



WAKE UP!! IT'S YER ALUMNI ABOUT TIME...

SchNEWS

www.schnews.org.uk

Friday 27th November 2010

Free/Donation

Issue 749

NEW KIDS ON THE BLACK BLOC

AS BRITAIN'S SCHOOLCHILDREN AND STUDENTS TAKE TO THE STREETS

The second wave of student protest this week saw thousands walkout of their classrooms and on to the streets all over the country.

Whilst events in London were amply covered – albeit traditionally skewed - by the mainstream media, SchNEWS was braving it on the frontline at the Brighton demo where around 3,000 students marched through the city centre.

The demo began around 2pm when around 1000 school-bunkers loitering in Dyke Road Park were joined by groups that had walked out from local universities and colleges (as well as the obligatory Trot paper sellers and anarchist infiltrators). The atmosphere was jovial but determined, with a higher proportion of face paint and animal costumes than at your average demo. A sound system added to the carnivalesque atmosphere.

HIJACK-A-NORY

Once the crowd had made their way into town they made it clear they were not going to stop on command. Or, as Chief Superintendent Graham Bartlett put it, after protesters “peacefully followed the agreed route...a group of protesters who were unconnected with the original march seemed to have hijacked the protest” - keeping to the official, national narrative of a small minority of disruptive troublemakers and conveniently ignoring the fact that the vast majority then went on to target several key buildings throughout the city.

Most demonstrators were clear on what they think is at stake if the rise in fees goes ahead. Typical was, “They’re unfair, and it’s sad. Students will have to seriously think about whether they can afford to go to university. Your university days are supposed to broaden your horizons, and a lot of people in the future are going to miss out on that.”

One Brighton University student commented: “They don’t think cuts through, they just do them and don’t think about the consequences.”

A first attempt to occupy Grand Parade, a Brighton Uni building conveniently located 10 metres from the official end point of the protest, was bungled with the main bloc telegraphing its intentions thus allowing staff and police to block and lock the doors. Luckily enough (like an edu-

cational version of Starbucks), there is another campus building just down the road which several agitating undergrads were able to occupy, draping their fabric signs over the balcony and at the window.

A TRIP TO THE PRIORY

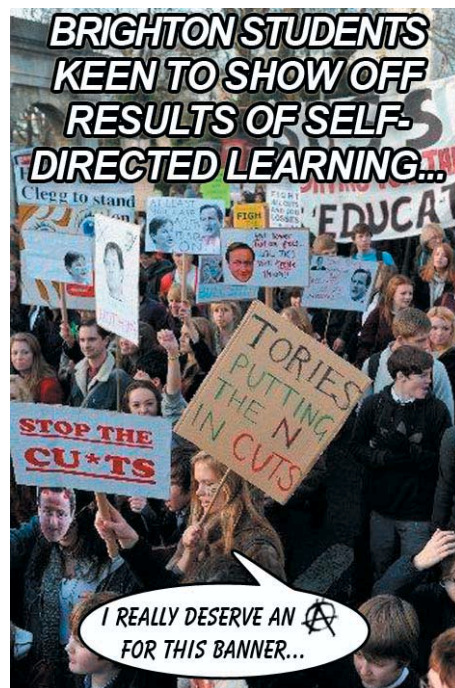
Meanwhile, another bid for occupation was made at the Priory House council building next to the Town Hall. Several students made it inside but were removed by police shortly after.

The police kettled around 200 demonstrators outside the Hall in Bartholomew square and brought out the dogs. Various overheard conversations suggested that the teenage protesting newbies were shocked and angered by the police’s repressive tactics. Some protesters managed to make an escape from the containment through a side alley before a few scuffles ensued as cops moved in to block it off.

Another splinter group had made their way to the police station, where a clash took place between a number of protesters and some particularly violent police; clearly shaken and surprised that they should be a target for protesters they had spent the past few hours manhandling. A hysterical mother looked on as her 15-year-old son was aggressively bundled to the ground. He was eventually released on police bail on suspicion of assault police, presumably for the damage done to police boots and batons inflicted by his head during the arrest.

In a final bid to turn the next generation against them, the police then formed another kettle in the North Laine area around a group that appeared to largely consist of confused under-18s. Meanwhile about 40 protesters stormed a branch of (tax-dodging) Vodafone. Riot cops cleared the store, only for them to cross the road and budget-ransack Poundland for out of date biscuits and plastic crap.

Overall six people were arrested, five of them school students between the ages of 15-16. The occupation of Pavilion Parade, Brighton Uni’s humanities building, is still (Thursday night) ongoing. Numbers are fluid, but approximately 40 students are maintaining a constant presence in one lecture theatre; screening films, holding meetings and entertaining the local media. A few NUS reps brought food but,



when pressed, sat awkwardly on the fence unwilling to either upset the rabble or contradict their glorious leader Aaron Porter (NUS president and Labour activist) who accused student groups of “naively and opportunistically [aligning] themselves with the anarchists”.

MASS = ENERGY

With similar, and more destructive, scenes of ‘kid-power’ breaking out in the capital and around the country this week, it has all left the police somewhat bemused. Used to painting all ‘trouble’ as down to the agitation of a few bad (cl)eggs, this new wave of protesters doesn’t fit their ‘domestic extremism’ mould.

In Brighton, cops made remarks to seasoned activists - who’d merely turned up cos it seemed like something interesting might be going on - which clearly implied they thought it was all orchestrated by them, and how sick it was to be using the kids like that. If only! This has been a genuine grassroots mass uprising of the type that never seemed that likely until recently. Not to mention the sparsely attended SchNEWS campaign table at fresher fairs in recent years...

The deep anger and readiness to express it is all bubbling up from previously more ‘mainstream’ apolitical youth, but it’s not all that surprising; these kids are realising they are victims of such large-scale financial and environmental generational theft that they now have so little to lose they may as well really go for it.

How long before the authorities realise that they now have a genuine mass movement on their hands? One which no amount of attempted marginalising, illegal and violent policing and empty soundbites on ‘fairness’ is going to suppress. (Sadly, they’re bound to give all those things a good go in the meantime.)

The second day of action is planned for Tuesday 30th November. In the meantime keep a watchful eye on www.educationactivistnetwork.wordpress.com www.conventionagainstfeesandcuts.wordpress.com and www.anticuts.com for further fun and games.

MONEY FOR OLD EUROPE

The winter of discontent is hardly over for Europe as another Euro zone member feels the cuts. On Wednesday (24th) Portugal was practically on its knees as flights were cancelled, trains stalled, health and bank services halted as an expression of rage over recent government cuts and unemployment rises.

As the general strike started taking hold, Portugal's largest exporter, Volkswagen, ceased operating as its production line ground to a stop. A picket line was held outside the motor giant's entrance.

A number of other car and shipbuilding factories halted production also. National airline TAP cancelled a large percentage of its flights for the day, whilst ports were sealed, rubbish collection frozen and postal services went out the window (not literally, fortunately for passers-by).

Unions accused the police of violently

dispersing post office pickets which the cops naturally denied.

Western Europe's poorest country has hit its highest unemployment point since the 1980s, over 10% and likely to rise significantly higher as the cuts bite.

Unlike other suffering Euro siblings such as Spain and Ireland that saw phases of boom and bust, Portugal has not really ever had the euphoria of boom to cheer it up and now wonder why they should be paying for everyone else's bust.

The budget its government is trying to impose hacks public sector wages by 5%, freezes pensions and raises VAT from 21% to 23%. Once again the brunt of these policies is felt most by the people that can handle it the least. "It's the workers who are paying for the crisis, not the bankers nor the shareholders of big companies", said a 65-year-old pensioner on the scene.

ADVERTORIAL POLITICS

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR SPONSOR: Jammers, creatives, revolutionaries: Our rebellion is in full swing and this Friday/Saturday/Sunday we hope it reaches an exhilarating climax ... Let's deliver a blow to the consumer capitalist system from which it will never fully recover.

This **Buy Nothing Day**, up the ante. Shut off your lights, disconnect your television, lose your cellphone and walk away from the internet. Go out into the streets, protest wildly and live like a cat on the prowl for a few magic hours.

There are 400+ **Buy Nothing Day** actions scheduled in more than 45 countries. Join up with your fellow rabble-rousers at www.meetup.com/Buy-Nothing-Day. (It's not 'Donate Nothing Day by the way' see below)

PARTY & PROTEST

For events listings updated weekly see www.schnews.org.uk/pap

THE REST OF PAGE 2 IS ON STRIKE THIS WEEK, IN PROTEST AGAINST RECENT SWINGEING WORD COUNT CUTS. A SCAB BEGGING ARTICLE HAS BEEN BROUGHT IN TO FILL THE EMPTY SPACE.

Dear Reader...

SchNEWS is, as ever, financially desperate. We've been getting by for years flogging T Shirts, doing benefit gigs and the occasional big donation. A few folk have been good enough to set up direct debits giving us anything from a pound to a tenner a month. Our thanks to you all.

Although it hasn't been down to a massive over-leveraging based on easy but illusionary forms of cheap credit, we are, nonetheless, according to our in-depth financial forecasts, gonna be well brassic by Xmas.

Back in the day the Levellers (remember them?) used to give us a free office space; but now we have to rent one with real money, even if it does help to support our local radical social centre, the Cowley Club. That's three grand a year from us - a volunteer newsletter. That's before we start forking out for printing, phone bills, broadband

and bourbons.

Anyway the point is that we need a more regular income so we can keep bringing you bang up to date direct action news from around the world. We need a hundred people (at least) to sign up to giving us two pounds a month.

Please help us in our hour of need. All money we are given (and more) gets used in fighting the good fight and none gets syphoned off to plug the large gap in our pension fund.

The easiest way to donate is via Paypal but they do take a small cut.

The best way is to set up a regular direct debit to:

The Co-operative Bank

P.O. Box 101

1 Balloon Street

Manchester

M60 4EP

Account Name: Justice

Account no.: 50084500

Sort Code: 089025

www.schnews.org.uk/extras/help.htm

*** The back page has entered into negotiations with management and we are hopeful it may return to the coalface in time for next week's issue.**

...and finally...

ADOPT-A-SCHACTIVIST



UNLOVED, UNCHERISHED, UNSHAVEN - THESE DOGGED SURVIVORS PLUG AWAY, WORKING SWEATSHOP HOURS FOR NO PAY WHATSOEVER IN THE OPTIMISTIC BELIEF THAT SOMEONE SHOULD BE SAYING THIS STUFF AND IF NOT THEM, WHO? JUST TWO POUNDS A MONTH COULD HELP CHANGE THE LIFE OF A WEARY HACK AND HELP KEEP SCHNEWS ER, FREE...

ISSUED BY THE ANARCHIST PROTECTION LEAGUE

Disclaimer

SchNEWS advises all readers, even if you don't cut it at skool no more, always keep up wiv ur lifelong lernin. Honest.

Subscribe!

Get SchNEWS free every week by email in pdf or text file - visit our site, or send us stamps and we'll post it to you. Copy and distribute! Keep SchNEWS free with donations (via website or cheques payable to Justice?). Posted free to all prisoners.

SchNEWS, c/o Community Base, 113 Queens Rd, Brighton, BN1 3XG. Tel +44 (0)1273 685913 Email mail@schnews.org.uk Web www.schnews.org.uk