

Case thrown out after Labour council attempts to jail Green councillor



27 October 2017

A judge has thrown out a case against Green Party councillor Alison Teal for protesting against the felling of healthy trees in Sheffield [1].

The Labour-run Sheffield City Council had accused Teal and other protesters of breaking the injunction the council had taken out against them [2] and asked for custodial sentences.

Natalie Bennett, Green Party former leader, was in court for the hearing. She said:

"I welcome today's decision by the judge, which confirms Alison acted lawfully in supporting the people she was elected to represent in trying to save healthy, valuable street trees. Sheffield's Labour City Council has put considerable resources into pursuing Alison and I think the people of the city will be asking why it chose to do that."

Notes:

1. <https://twitter.com/helenpidd/status/923902485378600960>
2. <https://www.greenparty.org.uk/news/2017/08/15/greens-condemn-high-court-ruling-against-sheffield-tree-protesters/>
3. Protester Calvin Payne has been found to have breached the injunction and will be sentenced on Friday, November 3. The case against protester Siobhan O'Malley has been postponed for a week.

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Young Greens call on government to defend universities against 'campaign of intimidation'



26 October 2017

Responding to today's *Daily Mail* splash 'Our remainder universities' [1], Young Greens co-chair Sam Murray said:

"As an academic I find this witch hunt by the right wing media a frightening exercise in enforcing a pro-Brexit doctrine. Britain's universities are world-class, and our academics have a right to teach without fear of smears and harassment from the press. It's crucial that the government stand up for them and condemn this campaign of intimidation."

The headline comes after pro-Brexit MP Chris Heaton-Harris sent a letter to vice-chancellors requesting details of their teaching on the EU [2].

Notes:

1. <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-5018251/Remainer-universities-Anti-Brexit-bias-laid-bare.html>
2. <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2017/oct/25/chris-heaton-harris-mp-who-asked-for-list-of-tutors-lecturing-on-brexit-was-doing-research>

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Green Co-Leader challenges BBC to stop giving airtime to climate deniers



26 October 2017

Green Party Co-Leader Jonathan Bartley has written to the BBC asking whether they will review their policy of giving airtime to those who deny the existence of human-made climate change.

Bartley's letter comes after the BBC admitted fault for letting the views of prominent climate-change sceptic Lord Lawson go unchallenged on their flagship Today programme [1].

Bartley welcomed the BBC admission but challenged their underlying assumption that giving space for climate-change deniers on their programmes offers viewers and listeners "balance".

In his letter to David Jordan, Director of Editorial Policy and Standards, Bartley said:

"I was pleased to see the BBC complaints team apologise for the Radio 4 Today

programme interview with Lord Nigel Lawson on 10th August 2017. I am writing today to ask what the BBC now plans to do to make sure this does not happen again?

“The overwhelmingly scientific consensus is not only that climate change is happening but that human activity is causing it. 97% of peer-reviewed scientific papers say it is human-made. The 3% who question this link have been found to contain errors.

“Giving credibility to those on the fringes with no evidence to support their claims does not provide balance, it misleads.”

Notes

[1] <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-41744344>

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Whistleblowers: European Parliament calls for urgent action to protect those who reveal information in the public interest



24 October 2017

A majority of MEPs today voted to support a report from the European Parliament's Legal Affairs committee calling for urgent and effective protection for whistleblowers at EU level. Molly, who was rapporteur for the opinion in the Economic and Financial Affairs Committee, commented:

“Today's report calls on the European Commission to present legislation to protect whistleblowers in both the public and private sectors before the end of the year. We cannot allow the Commission to drag its feet any longer. Whistleblowers urgently need protection; this is fundamental to freedom of speech in Europe.

Speaking to the European Parliament ahead of the vote, Molly paid tribute to two whistleblowers in particular: Antoine Deltour, who exposed the Lux Leaks tax scandal, and Daphne Galizia the Maltese journalist killed by a car bomb last week and who led the Panama Papers investigation into corruption in

Malta. Molly is due to meet with Daphne's family this week. She told MEPs:

"These two brave people gave us the information we need to challenge the corrupt and self-serving behaviour of the global plutocracy. Behaviour that is shaking the very foundations of our democracy. One was found guilty and barely avoided jail; the other was viciously murdered. This is the sort of courage it takes to be a whistleblower in a world without protective legislation."

Molly went on to say:

"It is thanks to whistleblowers that concrete policy changes to tackle tax fraud, money laundering and corruption have been initiated. We therefore have a deep responsibility to act to protect people that take the brave step of challenging wrongdoing or illegal or corrupt activity in Europe. Without protection, whistleblowers and journalists will continue to suffer. We expect the Commission to listen and bring forward robust proposals as soon as possible."

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[Sit-in against HS2 construction reaches its eighth consecutive day](#)



24 October 2017

Activists protesting against HS2 preparatory works have reached the eighth day of their sit-in.

The campaigners have been camping at a site off Harvil Road in Harefield where a construction company has been felling trees in preparation for HS2 construction [1].

They believe that the works are being carried out illegally because no planning permission has been granted. They are worried that the works, currently taking place in a protected woodland, is going to enormous damage to habitats and wildlife.

Sarah Green, 62 from Hillingdon and a member of the Green Party, is one of the protesters who has been at the site since 16 October.

Green said:

“HS2 Limited and their contractors need to know that we are not going anywhere. Now that HS2 have started their enabling works, they have their sights set on forest clearance and wetland drainage in 300 acres of woodland in West London. That only means we are going to step up our protests, not shy away. Their plans would alter the natural balance of the environment, of our air, water and habitats. It cannot be allowed to happen.”

Notes

[1]

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2017/oct/03/hs2-protester-spends-night-under-digger-demolition>

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