

PLANE STUPID
For immediate release

Sunday 24th September 2006

SERMON ON THE RUNWAY

~ Baptist Minister leads airport shutdown protest against climate change

Environmental protestors (1) have this morning breached security at Nottingham East Midlands Airport and established a second camp for climate action - this time on an airport taxiway. Their aim is to stop carbon emissions from what they are describing as a "climate change factory." (2) A Baptist Minister whose former parish is in Nottingham is leading a remembrance service on the taxiway, in memory of the victims of climate change, reminding his congregation of the Bishop of London's comments that "Flying is a symptom of sin." (3)

The Rev. Malcolm Carroll is conducting the service (from a pulpit he's constructed) with twenty five smartly dressed activists wearing suits who have chained themselves across the taxiway to prevent planes from leaving. Two tents, emblazoned with, "Climate Camp" have been pitched. The climate camp (4) campaigners from action group Plane Stupid (5) have pledged that this is part of a new wave of climate activism born at Drax Power Station in Yorkshire last month.

Making safety paramount, the protestors have taken steps to nullify the risk to the public by remaining on the taxiway rather than the runway thereby allowing planes to land in case of emergency. Police were immediately notified that this was a peaceful protest by environmental campaigners.

Nottingham East Midlands airport was chosen for the demonstration since it specialises in short haul flights, which are both unnecessary and unsustainable. (6) A huge number of the flights at this airport take place at night making them more damaging to the climate (7) and causing more harassment than usual to local residents. (8)

Speaking for the activists, writer and campaigner George Monbiot, said, "The real security threat comes from climate change, which is killing over 160,000 people every year – that's the same as a 9/11 every week."

The Rev. Malcolm Carroll, a member of Plane Stupid, said, "As the Bishop of London rightly put it, the science of climate change now means that flying is a sin. Tony Blair has known for years that climate change presents the biggest danger to life on earth so why doesn't he do the Christian thing and ban unnecessary and unsustainable short haul flights?"

He continued:

"The Climate Camp at Drax was just the start. The people killing our planet should be put on notice; this direct action movement is going to be bigger than anything this country has seen before."

This protest comes during the Labour Party Conference but Plane Stupid is already planning a national day of action against short haul flights on November 6th during the UN International Climate talks in Nairobi.

For more information/interviews:

On the taxiway: Richard George on 07984410021
Outside the airport: Joss Garman on 07847485946
In Edinburgh (for studio interviews): John Stewart on 07957385650
By phone: 07847372558

www.planestupid.com

Any email responses to: press@planestupid.com

Professional pictures available

Notes to editors:

- 1) The protestors include persons from London, Wales, Essex, Sheffield, Cambridge, Manchester and the Midlands.
- 2) Aviation is the fastest growing cause of climate change. For more: www.planestupid.com
- 3) Richard Chartres, Bishop of London who is third most senior figure in the CoE and who chairs the bishops' panel on the environment, said: "There is now an overriding imperative to walk more lightly upon the earth and we need to make our lifestyle decisions in that light...Making selfish choices such as flying on holiday or buying a large car are a symptom of sin. Sin is not just a restricted list of moral mistakes. It is living a life turned in on itself where people ignore the consequences of their actions." <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,2087-2281620,00.html>
- 4) The first climate camp was held at Drax from August 26th – September 4th, and this kick started the climate camp movement. www.climatecamp.org.uk
- 5) Plane Stupid is Britain's first national direct action group against the unsustainable growth in aviation. It is NOT a Christian group. www.planestupid.com
- 6) 45% of all flights in Europe are to destinations less than 500km away. (That's the same as London – Scottish border!) These are places easily reachable by train or bus alternatives which are over ten times less polluting.
- 7) <http://www.extra.rdg.ac.uk/news/details.asp?ID=671> (Report in Nature Journal)
- 8) http://www.foe.co.uk/resource/consultation_responses/east_midlands_airport.pdf#search=%22noisiest%20airport%20in%20Britain%20Nottingham%22 includes a comprehensive analysis of the environmental impacts of this particular airport

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