



WAKE UP! WAKE UP! IT'S YER TERROR-BILL

# SchNEWS

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# STATE OF TERROR

**Are you digging a tunnel to prevent a road from being built through your neighbourhood? Have you pulled up a few Genetically modified crops from your local test site? Maybe you spoke at a meeting where a member of the Animal Liberation Front, for example, also spoke? Well I'm afraid to tell you that you are soon to be deemed a TERRORIST!**

The government are starting to realise that protests are not going away, that people are getting more advanced and organised by using such new technology as telephones and the internet! To combat the outrageous behaviour of people meeting up in public spaces and discussing issues, the government have introduced the glorious, updated, newly improved.... Terrorism Bill!!

Terrorism, in it's hot off the press state, is now "the use of serious violence against persons or property, or the threat to use such violence to intimidate or coerce the Government, the public or any section of the public for political, religious or ideological ends."

This new Bill, which is being fast-tracked through parliament, is targeting environmental groups, animal rights protestors and anyone who shows a social or moral conscience.

If you intended to destroy GM crops coz they are contaminating your local organic farm, you will have less rights than a person who was involved in deliberate assault and robbery. Basically, you will be classed the same legally as the Soho nail bomber!

## **FIT THE BILL ?**

At present, the only organisations listed are those associated with Northern Ireland. But the Bill gives the police or government the power to add to this list. Reclaim The Streets, Earth First!, Animal Liberation Front have all hit the headlines recently as leading persistent and destructive campaigns against property. By demonising a group, organisation, or sector of a community, you can legitimise a treatment of them that is seen as 'fair punishment' by the general public. This is exactly what happened with Northern Ireland, the coal miners, the anti-poll tax demonstrators, etc.

Under Clause 3 of the new legislation, it will become an offence just to be connected with the new definition of 'terrorists'. If direct action organisations are being targeted as potential terrorists, then it is only a short step to 'proscription'. Once an organisation has been proscribed 'terrorist', it will become a criminal offence to belong to that organisation, to openly support it, or to speak out at a meeting where members of that organisa-

tion were also speaking. The Bill is scare-mongering people against joining organisations, regardless of whether or not they personally take part in criminal activity.

In fact, you won't even have to be directly involved with the organisation. The Incitement clauses of the Bill (clauses 57-59) would make it an offence to support by words alone an armed struggle in a country outside the UK. Those supporting such struggles as the Zapatistas in Mexico, or the Tamil Tigers of Sri Lanka, will be under investigation. Under the same clauses, there is a danger that refugees who have fled from repressive regimes to this country will become a legitimate target of the police merely because they support the overthrow of that regime.

CLAUSE 38/39 states that the police will be able to arrest, without a warrant, anyone they reasonably suspect as being a 'terrorist'. You won't have to actually have done anything. The powers of stop and search will be extended to include strip searches without a warrant, and failure to comply will result in a three month sentence.

As well as this, new rights are being given to the armed forces with regards to searching premises if they have reasonable suspicion of the property containing munitions and 'wireless transmitter or scanner'. Does this mean that we could be listening to Pirate Radio Terrorism FM? Or that John Peel and Jimmy Saville were once terrorists in their early radio career days? The wording of the Bill is ambiguous and open to misuse thru' misinterpretation.

Clause 18 states that it will be an offence not to report any knowledge of 'terrorist activity'. This has far-reaching implications for investigative journalists who could face up to five years in jail for not grassing people up.

## **HISTORY OF THIS BILL**

The Bill is going through its Parliamentary stages at an alarming rate, and looks set to become law sometime this autumn. It will replace both the Prevention of Terrorism Act of 1974, and the Northern Ireland Act of 1973. These two Acts have led to some of the worst human rights abuses in this country over the last 25 years, contributed to miscarriages of justice and have led to the unnecessary detention of thousands of innocent people, mainly Irish. This new Bill blatantly ignores the European Convention of Human Rights.

The original Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Act was rushed through Parliament in 1977 in record time - first presented to Parliament on a Wednesday it was law by Friday morning. Not a single Labour MP voted against it.

Despite what the government said at the time, the

PTA was never meant to convict people or prevent bombings - it was introduced to prevent the Irish community in Britain from expressing its support for a united Ireland. Less than 7% of the more than 5,000, mainly Irish, people arrested under the PTA in Britain in its first seven years were charged with any offence at all, although many were detained for days without charge.

The PTA has been widely used to expel innocent Irish people from Britain and prevent Irish republicans from speaking in Britain - In 1982 Sinn Fein's Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness were both banned from entering Britain to speak. The Act has also been used to remove prominent opposition figures during 'difficult' times for the government - the week before the death of hunger striker Bobby Sands, 30 leading republicans were arrested under the PTA, subject to 'extended detentions', then released without charge.

If you think SchNEWS is getting its knickers in a twist for nothing then here's an example of the PTA working in Ireland.

Bernard O'Connor, a teacher from Eniskillen, was arrested under the PTA in 1977. His first interrogation session in Belfast lasted for over three hours. He was forced to stand on his toes, bend his knees and hold his hands out in front of him and was hit in the face when his heels touched the ground or he lost balance. Every time he denied taking part in bombings and shootings he was hit again. That afternoon, three detectives tried to get him to admit lesser charges to avoid 35 years in jail. Then at night the brutality really started. He was stripped naked, beaten up and forced to do press ups continually. His underpants were placed over his head and he was threatened with being choked. He was then threatened with being handed over to the death squads of the Ulster Volunteer Force. These interrogations continued until he was released without charge on Monday night.

**Want to know more???** \* **Liberty**, 21 Tabard Street, London, SE1 4LA. Tel:0171 403 1904, \***discussion list** [ralph@blagged.freemove.co.uk](mailto:ralph@blagged.freemove.co.uk) [www.blagged.freemove.co.uk/law.htm](http://www.blagged.freemove.co.uk/law.htm)

\***Brighton Against Benefit Cuts** January 11<sup>th</sup>, upstairs at The George Beard Pub, 7:30pm, Gloucester Road, Brighton, to plan for a large gathering on Sat, 11<sup>th</sup> March.

\* **Manchester EF!** Mon 24<sup>th</sup> January, 7:30pm, One World Centre, Manchester. Michelle 0161 442 8635 or Chris 01942 513 792

\* **Cultures of Persistence** Squat, ( see In Brief) 13<sup>th</sup> January, 7:30pm, to discuss a strategy to mobilise against the Bill.

## DEALING IN COMPASSION

Ruth Wyner and John Brock are not heroin dealers. The police admit they have never been involved in dealing. But that didn't stop a judge sending Ruth and John down for 5 and 4 years. Their offence? They supposedly allowed the use and supply of drugs on the premises of Wintercomfort, a drop-in centre for homeless people in Cambridge, (some of whom are drug users). As Director and Assistant Director, Ruth and John had banned people who were suspected of dealing and were monitoring the use of the toilets to try and stop people using drugs there. However, they refused to hand over lists of suspected dealers to the police.

Ruth and John were charged under the Misuse of Drugs Act (1971). Judge Haworth explained, "If the defendants were unwilling to use any reasonable means that were readily available to them to prevent the prohibited activity, then they were permitting the act." Of course, there is a massive gulf between the legal interpretation of 'reasonable means' and the point of view of people providing a service for the homeless. By law, if you fail to close down your project when other measures are ineffective you are permitting the prohibited activity. Also, by law, sharing, swapping or giving constitutives supply, so 2 people sharing a spliff is the same as large scale smack dealing on your premises. This case has some grim implications for homeless facilities. In fact, this ruling could apply to any institution where some people may use drugs; schools, for example, or pubs and clubs. Will headteachers risk imprisonment if dealing is found to take place on school premises? The only answer seems to be body-searching people on entrance to homeless centres, and how would you feel if you were searched every time you went home at night? Chances are, you'd stop going home.

This law effectively criminalises all homeless workers who work with drug users. We need some constructive progress such as establishing links between homeless centres and drugs rehab centres; the ruling only serves to further exclude some of the most marginalised people in our society. For an information pack contact Release 0171 729 5255 [www.release-incl.demon.co.uk](http://www.release-incl.demon.co.uk) Letters of support to Ruth Wyner, EH6524 HM Highpoint, Stadishall, Newmarket, Suffolk GB8 9YG & John Brock, 3M 4946, HM Bedford, St Loyes St. MK40 18G.

## BUTTERFLY TOUCHES EARTH

After living in an ancient redwood she called "Luna" for the past two years, Julia "Butterfly" Hill came back to Earth just before Christmas. Julia was part of the Headwaters campaign to stop one of the last remaining redwood forests in America being clearcut (see SchNEWS 195). She came down after reaching an agreement with the company. Her supporters have pledged to pay \$50,000 to Pacific Lumber to make up for lost logging revenue, while the company agreed to spare Hill's redwood and a 2.9-acre buffer zone around it. The company will donate the \$50,000 to Humboldt State University for forestry studies. Well ain't that just swell.

[www.enviroweb.org/headwaters-ef/](http://www.enviroweb.org/headwaters-ef/)

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## SchNEWS in brief

The end of an era. The Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp has ended. A council approved sculpture will be erected on the site to commemorate 18 years of campaigning for nuclear disarmament.\*\*

SchNEWS readers will be shedding tears over the sacking of Nick Hudson, editor of the **Dover Express**. Unfortunately it wasn't for his paper's continued racist rantings about asylum seekers ("While labour luvvies dribble...we are left with the backdraft of a nation's human sewage and no cash to wash it down the drain") - that didn't earn him the boot but an article attacking Hoverspeed did. \*\* One for yer diary: 'Anonymity: the use of pseudonyms and initials in anarchist discourse and the tyranny of box numbers'. It's part of the regular Friday meetings of the London Anarchist Forum at Conway Hall, 25 Red Lion Square, London (nearest tube Holborn) 8pm. More details 0181 847 0203 \*\* Support those arrested for the alleged involvement in the **Smash Genetics** action last year, when an AgrEvo maze test site in Lincolnshire was destroyed. Trial begins on 18<sup>th</sup> January at Lincoln magistrates Court. Contact GEN 0181 374 9516 \*\* Carry on squatting! After 'Cultures of Resistance', they're back with **CULTURES OF PERSISTANCE!** From 10th-16th January 2000 at 168 Tower Bridge Road, London. Including an art exhibition on The City...its drawbacks and some positive solutions. If you want to use the space contact [rachred57@hotmail.com](mailto:rachred57@hotmail.com) or ring 0958 765 151 \*\* **The Earth First! Winter moot** is in Oxford on 28-30th January. More details send SAE to c/o URGENT, Box HN, 111 Magdalen Rd., Oxford, OX4 1RQ [emailwintermoot@yahoo.com](mailto:emailwintermoot@yahoo.com) \*\* Feeling marginalised by the orthodox anarchist left?! Well if you're a 'druid, odinist, folk autonomist' or part of the 'hermeticist anarchist underground' then pop along to the **Anarchist Heretics Fair**, they offer a chance to discover the unknown and alternative side of anarchy. For info ring 0181 459 5520 or e-mail [hermet@synarc.freemove.co.uk](mailto:hermet@synarc.freemove.co.uk) \*\* **Bloody Sunday** national demo, Sat 22nd January. Meet 12 noon @ Whitehall Place, London. For info. Tel 0181 4428778, e-mail [ICNwork@aol.co.uk](mailto:ICNwork@aol.co.uk) \*\* Support **Gill Emerson**, come along to Canterbury Crown Court, Chaucer Road at 10am on Thurs 13th January to show your solidarity at the appeal trial. Gill was arrested during the National Front march in Dover last Jan. Fighting fascism is no crime. \*\* **The Haringey Solidarity Group** are having a crisis meeting next Monday (10th) to discuss the future of the group. If you care about it's future get along to the Wood Green Labour Club, Stuart Crescent, N22 8pm

### SCHNEWS TRAINING DAY

Wednesday 12th January 12 noon

We need people to get involved with SchNEWS so why not make a belated New Year's resolution and help out? Ring office for more details (oh, and we lost all our ansaphone messages over Xmas).

\* Have you got a spare PC? SchNEWS will give it a loving home.

\* After helping the homeless for 25 years, the excellent Advisory Service for Squatters are looking for some new recruits. Want to make a difference? Ring 0171 359 8814

## Talking of terrorists...

Sixteen people are up on conspiracy charges after - wait for it, around 50 people entered the Nestle factory in Halifax and climbed on the roof and up a chimney to unfurl banners such as 'People and Planet Before Profit'. The action was in protest at the meeting of the World Trade Organisation in Seattle (see SchNEWS 240), the police reckon it had more to do with a desire to do some burglary. Because you often see burglars in groups of 50 in broad daylight, with banners and leaflets marching into corporate offices. Their next court appearance is on Tuesday 22 February, 2000. Halifax Magistrates Court, Harrison Road, Halifax, 9.30am onwards, and they are asking for people to turn up outside for support. Contact The Nestle 16, 10 Broughton Street, Hebden Bridge, West Yorkshire, HX7 8JY Tel 01422 844710

\* 'After Seattle - What next?' Meeting Saturday 15th January Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq., London WC1 (nearest tube Holborn) 2pm - 5pm. Speakers will include Barry Coates, Director of the World Development Movement, and activists from the Nestle action.

## Meeja Ho Massive

Over in the States, corporate media whores ABC NewsOne, CBS Newspath and Fox News Edge have merged their info sources. This means that although the 3 companies will still be competing to forcefeed soundbite bullshit to those canny Yanks, the news they have access to will be essentially the same spin-doctored bollocks.

## ...and finally...

SchNEWS scribe in millenium crap arrest shocker!! For proclaiming the end of the world!

This gag didn't go down to well with everyone on New Years Eve at the Golden Gate of Jerusalem. In absence of any doomsday prophets, our man decided to act the part before the eagerly expectant media circus "And when the seven seals are broken open on the day of judgement, and the seven angels blow their trumpets - when the third angel blows her bugle..." (this rant lifted directly from the film Naked - film buffs take note). They say that in comedy timing is everything. Lead balloons go down faster at certain times, and in certain climates. The holy city is one such climate. The international journalists were all besides themselves with joy; the Israeli police less so.

The bendy man was released without charge, but the police did ask why he had a dress, holy bible, half a bottle of vodka and some necro \* cards in his bag.

\* These cards are similar to kidney donor cards except they say 'I support sexual liberation . I want to help others experiment sexually after my death. I request that after my death

A) My body be used for any type of sexual activity B) gay only c) straight only d) I do not wish my body to be dismembered or disfigured during necrophiliac sex (you get the picture)

### disclaimer

Schnews asks what are all the Y2K nutters doing with all their spare time these days? Answers on a postcard not necessary. Honest.