

# No Border : to the gallows

**The media, the police, the justice system, the city and regional government are in cahoots to feed the psychosis of a terrorist invasion. Could it be that the authorities have something to fear of the solidarity that this kind of event always creates?**



**Y**ou're the mayor of a city that will host for a week a major event on an issue of direct concern to your municipality. What do you do? Bouchart (UMP) has the answer: she canceled all cultural activities, called in police reinforcements, postponed a meeting of the city council, organized a ghost town campaign, gave alarmist interviews, put pressure on all the associations in Calais, and made sure not to meet with the No Border collective, under the pretext that the emails signed with the collective's name are "anonymous." "I have no idea who they are... It's signed 'No Border.' We don't know who's who, we can't identify them." Crossing the street that separates city hall from the Maison de la Culture where the No Border organizing committee meets is also out of the question. "Within this seemingly 'peace and love' movement, there are anarchists... Judging from their state of mind, anything could happen." Anything? Now here's a stance conducive to dialogue...

## Police everywhere Justice nowhere

At the prefecture, things are clear: they have imported truckloads of CRS (between 1000 and 2000 are penned in the Jules Ferry camp), packs of BAC\*-style cops in civilian clothes, and RG\* snoops will occupy Calais hotels commandeered for the occasion. Pierre de Bousquet de Florian\* is wary: "we see full well that the people we're talking to either do not keep their promises, or do not want to keep them." He is referring to the organizing committee's refusal to use land already reserved by Travellers, a point the préfet conveniently forgot to mention. He is acting "in good will," though, and his declarations prove it: he has "absolutely no illusion about the organizers' intentions." Indeed.

"All the documents we receive are signed No Border. But, to me, No Border is nobody." How witty... "We negotiate with different people each time. They're usually pawns, and we never see the real deciders." And he's paranoid, to boot... A structure without hierarchy is just too much for him to take!

And how about this one: "The demonstration request has been filed under false names, false identities... What are they so afraid of?" Maybe they're wary of this funny habit cops and magistrates have of putting people in jail under any pretext? During one of the negotiation meetings, the sub-prefect warned "not to reply to police

provocations." "You can't get much clearer than that!"

Migrant populations detained at the Administrative Detention Center of Coquelles have been transferred away for the occasion. Indeed, demanding the liberation of populations in exile at the gates of ADCs is precisely the kind of "ultraviolet actions" No Border participants are likely to commit.

## Pressure galore

Things aren't much better on the civil society side. Some humanitarian associations are wary of the "politicization" of the migration issue\*. Others fear possible retaliation on the mayor's part were they to participate: so long, subventions! Would the director of the Channel theatre have canceled the meeting organized by No Border in his building had he not been subjected to pressure? "I was asked to make this decision. But I did make

the Human Rights League usually are to denounce repressive policies in meaningless official statements. Yet this time the Human Rights League representative in Calais and the Green Party elected official for the region leisurely dump on No Border in Nord Littoral, the local rag.\* When we attempted to get in touch with them, they gave no sign of life... maybe they were ashamed to death. If some of the local associations of support for the sans papiers did not sign No Border's call to demonstrate,\* some eventually backed the document publicly,\* while many association members chose to participate in the event's organization in their own name.

## The media crusade

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card doesn't mean you can do anything you want. Second: the camp is organized in work groups and collegial meetings, and it is therefore especially important to secure it against informers. Third: when journalists finally start doing their job, we'll talk. This journalist and his colleagues wait nicely in the hall when ministers and CEOs have their secret meetings. Yet those usually concern millions of people. What's with that? When authorities speak, guard dogs lay down.

## Frenzied psychotics

This network of security, media and underground structures is worrying. We have to deal with police omnipresence, the prefecture and mayor's office recurrent declarations about "ultraviolence," the dozen articles in local media dedicated not covering the event, but to discuss the risks it allegedly entails... No Border camps are an opportunity to confront authorities through direct action (site occupations and blockades), and also to meet with migrant populations. Where "humanitarian" associations work in perpetual negotiation, we aim at showing clear and direct opposition, not against population, but against repressive, xenophobic and "ultraviolet" policies.

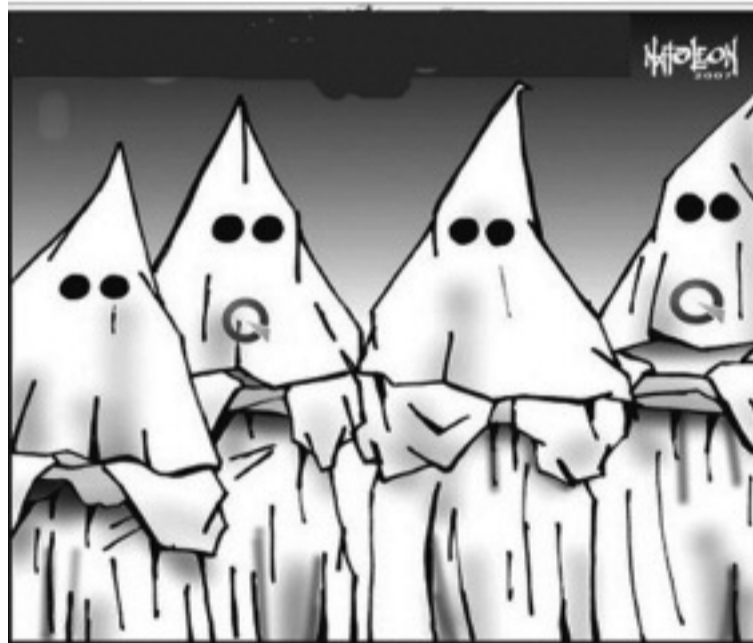
All quotes from Voix du Nord, Nord Littoral et Nord Eclair, newspapers owned by the Rossel media empire (that also owns L'Indépendant, Lille Plus, Nouvelle Côte d'Opale, etc.). For more information, read La Brique n°12.

### Notes:

- 1 : Brigade Anti-Criminalité (Anti-Crime Brigade), mobile police units in civilian clothes known for acting like cowboys in the French projects.
- 2 : Renseignements Generaux (General Intelligence Services).
- 3 : Prefect for the Pas-de-Calais region, former director of the French counter-intelligence agency, co-prince of Andorra between 1997 and 1999 (no kidding), and also involved in the Clearestream money laundering case.
- 4 : Quote of the sub-prefect during a meeting with a No Border delegation.
- 5 : Emmaus, the Secours Catholique and Médecins du Monde have officially "desolidarized" from No Border (Nord Eclair, 06/18/09).
- 6 : 06/13/09 edition.
- 7 : Except for the Terre d'Errance association.

\* Notably, the C'Sur network and the Salam association, whose official statements denounce the psychosis fed by the authorities.

## The sub-prefecture of Calais :



## Tranparency, clarity, communication

it, freely," he said, otherwise adding that "the future of the Channel is at stake." And its future is not challenged by No Border: "honestly, I don't think that a lawyer and a doctor were going to break everything in the theater." Considering that city hall subvention to the theater amount to a yearly €800,000, it seems that mayor Bouchat was the most likely to weigh on the director's "free will."

## "Subtle" positionings

We know how prompt the Green Party and

Newspapers have given full pages to the authorities, entertaining fantasies of demonstrations turning "ultraviolet" without bothering to investigate the veracity of those claims or allowing for a dissenting opinion. The media elected to pontificate on the hackneyed talking points of cops and informers: security, order, violence and threat. The way they describe the No Border network borders on the comical: "an international nebula of associations with anarchists sensibilities," "the Greenpeace of immigration," "anti-imperialist mercenaries," "pacifist hippies or thugs?," "underground ultraleft network," "extreme left wing anarchist group" ... When we asked a Nord Littoral journalist about these terms, he replied: "we did it to provoke No Border people into reacting." Now that's true journalism...

The Voix du Nord takes the cake with this headline: "The No Border camp, a no-go zone." The journalist lets it all out: "these militants... lock themselves up, turn inward, isolate themselves and delimit a no-go zone." He lays it on even thicker: "they clearly do everything to live in autarcy." Why so hateful? Because like the cops, the press has been invited to stay outside of the camp. Why? First: because holding a press