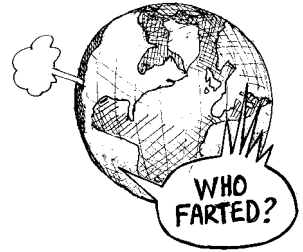




WAKE UP! IT'S YER TINGS CAN ONLY GET WETTER!

SchNEWS

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SPLOSHED!

"I am searching for justice for those who have been left behind by the consumerist people of the western world" -

*Dr. Owens Wiwa
(Ken Saro-Wiwa's brother).*

"We must counter, both in the UN and within the framework of the North-South dialogue, any discussion of global problems which questions the validity of the free market and of free enterprise in the countries of the Third World." -

A US Official

Last week's climate change conference in the Hague has been described as the most important conference ever - an opportunity to eventually do something about the consumerist society's continued efforts to destroy our planet. That the world is on the brink of climate armageddon is obvious to most people with half a brain, but the conference descended into farce with the main argument being whether John Prescott was a new man or not. But hang on, what everyone seems to have forgotten is that it was the United States dragging their heels from the start that was responsible for the talks collapsing. Industrialised countries are responsible for 55% of emissions, but still don't want to face up to their responsibility for making the planet go down the plughole.

The US with a mere 4% of world population, produces an impressive 24% of global CO₂ emissions, but is still trying to wangle its way out of making any meaningful changes. Well you've got to agree with them, what is there for them to change, they've only got the greatest output of CO₂, the lowest petrol costs in the West, and the least efficient energy industry.

So here is the blaggers guide to getting out of cutting yer emissions:

Carbon 'sinks' (that's forests to you and me) are supposed to suck up CO₂. So planting more trees is a good idea, but after all that good work some countries think you wouldn't need to decrease yer emissions, hey you might even be able to increase them. The Kyoto Summit in 1997 called for cuts in CO₂ emissions of 5%, not too impressive when you consider that what we really need just to make up for 'economic growth' is about 30%. And if yer feeling really radical how's about a cut of 60-80% which will actually reverse the spiral of decline future generations will inherit? Still, one scientist claims that trees contribute to global warming because they

have dark leaves that don't reflect sunlight back into space! Guess which country he comes from...

Clean Development Mechanism: Japan, US, Canada, New Zealand, and Australia were all in favour of investment in reforestation, building nuclear, hydroelectric or 'clean coal' (!) power stations in developing countries. Not as much as an effort but a way of earning emissions brownie points. But look at what these countries are up to at home - The US and Canada are clear cutting their ancient forests every day.

Emissions trading: countries (or companies) that reduce their emissions to below their targets can sell 'credits' to countries that can't manage it. This would mean that countries whose economies have collapsed (like Russia) could sell their quota of emissions to richer countries (like the US), who can then carry on polluting as normal. The EU was insisting that emissions trading shouldn't make up more than 50% of any country's targets, this was bad news to the US who like the idea of throwing money at a problem.

And check out the following scams put forward by the US: using wheat as a carbon sink, extending the working day to 24 hours so people never leave the office and so cut down on traffic emissions; digging holes to plant seeds rather than ploughing up the land which release's CO₂; feeding sheep, pigs and cows anti-flatulence pills to cut down on methane emissions, a big source of greenhouse gases, and putting up window boxes on all those skyscrapers. OK, we made two of them up but that America's ideas are so ridiculous it's hard to tell which ones are porkies. Maybe the anti-flatulence pills should be fed to US delegates, or someone should seal up their mouths to stop emissions of hot air.

Still, it was good of all those 'green' companies that are trying to cash in on climate change to produce their own carbon sinks in the form of all the leaflets they produced saying how capitalism could save the world.

Splish

"I invite political leaders to come and see our beautiful islands and see if they are worth saving" -

Opetaia Foa'i, Pacific Islander.

Among the 11,000 delegates were Opetaia and 9 members of his band Te

CRAP ARRESTS OF THE WEEK

For tagging a green sign with green paint! Squint and you might miss it, but one fresh-faced young painter was left feeling decidedly embarrassed after writing slogans on a BP sign in green paint and being nicked! Schwoops.

For banging on a window! Four people arrested, held for 24 hours and charged with 'public violence' for the heinous crime of banging on the windows of a public building that they were refused entry to. Inside was a presentation by carbontrading.com and various companies such as Shell and BP.

Crap No-Arrest! For disgusting crimes against the planet and humanity: various corporations, puppet governments, lobbyists, World Business Council for Sustainable Development, Global Climate Coalition, carbon traders, marketing and advertising people and a few NGOs who seem to have severely compromised their integrity.

Vaka. Two years ago they wrote a song about their islands disappearing, they weren't allowed to sing it in their homelands as people believed it would bring bad luck. Now he says many of the islanders are eventually accepting the truth as evidence mounts that their islands are slowly disappearing into the sea.

Most of the meetings at the conference took place behind closed doors, as delegates attempted to wade through the voluminous heap of gibberish they were supposed to be ratifying. The balance of power was uneven though, with the richer countries able to afford whole teams of delegates and support staff. The US sent over a team of 150 delegates who larded it up in a fancy hotel, while the 3 delegates from Mozambique (who could tell a tale or two about climate change) stayed in a youth hostel with Chinese tourists. Eventually, there wasn't enough time to do a deal, cos they had to get out of the centre and make way - for a meeting of oil industry experts!

For more info have a look at:

* Green Pepper, Climate Change issue, Autumn 2000 from Postbus 94115, 1090 GC, Amsterdam, The Netherlands. +31 20 665 7743 or eyfa@eyfa.org

* Kate Evans has produced a cartoon booklet on climate change. Send 2 1st class stamps to her at 1 Townhead Cottages, Dunford Bridge, Sheffield S36 4TG

* 'Greenhouse Gangsters vs. Climate Justice' by Transnational Resource and Action Center, PO Box 29344, San Francisco CA, 94129 www.corpwatch.org www.climateconference.org

Unclear Future

Sniffin' around at the Climate Conference were the nuclear lobby, who reckon we should all embrace nuclear because it will help cut greenhouse gas emissions. How nice of them to be so caring.

- Rising tides will cause havoc for at least four UK power stations located on low coastal areas – let's hope water levels don't rise much during the 150 years it takes before even de-commissioned plants can be dismantled. BNFNL are not past the 'brainstorming' stage about the problem.
- Cases of leukaemia and breast cancer double in areas downwind of nuclear refineries and mudflats which contain 'discharges'.
- Nuclear waste is carried hundreds of miles from power stations all around England up to Sellafield... BY RAIL!! Well no worries there then!
- Nuclear plants in Ukraine replacing Chernobyl fail European Safety standards. The European Bank of Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) are being lobbied not to fund more reactors – which will also put more financial strain on the already strapped maintenance budgets for existing Russian plants.
- 3.4 million Ukrainians are suffering from cancer and other diseases after Chernobyl with numbers set to continue to rise for at least 15 years.
- If US company Pangea have their way Rudall River National Park in Western Australia – considered highly 'geologically stable' – is set to become 'the nuclear toilet of the world' storing up to 76,000 tonnes of waste for future generations to enjoy.

Web of Lies

Shell has a skeleton in the closet – and it's not Nigerian – it's English! In 1968 at Shell's Thornton Research Centre, Cheshire a bit of a disaster happened while playing with nuclear fuels – and after a hasty clean-up much of the radio-active waste is still there. It was hushed up. Shell say it didn't happen and issued a 'Narrative' about it in fact being an incident involving *low radiation* 'Cobalt-60' material. They're calling their story a 'Narrative' because the last thing they want is their story going up against the truth in court and the publicity that would follow.

Researcher John Dyer has spent twelve years bringing this bogey into the open – and his web-site on this issue has brought another can-o-worms out about libel on the internet. Visit www.nuclearcrimes.com to read that the 1968 incident has even caused deformed births, and that Carlton Television made a documentary about it in 1993 which at the last minute was 'dropped' thru' fear of a legal battle with Shell. Now Shell are again using lawyers - this time to close the website. Instead of directly threatening the publishers of the material, Nuclearcrimes, they're bullying the 'internet host' – EasyNet (also host to SchNEWS) into switching off the offending site or suffer the consequences. This comes after a legal precedent was recently established during the Godfrey libel case when an internet host who knowingly left allegedly defamatory information on one of their sites were then in turn made liable for the defamation. Caspar Bowden, director of the Foundation for Internet Policy Research (www.fipr.org) told SchNEWS "the judgement in (this) case, by effectively deeming that Internet hosts are publishers, allows powerful interests to bully websites into self-censorship merely by alleging defamation. Reform of legislation is needed to prevent stifling of free speech." Under threat nuclearcrimes may have to move hosts again - possibly outside the UK (see RIP Act in SchNEWS 269).

This could be the shape of things to come for free information on the internet: If someone doesn't like something that's been said about them on the net – and the publishers aren't budging – they can go upwards to the hosts and internet service providers transmitting the article until there's one part of the chain willing to do the *right* thing and press the 'off' button.

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Inside SchNEWS

On the 7th December Eddie Gilfoyle will begin his long awaited appeal against the miscarriage of justice that got him sent down for life. Eddie was arrested in June 92 for murder after the tragic death of his wife, and has been in jail ever since. It seems that Merseyside Police are on their own in thinking that Eddie killed his wife after the case was first investigated by the Channel 4 programme "Trial and Error," who called it a "Keystone comedy of errors" and then by Lancashire and Cheshire police, the Home Office, and the Criminal Cases Review Board. All concluded that Paula (Eddie's wife) tragically committed suicide. The evidence against Eddie rests on a rope that was "found" by a certain DC Gregson in a drawer in the garage 3 weeks after the initial search by a specialist team failed to find anything as significant as that. Even an expert appointed by the Crown at the original trial has had second thoughts and is now a prominent defence witness. The Eddie Gilfoyle Campaign has called for a demonstration on the 7th 9.30 am at the Court of Appeal, The Strand, London (nearest tube Holburn) www.appleonline.net/justiceuk/jus

* 1st December is Prisoners For Peace day. For a list of people to send nice things to, contact War Resisters' International, 0207 278 4040 or warrresisters@gn.apc.org

Outta Their Tree

The Tree Council were aiming to set a tree-planting record last weekend and earn themselves a place in the Guinness Book of Records. Nothing wrong with that. Except that the sponsor of Tree Week is the largest oil company in the world Esso (Exxon-Mobil to everyone else). Esso certainly care about the environment. It was just over 10 years ago when one of their ships ran aground in Alaska causing the most damaging oil spill in history (see SchNEWS 205) and they are still dragging their feet on paying out any compensation. They are also one of main players of the Global Climate Coalition, who deny climate change is happening and use their corporate muscle to make sure nothing gets done about it that might harm profits. A couple of years back an ex-Esso Chairman even went to an international gathering in China and urged developing countries to sort out their environmental problems by "increasing ...the use of fossil fuels"! SchNEWS asks wouldn't Esso be better off sponsoring National Sandbag Week?

* House builders Countryside Residential have earned themselves a slap on the back from the Essex Wildlife Trust, which is a bit strange seeing as the 'developers' have been busy destroying the countryside at Hockley by building 66 luxury homes on a wildlife rich area that contained legally protected great crested newts. Nothing to do with the corporate sponsorship of £250 a year Countryside Residential hands over to the Trust every year.

Positive SchNEWS

The government has set itself the target of generating 10% of our electricity by alternative energy by 2010. As we are officially the windiest country in the Europe, wind power would be the obvious choice. But on-land wind power has met with loads of problems, because nobody wants them in their backyard. Most of the proposals so far have been large 'windfarm' projects, which people find both ugly and noisy. Local co-ops around the country are now experiencing less opposition to smaller scale, locally owned wind projects. There are now local schemes popping up all over, such as The Dulas project in Mid Wales, which will supply power to the Centre for Alternative Technology and nearby villages and will be totally owned by locals. Contact then on 01563 705000 www.gn.apc.org/dulas

SchNEWS in brief

Basildon Council in Essex are changing the colour of their **dog litter** bins from red to grey after bright locals kept mistaking them for postboxes and sticking letters in them. Doh! ** **No Sweat** is a new UK based campaign against sweatshops, who have already worked with Manchester United supporters around the Nike shirt deal, and are looking at direct action campaigning against companies like Nike and Gap and working to unionise fast-food restaurants, shops and sweatshops in the UK. There's a day of action targetting Nike and Gap on Dec 9th. 23b Northlands St, London SE5 07958 556 756 www.nosweat.org.uk ** **UK Rivers Network** is another new group who plan to "combine long-term work on political, educational, and community projects with short-term, rapid responses to particular riverine threats." www.ukrivers.net/ ** Birmingham based **Banner Theatre** are going on the road with their new production "Reclaim The Future". 25 young people from marginalised communities in El Salvador, the former East Germany and the West Midlands have shared their experiences to produce a multimedia production looking at the issues of race and how they create their own identity against a backdrop of McDonalds, Coco Cola and Britney Spears. To find out if they're performing in your area call 07971 770073 ** Next Thursday (7th) Glenn Jenkins of Luton's Exodus Collective will be among the speakers at a '**Sources of Radicalism**' meeting in Manchester 7:30pm, Green Room, Whitworth Street West 0161 225 0807 ** On the Friday (8) Bristol's **Kebele Culture Project** are having a free party at the Easton Community Centre. There's acoustic music, techno, poetry, videos, plus vegan food and drink ** While at Birkbeck College, University of London (nearest tube Russell Square) there's a public meeting **Return of Star Wars – A threat to Peace?** 020 7405 6661 email pugwash@qmw.ac.uk ** Staying in London there's a **Poetry for Palestine Benefit** on Friday and Saturday night to raise money for two community arts projects in Palestine. 9-12 midnight. £5 at the Planet, 11 Malvern Rd., London NW6 ** On the Saturday (9) 'Older And 'Bolder' People from **Growing Old Disgracefully and the Older Feminists Network** discuss the aims of their organisations at Epicentre, West Street, London 8pm 020 8555 5248 Admission free, but bring something for the buffet ** And in Brighton there's a **South East Permaculture Convergence** on the Sunday (10) Call 01273 503613/ email brynthomas@ecodesign.fsnet.co.uk for details ** The man arrested for criminal damage to a lamppost after peeling off an NF sticker has had his charges dropped. ** **To keep up to date with all the action check out party and protest on the SchNEWS website.**

...and finally...

It could only happen in America... Mayor Keith Holliday of Greensboro, North Carolina has thought of a novel solution to prison overcrowding. His idea is to cryogenically freeze inmates on death row until new evidence clears them. If it doesn't then they just stay frozen. "At present Death Row inmates can appeal against execution year after year claiming wrongful convictions. That delay causes overcrowding and costs us millions in legal fees. So instead of wasting all that money why don't we just put them on ice?" SchNEWS wonders whether they'll be defrosted for appeal hearings, or if the authorities can claim on the insurance if there's a power cut. After the 'execute by' date, the instructions on the chamber could read: defrost slowly and fry gently for ten minutes on an electric chair...

disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all environmentalists who think the ice is melting with politicians - it's just a wet dream. Honest