

Exchange

Newsletter for Aviation Campaigners across Europe

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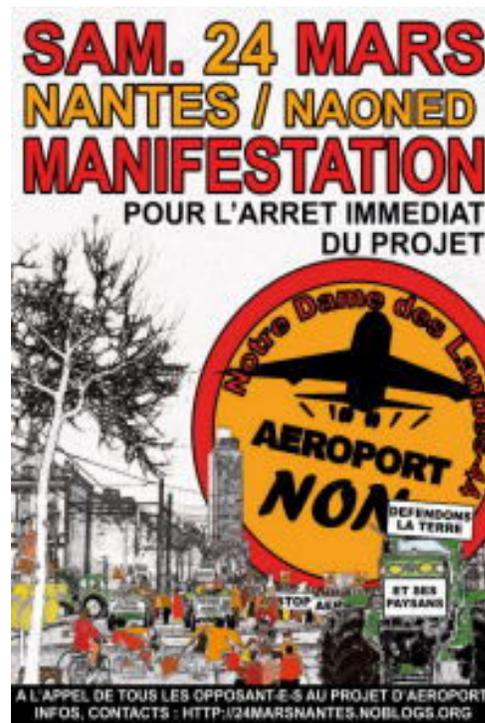
Germany in Revolt against Airport Expansion

There are public protests across Germany every week against airport expansion. The main protests are taking place in Frankfurt against the impact of the fourth runway which Chancellor Angela Merkel opened in October. But there have also been protests in Munich, Berlin, Cologne, Dusseldorf and Leipzig. I visited Germany at the end of February. See my reports on pages two and three.

March 24th

Day of action in Germany

French campaigners to occupy Nantes



March 24th will be a big day of protest by airport campaigners. Tens of thousands of people are expected to take place in protests across Germany and the campaigners fighting plans for a new airport outside Nantes in France are planning to occupy a key square in the city for 12 hours. The UK is hoping to stage a supportive protest. The more protests the better!

- If you are planning protest of support in your country, let us know so we can tell the media.

Thousands Protest at Frankfurt Airport



It was a privilege to address the rally in Frankfurt

It was a privilege to address a rally of thousands of campaigners inside the terminal at Frankfurt Airport. Rarely, in over thirty years of campaigning, have I experienced such raw emotion. People are angry that they were misled about the new flight paths and the noise of the planes. There is also real concern that a promised night flight ban (between midnight and 5am) might now not be introduced on a permanent basis. They are calling for the new fourth runway to be closed down. The campaigners gather in their thousands every Monday night in the terminal. But other protests take place on other days of the week in many areas affected by the noise. One Saturday protest drew up to 20,000 people. The airport and the regional government simply do not know what to do about the protests. It is their worst nightmare: thousands of law-abiding citizens descending upon the terminal at least once a week. The authorities have employed Burson-Marsteller, the PR firm to discredit the protesters. Burson-Marsteller have arranged for the fares of airport workers to be paid to attend rival demonstrations. We salute the Frankfurt protesters!

Watch this inspiring **video** of the Frankfurt protest:

http://www.focus.de/panorama/videos/frankfurt-tausende-protestieren-gegen-fluglaerm_vid_30107.html

But Frankfurt is not alone. There have been demonstrations in **Berlin**, where a new out-of-town airport is threatening real problems for the residents, **Dusseldorf**, **Cologne** and **Leipzig** where night flights is a big problem. However it is perhaps at **Munich** where the expansion of German airports could come to a shuddering halt. I report on my visit there on the next page.

Burson-Marsteller

Public Relations Firm being used against the Frankfurt protesters

“When Evil needs public relations, Evil has Burson-Marsteller on speed-dial.”

Burson-Marsteller is the company that governments with poor human rights records and corporations in trouble with environmentalists have turned to when in crisis. The world's biggest PR company was employed by the Nigerian Government to discredit reports of genocide during the Biafran War, the Argentinian Junta after the disappearance of 35,000 civilians, and the Indonesian government after the massacres in East Timor. It also worked to improve the image of the late Romanian president Nicolae Ceausescu and the Saudi Royal family. Its corporate clients have included the Three Mile Island nuclear plant, which suffered a partial meltdown in 1979, Union Carbide after the Bhopal gas leak Bhopal gas killed up to 15,000 people in India.

Read more: <http://bursonmarstellerwatch.com/>

Munich: 'The German Heathrow'



Munich could become the German Heathrow. There is a fighting chance that the protesters against the proposed third runway at Munich could match the success of the campaigners who successfully defeated plans for a third runway at Heathrow. If the Munich campaigners do triumph, it will reinforce the message sent out by the famous Heathrow victory that it has become increasingly difficult to build new runways or new airports anywhere in Europe.

These are the reasons why I believe the Munich campaigners will be successful.

- The campaigners are starting early. It will be some years before the runway could be started which gives them time to build up their campaign.
- There is a committed group of climate activists – coordinated by Young Friends of the Earth Bavaria – who have made links with local residents whose communities would be destroyed by new runway or whose lives would be damaged by the noise. The local residents' groups are also fighting first-class campaigns. They are supported by a number of politicians from most of the political parties.
- The economic case for the new runway is very weak. The existing runways are not at capacity. In order to fill the new runway, the airport will need to attract planes from other airports. The airport is justifying the billions of pounds of largely public money it would cost to build the new runway on the fact that it would reduce delays to passengers to 4 minutes (from 9 minutes)! There is no need for more jobs in the vicinity. The immediate area around the airport has the lowest rate of unemployment - 2.8% - in the whole of Germany. And Munich is already Germany's richest city. Munich has the largest number of flights to domestic destinations of any German Airport – a lot of them could be transferred to rail.

Given the power of the aviation industry, it is always a tough fight for campaigners, but the Munich campaigners intend to build on the success they already have had. Expect to see lively actions, flashmobs, a climate camp, peaceful direct action, a growing coalition and a serious challenge to the reasons given for building the new runway.

John Stewart

Tell us your news!

Each newsletter will have a section about what is happening in the different campaigns in the different countries around Europe.

- Let us know what is happening at your airports
- Send us information about events you are holding or campaigns you are doing
- Tell us about your successes.....and failures!
- Make this newsletter a real exchange of information

Also send your material to the UECNA website:
www.uecna.eu email JP Pago on jp.pago@free.fr

Campaigning and Information Sheets
UECNA has published short campaigning and briefing sheets to assist organizations with their campaigning:
<http://www.uecna.eu/sip.php?article161>

If you want to be able to track the flight paths in your area, UECNA can help.
Look at www.dfld.de or email Horst Weise on mail@DFLD.de

Two very useful websites:

- Transport and Environment (T & E): <http://www.transportenvironment.org/>
- European Environmental Bureau (EEB): <http://www.eeb.org/>

UECNA On-line Library

UECNA is setting up an online library where we can all access reports, campaign materials and useful information. We all have a lot of material that would be useful for other campaigners. Email me if you want to put anything on to the online library.

Two sites which show you whether you airport and the airlines using it is losing or gaining passengers:

<http://www.anna.aero/european-airline-traffic-trends/>

<http://www.anna.aero/european-airport-traffic-trends/>

If you have videos you want to share, email them to johnstewart@btconnect.com

UECNA Annual General Meeting

The UECNA Annual General Meeting is being held in Brussels on Saturday on Saturday 31st March. If you would like to come email johnstewart2@btconnect.com

This newsletter has been published by UECNA. We are a network of airport community campaign groups across Europe. Our main concern is the noise for residents living around the airports and under the flight paths. We have regular meetings, organize conferences and take part in marches, demonstrations and other visible activities. We also lobby the European Parliament and the European Commission. To find out more visit our website: www.uecna.eu If your group is interested in joining UECNA, email johnstewart2@btconnect.com