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ON DANGEROUS GROUND

HAMBURG RESIDENTS PUSH BACK AGAINST POLICE CONTROL ZONES.

The cops iron grip on Hamburg has slackened slightly after police decided to somewhat downplay their game following pressure from the streets and in the media. The police presence has been scaled back and the Gefahrgebiet or "Danger Zone" laws are now "only" being enforced between the hours of 6pm and 6am.

The Danger Zone was established after riots kicked over gentrification in Hamburg.

"DANGER ZONE" DAS REAL LIFE GAME

After the Rote Flora demonstration cops in Hamburg established a city-wide stop and search. On Saturday (4th) cops declared a Gefahrgebiet, literally "danger zone" in four large parts of Hamburg and stepped up their level of control. Some residents of Hamburg have put signs up warning that the "cops are out of control". What a Gefahrgebiet declaration means in effect is that the police can stop and search anyone in black clothing (so widows watch out) or realistically anyone who pricks their interest and ban them from the zone. There is no time limit on how long the restrictions can last. Also anyone arrested on the original demo is forbidden from entering the zones.

Since Sunday (5th) when the DZ was established there have been numerous protests. There was an impromptu demonstration on the day held by eight hundred demonstrators against the zone being enforced in the red light district of the Reeperbahn, the Old Town, St Pauli and Altona Nord, where Rote Flora is located.

On that night alone 263 people were stopped, according to a police report, with sixty being forced to leave the area. The Hamburg Morgenpost reported "that people were told to leave the area because

they looked like leftists". According to the German daily tabloid paper the police intend to uphold the ban until the spring, so local residents have months of police harassment to look forward to.

BRUSH WITH THE LAW

Following an incident where a cop became really confused when he found a toilet brush during a search conducted on someone within the danger zone there was a call-out for people to take toilet brushes into the danger zone. The cops are now turning up hundreds of bog-brushes in the zones. There's also been a call out for a Friday (10th) pillow fight on the Spielbudenplatz. Online posts say "Please bring pillows of any kind, filled with soft material, to put a smile on your face and if available: the whole family! From 17:30 let the feathers fly!"

That this declaration of martial law has the full support of the governing party of Hamburg, is not so surprising, especially as in recent months the mayor of Hamburg, Olaf Scholz, has been continually slashing democratic rights, instating a police state rule and clashing with anarchist groups to further highlight the "need" for police action.

Scholz is national deputy chairman of the SDP who hold an absolute majority in the state government. Last October the SDP had asked Hamburg police to capture and conduct searches on all citizens with dark skin so they could verify whether they were part of the 300 migrants that had escaped from the Libyan conflict. They had reached the Italian island of Lampedusa and from there were taken to various refugee camps. When the Libyan crisis ended at the beginning of 2013, the Italian authorities moved quickly and closed down the interim camp for refugees, giving

asylum-seekers valid European travel documents plus five hundred euros each and then left them to their own devices.

They eventually arrived in Hamburg. In October 2013 around 80 of the men had found sanctuary in the St Pauli church. Because of the police checks, they were stuck within the church grounds and were restricted from moving around the city. This led to regular demonstrations in the city of Hamburg in solidarity with the refugees that often led to confrontations between the police and protesters. Culminating with the Rote Flora demonstration on the 21st December which ended in riots throughout the city and the establishment of the danger zone.

RED FLOWER POWER

Riot police clashed with 8,000 protesters over the eviction of the Rote Flora social centre. Barricades were built and petrol bombs hurled as locals took a stand against gentrification.

This was the culmination of a long running state campaign to shut down the Rote Flora (Red Flower) social centre. Originally one of the few undamaged buildings after the Second World War, The Rote Flora centre was squatted on the 1st November 1989. Over the years it became an alternative cultural centre and a hub for political and artistic endeavours. It was used as a convergence space during the anti-G8 protests in Germany in 2007. The centre hosts flea markets, parties and other events on a regular basis. It also holds meetings for leftist and anarcho movements. It stands for immigrant rights, anti-nationalism and the resistance of the privatisation of public spaces.

Continued Over...

INFORMATION FOR ACTION

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ON DANGEROUS GROUND ...CONTINUED

The police operation kicked off with the arrival of a helicopter above, followed by a legion of riot cops who unprovoked and armed with water cannons, batons, tear gas and guns attacked the demonstrators. Defending the violence, police spokesman, Mirko Streiber said "There was a mood of aggression from the outset." Not surprising perhaps - SchNEWS wonders how peaceably most readers would react to water canons, batons, tear gas and guns, surely testy and perhaps even a little edgy. There is footage showing the cops swarming the crowd of demonstrators and attacking them. According to activist reports the cops justified their attack by saying the "demonstration started too early." Hamburg police are of course well known for being obsessively punctual. "There was a massive use of teargas and water canons. A journalist from DPA got treated with a punch in the face by a cop when he showed him his press identification. People responded in kind with flying bricks, stones, bottles and a handful of petrol bombs. Many anarchists had travelled to Hamburg for the demo and were re-inforced by fans of the well-known anti-fascist football team St Pauli.

Demonstrators moved onto the defensive, building barricades. They managed to build barricades in several neighborhoods. Police tried to block the roads to kettle protesters but demonstrators resisted and the then rallied up crowd attacked a police station and dozens of banks thrown in for good measure. According to German activist Ewige Blumenkraft - "Momentum continued to build as running battles ensued between protesters and riot cops across the city that lasted well into the night. There was damage to police cars and windows were smashed in surrounding properties"

According to DW.DE, Germany's mainstream international broadcaster more than 100 police officers were "injured" with an unspecified number of protesters also "hurt". A statement by the organisers put the unspecified number closer to several hundred activists injured and 120 arrested plus 19 arrested so far suspected of breach of the peace; with 82 officers wounded and 15 of those taken to a hospital.

'SAVING CALAIS', ONE FASCIST DEMO AT A TIME...

As if the crap weather, lack of hospitality and hassle from the cops wasn't enough, now migrants trying to cross the channel from Calais find themselves under fire from the French far-right.

Organised mainly on Facebook, along with adverts on far-right websites, the new bunch of Frenchie fash calling themselves 'Sauvons Calais' (Saving Calais) are trying to demonstrate against migrants and No Borders activists in the city of Calais. A call-out has been made for a counter-protest against the idiots at their inaugural hate-fest on Saturday (11th).

Whether Calais' self-appointed 'saviours' are anything to worry about is yet to be seen: for all their social media harping, their previous attempts to protest outside migrant-related cases in court didn't materialise after they were warned off by police. They've made it out once, though. About forty held placards in the rain outside the townhall stating 'Stop mass immigration in Calais', with which they managed to miss the crucial point that no-one actually wants to be in the channel-side hellhole.

They do however appear to be the most organised anti-migrant effort in Calais since the undocumented migrants in the city became such a contentious issue. Among their demands: a complete removal of sans papiers from the town, a complete removal of the No Borders movement, and stopping all state funding of migrant assistance charities such as food distributors SALAM. Hey, no-one said they thought things through.

'Sauvons Calais' have emerged during a time of hyped anti-migrant sentiment in Calais, emanating from the office of mayor Natasha Bouchart, the far-right neo-prick who's been flogging the anti-migrant horse for months in her attempts to get re-elected in the upcoming mayoral elections. There has also been an arson attack on migrants' showering facilities and mysterious smashing up of foreigners' cars.

Stay tuned for updates.

See the full report from Calais Migrant Solidarity activists and the call out: <http://calaismigrantsolidarity.wordpress.com/2014/01/05/call-out-for-anti-migrant-counter-demo-january-11th/>

LOG JAMMIN'

Balcombe Anti-Fracking Protesters Acquitted

The first mass trial of Balcombe anti-fracking activists has ended today (08/01/14) with acquittals all round.

Eleven activists were charged with obstructing the highway, with one of them also being charged with 'assault police'. The three day trial at Brighton magistrates saw a solidarity demo outside on the first day and a public gallery packed with supporters throughout.

The protesters were basically charged with wilfully sitting on a log in front of the main gate to Cuadrilla's fracking site. The assault police charge stemmed from nothing more serious than a spilled cup of tea. After three hours the cops used pressure point techniques to move the log-sitters.

Police originally charged the protesters under Trade Union legislation but charges were later amended. They were bailed away from the whole of the parish of Balcombe - an area of around a hundred square miles around the site.

The District Judge delivering the verdict said the the prosecution had failed to prove their case.

One defendant told SchNEWS "We're all really happy ... fingers crossed for everyone else. It was a successful blockade, we did stop the trucks on the day"

Altogether Sussex Police made well over 100 arrests during the Balcombe campaign and there will be many more trials to come.

For more on the resistance to fracking keep updated at <http://frack-off.org.uk/>

...and finally...

You might not think that the Met are looking particularly cuddly at the moment, what with have scraped through on a not guilty verdict for gunning down an unarmed Mark Duggan, but you'd be wrong.

In an effort to make up budget shortfalls Scotland Yard is looking for a private company to run an online shop selling teddy bears and other assorted tat to make a profit to shore up the thin blue line.

The Met's top-selling cop branded souvenir is the Bobby Bear - a uni-formed teddy. So if you want to make sure there's a enough boots on the streets to keep down the simmering discontent this summer or even buy the Met that brand new water cannon Boris Johnson's hankering after, then buy the toy that makes sure your little ones will head to bed when they're told to - or else.

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