

WAKE UP!! IT'S YER WON'T BE DICTATED TO...

# Weekly SchNEWS

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## MIDDLE EASTERN PROMISE

### AS PEOPLE POWER PUTS ARAB DICTATORSHIPS TO THE TEST

Egyptian dissidents (along with the masses) celebrated on Friday as Hosni Mubarak finally threw in the towel after the mass protests in Cairo's Tahrir Square and across the country refused to abate (and presumably the Americans finally ordered him to load up the plane with gold and go in an attempt to ensure the power structures – and thus their influence – didn't collapse completely). But the Egyptian revolution is not yet won as the military have stepped in, repressed protest and threatened to declare martial law.

Nonetheless there was jubilation across the country following last weeks events. The Egyptian people who have lived most, if not all, of their lives under Mubarak's rigid military regime had successfully shaken off the dictator. But the question is what will happen now? On Sunday the army removed the protesters from Tahrir square. The fact that the army prevented cameras and reporters from recording the eviction, thus continuing the media blackout and repression of free speech of the Mubarak regime should act as a warning.

The Egyptian revolution, like the Tunisian uprising, is ongoing; away from Tahrir Square, strikes have been held by everyone from airport staff, public transport workers and nurses in Cairo to workers in the sweatshops of Mahalla al-Koubra and Mansoura to oil industry employees. Egyptian banks, briefly reopened last week are now closed and the stock-exchange lies dormant. The demands of the strikers represent the other side of the Egyptian rebellion, a call for an end to corruption, for better wages and for lower prices. Predictably, Egypt's new military rulers have called for an end to the strikes on the grounds of 'security of the nation' while Egypt's caretaker finance minister is preaching the language of austerity.

The dissidents still have everything to win. If the Egyptian revolution is to achieve more than a cosmetic regime change, replacing one system of oppression with another, the struggle must challenge the military's power. Without that, Mubarak's departure will simply herald a consolidation of US colonialism in Egypt. The military, now, will preside over a reorganisation of power in negotiation with the US – the regime's bankrollers. If it is up to them, this will mean a tightening of imperialism's grip over the Egypt, either through a new dictatorship or through a move to cement control through a parliamentary democracy subjugated to US

control, similar to the puppet 'democracies' already in place in Iraq and the West Bank.

SchNEWS spoke to a Brighton anarchist who rushed to Cairo for a spot of revolutionary goal hanging last week. He said, "The Tahrir occupation was a shining example of grassroots organising in action. Occupiers set up community barricades, crewed by both male and female volunteers, complete with piles of rocks to use as weapons in case of attack. Medical clinics were set up staffed by volunteer doctors and surgeons. Hundreds of tents and shelters were erected around the square, rubbish collection was organised and food was distributed. At night the occupiers slept in front of the tanks surrounding the square to prevent the army from entering."

#### A HARD BAHRAIN'S GONNA FALL

Inspired by events in Egypt and Tunisia, (where President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali was forced to flee the country on the 14th January), popular protests have ripped through the Middle East this week in Iran, Yemen, Algeria, Libya.

In Manama, Bahrain, protesters mimicking the Tahrir occupiers have occupied the central Pearl Square after two anti-government activists were killed by police. Iranian and Libyan governments have taken a leaf out of Mubarak's book and restricted access to the internet while, in the West Bank, an election has been called to stave off murmurings of a popular uprising.

Meanwhile, thousands of protesters have been demonstrating for democracy in Yemen and the president has already promised to step down this year. In Algeria the obligatory thousands took to the streets on the 13th carrying Egyptian and Tunisian flags. Libyans fought police with petrol bombs in Benghazi on Wednesday amid calls for a 'day of rage' against Colonel Gaddafi's regime and anti-government protests have been reignited in Iran. In Tunisia, where it all began, the revolution continues: with attacks on police cars and security buildings as activists call for the dismissal of officials with ties to the old regime.

"Whatever people say, there are no leaders here, the square and the uprising belong to the people"- Tahrir Square demonstrator

Read first-hand reports from Egypt and elsewhere at [www.reportsfromthegyptianuprising.wordpress.com](http://www.reportsfromthegyptianuprising.wordpress.com)

[www.occupiedlondon.org/cairo](http://www.occupiedlondon.org/cairo)

[www.arabawy.org](http://www.arabawy.org)

## VICTORY FOR EGYPTIAN REVOLUTION?



MUBARAK OBAMA HAS SAID HE WANTS AN ORDERLY TRANSITION...TO AN EQUALLY FIRMLY-RULED COMPLIANT GEOPOLITICAL STOOGES - SO GO HOME BEFORE WE SHOOT YOU...

## CRAP ARREST OF THE WEEK

### For eating the evidence...

If you've ever helped yourself to food from a skip, you're likely to have had a few close calls with security goons. What you've probably not experienced is police arriving at your home, threatening entry with a battering ram if you don't let them in, arresting you in handcuffs for 'theft by finding', and raiding your home. This is what happened to Sasha Hall, a shop worker from Essex, who is due to stand trial later this month. Her local Tesco had left £3000 worth of food to go to waste on the street after a power cut, so she helped herself to waffles, ham and pies.

So, not only was she busted as aggressively as a suspected murderer, her last meal was really crap too.

## COMMISSION ACCOMPLISHED

IT WUZ THE SCHNEWS WOT WON IT:

After (as a direct result of, probably) SchNEWS' exclusive (kinda) exposure of plans to flog off the nation's publicly owned forests (see SchNEWS 754), the coalition's public spending shears were blunted for once when Cameron and co were forced into an embarrassing climb-down.

Following a campaign organised by a broad coalition of nature lovers, the government realised that just about the only people in favour of the policy were the moneybags developers rubbing their hands at the prospect of snapping up woodlands for themselves. The idea was so unpopular, even amorphous political blob Ed Milliband managed to score political points out of it, cornering Cameron at PM's questions. One No. 10 insider said: "It's a cock-up. We just did not think." Just for a change, then.

With her tail firmly positioned between her legs, environment minister Caroline Spelman announced an end to the the consultation on plans to dispose of the land in England run by the Forestry Commission, drop clauses in the public bodies bill that would allow the government to sell off all of England's forests and establish an independent panel with environmentalists to reach consensus on reforms to improve access and biodiversity in forests.

A victory for people power then, now to tackling the savaging of education, welfare, the NHS, legal aid, libraries...

\* See [www.handsoffourforest.org](http://www.handsoffourforest.org)

**INFORMATION FOR ACTION**

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## SHAC TO THE LAB AGAIN

Twelve years later, after injunctions, prison sentences and a massive campaign of state orchestrated vilification in the mainstream media, the SHAC story returns to its beginnings - the reason for it all: the senseless abuse of captive animals.

Previously unseen research papers, anonymously sent to the Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty (SHAC) campaign at the start of 2011, have shed new light on experiments carried out by Huntingdon Life Sciences (HLS)

The research papers detail invasive experiments which took place on rats, mice, rabbits and rhesus monkeys at HLS' Cambridgeshire and New Jersey laboratories between 2001 and 2010. Substances tested included petrol, grape seed extract, a toxic compound PCB, Botox, soybean fibre, and paraffin wax. There were also several duplicate tests for a food additive known as PVA and experiments to test a fragrance that occurs naturally in plants, which is used in cosmetics and perfumes. All the experiments involved lengthy distressing experiences for the animals before they were killed and dissected. In one test pregnant rats were forced to breathe vapourised petrol for up to six hours a day to examine the effects on their foetuses.

A summary of all 11 shocking documents can be found in 'HLS Unmasked', which can be downloaded at [www.shac.net/HLS/HLS\\_Unmasked2011.pdf](http://www.shac.net/HLS/HLS_Unmasked2011.pdf)

All the substances tested had already been tested on animals before. All of them are already used by humans around the globe on a daily basis, except for the PCB which was banned in 1979 because of its known toxic effects. The majority of the substances tested, such as Botox, have nothing to do with 'life saving research' and are used mainly in cosmetic products.

HLS's own documents point out the ludicrous nature of animal testing. One document involving the use of rats to test a naturally-occurring scent known as 'coumarin' concludes rather frankly that, "the rat is a very poor model for humans, and toxicity in the rat cannot be extrapolated to humans." In another experiment, in which rats are force fed paraffin wax, the conclusion states that the results proved to be "of questionable relevance for human safety evaluation". Of course none of this stops HLS from using rats as their main experimental animal.

Debbie Vincent of SHAC said, "these new research papers reveal, once again, the true horror and idiocy of this failing laboratory. When they are not getting exposed for gross misconduct or severe animal welfare breaches, they are thrust into the spotlight for testing bizarre and useless products on animals - products which we all use already on a daily basis. While cosmetic testing is supposedly banned in the UK, here we see products which are largely used in cosmetics still being tested on vast numbers of animals at HLS. We strongly condemn all experimentation on animals, but this blatant abuse of a gaping legal loophole regarding cosmetic testing is absolutely not acceptable. HLS must finally be made accountable for their cruel and unnecessary experiments which are taking place on a regular basis behind locked doors."

Despite the massive state harassment the SHAC campaign is still going strong - find out more at [www.shac.net](http://www.shac.net)

### PARTY & PROTEST

For events listings updated weekly see  
[www.schnews.org.uk/pap](http://www.schnews.org.uk/pap)

## SUPERMARKET SABO-TAJ

Over the weekend Brighton squatters occupied the planned site of a new supermarket.

Sainsbury's are plotting to open a new mini-market in the space recently vacated by popular ethnic food retailer, Taj, in Brighton's Kemptown. For many locals concerned with the corporate takeover of the area, this comes worrying hot on the heels of last year's lost battle against the opening of Starbucks (see SchNEWS xxx).

Repeated attempts by cops and bailiffs to secure entry have been rebuffed as call outs have brought the mob running. The first meeting was attended by eighty people.

This Saturday (19th), is 'Make Your Space' Day, so get down from 12-6 pm to help decorate and organise the space. One squatter told SchNEWS, "by occupying the building we are able to open it up to everyone in the community to get involved, make it their own, and use it to get all kinds of self-organised community responses to these difficult times going: everything from protests against the government's cuts, to local volunteer-run projects to directly help people here and now."

The occupiers have now received a notice of court proceedings and are due at Brighton County Court on Wednesday 23rd at 10am. Attend to show your support for the campaign and to keep the new community space open.

Local residents' group, 'No More Supermarkets In Kemptown' are lobbying for the government to introduce planning powers to enable local authorities to restrict the number of large supermarkets in any one area (OK, it's not exactly Fire to the Prisons but, hey). There is an e-petition on the council website asking the council to protect the 'uniqueness' of Brighton and stop it being turned into yet another clone city: <http://present.brighton-hove.gov.uk/mgEPetitionDisplay.aspx?ID=184&RPID=916828&HPID=916828>. The planning apps BH2010/03967 and BH2010/03968 are at: [www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/index.cfm?request=c1199915](http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/index.cfm?request=c1199915). Only lodged recently, there is still plenty of time left to sabotaj...

## CHEESED OFF

Plans for Britain's biggest intensive dairy farm in Lincolnshire have been axed. Nocton Dairies Ltd failed to convince the Environment Agency that the development, which was to house a massive 3770 cows in indoor conditions, would not impact on an aquifer underground at the site. The super-dairy had been opposed by an alliance of animal rights and agricultural charities, including CAFFO (Campaign Against Factory Farming Operations)

## BUNGA JUMP

In one of the biggest demonstration Italy has seen in years half a million women congregated last Sunday (13th) to rally against the sex scandals of Berlusconi and the sexism that is embedded deep within Italian society. They demanded he step down from office following the scandal of his shenaigans with an under-aged prostitute and abuse of office.

The protests took place in over 200 cities. One protester said "Silvio illuminates us. Set yourself on fire". According to the World Economic Forum Italy ranks 74th in its treatment of women and 121st in pay equity.

If Berlusconi gets convicted he risks up to 3 years in prison on the juvenile prostitution charge and up to 12 years for abusing his official authority, which is a crime in Italy. Prison seems unlikely as he stands at the tender age of 74. He maintains the charges have been brought on by a bunch of female moralists... People and their bloody ethics always getting in the way.

## SHIRE MADNESS

As the sun rose over Cambridgeshire on Tuesday (15th), the councillors travelling to the Council Chamber in Shire Hall for a day of public service devastation probably expected a degree of disruption. As it happened, they had to dodge two cuts protesters' blockades to enter the budget-setting meeting, who also formed a picket line with 'Resign before you sign' banners.

Once the supposedly public meeting was under way (with plenty of heckling and shouts of 'Judas!'), police hovered in the wings. The officers pounced to arrest three protesters for 'breach of the peace' after they shouted from the gallery. All three were let go as soon as the threat of them speaking their mind at a public meeting was over.

Wednesday (16th) was Southampton City Council's turn. After a well-attended rally outside, a group of protesters, thought to be council workers, evaded security and got into the building. Despite causing a commotion, the programme of a massive £25 million worth of cuts including 290 job losses was passed.

## DALE FARM CALLOUT

Supporters are gathering at Dale Farm (see SchNEWS 738) over the weekend to get ready for non-violent resistance to eviction. There'll also be a Dale Farm solidarity meeting at 2:00 pm. People are welcome to spend the night.

Dale Farm is easy to access via London Liverpool St. Lifts can be arranged from Wickford station to Dale Farm. Just email [dale.farm@btinternet.com](mailto:dale.farm@btinternet.com) Driving or walking directions can be found at <http://dalefarm.wordpress.com/contact/>

## COMMIE GARDEN

A new community garden is set to sprout in the centre of Brighton. The site, left derelict for around twenty years. The space, next to the Earth and Stars pub on the intersection between Portland St and Church St, is impressively sized. Work has already begun clearing rubble and creating planters. The idea is for the local community to come together to create a vibrant food growing space - and where better than in the centre of town? Workdays will commence every Sunday from 11-5 so get yerself and yer spade down there.

### ...and finally...

**LOCK, SQUAT AND TWO SMOKING BANNERS:** Mockney millionaire mincer Guy Ritchie copped a faceful as squatters cracked his £6million London mansion while he was having it renovated.

At least a dozen people moved in, right under the noses of the building contractors (*I don't want to know who you use, as long as they're not complete muppets*). The listed building in uber-trendy Fitzrovia (*Where's that? Some place near Katmandu? Meet me 'alfway, mate*) is now sportin' banners from the Tommy trinders (er, windows) saying STRIKE, RESIST, OCCUPY.

Fittingly, given that the building was previously a language school, they now intend to open what they call a 'Really Free School', offering a curriculum of squatting, anarchy, alternative and social media - but presumably not mockney rhyming slang.

Will Ritchie be makin' 'em an offer they can't refuse, threatenin' to send round all his hard villain mates - or be popping down to the family solicitor's in Belgravia to apply for a Court Order?

\* See [www.reallyfreeschool.org](http://www.reallyfreeschool.org)

### Disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all readers, you do live in interesting times. Honest.

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