



Pressure on County Council over arms investments

CCAAT, 14.12.2005

A group of campaigners held a protest on Tuesday outside a meeting of Cambridgeshire County Council to draw attention to the large investments that the council pension fund has in the arms industry. This currently includes 768,000 shares in GKN, and has previously included significant numbers of shares in BAe Systems, Cobham and Smiths Group.

In a startling display of the council's contempt for the public that elect it and pay its council tax, Cllr John Albert Powley (Conservative, Soham and Fordham Villages) of the Pension Fund Investment Committee hurled unprovoked abuse at the campaigners from the balcony above the entrance prior to the meeting, calling them "pathetic" and telling them to "grow up".



The group used the opportunity to put a Public Question to the council (only the second time the procedure has been used since its recent introduction), asking the council to consider adopting an ethical investment policy precluding investment in the arms industry. Despite the existence of research indicating that an ethical investment policy need not reduce financial performance, the leader of the council, Cllr Keith Walters (Conservative, Sawtree and Ellington), dismissed the idea on the basis that it might do exactly that.

Formed two months ago, the Cambridge Campaign Against the Arms Trade (CCAAT) is a grassroots organisation working to expose the investments that public institutions have in the arms industry. The campaign currently has a

twin focus on the County Council and the various colleges of Cambridge University that have extensive investments in arms manufacturers.

Did you know that Cambridge County Council invest millions of pounds in the arms trade through their pension fund?

Did you know that the County Council pension fund invests millions of pounds in the arms trade? Millions of pounds of our money is being invested in an industry that:

- supported the occupation of East Timor by Indonesia
- arms Israel which repeatedly breaks international law through their suppression of the Palestinian people
- supplied the illegal invasion and occupation of Iraq
- produces cluster bombs, white phosphorus and depleted uranium weapons

Help us pressure the council to adopt an ethical investment policy and stop funding the arms trade.

Community Radio on FM in Cambridge

Cambridge IMC, 09.02.2006



209 Radio is broadcasting on 103.5 FM for one week in Cambridge - the 10th - 19th of February. 209 Radio has been broadcasting over the internet since March 2003, building up its output - a range of specialist music programs with community and arts programmes being added all the time. And 209 Radio is hoping to hear soon about the results of its application for a long term FM community radio license.

As the Community Media Association say "Community Media is community owned and controlled, giving access to voices in the community and encouraging diversity, creativity and participation. Community media provide a

Cambridge IndyMedia provides a platform for reports from the struggles for a world based on freedom, cooperation, justice and solidarity. As part of the global IndyMedia network, Cambridge IndyMedia is created through a system of Open Publishing: anyone can contribute a written, video or audio report or picture to the Web site. All the articles and pictures in this newsletter are the work of local activists.

If you want to get involved, e-mail imc-cambridge@lists.indymedia.org

vital counterbalance to the increasing globalisation and commercialisation of the media."

The shows being broadcast include local news and views on Newzone, local and global issues on So Far and Yet So Near, socially responsible technology on Brain Candy and traveller issues on Romani Radio.

Cambridge Demo Against NHS Cuts

Simon Mullen, 17.12.2005



NHS services in Cambridgeshire and throughout East Anglia are suffering some of the worst cuts ever seen. These include:

- * Savage reductions in mental health services, with wholesale closures of wards and centres
- * Cuts and closures at community hospitals in Newmarket, Sudbury and other towns
- * Ward closures in major hospitals including Addenbrooke's, West Suffolk and Peterborough, where 200 jobs are under threat
- * Severe reductions in services at Ipswich, including banning 'obese' patients from certain operations on cost grounds
- * The possibility of some NHS organisations not being able to pay staff next year

This could all be averted if the government put in enough money to fund the NHS properly. Support our demonstration! Defend the National Health Service!

Guilty of Opposing the Arms Trade

JJ, 03.02.2006



Stuart Jordan, of Cambridge Campaign Against the Arms Trade, and Irene Willis, from South Essex CAAT, were in court on 23rd Jan. charged with "unlawful demonstration" for their role opposing the DSEi arms fair in September last year.

The police were at pains to state throughout the trial the significant size of the demonstration and how intimidating they found the "banners, dancing and bicycles" (!) The police were frustrated because they had set up a "pen" where they had decided protest was allowed to take place and some protesters had chosen to go elsewhere...

The police claimed that Jordan and Willis were a "serious disruption to the life of the Community" because they lay down in front of the Excel conference centre hoping to, in some small way, prevent the illegal acts that were taking place inside of the centre (for example the sale of leg irons and torture equipment)

The police were also asked to justify why Willis (pictured right) was cuffed behind her back and manhandled, and the arresting officer was forced to accept that she had been "calm and

compliant through out the incident" essentially constituting a "dead weight" rather than being a risk of assault or escape.

The defendants argued that they had no case to answer because Supt. Low who had issued the orders under Section 14 of the 1986 Public Order Act was not present to answer why he thought it was "reasonable" to curtail the democratic right to protest and impose small specified zones where protests was "allowed" to take place.

Without the opportunity to question why their demonstration had been ruled to be "unlawful" the court was unable to consider the fact that they were hoping to prevent greater crimes taking place. The magistrates did not agree and ruled that if Supt. Low decided something was illegal - then it was. That the act gave in the words of the defence "unfettered discretion to senior police officers".

It was also ruled that Willis' request for legal had been rejected despite her financial condition because it was "not in the interests of justice" for her to have legal representation.

The pair were found guilty and given conditional discharges of two years and fifteen months and fined. If you'd like to contact Stuart, or donate to his appeal to cover the fine please email stuartjordan32@hotmail.com

Multinational Chains on Mill Road

no chains 23.01.2006

A campaign has started to ask people to boycott the multinational chains on Mill Rd. Prompted by the recent opening of Pizza Hut and Chicken Cottage, a group of Romsey and Petersfield residents have been talking to shopkeepers, leafleting shoppers on Mill Rd and pushing leaflets through front doors in the area.

Mill Road is an oasis of independent shops in contrast to the city centre and Grafton centre - where you can find the same shops as in any city centre or shopping mall in the country. It has

a real character, and you can get to know the shopkeepers and have a chat on the weekly shop. There is food (take away and grocery) from all regions of the world. The diversity was well shown during the Mill Road winter fair in December.

Subway is another chain that has invaded Mill Road. And the Kailash shop has been threatened by their landlord with eviction to make way for a Ladbrokes betting shop (that would join the other two betting shops on Mill Road). And Perfect Pizza is part of the Papa Johns chain.

So far the response to the campaign has been overwhelmingly positive. The door to door leafleting has led to many of the leaflets being displayed in the windows of houses in the area. We can but hope this campaign prevents any more multinationals trying to set up shop on Mill Road. And ideally persuades Pizza Hut that they don't need their fourth store in Cambridge.

Cambridge Students Disrupt Arms Company Recruitment

dmish 16.11.2005

This afternoon, about 15 students attended the University Engineering Society "meet your new employer day" at the Guildhall in Cambridge. This included such lovely folk as Rolls Royce, GKN, ExxonMobil, QinetiQ, Shell and Thales. The demonstrators went inside and screamed next to the Rolls Royce and GKN stands to protest against these companies. They were ejected by University proctors.

The action follows the start of a campaign in Cambridge to get the university to disinvest from arms companies.

Rolls Royce manufactures engines for military aircraft that have been sold to such lovely companies as Indonesia, Burma and Saudi Arabia. GKN makes components for military aircraft used in Indonesia, Pakistan, Israel, China and Turkey.

Links

Cambridge Campaign Against the Arms Trade - <http://ccaat.cambridgeaction.net/>

209 Radio - <http://www.209radio.co.uk/>

No Chains - <http://www.cambridgeaction.net/nochains>

NHS Petition - <http://www.yps-petition.org/>

Cambridge Indymedia - <http://cambridge.indymedia.org.uk>