

MOVEMENT

No Borders Newsletter ★ noborders.org.uk



FREE #2 December 09



Jump the Border

On Saturday 28th November 2009, 65 French and British solidarity activists staged a cross-channel protest from Calais to Folkestone. The protest was against the tightening of border controls and the collaboration between the French and the British authorities, which is creating a heightened humanitarian crisis in Calais. Hundreds of migrants now sleep rough and suffer constant police abuse, after being stopped from entering Britain, and having their homes in Calais bulldozed this September (see last issue).

The protest began at 10am local time in Calais, and in Folkestone the final protest was held outside the newly built Joint Intelligence Unit, which is a centre for both the British and French services who specialise in trying to combat international illegal immigration networks.

What they call illegal immigration is in fact the visible human cost of war. Everyday increasing numbers of UK troops are sent to Afghanistan, and when the suffering from the conflict leads to ordinary people fleeing, the UK respond with further violence and hardship. Phil Woolas has announced that the UK will contribute £15 million to "improved security" and build more detention centers, whilst refusing to acknowledge the reasons why people migrate. Any attempt to make the borders impermeable will not stop people trying to cross, it just makes it more dangerous.

Activists from No Borders, Calais Migrant Solidarity, the CNT (National Confederation of Workers) and the NPA (New Anticapitalist Party) all crossed the channel; and future collaborations are planned for mobilisations in Paris and Brussels. Police destroyed one banner proclaiming 'No One is Illegal'. The protest was 'facilitated' by the 'European Liaison team', a special unit of police based in Kent, who monitor both sides of the border. calaismigrantsolidarity.wordpress.com

Against Deportations

Over 100 people took part in a 'No to Deportations & Destitution' demonstration outside Sheffield Town Hall on Saturday 28th November. Organised by South Yorkshire Migration and Asylum Action Group (SYMAAG) and supported by new group No Borders Sheffield. sheffieldnoborders.wordpress.com



End all Detention

Around 100 people gathered outside Campsfield Detention Centre in Kidlington on Saturday 28th November, to mark the 16th anniversary of the creation of Campsfield and to call for an end to immigration prisons and a halt to plans to build the biggest ever detention centre in England. This year will see the opening of Bullingdon house in Bicester, which will be the largest immigration prison ever built in the UK, housing 800.

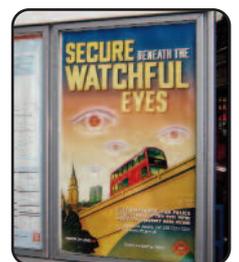
A combination of seasoned activists and newcomers descended upon Campsfield at around 12. Banners calling for an end to the arbitrary incarceration of innocent individuals were hung to the high fences that imprison Campsfield's inhabitants. There was a combination of spontaneous chanting, singing and dancing, and impromptu speeches. Speakers from No Borders, Barbed Wire Britain and Campaign to Close Campsfield all gave speeches talking about the work they are currently doing. There was also a moving speech by a migrant who has seen his friends kidnapped by the authorities and put in detention centres, and seen the suffering that it causes, and even a dedicated trade unionist all the way from Coventry (who comes up every month!) said a few passionate words about the cruelty of Campsfield.

On several occasions we could see prisoners waving through the bars of their windows at us. To see this is to know that the activism we are doing is not futile, and that regardless of whether or not Campsfield will continue to operate, the solidarity that we can provide to the prisoners is of some mental comfort - although, of course, it is the very least of what we all want to do for them.

In contrast to previous events, the police presence was low-key and totally non-confrontational. There are protests on every last Saturday of the month at Campsfield Detention Centre, all readers invited to attend. closecampsfield.org.uk

Out Of Control

On Saturday 23rd January there will be two demonstrations in London. One will be at St. Pancras, where the UK (e-border agency put up their controls in the middle of London. The second one will be at Piccadilly Circus where, while commuters, tourists and clubbers stare at the never-ending stream of commercials at ground level, they themselves are under constant observation by security and police in their cosy CCTV headquarters below ground. london.noborders.org.uk



Loon-Plage 'Jungle' Bulldozed

On 17th November, following the recent destruction of the migrant camps in Calais (see last issue), the 'Jungle' at Loon-Plage near Dunkerque was bulldozed (again). The camp had been destroyed in May prior to the Calais No Border Camp and in December. Using a bulldozer, crane, tractors and a lorry the camp was quickly destroyed whilst police arrested 41 people including 11 minors, of the 50 mainly Iraqis and Afghans living there.

The irony is that just over a week previously the town council, in agreement with the port authorities, had been given permission to set up showers for the very same migrants! This echoes what happened last December when on the 16th the camp was flattened and residents arrested. Then, without consultation with any of the other authorities, on the 30th, the mayor had the municipality erect a tent with gas heating and provided meals for migrants there. calaismigrantsolidarity.wordpress.com



Increasing pressure on Arora Hotels

Campaigners held a second protests at Arora Hotels in London on 5th November (see last issue for the first one), against company plans to turn its four-star Mercure Gatwick hotel into an immigration detention centre.

Gatwick airport already has two detention centres: Tinsley House, which can hold 125 male and female detainees, and the newly opened Brook House, which can hold 426. Both are run by private security company G4S.

Like other private companies that run privatised detention centres across the country, Arora is trying to sell its plan by arguing that locating detention centres at airports would make deportations easier and less costly.

Arora International Hotels has six luxury hotels in and around Heathrow and Gatwick airports and one in Manchester city centre. Alongside these activities in London, hotel staff and guests have been leafleted by No Borders Manchester.



Climate Justice = No Borders

Displacement and destruction, resource wars, recession, peak oil, energy crises, techno fixes, land grabs, state repression, corporate control, carbon trading and market based 'solutions', neo-colonialism, economic slavery.....Climate change is about a lot more than just CO2.

It may be the biggest threat to life as we know it, but climate change is also an opportunity for those in power to restrict, divide, exploit and control, legitimising everything from increased surveillance to repressive migration policies. The threat of 'terrorists' obscures the real motives behind resources wars, with a new colonialism emerging, violently displacing millions of people.

We invite all who challenge the state in the fight against borders, from individual struggles to transnational networks to a day of action at the UN Climate summit in Copenhagen on Monday 14th December. Meet 11am at Rådhuspladsen to march on the Ministry of Defence. climatenoborders.wordpress.com



8 Day in Prison For Blockader

On 2nd November Catholic Worker activist, Zelda Jeffers was sentenced to 16 days in prison at Bedford Magistrates Court for refusing to pay a fine of £450 for the blockade of Yarl's Wood Immigration Detention Centre.

The blockade was on 30th June against a mass deportation flight to Nigeria. She was arrested for 'obstruction of a police officer', all she did was to sit down and refuse to leave as the police did not read out an official warning.

She was released on 9th November after serving only half her term for 'good behaviour'. Explaining her reasons for refusing to pay the fine on her release:

"...[I] was told I could get 28 days in prison if I didn't pay. I said I choose not to pay a fine for an action I consider the least I could do in face of the detention without trial of families and children at Yarl's Wood and their deportation to possible torture and death. I believe it is a disgrace and possibly illegal. It is a matter of conscience for me." stopdeportation.net



Bah Humbug at Yarl's Wood

Police were called when £300 worth of gifts for the 35 children currently detained at Yarl's Wood detention centre were delivered by the St Nicholas Society.

The presents were delivered in classic festive style, by a man dressed in a red robe, long white beard, and carrying a bishop's mitre and crook. Despite the authorities having agreed to accept the gifts, the delegation was met at the gates by a group of unidentified security guards who barred their entry and ordered them to leave the area.

When the group paused for 'Saint Nick' to bless the gifts, detention centre staff called the police. The officers questioned the St Nicholas team, whilst the presents were loaded into an unmarked van by staff who refused to provide a name, number or receipt for the delivery. When one member of staff was asked his name, he replied "write down 'Father Christmas'".

'Saint Nick' said, "If this is how visitors are treated, I just shudder to imagine what else transpires inside Yarl's Wood."



Blockaders of Bomb Factory

Nine people were in court in early November for charges arising from a blockade of the EDO MBM/ITT bomb factory in Brighton. The blockade was held in solidarity with the Calais No Border camp in June to highlight the links between the arms trade, war and the creation of refugees. One defendant was found with no case to answer, two were acquitted and five were convicted of obstruction of the highway. They were given 12 month conditional discharges. smashedo.org.uk



No Borders Network is made up of autonomous groups, to get involved contact your nearest group. Contact the South Wales group for the newsletter editorial collective.

→ Local Groups

Brighton: nobordersbrighton.blogspot.com
Bristol: bristolnoborders.wordpress.com
Calais: calaisnoborder.eu.org
Leeds: leedsnoborders@riseup.net
London: london.noborders.org.uk
Manchester: manchesternoborders.org.uk

North East: nobordersnortheast.org
Nottingham: nobordersnottingham.org.uk
Oxford: oxfordnoborders@lists.riseup.net
Scotland: nobordersscotland.org.uk
Sheffield: sheffieldnoborders.wordpress.com
South Wales: noborderswales.org.uk

→ Friends & Relations

Barbed Wire Britain: barbedwirebritain.org
Calais Migrant Solidarity: calaismigrantsolidarity.wordpress.com
Campaign Against Immigration Controls: caic.org.uk
Close Campsfield: closecampsfield.org.uk
Indymedia UK - Migration: indymedia.org.uk/en/topics/migration
National Coalition of Anti-Deportation Campaigns: ncadc.org.uk
No One is Illegal: noii.org.uk
Stop Deportation Network: stopdeportation.net
Unity Centre Glasgow: unitycentreglasgow.org

→ Other Print

Corporate Watch: corporatewatch.org.uk
SchNEWS: schnews.org.uk
Shift Magazine: shiftmag.co.uk

Upcoming Events

December

8th - Virtual Borders. Talk and discussion by London No Borders at Pogo cafe, 76 Clarence Road, London, E5 8HB, 7pm

14th - No Borders Day of Action at COP15.

21st-31st - Come To Calais for Christmas!

We are planning to have celebrations, tours of jungles and squats, films, workshops and a surprise party! calaismigrantsolidarity.wordpress.com

31st - New Years Eve fundraiser 8pm-6am at 'Lift'n'Hoist', 1 Queens Row, Walworth, SE17 2PX

January

23rd - A Day Out Of Control in London.

No Borders is a transnational network of autonomous groups and individuals advocating freedom of movement and equality for all. The network operates on a non-hierarchical, anti-authoritarian basis and uses consensus decision making. We struggle in solidarity with migrants to work towards a world without borders, capitalism or the state. noborders.org.uk