



WAKE UP! WAKE UP! IT'S YER TREASURE CHEST

SchNEWS

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AID 'N' A BET

“Unfortunately, Bush and Co are not through yet. This invasion and conquest will encourage them to do it again elsewhere. The real purpose of this war was to say to the rest of the world, ‘Don’t Mess with Texas – If You Got What We Want, We’re Coming to Get It!’”

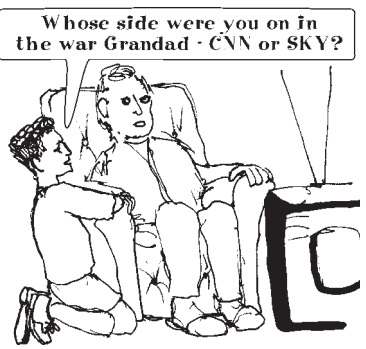
- Oscar-winning comedian Michael Moore.

Last week the White House got the green light for yet another \$75 billion to be spent on the Iraqi invasion and on it's favourite new form of at-home repression, homeland security. This is on top of the \$360 billion budgeted for 'defence' every year – an annual military budget that exceeds the combined annual military budgets of the next 25 top countries! The sums are mind-boggling, but to put them in some sort of perspective, the cost of a single cruise missile costs \$800,000, which means that the opening blitz on Baghdad, when 320 missiles were dropped in a single day, cost the US a stupendous \$256 million. Considering that the war was touted as a “humanitarian war,” this has to be the biggest single expenditure of “aid” in world history.

Last year, after America finished bombing the living hell out of Afghanistan (while still never managing to get hold of Osama bin Laden), the United Nations estimated that Afghanistan would need at least \$10 billion for reconstruction over the following five years. The US, which had just spent \$4.5bn on bombing the country, offered a measly \$300m for the first year of reconstruction and refused to make any commitment for subsequent years. This year, George Bush managed to “forget” to produce an aid budget for Afghanistan at all until he was forced to provide another \$300m by Congress. That George Dubya! Ain't he such a great liberator! SchNEWS is overwhelmed by his boundless generosity and concern for oppressed and suffering peoples throughout the world. However, the US government's true priorities are highlighted by the amount it's willing to shell-out on a single stealth bomber—\$1.26 billion—which is about the same amount as America gives in aid each year to sub-Saharan Africa.

And while the US and UK have focused their budgets and military might on Iraq, the United Nations is facing a massive shortfall in feeding the world's poorest people: In the

drought-struck Horn of Africa, 11 million Ethiopians are at risk from hunger, yet only half their food needs have been pledged by richer nations. In neighbouring Eritrea, two thirds of the population face starvation, but just over 2 per cent of the \$163 million asked for by the UN has been offered. Southern Africa is also in the grips of drought with 14 million people in desperate need of food aid yet Western aid has been trickling in. In Burundi, almost one sixth of the inhabitants have been forced out of their homes by conflict and natural disasters. The country has now been officially listed as the third poorest nation on earth, but has received only 3% of its UN request.



Two and a half years ago at the Labour party conference, Prime Sinister Blair talked about Africa as “a scar on the conscience of the world, but if the world focused on it, we could heal it.” Now, however, Tony's so focused on scarring Iraq with his war of conscience that any chance of helping Africa is remote at best. As journalist George Monbiot points out, “The payments and promises that have been extracted so far chart the collapse of international concern for the people of almost every nation except Iraq.” Yet in the post war carve-up of Iraq, while Western companies battle for control of resources, it will be the Iraqi people's turn be forgotten by their ‘liberators’, just as the people of Afghanistan have been.

Carnival Against Oil Wars and Climate Chaos

Protest outside BP's Annual General Meeting on April 24th. 10am, Royal Festival Hall, Belvedere Road, South Bank, London.

BP would like to give the impression that they are a lovely, green, sustainable corporation, while still keeping busy wrecking the environments of Colombia, West Papua, Alaska and Azerbaijan. Let them know the game's up! Expose them for the liars they are!

www.burningplanet.net

Transport going from Brighton. Tickets available for £5 from the Cowley Club, London Road.

CRAP ARREST OF THE WEEK

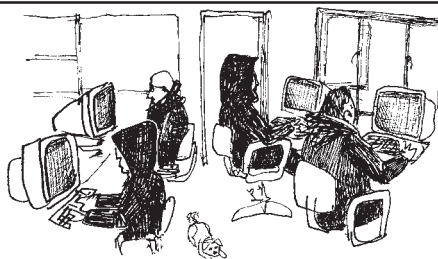
For getting in a jam...
An irate Irish copper who'd stormed in to remove anti-war protesters from blocking a road in protest at George Dubya's arrival in Belfast, found himself in a sticky situation after treading on a bag of jam. As well as getting a few good bashes with a baton, the owner of the jam (who'd intended to use it for a bit of street theatre) was arrested for assault and criminal damage. Another protester came to a sticky end getting dragged off by the hair after attempting to smear jam on a riot shield. Beware the heinous offence of making a copper's uniform sticky! www.indymedia.ie

HOME-MADE TERROR

While the “humanitarian war” was taking place in Iraq, liberating an entire nation through massive bombing raids and civilian deaths, the IDEX arms fair was happening in the United Arab Emirates. “The Gulf region remains the ideal market in the world for military hardware,” said Major-General Sultan Al-Suwaidi, head of the committee that organised the five-day event. Every permanent member of the UN Security council had big exhibitions at the fair, hoping to entice countries like Iran, Syrian Algeria, and Libya to step right up and buy their weapons of mass destruction. But Britain held pride of place by being the largest exhibitor at the show, with some 100 UK firms taking part. Organisers of the fair had, after all, announced that despite the war ‘the show must go on.’ Oh well, at least the next time that “our boys” follow the US into battle, they can be proud of being shot by British-made bullets.

HAPPY 400th SchNEWS

Well done our readers for keeping us in biscuits and stamps ever since 1994. If you want to be part of the next 400 issues get in contact...



The SchNEWS office on a 'dress down' Friday

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FRIENDLY FIRE

"The 'fog of war' obscures more than just news from the battlefield. It also provides cover for radical domestic legislation, especially ill-considered liberty-for-security swaps which have been historically popular at the onset of major conflicts." - Matt Welch, *Alternet*.

Nearly two years ago, while American troops were busy 'sorting out' Afghanistan, Bush and his cronies used their pantanated 'if you're not with us, then you're against us' rhetoric to push the USA Patriot Act 2001 through Congress. The Patriot Act became law just 7 weeks after the downing of the Twin Towers and was the most dramatic expansion of state power at the expense of civil liberties in the history of the US. It gave the state new powers to wiretap phones, confiscate the property of suspected terrorists, spy on its own citizens without judicial review, conduct secret searches, and even snoop on the reading habits of library users.

So with the US war machine pounding away once again, it's no surprise that there's a whole new round of even more repressive laws in the pipeline for Americans - this time in the form of The Domestic Security and Enhancement Act, the so-called Patriot Act II. This Act includes more than 100 new provisions aimed at taking away all the freedoms they accidentally left people with in the first Patriot Act. The Patriot Act II does quite a nice job of filling in the cracks in the first Act, adding a whole new range of oppressive measures to the state's already massive arsenal. The act allows the connection of DNA from people "suspected of wrong-doing", the ability for American citizens to have their citizenship revoked if they are deemed to have contributed material support to organisations deemed to be 'terrorist', the ability to monitor a person's internet usage without a warrant, and the expansion of the death penalty to include 15 new offences. The Patriot Act II would also allow for the creation of a vast database of consumer, personal and political information on all US citizens, called the Total Information Awareness system - 'We got all the information on you, little citizen, and you're completely unaware of it.' For further info on Patriot Act II www.alternet.org/story.html?StoryID=15541

With the euphoria of the war 'victory' setting in, the US government may have to wait for the next terrorist attack to get their new bit of dodgy legislation passed, but in the meantime the US police and the legal system are acting as if they've already got totalitarian powers.

On Monday morning, California police opened fire on a peaceful anti-war protest at the Port of Oakland where military supplies were being shipped from. 500 protesters had blockaded the port and many dockworkers had walked out in solidarity. On arrival, police gave protesters two minutes to disperse, then opened fire with wooden bullets, concussion grenades and tear gas. Several people, including six dockworkers, were injured when police began shooting at very close range. The protesters didn't manage to close the docks for long, but the incident caused dockworkers to go on strike for the day. The union official Trent Willis said, "They shot my guys. We're not going to work today. The cops had no reason to open up on them." See <http://sf.indymedia.org/> for more on the California port situation.

Last October, three Roman Catholic nuns entered the N-8 Minuteman III missile silo in Colorado to protest against US war mongering. This week they have been convicted of obstructing national defence and damaging government property. The nuns are expected to receive five to eight years each for cutting two gate chains and a fence, painting six crosses on the missile silos with their own blood and symbolically tapping hammers on the railway tracks used to transport the missile.

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SchNEWS in brief

Radio 4A is on the airwaves in Brighton this weekend 101.4 FM and internet streams at www.radio4a.org.uk ** **Atkins Education**, who'd taking on running schools in the London Borough of Southwark, have discovered that running schools ain't as profitable as they had hoped and so they've walked away after just two years. Whoopee for privatisation!! ** The **Mayday Football Tournament** is on May 4th, Clissold Park, Stoke Newington, London, they're looking for teams to enter. 07958-112870 Blackstarrebels@aol.com ** **October Books**, Southampton's co-operatively run independent bookshop, has moved to 243 Portswood Road, Southampton SO17 2NG. 023-80581030 ** **The Anarchist Press: What's it for?** Discussion Tuesday 15th at LARC, 62 Fieldgate St, London, 7.30 pm ** **Mad Pride**, which campaigns for improved civil liberties and social conditions for psychiatric patients, is launching a '**Stop the Suicides**' campaign, Friday 18th, 8pm, at Chat's Palace, 42 Brooksby's Walk, Homerton, London. £4 on the door. 07985780385 madpridelondon@hotmail.com ** **Francisco Ramirez**, president of a Colombian mine workers' union, is in Britain April 21st - May 12th and is willing to give talks to groups. Info: 020-7254-4699 solly@talk21.com ** To see how all the companies that are pushing for the commercialisation of GM crops are linked, then get hold of the **biotech family tree poster** from Corporate Watch, 16b Cherwell Street, Oxford, OX4 1BG. 01865 791391 mail@corporatwatch.org (Donations appreciated) ** The ETC Group have produced a report on **Terminator Technology & Exorcist Technology** in GM crops. www.etcgroup.org ** **Benefit night for the people of West Papua**, with Papuan Musicians, Matt Black from Coldcut, and film showing of the new film 'Merdeka'. Next Tuesday (15), The George IV, Brixton, London ** **Greg Pallast**, author of "**The Best Democracy Money Can Buy**", will be signing books and talking at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London, 6pm, 23rd April. £5/£2 07077-229459 Proceeds go to the firefighters.

Inside SchNEWS

Swiss anti-nuclear eco-anarchist prisoner, **Marco Camenisch** is serving 10 years in jail for blowing up power lines leading to nuclear power plants. He can read and write in French, German, Spanish and Italian. He can read English, but does not feel confident to write long letters in English. Write to: Marco Camenisch, Sennhofstrasse 17, 7000 Chur, Switzerland.

Animal rights campaigner **Sonia Hayward** has been sentenced to 15 months for her involvement in campaigns against Huntingdon Life Science. Letters of support can be sent to her Sonia Hayward, KV 5943, HMP Cookham Wood, Rochester, Kent, ME1 3LU.

WEAPONS OF MASS CONSTRUCTION

The tradition of Mayday has always been about the celebration of life, a way of people uniting all over the world to celebrate their power and to reclaim public spaces. A day of defiance against authority. This year's action on will see a pre-emptive strike against the real weapons of mass destruction: oil companies, the arms manufacturers, multinationals and banks.

In London on May 1st there will be a number of autonomous actions with the main meet ups at 2pm at LockHeed Martin - the biggest arms company in the world - Berkshire House, corner of High Holborn & Endell St, and 4pm at the headquarters of oil company Shell UK, The Strand.

More info: www.ourmayday.org.uk or send an SAE to BM Mayday, London WC1N 3XX.

War Briefs

Stop the War national demonstration, Saturday 12th, in memory of those that have died in Iraq. Bring flowers, cards, wreaths etc to lay outside 10 Downing Street. Assemble 12 noon at either York Road, Waterloo or Victoria Street 020 7053 2153 www.stopwar.org.uk ** If you don't want to trudge through London on Saturday but want to listen to the same old speakers, then stay at home and listen to www.cableradio.co.uk who'll be broadcasting live from the main stage. ** For **anti-war protest in Scotland**, meet 11.30am Blythswood square, Glasgow 0131 538 0257 www.edinburghstw.org.uk ** On Monday (14) there's a **Kites for Peace at MOD Llanbedr**, nr Harlech, at 2pm. Meet Machynlleth Station, 12.30pm. Bring pictures, ribbons and flowers and a kite to fly. Flying kites is forbidden at MOD Llanbedr, so they will be flown as a symbol of opposition to the war machine. Info: 01654-702166 ** **London school students Direct Action planning meeting**: To create a network of school activists and to follow up the anti-war student walk-outs with a student strike on Mayday. Meet 19th April, 1pm on Houghton St, WC2 near Holborn and Temple tubes. schoolaction@london.com ** The next mass blockade of **Faslane Naval Base** in Scotland, the home of Britain's very own weapons of mass destruction, will be on 22nd April. More info: www.banthebomb.org/rbb. Coaches from London and elsewhere. £20/£30. To book a seat ring 07810 192905 or email faslanecoach@hotmail.com. ** **Australian Prime Minister John Howard** and other top Defence officials watched red-faced as HMAS Sydney set sail for the Gulf with a "No War" banner attached to its bow after protesters arrived on inflatables and surfboards and clambered up the hull in a daring anti-war demonstration. Two protesters were arrested, but not before they had forced the ship to a halt ** Film Premier of '**Jeremy Hardy versus The Israeli Army**', 23-24 April at Bloomsbury Theatre, UCL, 15 Gordon Street, London, 8pm. Tickets £6.50 020-7388-8822 ** **Brazil's new leftist government** of Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva has delayed spending \$760m on a fleet of new fighter jets, saying that it would look instead at plans to lease around 12 second-hand planes and spend the money it saves on tackling poverty. ** A BBC television producer, moments before he was wounded by an American fighter aircraft that killed 18 people with friendly fire, spoke to his mother on a satellite phone. Holding the phone over his head so that she could hear the sound of the American planes overhead, he said: "Listen, that's the sound of freedom." For more brilliant cover of the war see <http://pilger.carlton.com/print>

...and finally...

War! What is it good for? Well, apart from the obvious, like arms dealers, oil companies, world dictators and George Bush's mates, it's also pretty good for toy companies. Hasbro, one of the largest toy manufacturers in the world has just marketed its latest costume for 'G.I. Joe', America's equivalent to Action Man. Joe's new get-up is none other than a stunning Gulf War II nuclear, chemical and biological suit, complete with gas mask, boots and gloves. Another topical 'action doll' that's been marketed in the U.S. recently is the National Guard 'Homeland Security Army'. Too bad it doesn't come complete with life size wire taps, computer monitoring systems, and loads of new jails in which to put evil-doers.

Disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all readers don't toy around..We'll be back on the 25th April. Honest!