

Press release 1 September 2002

Freedom to Pollute Spreading over the World

The world's Media Cover Provoking Statue of Liberty Spilling out Smoke

Just one day after the statue was unveiled in central Copenhagen last Monday, a quick search on the Internet revealed a vast media coverage: Le Monde and Le Figaro in France, Metro in Finland and Sweden, TV stations in Hungary, Portugal and Australia, a radio station in Peru - just to mention a few.

The 28 feet Statue of Liberty replica was planned to remain in its site all through the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, spilling out smoke to parody America's smoking environmental policies. However, the Copenhagen City Council banned the exhibition of the sculpture in the central Kongens Nytorv, allegedly for esthetical reasons.

This argument did not convince the artist, Jens Galschiot who exclaimed: "This is blatant political obstruction!" and added: "It's a farcical claim that the world's most famous sculpture - the American liberty symbol - is too bad taste to be exhibited in Copenhagen."

The official ban has in no way diluted the guts of the happening. On the contrary, dynamics has been injected. Placed aslant on a boat trailer, the statue has legally been transformed into a vessel. "The appearance of a fallen angel may have a symbolic interpretation" - to quote to the artist.

Displaced by the City Council's esthetical pundits, the vessel is now cruising through the streets of the Danish capital, coming to a halt at places of symbolic importance. Undoubtedly, most salient of the sites has so far been the *US embassy*, where the statue was smoking for about 20 minutes, as an overt accusation against the super power's arrogance and contempt for the rest of the world.

The US ambassador in Denmark, Mr Stuart Bernstein was handed over a handwritten message to President George W. Bush with the wording:

Dear George,

We hope that you are enjoying your holiday at the ranch while the rest of the world is meeting in Johannesburg, trying to save the Planet.

Yours, The Danish 92 Group

The vessel set afloat by the Danish environmentalists is sticking to its course, without barnacles on the hull. Can the same be said of the world summit in Johannesburg?

Information on the whereabouts of the statue is available on:

www.FreedomToPollute.com and www.92grp.dk

or Dan Hindsgaul: Tel: +45 2810 9021 - e-mail: dan@nordic.greenpeace.org

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