



WAKE UP!! IT'S YER ATTACK OF THE DRONES...

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DO FEAR THE REAPER

CASUAL STORY OF THE WEEK!!

There will be a 'Ground the Drones' demo on Saturday (27th April) at RAF Waddington in Lincoln. The base is about to become the new launch pad for the UK's fleet of drones – prior to that they've been operated from a base just outside of Las Vegas. This represents a marked step up of the UK's involvement in drone warfare in the skies of the Middle East and closer to home. As well as setting up the new centre for drone operations, the UK is increasing its fleet of the armed Reaper drones from five to ten..

The UK has launched at least 365 drone strikes in Afghanistan alone, but the MoD states these have resulted in a staggeringly low four civilian casualties. As Drone Wars UK point out, 366 drone strikes by the US in neighbouring Pakistan resulted in deaths in the region of 2,562-3,325 including 176 children, (figures by the Bureau of Investigative Journalism).

Given that Reaper (nee Predator) drones are armed with Hellfire missiles and laser guided Paveway bombs either the bombing has achieved an almost magical level of accuracy or the figures are bent.

The world's leading exponents of remote controlled death from above, the U.S, have been similarly cavalier with the figures. They claimed in 2011 that civilian casualties from drone strikes were either 'non-existent' or 'single digit'.

Research published late last year, as legal challenges by drone victims in the hard-hit Waziristan area of Pakistan were launched, showed that the civilian death count from drone warfare was in the thousands. A Stanford/New York University report also highlighted the reality of 'Living Under Drones'. It states, unsurprisingly, "Their presence terrorizes men, women, and children, giving rise to anxiety and psychological trauma among civilian communities. Those living under drones have to face the constant worry that a deadly strike may be fired at any moment, and the knowledge that they are powerless to protect themselves." Protests against drones have picked up the pace in Yemen, Palestine and Pakistan, where thousands of people took part in a peace march to Waziristan in October last year.

MADE IN ENGLAND

UK companies have rushed to get involved in wreaking terror over Pakistan and Afghanistan, as anti-arms trade campaign Smash EDO has been pointing out for many years. However, EDO MBM aren't the only UK company making a killing. Recently released information shows arms corporation Cobham Plc was granted 31 drone export licences between 2008-2012. The company makes antennas and other parts for US Predator drones used in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Hopefully, the company will feel the heat like other war profiteers General Electric Intelligence Platforms, who faced a backlash during their sponsorship of the Olympics last year. GEIP have now pulled out of their dealings with the US.

Currently the drones used by the UK are Reapers bought from the US, along with a few on lease from Israel. However new models are being developed specifically for the MoD by BAE Systems, and a new surveillance model is on the way courtesy of Israeli occupation profiteers Elbit and its UK partner Thales UK.

The fear that drones may be used for civilian surveillance is being born out by the recent announcement that the Northern Ireland police are buying three drones, at a cost of well over £1m, for use at the G8 summit in June. The drones can relay high-quality photos straight to base camp. Focusing on 'protest venues' and the likelihood of huge demos nationwide, its the first time drones have been purposefully acquired to monitor the domestic population in matters of civil disobedience.

IN THE PINK

The Waddington demo coincides with the April Days of Action against UAVs across the States. US-wide demonstrations, lectures and events have been taking place organised by a coalition of peace and anti-drone groups called the Network to Stop Drone Surveillance and Warfare (NSDSW), women's peace organisation Codepink and the No Drones Network have been heavily involved: a Codepink-led protest took place in San Diego (capital of drone production) for several days against General Atomics, who make Predator drones.

continued overleaf...

We really probably shouldn't indulge ourselves but something about the ongoing fictionalization of events in Brighton last Sunday by the far-right keeps us heading back to Facebook and Twitter for the latest fantastic developments.

Now you might think the reams of photos of boneheads being kicked all over the pavement/hiding behind the police/ getting bashed on the bonce by flying objects might present a fairly conclusive picture of what happened – but you'd be wrong.

Unfortunately for EDL fashion victims Casualties United – they weren't quick enough with the camcorder when one of their girls (a kickboxing champion no less!) battered seven antifa men unconscious. Now that'd be worth seeing! Unfortunately overcome with modesty the Casuals seem to have disappeared this stirring episode from their Facebook.

In an unconscious admission of what really happened (i.e the fash got kicked all over town) Casuals are pinning all their bullshit on one incident down near the pier – apparently a happening so fearsome no 'commie' dares speak of it. The Casuals crack suicide squad (some of whom had already taken a bit of shoeing) managed to run a vaguely defined number of Antifa (think of a number – quadruple it and add five) and batter them all – glorious stuff!!

Sadly back in boring mundane reality what actually happened was that a small group of Casuals, was confronted by a larger mixed group of anti-fascists. To be fair the Casuals did start when outnumbered and managed to split a girl's head open with an umbrella. They were then put on their arses and two of them (including Steven Sands in what must have been one of the worst afternoon's of his life) got nicked.

One participant observer told SchNEWS "They actually weren't very good at fighting – it was all sort of rush in, try and get the first punch, then grab hold of someone and fall over". Maybe SchNEWS is being unfair and staunch nationalists that the Casuals are they were practising some indigenous form of martial arts – the way of the stunned ferret or some such.

INFORMATION FOR ACTION Copyleft

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LIVING ROOM?

NEW SQUAT LAW FAILS IN COURT

Two squatters who were among the first to be arrested under Weatherley's law in Brighton had the case against them for squatting in a residential building thrown out of court this week. In what hopefully is sign of things to come, the court realised they couldn't prove they were actually living in the building.

Weatherley's law was attacked before it was passed as badly drafted and full of loopholes. Unfortunately those best able to defend themselves are going to be exactly the kind of well-educated drop-outs that Mike claimed he was targeting in the first place. The draconian nature of the law means that cops across the country often use it as a means of conducting short-cut evictions of

those who don't know their rights.

A third squatter is still on trial as a cop claims the squatter told him he was living in the residential part of the building, and not the commercial part. The case has now been adjourned until the 24th of May as the trial ran out of time. SchNEWS will of course be on hand for the verdict but it's looking like the case against him is pretty weak too.

The advice to squatters from this case is don't plead guilty. Presence in a building where someone is living is not enough, they have to prove with documentary evidence that you as an individual actually live there. So take our advice - give a "no comment" interview and take it to trial.

Follow @HousingWar on twitter for updates on the trial.

MOBS AND COPPERS

..an anti-fascist day out by the seaside.

"One guy went straight over the barricade into them - he was knocked down but everyone followed and soon the fascists were hiding behind the police" - eyewitness account of the arrival of the South East Alliance into the March for England pen.

Another year, another March for England, another victory for the anti-fascist massive. Around 100-150 dregs of the EDL with the assistance of 700 police to march 400 yards along a cordoned off seafront and back. Turn-out against the march was huge with an estimated 2,000 counter-protestors turning out inside the police organised cordon re-inforced with a 200 strong black block roaming around the perimeter.

Photos (see below) of the event show the extent to which Brighton stood up for itself well against the various EDL splinter groups that make up the March for England. The far-right pulled out all the stops for this one with march organiser Dave Smeeton hitting the road to drum up support for the event. The basic message was: Last year they caught us by surprise - this year we must get the numbers and show the 'commies' who's boss. Fascists travelled from around the country to be in Brighton and the day showed just how dispirited the remnants of the English Defence League are.

THEY GO WHERE WE WANT

A large number of old EDL faces were spotted on the day but the likes of Shane Calvert, Jeff Marsh and Liam Pinkham just can't attract a following any more and are reduced to making idle threats on the internet. Fascists had promised a weekend of carnage, but in the end Jeff 'Casuals United' Marsh @wegowherewewant was reduced to tweeting on Saturday that the Casuals "totally owned Worthing" which is a nice way of spinning the fact that they were too frightened to come fifteen miles along the coast to Brighton for the night.

Meanwhile Brighton's anti-fascist coalition was busy building in the town itself conducting daily street stalls and plastering the place with stickers and flyposters. It was obvious by contrast that the March for England have no base in the town and no grass-roots support.

ALL BETS ARE OFF?

Sussex police claimed that they were putting in place the biggest public order operation in the force's history and the barrier erected along the seafront was expensive but in the event nothing prevented fash and anti-fa from settling their differences.

Plod had originally announced that the MfE were to be bussed into their start point from one of the train stations. In the event they were

simply allowed to walk through town in small groups - unsurprisingly SchNEWS started hearing of small punch-ups erupting throughout the North and South Laines. The first real flashpoint came when groups of EDL started to get to the startpoint of their demo while waving flags. One group was immediately chased into a bookmakers on St James St while anti-fascists fought with the police to get at them. They were only rescued by the arrival of mounted cops. Meanwhile the South East Alliance were trying to sing their way badly into the cordon while being pelted with bottles.

Eventually march organisers decided that sufficient numbers had arrived for the march to begin. The MfE began their dismal cordoned off trudge at 1p.m - realistically police presence and preparation meant that there was little chance of blocking the route. However the MfE had to run the gauntlet of 2,000 jeering opponents, comprised of trade unionists, the Unite Against Fascism crowd, the Green Party and hundreds of ordinary Brightonians.

BATTERED FASH

Meanwhile groups of fash and anti-fa played hide and seek in through the South Laines. Groups of fash were continually sent packing, retreating behind police lines. A few anti-fascists got thumped but the opposition came off far, far worse. The militant block eventually made its way to the proposed end point of the march and waited there to bait the march. This was when the hardcore racists headed up by Steve 'Sugar Plum Fairy' Sands, launched their ill-fated kamikaze attack. Badly disguised as black block a handful of them began throwing punches at the masked up youth but were rapidly overwhelmed and were only just rescued by police after a proper pasting. (insert your own "got a tasty smack in the mush off the lads/ claret all over the shop" type hoodligan narrative here). By the way Sands has pent the last two years bragging on facebook about ambushing anti-fascists during a 2010 demo in Brighton...best served cold eh?

TALE OF TWO MARCHES

The fash were marched back to the start point and police organised coaches began to arrive to cart them off to less fashionable parts of the country. A few hundred antis remained to see them on their way but the majority marched back through town under a rainbow flag and behind a banner marked 'No Pasaran'. No cordons, no police, with the chant "Whose streets, our streets" ringing true. One participant told SchNEWS "This was a moment of true Brighton unity - we didn't need cops to protect or facilitate our march because this is our town".

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CONTINUED...

The CEO, Neal Blue, saw his home become an uncomfortable target with protesters lambasting him as someone who literally 'makes a killing out of killing'. The demo resulted in the corporation/state irony of the week - anti-drone activists in San Diego, attempting to fly a pretend drone over Blue's house were prevented from doing so, because "it might hurt somebody".

Economic and business groups from San Diego, along with groups from 37 other states, are competing to become one of six congressional mandate drone test sites. And it's not just military testing that may result in drones becoming a familiar sight in the skies of a nation who normally hides behind remote controls at a comfortable distance. The head of San Diego's Economic Development Corporation was quoted as saying the drone licences were desirable because, "Unmanned systems are critical to advancing everything from firefighting to protecting agriculture to search and rescue efforts, predicting weather and inspecting utility lines." The implication this has for policing and surveillance hasn't been missed.

In Missouri activists targeted Whiteman AFB, an air force base where drone pilots are known to operate; in Chicago street theatre protesters drew attention to Boeing's newest killer drones and in Boston a Drone Death Walk was staged. In Nevada, fourteen people were arrested at the beginning of the month protesting outside the Creech Air Force Base where Pakistan drones are operated from.

For more information on the Ground the Drones Protest, including plans and transport: <http://dronecampaignnetwork.wordpress.com/>

...and finally...

How could not mention dumbo arisotocrat Robert Oliphant (dumbo - geddit?) Maxtone-Graham.

The upper class twit if the year was up in front of Perth Sherriff court on Feb 21st having been given a large block of dope by a friend. He then phoned the police to er, complain about the poor quality of the stuff. Talk about toking the piss. Despite the cops best efforts to ignore him, he persisted until they were forced to nick him in what even his own solicitor called "an own goal". Naturally it wasn't an "own goal" as anyone who scores higher than 'O Cripes' in a posh test is handled completely differently under UK law. He was fined £360.

There are more hilarious details at the only national newspaper we subscribe to - the Daily Mail. (We love it for the sensible political rhetoric, measured house price analyses and for perverting over underage celebrity children!)

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A CUT ABOVE THE REST

UK UNCUT MAKE A POINT HOME

WHIPPED ROUND

HUNT SCUM GET THEIR COMEUPPANCE

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