rostock came to lend support, clutching pamphlets on 'how to spot a Nazi'. Police 'kettled' the anti fascist activists holding them for several hours before being pulled out one by one, loaded onto buses and arrested. Everyone was let out by the evening, but the legal support team declared the detentions illegal and a mass civil action has started against the police.

On the **Sunday** thousands participated in a day of environmental action. In the morning a third of an acre field containing GM crops received a well deserved trashing and later on a group of 50 people dressed as clowns occupied McDonalds. A solidarity demo was also held outside the detention centre where those arrested on Saturday were being held.

Monday 4th June began with police attempting to stop and control groups leaving the camps for the day's demonstrations around the issues of immigration and freedom of movement. One group had their train stopped by armed cops and were told they would have all their details checked and bags searched, but managed to sneakily get around police lines by running across the railway tracks.

The demo started at the Ministry of Immigration, moving on to a LIDL supermarket (a chain known for keeping its prices

down through low-wage labour and strong anti-union practices) and then to Sunflower House, a home for refugees, which was attacked and set on fire by fascists in 1992.

Tuesday marked the 40th anniversary of the Israeli occupation of Palestine with an action against a local Caterpillar depot - the company supplying D9 bulldozers to the Israeli Occupation Forces. Later in the day, reports came through that all the machines at the depot had been burnt in a spontaneous action in support of the Palestinian people. Around 1,500-2,000 people demonstrated at EADS - an arms company with links to the UK weapons manufacturers EDO MBM.

June 6th and 7th promised plenty of civil disobedience and direct action, as people used a variety of tactics to block road and land access to the summit and cause a bit of logistical chaos. Although everyone knew that the main "dignitaries" would be flown in by air, a summit is more than just a meeting of eight people, so support staff and middle level delegates were the main targets.

For the past year in Germany, a large coalition had been forming with the stated purpose of disrupting the conference. **Block G8** brought together over 120 different groups and asked that people organised themselves into 'affinity groups' and turn up ready to participate in direct action. Details such as time, place and route of the blockades were organised by a central planning group and info was not given out to participants until hours before the blocks left camp. Block G8 agreed that they would not start any violence and any started by the cops would be dealt with through "de-escalation".

On the day, thousands of people streamed from the camps, organised within the mass in small groups and "fingers" (a tactic where the crowd splits into five streams making it difficult for the police to control and surround, the theory being that some of the streams may be stopped, but others will get through). The road on the eastern side of the summit was taken as 8,000 people set up camp and stayed for the next 48hrs. Reports came back of a festival-like atmosphere and the inevitable clowns appeared. Meanwhile 5,000 were reported to be holding the western gate with a small block of several thousand in the south.

Many decided to do more mobile actions, partly as a rejection of the perceived "self policing" of the Block G8 process, but also because mass blockades were only agreeing to take on two points so for the whole block to be effective smaller actions were essential. It's

CRAP ARREST OF THE WEEK

For robbin' the rich...
 Whilst SchNEWS doesn't generally have a very high opinion of bank managers, in the small town of Tauberfranken, Germany, one example of the species, Peter Taubinger, has broken the mold.
 Clearly overwhelmed by the sheer scale of the bank-induced social injustice all around him, he set about taking direct action by nicking £1.5 million quid from rich customers' accounts - and started redistributing it into the overdrafts of more deserving punters like single mothers, pensioners, and those unable to work due to ill health!
 It's no good playing Robin Hood if you grass yourself up though and it all came to an end after Pete turned himself in, realising he couldn't hide what he'd done. Receiving a 34 month jail sentence he has at least set a tremendous example to banks and their bands of merry men everywhere!

difficult to tell how many groups were running around in the woods building barricades but one SchNEWS reporter knew of at least four groups of several hundred roaming the woods around the security fence to the west.

The next day there was a mass walkout from the Reddelich camp to reinforce the western blockade of the gate. 2,000 marched through fields in the blazing heat and while a large group approached the gate, others continued small group actions. As they approached the police lines around the fence they streamed around the riot cops and water cannons, taking the road with shouts of "we are peaceful, what are you?" As the day wore on, at the west gate the cops steadily cranked up the pressure as seven huge military helicopters circled overhead bringing in re-enforcements. By the early evening the action medics were having to deal with some serious casualties including one spinal injury and another man from Liverpool with a detached retina.

All road access to the summit had been blocked, Greenpeace sent boats into the sea exclusion zone but 1,100 arrests later and the G8 shindig still went ahead. One of the problems with trying to fight capitalist globalisation is the way it runs through every aspect of our lives. Finding where to challenge it is a challenge in itself. G8 summits can be a focus point for people to come together and oppose capitalism both with their bodies, in actions, and with their lives in the camps. Making it as hard as we can for these "leaders" to meet - behind a 13 million Euro fence designed to keep out those they claim to represent - is a symbolic victory. And as one SchNEWS reporter says, "the experience of running through the fields, knowing there are more of you than them and that you have control of the roads was incredibly inspiring..."

STONE ME

Avebury, one of the largest neolithic monuments in Europe, a 5000-year-old stone circle (which now has a pub in the middle), is a popular Solstice meeting point, a tranquil alternative to the flood-lights, hamburger vans and policing of Stonehenge in recent years, post-Battle Of The Beanfield in 1985 (See SchNEWS 25) when no solstice celebrations were allowed at Stonehenge.

Last year the Kennet council served an enforcement order on the National Trust – who control the site – preventing camping in the carpark at Avebury during solstice celebrations. So with the solstice sunrise falling this Thursday morning, a height restriction was brought in to prevent caravans, vans and travellers' buses parking, with no alternative provided. Policing was stepped up to enforce the ban. The local Gazette biblically warned of 'Village Braced For The Invasion - many fear the sunrise will leave chaos in its wake.'

During Wednesday afternoon, enthusiastic coppers started towing away tourists cars, while Brendan McCarthy of the National Trust said, "The simple message is, we'd rather thousands of people didn't come, but if they do, they should come by bus". Er, that's what they're trying to do innit? "We're scared out of our minds things could turn nasty," said Jenny Baldrey of the parish council, following it up with the charmingly Nazi-ish "We just want it sorted once and for all..." On the plus side, our man on the ground reports a public-spirited chap who has built a rudimentary passage grave in the car park, where he's inviting people in for bucket bongs. You can't kill the spirit, eh!?

For more solsticery, see www.themodernantiquarian.com/forum/?thread=40475 & www.stonehengecampaign.org.uk

STILL ON THE PIPE

Evictions have begun in force at the Trebanos/Brecon camp where campaigners have been stopping work on the National Grid's 200 mile gas pipeline project since February (see SchNEWS 569). Activists have locked themselves to trees and inside tunnels as they hold out against the bailiffs in a last ditch attempt to prevent work at the site.

As of Tuesday evening, six protesters had been arrested before police and bailiffs packed up for the night, leaving three hardcore tree defenders still locked on for the duration. In their usual low-profile style the cops and bailiffs blocked the road all day and barred journalists and supporters from the site. One defiant protestor told SchNEWS, "We are willing to risk arrest as the consequences of this pipeline will be far more devastating than spending a night in a police cell. National Grid, as a private company, are putting shareholder profit before people's safety, both locally and more globally. We are putting ourselves in the way to say this is completely unacceptable."

The eviction looks set to continue, as the protesters show no intention of leaving soon - although the National Grid have wasted no time in getting down to business and started stripping the land as soon as the eviction began. This £6 billion scheme to transport gas in from Qatar - as the National Grid themselves admitted - is a quick fix for Britain's declining energy reserves and expanding energy demands. It will be the largest gas pipe anywhere in Europe and North America.

The 48-inch, high pressure pipe is a type normally used in third world countries where life and litigation is cheap. It's considered so dangerous that it is banned in the US - not a country famous for its health and safety laws. When a similar pipeline exploded in Kalakama, Nigeria, it devastated an area 20 miles square and killed 11 people.

Even though it looks like the Brecon site's days (hours) are numbered, locals and give-a-monkey's types will continue their fight against the destruction of Brecon's (& the Earth's) eco-systems. So come on people, get yerself down to Wales for round two ... For eviction updates call 0778 6151033 or see www.fightthepipe.co.uk

LOST THE BUZZ

SchNEWS already knew that cutting down on flying wasn't the bee all and end all in the quest to avoid eco-geddon. A reminder of nature's complexity and our reliance upon it comes from the United States where bees have been suddenly and mysteriously dying off in staggering numbers. Alarm led to a survey which discovered that, across the country, up to 750,000 colonies have disappeared in the last year (that's hundreds of millions of dead bees - a 60 to 70% loss in some areas). The speed of the extinction has panicked even US scientists and has led to a new buzzword to describe the crisis: 'colony collapse disorder.' And as new data comes in suggesting that similar problems are occurring in other countries, including Poland, Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, Germany, Canada, Taiwan, and with new cases every week, the fear is it may have a massive impact on ecosystems and world food production.

Opinion is currently wildly speculating as to what is causing the hive nose dive. Suggestions range from global warming helping parasites like the varroa mite or the bee-astly *Nosema ceranae* fungus, to radio masts affecting navigation, or GM crops like Monsanto's BT corn which may suppress bee immune systems. Maybe it's just pesticides or some other general environmental imbalance but, whatever the reasons, there's no way to honey-coat the fact that human activity is screwing up the planet in ever more unpredictable ways. And if Albert Einstein was right there could be a real sting in the tail: "If the bee disappeared off the surface of the globe then man would only have four years of life left. No more bees, no more pollination, no more plants, no more animals, no more man." For more see www.alternet.org/environment/53491

* UK bee populations are also under threat. Although not yet collapsing, 3 species went extinct last year. To find out about taking some direct gardening action to encourage more wild flowers which support different types of bees, see www.bumblebee-conservationtrust.co.uk/bumblebees_in_crisis.htm

* And beekeepers have been helping in the fight stop GM crop trials in Britain. On May 16th, BASF u-turned and announced that they are abandoning their attempt to trial mutant potatoes in Hull (See SchNEWS 585). This was partly due to their inability to tackle the problem of pollen contamination of local hives. It's a development which may prove a useful precedent in defences against GM in the future. But BASF also can't have failed to notice the upswing of resistance since their schemes were discovered - so it's one down and one to go for the current crop of anti-GM activists as their other trial, in Cambridgeshire is still on the cards...

* **There's a protest action** on Sunday 1st July at noon: Bring costumes, families, footwear and clothing for a country stroll and your favourite potato-based dish. Starting from Girton Parish Church, Girton, Cambridgeshire.

* For more see www.mutatoes.org

BURN OUT

The fight against the building of a giant incinerator at Newhaven, East Sussex (see SchNEWS 488), continues...

After the government refused to call in the dodgy decision by local councillors to press ahead - a vote which saw everyone in the region gang up to force it on Newhaven (and one neo Labour councillor actually claimed that the small seaside town will be made 'more attractive' by an industrial toxic polluting plant!) All routes of 'legitimate' protest have increasingly been run, and it will soon be time for direct action to step in as the only way for residents to demonstrate their opposition. Activists are calling out for noisy people to go to the council's 'Land Grab' meeting at County Hall, Lewes on 26th June from 9.30am, where a compulsory land purchase on behalf of Onyx / Veolia Waste is being discussed.

* For more see www.dove2000.org.uk

AWAY WITH THE FAERIES

The Hill of Tara in Co. Meath, Ireland, one of the most important archaeological complexes in the world, is under threat due to a motorway being built nearby (See SchNEWS 585). Once the seat of the High Kings of Ireland, the area has at least 160 archaeological sites from 3600BC through to medieval times but now the plan is to put a huge motorway interchange at the bottom of Tara, cutting across the Skryne Valley.

Having been given the green light by the Irish government, the destruction has begun. There are two protest camps in place - a vigil, and a direct action camp bang in the line of fire. Other campaigners, meanwhile, are going through legal channels to get Tara protected on archaeological grounds.

Several weeks ago a site along the path of the road at Lismullin, which had been fenced off and under guard, was revealed to be a bronze-age wood henge, which had the potential to derail - or at least re-route - the road scheme (See SchNEWS 586). But, in his last heroic act as Environment Minister and just before the elections last month, Dick Roche rubber-stamped a decision to allow the monument to be studied then destroyed. Despite the fact that the monument had survived for the last few millennia, the outgoing minister claimed that if it was left in place it would 'result in its destruction by the elements!' Roche claims he's done John Gormley - the new minister - a favour, who is feigning powerlessness to overturn the decision. A permanent camp has been established at Lismullin and demonstrators are refusing to allow builders or government-lackey archaeologists on to the site.

* June 20th-24th is a Midsummer Festival at Tara, celebrating Tara and Irish heritage with music, poetry, storytelling, and a Solstice celebration this Thursday morning.

* See www.savetara.com & www.tarawatch.org

...and finally...

With the weird (wired) and wonderful punters at Glastonbury this weekend parading around in a full rainbow of fashion styles, from fancy evening wear through designer hippy chic and fancy dress to all out nudity, they should be grateful that the festival's not being held in the US state of Louisiana. Uptight Delcambre town council have made themselves the butt of jokes by making it an actual crime to wear low slung trousers or any clothes that expose your underwear. The crackdown is on particularly for the hip-hop-stylee sagging pants look, leading to some accusations of racism. Having effectively literally created a state fashion police, they're now out to demand \$500 fines or six months in jail from anyone caught with their pants down. SchNEWS reckons the law is an ass...



Disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all Glastonbury punters - a silly hat does not make you mad and bonkers. Honest!

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