



WAKE UP!! IT'S YER HARRY AND THE BOYS

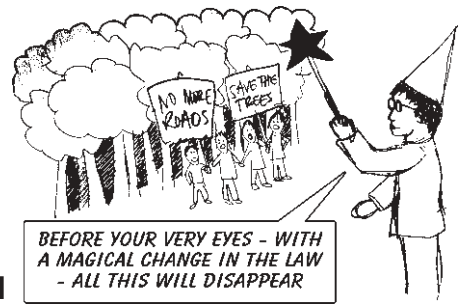
SchNEWS

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SPELLBOUND

"This is the frontline. It's not just about trees. If people want to continue anti-war protests, it doesn't take much to make the connection between this and the war for oil. This is the Anti-Roads Movement Part II. Cast your mind back to the early nineties—the first Gulf War had just ended, there was a Climate Change Summit. Now things have turned a full circle and a whole new generation are on board." *Holly, protester at Blackwood Protest Camp.*

This week there are three separate protest camps all on urgent eviction alert: ecological direct action camps at Blackwood near Newport, Sherwood Forest in Nottingham, and Nine Ladies in Derbyshire – all competing for limited amounts of people and resources. Are we back to the protest camp halcyon days of the nineties?

BLACKWOOD MAGIC

Five acres of St Davids Wood in Blackwood, south Wales, is currently under threat of being trashed for the sake of an access road to an industrial park – and would already be gone if it wasn't for some hardy protesters and a ten-year local campaign which involved two High Court battles. This camp needs urgent help to protect the site – but before you go down to the woods, you'd better leaf through the dusty pages of Hogwart's book on tree protest wizardry...

We now know that magic can happen in the woods, but things got truly surreal this week when Harry Potter weaved a spell into the story. This new development has come about because contractors Costain and the Caerphilly Borough Council have used the obscure 'Harry Potter ruling' to secure a High Court civil injunction on the entire camp. In the Harry Potter case, some of the kid wizard books went missing from the publishing company Bloomsbury and were then given to the press before publication. Because the company didn't know the specific names of the persons who had taken the books, they simply described them to the court. The court then decided for the first time that persons described, rather than actually named, could be defendants to an injunction. This means an injunction can be served against anybody – no names are needed – so therefore any person entering or remaining in a specified area (the woodland at Blackwood, in this case) can be immediately removed. Bindmans, the solicitors giving free legal advice to the camp, told SchNEWS "it's the first time the 'Harry Potter ruling' has been used against protesters."

The injunction is a useful legal tool for companies wanting to get rid of pesky protesters. In the hearing for the Blackwood case, the judge only heard evidence from the 'interested party' – the developers – leaving the defendants (the protesters) with no chance to defend themselves. It is possible to later appeal the injunction in court – but it becomes a David and Goliath battle between a cashed up company and a campaign which doesn't get legal aid.

The woodland under threat – owned by Costain and under the spell of Harry Potter – is now 'protected' from protesters, but while the trees are still under threat, the protest camp itself is on adjoining land NOT owned by Costain, making it safe from eviction for the moment.

Currently, the anti-roads campaigners are trying furiously to mix a legal potion to fight the Harry Potter ruling – throwing in such ingredients as the Section 6 status of the camp and the presence of dormice on Costain's woodland site. It's a shame that the dormice can't get an injunction so they can live undisturbed. Work stopped on the site when dormice - were found. Legally, dormice are protected and they must be "re-located" (evicted) if the chopping of the trees is to continue – but work has continued, around their habitat. The presence of dormice has meant that a wildlife group is taking Costain to court and maybe even criminal proceedings will occur, but don't hold your breath as courts tend to be more chummy with the likes of Costain than dormice lovers.

We asked one protester on site, Holly, if the protest camp was mostly Twyford Down or Newbury veterans like herself? She told SchNEWS that while there is unbelievable local support, there is also a whole new generation of protesters present. This is the generation who took the anti-war protests by storm last year, so watch out cos hopefully there's plenty more where they came from.

People and climbing equipment are needed at the camp now. To contact the camp phone 07952 774525 or 07708 420446 For a map and details visit www.schnews.org.uk/pap/protestcamps.htm

CAMP IT UP

Sherwood Forest Protest Camp is also in urgent need of help. Bailiffs have been on site recently and eviction seems imminent. "Security" forces had planned an illegal eviction but were thwarted when extra people and the cops turned up.

Bellway, the property developers, want to turn these magnificent woods into sawdust and build almost 300 poor-quality overpriced houses there instead.

CRAP ARREST OF THE WEEK

For hanging a banner from a bridge

A man who was charged with 'Causing a Public Nuisance' after hanging a banner saying STOP BUSH at Cambridge railway station in the run-up to Bush's visit in November last year was re-arrested recently.

He has been charged on a public order offence for using threatening or abusive words or behaviour. Yet, according to witnesses and video footage from Cambridge IndyMedia and even the police officers who arrested him, the activist didn't use offensive language. On top of all the this, the man was also investigated for defacing a local war memorial, something that actually took place at the same time that he was on the bridge. So not only is the poor chap a non-threatening threatener, he also seems to be a non-defacing defacer as well.

A 300-year old beech tree is at the heart of the forest and serves as the HQ of the Protest Camp. Massive local support has been apparent since the camp was established 6 months ago. Meanwhile, 60-odd security, an ambulance (!) and cutting machinery have been hovering near the area, waiting to go in for the kill.

Support is vital over the next couple of days. 07050 656410 http://mysite.freemove.com/sherwood_camp/ If you can't get down to the woods, you might want to phone Bellway on 0116 2727000 to tell them what you think, POLITELY of course!!

ROAD FLASH

* **The Nine Ladies anti-quarry camp** is still expecting to be evicted any day now. More people and climbing equipment needed. Contact 07005942212 for details.

* A camp has been set up to stop the construction of a privately financed road at **Bilston, 8 miles south of Edinburg**. Construction work has started on the road, but at the moment the camp remains untouched. The camp now has a kitchen/ cafe and infoshop and welcomes visitors 07986 632429 www.bilstonglen-abs.org.uk

* A housing development of 2,500 homes is planned on a **Greenfield site in East Grinstead**, West Sussex for 2006. If the plan gets the go ahead, the council must build a bypass around the town which will destroy an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and maybe even encroach on Ashdown Forest. peterveresimmons@hotmail.com

* Next Tuesday sees the opening of a public inquiry into proposals to construct a new four-lane road through the **Stonehenge World Heritage Site**. Campaigners warn that the public inquiry may simply "rubber stamp" the road. www.savestonehenge.co.uk

* The Scottish Executive plans to build a 6-lane elevated motorway through the southern suburbs of **Glasgow**. The **M74 Northern Extension**, as it would be called, would be raised on 40 feet concrete stilts for parts of its journey and at £375-500 million, it will be the most expensive transport project in Scotland www.jam74.org

Another Brick In The Wall

Ever daydream during one of those long, boring school lectures on the periodic table and King What's-his-face the 10th that something interesting would actually happen at yer school? Like the school closing down, for instance, and then becoming a battleground between squatters who want to turn it into a space for alternative energies projects and a community centre for local kids, and developers who want to turn it into yet another soulless housing estate?? Well, that's exactly what's happened at an abandoned primary school in South London.

The squatters took up residence in Harland First School in Colliers Wood last autumn following the local Council's decision to close the school in August and sell the land to property developers Kings Oak Homes, part of the giant Barratt group. Kings Oak Homes want to demolish the school and build thousands of ugly, poorly-constructed, identical boxes. The squatters, on the other hand, have been running the school as a social centre and free space since Christmas, with more than a dozen local children regularly using the facilities, including a fully-equipped computer area. The group, which calls itself Alternate Energies, say they want to protect the school for future generations and have been forced to take action as the land is protected by a covenant that forbids any use other than education. In court this winter, however, the covenant was dismissed by a judge who ruled that now that Kings Oak Homes has bought the property, the company can do whatever they want with it.

On Monday, police and bailiffs moved in to remove the squatters but were prevented when many, including local children, barricaded themselves onto the roof, dancing in the face of the big heavies who'd come to turf them off their space. To try and force them out, a representative from Kings Oak Homes entered the building and disabled the electrical circuits. The water was also turned off. But Alternate Energies is holding strong. A representative for the group named Dave told SchNEWS that the local area has no youth clubs or facilities for the local kids at all. "We have cleaned this site up and are only interested in ensuring it is preserved as an educational and social space," says Dave. The group is interested in getting more people down, people who are interested in permaculture, alternative energies, and hard work. If you're interested in helping the group to save their space, contact Dave on 07986 465552.

Midland Expressway

Britain's first toll motorway - the Birmingham Northern Relief Road - was built in part to divert heavily polluting trucks out of Birmingham. There's just one small snag. Midland Expressway, the private company who built the road, have decided to charge lorries £11 to use it.

Under a 53-year deal, the company can charge whatever price it likes to motorists - without the regulatory restrictions that are imposed on other toll roads around the world. Because of its weight, a lorry damages the road infrastructure as much as 100 times more than a car. So obviously, Midland Expressway want to attract cars, which give them revenue, but not lorries, which cause damage.

The company are also preparing a multi-million pound advertising campaign to urge motorists to use the road, despite the government's official policy of encouraging people to switch to public transport. Doh!

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DUBLIN CRAIC-DOWN

Ill-informed Irish journalists are stirring things up in Dublin over plans to celebrate this year's May Day. The Irish Presidency of the EU ends on the first of May, and 10 new states join the EU capitalist gang-bang. The Irish government plan a "Welcome Celebration", including a state-sponsored street party, for diplomats from such bastions of freedom as Turkey. To combat all this capitalist clap-trap, Grassroots, an Irish anarchist network, have put out a worldwide call inviting people to come and celebrate resistance to the EU expansion. A Dublin-based week of action from April 30 to May 3 has been called for, the highlight being Saturday May 1st. This piece of information was seized upon by a journalist from the Independent on Sunday (think an Irish Sunday Times). Armed with the fewest of facts, the corporate journo has run a mile down the road of fantasy. Apart from predicting 15,000 (wouldn't that be nice) demonstrators from all over Europe, she also seems to think that the Wombles apparently have "strong links with the PKK", a Kurdish communist group! This self-styled journalist goes on to bemoan the fact that there are only 1,000 trained riot cops in Ireland. She fears they will be unable to deal with the likes of "Italian and Greek" anarchists who will flood the city and fears the army may be called for!

Ireland is experiencing a growth in direct action at the moment, especially since the use of Shannon airport as a refuelling base for US warplanes during the last Gulf war. Recent years have seen streets reclaimed and warplanes sabotaged. The Irish police have even been getting lessons recently from the good ol' Met and Europol on how to stomp out protest. They were spotted hovering on the edges of last years DSEI arms fair in London taking notes and learning the ropes. Preparing for Dublin perhaps?

Links are being made between Ireland and European-based activists. People fed up with the over-policing at recent London Mayday events may feel Dublin is a good opportunity to forge alliances and affect some positive action. A day of socialising and events for people interested in going to Dublin for the week/weekend is happening at the Occupied Social Centre at 93 Fortress Rd., Kentish Town on Saturday 28th February.

Support for the EU expansion in Eire is weak. The first referendum on whether to accept the new states or not was rejected, partly because of the dire human rights records of some of the new members. Turkey, in particular, is one place you don't want to do time in. Torture in prison is rife and suppression of dissent endemic. Showing their true colours already, the old-school EU have decreed that citizens of the new, mainly Eastern European states will have to wait a mere 6 years before being allowed to travel freely. Consumer products, naturally, get the go-ahead straight away. www.geocities.com/eufortress or www.indymedia.ie

ARGENTINA

In the northern province of Santiago de Estero, Argentina, the local government has banned all types of public meetings that don't have prior consent. Anyone not complying is subject to imprisonment between 1- 30 days or a fine of between 10-20 days pay.

The new law comes in response to demonstrations (all of which have been peaceful) and a memorial service to mark the first anniversary of the brutal torturing and murder of two young girls by an ex-policeman. Witnesses in the case have received death threats from the governor of the province. It seems the local authorities and police are closing ranks to suppress protests against violence, corruption and impunity, a return to the bad old days for Argentina. http://argentina.indymedia.org/features/santiago/

SchNEWS in brief

All those arrested by the Italian police at the brutal raid on the Diaz school in Genoa following the anti-G8 protests in 2001 (SchNEWS 314) have had all their charges dropped. But there are still cases against 73 police involved in the raid, including senior officers, who are facing trial for slander, false arrest, assault, battery, and abuse of authority. <http://italy.indymedia.org> ** **Radio 4A** broadcasts across Brighton this weekend on 101.4FM and on the net at <http://web.ukonline.co.uk/radio4a/> ** Ever ran out of breath sabbing a hunt or running away from a friendly neighborhood officer? Do your hands get tired holding a banner or a bunch of leaflets? Ever lost your stamina in those marathon meetings? Then check out www.veganfitness.net ** **Peace Not War Festival** this weekend at the Hackney Ocean, www.peace-not-war.org/Festival/, 020 7515 4702 ** Planning meeting for the next **Big Bletcher**, Scotland's biggest activist gathering, 23rd February, 7pm, Forest Cafe, Bristol Place, Edinburgh. ** To celebrate the beginning of **DISSENT!** A Network of Resistance Against the G8, Oxford Indymedia and Undercurrents are launching monthly film nights starting with a showing of "The Fourth World War" 22nd February, 7.30pm Northgate Hall, St Michaels Street. £2/£3. ** **Struggle and Solidarity** - Discussion on Anarchist Insurrection and Prisoner Solidarity in Southern Europe, 5pm, Sunday 15th, Occupied Social Centre, 93 Fortress Road, London NW1 and a soundsystem on 21st Feb 8pm www.wombles.org.uk ** Six people charged with political crimes under the **Terrorism Act 2000** for importing a magazine on sale in Turkey and Europe are in court this Monday (16) Picket from 9.30am, Kingston Crown Court, Penrhyn Road, Kingston. hoc@post.com 07966 739061

Inside SchNEWS

American James Borek has been sent down for four and a half years for his part in the June 18th protests in 1999 (SchNEWS 217) and would appreciate letters of support. James Borek, B4-14, HMP Wandsworth, PO Box 757, Heathfield Road, London SW18 3HS.

* Benefit punk night for animal rights mag Arkangel and Simon Chapman, who was stitched up and imprisoned following demonstrations against the EU meeting in Thessaloniki, Greece. Chat's Palace, 49 Brooksbys Walk, Hackney East London on Saturday 21st Feb, 7.30-11:30pm.

* Simon Shaw, who was nicked in Edinburgh during a demonstration against the war for carrying an upside down American flag with a swastika and the words 'Fuck Bush' imprinted on it, was this week found not guilty of inciting racial hatred.

...and finally...

A US man is suing a cable television company for making his wife fat and turning his two teenage children into "lazy channel surfers." "I believe the reason that I smoke and drink every day and that my wife is overweight is because we watched TV everyday for the last four years," he said in a written complaint.

Timothy Dumouchel told his TV company to stop his cable service in August 1999 - but four years later he was still getting it for free. So just before Christmas, Timothy paid a visit to the company's offices, where workers said he intimidated them with "low level threats". Timothy is now demanding \$5,000 or three computers, and a lifetime supply of free Internet service from the cable company in compensation for the suffering he has endured at the hands of cable television- we reckon he should ask for an exercise bike instead.

Disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all readers...we don't believe in magic, but we'll spell it out for you next week Honest!