

WAKE UP!! IT'S YER CAN'T AFFORD NOWT ANYWAY...

Weekly SchNEWS

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Free/Donation

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BUY BUY CRUEL WORLD

AS SchNEWS HOPES THE ANTI-CONSUMERIST MESSAGE WILL FINALLY GAIN PURCHASE

With the government plumping for the 'bail now, pay later' option to paper over the gaping cracks in the global financial system, consumer spending is once again creeping up. While this may be good news for Tesco and Poundland, a return to a rampaging consumer society ravaging the world's resources doesn't sound too good to us here in awkward squad corner. Which is why we're once again welcoming the return of the premier annual direct inaction event Buy Nothing Day on November 28th.

Started by Adbusters in the early 90s, Buy Nothing Day has grown into a worldwide movement that encourages people to go cold turkey on our collective shopping addiction for 24 hours. As well as getting folks to take a break from racking up the debts to upgrade their lives and create self-worth through i-phones and i-shoes, Buy Nothing Day aims to spread the anti-consumerist message and get people to think about the effects of unrestrained consumption on the environment and the developing world. You'd think after the credit crunch / debt meltdown 'n' all that, efforts might be less in vain this year but you'll probably have to keep the pressure up for the other 364 days too.

Maybe one day, after the next great collapse, SchNEWS will launch our own 'Buy Something Day' when it'll be OK to take a break from toiling on yer community food garden and scavenging landfill sites for computer spares and actually purchase some well needed bit of kit you've saved all year for...

Meanwhile, you can participate in Buy Nothing Day by doing nothing more than sitting in a darkened squat reading anti-capitalist diatribes all day (or even in a cosy semi watching the

X-Factor), and for those willing to spread the anti-consumerist message about a bit there are a host of events taking place all over the country.

*** Some of the Buy Nothing Day events happening around the country on Saturday November 28th include...**

Birmingham: The 8th annual Santa Parade will be trundling through Birmingham city centre from noon. For details email joe@birminghamfoe.org.uk

Brighton: Feeling the crunch when it comes to your Christmas list? Head down to The Cowley Club to join in free gift making workshops including rug weaving, candle dipping and a book exchange, starting off at 11am.

Bristol: If you really can't kick the consumption habit there will be Free Shop in Bristol. Swing by to pick up yer gratis goodies or stop for a chat and a bite to eat, at the centre of Broadmead from 11am.

Cardiff: Help clean up after capitalism with an organised litter pick along the Taff Trail and surrounding areas between 12.30pm and 3.30pm. Meet outside 89 Corporation Road, Grangetown, CF11 7AQ at 12.00 for a 12.30 start. See <http://cardiffdigs.blogspot.com/2009/11/buy-nothing-day-litter-pick.html>

Falmouth, Cornwall: Kernow Action Now! a new Cornwall direct action group will be launching what will become a regular Free Shop from 1pm outside the old Woolworths in Falmouth.

Leeds: Another Free Shop along with a craft workshop and lusty renditions of alternative Christmas carols. From 11am to 4pm at Brig-gate in Leeds city centre.

Continued overleaf...

YOU CAN BANK ON ITT

Smash EDO is launching its campaign against the arms trade's number one UK financial backer Barclays Bank this Saturday (26th).

Not only did Barclays invest £7.3 billion pounds in the arms trade last year, they also act as a 'market maker' for ITT, EDO MBM's parent company. This involves Barclays acting as a 'middle man' in ITT's share dealings by purchasing shares then holding them until a buyer becomes available. This ensures the stability of ITT share price by allowing shareholders to sell at any time, even when a buyer isn't available. The eagle-eyed bankers then sell the shares at a small mark-up, generating juicy profits when spread across a large volume of sales.

Smash EDO spokesperson Chloe Marsh said, "Arms dealers like EDO MBM/ITT do not operate alone, they need organisations like Barclays. Every stage of the arms trade is made possible by a network of complicit corporations and financial institutions. Barclays have blood on their hands."

The Target Barclays campaign will be launched in Brighton with a demonstration and info stall outside the North Street branch at 11am. See smashedo.org.uk



And remember - order in the next hour to get the complete set of SchNEWS annuals for only £9.99!!

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K Marx

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MAINSHILL EVICTION ALERT

Proceedings to evict the protest camp at Mainshill in Scotland (see SchNEWS 695) appear to be underway. Last Friday (20th), members of the National Eviction Team, along with police climbers, turned up for a recce and strolled around the sight taking snaps of the camp's defences. On Tuesday two bailiffs appeared on site and attempted to rip the wall of one of the defensive bunkers before slinking away.

The campers are staging an open long weekend from Saturday (28th) to Tuesday (1st). They will be offering direct action workshops, legal briefings, a guided tour of the site and the chance of a ceilidh with local people on Saturday night, plus whatever actions people are up for. With eviction seemingly imminent it's more important than ever that this bunch of committed campaigners get as much support as possible. Bring warm clothes, boots and waterproofs, a tent, sleeping bag and mat plus building tools and action materials if you can.

* See www.coalactionscotland.noflag.org.uk (resources page has great guide to 'Digger Diving for Beginners'!)

LOSING THE MAGIC

After four long months of struggle, the wheels of Magic Roundabout Vestas protest camp have finally fallen off. The ex-workers, occupiers and supporters that have been camped there fighting for fair redundancy packages for the laid-off staff (see SchNEWS 691) were served with a possession order last Thursday (19th) and appeared in court on Tuesday (24th). The group were unable to find legal representation due to the fact the order was served to 'persons unknown' (what a coincidence...) and the judge turned deaf ears to the campers' argument that the order had been funded and driven by Vestas, as the landowners, MJH Developments, have until now taken no interest in the camp.

Rather than enforce the possession order straight away, the judge graciously granted the protesters time to speak to the landowners and sort out an eviction date. All suggestions made by the camp that ensured they would have enough time to dismantle the site and return it to its original state were refused by solicitors and, on Thursday (26th), they were told that they had to be gone by 11am Friday 27th.

What has ensued is a hurried clearance of the site, which includes a wooden framed kitchen room with cob oven, living space with three-piece suite and vegetable patches, as well as tents, caravan and sleeping spaces for the determined campers. The group maintain that the fight will continue with regular meetings and actions directed towards getting justice for the sacked turbine builders.

* See: <http://savevestas.wordpress.com>

Lincoln: Anti-capitalist crazies My Dad's Strip Club are out to do three events in three days. Following *Bite the Hand*, a comedic demo held yesterday, today sees *From Dirty Cash to Clean Green* as MDSC try and navigate a way out of the climate chaos through drawing and performance. 5.30-7.30pm at Healthy Hub café, Beaumont Fee. Saturday's finale is *Good Shit Doesn't Have to Cost the Earth* as MDSC will be out coercing unsuspecting shoppers into breaking their addiction to mass-produced cheap-shit. Meet for a report back at the Dog and Bone pub 1pm sharp. See www.mydadsstripclub.com

London: Islington's Green Living Centre is hosting a craft workshop using waste materials including newspaper origami and making picture frames from old CD cases. 222 Upper Street. For more info email sustainabilitycentre@s@islington.gov.uk

Sheffield: A hoard of zombie shoppers will be lurching around Meadowhall shopping centre in search for sweet, tasty consumer brains. Bring friends, costumes, signs and blood, lots and lots of blood (fake please, people). Meet by the statue in the main concourse at 1pm. Search Facebook for 'zombie flashmob sheffield' to get more details.

South Derbyshire: We won't pretend to understand this one despite our up and running Twitter page and hundreds of devoted followers but apparently... conkertu.com will serve as the social media hub for sustainability, with an annual programme of eight lifestyle events to meet, tweet and stream. See twitter.com/conkertu twitter.com/zerocredit_uk twitter.com/philcampbell twitter.com/visitconkers

* For more info see www.buynothingday.co.uk

GANG BANGING

We just can't keep track of 'em... new police/crime/public order laws that is. Time was when there would be a new shake up of criminal law once a decade, now it's more like once a week.

Anyway the latest round of repression on the beat in your neighbourhood is set to be the Crime and Policing Act 2009. The Act (which came into force last week) is the usual New Labour rag-bag of miscellaneous new police powers to bug, search, seize and detain without trial, with the odd bit thrown in to keep liberal naysayers happy.

Most worrying for campaigning groups is Part 4 - the power for civil courts to grant injunctions to 'prevent gang-based violence', the so-called GANGBO. Now this revisits the territory of the injunctions taken out under the Protection from Harassment Act (see SchNEWS 581) and ASBOs in that a civil burden of proof (balance of probabilities in place of beyond reasonable doubt) is used to create criminal offences tailor-made for the individual, punishable by arrest and imprisonment.

All that is required is that violence is threatened. In item 34, section 5 of the Act, "gang-related violence" means violence or a threat of violence which occurs in the course of, or is otherwise related to, the activities of a group that (a) consists of at least 3 people, (b) uses a name, emblem or colour or has any other characteristic that enables its members to be identified by others as a group, and (c) is associated with a particular area. Sound like any protest groups you know?

Of course when the act was first drafted it only applied to adults - but before the first GANGBO has even been issued, along rolls another piece of legislation, this time the Crime and Security Bill which is going to extend the powers to thirteen to seventeen-year-olds.

UNI'D A MIRALCE

Over two hundred students and staff turned out for a rally against the University of Birmingham's plans to make big staff cuts - or 'disinvestment' as the management tactfully put it. It is rumoured that there will be around 200 staff lay-offs.

The guvnors are also trying to force through a plan to dump the Sociology Department, where 16 jobs may be lost.

Calling it the 'corporatisation' of the university, the organisers of the protests say the plan is for the uni to become a consultancy service for government and business.

The ruckus has rocked the relevant committees with their decisions still pending. The judgement on sociology will take place on Thursday 26th November, so get yourself down to the rally in the forecourt next to the clock tower at 1pm on the 26th to oppose further commercialisation.

This is another total (Ed) balls-up in the making. Universities in West Yorkshire, Sterling and Sussex - to name but a few - are sacking people left, right and centre. It remains to be seen whether all this will stir the students out of their squalid pits early enough to do anything about it.

* **STOP PRESS** - around 150 students at Sussex did make it out of bed yesterday to take part in a noisy protest demo, chanting 'They say cutback, we say fightback!' - and who said student radicalism was dead?

MERSEY BEATINGS

On Saturday November 21st hundreds of people joined a break-away anti-homophobia march in Liverpool, hitting the main streets instead of skulking around the side alleys.

The Council, worrying that the centre of the city was too busy with Christmas shoppers, tried to force the poor sods on the authorised march to keep a low profile.

Not surprisingly, the marchers got a taste of curdled egg-nog in their mouths so they decided (in their words), to "come out of the closet" and "onto the streets".

The police gave the marchers a jolly good ticking off, saying, "This will spoil everything." Just shows how in touch the filth are with public anger about recent homophobic attacks in the city and sectors of the mainstream media.

Gay Liverpool councillor Steve Radford said, "It was great to walk through the main shopping area of the city and show that gays and lesbians will not be treated as second-class citizens in our city, and that an injury on one is an injury on all of us."

Another councillor who came out very recently told how she'd faced an onslaught of homophobic abuse and had been considering leaving the city until she saw the large turnout of people supporting the rights of the LGBT community.

Gay teenager Michael Causer was murdered by teenagers in the summer and 'out' trainee Merseyside Police Constable, James Parkes, 22, was left fighting for his life after a beating last month.

These are only a couple of the recent vicious attacks on the LGBT community in Liverpool.

Many of these homophobic thugs are in their early teens, like those who attacked a young man on Lord Street last week.

LGBT rights group Stonewall says attacks on the LGBT community are rising across the UK, and that one in five lesbian and gay people experienced a hate incident in the last three years.

PARTY & PROTEST

For events listings updated weekly see www.schnews.org.uk/pap

SchNEWS in Brief

A Stop The War organised die-in held traffic up for "more than 10 minutes" in Parliament Square yesterday (26th). The mostly student-backed demonstration demanded the withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan then marched on to Downing Street for some shouting and the odd speech. As the protesters were preparing to leave a police inspector came and had a word in the ear about breaking SOCPA laws banning protest in the Westminster area.

* **Smellie Fisher Man Court Shocker:** Charmingly named cop thug Delroy Smellie was up in court last week charged with common assault. Despite Youtube footage clearly showing Smellie backhanding protester Nicola Fisher across the face before clubbing her on the legs with his baton at the vigil for Ian Tomlinson, Smellie pleaded not guilty. Trial has been set for March 22nd.

* **BUY NOTHING DAY SPECIAL** - The new SchMOVIES dvd is out soon - **Reports From The Verge** - the Smash EDO/ITT Anthology 2005-2009. Order yours now for £6 including p&p. Buy one and help keep SchNEWS free. www.schnews.org.uk/schmovies

NERVOUS WREX

The latest attempt by the EDL/WDL to crack the Welsh racist market followed the now familiar pattern of a pub-based kettle and boozy chanting. Around 50 Defence Leaguers met up in a city centre Wetherspoons (who, we've heard, may soon become the Official Pub of Racism) and were quickly blocked in by a police horseshoe. Reports suggest the majority were on a racist's day trip from Bolton. Four people were arrested for public disorder offences.

Up the road around 200 Wrexham locals gathered for a Communities Against Racism festival, with music, poetry, food and politicians grabbing the mic to make 'rousing' speeches.

One local attending the event said, "We demonstrated the true face of Wrexham; a peaceful, proud, tolerant and diverse working-class town; and we did it the right way - by having a good time together."

...and finally...

If you thought that yer local council never did nuffin' for the homeless, think again. Brighton Council's offices on Palace Place provided a great space for a cheeky bunch of squatters a few weeks back. Apparently the crafty crew snuck in uninvited whilst the offices were being redecorated and made themselves at home. Of all the offices to choose from, this one just happened to be - oh the irony - part of the Council's Housing Department.

According to our source, council offices adjacent to it were still working business as usual, despite a connecting door leading from bored council mandarins to K'd up crusties (excuse the stereotype - not all council workers are bored by their jobs). Still, it meant that for those memorable weeks there was always a culprit on hand for those missing staplers and pens.

One disgruntled Council employee told us, strictly off the record and between fits of laughter, "It was a bit of a surprise, but we all think it's f&%ing hilarious - when we found out what had happened it made our week".

The squatters cleared out after they received an eviction notice. But, at least they know where to go to apply for temporary accommodation.

Disclaimer

SchNEWS advises all readers - there's some things that money can't buy - for everything else there's shoplifting... Honest.

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