

IRAQ AND RUIN

"Why of course the people don't want war... But after all it is the leaders of the country who determine the policy, and it's always a simple matter to drag the people along, whether it is a democracy or a fascist dictatorship... Voice or no voice, the people can always be brought to the bidding of the leaders. That is easy. All you have to do is tell them they're being attacked, and denounce the pacifists for lack of patriotism and exposing the country to danger."

-Hermann Goering, Nuremberg, 1946

"The bewildered herd is a problem. We've got to prevent their rage and trampling. We've got to distract them. They should be watching the Superbowl or sitcoms or violent movies. Every once in a while you call on them to chant meaningless slogans like "Support our troops." You've got to keep them pretty scared, because unless they're properly scared and frightened of all kinds of devils that are going to destroy them from outside or inside or somewhere, they may start to think, which is very dangerous, because they're not competent to think. Therefore it's important to distract them and marginalize them." - Noam Chomsky

Saturday promises to be the biggest day of global action against war in world history, with demonstrations in seventy countries and hundreds of cities from Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia to Ramallah in Palestine to Tel Aviv in Israel, from Seoul in South Korea to the USA, in all the countries of Europe and in many of South America and Africa.

While the unelected Bush administration talks of "endless war" and "full spectrum dominance", the American public gorges itself on gaffer tape and tinned prunes in case of terrorist attack or armageddon. On Tuesday, the people of Britain woke up to the appearance of tanks and armed patrols around Heathrow airport. Terrorist threat or theatre? Helping to thwart terrorists or introducing fear so that we may all eventually agree to a war on Iraq? Walter Lippman, the Pulitzer Prize winning American journalist, argued that what he called a "revolution in the art of democracy," could be used to "manufacture consent" - the skilful use of propaganda and the manipulation of facts in order to get the public to agree to things they would otherwise have opposed. As well as telling outright lies, such as the Gulf of Tonkin Incident, when the US lied about an attack on a US warship as an excuse to launch the Vietnam War, governments also try to manipulate the debate so that it takes

place entirely on their terms. Hence President Blair always talking about the present situation as if it is caused entirely by Saddam Hussein's failure to disarm (despite the fact that the US and UK governments have tolerated exactly this same situation for years) in an attempt to draw attention away from what has really changed - the political motives of the current US administration.

SLAUGHTERHOUSE 5

Switch on the news and hear about more terrorists being arrested. But who are they? In December, five Turks and a Briton were charged under the Terrorism Act 2000 for supporting the Turkish Revolutionary People's Liberation Party-Front, or DHKP-C. They were nicked because DHKP-C has been banned by the UK government and the six arrestees were supposedly "facilitating the retention or control of terrorist property." Guns? Bombs? Er, no, the people arrested were simply in possession of magazines, videos and posters that supported the DHKP-C. At a pre-trial hearing, the judge ordered all the defendants to surrender their passports and banned them from selling or distributing copies of "Vatan," a radical Turkish-based magazine that has the bare faced cheek to criticise that bastion of human rights, Turkey.

One of those nicked was Rory O'Driscoll, who had recently joined other people in a visit to Turkish hunger strikers protesting about prison conditions. His house was then raided and he was held for two weeks at Paddington Green police station where *every hour* someone would open up the hatch to his cell and ask if he was 'alright' (a friendly way to deny a prisoner of sleep, don't you reckon?). If found guilty of the 'crime' of possessing magazines and supporting Turkish hunger strikers, Rory could face up to 10 years in prison.

Meanwhile, under the Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Act, thirteen people have

been arrested and held without charge for 14 months without being told what they have done and with no way of knowing if and when they face trial or release. One of these, a Palestinian father of five, has been transferred to Broadmoor and is suffering from mental health problems.

But wait a second... aren't Bush and Blair the real terrorists here? Just recently the Pentagon announced that it intended to shatter Iraq "physically, emotionally and psychologically" by raining down 800 cruise missiles in two days on the Iraqi people. Military strategist Harlan Ullman told American television: "There will not be a safe place in Baghdad. The sheer size of this has never been seen before, never been contemplated before." The strategy is known as "Shock and Awe" and Ullman is apparently its proud inventor. He said: "You have this simultaneous effect, rather like the nuclear weapons at Hiroshima, not taking days or weeks but minutes."

What will his "Hiroshima effect" actually do to a population of whom almost half are children under the age of 14? The answer comes in a "confidential" UN document, which says that "as many as 500,000 people could require treatment as a result of direct and indirect injuries".

A Bush-Blair attack will destroy "a functioning primary health care system" and deny clean water to 39 per cent of the population. There is "likely [to be] an outbreak of diseases in epidemic if not pandemic proportions".

The logic is brilliant. To save the Iraqi people from a murderous dictator (who we put there in the first place) we must first kill them with sanctions and then with bombs. To stamp out terrorism we must attack countries and kill innocent people, which will produce more terrorists. And to protect our civil liberties and freedoms we must, of course, take them away.

SchNEWS wants regime change in Iraq, but regime change must also happen here. Who voted to leave the running of the world to this motley crew of self-interested oil-fuelled egomaniacs? Saying no to this war *alone* is asking for trouble. We must say no to its leaders as well. As Novelist Kurt Vonnegut so aptly put it "(America) has been taken over by means of the sleaziest, low-comedy *coup d'etat* imaginable."

Recommended reading: John Pilger - *The New Rulers of the World* (Verso 2002). Noam Chomsky & Edward S. Herman *Manufacturing Consent - The Political Economy of the Mass Media* (Pantheon Books).

For an indepth analysis of world events see www.zmag.org

Need a rest after marching? Why not pay the US Embassy a visit in Grosvenor Sq near Hyde Park? Or join a mass sit-down in Piccadilly - meet at 5pm in Green Park.

3rd February - Fairford Airbase 'Mass Weapons Inspection'. Noon, Fairford Town Centre, Gloucestershire. www.safp.org.uk www.gwi.org.uk

22nd March - Fairford again! Noon at the junction of High St/Park St, Fairford. www.gwi.org.uk and **Menwith Hill 'Foil the Base'** www.now-peace.org.uk.

For more info on action against the war check out: www.schnews.org.uk/stopwar/

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THE COST OF WAR

It's estimated that even a short war in Iraq could cost the taxpayer £3.2 billion (and the US \$33bn), and that's not taking into account the money that will be needed for long term security. This is good news for the UK arms industry, but not so good for those crying out for more state funding. Here are some suggestions from SchNEWS on how the money could be better spent:

* £180 million to give the fire fighters the pay rise they deserve

* £65 million to take on 35,000 extra nurses

* £2.6 billion to give pensioners a £10 a week rise.

* And you'd still have enough spare change to buy up the Daily Mail and re-launch it as an anarchist daily!!

Alternatively we could send the whole population of Iraq on holiday to Brighton's Grand Hotel for a week while the 'special friends' bomb the fuck out of their country.

We could save the Brighton West Pier from falling into the sea and turn it into a jail for all politicians!

Or, we could blow the whole lot on getting Harrogate Railway FC and the rest of the clubs in the Northern Counties league into the Premiership.

CRAP ARREST OF THE WEEK

For reading the wrong sort of magazine!
(no not Hello! - see front page story).

War Briefs

Army reservists who've been receiving their call-up papers during the last few weeks **have been refusing to go in record numbers**. So far one in three have either applied for exemption or have just ignored their call-up papers.

** Last Saturday **25,000 people took to the streets of Munich, Germany** to demonstrate against the NATO security meeting being held there. Predictably, the police raided the convergence centre, arresting 22 people and only releasing them after the protests had ended.

All over Germany, several thousand people took part in antiwar demonstrations. www.indymedia.org ** Having achieved their objective of drawing attention to the unconstitutional use of **Shannon airport** for US war preparations, the victorious **Shannon Peace Camp** has now been dismantled and in a major victory for them, the US aircraft which used the base have now been moved to Germany. Unfortunately, the protestors arrested for damaging US military equipment are still being held in Limerick prison www.shannonpeacecamp.org

** **Over 30 people stormed Labour Party HQ** on Tyneside last Friday, barricading themselves in the lobby to demand that the Labour Party stop its terrorist war against the people of Iraq.

** Over 300 people marched through **Worthing** town centre last Saturday to protest against the prospect of war against Iraq. There will be a **Worthing Against War** meeting at The Downview pub in Tarring Road at 7.45pm on 4 March and an anti-war day on Sat 29th March worthingagainsthewar@yahoo.co.uk ** **Stop Europe's biggest ever death fair!** One of the world's biggest ever trade fairs for guns, bombs, military planes, small arms, mines and tanks will take place in London from 9th-12th September. There's a week long festival of action, protest and resistance planned 0781 7652 029 www.dsei.org ** To find out about actions going on around the country join the **Direct Action Against the War discussion group** at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/directactionagainstarwar/>

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PANTS AWAY!

All over the world people are protesting by taking their war briefs off. From New South Wales in Australia to Sussex to Florida to New York's Central park (where a group of women used their bodies to spell the words 'No Bush') protesters are getting together, getting naked and rolling around in snow, sand and grass to get their message across. www.theage.com

* **Chickenhawk** is the term used to describe a warmonger who has carefully avoided direct involvement in conflict themselves. Chief Chickenhawk is Bush himself who managed to not turn up for National Guard duty during the Vietnam War and since then has never been able to account for his absenteeism - we're fairly certain it had nothing to do with being a conscientious objector. In that same war, Dick Cheney also "had other priorities" than serving and Rush Limbaugh (a notorious right wing radio presenter) was excused on account of his anal cysts. For a full list of Chickenhawks: www.nhgazette.com/chickenhawks.htm

* **If war makes you sick, why not phone in sick if the bombs start to drop?** "Sorry boss I turned on the radio, heard about all the death and destruction and felt physically sick - it's just gotten worse all day." This will leave you free to take part in a little civil disobedience later in the day - after your miraculous recovery of course.

* Australian PM John Howard has come up with a novel way to combat terrorism - by spending ten million quid on junk mail! Every Australian household has been sent a Government Terrorism Kit, courtesy of Howard, consisting of that well known domestic terrorism deflector, a fridge magnet, plus a booklet filled with handy tips for avoiding disaster. Our personal favourite was 'keeping on the look out for people with a lifestyle that doesn't add up.' Mayor of Brisbane, Jim Soorley, has condemned Howard's propaganda exploits as scare-mongering and is urging anyone of an anti-war persuasion to send the packages right back where they came from. More info about the Return to Sender campaign at www.sydneymedia.org

SchNEWS in brief

Brighton's premier pirate radio station **Radio4A** is on air and internet this weekend with live coverage of Saturday's protest, music and allsorts. Tune in from Friday night to Sunday night 101.4 FM. www.radio4a.org.uk

** Get along to the **Sale of the Century Tour**, 17th February - 1st March, part of the World Development Movement's ongoing campaign against the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS- see SchNEWS 286) To find out if the tour's happening in your area call 020 72747630 www.wdm.org.uk **

The Cowley Club café and radical bookshop is now open in Brighton! Come in and have a cuppa whilst browsing your favourite anarchist weekly (SchNEWS of course!). The Club café and bookshop are located at 12 London Road, opposite Somerfield's, and are open Tues-Sat 12noon-4pm. The café and bookshop are co-operatively owned and run by unpaid volunteers, so new volunteers are always needed. If you have any time to spare, come in and speak to someone about helping out ** **SchWOOPS!** In last week's positive SchNEWS column we wrote about the Pedal Power Convention this Sunday (16th) but put the wrong web address. It's really www.c-realevents.demon.co.uk.

BASE INSTINCT

There are regular demos at many of the military bases throughout the UK:

Menwith Hill, in North Yorkshire, is the largest electronic monitoring station in the world. Run by the US National Security Agency (NSA) & operating as a US sovereign territory (!), Menwith Hill spies on emails, phone calls, and all sorts of communications throughout Europe and the Middle East with its vast array of satellites. It even won an award for its heroic eavesdropping in the last Gulf War! Menwith is also a key base for America's pet project of long-term military aggression - 'Star Wars'. There are regular demos, and on 23rd March there's a planned demonstration to 'Foil the Base' (disrupt the satellite signal receivers by using tin foil). There has to be as much foil in the air as possible, so bring foil kites, foil balloons, foil puppets- use your imagination. Info: Yorkshire CND 01274 730795 or cndyorks@gm.apc.org

Fairford, in Gloucestershire, is the biggest bomber base in Europe and can now house the U.S B2 Stealth bombers. These lovely friendly planes can release mini nuclear weapons, dubbed 'more usable' by the trigger-happy MoD. The U.S wants to use British soil to house these weapons of mass destruction, placing the UK in the frontline of the US war for oil. A peace camp is being set up outside Fairford military base from the 23rd February. Info: jill@gwi.org.uk.

Faslane Peace Camp, near Glasgow. Now 20 years old, Faslane naval base is home to the UK's trident nuclear submarine fleet. Even if you can't stay for very long, moral support and supplies are always appreciated. Contact: 01436 820901

BODY LANGUAGE

On the 17th of February, up to fifty human shield volunteers will fly to Jordan. From there, they'll travel by bus to Baghdad to meet up with the convoy of human shield volunteers who left London last month. The Human Shield movement aims to put loads of Western peace activists in Iraq around the large civilian areas in the hope of preventing bombing. Human Shield groups are now starting in Spain, Slovenia, Italy, Australia and the US. As one volunteer said, "I don't want to die. I love life. But every life is precious, and we need to recognise that a war that will kill innocent Iraqis must be opposed ... I am going to Iraq to try to stop this war, and so to preserve life". If you don't want to be a shield but want to help, make out a cheque for "Human Shield Action" and send it to 90 Mercers Road, London, N19 4PR. If you'd like to sponsor a shield directly, call Uzma on 07764 603106. www.humanshields.org

...and finally...

Wankers Against The War

We've all heard of groups like Doctors For Peace, Lawyers Against The War and even Businesses For Peace but here at SchNEWS Towers a new group we came across made us laugh out loud. **Masturbators For Peace** is a new anti war posse that is causing a stir with slogans like "I cum in peace", "Touch your sack, not Iraq" and "War is silly - Whack your willy". As they say on their website, "There's no greater antidote for war than love. However, any real love must start from within. You can't love others without loving yourself first. And of course masturbation is the greatest expression of self-love. So its natural that we, the citizens of the world, are joining together to masturbate for peace." Mind you this could be a load of old toss, so check it out for yourself at <http://www.masturbateforpeace.com>

Disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all combatants to take a walk while we have a peace up.