

Nantes: A community fights on against the invasion of the bulldozer empire

And as the empire grows, the community must also grow, and look for those to join the fight.

For a rural area of farms, fields, houses, marshlands and forests, 25 km north of the city of Nantes, France, a storm cloud has been gathering for over 40 years. As an integral part of the massive expansion of the so-called «ecometropole» of the grand-ouest, the local government has been buying up an area of over 1000 hectares to make way for the construction of a so-called «high quality environmental project» - a new airport, highway bypass and tgv train line. This zone is officially known as the ZAD, «Zone d'Aménagement Différé» and by us who resist as the «Zone A Défendre».

Since the announcement of the plans, local residents and farmers have organized their resistance through petitions, demonstrations, tractor occupations and blockades. In spring and autumn '09, the area was in a state of military guard, as 150 military cops were sent out to protect machines involved in the early works of core drilling and soil sampling. This is not a normal course of action; rather it was the response of the local

government to acts of sabotage that occurred earlier on during the works.

In September 2009, after a climate camp, a call was made to occupy the abandoned houses and threatened areas of the ZAD, with support of local people in resistance to the airport.

This call has been answered. Already there are some 13 occupied areas in the ZAD, including empty farmhouses, caravans on abandoned land, forests and collective gardens. On July 15th 2010, authorities delivered papers to 5 occupied areas, warning the occupiers that they should vacate these places by the 30th July or face legal proceedings and evictions. Earlier that day, an agreement was signed by 5 unimportant bureaucrats to finance the construction of the airport. On 29th July, about 40 people occupied the council offices in Nantes. The next day it was made public that the multinational construction company Vinci had been awarded the contract to build the airport.

Already the first works have begun on the Barreau Routier, a highway bypass being built to serve the airport. In August the city of Nantes made public their

search for a security company to be on constant guard on the construction sites and areas around the ZAD.

But we won't be moved so easily. Busily growing food to support us over the next few years, looking for further areas that are to be occupied and defended when the time comes. If you have your own project to contribute, like setting up a new space, garden, ideas for taking action, or any other useful resources or unusual talents, even better. We are encouraging people to try and be as self sufficient as possible within this space, as well as wanting to be inspired to become part of this ever growing struggle against the machine of progress.

If you can't come to visit us, maybe you feel the need to visit some sites or offices of Vinci in your area.

Wishlist / ideas of stuff to bring along:

bicycles and trailers, tarps, tools, building and barricading materials, climbing materials, computer and technical skills, wheelbarrows, rope of all kinds, books, vans/trucks, media resources, ideas, inspiration, fighting energy, dentists, donkeys and dragons.

Stand: 17.09.2010

Reclaim the Fields and the Squats of the ZAD FOR A FIGHTING FARM, LET'S SQUAT THE LAND!

For forty years, those who decide and those who tarmac have been salivating over a new airport near to Nantes to feed their voracious dreams of a metropolis and of economic expansion. This project would cover 1650 of agricultural land and rural hamlets: the ZAD («zone of recorded planning» in French administrative language, in other words, the «Zone About to be Destroyed»). The Notre-Dame-des-Landes airport project, which could have been shelved as a inopportune anachronism, has been adapted over time, becoming a flagrant symbol of the con and the ideological arrogance of «Green Capitalism».

The struggle has reached a critical stage

with the signing, this January, of the construction and exploitation contract with the Vinci group, world leader in planning territories. The colossal propaganda offensive is being reinforced to justify the project, as it's promoters must feel they are walking a tightrope. Although they aim to start work in the coming years, we know we can still win this fight and we are prepared to ensure that any attempt to tarmac these lands will cost them dear. The examples of victories won in this region in the past, including the defeat of the nuclear projects in Plogoff, Carnet or Pellerin, show that even the

most megalomaniac companies can be paralyzed with enough determination and the right tools.

As well as the many actions in support of the farmers and residents resisting

