

WAKE UP!! WAKE UP!! ITS YER IZZY WHIZZY...



SchNEWS

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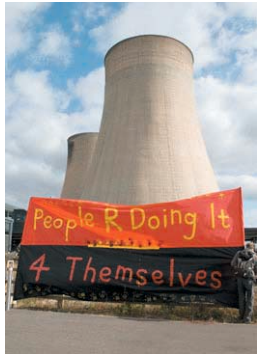
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Issue 696



SOOTY & SWOOP

GETTING BUSY AT THE RATCLIFFE POWER STATION CLIMATE PROTEST



Over a thousand swoopers descended on Ratcliffe-on-Soar power station over the weekend, their stated aim to shut the whole place down. Ratcliffe is a coal powered station owned by Sauran the Mighty, and Britain's 3rd largest emitter of carbon.

The swoopers had been well briefed before they got there, equipped with maps of the area, overlaid with a grid. This allowed rear echelon tactical groups to announce the site of swoops via text message. Forming four separate blocks (five if you include the bike block); Take Back the Power (aiming to get to the control room), False Solutions (trying to climb the coal heap), Footsteps to the Future (the 'safe' option) and Capitalism is Crisis ('avin it, de-

centralised autonomous actions).

Although ten people were nicked first thing in the morning for 'conspiracy to aggravated trespass', pretty much everyone else was left to assemble unmolested. SchNEWS spoke to one of the swoopers:

"We made our way to Cottagers Woods where the meet up point for both the Take Back the Power and False Solutions group was. We formed up into the five finger formation (a weird shuffling dance designed to evade police lines), we marched straight up to the south east side of the fence. Apart from a helicopter we didn't really see any police until we got the fence. At around 1pm the first of the Swoopers started cutting the fence with bolt cutters and pulling at the sections with ropes. Police had come prepared with cutters themselves to chop our ropes. They were speedily relieved of them and the device was soon re-deployed against the fence! - then we all retreated to the woods for tea and cake."

At 3pm the second swoop was called: "This one was bigger - because the block from the gate had joined in, lots of fences started coming down at this point - and people started getting in". There were autonomous actions all round the power station for them rest of the day. The

number of arrests continued to mount as did the casualties. The atmosphere took an ominous turn later in the day at 6pm as a breach in the fence to the north-east by 50 or 60 swoopers was attacked by police dogs - there were around twenty arrests. "In the absence of the media the police felt free to be more aggressive; otherwise they were very conscious that they were under the public eye".

"We all camped out around the power station for a night, dotted around the site. The main camp was even showing films in a marquee. By the time we got up the police had imposed a Section 14 order across the whole site and were attempting to herd everyone towards the main gate of the power station - the designated protest zone".

There was another attempt to pull fences down along the A453 (running along the bottom edge of the site) leading to the road being blocked. At this point police began arresting people for offences allegedly committed on the Saturday. Altogether there were 57 arrests, everyone was later released although most are on bail on charges including aggravated trespass and criminal damage.

As our source said, "The Climate Swoop was a great curtain-raiser for Copenhagen" - See www.climatecamp.org.uk/actions/copenhagen-2009

*There are literally thousands of photos/videos/blogs of the swoop (although people should perhaps be a little more careful about sticking up photos of them and their un-masked mates smashing stuff) For a taster go to www.climatecamp.tv

EDO AQUITTALS

Two protesters convicted of aggravated trespass during the Smash EDO Carnival Against the Arms Trade back in May '08 have had their convictions quashed by an appeal court this week. The two had been busted after the mass invasion of EDO's car park (well what do you expect if someone opens the security gates whilst a demo's kicking off?). It's small relief for one of them, Elijah Smith, who's still inside awaiting trial for the citizen's decommissioning of EDO during the bombing of Gaza in January.

Over the year and a half since the arrests at the Carnival, police have downgraded serious conspiracy charges to relatively minor public order charges, only to watch trial after trial come unstuck.

Even though the decommissioners case has been adjourned to May next year, the events planned for the Support the Decommissioners Week of Action continue. On Monday (19th) there was a demo outside Brighton Town Hall, demanding Brighton and Hove City Council table a motion against EDO's complicity in war crimes. A Green Party motion condemning EDO early this year because 'the issue is not directly related to Brighton and has no bearing on the wellbeing of the city'.

On Saturday (24th) there was a rally outside the Foreign Office in London, demanding an end of arms exports to Israel.

* See www.smash edo.org.uk

IT'S BRIM UP NORTH

Britain's newest anti-arms campaign, Target Brimar, staged their inaugural demo on Saturday (17th). Target Brimar are, as it says on the tin, targeting Brimar, a Greater Manchester based arms-components factory that manufactures targeting systems for Apache helicopters and tanks, among other killing machines (see SchNEWS 694).

Around 70 protesters marched on the Brimar site, including Critical Mass. There was a family atmosphere with speeches, food, bike-powered sound systems and even a kids play area, all under the watchful eye of security and cops.

Also present were two of Sussex's finest EDO cops, CID's DC Mark Butcher and our very own increasingly supersized David Brent-alike, Sean MacDonald. Both had decided to travel up for a spot of protester harassment outside their usual jurisdiction.

Once there, Brighton's finest urged Manchester police to take a liberal interpretation of the law and arrest three people bailed in connection to the EDO decommissioning (see SchNEWS 663) for breaching their 'not to associate' bail conditions. Just one snag: the bail conditions were 'not to contact' and the three didn't speak and remained at a distance from each other the whole time..

The police held them for exactly 48 hours, moving them between three police stations. The three appeared in court on Monday morning with police claiming that although the three had not spoken, they could hold them as they had associated by being at the demo.

The farce continued as the police came to court without a copy of the bail conditions and spent the first hour trying to get one. Meanwhile the clock on how long the three could be held without a magistrate's decision slowly counted down towards the 48hr mark and freedom.

With just an hour and a half left police began proceedings in an attempt to remand the defendants. Legal chaos ensued as cops frantically tried to blur the line between 'association' and 'contact'. Proceedings only managed to get half-way through the first defendant's evidence before hitting 1.18pm, exactly 48 hours after their incarceration. The three were then released, without charge, missing two days of their lives.

In the meantime Sean MacDonald had clearly been left unsupervised and absconded to Brighton with one of the defendants' phones. It was taken from the evidence bag in the police station to an undisclosed location in the south of England, thought to be Sean's secret lair, and

not one of the two Brighton cop shops. The defendant is still waiting for their phone back despite a legal right to claim it as soon as the case collapsed.

Despite the dodgy arrests it was a successful show and tell – showing everyone where the Brimar site is and telling ‘em what goes on there. Even at this early stage it looks like the campaign is having an impact. Target Brimar’s internet service provider have been contacted and asked to remove the campaign group’s website as they are extremists. Looks like someone is worried...

* See www.targetbrimar.org.uk

CYMRU HAVE A GO IF YOU THINK YER HARD ENUFF

A counter demo of around 600 anti-racists ensured the English Defence League’s attempts to spread their Islamophobic message to Wales came a cropper in Swansea on Saturday (17th). The newly formed Welsh Defence League could only muster around 50 racists to take the streets and they were out-numbered, out-maneuvred and out-shouted by the coalition of anti-fascist and locals.

By early afternoon, the anti-racist protesters had occupied Swansea’s main square, with the WDL confined to a corner and police lines separating the groups. When the WDL attempted to march, they were kettled in by police.

Chants of “Nazi Scum off our Streets”, and, “Whose Streets? Our Streets!” made sure the WDL’s racist message barely made it past police lines. A spokesperson for the Newport anti-racist coalition who was at the demo told SchNEWS, “We kept the noise levels up to drown them out but sometimes you could hear them growling a few songs.”

The EDL had attempted to avoid the traditional far-right image of sieg heiling skinheads. The WDL however, were somewhat off-message: Our eyewitness said, “if you want to draw a picture of a racist, they looked like that.” She added, “There was a lot of sieg heiling”.

Since the demo, the EDL have been attempting to distance themselves from the fiasco. One poster on the EDL forum said it “Was a joke. Descended into nothing more than a NF rally... There was more white power there along with idiots who just thought we were bnp/nf than there were E/WDL. Racist comments sieg heil salutes and the burning of an anti swastika flag ensued.”

The defence leaguers now seem leery of the planned protest in Newport on Saturday (24th), with concerns about the reaction of the sizeable local black community. Local anti-racists are still planning to turn out in force, determined to show the racists where the people of Newport stand. They are calling out for people to assemble in Frost Square from 11am.

* See SchNEWS 693. For info and links to Welsh anti-fa groups, (give thanks to South Wales premier anarchist newsletter ‘Gagged’ and) see www.facebook.com/event.php?eid=158100673713&ref=mf

SchNEWS 15th BIRTHDAY

Celebrating nearly 700 issues of the widely ignored but always right weekly direct action newsheet. A heady mix of The Lovely Brothers - Punk Cabaret and other ‘tbc’ acts all with a dash of SchMOVIES screenings. The Cowley Club, 12 London Rd Brighton from 8pm on Oct 30th. £4 to help keep SchNEWS er, free. mail@schnews.org.uk

BRIGHT SPARKS

A judge has dismissed a power company’s attempts to prevent a one-man picket with an injunction under the Terrorism Act as “fanciful and bordering on paranoia”. Scottish and Southern Energy (SSE) attempted to suggest that the picket represented a “threat to national security”.

Electrician Steve Acheson was dismissed from his job at the Fiddlers Ferry power station project in December 2008. Although he was technically made redundant, at the time of his dismissal the firm took on another 300 workers. Since then he’s maintained a regular picket outside the construction site with a banner saying “STOP VICTIMISING UNION WORKERS - END THE BLACKLISTING NOW”

Initially SSE had attempted to secure a hearing without notice one month ago that would have left Steve unable to defend himself. Steve told SchNEWS, “All I want to do is highlight this abhorrent abuse of people’s rights - I’m not linked to any terrorist or protest organisations”. The evidence submitted by SSE suggested that he was inciting workers to ‘direct action’ and was imperilling the nation’s energy supplies.

Having been involved in an earlier industrial dispute at the Manchester Royal Infirmary he strongly suspected he had been blacklisted within the construction industry. Confirmation of this came when the Information Commissioners Office launched a prosecution against Ian Kerr, head of the Consulting Agency. The Consulting Agency had maintained a

database of over 3,000 construction workers. Companies who accessed the data were a virtual who’s who of the UK construction giants, Balfour Beatty, Laing O’Rourke, McAlpine etc etc.

According to one worker who featured on the database, David Smith of the Blacklist Support Group: “It’s a database of trouble-makers, people who’ve stood up for their rights, complained about site safety, about having to remove asbestos without dustmasks. My dossier has even got information about my political affiliations and my wife. This is a human rights abuse, a complete conspiracy by the major companies paying thousands and thousands to organise this database.”

In his case Ian Kerr was fined a mere £5,000, which, given that his operation had been running since the eighties, is hardly a disincentive. Blacklisting is particularly useful to companies in the building trade as workers are employed on short-term contracts for different projects. Union activity is therefore that much easier to stamp out.

A spokesperson for Blacklist Support Group said, “The files are blatant evidence of systematic victimisation - but this is not about being a victim. This is about ensuring justice for those honest building workers who raised genuine concerns about safety or complained if they were not paid. This is about multi-national companies not being above the law This is about equality and fairness: Human Rights for trade union members.”

* blacklistsg@googlemail.com

...and finally...

\$23.7 trillion new debt off-loaded to the Treasury, Fed and American people.

“Who’s in power? Irrelevant. The ‘happy conspiracy’ controls both parties, writes the laws to suit its needs, with absolute control of America’s fiscal and monetary policies. Sorry Jack, but the “Battle for the Soul of Capitalism” really was lost.”

The other 15 ‘reasons’ pill no punches either, a list of lucid facts and figures pointing out things like America’s top 1% own more than 90% of the wealth, oil and energy costs will skyrocket, foreign nations have started dumping the dollar as reserve currency and how the new financial reforms will do nothing to prevent the next meltdown.

The big finale is not only to endorse Faber’s view but push it further: “Faber is uncertain about timing, we are not. There is a high probability of a crisis and collapse by 2012. The ‘Great Depression 2’ is dead ahead. Unfortunately, there’s absolutely nothing you can do to hide from this unfolding reality...”

Wow, 2012! Even us conspiracy nuts and Maayan sympathisers in the office hesitate to stick out our necks so far as to definitely state that the London Olympics will actually be the start of armageddon, as attractive a proposition as that is.

So which loony lot would be publishing such incendiary scaremongering doomism? Er, how about www.MarketWatch.com, a ‘respectable’ news wire reporting the ups and downs of stocks and shares and packed full of investor related analysis and trading tips. Owned in fact by Dow Jones, the American stock market index people,

Stranger and stranger. And who owns Dow Jones? Er, Rupert Murdoch’s News Corporation – Fox news, the Sun, half the world’s crappiest right wing media etc...Damn, now we don’t know now whether to write off any apocalypse-angled analysis as part of a double bluff elite conspiracy or head for hills and brush up on extreme survival skills...

Disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all readers not to try and swoop it all under the carpet. Honest.

Great SchNEWS fodder surely, finding an article called, “Death of ‘Soul of Capitalism’: 20 reasons America has lost its soul and collapse is inevitable.” Should be a good rant with a title like that. And it is.

The author notes that radical economist Marc Faber has brought out a damning analysis of the current capitalist state of play called ‘Doom, Boom & Gloom’ and proceeds to enthusiastically summarise all his main points and resoundingly agree with them.

No pussyfooting here: “No, not just another meltdown, another bear market recession like the one recently triggered by Wall Street’s “too-greedy-to-fail” banks. Faber is warning that the entire system of capitalism will collapse. Get it? The engine driving the great ‘American Economic Empire’ for 233 years will collapse, a total disaster, a destiny we created ... OK, deny it. But I’ll bet you have a nagging feeling maybe he’s right, the end may be near... I have for a long time...”

Headings include: ‘Collapse is now inevitable’ and ‘When greed was legalized’, and ‘Wall St sacked Washinton’, cutting through the crap in fine style, for example:

“...‘Wall Street America’ went over to the dark side, got mega-greedy and took control of ‘Washington America’. Their spoils of war included bailouts, bankruptcies, stimulus, nationalizations and

SchNEWS IN BRIEF

OCT 24th - Anarchist Bookfair London 2009 – Back again, for all your anarchist requirements... And the SchNEWS stall PR team will be available to hear your ramblings / conspiracy theories. Donations for entry at Queen Mary & Westfield College, Mile End Road, London, E1 4NS. 10am-7pm. www.anarchistbookfair.org ** **31st - Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty (SHAC) National march and demo at Novartis** (Horsham, W.Sussex). Meeting midday at Horsham Park, behind the leisure centre. A stroll through Horsham and on to Novartis for the demo proper. www.shac.net ** **For events listings updated weekly see www.schnews.org.uk/pap**

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