



WAKE UP! WAKE UP! IT'S YER STICK-IT-ON-THE-TABD

# SchNEWS

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# YOU'VE BEEN TABD

*"A unique, business-driven process. Helping to shape US-EU trade policy"*  
*Transatlantic Business Dialogue website*

What with people congregating in The Hague this week to turn up the heat on the Climate Change Conference, you could be forgiven for having missed an interesting little bit of bother last weekend in downtown Cincinnati.

Tucked away in the sleepy Ohio city, a high-level meeting of the Transatlantic Business Dialogue (TABD) was overshadowed by clashes between police and anti-globalisation demonstrators. It was the first protests in the organisation's 6-year history with over 100 riot police ringing the conference hotel for the duration of the two-day meeting, with 47 people nicked during largely peaceful demonstrations.

If you've never heard of the TABD, you're not alone. They like it that way. The TABD has, since 1995, brought together over 100 captains of industry from the US and EU to push for the removal of all 'barriers' to transatlantic free trade- including such nuisances as the European eco-labelling system and restrictions on marketing GM products.

The brainchild of Tory lard-arse Leon Brittan, the TABD is basically a direct line between multinational corporations and US and EU governments; a direct line that conveniently misses out other little 'nuisances' like public discussion and democracy. They are cocky enough to present their demands in the form of a 'scorecard', with priorities and deadlines for action; they're cocky because governments queue up to carry out their recommendations. And they've shown little interest in listening to people with different ideas. As ex-TABD Director Stephen Johnston said, businesses would soon get fed up "if they have to sit down and spend half an afternoon arguing with environmentalists."

But now they may have to change their tune. Most of last weekend's meeting was spent debating how better to convince the public of the merits of free trade. "We have a selling job" said EU trade commissioner Pascal Lamy "We need to find new ways of getting across the benefits of globalisation". George David, US co-chair of TABD, admitted "we would be foolish to fail to listen to these demonstrators and their views". Although undoubtedly 'greenwash', such statements highlight the TABD's discomfort at being dragged into the anti-globalisation spotlight. Fears of protest may now have temporarily scuppered one of its highest priorities- a 'mutual recognition

agreement' whereby a product approved in one country would be given automatic approval by others. No community would be able to set standards higher than ones set internationally under the guidance of transnationals. But the discussions ended in stalemate because US agencies have become scared of anti-capitalist opposition.

In Cincinnati, citizen's groups and other protesters held 'teach-ins', workshops, pickets and other activities to get local people up to speed on the facts whilst panicky cops nicked people for things like jaywalking. "They [TABD] are terrified of the NGO's" said an EU official. Just wait 'til they meet the black bloc...

## This'll ERT

The TABD however are just one of many shadowy business groups behind the scenes pushing their pro-corporate agendas into the politicians mouths and onto our de-regulated plates. One of the main movers is the European Roundtable of Industrialists (ERT), representing the largest multinational corporations in Europe, who frequently use its corporate muscle to get its own way.

The latest example of this was the EU's 'Jobs Summit' in Lisbon earlier this year. Despite 50,000 people demonstrating in front of the summit building the EU said it would create more jobs - by speeding up privatisation of electricity, gas, rail, post and pensions as well as pushing through 'urgent structural reforms' like dismantling the welfare state. An ERT wet dream. In fact one ERT official commented that their very own Competitiveness Working Group "were very much involved in the preparation of the Summit."

According to groups like ERT everything should be thrown to free market forces. Take education. One member complained of the "culture of laziness which continues in the European education system," where 'human resources' (we think they mean human beings) "take liberties to pursue subjects not directly related to industry. Instead they are pursuing subjects which have no practical application." All schools should be privatised

## FANCY THAT!

French President Jacques Chirac has recently appointed Jérôme Monod to join his staff of advisers. Monod is Chief Executive of a French water giant, and was last year's European Co-Chair of the Transatlantic Business Dialogue and former Chair of the European Roundtable of Industrialists!

## CRAP ARREST OF THE WEEK

*For taking a photo!*

Joan Russow, Leader of the Green Party of Canada, organised a demonstration outside a Quebec city jail which is being emptied to accommodate anticipated protesters at next April's Free Trades of the Americas meeting. The police took offence to her presence, arrested her for the despicable crime of taking a picture. She was slammed up, but only for 45 minutes after concerns were raised that she wouldn't be out in time for her dinner. [www.oqp2001.org](http://www.oqp2001.org)

to encourage competition, because "schools will respond better to paying customers, just like any other business..."

## Have A Nice Day

When leaders of the EU meet in Nice in France in December one of the proposals on the agenda is the 'fast-tracking' of international trade agreements. Business groups are fed up of their great ideas being watered down or blocked altogether by interfering governments and protestors. They want swift, centralised decision-making, making it easier to push their demands through an already industry-friendly European bureaucracy.

All this can not only get very confusing but also a bit depressing. However nearly one year on from the successful Seattle protests (SchNEWS 240) and anti-capitalist protestors are continuing to rattle those corporate cages. Every major business conference is now ring-fenced with barricades and riot cops. Biotech lobby group EuropaBio, even had to cancel its annual congress recently for fears of public protests. At a recent International Chamber of Commerce Conference the subject of how to counter the growing backlash against globalisation topped the agenda.

Crucial for demonstrators is to see through the 'we need to talk' bullshit. Because as those nice people from the Corporate Europe Observatory point out "industry isn't really interested in actually dealing with the very real social and ecological problems caused by corporate-led globalisation, but focuses on how 'to be seen' to be dealing with these problems." Or as one Business PR consultant put it "It is easier and less costly to change the way people think about reality than it is to change reality."

\* European trade unionists have called for a day of action on December 6<sup>th</sup> at the opening of the EU Summit.

\* For more on all this check out the excellent Corporate Europe Observatory, Paulus Potterstraat 20, 1071 DA Amsterdam, Holland Tel +31-20-612-7023 [www.xs4all.nl/~ceo](http://www.xs4all.nl/~ceo)

\* Also read their latest book 'Europe Inc. - Regional and Global Restructuring and the Rise of Corporate Power' (Pluto Press)

# Putting the Clog In

"I call it politricks"

- Juanita Stewart, community activist, US  
As yer Anarchitours rovin' reporter pulls into Holland on the ferry, the sky darkens and the forecast is for hot air and a thick cloud of bullshit. Yep, this week SchNEWS is visiting The Hague for the UN Climate Change Conference. Much of Holland is below sea level, so the Dutch have plenty to lose if sea levels continue to rise. Which begs the question: why is the Conference here. Irony, or wot?

Anyway, here's yer Diary of Dissent.  
**Saturday** 2-3000 people turn up to build a dyke around the Conference Centre in an action by Friends of the Earth (Holland). When the dyke has been raised, the UN Environment spokesman is invited to add a sandbag and spouts the predictable greenwash. Then the army gets to use the sandbags so generously filled for them. All a bit too much for yer cynical SchNEWSer! Things get better at the Climate Technology trade fair, where activists 'raise sea levels' in the building by replumbing the basement. Shell's HQ gets paintbombed, too, and one of their garages has its windows put in. That'll please the Queen of Holland - she's a major shareholder!

**Sunday** A lunchtime critical mass of 200 cyclists precedes the opening of a 2 day 'Counter Conference'. Later, delegates and ministers arriving at the station are met by a crowd of 500 making a massive racket. In the evening, the 'Liquidators' show up at a dinner for the ministers and spill symbolic 'blood' red wine on them.

**Monday** ASEED (Action for Solidarity, Equality, Environment and Development) activists wearing gags occupy the Ministry of the Environment, after their access to the Conference Centre is withdrawn by the UN. In the evening, activists target the press launch of www.CO2e.com, a website where emissions are 'traded'. A samba band brings the noise, while inside undercover troublemakers cause disruption with words and a smokebomb, and leaflet a surprisingly sympathetic audience. Elsewhere, hackers shut down the site altogether!

**Tuesday** Now it's the turn of the International Emissions Trading Association. People enter offices and drop banners, dish out verbal grief and spread pro-planet propaganda. One scientist tells them, "The Global Climate Coalition are worse than us!" Round here there's always someone worse.

**Wednesday** Time to turn our attention to those inside the conference. The day starts with 150 nicked at an anti-nuclear demo. Meanwhile, activists are infiltrating the Conference Centre. More replumbing, computers disappear, and pixieing of all kinds goes on right under the noses of the security. A crack team shimmy up onto some crossbeams in the main concourse and do a banner drop. The head of the US delegation gets pied, people smile and laugh. We set up the biggest ever squatted stall at a conference and serve up some SPOR and SchNEWS underground goodness. The Centre Co-ordinator clocks us and comes over to chat. He's delighted we've made our presence felt, that the concerns of ordinary people who've been excluded from the conference are being expressed! He assures that no-one who does actions will be arrested because they just don't want the negative publicity. Everyone, so it seems, is fed up with the US trying to control the show...

Stay turned to next weeks SchNews to find out what happens next. To keep up to date with the conference capers www.climateconference.org

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# SchNEWS in brief

**Congratulations** to Railtrack boss Gerald 'Killer' Corbett-off on holiday to India with his £1m pay-off for services to the road industry \*\* **Anti-fur campaigners** were celebrating this week as fur farming was banned in England and Wales thanks to the Fur Farming (Prohibition) Bill. The 13 mink fur farms in England now have until 2003 to cease operations. Animal rights groups want it sooner. \*\* Meanwhile in the States an animal rights protester wearing just her **knickers** led to distracted drivers crashing into each other outside a busy shopping centre. 27 year old Amanda Valencia was drawing attention to the plight of animals killed for their skins. \*\* **Greenpeace Eco-Chickens** who had been occupying the Cargill GM soya factory at Liverpool Docks were this week served with an injunction which ordered them to leave. Around 60 Greenpeace members had entered the plant on Monday with the intention of halting production of the genetically modified soya, most of which is destined for animal feed \*\* Around 10,000 people gathered at the Fort Benning military base last week for an annual protest calling for the closure of the **US Army School of the Americas** (SOA). Many graduates of SOA end up in the military squads of dodgy third world regimes. Groups of activists entered the base from different entrances, staging symbolic die-ins, pouring fake blood onto the ground and holding theatrical battles dressed as campesinos and soldiers and around 2,000 protestors were arrested! The demonstration, organised by the School of Americas Watch, is held every year to mark the death of six Jesuit priest in El Salvador at the hands of Salvadoran officers who we're trained at SOA www.soaw.org \*\* **Seattle anniversary** and Indymedia one year birthday Party next Friday (1<sup>st</sup> December) at the Button Factory, South London, Hardess Street/Herne Hill Road, Brixton Tube station 9pm-6am. 3 rooms including the Squall soundsystem, film, stalls etc. Plus London Underground's monthly meeting from 7-9pm. \*\* December 1<sup>st</sup> is **West Papuan Independence Day**. There is a real risk that the event will be marked by a military crackdown. There will be a demonstration in Solidarity with the People of West Papua next Mon (27) from 12.30 - 2pm at the Indonesian Embassy, 38 Grosvenor Square, London. 01865 439705 www.koteka.net \*\* On the 2<sup>nd</sup> December there is a **day of action against McDonalds** in Liverpool. Meet outside the McDonalds on Lord Street at noon. Bring whistles, drums, megaphones, costumes etc 07733200856 livunigreens@yahoo.com \*\* The **UnderCurrents Foundation Swansea** alternative media event including films made by people from around Swansea, is taking place on Saturday 9th Dec, starting at 10am, at the Environment Centre, Pier Street 01792 455900\*\* Building a World of citizens- One year after Seattle is the title of an international gathering next weekend in Paris www.postSeattle.org \*\* **Big Brother Awards**, 4th December at the London School of Economics. Awarding those who, in the last twelve months, have done the most to invade our privacy. www.privacyinternational.org

### REBEL ALLIANCE

Brighton's direct action knees-up (sort-of). Sunday 26th November 7pm at the Hanover Community Centre, Southover St, Brighton. There will be a showing of the new Zapatista film with food and music provided. Kids welcome. Bring your own beer.

# Positive SchNEWS

This country is not known for being at the forefront of renewable energy initiatives. So it's great news that the small island of Islay off western Scotland, has this week become the first place in the world to use the power of the waves to produce electricity commercially. On Tuesday the first kilowatts of wave-generated power began supplying nearly 400 local homes on the island. The government had predicted that wave power would not be viable for decades; this project has proved them wrong. The World Energy Council has estimated that if less than 0.1% of the oceans' energy was converted into electricity it would satisfy present world demand for energy more than five times over. Here in the UK we have loads of coast line, from which we could easily meet all our energy needs. So there should now be nothing holding us back. Three sites on the Welsh coast are now being considered for similar projects that could provide a fifth of Wales' electricity needs. Information on the Islay project is available from Wavegen 01463 238094 www.wavegen.co.uk.

Upstart is a new project aiming to set up a community renewable energy project in Somerset. Contact them on 0870 7332538

## You're SHIT - and you know you are...

Video activists last week turned the tables on the police at the **Metropolitan police's** football league match. Fed up by the constant surveillance of the public, they surrounded the football pitch with a mass of cameras whilst comedian Mark Thomas provided a constant commentary alongside a huge television screen showing the game. A spokesperson from Undercurrents commented, "The action was to highlight the police attempts at intimidating people during protests with video cameras. It is a waste of taxpayers money and is only designed to build secret files on us all." The referee of the match complained that the sound of Mark Thomas' amplified commentary was putting the players off the match, and confusing them as to which wing they were supposed to be on.

• **XMAS BOOK PLUG** •  
• **What makes a great Xmas? Mince pies, brandy, Bond on the telly and the whole family gathered around the SchQUALL book, sneering at the cops! Go on- fill granny's surgical stocking! £7 plus 1.50 p&p from the SchNEWS office. Only 30 shopping days (and one no-shopping day) til XMAS! Order Now.** •

### ...and finally...

Here at SchNEWS towers we've been dreaming about some havin' it holidays for next year. Instead of bothering with glossy brochures, though, we reached straight for Riskmap 2001, a report which lists countries that are so dangerous, you shouldn't consider going there. The report reads like a list of countries that have been severely fucked over by capitalism. The most interesting part of the report for us international activists is its listings of areas to avoid due to possible anti-capitalist demos. For next year it lists Davos, Quebec and Washington as 'potential flashpoints'. So no points for guessing where's top of our holiday wish list!

### disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all drips flooded with info about capitalism's rain of terror to get an umbrella organisation and a good pair of wellies.