

TERRACE TALK

Like any Spurs fan, I was excited about the new football stadium - I might see a few more games, in better conditions, and not stuck where I can't see all the pitch. Then I got to thinking about the plans and what it must be like for people living or working near the stadium.



UFO makes forced landing in Tottenham

I worked in the N17 Studios on Tottenham High Road. There were 30 or 40 local businesses there, employing dozens of people. They spent money in local shops and many workers were local people. All these jobs and money for the local economy will go. And N17 studios are not the only businesses forced out. Ok, there will be jobs at matches and in the new supermarket, but these will mostly be low-paid or part-time agency work. Then there is the new housing. Some of it is proposed to be 19 stories high - no doubt more cramped housing for Tottenham? I looked at the original application and less than 15% will be for "social housing" and very little family housing. Isn't that what's really needed with nearly 4,000 homeless families in Haringey?

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ADI-NOUGH

What do you think of when visiting your local park? For most people it must surely be a chance to experience some green open space, relax with friends, walk your dog or maybe even play some sport. Would you expect to be bombarded with yet more adverts telling you what to buy? Well, this is what you might get soon in Haringey.

Adidas, the sportswear company, has applied to Haringey council to build an Adizone in Ducketts Common near Turnpike Lane. The company are trying to roll out these Adizones across the country, in partnership with local authorities, as Adidas's contribution to "the Olympic Heritage". In fact they are no more than cheap advertising. What we get are play spaces embossed with the Olympic sign and Adidas logos. Adidas and the council each put

in £50,000 and these Adizones are installed in prominent locations and given to the council to look after.

There has already been opposition to such proposals in other parks. Local groups in Finsbury Park and Alexandra Park campaigned successfully against them, so the council has now turned to Ducketts Common as the next alternative. There are already plans in place to substantially improve Ducketts Common without the Adizone - so why now give some of the funding to Adidas for cheap advertising?

Adidas spend many millions of pounds on advertisements for its products every year. Let's not have even more permanent adverts in our parks. What next? A McSpace or a PriPark?! Tell us what you think!

HARINGEY SOLIDARITY GROUP

If you like what you've seen in this newsletter, check out www.haringey.org.uk. As well as more news about grassroots action around Haringey, you'll also find out about upcoming events and how to get active in your area, including how to get involved with HSG. If you have some news about something you think we should include on our site, then get in touch. Whether it's a street party you've organised with your neighbours, a strike at your workplace or some gossip about a local slum landlord, we're keen to hear from you.

WHO WE ARE

Haringey Solidarity Group is a network of people who live or work in the borough of Haringey. Our aim is to help increase the fighting spirit and self-confidence of local people to improve their lives.

It's clear that we can't trust politicians or business to end the inequality, privilege and racism that divides our communities. But real change does not happen at the ballot box. It can only come about by independent community action - that is, people looking out for each other and organising themselves to deal with the problems that they experience in everyday life.

So we work with local community groups and campaigns in Haringey, encouraging them to link up and work together on the issues that affect the lives of ordinary people. We also work directly on local campaigns - including organising around housing and welfare benefits issues and supporting people to get their rights.

If you want to find out more about what we do visit www.haringey.org.uk or contact us: PO Box 2474, London N8, 0845 223 5270 or info@haringey.org.uk

GROUPS ACTIVE IN HARINGEY

Haringey Independent Cinema screen monthly films and documentaries that are sometimes challenging, always thought-provoking and usually rarely shown. www.haringey.org.uk/hic

Haringey Friends of Parks Forum is a network of 30 local Friends groups who are protecting and improving, our local parks and open spaces. www.haringeyfriendsofparks.org.uk

Reel News is an activist video collective, set up to publicise and share information on inspirational campaigns and struggles. www.reelnews.co.uk/

Defend Haringey's Health Services Coalition is a coalition of local groups campaigning against cuts and privatisation of our healthcare services. Email: info@haringeyresidents.org

Sustainable Haringey is an independent, informal network for anyone who wants to make Haringey more sustainable. If you are interested in green issues and want to make a positive contribution, this network is for you. www.sustainableharingey.org.uk

Radical History Network of North East London - a Haringey based group which publishes cheap, short booklets looking at local, topical issues under the slogan "celebrate our history, avoid repeating our mistakes". <http://radicalhistorynetwork.blogspot.com/>

Back to Earth Project was set up by local activists keen to develop environmental projects in the Lordship Rec and Broadwater Farm estate areas. Back to Earth run The Farm Community Kitchen which serves healthy freshly cooked hot meals some lunchtimes at the Broadwater Farm Community Centre. www.back2earth.org.uk

Haringey Federation of Residents Association connects local residents' associations of all kinds. There are already dozens of associations active in Haringey improving their local areas. HFRA can help you find your local residents association or help you set one up yourself. www.haringeyresidents.org.

Wards Corner Community Coalition came together to block the demolition of the Edwardian buildings and eviction of a multi-cultural market in South Tottenham. The Coalition has developed an alternative plan and campaigns for a development which builds on the vibrant and multi-cultural character of Seven Sisters. <http://wardscorner.wikispaces.com/>

Haringey Justice For Palestinians is a broad based movement of local activists, mosques, trade unionists and many others. It aims include: boycotting Israeli goods, twinning with a Palestinian community and raising funds to help Palestinian charities and campaigns www.hjfp.org.uk

Haringey Defend Council Housing is a campaign for investment in Council housing without strings, for such housing to remain in public control, for improvements to conditions, and against rent and service charge rises. www.defendcouncilhousing.org.uk/

Haringey Online Community is a resident-led network for the neighbourhood of Harringay. It connects residents so they can share information and work together to improve their local neighbourhood. www.harringayonline.com/

NOT PLAYING BY THE RULES

Despite the hype about the World Cup there is a much nastier side to the event. Here are the authorities' rules for World Cup 2010.

The Sweeper System

The South African government has brushed aside the needs of the poor and homeless, by spending a whopping £3 billion on new stadiums and rebuilding infrastructure. Well over the originally estimated £200 million.

The Beautiful Game

Officials have been encouraged to "clean up" and "beautify" the host cities. They want the thousands of supporters, travelling to cheer on their respective countries, to see South Africa as crime free and "world-class".

Red Card

This has given the authorities the excuse to forcibly evict and persecute the poor, desperate and unwanted. Thousands have been sent off to Temporary Relocation Areas like Blikkiesdorp, close to Cape Town's newly revamped airport, but far enough away from the main city so as not to upset those emotionally sensitive "soccer" tourists. Also known as "Tin Can Town", it consists of wood and corrugated iron buildings, with tiny communal toilets, no showers, just standpipes.

Crowd Control

Residents complain that the 3,000 small homes are overcrowded, with 15,000 people and more being sent there every day. They say it's like a concentration camp, with restricted freedom of movement. Police beatings of adults and children are said to be commonplace.

Offside

Meanwhile tens of thousands of local African traders are worried that they will lose money because of FIFA imposed "exclusion zones" around stadiums. These will permit only approved businesses to trade. Local workers have been told to vacate their premises for the duration of the World Cup.

Penalties

The disenfranchised people are organising demonstrations during the tournament. They are disgusted at the way money is being thrown at a month-long carnival, when it is desperately needed to fund new housing and other basic social services.

An extra 40,000 police will be on hand to suppress these people.

Not such a beautiful game when you look at it this way.

HARINGEY'S ONLY INDEPENDENT NEWS SHEET

TOTALLY INDYPENDENT

Credit buying is much like being drunk. The buzz happens immediately and gives you a lift....
The hangover comes the day after" Joyce Brothers

WELCOME TO THE CON-DEM NATION



Even before the election, we were promised major "efficiency savings". Now, with a new coalition government, we are guaranteed the deepest public spending cuts in 60 years. Benefits, services and funding are all under threat, whilst public sector and other workers face reduced wages and pensions, or redundancy. Why? Because the gap between government spending and income has tripled since 2008, creating a national debt that is now set to hit £1 trillion (yes, that's £1,000,000,000,000). That's more than any other country in Europe, including Greece. The last time our economy looked like this we had just spent six years fighting the Nazis.

So should we just accept the "difficult times ahead" and help "rebuild our broken society"? Do we just take the harsh medicine needed to cure our sick

economy?

Let's just remind ourselves of how we got into this mess. Since the 1980s, successive governments have deregulated the banks and removed the rules on big business. Freeing up trade, they argued, brings a strong and lasting economy. The reality has been the extension of business thinking into all areas of society, including our public services. Budget savings, target figures and league tables are the way schools, hospitals and all our public services are run nowadays. And whilst public sector staff now have to work with the constant demand for "efficiency savings", the consultants and executive managers have received ever bigger salaries and bonuses. At the same time, the unrestrained financial markets have profited from precarious investment bubbles and convoluted international debt deals. Until, in 2008, it all inevitably

collapsed around us.

The UK government borrowed an extra £40 billion to fund the bank bailout. That's more than the yearly budget for schools and universities. But we are now running up even more debt from the interest payments of nearly £43 billion a year. So, we are paying out the equivalent of the bailout each year just on interest. And who gets this money? The banks, financial institutions and investment companies that deal in buying and selling debt. In other words, the same people who caused the credit crisis and were given the bailout in the first place!

The current debt crisis was not some unforeseen or unfortunate accident. It's not bad luck, and it's not our fault. It's been created by the idea that you can create a society out of business deals and profit margins. By the belief that if you look after the pennies, the people can fend for themselves.

If we want real progressive politics, we need to rethink our economy and our society. If our national income is too low, why not tax those well-paid bankers and top-level managers? Even under Thatcher the income tax rate for high earners was 20% more than it is today. And if our spending is too high, why are we shelling out £130 billion on Trident missiles? Why are policing costs still rising, when crime is going down? And why are we still funding an unwinnable war in Afghanistan?

So, before you take the medicine, just ask where the sickness really lies.

GIVE US A BREAK

Any society should be judged by the support it provides its most vulnerable members. In Haringey there are thousands of people with special needs and unable to look after themselves, and 16,000 carers. The lack of support for both these hard-pressed groups is a scandal.

An informal group of carers recently organised a 'Carers Speak Out' meeting. Over 80 carers told their powerful stories of struggling 24/7 to look after family members with serious and long-lasting physical and mental health problems. The carers described having to battle against isolation, exhaustion, poverty, inadequate housing, depression and ill-health.

A supporter present wrote afterwards: "Three words were ringing in my ears as I left: fight, fight, FIGHT. People struggle to survive, fighting the system to get some help - often for decades: ten years to find out what the law entitles them to; twenty years finding decent homes or schools for their relatives and getting turfed out of one after another; thirty years looking after relatives with incontinence problems; forty years of stress."

The carers demanded a decent income, less bureaucracy, more support services, and access to decent schooling and well-run, friendly care homes. In particular they all needed BREAKS.

The local NHS was given £750,000 to pay for carers respite breaks, but due to inadequate funding this was secretly channelled into other uses. Carers have now launched a campaign for the respite breaks they are entitled to. Protesting outside the local NHS HQ, Victoria Dimandja said she feels "totally worn out" after caring full-time for her severely autistic son Joseph. "Having some respite time would mean everything because it would mean I have some time to myself."

We should all back the campaign for respite breaks and support carers and their organisations.

Further details:

www.haringeyresidents.org (search 'carers')

Haringey Carers Centre: 0208 888 0808

info@haringeycarers.org

BIG PROFITS BIG POLLUTERS



Local residents leafleted car drivers recently at the BP petrol station in Tottenham Hale to highlight the company's involvement in the Canadian tar sands project. This scheme threatens ancient forests and will harm indigenous communities, all in a desperate attempt to profit from the world's crippling dependency on oil.

The methods used to extract the oil from "tar sands" produce toxic wastewater, which has now leaked into drinking water. High rates of cancer and other illnesses have recently been recorded among local people.

BP is the largest company in Britain, and one of the biggest in the world. It spends millions of pounds lobbying governments to relax regulations and win concessions for itself, thus increasing concerns over safety and the environment. Yet BP likes to promote a green image, something that can be seen in the new BP logo only, and not in the way it conducts its business affairs.

The present disaster in the Gulf of Mexico, where 11 people died, is just the latest accident showing the contempt the oil company has for its workers, the environment and others who suffer as a result of its cost-cutting measures.

Just a week after the recent blowout, BP reported \$6 billion profits for the first quarter. Yet they wouldn't pay \$500k for a safety valve, which could have stopped up to three million gallons of oil a day spilling out and endangering the whole ecosystem. This could become the worst industrial environmental disaster in US history. BP's response trying to buy off local fishermen on the cheap (up to \$5,000) in return for not suing the company. Although BP claims this isn't the case, it is a tactic they have used before.

In 2005, BP's Texas City refinery exploded, killing 15 and injuring 170. In Alaska in 2006, a pipeline pumped out 200,000 gallons of crude oil causing the largest spill ever on

the Alaskan North Slope. Colombian farmers fought for compensation when a pipeline cut across key water sources, leading to soil erosion, spoiled crops and fishponds starved of water. In July 2006, the farmers and BP agreed to a deal believed to be several million pounds. There are many other examples worldwide of BP's lack of respect for people who happen to live in regions where vast mineral resources are exploited for massive financial gain.

So much for BP's claims "to strive to be environmentally friendly" and "responsible".

As most of us now know, global warming is caused by our use of fossil fuels. If BP were serious about their responsibilities to the planet, they would invest more in green energy solutions. But instead they recently cut their budget in this area by 30%. They are obsessed with maximising profit, while the world goes to hell.

Another demonstration has been arranged for the 26th June, at 1pm, at BP's garage in Tottenham Hale. Please join us.

For more information about the campaign:

Locally: www.sustainable-haringey.wikispaces.com
Nationally: www.no-tar-sands.org

BEHIND THE LOGO

Greenpeace is running a competition to redesign the BP logo to show the true nature of the company. It's open to professionals, students, Joe Public and under 18s, so if you're feeling creative, and little pissed off with big business branding, why not have a go? The winning design will be used by Greenpeace for their campaign against BP's investment in tar sands.

<http://www.greenpeace.org.uk/files/tarsands/logo-competition.html>

BIDDING YOUR HOME FAREWELL

Imagine you are a parent with a family of three young children. You have been made homeless through no fault of your own, have been placed in temporary accommodation by the council and have now lived there for several years. Your children attend the local school and have made friends. You have also made links with your local community. Through the council's bidding system - which allocates points for number of children, length of time waiting, overcrowding etc - you have applied for suitable, local housing on numerous occasions, always unsuccessfully.

Then the council changes the rules and starts a system they call auto-bidding. They now decide what you and your family will bid for, and they decide that you have to move to the other side of the borough. You do not know the area and your children have to move schools (or spend an hour getting to school each day). Do you think this can't be right?

Hard luck - if you refuse, the council says it will no longer have a duty to house you and will deem you intentionally homeless.

This is what Haringey Council is now doing - the above is a true story. The drive behind this change is not the desire to meet people's needs, but to meet political needs. The council has to reduce the people in temporary housing to make the national homeless figures look better. With no new council housing being built, the council is forcing people to move into properties that are hard to let, or leaving people to the mercy of unscrupulous private landlords.

As part of HSG's Housing Action Group, we are actively campaigning for decent, affordable homes for all. We think the new auto-bidding system is badly thought out and would like to hear from you if you have any experience of it. Contact us at: housingaction@haringey.org.uk.

MIDNIGHT TRAIN TO SELLAFIELD

Once again, trains carrying highly radioactive nuclear waste are passing through Haringey twice a week. Many years ago these controversial trains travelled the Barking-Gospel Oak line, but they were re-routed following protests over the poor state of the track. Now they are back, because the North London Line running through the Olympics site is closed for platform upgrade. This re-routing may become permanent.

The deadly cargo is "spent fuel" from Sizewell power station, and is carried in 50-ton steel containers, but even this is not enough to contain the radiation. Contrary to industry reassurances, these containers have not been fully tested against the range of possible accidents. A serious accident could kill and injure many people in North London, and pollute the area for decades.

This waste is taken to Sellafield, where it is reprocessed to separate out plutonium. Plutonium is extremely radioactive and remains so for many thousand years; its main use is nuclear weapons. After 50 years of research, no safe method of disposal has been found. Reprocessing actually increases the problem of disposal, and a much better idea would be to store the waste on-site, thus avoiding its transport.

The government continue to push plans for

more nuclear power stations, which means much more nuclear waste. This is despite nuclear power being dangerous, hugely expensive and unsustainable. The nuclear industry continue to peddle the myth that nuclear power is "carbon free". While this is true of the power stations, other parts of the "nuclear fuel cycle", such as uranium mining, transport and enrichment, do produce carbon dioxide and require huge amounts of energy. As the higher grade uranium ore runs out, even more energy will be needed to produce the fuel. Nuclear power is no substitute for the urgent need to plan and fully develop alternative non-polluting and renewable energy sources.

The planned additional nuclear reactors are a new design that is not yet approved in the UK by the Health and Safety Executive (report due June 2011), yet site groundwork has already started. Of the two places where this design is already under construction, Finland's is now £2.3 billion over budget and 3 years behind schedule, and France's is 20 months behind schedule. You can guess who will continue to subsidise nuclear power in the UK and pick up the waste bill and the full costs of any accidents.

For more information check out the Nuclear Trains Action Group (NTAG) website at www.nonucleartrains.org.uk

WAR IN OUR SCHOOLS!



We've all seen the adverts on TV promoting the armed forces as a chance to "learn a skill and further your career". But the government also uses more underhand means to recruit people into "the best Army in the world".

Recently, secondary schools across London were invited to send students as young as 14 to visit the Army Music College for a day. Whilst the students were there, they were given leaflets praising the benefits of a military career and the opportunities for studying music in the armed forces. Studying music? Surely the role of the army is to train young working class people to kill those in countries whose policies the government doesn't agree with.

This is only one example of the way schools are now being used as recruitment centres. The age at which young people in Britain can join the armed forces is 16 the youngest in Europe. Old enough to learn to kill, but not to vote. The armed forces are now engaged in recruiting at an even earlier age.

Fortunately, there is a growing resistance to these tactics. Students, parents and teachers are actively campaigning against any recruitment in schools, and these campaigns are gaining support. We neither need nor want schools to be used as a means for children to be taught to wage war.

CUT THE CRAP

We thought it was only Doctor Who who could time travel. But the new Con-Dem coalition wants to take us back to the bad old days of Thatcherism: spending cuts, austerity measures, job losses and anti-union tactics. Cameron and Clegg have already planned £6 billion cuts in public services this year, while VAT may reach 20%. Both measures will hit the least well-off the hardest. Then there is Trident and the Afghan

war, which we are still paying for. At the same time bankers and traders can carry on their (big) business uncut and corporation tax is set to be reduced! The Con-Dem's newspeak may refer to "efficiency savings" or pretend "cuts won't hit frontline services", but what they really mean is "working class pay now". In our communities and workplaces we need to increase resistance and fight back against the

guard dogs of capitalism, be they bosses or politicians. It won't be easy, especially when the courts are also being used against strikes, as with Network Rail and British Airways. So what we need is mass collective action against a system that puts profits before people.

To illustrate this, here are some examples of recent local struggles. Some successful too!



THIS UNIVERSITY IS A FACTORY!

Well before the general election and the shouts of 'cuts for everyone', Further Education was under pressure to cut staff and courses in colleges and universities. A battle is being waged between those who value education and want to protect it, and ideologically driven managers trying to turn universities into businesses.

The latest attack is in Enfield where management at Middlesex University announced, without any consultation, that they were closing the whole of the philosophy department. The reasoning was purely a financial one - apparently the university can generate more income by shifting teaching away from humanities subjects to courses such as business studies. But the point is contested by the students, who state that "the management's case for closure is unconvincing even on its own terms".

As soon as the announcement was made, students moved into action. After management refused to meet with them, they occupied the 'Mansion' building on the Trent Park campus, demanding that management enter into negotiations with

them - an offer that was refused. The campaign then escalated. Lectures and events held on campus brought supporters from across London (including HSG) and the south east. The international community also voiced its support for the campaign, and condemned the university's decision.

When it became clear that they weren't leaving, Middlesex used the law against the occupiers. The university went to court and were granted an injunction to end the 12-day occupation. The following day, during another public rally, the remaining students inside the building ended the occupation.

As the university is still ignoring the students' demands, the campaign continues. It has gathered support from across the world and is part of the larger movement to protect education from the interests of business. While the government and the media are shouting for reducing funding across public services and education, we can stop this madness through collective action that fights to win.

For the latest on the campaign, go to <http://www.savemdxphil.com/>

EDUCATE. AGITATE. ORGANISE

When Tony Blair came to power all those years ago, he claimed his first priority was education, education, education. 15 years on, things seem a bit different. University fees keep rising, while fewer working class kids can afford to enrol. Labour has already cut £200 million from adult funding in FE, and further cuts of £340 million were in the pipeline if they had got back in. The Tories stated before the election that they will not reverse these cuts.

So it's no surprise that at the beginning of this year, management at the College of Haringey, Enfield and North East London (CoHENEL) on Tottenham High Road, told staff they were going to make cuts of around £2.5 million and sack 29 staff, as money was tight. CoHENEL attacked the classes that can least fight back, as the cuts are aimed at ESOL, Literacy and Supported Learning courses.

But teachers didn't agree. The staff have fought these cuts for the last few months including protests and strike action and

were preparing to walk out again on May 18th. Over the years colleges like CoHENEL have appointed more and more managers and bureaucrats on higher and higher salaries. If they wanted to look for savings, this might be a good place to start rather than teachers and lecturers on the front line educating people.

With the threat of further strike action and a growing campaign by the staff, management backed down and agreed there will be no compulsory redundancies.

Well done to the workers at CoHENEL for standing up for their jobs and the courses that many people in Haringey need. But the concern of voluntary redundancies remains and courses could still close.

Like New Labour before the election, the Con-Dem alliance have said funding for adult learning may be cut. The fight will continue and we need to give the workers as much support as we can in Haringey, London-wide and nationally.

CARRY ON DOCTOR

In November 2009, a shocking internal memo leaked by NHS Islington revealed plans to downgrade and close A&E at the Whittington Hospital in Archway. Before the end of the year, a grassroots campaign was set up and active. After months of struggle it has successfully ended with (former) Minister of State for Health Services Mike O'Brien making the timely announcement - a week before the general election - that he was "not convinced of the need for the A&E to close". What could have motivated this sudden U-turn in the government's long-term plans to undermine public services?

Although it treats 80,000 local residents a year, the highly-paid chief executives claimed that 60% of the patients could be treated more effectively in "lower-cost settings". These could be anything from your doctor's surgery to privately-built "polyclinics", the latest excuse to deprive public hospitals of crucial funding. Treating health as a commodity, politicians and bosses simply put our lives at risk.

The campaign to save the Whittington was an example of the type of resistance we need to put up to counter their attempts to make us pay for the crisis and the banks' bailout. Benefiting from strong community support and culminating in a 5,000-strong march to the hospital in February, the campaign undoubtedly forced policy-makers to rethink and eventually give up their plans. It was a clear success, in which HSG played a part, and demonstrates that results can be achieved against bureaucrats who think they can make decisions for us.

We deplore, however, that political parties ended up controlling the campaign and running it according



CIVIL SERVANTS GOVERNMENT

PCS, the civil servants' trade union, have won a major legal victory against the government. The High Court has ruled that the government acted unlawfully when it imposed, without PCS's agreement, changes to the existing redundancy scheme. The amendments would have lowered redundancy payouts and so made it easier and cheaper to cut civil service jobs and privatise more of our public services. PCS members took three days of strike action against the scheme in March, including on budget

day, but suspended their actions during the election. With this ruling, however, the new government is being forced back to the negotiating table.

The lesson is clear: action gets results. Doubters from other unions and Government officials had said that there was no alternative but to accept the cuts. But the first thing the Con-Dems have been shown - just four days after the election - is that they cannot ride roughshod over worker's rights.