

## **The Prospect Park Three have been set free!**

# **ALL CHARGES DISMISSED FOR ARRESTED “PESTICIDE TRUCK BLOCKERS”**

BROOKLYN, NY, September 20—Judge Alex Calabrese late yesterday dismissed charges on all three health and human rights advocates, the Prospect Park 3, arrested in Prospect Park on the night of August 18-19, after challenging City government attempts to begin covering the park with toxic pesticides.

The three were Selena Coppa and Gabrelle Langholtz, both affiliated with the Green Party, and Joel Meyers, of Breathable Air, Not Pesticide Poison (BAN-PP), originally founded as Active Resistance to Malathion Madness (ARMM). Police charged them failing to comply with a direct order of a police officer when they refused voluntarily to clear themselves from the intended path of pesticide spray trucks.

Judge Calabrese prompted defendant Selena Coppa to explain her participation, and she explained the toxic effects of mass pesticide spraying. She emphasized that police were forced to accompany the spray trucks hour after hour without any protective gear. “You’ll make a great teacher,” Judge Calabrese responded.

The arrests followed a 10 p.m. rally of nearly 200 people, which demanded an end to the escalating spraying of pesticide. Speakers and participants rejected the official rationale for the spraying. Federal, state and city governments claim that the spraying is a justified public health measure to prevent the spread of mosquito-borne West Nile Fever.

The rally included patients made sick by the spraying and offered expert information concerning the harmful effects of the pesticides, in contrast with the relative mildness of West Nile Fever in all but a handful of cases. The authenticity of West Nile cases are under suspicion, since the agencies in charge refuse to release the identities of the claimed victims, blocking independent confirmation. Some suggested that the spraying program may be the product of corruption by chemical and pharmaceutical companies, indicating that a West Nile Virus vaccine, variously called Orafax or Chemiravax, are already projected for mass marketing. Others wondered whether West Nile Virus and the massive spraying were experiments in biological warfare, with documentation proving that if true, it would by far not be the first time unknowing citizens were used as guinea pigs.

The rally was called by Brooklyn Anti-Spray activist Robert A. Miller, and also was joined by the No Spray Coalition (718/670-7110), the lead plaintiff of the lawsuit calling for judicial intervention to force government agencies to observe legally binding restrictions on pesticide spraying. Evidence shows a policy of wholesale violation. Compliance with legally mandated requirements would effectively halt blanket pesticide spraying. But a judge has to worry that any ruling to restrain pesticide spraying could lead to the judge being condemned in sensationalist headlines if even one death is attributed to West Nile Virus. Meanwhile, thousands of potential deaths triggered by toxic spraying is politically safer, because of the difficulty of proving logically indirect causes of, say, asthma attacks, especially when the statistics are processed by a political bureaucracy. Mass action is urgently needed to compensate for the uphill tilt created by this pressure on the courts.

Organizers vowed to be back on the streets of Brooklyn tonight to demonstrate how strongly they feel about the slogan they chant: Toxic Spray, No Way! They added that massive public action is key to success in the courts.

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