

LDMG UPDATE 14TH MAY 2002

MAYDAY ARRESTS

According to the police, 54 people were arrested on Mayday. We know that 34 have been charged (of the other 20 no further action is being taken in some cases, whilst others are on police bail.

The charges range from, at the worst, violent disorder to minor charges such as drunk and disorderly. Already a number of counts of violent disorder have been reduced to threatening words and behaviour. The charge most widely used is s5, for swearing at the cops!

Although a few people were initially remanded in prison, as far as we know, all but one person (who pleaded guilty to going equipped to cause criminal damage and is awaiting sentencing) are now out on bail. Most cases have been remanded for 4 weeks to allow the cops to view their video evidence, CCTV and, presumably, videos from TV companies and photographs from press photographers. However a few trials will take place in the next few weeks. One person has already been given a £400 fine for s5 and five other cases have been completed.

WITNESSES NEEDED

Thanks to those who responded to our appeal for witnesses. We still urgently require witnesses to arrests. Please e-mail or send details of the arrest, including the time and place, with your details. This may keep someone out of prison.

LDMG WEBSITE: <http://www.phreak.co.uk/ldmg/>

After a number of years in mothballs, the LDMG website is now up and running. On it you will find useful legal advice, back issues of the newsletter, press releases and demo reports. We will be adding more material over the coming months. If you run a website feel free to add a link.

MAYHEM SECRET SENTENCING GUIDELINES

In our last issue we revealed the existence of secret sentencing guidelines in relation to Mayday cases. Since then we have been given the classic civil service run-around. We wrote to the Lord Chancellor asking for the Guidelines to be made public. His Department replied passing the buck to the Home Office. Now the Home Office have sent a two page letter which does not even mention the Guidelines – but does confirm that sentencing guidelines are the responsibility of the Lord Chancellor’s Department. We have written back to both!

BENEFIT GIG

Our thanks to Robb Johnson and Dr Feelshite for playing a benefit for LDMG, which raised £202. Most of this has been spent on Mayday bust cards and phone bills, so any donations would be most welcome.

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ABOUT US

The Legal Defence & Monitoring Group provides legal observers for protests/demonstrations. We cannot cover every event but are always willing to advise. We also provide unconditional support for anyone arrested on protests where we had legal observers. We can be contacted by post: LDMG, C/o BM Haven, London WC1N 3XX (please send a stamped self-addressed envelope); by e-mail: ldmgmail@yahoo.co.uk and by ‘phone: 020 8245 2930 (24hr answerphone).