

Iraq Sanctions: Suspected Dual Use

"Sanctions target the weakest and most vulnerable members of the Iraqi society – the poor, elderly, newborn, sick and young." – Voices in the Wilderness

"The sanctions have decimated the Iraqi people, driven most Iraqis into a dependent relationship to the government, shattered institutions that could sustain opposition and increased nationalism." Anthony Arnove, Iraq Speakers Bureau

In the buildup to war, liberal anti-war groups got far too worked-up about the UN confrontation with the US/UK coalition over their plan to attack Iraq. It was as if America was the Source Of All Evil and the UN Security Council was heroically standing up for innocent Iraqis. But it's unlikely that the Security Council was any more concerned about Iraqi lives than George Dubya – they just didn't want to hand over all control of the region to the US. If there's any doubt about this, we only need to recall the UN's preferred method for keeping Iraq under thumb: the sanctions regime that has been imposed on the country for over 12 years.

It's hard to imagine the shit that ordinary Iraqis have had to put up with since the imposition of sanctions. In 1991 Iraq was recovering from an 8-year war with Iran that had left over 500,000 dead, the first Gulf War in which perhaps another 250,000 were killed, and a brutal counter-insurgency by the Baathist regime, after the US pulled its troops out to allow them to put down the uprisings that began early that year (see *Milan Rai article*). The Gulf War had destroyed the country's infrastructure. At this time, the UN decided to continue with a program of economic sanctions so extreme that health, energy, education and sanitation services virtually fell apart, unemployment rose to critical levels, and rationing had to be introduced. Before the Gulf war Iraq had the best public health system in the region. In 1996, Kathy Kelly from US direct action group Raising Voices visited Dr Tarik Hasim Habeh at the Basra pediatrics and gynecology hospital. He told her that doctors couldn't earn enough to feed their families, sometimes making no more than \$3 a month, so some had had to

find work as taxi drivers, street vendors or waiters. He took her through several wards where infant after infant lay wasting in squalid conditions. They were suffering severe malnutrition, respiratory diseases, leukemia and kidney disease. In one room 14 incubators were stacked against a wall, useless because of the lack of repair parts available under sanctions.

The UN Security Council first imposed economic sanctions on Iraq in August 1990, following the country's invasion of Kuwait. They were originally intended to force Iraq to end the occupation. After the Gulf War forced Iraq out of Kuwait the decision was made to re-impose the sanctions. The official reason given for this was to force Iraq to give up its Weapons of Mass Destruction programs, but there was also clearly an intention to punish the Iraqi government for its disobedience. The wording of the new resolution, "one of the longest and most complex...ever passed" was so vague that it allowed Security Council members – particularly the US and the UK – to constantly shift the goalposts over what counted as co-operation with UN demands.

Sanctions are basically barriers to trade, where no goods are allowed in or out of the country without the permission of the UN. The scope of the sanctions program was so broad that it almost completely shut down the country's economy. Many items were banned from import because of their "Suspected Dual Use" – the threat that they could have military as well as civilian uses. The list of these supposedly deadly items was long and ridiculous. It included wheelbarrows, aspirin, chlorine for purifying water, brake pads for various makes of car, cuddly toys, pencils and detergent. The banning or stalling of most necessary items meant that cars lay abandoned on roadsides, hospital staff had nothing to clean the floors with but petrol, children had nothing to write with, and most drinking water became contaminated. Where needed items were not banned, the restrictions placed on exports meant that the country simply didn't have the cash to buy adequate supplies.

The sanctions prevented the reconstruction of essential infrastructure such as water works, sanitation plants, schools, hospitals, roads and electricity generating plants that were bombed during the first Gulf War. In stark contrast to the fairly swift reconstruction following the Iran/Iraq war in 1989, reconstruction after the 1991 war was more or less non-existent. Not only did sanctions prevent effective reconstruction, they prevented the day-to-day maintenance of those facilities that hadn't been destroyed by bombs.

Holding back the supplies needed to repair water and sewage works amounted to germ warfare. By 1999 the UN's own staff estimated that "access to potable water [in Iraq] is currently 50% of the 1990 level in urban areas and only 33% in rural areas." Public health deteriorated massively, in large part because of lack of access to clean water. The Humanitarian Panel of UNICEF reported in their 1999 study, "Communicable diseases, such as water borne diseases and



Second hand book market in Baghdad - under sanctions people were forced to sell what possessions they could to survive.

Pic: Jo Wilding

Malaria, which had been under control, came back as an epidemic in 1993 and have now become part of the endemic pattern of the precarious health situation."

By 1997 it was estimated that over half a million people had died because of the sanctions, more than were killed in the Iran/Iraq war. According to Amatzia Baram, Director of the Jewish-Arab Centre at the University of Haifa, it's been civilians and "mainly young children and the elderly [who've] paid the price." In southern and central Iraq - home to most of the country's population - under-5 mortality more than doubled, from 56 deaths per 1000 live births during 1984-9, to 131 between 1994-9. Likewise infant mortality - the death of children in their first year - increased from 47 per 1000 live births to 108 within the same time frame. Maternal death during childbirth also increased.

Unemployment became unimaginably high. For example, by 1996 only six people in every hundred were working in the area around Basra. School enrolment halved since 1990 and the schools that were able to operate became massively overfilled. UNICEF's Humanitarian Panel wrote at the time, "The rising number of street children and children who work can be explained in part as a result of increasing rates of school drop-outs and repetition, as more families are forced to rely on children to secure household incomes."

Once the cultural hub of the Middle East, Iraqi culture was stifled. Nasra Al-Sa'adoon, an Iraqi writer explains, "...most painters, archaeologists, musicians and professors either died or moved away, or became too depressed or impoverished to continue."

The only section of Iraqi society that didn't suffer was the Baath Party. Weakened by poverty and made dependent on the regime for food rations, Iraqis had little hope of repeating the uprisings that nearly brought down Saddam Hussein in 1991. A clique of doting dependents formed around Hussein, who played on the nationalism that increased with people's resentment of the sanctions.

For ordinary Iraqis, the sanctions meant daily reminders that they were living under siege. Even trying to walk down the street became a major health hazard. In Basra, Iraq's second largest city Kathy Kelly describes a scene, "Basrans trudge through streets fouled with piles of human waste. The piles, five to six feet tall, spaced every thirty feet, are left to dry. Adults negotiate residential sidewalks with care, stepping over human feces, and wastewater spills from the streets into nearby homes."

In 1996, Madeleine Albright, the then US secretary of state, was asked what she felt about the fact that 500,000 Iraqi children had died as a result of US-backed economic sanctions. She replied that it was 'a very hard choice,' but that, all things considered, 'the price is worth it.' This judgment came at a time when many UN members favoured easing the sanctions. The US position is thought to have swayed many UN officials and kept them quiet about the deadly effects of the sanctions. It was two more years before Denis Halliday resigned his post as UN coordinator for humanitarian aid to Iraq, for example. When he did resign, he said the sanctions were "... ignoring the human rights of ordinary Iraqis

and turning a whole generation against the west." On a later occasion he said, "The member states know full well what they're doing and what the impact is."

In October 1999, in a letter to the president of the UN Security Council, even Kofi Annan, the UN Secretary General complained about unnecessary 'holds' on food and equipment that had been preventing the reconstruction of water, sanitation and electricity plants as well as the communications infrastructure in Iraq. Meanwhile an American official boasted to the Washington Post, "The longer we can fool around in the [UN Security] Council and keep things static, the better." An example of this lethal 'fooling around' was given by Anthony Arnove, US writer and activist, "When the Iraqis asked for 500 ambulances, these were initially blocked in their entirety and then slowly, over a period of months were released - 100, 200 ambulances."

A major problem with the UN seems to have been their complete inability to consider the Iraqi people living under sanctions as human at all. As John Pilger put it, "Peter Van Walsum, Netherlands Ambassador to the UN and chair of the sanctions committee ... seemed to associate Iraq, the civilized society, with Saddam Hussein, the murderer as if they were one and the same. He also seemed to believe in holding innocent people hostage to the compliance of a dictator over whom they [had] no control."

At the time of writing, the US and the UK, having been the main obstacle to lifting the sanctions for years, have presented a new resolution to the UN calling for them to be lifted. White House spokesman, Ari Fleicher, announced, "There is no reason for the people of Iraq to suffer sanctions any longer" - although the US consistently denied that the sanctions were causing suffering throughout the 90s. Of course the White House couldn't give a toss whether Iraqis are suffering or not, but they know that unless oil revenues are released there won't be any money for the lucrative post-war reconstruction contracts that are already being farmed-out to US companies. The last word on the new resolution goes to Voices in the Wilderness, the direct action group who organised illegal deliveries of medical supplies to Iraq throughout the sanctions regime. On the day the resolution was presented, they said, "We support their removal...and the recognition of economic sanctions as both a failed and genocidal policy. We continue to oppose the umbrella of military violence, occupation, corporate control, and foreign developed leadership that Iraqis have been told is their 'liberation.'"

Useful sources

Voices In The Wilderness:

www.viwuk.freemove.co.uk

Middle East Institute: www.mideasti.org

Campaign against sanctions on Iraq: www.casi.org.uk

Human rights watch:

www.hrw.org/reports/1991/iraq

UN Food & Agriculture Organisation:

www.fao.org/giews

Electronic Iraq: <http://electroniciraq.net>

Arnove, A (Ed) 2003 *Iraq Under Siege*.

Pluto Press, London



www.schnews.org.uk

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Free/Donation

Issue 367

Mr President, this is a nuclear reactor and four missile launchers and they're all over Iraq Sir.



IT'S A NUKE OUT

Tuesday was the anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima. Fifty-seven years since the USA dropped a nuclear bomb on the Japanese city which eventually killed an estimated 200,000 people.

Tuesday was also the 12th anniversary of the imposition of sanctions on Iraq - where another Hiroshima is taking place. In a report published three years ago, the United Nations Children's Fund said that between 1991 and 1998 economic sanctions contributed to the deaths of half a million Iraqi children under the age of five.

These deaths weren't caused by sanctions alone, however. Other factors have also contributed to the high child mortality rate, including the after-effects of the Gulf War, where the country's infrastructure, namely water and sewage treatment facilities, was deliberately destroyed. In addition, depleted uranium from tank shells and bombs used in the Gulf War has caused cancer in many children. This situation was worsened by the Iraqi government not taking all available measures to prevent the massive increase in child mortality. Dr. Ginan Ghalib Hassen, an Iraq paediatrician said, "I have studied what happened in Hiroshima. It is almost exactly the same here; we have an increased percentage of congenital malformation, an increase of malignancy, leukaemia, and brain tumours."

During the Gulf War, more than 300 tons of depleted uranium was used in weapons against the country. On impact, they left a residue of radioactive dust. This dust, travelling where the wind blows, remains ra-

dioactive for 4,500 million years and as a result, there is now an epidemic of cancer throughout Iraq causing babies to be born without eyes, limbs, genitalia, and sometimes with their organs on the outside of their bodies.

Professor Doug Rokke was the army physicist responsible for cleaning up Kuwait. He now has 5,000 times the recommended level of radiation in his body. He wonders why the United States and Britain decided to use a 'weapon of mass destruction', "What happened in the Gulf was a form of nuclear warfare," he maintains.

As if the death of innocent civilians from cancer wasn't enough, Britain and the US have also been bombing the country on and off since 1991 to protect the so called 'no fly zones'. During 1999 alone the two countries dropped more than 1,800 bombs and hit 450 targets. Bombing happens almost every day, yet to read the mainstream media you wouldn't know it was happening.

OIL SLIP

For 50-odd years, Iraq relied on its oil exports for national earnings. In 1990, its ability to export was cut off overnight and its oil facilities decimated by bombing. Although the country can now export oil, it can only spend the bulk of the revenues on humanitarian imports. "What this means" Dr Glen Rangwala from the Campaign Against Sanctions on Iraq told SchNEWS "is three things: Iraq can't rebuild its country's public services; it can't rebuild its oil sector, so it earns less than a fifth of what it was earning in 1980 with double the population

CRAP ARRESTS OF THE WEEK

For travelling in the same car!

In Iran the Basiji (the Islamic police force) routinely stop cars playing forbidden Western music, and if unmarried women are found in the company of men, they are arrested and charged with moral corruption! Single women can be subjected to humiliating virginity tests, and if they fail they are given the option of marrying their companion or being flogged for having extramarital sex. www.hambastegi.org

to provide for. The Iraqi people don't have jobs that pay anything like adequate salaries, because the Government can't use its oil revenues to pay its people - which means that people aren't able to afford any of the necessities of life. They receive the bulk of their food in a government ration - the whole country has been run like a refugee camp for the past 12 years. Lastly, it also means that if we invade, the ration distribution system will probably collapse and we'll see mass starvation."

Bush and Blair say Saddam Hussein is still a threat to the world but Scott Ritter, for five years a senior weapons inspector in Iraq who meticulously checked out the country's chemical, biological and weapons infrastructure, said "If I had to quantify Iraq's threat, I would say (it is) zero."

It was the CIA who helped put Saddam in power and it was the West who helped keep him there.

Oil Slip cont...

It was the US who sold materials that it knew could easily be used to make nuclear, biological and chemical weapons, even after the Iraqi government had slaughtered 6,000 Kurds in its chemical bombardment of Halabja in 1988. A year later John Kelly, US Assistant Secretary of State, visited Baghdad and told Hussein "You are a force for moderation in the region, and the United States wants to broaden her relationship with Iraq."

Saddam's problem was not that he tortured and murdered thousands of his people, gassed and bombed the Kurds and made war with Iran, but that he invaded Kuwait and now refuses to toe the American line. As Rahul Mahajan, author and Green Party candidate for Governor of Texas points out, "The Bush administration wants a war...replacing Saddam with a U.S.-friendly dictator who will make deals with American companies and follow American dictates."

On any given day, U.S. troops are in 140 countries around the world with permanent bases in more than half of those. This is the reality of the so called war on terror, a war that will never end, until every country bows to the might of the United States.

* A lot of this material was lifted shamelessly from John Pilger's ex-

cellent new book 'The New Rulers of the World' published by Verso. Essential reading.

* **Campaign Against Sanctions on Iraq** have produced a booklet giving twelve suggested actions for twelve years of sanctions 0845 330 4520 www.casi.org.uk

* **A doctor from Oxford** has begun withholding 7% of her tax bill in protest against sanctions on Iraq and instead donating the amount which would usually go to the military to the UK charity Medical Aid for Iraqi Children.

* **24 August: Citizen's Inspection** at Welford US munitions store to highlight the hypocrisy of US demands for arms inspections. Meet 10 am Reading station. 0118 966 8328 readingpeacegroup@hotmail.com

* **Sellafield Peace Camp** 29-31 August The Sellafield site is implicitly involved in the nuclear weapons industry. 0773 2928780

* **Don't Attack Iraq** demonstration Saturday 28 September. 12noon Speaker's Corner, Hyde Park, Central London CND 020 7700 2393 www.cnd.org.uk

* **Two ships carrying rejected MOX fuel** from Japan are due to arrive in the UK at the end of the month. A nuclear-free flotilla is going to sail out to greet it, and a protest is being organised in Barrow-on-Furness. Info: fgod@hotpop.com www.nuclearfreeflotilla.org

SchNEWS in brief

Brighton's **Radio 4A** is back on the airwaves this weekend, followed by a Reclaim the Beach party on Saturday night. 'Bring your ghetto blaster - you are the sound system.' 107.8 FM www.piratetv.net ** **Random Artists** have opened a building as a café, gallery space and record shop at 282 Richmond Rd. London E8. Open Thurs-Sat midday-late. 07092 012299 ** Sunday 11th is the 9th **Portsmouth Smokey Bears Picnic** for those who like a joint or twenty. 2pm on Southsea Common. 07753 219135 ** 87 activists who were arrested during a march to the Mayor of Johannesburg's house in protest against water privatisation, are being taken to court on 15th August. An international day of action is being called. **Picket of South Africa House**, Trafalgar Square, London, 4.30pm onwards. www.resist.org.uk ** Glasgow once again has it's own new radical bookshop and meeting space. **The John MacLean Centre** is a workers co-op run by volunteers, 34 Clarendon Place. 0141 332 6849. www.johnmacleancentre.org ** **A compilation video of various GM actions** from Stop the Crop in 1998 to last months DEFRA action is now available for £5 from ToGG 01803 840098. ** **At Hayle Beach in Cornwall** there is a series of protests against the destruction of the beach by the harbour company that manages the area. www.SOSHayle.fsnet.co.uk ** **Road Alert!** have a new website www.roadalert.org.uk created to provide a forum for those interested in a direct action response to the resurrection of the Government's road building program ** **Demonstration against the resumption of live exports** from Dover next Saturday (17th) midday, Pencester Gardens, Dover. Coaches from London and the Midlands 01730 264208 ** Last Saturday shoppers at **Selfridges** in Oxford Street faced a couple of hundred demonstrators protesting about the store continuing to stock goods made in illegal Israeli settlements in the West Bank and Gaza. The protest was organised by Direct Action Against War Now! www.daawn.cjb.net

SODS

Last week, 300 hospital workers at Glasgow's Royal Infirmary went on strike to demand a minimum of five pounds an hour and a return to NHS conditions of employment with holidays and sick pay. Ever since the French multinational Sodexo has officially employed the workers (when they won the contract from the NHS) the workers have been in a much weaker position to make any demands. Not content with treating workers like second class citizens, Sodexo has really taken the piss recently by offering to restore workers rights by 2005! No rush hey. This crap offer was unanimously voted out and there has been a three day strike this week and one planned for next week. The fact that public services are now

run by profit is due to the Private Finance Initiative (PFI), which is basically privatisation by the back door, allowing corporations like Sodexo to get their hands on public services (see Schnews 240). Sodexo has its fingers in many pies--it has contracts with 120 public sector institutions, at least 4 of which are PFI profit-run NHS hospitals; it's subsidiary, UK Detention Centres Ltd., is a leader of the privatised prison service. This lovely company was also planning to pay asylum-seekers 34p an hour for cooking, cleaning and doing odd jobs at a detention centre near Heathrow, an offer which they eventually dropped under pressure from various groups.

More info: Sod Action, Box 95, 82 Colston Street, Bristol, BS1 5BB. sod-action@fsmail.net

AIRBORTED



In an astonishing victory for the residents of San Salvador Atenco, the Mexican government last week confirmed that they were abandoning plans to build a new international airport smack on top of the small farming community just outside of Mexico City.

The whole saga began last autumn when Mexican President Vicente Fox's government approved plans to build a six-runway, \$2.3 billion airport that would gobble up much of San Salvador Atenco's farming land.

In October, a federal ruling offered villagers a mere 40 pence a square yard for the land - the land that served as the farmers' main source of food, income, and security. The residents of Atenco and the surrounding villages quickly dismissed this slap-in-the-face offer, and immediate protests and marches were organised.

Over the next 9 months, farmers mobilised themselves with few results - but things began to change on Thursday, July 11th, when a demo was organised to protest an official government announcement affirming the airport plans. Farmers travelling in a peaceful caravan to the demo were attacked by police with clubs, tear gas, and live ammunition. Thirty protesters were injured, fifteen arrested, and five hospitalised—one of whom, Jose Enrique Espinoza Juarez, died in hospital two weeks later.

This brutal show of force inspired supporters in nearby Atenco to take immediate and radical direct action. Over the next few days, five police squad cars were burnt and used along with other seized vehicles (including some



Coca-Cola trucks!) to block the nearby national highway. Thirteen government and police officials were taken hostage, and the Atenco farmers used these hostages as bargaining tools in their struggle with the authorities. On July 14, the last hostages were released in return for the release of all arrested farm workers. It has taken the government another three weeks to cancel plans for the airport altogether, but with last week's announcement; the Atenco workers' victory became certain.

Many people feel that the Atenco struggle has been a vital test of the ability of a community-based movement to stop projects that only serve the interests of a few, powerful and wealthy businesses. The administration of President Fox has a plethora of such projects, including the lofty Plan Puebla Panama (PPP), a plan to privatise the energy industry and support the Free Trade Area of the Americas.

The PPP is President Fox's crown jewel economic project, which seeks to transform south eastern Mexico into an industrialised factory centre where maquiladoras (sweatshops) can thrive, producing yet more raw materials for the developed countries in the Northern Hemisphere. The plan involves massive construction projects and generous factory building incentives in an attempt to attract more foreign investment from multinational corporations. But the PPP cuts right through the heart of a lot of indigenous land and territory in the poverty stricken southern Mexico State of Chiapas and beyond. Roberto Rivera, a student involved in a recent Atenco solidarity march, sees the protests in Atenco as "an important turning point, because the proposed airport is the first integral step in the process of implementing the Plan Puebla Panama ... if the plans to build this new airport in Atenco are stopped, it will be a major blow to the PPP."

The events of Atenco have indeed sent a clear message to multi-national companies and the governments that seek only to protect their interests. "Even if they gave us all the gold in the world," said one Atenco woman, "We wouldn't leave our land because that is all we have." <http://mexico.indymedia.org/>



Enjoy Autonomy - it's the real thing



Corporatewealth Games

"While big business is profiteering, local resources are cut. While poor areas of the city are given a paint job and abandoned shops covered over with corporate adverts, the real problems go unsolved and the real needs of the communities in these areas are ignored." - Manchester Biotic Baking Brigade.

The Blitz festival blew up in the streets of Manchester with a mind-expanding explosion of art and direct action. Running parallel to the Commonwealth Games, this well-organised, independent festival showed how cunningly the people of Manchester could attack the corporate games spectacle.

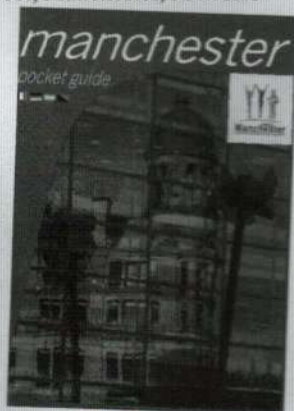
The simply splendid march FOR capitalism kicked off with cucumber sandwiches and G & T's in a park, where an impeccably dressed rabble held banners such as "Bomb Other Countries" and "the environment can kiss my ass." AgiTATE put on an art exhibition in a shopping mall, and cyclists and skaters teamed up for a skate-athon around Manchester City centre. Councillors were none too pleased with all this unpredictable activity, particularly when they eventually realised that tourists were wandering around with spoof alternative guides to the city.

The Commonwealth Games, like all major sporting events, was used to boost sales of advertising and sponsorship. Reebok sponsored UK Athletes. Chinese Labour Watch say the company encourages "illegal long hours, failure to pay the minimum wage, lack of social benefits, crowded living, short term contracts, and

constant violation of both Chinese law and Reebok's own cosmetic Human Rights standards." Asda, Walmart and Manchester Airport were two other sponsors who both have lousy labour rights records. In 2000, Walmart in the US was forced to pay \$50 million to settle claims after 69,000 workers were forced to work unpaid overtime.

No Sweat organiser Mick Duncan said "Our campaign isn't about attacking the Games, or sport - it's about exposing the practices of firms who use sport and sporting events to make millions while paying next to nothing to the workers who make the products." www.nosweat.org.uk

For a copy of the splendid spoof booklet send 2 first class stamps on an SAE to NATO, c/o EF! Box 29, MERCi, Bridge 5 Mill, 22a Beswick Street, Manchester, M4 7HR



To keep the tourists informed an alternative guide to the city appeared for the Games, an exact replica of the official guide. It gave the other side of the story - about how funds were diverted from local communities to pay for the Games, and on the positive side, pointing people to events in the Blitz festival.

Positive SchNEWS

'Land and Future' is the world's first guide for tribal people, with information on how tribes around the world can secure their lands and way of life. It advises tribes on how to conduct a campaign when faced with the invasion of their lands by nasty oil companies, loggers and colonists, and offers tips on their rights under international law, and how to secure them. The book is going to be printed in many languages and there are plans for it be sent out to the remotest parts of the world. www.survival-international.org

...and finally...

Cardiff Bay, once an expanse of tidal mud flats, was recently re-developed at a cost of billions cos' nature wasn't considered good for business. Instead of being home to wading birds, the Bay's new residents are thousands of rich people who flocked to the area hoping to spend their time sipping cocktails on their balconies whilst the sun set over the tidal barrage. It now seems however that nature is getting its revenge in the form of thousands of midges that are plaguing the area. Residents, who now have to lock themselves in their luxurious flats at dusk to avoid the swarms of midges, are now threatening to take legal action against the harbour authorities for their failure to understand mother nature. Gnats that then.

Disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all readers living in the atomonous zone - don't fall-out over the mushrooms. Honest.

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States of Unrest III

The A-Z of global resistance to the IMF and the World Bank

"The rising tide of the global economy will create many economic winners, but it will not lift all boats. ... [It will] spawn conflicts at home and abroad, ensuring an ever wider gap between regional winners and losers than exists today.... [Globalisation's] evolution will be rocky, marked by chronic financial volatility and a widening economic divide. Regions, countries, and groups feeling left behind will face deepening economic stagnation, political instability, and cultural alienation." Central Intelligence Agency, 2000

Mobilisations in Europe and North America against the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank are only branches of a much larger movement – the fiercest opponents of IMF and World Bank policies have always been people in the poorest countries, i.e. those who are most affected by them. Despite massive popular protest over the past few years the IMF and World Bank continue to force privatisation and 'austerity' on indebted countries.

Most of the money owed by indebted countries is owed to private banks. Often these countries need to seek new loans just to keep up with the interest payments on old debt. The IMF acts as 'gatekeeper', deciding whether to open or shut the 'gate' between a borrowing government and all other lines of international credit. That means that before anyone will lend an indebted country money the IMF is sent in to get the government to push through 'reforms' that ensure a climate that's 'good for business'.

Needless to say, what's 'good for business' – hacking back social spending and privatising everything to provide global capital with a constant supply of new markets; cheap & impoverished labour, and bargain-basement raw materials – is bad news for almost everyone else.

IMF reform packages used to be called Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs). In 1999, just for a laugh, they were re-named Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs), as though that would stop anyone noticing that they were made up of the same poverty-increasing schemes as always. These include:

- *Reduced government spending, leading to public-sector lay-offs, freezing of salaries, and cutbacks in health, education and social welfare services;*
- *Privatisation of state-run industries, often leading to massive lay-offs with no social security provision and the loss of services to remote or poor areas;*
- *Currency devaluation and export promotion, leading to the soaring cost of imports, land use changed for cash crops, and reliance on international commodity markets;*
- *Raising interest rates to tackle inflation, putting small companies out of business;*
- *Removal of price controls, leading to rapid price rises for basic goods and services.*

This report is the third annual global round-up of its kind from the World Development Movement. For the unedited version see the website: www.wdm.org.uk

ARGENTINA

At the end of December 2001, Argentina defaulted on its public and private foreign debts, totalling some US\$132 billion – the largest default in history – plunging the country into economic and social crisis. In early December, the IMF refused a request by Argentina for an emergency loan agreement to cover the country's increasing debt and so the country defaulted. Throughout December and into January 2002, Argentina imposed emergency, short-term policies to deal with the economic fall-out from the debt default crisis, including changing the exchange rate regime and freezing banking accounts. The IMF set a number of strict conditions including the cancelling of an anti-corruption law and commitments to reduce public spending by 60 per cent. By the end of 2002 the IMF had still not resumed lending to Argentina. A new programme was eventually signed in January 2003.

After massive riots and the subsequent collapse of President Fernando de la Rúa's Government in December 2001 (States of Unrest II), Eduardo Duhalde assumed Argentina's Presidency on 1 January 2002. Duhalde was put in place by the Argentinean Congress to remain President until December 2003. As his first act as the new President, Duhalde announced a currency devaluation plan and the dismantling of the 'convertibility' regime that for 11 years had pegged the peso on par to the dollar. Hours after the announcement, more than 4,000 Argentines, fed up with Argentina's politicians and the economic crisis, streamed onto the streets of Buenos Aires in a raucous protest that continued throughout the night.

10 January: Thousands of protesters, in at least 60 Buenos Aires neighbourhoods, took to the streets in reaction to new restrictions (known as the 'corralito') imposed on bank account transactions and withdrawals. The restrictions were first introduced on 3 December 2001 to maintain the integrity of the banking system, which faced a massive run on cash withdrawals as the public and foreign investors lost faith in the banking system (States of Unrest II). The demonstration ended with riot police firing rubber bullets at the crowd, and several properties being trashed or burned including shops, supermarkets, McDonald's and the pay phone booths of Spanish company Telefonica de Argentina.

15 January: In the Santa Fe town of Casilda, 7,000 people mobilised, throwing eggs at the local offices of the Credico-Op and Galicia banks, while others threw rocks at the Bisel Bank and nearby shops. Riot police used tear gas and rubber bullets on the protesters. In Jujuy province government employees who hadn't been paid their December wages held a demo during which at least five banks and a company that provides public services were attacked. The facade of the provincial energy company, which had repeatedly raised its rates despite complaints from local residents, was also destroyed.

22 January: Workers from 76 public hospitals in the central province of Buenos Aires held a strike in defence of the public health system, demanding the materials and drugs needed to treat patients, and calling for payment of back-wages.

30 January: Over 7,000 middle-class mortgage-holders staged an 'el llaverazo', or 'key-banging' protest in Buenos

Aires. This was a variation on the frequent "cacerolazos" or 'pot-and-pan-banging' protests of the poor. Many people's mortgages had remained in US dollars while their savings had been turned into pesos. The Head of Argentina's Association for the Defence of Consumers and Users, Sandra Gonzalez, said "More than three million people have debts in dollars to construction firms and private finance companies and run the risk of losing their homes if the government does not take a hand in the matter."

20 February: Public employees, the unemployed, teachers, doctors, pensioners, account-holders and students held massive street protests in Buenos Aires and in at least 10 provinces, while the Government tried to minimise the impact of the falling peso and rising fuel prices. Workers from the 'Congreso de Trabajadores Argentinos', the central trade union, wrapped Congress in a 400-metre-long Argentine flag, while retired and jobless protesters gathered outside the central offices of Repsol-YPF (a multinational oil company), demanding "50,000 real jobs," and "urgent food aid". The Secretary-General of the teachers' union, Marta Maffei, commented, "Every day, another 1,700 workers are left without a job, and enter the circuit of poverty. And those of us who do not lose our jobs have to put up with salary cuts, unpaid wages, and restructuring."

Argentina's Economy Minister, Jorge Remes Lenicov, told reporters that without foreign financial support not only would the economic programme collapse, but so could the Government itself, and urged that aid must not be delayed too long. Observers attributed the IMF's reticence to the stance of the US Government, which, upon realising that the Argentine crisis was not having a "domino effect" in the region, withdrew support for a bailout.

23 April: Lenicov resigned because Congress refused to back a bill that would meet some of the IMF's demands. Congress failed to agree the bill because protestors had surrounded the Parliament building.

27 May: Argentina's savers demonstrated again outside the main offices of several banks. Clashes with the police resulted in the arrest of four women.

26 June: Over 50 people were arrested, 15 injured and two people shot dead in violent protests against the Government and IMF. Riot police used tear gas, rubber bullets and batons to disperse protesters, who took to the streets just before new Economy Minister, Roberto Lavagna, was due to travel to Washington to meet IMF officials.

9 July: Independence Day. Over 15,000 people demonstrated peacefully in Buenos Aires against the Government and IMF.

9 December: The Government lifted the 'corralito', or banking restrictions that limited cash withdrawals.

20 December: Thousands of protesters marched through Buenos Aires, to mark the first anniversary of the 2001 riots which had led to the downfall of elected President Fernando de la Rúa. Demonstrators burnt effigies of politicians and hurled paint bombs at the stock exchange.

BANGLADESH

In May 2002, the IMF cautioned that, "the financial burden posed by state-owned enterprises" needed to be addressed and "urged the authorities to move ahead forcefully to strengthen and implement their plans for privatisation and closure or restructuring of non-viable enterprises."

9 January: The Awami League held a nationwide half-day general strike to protest against fuel and other utilities' price

hikes. The Awami League leaders said that the Government had increased the price of fuel, gas, electricity and water to maximum levels while the prices of these commodities on the international market remained at minimum levels.

BENIN

In August 2002, the IMF "stressed the need to...control spending in non-priority areas...In particular, Directors urged restraint in wage settlements...Further action is also needed to complete a thorough review of the civil service pension fund, aimed at ensuring its viability, and implement the long-delayed reform of the civil service compensation system."

29 January: Public sector workers in Benin started a series of rolling 72-hour strikes in response to the lack of progress made by the Government in response to their wage claims. Despite promises made before the last presidential elections in March 2001, salaries have remained blocked since 1996.

COLOMBIA

In January 2003, the IMF Directors "were encouraged by the authorities' commitment to wide-ranging structural reforms [and] supported the high priority assigned by the new administration to modernising and streamlining and introducing greater flexibility in public spending." In December 2002, the Colombian Government explained how it had "proposed to freeze a large part of the public sector's... primary spending for the next two years at the 2002 level... The proposal that the government submitted to congress should reduce labour costs by extending daytime working hours and reducing overtime charges and severance payments."

January 2002: The Colombian Government, the Mayor of Cali and trade union SINTRAEMCALI signed an agreement ending a 35-day office occupation by workers of EMCALI, the state water, telecoms and electricity company (States of Unrest II and SchNEWS 339, 354). The union occupied the offices after the government announced plans to sell the enterprise in December 2001, amidst allegations by the union of mismanagement and corruption. The agreement ensured that the enterprise would not be privatised, that rates would not be increased in 2002, and that an investigation would be started into those officials who had defrauded the enterprise in recent years.

6 September: The first of two national strikes attracted thousands of workers to protest against the new President's economic policies and the treatment of trade unions, particularly SINTRAEMCALI, which had been subjected to a campaign of violent intimidation since January. The President had announced that he was going to freeze salaries, abolish the offices of municipal inspectors general, cut more than 10,000 public sector jobs, and present to the Congress labour and pension reforms as a way of following more IMF policies. The strike disrupted air traffic, hospitals and the state oil company.

30 October: Public sector and other workers took to the streets in the second national protest against IMF prescribed policies.

ECUADOR

In May 2001, the Government stressed that, "Agreement has been reached with a consortium of private oil companies to construct a second oil pipeline from the Amazon to the coast" and highlighted plans to submit to "congress legislation that includes agreed reforms of the oil stabilisation fund, and elimination of all tax revenue earmarking not mandated by the constitution." In January 2003 an IMF Mission concluded,

"The new Ecuadorian government has been very courageous in its first few days... and has developed a comprehensive program of far-reaching structural reforms."

21 January: The United Workers' Front (FUT) organised demonstrations throughout the country to protest against the fuel price increase and repression against students. The protests coincided with the second anniversary of the overthrow of former President Jamil Mahuad in Jan 2000 (States of Unrest I).

20-25 February: In the north eastern provinces of Sucumbios and Orellana, indigenous people, peasant farmers and municipal authorities workers staged protests and occupied oil industry infrastructure to demand compensation for the environmental damage that would be caused by the Heavy Crude Pipeline (OCP) project (SchNEWS 346).

22 May: Congress amended and passed a law stating that 10% of revenues generated from the OCP pipeline must put towards health and education.

29 May: IMF withheld US\$240 million because it opposed the 10% amendment. The IMF demanded that the revenues attained from the OCP pipeline should go exclusively towards servicing debt. Economic analyst, Wilma Salgado, said the Ecuadorian population would not benefit in the least from the rise in oil revenues if the government did what the IMF wanted them to, pointing out that "Under the new law, the creditors who hold Ecuador's public debt, most of which is external, will be the beneficiaries of 90% of the revenues from exports of oil transported by the OCP pipeline."

HONDURAS

In September 2001, the Honduran Government reported that "In April 2001, decrees were issued that established a...limit for the wage bill in 2001 and 2002." They said, "Further progress with privatisation is essential to promote faster poverty-reducing growth." The conditions attached to Honduras receiving debt relief under the Highly Indebted Poor Countries Initiative have included privatisation of water and sewage management and electricity distribution.

15 March: Around 2,000 members of 30 popular organisations protested against the IMF, urging the Honduran Government to learn its lesson from Argentina's mistakes. SITRASANAAYS, the National Water and Sewage Workers Union, together with other social organisations formed a grassroots network against privatisation. The network held a series of popular mobilisations to resist the privatisation of water services and to protest free trade negotiations. In late 2002 it was reported that Honduras was stalled in its debt relief programme for not adequately complying with IMF conditions.

INDIA

In August 2002, the IMF advised that "priority should be given to reducing subsidies and the wage bill, for which further progress on downsizing the civil service will be necessary, together with bringing remaining subsidies [on fuel] on budget and announcing a timetable for the elimination of these subsidies." They also noted "reform of labour laws would facilitate greater labour mobility."

February: Kerala government employees and teachers went on a 20-day strike protesting curbed benefits. Workers picketed government offices in the state capital and district headquarters - about 30 people were arrested. Rallies in support of the strike were also organised. Hundreds of

activists marched on the residence of the chief minister.

26 February: In the Kolar district, a dawn-to-dusk strike was organised to protest the failure of the state government to supply adequate electricity to rural areas and also against the proposed hike in power tariffs.

16 April: A major nationwide strike over labour reforms and the Government's privatisation plans involved over 10 million workers from state-run firms, banks, as well as the insurance and financial sectors. The day of protest followed Indian Cabinet approval, in February 2002, of reforms to a 55-year-old labour law reducing the rights of workers. Unions also protested the Government's plan to push ahead with a programme to privatise state-run firms including banking, automobile, telecoms, petroleum, port and metal companies.

INDONESIA

In December 2001, the Government explained how key features in the 2002 budget included, "continued wage restraint in the public sector...lowering untargeted subsidies through planned increases in fuel and electricity prices; and capping the share of general allocation funds to the regions at 25% of domestic revenue. It stated that it "is also committed to maintaining a liberal trade regime. Privatisation of state-owned enterprises is a key part of the... reform effort aimed at improving economic performance and strengthening the public finances."

14 January: More than 1,000 protesters flocked into central Jakarta to protest Government plans to raise fuel prices, along with telephone and electricity fees. Some demonstrators also demanded a raise in the minimum wage and a reduction in prices of basic staples. It was reported that the Government planned to increase basic fees for electricity by up to 15%; fuel by 20-25%; and telephone fees by 15%.

16 January: Hundreds of students took to the streets in several cities, in protest at the planned increases in fuel, electricity and telephone costs.

18 January: Protests continued with two separate marches converging on the House of Representatives in central Jakarta and bringing traffic to a halt.

8 March: Around 500 protesters from three different organisations staged a simultaneous rally to commemorate International Women's Day. The protesters marched from the Hotel Indonesia to the State Palace in central Jakarta. A spokesperson said her group demanded an increase in the regional minimum wage, reinstatement of public health subsidies and greater employment opportunities for women.

13 March: The Government sold its 51% stake in Bank Central Asia to a consortium led by US investment firm Farillon Capital. The sale nearly collapsed when thousands of the bank's employees held a strike in protest. The sale was reported by the BBC as "the country's most significant privatisation since the Asian financial crisis in the late 1990s and a key requirement for International Monetary Fund (IMF) assistance."

April: More than 400 employees from state-owned water company, Bandung City (West Java) went on strike rejecting the privatisation of the company to South Australian Water.

21 May: Several hundred students and activists clashed with police. The protest marked the fourth anniversary of Suharto's resignation, which heralded the start of Indonesia's transition to democracy. But the protesters claimed that reforms had gone astray. The groups argued that poli-

ticians had sunk into inter-party bickering and blindly followed IMF-led economic reforms that ignore the poor.

KENYA

In April 2002, the IMF advised that "to maintain the credibility of the PRSP process and reduce poverty in Kenya, budget execution should reflect the priorities identified in the PRSP, including the need to reduce the government wage bill." In July the Government said, "reforming the public service lies at the heart of tackling poverty ... The operational structure of the entire public sector will be rationalised and reduced."

10 April: Police fired teargas into a demonstration of farmers protesting the decision by Kenya's National Cereals and Produce Board (NCPB) to pay maize farmers with seed, fertilizer and fuel instead of cash. The NCPB initiated the 'in kind' payment system for small-scale maize farmers after it ran out of money. In the past, the NCPB played an important role in the Kenyan farming community by buying the crops of small farmers at a guaranteed minimum amount. Since the liberalisation of the cereals market and the commercialisation of the NCPB, the system had collapsed.

October: Over 240,000 teachers from the Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT) went on a four-week strike because the Government refused to pay them wage increases agreed in 1997.

LEBANON

In October 2001, the IMF advised that Lebanon should "restore competitiveness and spur economic growth" through "structural reforms", particularly "privatisation, tariff reductions, and improvements in the business environment more generally...[the IMF] stressed the key role that privatisation may play in this regard."

January: Workers began a strike to protest against the planned privatisation of public services and to remind the government of union demands, including re-organisation of some sectors, payment of transport bonuses, and the implementation of agreements that had already been made.

MOROCCO

In 2001, the IMF warned that, "Morocco faces important remaining challenges in raising growth sufficiently to reduce unemployment and poverty on a sustained basis, that would require further trade liberalisation and structural reforms." They emphasised that, "the highest priority" must be given to "fiscal consolidation... aimed at curbing the growth of the wage bill."

1 February: The National Federation of Employees and Civil Servants from Collective Localities, which is affiliated to the Moroccan Workers Union, went on strike. The strike followed two general strikes in December 2001 (see States of Unrest II). The unions were calling for a rise in wages, which had been the same since 1997 despite an increasing cost of living.

NIGER

In March 2002, the IMF "urged the [Niger] authorities to maintain their structural reform agenda, particularly the privatisation program, [and] encouraged the authorities to focus on improving the business environment and private sector development".

22-23 July: The health workers union, Syndicat unique de la santé et de l'action sociale (SUSAS), went on a 48-hour nationwide strike. Throughout the strike only minimal health services were provided. The union was calling for the granting of a housing allowance for health workers;

the unfreezing of length of service allowance for auxiliary staff; and increased training.

NIGERIA

In January 2003, the IMF stated that, "Progress on structural reforms... has been mixed. On the positive side, the authorities on January 1, 2002, adjusted the maximum retail price of gasoline... and began charging the Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation US\$18 per barrel for crude oil used for domestic consumption compared with the US\$9.5 charged in 2001. The hike in the retail price of petroleum is a step forward in the deregulation of the downstream petroleum sector." They also "urged the authorities to renew their commitment to trade liberalisation [and] to strengthen expenditure control, especially with regard to the wage bill."

16 January: The Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC) organised a nation-wide strike against the increases in the cost of petroleum products. Fuel deregulation and the ending of subsidies had proved a rallying point for the NLC, which successfully forced President Obasanjo to climb down from a 50% price rise in 2000 when protests turned to riots that paralysed the economy for several days (see States of Unrest I). Earlier threats by the Government to use the security forces to prevent the strike went unheeded as protesters blockaded streets in Lagos, and forced the closure of banks, schools and street markets. Work in other cities also halted. More than 50 union leaders were arrested as a result of the strike, including the leader of the NLC.

February: The police went on strike because of non-payment of wages and allowances. A total of 185 junior officers were arrested because of the strike.

12 October: Workers from the local government employees' union, NULGE, took industrial action in order to secure back pay owed to local government workers in Adamawa State. The government finally agreed, but in Gombe State workers continued the strike over salary arrears at the same time after councils failed to respond to the unions.

PARAGUAY

In June 2001, the IMF "welcomed the progress made in the privatisation of the telecommunications and water and sewage companies [but] encouraged the authorities to complete these operations this year [2001/02], to privatise additional enterprises, and to improve the efficiency of the remaining state enterprises." The Government said "Fuel prices were recently increased to reflect increases in oil prices (Paraguay imports 100 per cent of its oil needs)...[and] The government has pressed ahead with the privatisation of the telecommunications and water and sanitation companies." In August 2002, the IMF announced it would provide Paraguay with a US\$200 million loan.

4 June: In Coronel Oviedo City, police harshly cracked down on around 5,000 peasants marching on the Paraguayan capital to demand that a law on privatisation be overturned. Calixto Cabral, a 34-year-old farmer, was killed by a bullet to the head and another farmer, Teresio Velazquez, was critically wounded when he was shot in the stomach. At least five others were injured.

6 June: The Central Nacional de Trabajadores (CNT), the country's main trade union, announced a strike to demand changes in economic policy and the revocation of the law on privatisation, including the sale of the public telephone company, the Compania Paraguaya de Comunicaciones (Copaco). The President of Paraguay's Central Bank,

Raul Vera Bogado, stressed that the sale of Copaco was indispensable for reaching a US\$60 million agreement with the IMF. However, in reaction to the strike's intensity, the President called an emergency cabinet meeting and a few hours later announced on television that he had decided to indefinitely postpone the sale of Copaco, scheduled for 14 June, in order to "calm things down."

18 June: Eight people were injured and six were detained on the first day of a strike by the Union of Municipal Workers, SITRAMA. The Union called the strike in reaction to the authorities' lack of compliance with their contract, and in protest against dismissals, unjustified transfers, and unpaid benefits. The Mayor sought to have the strike declared illegal and threatened to fire all strikers, offering overtime rates to anyone who wanted to work in their place.

15 July: Paraguay's President decreed a state of emergency, suspending civil rights, after escalating nationwide protests against his Government's economic policies. In the capital, baton-wielding police battled with 600 protesters who had blockaded roads and taken to the streets. Police officers used rubber bullets and water cannons while the army took up positions outside Congress. At least four people were shot, two people died and several were seriously injured and over 33 demonstrators were arrested. The protests also spread to Ciudad del Este, some 200 miles east of Asuncion. Four people, including an 11-year-old, were treated for bullet wounds after 800 protesters clashed with police, who used tear gas and water cannons to disperse them. The protest had blocked the Puente de la Amistad bridge, which links Paraguay to Brazil.

PERU

In January 2002, the Government outlined plans "to generate investor confidence [by implementing a] sizeable program of privatisation and granting of operating concessions to the private sector. Privatisations will focus in the energy sector, particularly in the generation, transmission and distribution of electricity. In infrastructure, the government will accelerate the transfer to the private sector of the operation of several state-owned assets, including regional seaports and airports and highway projects."

15-17 June: Thousands of protesters took to the streets to oppose the sale of Egasa and Egesur, two state-owned electricity companies. Protesters put up roadblocks and smashed up the airport as well as phone boxes and shop fronts. At least one man died in the protests and the police made over 30 arrests, with at least two officers injured.

17 June: After three days of rioting in Arequipa, the Government declared a state of emergency. President Alejandro Toledo ordered 1,700 heavily armed police and soldiers into Arequipa to repress the demonstrations. Rioting also spread to other provinces. In Cuzco, over 3,000 students marched in solidarity with the protesters in Arequipa. In Tacna, over 2,000 people took to the streets, closing the Pan-American Highway with blockades of burning tyres.

19 June: An official government mission sent to Arequipa under armed guard announced a temporary suspension of the privatisations.

December: The privatisation of state enterprises was re-started.

PHILIPPINES

In November 2002, the IMF noted, "During its first year, the new administration made significant progress... especially reviving the energy sector deregulation bill... Direc-

tors agreed that further structural reforms are needed to bolster growth. In this respect, they welcomed plans to privatise and deregulate the power sector, which hold out the promise of solving long-standing problems, while spurring large amounts of foreign direct investment".

15 May 2002: Nationwide protests were launched for the abolition of the Power Purchased Adjustment (PPA) charge. Hundreds of families living in Caloocan City participated in a 'noise barrage' and 'power off' protest. One spokesperson from poor residents said residents of depressed areas were mobilising against PPA. He cited the power-off protest of 2,000 residents of Sawata against the controversial billing of Manila Electric Co. (Meralco). Residents began to mark billing statements with "Under Protest."

June: Thousands in Metro Manila and surrounding provinces took part in a planned 'noise protest' against power rates and the PPA charge. Riot police were ordered to set up barricades as demonstrators marched on the presidential palace in the capital.

SOUTH AFRICA

In July 2002, the IMF highlighted that "reforms aimed at promoting private sector activity and attracting foreign investment will remain critical, and should focus on further progress with privatisation and trade liberalisation... Directors encouraged the authorities to persevere with structural reform [and] welcomed efforts to pick up the pace of privatisation... Directors also welcomed the steps taken to communicate the privatisation strategy more clearly to the public." They urged "the authorities to continue reviewing labour laws at frequent intervals."

March: The Soweto Electricity Crisis Committee and the Anti-Privatisation Forum, organised a protest march to demand the electricity company stop cutting off electricity to those who are too poor to pay and who have illegal power connections. The state power company, Eskom, was clamping down on the illegal connections practice because they claimed it to be dangerous and costing too much money. But the protesters claimed that the poor deserve free electricity and that the government was preparing Eskom for privatisation (SchNEWS 391).

July: For three weeks municipal workers from the South African Municipal Workers Union (SAMWU), were on national strike against rising inflation and low wages. Workers occupied Mayors' offices in several centres, including the economic heartland of Johannesburg. A worker was shot and killed in the town of Louis Trichardt, the first casualty of a strike that saw other workers injured in clashes with security guards and police officers.

SOUTH KOREA

In February 2002, the IMF "noted that, despite progress, the corporate sector remains beleaguered by the continued operation of loss-making [state] companies. They stressed that the orderly exit of non-viable companies should be accelerated... Furthermore, many companies need to undertake deeper restructuring, close loss-making operations, and sell non-core assets to improve profitability and resolve debt levels."

26th February: Workers in state railway, power and gas sectors held massive nationwide strikes in protest against moves toward privatisation. The strike caused widespread disruption, especially to transport infrastructure. The President of the FKTU railway union was arrested and arrest warrants issued on 12 others. The strikes involved more

than 50,000 workers in 94 workplaces. The Government planned to hand over the railway to a private company and sell most of its power generation operation.

March: The Electric Power Industry Union (EPIU) began a five-week stoppage to protest Government privatisation plans.

20 March: Leaders of the EPIU began a hunger strike at Myeong Dong Cathedral demanding the Government scrap plans to privatise power plants.

2 April: Tens of thousands of union members went on strike in support of the EPIU. Both public and private sectors were affected by the nationwide walkout, intensifying pressure on the Government to reconsider the planned privatisations.

17 April: Members of the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU) clashed with police as they tried to storm a conference room to protest against the proposed conditions being attached to a five-day working week agreement. Demanding the unconditional adoption of the shorter working week for small businesses and part-time workers, KCTU members tried to force their way into the room where the labour commission was meeting.

23 May: The Korean Health and Medical Workers' Union (KHMWU) launched strikes in 16 hospitals. Two hospitals staged full-scale walkouts, while workers at 13 hospitals took part in partial strikes. Strikers called for more staff, demanding that the distinction between full-time and part-time workers be abolished. KCTU conducted a sit-in at Jongmyo Park in Seoul calling for the withdrawal of privatisation plans and the introduction of a five-day working week.

4-5 November: The Korean Government Employees Union (KGEU) held a public rally, with around 30,000 members taking to the streets. As soon as the rally started riot police broke it up violently, leaving many unionists injured. Thousands of KGEU members were arrested. The KGEU was against a draft government bill on labour rights aimed at denying civil service workers the right to organise. The protest came after 27 members of the KGEU were arrested on 1 and 2 November. Arrest warrants were issued against eight other leaders and riot police surrounded the KGEU offices, blocked the entrance and confiscated documents.

URUGUAY

In August 2002, the IMF agreed to bail out Uruguay's escalating financial and banking crisis. In doing so they "welcomed the Uruguayan authorities' decisive response to the continued deposit outflows [but noted that] significant challenges continue to lie ahead for the authorities, to restore financial stability, regain access to markets, and to return to economic growth. This [loan] programme provides the authorities with the opportunity to achieve these objectives, but sustained structural reform to reinvigorate the economy through privatisation and deregulation will be key in the months ahead."

16 April: Thousands of farmers held protests in the capital, Montevideo, and other cities, against the Government's economic policies.

May: Workers held a general strike protesting against the Government's economic policies and a bill which aimed to raise taxes on salaries and pensions.

29 May: Congress passed the bill that would raise taxes and which the IMF demanded as a condition of fresh loans. Congressional approval for the bill came a day after the IMF said it would be willing to loan Uruguay an extra US\$1.5 billion.

20 June: Uruguay got rid of its currency-trading band, and announced the free flotation of the Uruguayan peso 92

against the dollar. Immediately the peso plunged in value. IMF Deputy Managing Director, Eduardo Aninat, praised Uruguay's decision.

30 July: The Government ordered a halt to all financial activity for one day by creating a 'bank holiday'. The freeze aimed at stopping the free fall of the Central Bank's reserves, which plummeted from US\$3.1 billion at the end of 2001 to US\$725 million by July 2002. In the month of July capital flight totalled US\$746 million, with at least \$50 million withdrawn on 29 July alone. The President, Jorge Batlle, gave his word that the bank holiday would last only 24 hours. It was reported that government delegates were in Washington asking the IMF for an early disbursement of a loan approved at the end of May.

4 August: After four days of bank closures, public frustration and panic erupted into rioting on the streets of the capital, Montevideo. The protests were the largest the country had seen in a decade, as thousands joined a general strike called by 42 unions to protest at the closed banks and the country's three years of recession. Shops were looted and 20 people arrested.

6 August: US Treasury Secretary, Paul O'Neill, visited Uruguay as part of a four-day regional tour. When asked why Uruguay received a loan and not Argentina, Mr O'Neill said: "Why Uruguay? Because Uruguay is a country that has followed sound economic policies."

ZAMBIA

In May 2002 the IMF approved new loans to Zambia, praising "the recent re-advertisement inviting bids for an increase in the sale of the Zambia National Commercial Bank shares to 51%, which is indicative of the commitment to move forward with major structural reform policies." In 2000, the receipt of debt relief by Zambia under the HIPC initiative was made conditional on the privatisation of the state run telephone, electricity, bank and oil companies.

23 May: The Government announced that it was privatising 51% of the Zambia National Commercial Bank (ZNCB), after an offer for 35% attracted little interest from foreign investors. ZNCB has 43 branches and 1,440 employees, making it Zambia's biggest retail bank.

May 2002: Zambian President, Levy Mwanawasa, declared the country's food shortage a national disaster, saying four million people faced starvation. The food shortage was part of a wider pattern facing many other countries in the Southern Cone of Africa, including Malawi, Botswana and Namibia.

29 August: Unions reacted angrily to the Government's decision to suspend expense payments, including food and travel, to civil servants and public sector workers. The Primary School Teachers Association of Zambia and the Civil Servants Union of Zambia suggested cuts should be made to benefits paid to senior civil servants and politicians instead of the lowest paid workers and threatened strike action.

9 December: After strong opposition by unions, the President announced that the privatisation of ZNCB would be halted. In immediate retaliation, the IMF told the Zambian Government it would not receive debt relief worth US\$1 billion (£633million) unless it went ahead with the privatisation. "If they don't sell, they will not get the money," said Mark Ellyne, the IMF resident representative to Zambia.

14 December: Thousands joined in a demo in the capital, Lusaka, to oppose the IMF and to call a halt to other privatisations, including telecom operator Zantel and electricity operator Zesco Limited. The President of Zambia's Federation of Free Trade Unions (FFTUZ), Joyce Nonde, told the rally that the economic mistakes of the past 10 years had left people in abject poverty and deprivation. "Now let somebody out there tell us," she said, "having privatised 80% of our economy, why is it that we have become one of the poorest countries in Africa and the whole world?"



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Friday 16th August 2002 Free/Donation Issue 368

GRAVY PLANE

"South Africa is in the hands of global capital. That's why it can't meet the legitimate demands of its people." - George Soros, money launderer

It's all hitting the fan in South Africa and that's before 60,000 delegates fly in for the huge talking shop that will be the World Summit on Sustainable Development coming up at the end of this month.

It all started when the ANC government (yes the same people that fought against Apartheid) began implementing a World Bank-influenced development model for Johannesburg which included privatization of public services. When the ANC first came to power in 1994, its Freedom Charter promised one million houses, universal and affordable electricity, a national health scheme and social security. But in 1996, the ANC was forced by powerful investors and the International Monetary Fund to adapt itself to the 'realities' of the global economy. Since then, health, welfare, education, electricity and housing budgets have been slashed. The gap between rich and poor has increased since the end of apartheid, with around 1 in 4 South Africans unemployed.

Now the social force that helped bring down apartheid is once again active in townships across the country - and this time the ANC isn't taking too kindly to it.

Yesterday the trial began of 87 people arrested in April as part of an action organised by the Soweto Electricity Crisis Committee (SECC). The group had gathered in front of the mayor's house to protest about people's services being cut off. Some thought it would be good to give him a taste

of what they have to put up with and tried to cut off his water and electricity when one of his bodyguards fired eight shots into the crowd, wounding two people. The protestors were then all nicked for public violence and damage to property. Most of the damage was done to the Mayor's swimming pool, ironic since most of the people in Soweto can't even afford to pay for drinking water.

On the official summit website they talk of "hundreds of millions of people living under conditions of abject poverty or experiencing highly unequal access to resources, living in inadequate human settlements - characterised by over-crowding, lack of access to basic infrastructure, services and economic opportunities, inadequate resources, environmental degradation, homelessness and social exclusion."

And what would you do if some of these same people lived in your country, in townships just a few miles away from the conference centre? Well you would host a summit that costs £34 million pounds to talk about it of course! And who would you get this money from? From Eskom, the electricity company who've been busy helping people stay in abject poverty by pushing up bills past the point where people can afford to pay for them and then cutting their electricity supply off.

CRAP ARRESTS OF THE WEEK

For stealing his own spoon!

Tom Harris spent 12 days in remand earlier this year after taking part in an office occupation to protest against Huntingdon Life Sciences - the animal torturers. He was arrested for burglary by cops who said he'd photographed 'sensitive' documents. When they later decided that this wasn't actually illegal, they accused him of stealing a spoon and threw in section 4 of the Vagrancy Act. After 12 days inside they dropped the case after realising that section 4 doesn't apply to office blocks and the spoon was actually his!

Soweto?

Last September, 1800 houses in Tafelsig, a township near Cape Town, had their water cut off because they couldn't afford to pay the bills the recently privatised company was demanding, some of which had increased about 400%. People who resisted were shot with live ammunition while riot cops protected the people who were busy disconnecting. Within weeks, a major cholera epidemic broke out because people were forced to use rivers and stagnant ponds for water. To date there have been more than 100,000 cases of cholera and 250 deaths.

Meanwhile, the recently privatised electricity company, Eskom, started cutting off the electricity of people who couldn't pay their massively increased bills. Poor communities in Sowetan South Africa organised a boycott of their Eskom payments and the Soweto

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Soweto? cont...

Electricity Crisis Committee began illegally reconnecting the power of families left in the dark. For their troubles one ANC minister called them a "criminal gang." For nine months it co-ordinated this campaign, until last October, when Eskom announced it would no longer disconnect those who couldn't pay:

The success of the campaign inspired a similar boycott of water payments, and thousands of Sowetans took to the streets.

With the telephone system also recently privatised, 40 per cent of the new phone lines that the company Telkom has delivered have been disconnected because the people can't afford the new rates that have gone up by 35%. In contrast, the price of domestic long-distance and international calls, used mainly by wealthy South Africans, has become 40% cheaper!

Earlier this month, hundreds of residents of Mandela Park in Cape Town occupied a house before a pensioner was 'rightsized' by the Servcon Housing Company. 'Rightsizing' is a legal process whereby vulnerable people such as pensioners, the disabled, and the unemployed who cannot afford to meet repayments on houses (some of which aren't even properly built) are forced to move to tiny houses. These tiny houses are described as 'dog kennels' and are often far from their community. One pensioner recently died after being forcibly evicted.

The township of Soweto will always be known for its own 'Spirit of '76' when a thousand students were killed in an uprising, an event which radicalized a generation of anti-apartheid activists. Resistance to privatisation has once again radicalized this and other communities across the

country. As one campaigning group put it, "The Summit will offer the opportunity for the social movements to demonstrate with the whole world watching. This will be the time to show that the neo-liberal model aided by the international financial institutions and profit hungry corporations do not deliver social or ecological justice to those who need it most."

* Aug. 31 will be a global day of action against big business muscling in on sustainable development. www.aseed.net

* Also on Aug. 31, many of the social movements in South Africa have agreed on a common platform to organise what they hope will be the biggest independent political gathering since apartheid ended in 1994. To keep updated with the protests visit <http://southafrica.indymedia.org>

* For more: www.earthsummit.biz/

Batle Battered In Uruguay

And now boys and girls, it's time for another South American economic crisis brought to you by our old friends at the IMF and World Bank. By now it's a familiar story—the IMF lends money to an impoverished country, on condition that said impoverished country will agree to IMF demands for "structural readjustment," i.e. privatisation of public services, unlimited foreign investment (read: allowing Nike to build as many sweatshops as they like) and free trade agreements which allow local industries to be outdone and then overtaken by foreign multinationals. Once "structural adjustment" is up and running, large amounts of cash flow OUT of the country (into the bank accounts of aforementioned multinationals or corrupt local governments), causing the local currency to plummet and the price of goods and services to skyrocket.

At the beginning of August, Uruguay began to show signs of just such a disaster. President Batle closed banks and froze savings deposits in fear of bank runs amid a freefall in the value of the Uruguayan peso. Pressed

to breaking point, the poor and starving population of Uruguay decided they'd had enough. In a recent statement, the Federación Anarquista Uruguaya (FAU) describes the situation, "The tariffs on essential services [water, electricity, etc.] had been raised, supermarkets increased prices scandalously... Basic items doubled their price in little time. Salaries stayed the same, however, and there were hardly any more "odd jobs" available. Quite simply, hunger had taken over the world of the poor." On August 2nd, the Uruguayan people took action—more than 13 supermarkets were looted in the poor neighborhoods of Montevideo to the shouts of "We are hungry!" The FAU letter explains, "Hundreds of people "looted" supermarkets in different areas. Children, women, the elderly, entire families entered and took what they could: sugar, rice, noodles, flour, oil, etc."

As a result of these "food liberations," the government and corporate media in Uruguay have started a campaign against alternative media sources, desperate to

blame the situation on anyone but the truly responsible parties. On August 3, police raided and shut down the community radio station "El Quijote", also located in the neighborhood of Montevideo, blaming them for inciting the looting. Mainstream newspapers have published articles accusing radio stations and even Uruguay Indymedia of inciting looting at supermarkets. In articles reminiscent of The Sun or The Daily Telegraph, one paper assured its readers that "The Minister of the Interior [blames] 'Anarchists' for the looting... These are people who want to destroy our style of life." ("Our style of life" which includes starvation, poverty, and suffering for the poor, of course). Meanwhile, President Batle has managed to re-open all banks. And just how did he manage this fantastic achievement?? Why, by securing a new £1 billion loan from the IMF, of course. For breaking news, visit:

<http://www.indymedia.org/>
(or if you can read Spanish):
<http://uruguay.indymedia.org/>

SchNEWS in brief

Check out the new **Lancaster Re-Source centre**, a fair trade café and local campaigns base, open every Wednesday 12-7pm. 78a Penny St., Lancaster Tel-01524-383012 ****Another World is Possible** free festival is happening on 31st August from 1-9pm, Tankerton Slopes, Whitstable. 07753 822424 **** One of the last independent political bookshops in the country, Little Thorn Books in Leicester** desperately needs money (or better still, people to go in and buy books) or they'll have to close. And of course you can always go and get the new SchNEWS book there that's out today so hurry! 73 Humberstone Gate, Leicester. Open 10-5.30 Tues-Sat 0116 251 2002 **** The Green Blayde Fayre** which the Levellers were organising has been cancelled cos the nice people of Sidmouth in Devon didn't want a lot of "New

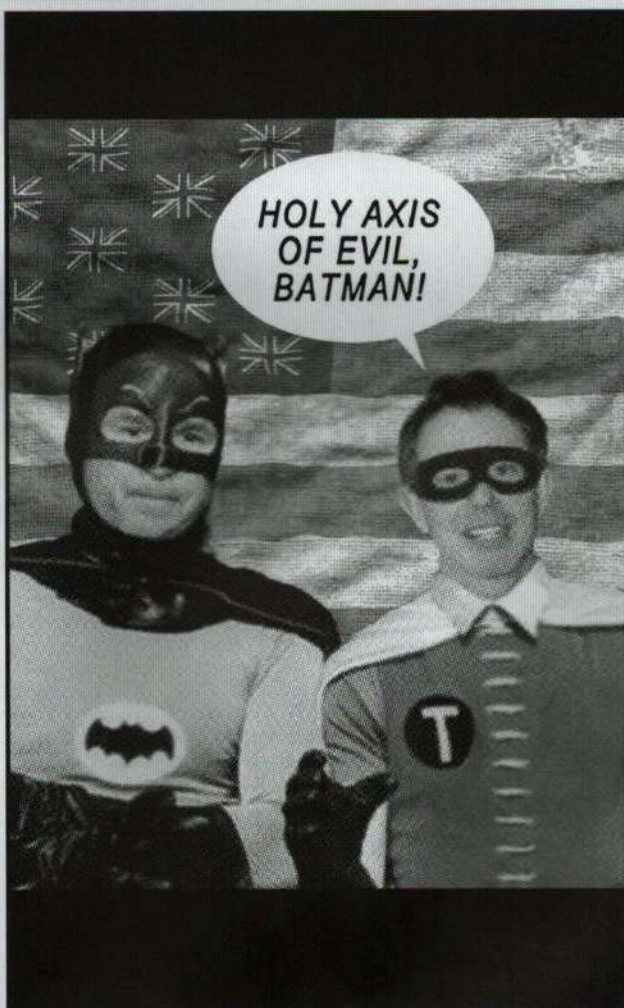
age traveller" types staying there for weeks disrupting the local community **** The Ministry of Defence** care so much about life that they're putting up birdboxes for ospreys at their Trident nuclear submarine base. On Wednesday activists from the nearby peace camp dressed up as birds, a cockroach and a dog commenting, "Nuclear weapons could make all life on the planet (with the possible exception of cockroaches) in danger of extinction. The ospreys have so far declined to take up residence, obviously they are aware of the dangers within the base." So far 53 have been nicked during the summer **Trident Ploughshare camp** including two who swam out to HMS Vigilant and spray-painted 'Vile' on both sides of the submarine! 0845 4588366 www.tridentploughshares.org **** Several thousand Polish shipyard workers** last week broke into the Odra clothes factory

in Szczecin where women workers have not received pay for several months and are on partial strike. The shipyard workers pelted the boss with eggs and then stuck him in a wheelbarrow – apparently an age old custom in Poland when firing your boss! **** The world car-free days** billed as **"Fifteen Days to End the Auto Age"** are coming up on September 13-27 for more info www.carbusters.org/carfreeday **** The International Longshore and Warehouse Union** in San Francisco is under threat from the Bush administration who are threatening to bring in the National Guard (a division of the army) to break a threatened strike. Working for months under an expired contract, **10,000 dock workers face a threatened lockout** by their bosses who want to sack staff, cut healthcare, and attack workers' rights. <http://sf.indymedia.org/>

Reedy Business

On Tuesday a group of people occupied Reed Recruitment Agency to protest against the company's involvement in the privatisation of education, in particular the creation of a privatised 'City Academy' in Leicester. 16 people gathered outside Reed Recruitment Agency in Leicester's market square carrying banners with slogans such as, 'Keep Fat Cats Out of Education.' Several people entered the agency and refused to leave while Reed's window was decorated with banners and 'spoof' job vacancies – 'School Governor wanted: no previous experience necessary, must have lots of wonga, call inside and ask for Tony'. Staff kept asking people to leave but as one protestor said, "Alec Reed decided to interfere with education so we'll interfere with his business."

Alec Reed, owner of Reed Executive, already owns one school in London and has a fortune in the region of £50 million. He has argued that the present school curriculum should be 'torn up and thrown away' and that his investment 'buys him permission to interfere.' Alec Reed wants free enterprise to be taught in schools to children of all ages so that they can all grow up to be wankers like him. As part of the Labour Government's new privatisation policy, 10% of funding required to establish a new school comes from the private sector. Even though the remaining 90%, along with the running costs, is fronted by the taxpayer, the private backer is considered the owner and is handed control of the whole school. With "City Academies" being exempt from the national curriculum, this gives the owner free reign over what children can be taught. leicesterisr@yahoo.co.uk



Positive SchNEWS

A new squatted community art space will be opening at 282 Richmond Road in Hackney, London on the 24th August, running for a week with workshops on sculpture/metalwork, woodwork/speaker cabinet building, web design, and desk top publishing, plus an array of the finest underground art in the capital. Running along side this event will be Riot Squad Records, a squatted record shop devoted to underground dance music and hoping to be a vital link between musicians, artists, producers and performers. "Finally there will be a friendly place to listen to tunes, with good prices and the opportunity to get some second hand classics," say the organisers. More info on 07092 012299 www.randomartists.org

* **The Edith Cavell building**, a huge modern office building in Hackney (between Enfield Road and Hertford Road, just off Kingsland Road) has just been squatted as a community centre.

* Parents at **St Johns nursery, Hackney** have organised a festival of resistance on Saturday 31 August as part of a campaign to fight its closure by the bankrupt council. The nursery is at 22 Milborne St Tel 07905 460472 or contact joeeamon@aol.com

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...and finally...

Still think the UN has people's best interest in mind? That the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) really cares about the health of the world's children? SchNEWS (in co-operation with our corporate sponsors McDonald's) begs you to reconsider. Last month UNICEF and McDonald's announced plans "to team up to raise money on behalf of the world's children as part of a new McDonald's fundraising initiative called 'World Children's Day'" to be held on November 20th.

How sweet... Too bad McDonald's is a global leader in the marketing of junk food that creates soaring rates of childhood obesity and diabetes. Too bad that its type of nutritionless convenience crap is disrupting traditional ways of food preparation in families and cultures, and its Golden Arches are branded on urban and rural landscapes from Bangkok to Mexico City, bright shiny symbols of a country whose children throw away more food in a year than the children of some other nations eat. The initiative, which aims to raise money for McDonald's charitable arm and a dozen UNICEF programmes, includes a pop concert in China which will be broadcast over the internet—access to which can only be obtained by buying a Big Mac burger! Conveniently, UNICEF will receive a cut of the profits from each Big Mac sold.

Sensing a slight inconsistency in the alliance, an international coalition of public-health professionals and activists has asked UNICEF to withdraw from the partnership. The charity, which stands to make millions of pounds by lending both its name and resources to the event, responded to the coalition by saying that, "The partnership does not mean that UNICEF endorses McDonald's or its products." But if this "Buy a Big Mac and Help UNICEF" arrangement isn't an endorsement, we at Schnews wonder what is? Perhaps "Buy a Happy Meal and Support Global Destruction" would have been a bit more appropriate.

Disclaimer

Schnews warns all conference goers to stay at home and watch TV and not to go to any legal gathering, honest.



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RETURN TO SENDER

"The least important global environmental issue is potential global warming, and we hope that your negotiators at Johannesburg can keep it off the table and out of the spotlight."

- Excerpt from a letter sent to George W. Bush by a group of Exxon Mobil funded lobbyists.

As if dodging out of the Kyoto treaty, supporting rabid fossil fuel consumption, and making money at the expense of all forms of life on earth weren't enough to keep them busy, it now seems that some of the big business lapdogs in Washington have taken it upon themselves to sabotage the upcoming Earth Summit in Johannesburg.

In a letter to George W. recently leaked to the media by Friends of the Earth, thirty-one lobbyists - many funded by Exxon Mobil - told Bush that "we applaud your decision not to attend the Summit in person ... the Johannesburg Summit will provide a global media stage for many of the most irresponsible and destructive elements involved in environmental issues. Your presence would only help to publicise and make more credible various anti-freedom, anti-people, anti-globalisation, and anti-Western agendas."

So let's get this straight—this lot doesn't want Bush to attend the conference because they think it's been taken over by irresponsible and destructive tree-huggers who, unlike them, wouldn't sell their own grandmothers to make a buck. They're upset because they think the Earth Summit is actually going to be a meeting of concerned environmentalists, gathering to discuss what can be done about the impending ecological disaster brought on by capitalism and free trade. They think the Summit is a threat to all the things they hold

dear—greed, gain, and globalisation. But for once, dear readers, the joke's on the corporate whores. They needn't bother sabotaging the conference because it's already been sabotaged by their favourite things—multinational greed, corporate gain, and the push for globalisation at any cost.

If the American big business butt kissers would simply pause a moment to review some of the people who are planning to attend the Summit, they'd quickly realise they have nothing to fear. Just for kicks, let's look at some of Blair's hand-picked delegates. Blair's posse contains a number of his Big Business cronies including Bill Alexander, chief executive of Thames Water. The largest water company in the UK, Thames Water has been prosecuted for pollution over 20 times since 1996. Just two days after it was announced that Thames Water would become an official defender of the global environment in Johannesburg, its parent company, RWE, threatened to cancel the creation of 4,000 new jobs unless the European commission dropped its plans to impose stricter controls on carbon dioxide emissions. During the Summit, Bill Alexander will be making a speech outlining how private water companies can make immense contributions to environmental and humanitarian interests. Try telling that to the hundreds of South Africans who contracted cholera from drinking polluted river water after their unaffordable privatised water was cut off (See Schnews 368).

Chris Fay, another of Blair's prime choices, is not only a non-executive director of Anglo America, another of the world's mining giants, but he's also a director of British Airways and was formerly the chairman of Shell—mining, aviation, and oil being three of the most sustainable

CRAP ARRESTS OF THE WEEK

For being Ash-Holes!

17 people were arrested earlier this year during a protest against incinerated waste being shipped to the Danish island of Langoya. They bared their bums in a collective moonie with the words ASH HOLES spelt out on their backsides.

industries, of course. This is a particularly sensitive choice on Blair's part, as many South African communities are currently involved in seeking compensation from Shell and BP following leaks from an oil refinery. Fay is also a director of Weir Group Plc., whose subsidiary, Weir Pumps, has been implicated in human rights abuses and genocide in Sudan.

And last, but certainly not least on Blair's stunning list of eco-warriors, is Sir Robert Wilson, executive chairman of mining company Rio Tinto. As the world's largest mining conglomerate, Rio Tinto has destroyed ecosystems the world over and is currently the focus of one of Australia's highest profile environmental rows ever. The company's plans to mine uranium in one of the planet's most valuable wildlife sites - Kakadu National Park, a World Heritage Site - has sparked protests that have led

EARTH SUMMIT ACTIONS:

Global Day of Action has been called by ASEED 31st August. www.aseed.net
Brighton "Sunny Day" Sept 1st at the Ellipse on Brighton seafront (11-4pm). Energy efficiency, climate change, electric bicycles, biodiesel, Brighton's earthship. Rising Tide, bands and music. 01273 725077 RTtrad@aol.com

For more Earth Summit stuff visit:

- * <http://climate.indymedia.org/>
- * <http://southafrica.indymedia.org/>
- * www.corporatewatch.org.uk/news/blair_and_earth_summit.htm
- * www.corporateeurope.org/observer/12/wssdlobby.html
- * www.monbiot.com

Return to Sender cont...

to more than 500 arrests.

Speaking sensitively about environmental issues in underdeveloped countries, Hugh Leggat, a Rio Tinto spokesman, has remarked:

"When you get there, you can find the locals have chopped all the trees down. So perhaps it would be advantageous to allow in a mining firm which could then in return promise to do regeneration work." Cross your heart and hope to die, Mr. Leggat? But, as Leggat has pointed out, "We are already just about the most regulated industry in the world." Apparently he doesn't remember his company's brilliant track record in Bougainville.

Deadbeat Delegates

With a group of delegates like this, one might wonder just what kind of an environmental conference Blair's going to? But at the heart of Blair's seemingly contradictory delegate choices lurks his pet project - public-private partnerships. He, along with many other Western governments, seems to think that by inviting reckless corporations to the party and allowing them to control things like water, energy, and forests, they will then start to behave sensibly, protect these crucial resources, and sustainable development will naturally follow.

But the craziest part is this - even if corporations weren't in the thick of the decision-making process, it would still be a bogus summit. Why? Because none of the agreements that the involved parties sign will be legally binding. Legal regulations (covering such issues as human rights and the environment) have been dropped in favour of voluntary codes. The draft plan now calls only for the "promotion of corporate accountability and responsibility and the exchange of best practices." Believing in the actual existence of "corporate accountability and responsibility," the powers that be have decided that voluntary self-regulation is all that's needed to fix the environmental problems caused by free trade. As George Monbiot says, "To defend the world from the destruction brokered by multinational capital, governments will tie a ribbon round it and hand it to multinational capital."

SchNEWS in brief

Catch up with everyone's direct action summer adventures at the next **Rebel Alliance**, 4th September 7.30pm upstairs at the Albert Pub, Trafalgar St. Brighton. ** On the same night, SchNEWS will be hosting our annual **Book Launch Party** at the Volks, Madeira Drive, Brighton 9pm. Please arrive early! ** Great news - **Steward Community Woodland** in Devon has been given a 5 year temporary planning permission to continue their sustainable woodland low-impact living project www.stewardwood.org ** Film premiere of **'Drowned Out'** about the **Narmada Dam** protests in India. It's on at Curzon Soho Cinema, Shaftesbury Ave, London W1 £7/5, Wed 28th, 7pm, the screening will be followed by a Q&A session. www.spannerfilms.net ** **The Colchester Radical Collective** have opened a social centre in a Grade 2 listed building. The building had been left empty by Capita (big friends of New Labour's Private Finance Initiative) who have been trying to turn it into posh flats. Capita is taking the squatters to court today (23rd). If you're going to the **Colchester Free Festival** (www.colchesterfreefestival.co.uk) this bank holiday Monday, why not

pay the centre a visit? 87 East Hill, 0798 6654583 squat@nogm.cjb.net ** Meanwhile in nearby **Southend**, two people let everyone know about a road widening scheme that could destroy 100 trees by spending eight hours in the threatened trees' branches www.ppps.org.uk ** Worthing cops are continuing to hassle people they suspect might be 'ringleaders' of the campaign to stop the destruction of ancient **Titnore Woods** by property developers. The next action planned on September 1st is delivery of a letter to the landowner urging him to consider preserving the area as a nature reserve. Fancy dress if you can. Meet 1pm Coach and Horses on the A27 Arundel Road www.worthinga27.freereserve.co.uk ** Copies of our new **SchNEWS OF THE WORLD** book will be on sale at a S.C.R.A.P. Records music alldayer next Saturday (31st) at Windmill Pub, 22 Blenheim Gardens, Brixton, London. 3pm onwards www.dirtysquatters.com ** **The Fylingdales Star Peace Camp** in the North Yorkshire Moors is desperate for more people to come and stay - otherwise they might have to shut up shop. 01274 730795 cndyorks@gn.apc.org

Positive SchNEWS

In a time when everywhere is being **McStandardised**, Common Ground is working on a big encyclopaedia all about 'Local Distinctiveness,' championing the regional differences still to be found across England. They tell all Schnews readers, "You know much more than we do, and with your knowledge and help, we can bring the book and the web-site alive. We

would like to hear your local stories, details, examples, and observations about the particularity of everyday places: from houses and woods to food and legends, from dialect words and endemic wild life to vernacular greetings and breeds of sheep." If you've got something to contribute visit <http://www.england-in-particular.info/>

Justice?

* **The 'Fair Justice For All campaign' which represents the families of people imprisoned after the Bradford riots last year** (SchNEWS 313) are holding a rally on bank holiday Monday outside the city court house. They are protesting against harsh sentences given to 94 people convicted of riot, people such as Istifar Iqbal, who received 11 months for picking up, but not throwing, two stones and Ashraf Hussain, who got four years for throwing three stones.

Campaigners contrasted the length of the sentences with maximum terms of 18 months given to white youths who rioted on the Ravenscliffe estate the day after the disturbances in Bradford.

This 'special treatment' is also reflected in the team that was appointed to look into the causes of last years riots. Muslims on the community cohesion review team told one member of the review team "At the first team meeting we were informed our purpose was not to focus on any one community, but to look for solutions to bring communities together. This was disappointing, as I felt that the specific issues of the Muslim community needed to be investigated and dealt with. Often Muslim participants would tell me in private of their frustration with this review. When I asked why they didn't speak up at the meetings they answered: "What's the point? They're not going to listen."

Mobil Phoney

Eleven Indonesian villagers, backed by the International Labor Rights Fund, are trying to sue oil giants Exxon Mobil in an American court claiming that the company knew of the murder, torture and rape of residents near its natural gas plant in the northern province of Aceh.

Since 1990, there has been a bitter war of independence being fought in Indonesia. Human Rights Watch reports that in the last decade, "Over 1000 people were killed, tortured or have 'disappeared' ... Thousands of Acehnese were detained without charge, often for years at a time, in military camps; Many never returned." The current law suit says that under an agreement with General Suharto, the former military dictator of Indonesia, Mobil paid the Indonesian military for protecting its facilities. One of the plaintiffs described how troops held him in a building at a Mobil plant and tortured him for three months. Before they released him, the soldiers showed him a large pile of human heads. Another plaintiff claims he was tortured by soldiers at a building inside the company's compound. Others have reported similar accounts of abuse.



'Cartoon Molotovs In The Face Of Corporate Rule' a cartoon book by Polyp "Anti-American, unbalanced and unreasonable"
- Coca Cola Company.

Get yours for £6 from NI Publications,
01858 438896 ISBN 09504499-3-4

This legal wrangle all started in 1998 when several Indonesian human rights groups accused the company of sponsoring the violence because it had provided the army with earth-moving equipment used to dig mass graves.

In April, addressing a US federal district judge, an Exxon Mobil lawyer said "This is a very difficult time in Indonesian-American relations because al Qaeda fighters are residing in that large Muslim nation." He continued that it would be bad for trade relations and bad for the so-called war on terror if a US court accused Exxon Mobil and the Indonesian government of murder. The judge's decision on whether to proceed with the trial is still pending.

After the bankrupt Enron corporation, Exxon Mobil were the second largest campaign contributor to the Bush administration. In 2000, Exxon Mobil refused to sign a code of conduct for businesses working in developing nations where governments might commit human rights abuses. They have constantly denied that global warming is happening and even claim that covering ourselves in crude oil is actually good for us.

The lawsuit against Exxon Mobil is one of a series of suits brought to U.S. courts by human rights groups against multinational companies under the Alien Tort law, which allows victims to sue in US Courts for alleged human rights violations perpetrated in other countries.

Corporations like NatWest, Barclays Bank, ICL and Vickers are currently facing a multibillion pound lawsuit claiming they profited from collaborating with apartheid in South Africa. One of the lead plaintiffs in the campaign for compensation said, "We want reparations from those international companies and banks that profited from the blood and misery of our fathers and mothers, our brothers and sisters."

Inside SchNEWS

At a demo during the recent No Borders protest camp in Strasbourg (SchNEWS 366) Ahmed Meguini, co-founder of the French anti-racist group Mouvement Spontane (Spontaneous Movement), was violently arrested, receiving a broken wrist from the French riot squad. From his arrest on 24th July to his trial date on 21st August, Ahmed was held in solitary confinement, which meant, amongst other things, he was not allowed to receive visitors. At his trial, Ahmed was sentenced to 8 months but luckily 5 of these will be probation which means he will be out in 3 months. He also received a fine of 700 Euros (£500). Incidentally Ahmed was the only person from the No Borders camp who was locked up the entire time before his trial and the charges against him were the heaviest. This Saturday (24th Aug) there will be a benefit to help pay his fines at the Radical Dairy, 47 Kynaston Rd, Stoke Newington, London, with food and DJs. www.noborder.org

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...and finally...

After banging on and on about the leaked letter to Bush on the front page, we thought you might be interested in who it was exactly that sent the letter. Many of these organisations have been involved in anti-environmental activities before. More to the point seven of them are known to be funded by Exxon Mobil. Signatories include:

* Fred L Smith and Myron Ebell of the Competitive Enterprise Institute - funding from Exxon \$280,000 in 2001 ** Craig Rucker from the Committee for a Constructive Tomorrow (CFACT) - funding from

Exxon \$35,000 in 2001 ** Steven Hayward from the American Enterprise Institute - funding from Exxon \$230,000 in 2001 ** Terrence Scanlon from the Capital Research Center - funding from Exxon \$25,000 in 2001 ** Joseph L Bast of the Heartland Institute - funding from Exxon \$90,000 in 2001 ** Derooy Murdock of the Atlas Economic Research Foundation (AERF) - funding from Exxon \$150,000 in 2001 ** H Stirling Burnett of the National Center for Policy Analysis - funding from Exxon \$20,000 in 2001

This is, of course, absolutely typical of the way Exxon works..... They pay other people to do their dirty work and then—with breathtaking hypocrisy—deny that they are trying to influence anybody or are the tiniest bit anti-environmental!!

Disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all readers to not take everything we say literally. Honest.



What a year it was... Genoa, September 11, Argentina, Palestine, Gothenburg and the rest. Phew. All in one book. Issues 301-350 of SchNEWS plus 200 pages of articles, satire, cartoons, photos, subverts, the direct action yellow pages and loads more. Order yours from us now - £8.50 including p&p (cheques to Justice). ISBN 09529748-6-X

Scotland With

This is a round-up of direct action and stuff that's been going on in Scotland in the build up to the war on Iraq...

On June 10 2002, as part of Faslane Peace Camp's 20th birthday celebrations, a group of Faslane peace campers and associates successfully blockaded BAE Systems's headquarters in Edinburgh using lock-on tubes and a D-lock. Flyers were given out to passers by which gave an extensive list of BAE's dodgy deals, highlighting how the site has been involved in refurbishing the laser sighting for guns that shoot depleted uranium shells. No arrests were made, perhaps because BAE didn't want the bad publicity. All the better for us - we went and did it again the following January, shutting the place down for five or six hours.

August 2002 saw another Trident Ploughshares disarmament camp at Coulport, in which diverse groups of people took part in actions including blockades, fence cutting, spray painting, and swimming and canoeing out to visit nuclear submarines.

In January 2003 a series of actions took place against the Ark Royal aircraft carrier, at Glen Mallon near Faslane being loaded with troops and equipment to go to the Gulf. On 15th January the only gate to the jetty was blockaded by three activists who locked on to each other and locked themselves inside a car, which they parked across the gate for over three hours. The MOD eventually got the activists out by taking off the back window, and the car was impounded.

There was less than an hour's gap between their removal and another group of protestors going to Ark Royal. A Peace Camp resident managed to climb the fence, then walk along it to the gate, where he D-locked the gate shut and locked himself to the top, keeping it shut for another 4 hours.

The following morning, half an hour before the Ark Royal was set to leave, two other peace camp residents got into the water and D-locked their necks to the mooring ropes of the ship under the jetty. The MOD went into the water after them and managed to cut the ropes, which must have cost them a few bob. One of the activists was arrested but the other managed to swim away, having successfully delayed the ship's leaving.

The war against Iraq involved the Tornado war planes at Leuchars in Fife, near Edinburgh. The Leuchars RAF base, whose motto is "Attack and Protect", is believed to have been involved in the bombing of Iraq since 1991.

Early on the morning of Monday 10th March two anti-war activists were arrested at the base, which they were inspecting ahead of its illegal use in war on Iraq. The two were able to get in and 'inspect' the base for over two hours before being discovered, even though one was in a wheelchair. Both are charged with two sets of Malicious Mischief for alleged fence-cutting, and for spray painting anti-war messages on three army trucks and an empty



Anti-war demonstration in Glasgow

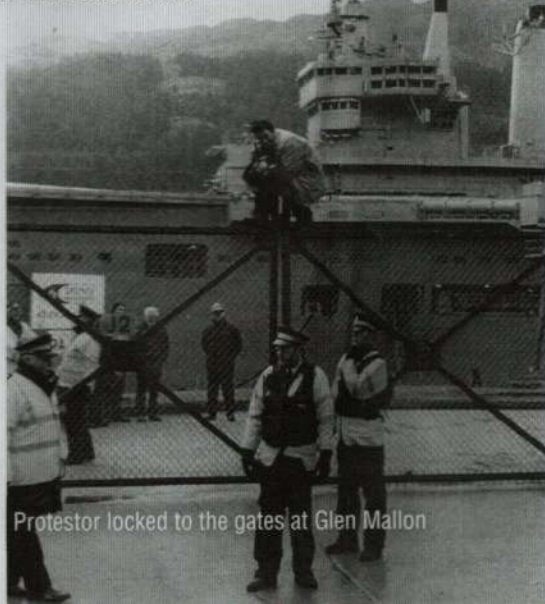
aircraft hanger. They were both let out on bail, but on the condition that one of them, who is from Sweden, handed in his passport. Both are under "Petition" which means they have closed hearings in court and the police have more rights over searching them. (Airbases were discovered to be very wheelchair friendly once you get inside!)

The following day Trident Ploughshares activist Ulla Roder entered RAF Leuchars to disarm a Tornado. She was arrested having successfully carried out her action and is now on remand awaiting trial. It's possible that she will be in jail for some time so letters of support would be good. Her address is: Ulla Roder, HMP Cornton Vale, Cornton Road, Stirling FK9 5NY.

The day war was declared the army recruitment office in Glasgow was decorated with fake blood. Unfortunately the decorators were not able to make a swift getaway and one received a few punches and kicks from the local constabulary; rather ridiculously he was done with 7 charges of police assault for getting fake blood on their nice clean uniforms.

Since the start of the war there have been regular demonstrations in Glasgow and Edinburgh, some involving civil disobedience in the form of blocking roads and junctions. On some occasions roads were successfully shut down in spite of attempts by demonstration 'organisers' to maintain obedience.

On Tuesday 22nd April some 500 people from all over Europe went to a blockade of Faslane naval base. The turnout was lower than hoped, maybe due to the media's repetition that the war was 'over'. However 160 arrests were made, the majority for blockading the base but some for cutting the fence in an attempt to 'inspect' the UK's weapons of mass destruction.



Protestor locked to the gates at Glen Mallon



www.schnews.org.uk



Friday 30th August 2002 Free/Donation Issue 370 Because we wouldn't want you to starve

APOCALYPSE SOON?

"It should now be crystal clear that the South African government is hell-bent on smashing legitimate dissent by whatever means they deem appropriate, including attacking peaceful marchers and terrorising children. The ghosts of the South African past are returning with a vengeance." *Johannesburg demonstrator, outside the Earth Summit, this week.*

Tanks in townships, tooled up riot cops firing teargas and stun grenades into crowds of people, mass arrests, threats of deportation, laws against group assembly, the secret police spying on people ... South Africa ten years ago?? Try South Africa this week — just a small dose of what's in store for anyone who has the cheek to criticise the hijacking of the Earth Summit by Big Business.

And while the fat cat delegates hob nob in air-conditioned grandeur inside the summit, ignoring any and all voices of dissent outside, the world continues to melt away. Since the Earth Summit ten years ago in Rio, 10% of the earth's remaining forests have been destroyed. Over the next 18 years, carbon dioxide emissions leading to global warming are expected to rise by a third in rich countries and to double in the rest of the world. These are not facts from some loony lefty environmental organisation, but reports written by the fat cats themselves.

This week, a report from last month's Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) meeting was leaked to the press. The report had been written in preparation for the Earth Summit, to inform people going to the OECD meeting about the state of

the world before going to Jo'burg to do nothing about it. A flock of suits who push for salvation through privatisation, the OECD is a group that works along the same lines as the G8 or WTO—a think-tank (wank tank) made up of 22 of the world's richest countries who like to influence world-wide economic policy. Most of the OECD's members are in the rich North, but some lucky industrialised outsiders such as Mexico and South Korea have been invited to send reps too. Their report just goes to show something we've suspected all along — heads of state and powerful corporate CEOs know how fucked the world is, their own research supports it, and yet they refuse to do anything except push more of the same thing that got us in this whole mess to begin with.

"Through the provision of subsidies on fossil fuels, governments are effectively subsidising pollution and global warming as more than 60% of all subsidies flow to oil, coal and gas."

- Leaked OECD report.

For all the conventions, treaties and intergovernmental agreements of the last 30 years, little has actually changed. Warnings that air pollution has already reached crisis point in many cities, and that there is not really anything anyone can do anymore to reverse climate change are being ignored, even when these subjects are contained in corporate reports like the one written by the OECD.

Other info from the report: The current demand for fresh water will continue to increase and already 40% of the world's population is short

CRAP ARRESTS OF THE WEEK

...for hanging out in a carpark!

Two hundred and seventy three people were arrested last Saturday night in a carpark outside a 24 hour K-Mart in Houston, USA. Police swooped after complaints about drag racing but when they found that wasn't happening they were told to arrest any youngsters. So people were nicked while buying a hair band, eating ice cream, they even arrested a 10-year-old girl who was having dinner with her dad. One arrestee said "It didn't matter what you were doing; they arrested you."

13 cops have been suspended on pay with one councillor complaining "We're in the middle of the biggest police debacle in this city that did not involve a death." www.houstonchronicle.com

of fresh water. Tying into global warming, the report also says that the number of people affected by weather related disasters has risen by half in the last decade.

But while the OECD report highlights these facts, it tends to hush up how these disasters have come about. Take Coca Cola, for instance, who are still forging into Kerala, South India sucking up all their ground water or Shell, who is still in Nigeria polluting all water supplies with their regular oil leaks. And in Brazil, the government is pushing ahead with Advance Brazil, a rainforest development project set to destroy 42% of the forest by 2020. All the while, the OECD report tells us, more and more land, unprotected from the sun and the rain and destroyed by intensive agriculture is turning to desert or rendered unusable. Plant, insect and animal species are being made extinct at a rate never seen before as habitats are destroyed or polluted, or cooked to death by climate change.

Apocalypse Soon? cont...

UN Sustainable

Not only have governments and businesses seen the OECD report, they've also been given a huge UN report, the Global Environment Outlook, each presented in a fruitless attempt to make them actually do something.

This UN report looks back over the last thirty years of Earth Summits and makes some predictions for the future. Unsurprisingly, the conclusion the report reaches is that more "sustainable development," is needed. All of this while admitting that full scale emergencies already exist: water shortages hampering developing countries, land degradation reducing fertility and agricultural potential, and destruction of the tropical rainforest that, according to the report, has gone too far to be reversed.

Okay, so let's recap: The big business friendly OECD and the West obsessed UN are saying that enough is enough. And what will they do with these conclusions? Probably just make up another set of hollow pledges to "defend" the

environment against themselves – missing the point that you would actually have to dismantle capitalism to do this. The fact is there are things that can be done.

Trying to link global problems with local ones is vital when governments and big businesses only care about lining their pockets. Through direct action and community-based resistance, there ARE ways that we can battle against the destruction of our environment. We can support resistance in other countries in many ways. In West Papua, local groups such as the OPM are fighting against oppressive mining companies like Rio Tinto and BP. Activists in the UK have been targeting offices owned by these companies for protests and actions; they have also made concrete links with communities in West Papua by going there and also by raising money to give directly to the OPM.

As well as supporting struggle in other countries, looking in our own backyards is still important. In the UK, people have been targeting the destructive extraction of peat from three moors,

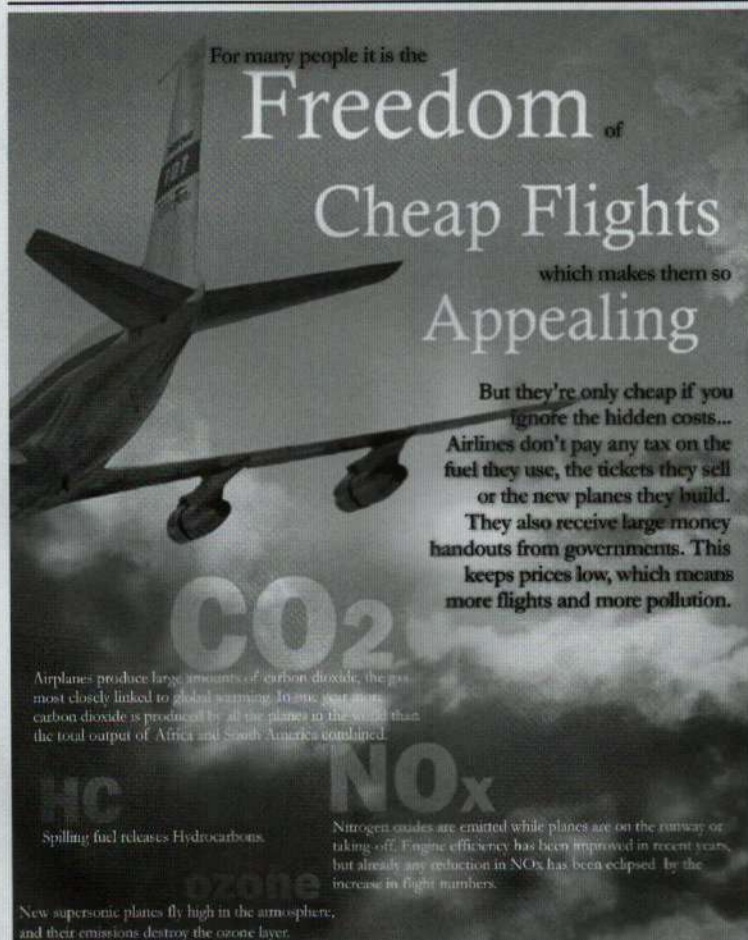
Hatfield, Thorne and Wedholme Flow. This successful direct action campaign has fought the mining of peat by the US multinational Scotts and has been instrumental in the recent agreement between Scotts and the UK Government to halt mining in Thorne and Wedholme Flow immediately. There are many more projects like these that need people's help. As one ecological activist told Schnews, "I am not going into detail about what tactics are needed in local battles. After 10 years it's pretty obvious. Community mobilising, occupations, blockades, bulldozer pledges, sabotage. Threatening destroyers with costly chaos and giving it to them if they try it on."

To find out more about direct action in your area check out the Party and Protest guide on the SchNEWS website.

Summit info: <http://southafrica.indymedia.org>

West Papua info www.eco-action.org/ssst

UK Biodiversity Website: www.ukbap.org.uk



For many people it is the

Freedom of Cheap Flights

which makes them so

Appealing

But they're only cheap if you ignore the hidden costs...

Airlines don't pay any tax on the fuel they use, the tickets they sell or the new planes they build. They also receive large money handouts from governments. This keeps prices low, which means more flights and more pollution.

CO₂

Airplanes produce large amounts of carbon dioxide, the gas most closely linked to global warming. In one year more carbon dioxide is produced by all the planes in the world than the total output of Africa and South America combined.

HC

Spilling fuel releases Hydrocarbons.

NO_x

Nitrogen oxides are emitted while planes are on the runway or taking off. Engine efficiency has been improved in recent years, but already any reduction in NO_x has been eclipsed by the increase in flight numbers.

Ozone

New supersonic planes fly high in the atmosphere, and their emissions destroy the ozone layer.

Chemistry Set-up

A court in the city of Bhopal, India has rejected an appeal made by the Indian government to reduce charges against the former CEO of Union Carbide. Warren Anderson if convicted faces 20 years in prison – that's if they can find him. Nearly 18 years after the fact, the disaster at the Union Carbide pesticide factory is still a nightmare for the people of Bhopal. More than 3,000 people died on the day of the actual disaster, when a storage tank in the factory burst, sending tonnes of poison gas over the city. Now more than 100,000 people continue to get ill as a result, including babies born to survivors.

Meanwhile, CEO Anderson hasn't been turning up to court for some reason and is classified as an 'absconder' under Indian Law. Apparently he's been photographed in the US, although Law enforcement agencies there say they have not been able to locate him. SchNEWS wonders if that would be the case if thousands of Americans had died? www.bhopal.net

**Yesterday Greenpeace put the spotlight on Dow Chemicals, who bought Union Carbide, by fencing off an open discharge pipe for toxic waste at the company's manufacturing facility in South Africa. www.greenpeace.org

Hit On Hinton

14 people were nicked last week-end after a GM rape seed oil crop site was trashed at Hinton, in Dorset. For 4 years the biotech company Aventis Cropsciences (now owned by the German Chemicals giant Bayer) has been using rape seed illegally contaminated with antibiotic 'marker' genes. The use of antibiotic markers in crops was banned because the British Medical Association feared that the genes could possibly cross to bacteria in human or animal guts, making common diseases and infections as well as already life-threatening illnesses immune to antibiotics. Planted at twelve sites around the country, these crops are set to be harvested

in September, which means now is the time they are most able to cross contaminate the soil, other plants, and animals. The government says it is 'very annoyed' with this activity, but plans to let Aventis leave the crops in the ground anyway!

With only paper inspections, it's hardly surprising no one spotted the contamination earlier. As Friends of the Earth's Adrian Bebb said: "This is yet another biotech blunder from the GM industry. How can we trust them to produce our food if they cannot even run a GM test site?" Totnes Genetics Group: 01803 868523 www.genewatch.org/Publications/Briefs/Brief3.htm

Positive SchNEWS

While SchNEWS doesn't hold out much hope of the Earth Summit coming up with the goods, it does seem to be inspiring some people to think about the state of the planet. RioKids is one such group. Children from four primary schools in Bristol who were born in 1992, the year of the first Earth Summit, spent time recently researching some of the issues raised by the Summit, issues such as recycling, protecting coastal environments, and caring for natural habitats. They then went on to make pictures, writing and photography expressing how they felt about the issues and how they thought the issues to affected them personally and in their own locality. Check it out at www.riokids.net

AMAIZED?

"Africa is treated as the dustbin of the world. To donate untested food and seed to Africa is not an act of kindness but an attempt to lure Africa into further dependence on foreign aid." - Africa's Biowatch.

The US has come up with a grand scheme to get rid of its excess GM crops - dumping them in Africa, while claiming to 'save' the starving. Last week the US told Zambia that it would have to borrow money in order to buy \$50 million worth of GM maize from the World Food Programme - or face starvation. While India has vast stocks of rice - 65 times as much as Africa needs - available at half the cost of the US maize, Zambia has been "strongly advised" by US interests not to buy it. Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Mozambique and Malawi have

all been offered similar threats, er, deals. Many countries have outright refused to buy the GM maize.

But with the EU standing firm on the strict labelling of GM food in supermarkets, the US is getting desperate to unload its GM food somewhere a bit more label-free. The US along with the biotech firm Monsanto, claim that environmentalists and scientists opposed to giving GM food the green light stand in the way of feeding the poor. The truth is, none of the countries suffering from famine want to import subsidised GM crops or to accept GM food 'aid'.

Four years ago every African nation - apart from South Africa - signed a statement saying "[We] strongly object that the image of the poor and hungry from our countries is being used by giant multinational corporations to push a technology that is neither

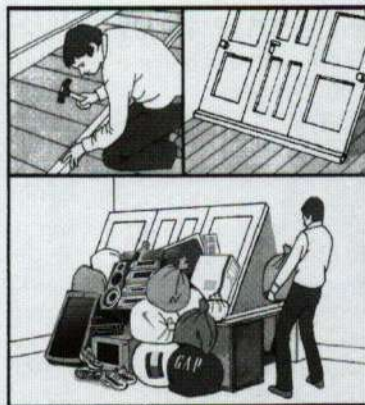
safe, environmentally friendly, nor economically beneficial to us."

Meanwhile, the millions of tons of surplus Indian rice that the Zambians are not supposed to buy is rotting in warehouses because the poor of India can't afford to buy it either. Malawi also had non-GM surpluses until a few months ago, but was required by the International Monetary Fund to sell them to pay off its debt. As Ethiopia's Food and Agriculture spokesman, Dr Tewolde Egziabher, put it, "this notion that genetically engineered crops will save developing countries misses the real point. The world has never grown as much food per capita as it is doing now, yet the world has also never had as many hungry. The problem is not the amount of food produced, but how it is both produced and distributed."

IF ORDINARY PEOPLE BEHAVED LIKE-

MONSANTO





SchNEWS in Brief

'Argentina & Venezuela: Organizing for survival and revolution - The truth behind the headlines' Public meeting next Thursday (5) at Conway Hall, 25 Red Lion Square, London WC1 (Holborn tube) 7pm. Two women from Argentina's grassroots women's assemblies and the highly respected housewives union will be speaking - as well as the video premiere of **'The Global Women's Strike & the Venezuelan Revolution.'** 020 7482 2496 <http://womenstrike8m.server101.com/> ** Speakers from the Sante Fe Neighbourhood Network in **Argentina** will be at the Easton Community Centre in Bristol next Wednesday (4) 7pm 0117 9399469 www.marsbard.com/kebele ** **American Indian** activist Rod Coronado will be kicking off a

speaking tour of the UK in Brighton on Monday 9th September 7.30pm in the Hanover Room, Brighthelm Centre, North Road. From sinking Icelandic whaling ships to defending old growth forests, Rod has engaged in militant and uncompromising direct action and in 1995 was jailed for some of his actions. Recently released, he lives on the Pascua Yaqui reservation in Arizona, USA. Other confirmed dates on his speaking tour are London (11), Nottingham (12) Sheffield (16) Manchester (17) and Leeds (19). For more info 07763 552 627 ** **Compassion in World Farming** have released a major report proving that the introduction of industrial animal farming into developing countries will be a disaster. Crowding thousands of animals together in disease-prone sheds uses very little local labour, uses scarce water and electricity, creates reliance on imports for cereals and farming equipment, causes pollution and after all that ends with a product which the poor cannot afford! For copies 01730 233 904 www.ciwf.co.uk ** There's a **free festival** this Saturday (31) in Tankerton Whitstable, Kent from 1-10pm. "One of music & resistance organised by the European Social Forum Mobilise Kent." 07950 610257 ** Since October 2000, hundreds of thousands of Palestinian trees have been bulldozed, uprooted or set ablaze by Israeli soldiers and set-

tlers. Many of these were olive trees. **Olive trees** are an important symbol to Palestinians as well as massively important economically. So this year the International Solidarity Movement are calling on people to join them for the olive harvest from October 15 - November 15. More info www.palsolidarity.org ** Antifascists last week attacked a shop in **Burnley** owned by Steve Smith, the **BNP** organiser for Burnley. The shop actually sells very little and is mainly used as a base for BNP organising

...and finally...

While 12 million people starve to death in Africa, McDonald's has just dreamed up a stunningly sensitive new product—the **McAfrica burger**. With no apparent sense of irony, these burgers are currently on sale at McShit branches in one of the most expensive and comfortable countries in the West, Norway. Aid agencies are understandably a bit wound up with this bit of McMarketing. As Linn Aas-Hansen of Norwegian Church Aid says "It's inappropriate and distasteful to launch a hamburger called **McAfrica** when large portions of Southern Africa are on the verge of starvation." Initially, McTosser's spokeswoman Margaret Brusletto said the company would consider sharing the proceeds of its sale with aid agencies(!) but a meeting with Norwegian Red Cross came to no agreement. Instead, after getting loads of protests about this McScam, McDonald's have agreed to place collection boxes for Africa in the participating stores while the promotion lasts--but no longer. We wonder if stuffing the boxes with **McAfrica** burgers would help to fill the stomachs of Africa's starving.

Disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all governments "Oi! Come on then if yer wanna make summit out of it." Honest.

Inside SchNEWS

17 supporters of Ahmed Meguini, who was jailed for eight months last week after taking part in the **No Borders** protest in Strasbourg (SchNEWS 366), were nicked last Friday during an occupation of the local Ministry of Justice the day after his trial. They were demanding Ahmed be taken out of solitary confinement and allowed visitors. They have all been charged with 'kidnapping' after three members of the Ministry of Justice staff refused to leave the building. Now Meguini's supporters could be facing prison sentences of up to five years themselves. Find out how to support them at www.noborder.org

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Landside Victory

With the **Countryside Alliance** promising the biggest demonstration London has seen since the **Poll Tax Riots of 1381**, a group of people have decided while the aristocracy are in the Capital on September 22nd they'll target one of the Alliance's prime movers. In their own words, they plan to "Move onto his estate... (and) establish an autonomous community in the spirit of Winstanley and the Diggers."

They are calling on other groups to organise as well, with the aim of reoccupying stolen common heritage. "If you really want to stop the Alliance," the squatters say, "Don't go to London to yah-boo them, get out into the countryside and hit them where it really hurts - in their own back yard!"

Catch up with everyone's direct action summer adventures at the **REBEL ALLIANCE** next Wednesday (4th) 7.30pm upstairs at the Albert Pub, Trafalgar St. Brighton. Followed by SchNEWS of the World Book Launch at the Volks, Madeira Drive, Brighton. Donations on the door



SUMMIT ROTTEN

"...These people at the summit are not kind. We earn peanuts and they don't even tip us. They think they are so important, they fly around the world having meetings and getting waited on, but they know nothing of how we live. I came here from Zimbabwe because my people are very desperate there. I live in a shack in Soweto now, one room with two children, no privacy, trying to earn money to send home. For months the government has talked about cleaning up the city for the summit, but when these people go home, everything will be back like it always was. They will still be rich, we will still be poor. It's not right that they say they meet for our sake. It's all for their benefit, not ours."

- Rosemary, a Zimbabwean refugee waiting tables under the shining towers of Sandton, South Africa, where the conference was held.

SchNEWS would never snipe at the sidelines telling anyone who'd listen 'we told you so' but as the Johannesburg Earth Summit finishes, the new blueprint to save the planet is about as useful as waterproof bogroll.

Corporations hailed it a success (horray - no strings, we can carry on polluting), there was fine words from politicians (like Vice-President Blair banging on about climate change then promising to improve the people of Iraq's climate by bombing them), plenty of NGO hand wringing and muttering in Victor Meldrew 'I don't believe it' style disbelief and demonstrators being given a good kick in the privates so they don't feel left out in the new era of global partnerships. SchNEWS has sifted through the final 65 page document with its eight key commitments and come up with summit of the highlights.

* Dropping all renewable energy targets, because oil rich nations argued that until

they figure a way of charging us for the sun and wind they aren't interested in bloody solar panels and windmills.

* Promising to increase the number of people cut off from essential services like water and electricity by privatising services immediately.

* Getting rid of poor people, or at least making them disappear out of view, with the use of very big fences surrounded by razor wire and men with machine guns (hey, just like the Earth Summit).

* Making people re-use envelopes and dig ponds in their back gardens to preserve fish stocks.

* Handing out free umbrellas and suntan lotion to help lessen the effects of climate change.

* A pledge to stop species extinction through gene transfer and cloning of profitable animal and plant crops.

* A free market monopoly in exchange for eternal debt and gratitude plus spontaneous culling of various groups as and when necessary all done in the best possible taste.

Er, that's it.

But perhaps the 'major triumph' of the Summit was the creation of "partnership agreements." Corporations promise to respect the environment and peoples' human rights, as long as they can do it voluntarily and with none of that silly red tape that spoils it for everyone. As an ecstatic spokesman for Business Action for Sustainable Development (BASD - see SchNEWS 361/2), a powerful new lobby group stuffed full of fat cats, told SchNEWS "We can't believe those suckers expect us, the very people who are destroying

**BLAST in association with the
SIMON JONES**

MEMORIAL CAMPAIGN

presents a drum'n'bass +
jungle full-on mix-marathon
at the Concorde, Brighton 12th
September, 10pm-3am, £4/3

CRAP ARRESTS OF THE WEEK

For asking a question...

Indymedia reporter and former political prisoner Chris Plummer was arrested last month at a Conference organised by the Texas Dept. of Criminal Justices. Billed as a forum for the exchange of information between families and prison officials, he was arrested after asking the riot-inducing question, "What percent of grievances get a not guilty verdict?" Chris is still on parole for his antifascist actions in the 90's, and this arrest could be used as an excuse to revoke his parole and send him back to prison.

the planet to come up with a grand plan of how to save it!"

BASD tardly Deeds

During one of the BASDtards Summit knees-up Shell Chairman Philip Watts reluctantly accepted a Greenwash Lifetime Achievement Award, muttering something about the good work his company has done in Nigeria and the report his company had produced which said how responsible they now were. Isaac Osuoka of Environmental Rights Action, a Nigerian group that has documented Shell's pioneering human rights and environmental work in the Niger Delta pointed out "How can we talk of partnership and trust with business leaders who do not recognise the most blatant corporate crimes?"

Other Greenwash Award winners include BP, who spent £20 million on their new sunflower logo to show the world how much they like flowers, Nestle who continue to defend the rights of mothers in the developing world to use powered milk, Enron for Best Makeup, and accountants (and we use the term in the loosest possible manner) Arthur Andersen for Best

Summit Rotten cont...

Documentary Destruction. As author Naomi Klein puts it "Post Enron it's hard to believe that companies can be trusted to keep their own books, let alone save the world." Or as Kenny Bruno co-

Capita Punishment

The school year has begun with a right neo-labour cock-up. Thousands of lucky kids have been turned away from school because not all staff have been cleared by the new Criminal Records Bureau (CRB). And just who's behind this mess? Why our old friends Capita (see Schnews 335) who got control of the bureau thanks to the PFI (Private Finance Initiative).

Launched in April, the CRB is a system for checking the background of all people who work with children or vulnerable adults in schools, voluntary organisations or professional bodies. Collating information from the police and government agencies, the CRB is run by Capita, which charges £12 for each check. Initially, Capita promised to respond to 90% of high-level enquiries - those required for the teaching profession - but within three weeks this promise had slipped back to the end of the year "if yer lucky".

The problem was that poor Capita were expecting 75% of the applications to come by phone and were surprised that so many came in hand-written through the post - actually not all that surprising since applications from local authorities need to be signed by a designated officer and so can't really be phoned in. The real reason for the mess up is that Capita set up a system to scan the applications using optical character recognition which can't

author of Earthsummit.biz says, "Most corporations, when left to their own devices, are attracted to irresponsible behaviour like moths to a flame."

So, without wanting to become the pub bore going on and on about what's to

read handwriting so all the data had to be input manually (I don't believe it!) and they just didn't have the staff to handle such a tall order. Capita have since shipped off all the applications to India! So the education Secretary Estelle Morris was left a 'very dissatisfied customer'.

But of course unlike failing schools, Capita is under no threat of the government taking them over or even giving them a slap on the wrist. Instead, Capita, who cocked up the Individual Learning Accounts Scheme earlier this year and left £260 million of tax payers money open to fraud, have continually been fed more and more contracts - over £1 billion worth in the first half of the year alone including a 10-year contract to collect TV licence fees (which should make SchNEWS readers without licenses breath a sigh of relief) and a five-year contract to run the congestion-charging scheme in London. Maybe that's why they've had a 38% rise in profits for the first half of the year, with three of their top exec's sharing a £7.5million payoff.

Meanwhile, hospitals, care homes and social services dept's trying to recruit struggled with delays that have built up in vetting potential staff. The whole social services system had "slowed down dramatically", said one director of social services. A care worker told Schnews she'd spent 18 weeks waiting to be cleared and unable to work.

be done, we at SchNEWS Towers repeat it's only when people get together to solve problems, offer solutions and take direct action against those who are destroying the planet, that life will ever change.

SchNEWS VOCAB WATCH

Greenwash: spending millions on adverts telling the world how green you are, while behind the scenes doing everything to oppose or avoid any social or environmental law that might harm profits.

* The Greenwash Awards did actually happen. Find out more www.earthsummit.biz/

* During last weeks day of action against a 'Corporate UN', Dutch Earth First! used paintbombs to 'greenwash' outlets of a dozen corporations in Amsterdam. "Anyone who believes that profit making, economic growth, and sustainable development can go together is very naive." For details of other actions on the day www.aseed.net

Recommended reading

* Earthsummit.biz: the Corporate Takeover of Sustainable Development by Joshua Karliner and Kenny Bruno (Food First Books) www.corpwatch.org

* Battling Big Business - countering greenwash, infiltration and other forms of corporate bullying. Eveline Lubbers (Green Books) 01803 863260 www.greenbooks.co.uk

* Check out the special Earth Summit report in this month's Ecologist magazine www.theecologist.org

SchNEWS in brief

This weekend (6-8) is **Big Blether** 3. "A weekend for those interested in direct action, environmental issues and campaigning in Scotland" at the Talamh Life Centre, Lanarkshire, Scotland. Workshops on greenwashing vs. corporate responsibility, herbal medicine, alternative technology etc. Cheap vegan food available but come as self sufficient as possible. Donations of £5-20 depending on income. 0131 557 6242, www.jl2.org/bigblether/ ** Next Wednesday (11) there's a **Peace Walk**. Meet at the Peace statue in Hove, 12 noon. Walk silently through Brighton, no banners or placards please ** Film, talk and discussion with **North American Indian activist Rod Coronado** this Monday (9th) in Brighton, 7PM, Brighthelm Centre, North Road, also London Wednesday (11th) at LARC 62 Fieldgate Street. Aldgate East tube, Whitechapel. 7.30pm

020 7377 9088 www.londonarc.org ** All charges against the five protesters who occupied the Shoreham docks of Euromin, the company responsible for killing **Simon Jones**, have been dropped. www.simonjones.org.uk ** **Reclaim the Future** 20-22 September, includes all day event on the Saturday with workshops, kids area, inspiring films, spoken word and cabaret followed by party. 07931 560 569 rtsparty2002@yahoo.co.uk ** **INJUSTICE**, the documentary about struggles for justice by the families of people who have died in police custody, has won Best Documentary at the BFM Film and Television Awards, which will take place in London next Monday. The awards are an annual celebration of achievement in black cinema and television. Between 1969 and 1999 over one thousand people died in police custody in England, with not one officer ever being convicted. www.injusticefilm.co.uk ** In protest against the Nike "Run London" event in Richmond Park on

Sept 22nd, **No Sweat**, the UK campaign against sweatshops, will be holding its own events to expose the poor working conditions in the Niketown shops, and on factory floors. Get "No to Nike Naked Greed" posters to post over Nike's ads on your local high street. 07904 431 959 www.nosweat.org.uk ** The radical video collective cultureshop.org are now selling **Drowned Out - The Narmada Dam Story**. The film will be showing at the Cube, Bristol next Tuesday (10) 7 pm £2 door tax ** Lancaster City Council have just voted through the Lancaster University / Jarvis Greenfields Expansion Plan and A6 link road. Interested in setting up a protest camp? grandlaf@lineone.net ** **Critical Mass North London Ride**, 14 September. Critical Mass is a rolling party encouraging a better deal for London's cyclists, pedestrians and public transport users. Bring a bike, roller blades, skateboard, pogo stick or any non-motorised transport. Starts 2pm Finsbury Park main gate (Seven Sisters Road).

Suit Up!

In America, the land where obese people recently sued the inventors of burgers and fries, now it's the environmentally disadvantaged suing the inventors of global warming....

Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace and the City of Boulder, Colorado are filing a lawsuit on behalf of their members who are victims of global warming. The suit has been filed against two US government agencies - the Export Import Bank (Ex-Im) and the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) - who use taxpayers' money to fund loans to US corporations for overseas projects that other banks have deemed too dodgy. In partnership with the Bush Administration, virtually every major energy, oil and gas company has received subsidisation by these two in the last ten years. Edison, Citicorp, ExxonMobil, Enron, Westinghouse, GE, Chase Manhattan, Bank of America and many others receive billions in taxpayer support from them.

The lawsuit claims that through this subsidisation, OPIC and Ex-Im have illegally provided over \$32 billion in

financing and insurance for oil fields, pipelines and coal-fired power plants over the past ten years "without assessing their contribution to global warming and their impact on the U.S. environment." Or, more to the point, without giving a toss.

The lawsuit website goes on to say that, "OPIC and Ex-Im are using taxpayer dollars to support fossil fuel extraction projects around the world, primarily to take oil from developing countries and bring it back to the United States. 56% of U.S. oil consumed comes from other countries like Nigeria, Venezuela, the Middle East and Mexico. Chapter 8 of the Bush/Cheney Energy Plan seeks to expand that even further. OPIC and Ex-Im are involved in virtually every major fossil fuel extraction project in the world. Despite requirements under the National Environmental Policy Act to assess the climate change impacts of these projects, the Bush Administration is not in compliance and U.S.-caused greenhouse gas emissions continue to rise. Private citizens, environmental organizations, states and cities in the U.S. are being harmed by climate change and therefore



are bringing this legal action."

Which all sounds well and good, but becomes a bit disappointing when you learn what the plaintiffs hope to accomplish through their lawsuit - they want OPIC and Ex-Im to simply fill out more paperwork, believing this will make them into better environmental stewards. The lawsuit pushes for, "Environmental Assessments to see if an action will significantly affect the environment and if the answer is affirmative to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) detailing the effects and options for alternative actions." More red-tape and bureaucratic greenwash anyone?

And while attacks on meanies like OPIC and Ex-Im are never a completely bad thing, one has to wonder when the rest of world's population (i.e. those of us who can't afford costly lawyers but are still affected by climate change) will get our day in court. Maybe OPIC will lend us some money for a lawsuit.... www.climatelawsuit.org

...and finally...

Most wanted fugitive found in New York. No its not that bin liner bloke, but international fugitive Warren Anderson, the former Chief Executive of Union Carbide responsible for the deaths of thousands of people after the Bhopal poison gas disaster (see Schnews 371). Apparently the US law enforcement agencies couldn't track him down so instead it was left to a team of crack commandos from Greenpeace to go to his house. Anderson is now facing extradition to India to face charges of culpable homicide. Not having a good time of it really are they?

Disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all readers we'll give yer summit for nothing not nothing for something. Honest.

Positive SchNEWS

Meanwhile Gardens in West London is a project aimed at helping people who have severe or enduring mental health problems learn about gardening and allotments. Originally set up in the early 1970s when a group of local residents managed to save it from developers, Meanwhile Gardens is a half acre site on a small strip of land between the canal and the A40 Westway and tower-blocks. Its achievements include ponds, a bog garden, a meadow area, herb garden and the promotion of a variety of species such as alder, hazel, birch, oak and beech. The success of the project has enabled it to thrive and currently to challenge yet more encroachment on the land by potential developers. "Experience gained at the Gardens can boost the confidence of trainees who may have been out of work for a long time, and show both them and potential employers that they can commit to a project, interact with a group of people and gain nationally recognised qualifications in the process." Contact: Kensington and Chelsea Mind, 020 8960 6336

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A Really Brief History of Iraq

There's nothing new about the US and Britain's use of military force to secure 'regime change' and control of oil reserves in Iraq. Since before Iraq existed the history of the region has been dominated by Western imperialists and local gangsters fighting for control of its people and resources. But Iraq also has a history of popular rebellion against all forms of exploitation, homegrown or imported; and people's uprisings have brought down governments, thrown repressive regimes into chaos, and forced out a British occupation. This timeline was nicked from Practical History, and heavily cut down. To read the complete version, Iraq: a history of war and rebellion, see their website: <http://www.geocities.com/CapitolHill/Senate/7672/>

1900: Iraq doesn't exist. Since the 16th century the area that will become Iraq has formed part of the Turkish-based Ottoman Empire. The Empire's rule is based in the cities; the countryside remains dominated by rural tribal groups, some of them nomadic.

1912: The Turkish Petroleum Company, formed by British, Dutch and German interests, acquires concessions to prospect for oil in the Ottoman provinces of Baghdad and Mosul.

1914-18: Turkey sides with Germany in WWI. To protect strategic interests and potential oil fields, Britain occupies Basra in November 1914, eventually capturing Baghdad in 1917. By the end of the war, most of the provinces of Iraq are occupied by British forces although some areas remain "unpacified". Colonial rule is established, with top levels of the administration in British hands.

1919: Throughout 1919 and 1920 there are constant uprisings in northern Iraq, with British officers and officials being killed. The tribes in this area share a common Kurdish language and culture, but at this stage there is little demand for a separate Kurdish state. The main issue is resistance to external state authority.

The RAF bomb Kurdish areas. Wing-Commander Arthur Harris (later known as "Bomber Harris" for his role in the destruction of Dresden in WW2) boasts: "The Arab and the Kurd now know what real bombing means. Within 45 minutes a full-size village can be practically wiped out and a third of its inhabitants killed or injured".

A leading British officer declares that the only way to deal with the tribes is "wholesale slaughter". RAF Middle Eastern Command requests chemical weapons to use "against recalcitrant Arabs as (an) experiment". Winston Churchill, Secretary of State for War says, "I am strongly in favour of using poisonous gas against uncivilised tribes... It is not necessary only to use the most deadly gases; gases can be used which cause great inconvenience and would spread a lively terror and yet would leave no serious permanent effects on most of those affected".

1920: In the post-war carve up between the victorious imperialist powers, Britain gets Iraq (as well as Palestine), France gets Syria and Lebanon. The borders of the new state of Iraq are set by the great powers, setting the scene for a century of border conflicts.

The British authorities impose tight controls, collecting taxes more rigorously than their predecessors and operating forced labour schemes. In June an armed revolt against British rule ("the Revolution of 1920") spreads across

southern and central Iraq. For three months Britain loses control of large areas of the countryside.

1921: By February the rebellion has been crushed, with 9,000 rebels killed or wounded. Whole villages are destroyed and suspected rebels shot without trial.

Britain decides to replace direct colonial rule with an Arab administration which it hopes will serve British interests. Britain creates a monarchy with Faysal as Iraq's first King. Iraqis now fill senior positions, but ultimate control lies with their British advisers.

1924: Britain's Labour Government sanctions the use of the RAF against the Kurds, dropping bombs and gas. The effects are described as "appalling" with panic-stricken tribespeople fleeing "into the desert where hundreds more must have perished of thirst".

1927: The British-controlled Iraq Petroleum Company (IPC, successor to the TPC) opens its first substantial oil well near Kirkuk. Tons of oil decimate local countryside before the well is capped.

1930: The Anglo-Iraq Treaty paves the way for independence. The Treaty provides for Britain to maintain 2 air bases, and an influence on Iraq's foreign policy until 1957.

Kurdish uprisings, prompted by fears of their place in the new state, are put down with the help of the RAF.

1931: General strike against the Municipal Fees Law, which imposes new taxes three times heavier than before, and for unemployment compensation. Thousands, including 3,000 petroleum workers, take part and there are clashes with the police. The RAF flies over urban centres to intimidate strikers.

1933: The Artisans Association (a union) organise a month-long boycott of the British-owned Baghdad Electric Light and Power Company. After this, unions and workers' organisations are banned and forced underground for the next ten years.

King Faysal dies and is succeeded by his son Ghazi.

1935-36: Sporadic tribal rebellions, mainly in the south. Causes include an attempt to introduce conscription and the dispossession of peasants, as tribal lands are placed in private hands. The revolts are crushed with bombing and summary executions.

1936-37: General Bakr Sidqi, an admirer of Mussolini, installs a military government and launches a repression of the left. There are protest strikes throughout the country including at the IPC in Kirkuk and the National Cigarette Factory in Baghdad.

1940: Rashid Ali becomes Prime Minister after a coup, at the expense of pro-Brit politicians. The new government takes a position of neutrality in WW2, refusing to support Britain unless it grants independence to Syria and Palestine. Links are made with Germany.

1941: Britain re-invades Iraq and restores its supporters to power in the '30 days war'. During the occupation, martial law is declared. Arab nationalists are hanged or imprisoned. Despite this, British forces don't stop Rashid supporters from staging a pogrom in the Jewish area of Baghdad, killing 150.

1946: Strike by oil workers at the British-controlled IPC in Kirkuk. Workers clash with police, and 10 are killed when police open fire on a mass meeting. The following

"I am strongly in favour of using poisonous gas against uncivilised tribes"
Winston Churchill

month there is a strike by oil workers in the Iranian port of Abadan and Britain moves troops near to the Iranian border. The Iraqi government suppresses papers criticising this move, prompting strikes by printers and railway workers. The cabinet is forced to resign.

1948: The Iraqi government negotiates a new treaty with Britain which would have extended Britain's say in military policy until 1973. British troops would be withdrawn, but would have the right to return. The day after this is agreed police shoot dead four students demonstrating against the Treaty. This prompts an uprising that becomes known as al-Wathba (the leap). Riots spread across the country, directed not just against the Treaty but also bread shortages and rising prices. More are killed a few days later when police open fire on a mass march of railway workers and slum dwellers. On 27 January 3-400 people are killed by the police and military as demonstrators erect barricades of burning cars. The cabinet resigns and the Treaty is torn up.

In May, 3,000 workers at IPC's K3 pumping station go on strike, bringing the station to a halt. The government and IPC cut off supplies of food and water to the strikers, who then decide to march on Baghdad, 250km away. On what becomes known as 'the great march' strikers are fed and sheltered by people in the towns and villages en route before being arrested 70km from Baghdad.

The British military is withdrawn from Iraq. Martial law is declared and demonstrations are banned.

1949: Communist Party leaders are publicly hanged in Baghdad, their bodies left hanging for hours as a warning to opponents of the regime.

1952: Students strike over changes in exam rules. The movement spreads to mass riots in most urban centres, known as al-Intifada (the tremor). In Baghdad a police station and the American Information Office are burned down. A military government takes over, declaring martial law. 18 demonstrators are killed in military action.

1954: Government decrees permit to deport persons convicted of communism, anarchism or working for a foreign government.

1958: Popular unrest throughout the country, including in Diwaniyah, where in June 43 police and an unknown number of demonstrators are killed in a three-hour battle.

A month later the "14 July Revolution" brings to an end the old regime. A coup led by members of the Free Officers seizes power, denounces imperialism and proclaims a republic. The royal family are shot. Crowds take to the streets and a number of US businessmen and Jordanian ministers are killed. People take food from the shops without paying, thinking that money is now obsolete. To prevent the revolution spreading out of control, the new government imposes a curfew. After a brief power struggle, Abd al-Karim Qasim becomes prime minister and continues to rule with the support of the Iraqi Communist Party (ICP) and other leftists.

Although Islamic influence remains strong, there are public expressions of anti-clericalism including public burning of the Koran.

Without waiting for Qasim to deliver on land reform promises, peasants take matters into their own hands. In al-Kut and al-'Amarah they loot landlords' property, burn down their houses, and destroy accounts and land registers. Fearing the spread of rebellion throughout the region, the US sends 14,000 marines to Lebanon. Plans for a joint US/British invasion fall flat because "nobody could be found in Iraq to collaborate with".

1959: Baathists and nationalists form underground anti-communist hit squads, assassinating ICP members and other radical workers. By 1961 up to 300 people have been murdered in this way in Baghdad and around 400 in Mosul.

In Mosul, Arab nationalist officers stage an unsuccessful coup, prompted largely by anti-communism. Popular resistance goes beyond suppressing the coup: the rich are attacked and their houses looted. There are similar scenes in Kirkuk where 90 generals, capitalists and landlords are killed in violent clashes.

1960: Qasim cracks down on radical opposition. 6000 militant workers are sacked. Several communists are sentenced to death for their role in the Kirkuk clashes. Despite this the ICP leadership continues to support the government.

1961: War breaks out between the government and Kurds, lasting on and off until 1975.

1963: The Baathists seize power in a January coup. They strengthen links with the US, suspected by many of encouraging the coup. During the coup, demonstrators are mown down by tanks, initiating a period of ruthless persecution during which up to 10,000 are imprisoned, many of them tortured. The CIA supply intelligence on communists and radicals to be rounded up. Up to 5,000 are killed in the terror, many buried alive in mass graves. The new government continues war on the Kurds.

In November the Baath are removed from power in a coup by supporters of the Egyptian Arab nationalist, Nasser.

1968: The Baath Party returns to power after a July coup. It creates a state apparatus systematically dominated by the Baath party that enables it to remain in power for at least the next 33 years.

1969: The regime begins rounding up suspected communists.

The air force bombs Kurdish areas, but military stalemate remains until the following year when Saddam Hussein negotiates an agreement with the Kurdish Democratic Party. In exchange for limited autonomy, the KDP leadership agrees to integrate its peshmerga fighters into the Iraqi army.

1973: The Iraqi oil industry is nationalized.

1974: The ICP joins the pro-government National Progressive Front along with the Baath, but the Baath remain in sole control of the state.

War breaks out again in Kurdistan as the agreement with the KDP breaks down. The KDP is deprived of its traditional allies in the CP and the Soviet Union, now supporting the Baath. Instead it seeks and receives aid from the USA and the Shah of Iran. The Baathists launch napalm attacks on Halabja and Kalalze.

1975: The Iraqi military continues bombing civilian areas in Kurdistan.

Iraq negotiates an agreement with Iran, withdrawing help from Iranian Kurds and other anti-Shah forces in return for Iran stopping support to the Iraqi KDP. Iran takes back the military equipment it had given to the KDP, leaving the field open for the Iraqi army to conquer Kurdistan.

1978: All non-Baathist political activity in the army (such as reading a political newspaper), or by former members of the armed forces is banned under sentence of death. With universal conscription, this means that all adult males are threatened with death for political activity.

1979: Saddam Hussein becomes president of the republic.

1980: War breaks out between Iraq and the new Iranian regime lead by Ayatollah Khomeini. The conflict centres on border disputes and the prospect of the Islamic revolution spreading to Iraq.

1982: Popular anti-government uprising in Kurdish areas. The government decrees that deserters from the army (anyone who has gone AWOL for more than 5 days) will be executed.

In the southern marsh regions, the Iraqi army launches a massive military operation to flush out the thousands of deserters and their supporters in the area. Rebels not only run away from the war, but also organise sabotage actions such as blowing up an arsenal near the town of Amara. In the village of Douru armed inhabitants resist the police to prevent house-to-house searches for deserters. Villages supporting the rebels are destroyed and their inhabitants massacred.

1984: US support for Iraq in the war is reflected in the restoration of diplomatic relations between the two countries. Iraq has received military planes from France, and missiles from the Soviet Union. Saudi Arabia and Kuwait fund the Iraqi war effort. West and East are united in a wish to see Iraq push back the influence of Iran and Islamic fundamentalism.

The Patriotic Union of Kurdistan calls a truce, with its troops fighting alongside the Baath.

1987: In May there is an uprising in the Kurdish town of Halabja led by the many army deserters living there. One eyewitness reports: "governmental forces were toppled. The people had taken over and the police and army had to go into hiding, only being able to move around in tanks and armoured divisions". Hundreds are killed when the rebellion is crushed.

1988: Armed deserters take over the town of Sirwan (near Halabja). The Iraqi air force destroys the town. On 13 March the Iraqi government attacks Halabja with chemical weapons killing at least 5,000 civilians. Poor people attempting to flee the town for Iran before the massacre are stopped from doing so by Kurdish nationalist peshmerga. Throughout this period of insurgency there is widespread suspicion of the Kurdish nationalist parties because of their history of collaboration with the state.

The US sends a naval force to the Gulf after attacks on oil tankers. It effectively takes the Iraqi side, shooting down an Iranian passenger jet, killing nearly 300, and attacking Iranian oil platforms, killing another 200. In August Iran and Iraq agree a ceasefire.

1990: Iraq invades Kuwait.

1991: In January the US military, with support from Britain and the other 'Coalition Forces' launches Operation Desert Storm, a massive attack on Iraq and its forces in Kuwait. The conflict is less of a war than what John Pilger calls "a one-sided bloodfest". Allied forces suffer only 131 deaths (many by 'friendly fire'), compared with up to 250,000 Iraqi dead.

Despite public statements by the US army that the allies will not attack Iraqis in retreat, Iraqi conscripts are slaughtered even after the unconditional withdrawal from Kuwait has begun. The day before 'war' comes to an end troops retreating from Kuwait City on the Basra highway are mas-

sacred, in what US pilots call a 'duck shoot'. For miles the road is filled with charred bodies and tangled wreckage. An eye witness writes that "In many instances the human form has been reduced to nothing more than a shapeless black lump, the colour of coal, the texture of ash".

Many civilians are also killed, most famously at the Amiriya bunker in Baghdad where hundreds sheltering from allied bombs are killed when it receives a direct hit from 2 missiles.

In February and March, popular uprisings against the Iraqi government spread across the country. It starts at Basra, sparked by rebels using a tank to fire at huge pictures of Hussein. Inspired by southern rebellion, people in Kurdish areas join in. Police stations, army bases and other government buildings are wrecked. Shops are looted. Food warehouses are occupied and the food distributed. In Sulliemania, rebels smash up the prison, set the prisoners free and then storm the secret police HQ. Baathist officials and secret police are shot. In some areas, self-organised workers' councils (shoras) are set up to run things. They set up their own radio stations, medical posts, and militia to resist government forces.

After a brutal repression of the rebellion in the South (made easier by the Allied massacre of mutinous conscripts on the Basra highway), Government forces focus on Kurdistan. They reoccupy Sulliemania in April, but the city is deserted with almost all inhabitants having fled to the mountains.

The Western media present the uprisings as the work of Kurdish nationalists in the north and Shiite Muslims in the south, but they are in fact mass revolts of the poor. The main Kurdish nationalist parties (the

KDP and the PUK) oppose radical aspects of the uprisings and try to destroy the shora movement. True to form they announce a new negotiated agreement with Hussein soon after the uprisings are crushed.

1991 - 2003: Desert Storm comes to an end but the war on Iraqi people is continued by other means - sanctions. The destruction of water pumping stations and sewage filtration plants by allied bombing is compounded by sanctions, which prevent reconstruction. This amounts to germ warfare, as the inevitable consequences are epidemics of dysentery, typhoid and cholera. In 1997, the UN estimates that 1.2 million people, including 750,000 children below the age of five, have died because of food and medicine shortages.

1996: The US launches 27 cruise missiles against Iraq.

1998: In February there is a massive military build up of US and British forces in the Gulf, threatening a new war on Iraq. Conflict is avoided after a last minute deal on UN Weapons Inspectors.

In December, after weapons inspectors are forced to leave, being told that bombing is imminent, the US launches Operation Desert Fox. Over a 4-day period, 400 cruise missiles are launched, along with 600 air attack sorties. British aircraft also take part. Thousands are killed or wounded.

1999: Western military attacks continue. On April 11, two people are killed when Western warplanes bomb targets in Quadisiya. On 27 April, four are killed by US planes in the northern no-fly zone. On May 9, four are killed in Basra province, including three in a farmer's house in Qurna. On May 12, 12 people are killed in the northern city of Mosul.

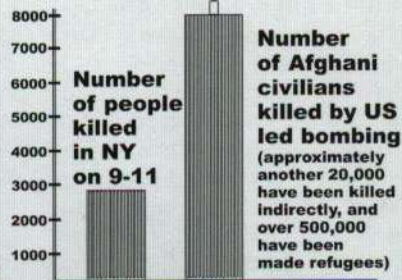
2003: ...see rest of book.

During the 1991 uprisings, rebels in Sulliemania smashed up the prison and set the prisoners free, then stormed the secret police HQ.



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Friday 13th September 2002 Free/Donation Issue 372

SILENT BUT DEADLY

"As a Native American, every time I see the American flag I feel the same way I imagine Jewish people must feel when looking at the Nazi flag. The American flag is a flag of oppression and genocide. Because that's what America is built on — from the very beginning when the first European settlers landed in North America, it has been a country built on blood." *Rod Coronado, Native American activist, speaking in Brighton last week.*

"It's really not a number I'm terribly interested in." *General Colin Powell, when asked about the number of Iraqi people who were killed by Americans in the 1991 Desert Storm campaign (200,000 people, incidentally)*

September 11th is an anniversary. And if you've watched too much telly or read too many newspapers this week, you may have been fooled into believing that September 11th is only the anniversary of one tragedy, in one nation. But it's not. On the same day in 1973, Salvador Allende, the socialist President of Chile, was killed in a violent, American-sponsored coup, led by General Augusto Pinochet. Pinochet's rise to power,

dreamt-up and orchestrated by a Red-paranoid CIA and Mr. Henry Kissinger, began nearly twenty years of military dictatorship that led to thousands of deaths and countless incidences of oppression and torture. 30,000 people were massacred in the weeks following this other September 11th, as Pinochet tried to wipe out an entire layer of society who had identified with the left. Even in exile, many who had associated with the Allende government (or were vaguely perceived as some sort of communist threat) were assassinated by Pinochet's secret service. And all of this sponsored in the name of Freedom and Democracy.

So when we're having a minute of silence for the people who died in the Twin Towers, why not a minute of silence for those who died at the hands of Pinochet's CIA-sponsored death squads? Or while we're at it, we could have a minute of silence for the people of the Congo, also subjected to a military dictatorship thanks to the CIA assassination of evil lefty Patrice Lumumba. Or how about Cambodia, which deserves at least two minutes of silence when one considers that America (and Britain) backed Khmer Rouge

CRAP ARRESTS OF THE WEEK

For 'wanting to blow up the Olympics' ...Yep that's right, that's one of the things 19-year-old Sherman Austin, the creator of 'Raise the Fist' an anarchist/independent media website, is being accused of. This "imaginative" accusation came after his arrest while trying to "carry out his plot of mass destruction against the World Economic Forum", i.e. attend a demo outside of the WEF summit. Finding no real evidence to back up these claims, the desperate feds are charging him with two lesser felonies and he'll be sent away for 4 years if found guilty. <http://raisethefist.com>

leader Pol Pot to the tune of \$85 million in his genocidal rampage which killed nearly 2 million Cambodians. Or what about a few minutes of silence for Nicaragua, where in 1936, the American National Guard helped Anastasio Somoza to establish and maintain a family dynasty which would rule over Nicaragua for the next 43 years. While the National Guardsmen, consistently maintained by the US, passed their time with rape, torture, murder of the opposition, and massacres of peasants, as well as less violent pursuits such as robbery, extortion, contraband, running brothels and other government functions, the Somoza clan laid claim to the lion's share of Nicaragua's land and businesses. Love that Freedom & Democracy, don't ya?

The problem with this list is that it could go on and on — Brazil, Guatemala, El Salvador, Ecuador, Uruguay, the Dominican Republic, Cuba, Haiti, Iraq, Iran, Laos, East

"What might be the effect upon the American psyche if the true-believers were compelled to witness the consequences of the past half-century of US foreign policy close up? What if all the nice, clean-cut, wholesome American boys who dropped an infinite tonnage of bombs, on a dozen different countries, on people they knew nothing about - characters in a video game - had to come down to earth and look upon and smell the burning flesh?"

From the book *"Killing Hope: U.S. Military and CIA Interventions Since World War II"* by William Blum... For more info on Blum's books: www.thirdworldtraveler.com/Blum/KillingHope_page.html or http://members.aol.com/bblum6/American_holocaust.htm

Silent but Deadly cont...

Timor, Grenada, Greece... All of these and more are countries who have suffered from oppression, torture, starvation, and death at the hands of American "intervention," whether it takes the form of bombs, sanctions, or our personal favourite, CIA sponsored military regimes.

As ex-State Department employee and author William Blum writes, "An American holocaust has taken place... So great and deep is the denial of the American holocaust that the deniers are not even aware that the claimers or their claims exist. Yet, a few million people have died in the American holocaust and many more millions have been condemned to lives of misery and torture as a result of US interventions extending from China and Greece in the 1940s to Afghanistan and Iraq in the 1990s."

"I will never apologise for the United States of America - I don't care what the facts are," said President George Bush Sr. in 1988, when the

U.S. Navy warship Vincennes shot down an Iranian commercial airliner. The plane was on a routine flight in a commercial corridor in Iranian airspace. All 290 civilians on board the aircraft were killed.

So while George Bush Jr. demands that the world observe a minute of silence for the dead and injured civilians of September 11th, the 290 dead Iranian civilians of 1988 didn't even get an apology. Neither did the nearly 8,000 Afghani civilians who have died in the last

year as a result of U.S. led air strikes in Afghanistan, a campaign appropriately titled "Enduring Freedom."

To the best of our knowledge, none of the victims of bombings in these countries have ever received any apologies, memorial funds, or commemorative minutes of silence. Yes, it is a tragedy when 3,000 people lose their lives on a single day as the result of madmen. But it is also a tragedy that takes place in many countries around the world on a daily

basis, often times as a result of the madmen in Washington. And when this fact is not acknowledged, anniversary observances of September 11th sound hollow at best, and grossly hypocritical and offensive at worst. As one American activist told Schneus, "If we had to observe a moment of silence for all of the victims of American foreign policy, we'd be silent for the rest of our lives." www.geocities.com/americanterrorism/
www.users.bigpond.com/nlevine/thearchive.html

While we're on the subject of bombs, let's remember that since the Second World War, the US government has bombed 21 countries: China in 1945-46 and again in 1950-53, Korea in 1950-53, Guatemala in 1954, 1960, and 1967-69, Indonesia in 1958, Vietnam in 1961-73, Congo in 1964, Laos in 1964-73, Peru in 1965, Cambodia in 1969-70, El Salvador throughout the 1980s, Nicaragua throughout the 1980s, Lebanon in 1983-84, Grenada in 1983, Bosnia in 1985, Libya in 1986, Panama in 1989, Iraq in 1991-20??, Sudan in 1998, Former Yugoslavia in 1999, and Afghanistan in 1998 and 2002.

Atenco Update

Having successfully fought off government plans to build an airport on their land, farmers in the Mexican town of San Salvador Atenco have now declared the town the first 'autonomous municipality' outside of Chiapas, electing a people's council and seizing all government vehicles trying to enter the area. This is the latest episode in an uprising that began on July 11, when the government tried to violently suppress a protest organised by farmers against the airport proposals. The residents of Atenco responded to police clubs, tear gas, and bullets by burning police vehicles, barricading the national highway, and taking 13 government and police officials hostage. The result was a five-day stand off between residents and the authorities, which ended in the government releasing all prisoners they had taken during the protests and abandoning their plans for the new airport (see Schneus 367).

Since their victory, residents have made the town a no-go area for police and federal authorities. Their declaration of autonomy is the most recent expression of a new unwillingness on their part to allow the Mexican government to dictate the organisation of their community. The 'people's council', described by the town's former mayor as 'frankly illegal', is seen by residents not as an attempt to withdraw from Mexico, but as an effort to decide for themselves how to meet their communities needs. "They try to scare people off with the word 'autonomous'", said one resident, "but what it means is that the people's will is respected. It doesn't mean we want to close ourselves off. The people are just going to decide how to police the town".

We Won't Bet The Farm: Atenco

On September 11th 2002 a peoples council voted on making the town of Atenco an autonomous municipality. Neighbourhood assemblies were set up and a 14 member Peoples Council said in a statement read at their swearing-in ceremony, "We are aware that that the government will not recognize this action by the people, but they have no choice but to respect our decision". A declaration stated that police and government officials would no longer be allowed to enter the town and Atenco will continue to be self-policing.

The people managed to keep all police and other government authorities out of the town, but March 9th 2003 was local election day in and around Mexico City. The elections went without a hitch for the large part elsewhere in Mexico's largest state but for Atenco it was an affront to their declared independence. The authorities could only look on helplessly from police helicopters as protesters burnt ballots and demolished the polling booths. This time there were no serious injuries and the people celebrated the destruction of all the voting booths by firing off a cannon. Some of the townspeople went to outlying areas to vote but farming leader Ignacio Del Valle insisted, "We are right and we have the force of the people behind us".

The struggle in Atenco has continued to inspire imperilled or dispossessed Latin Americans even more than the Zapatistas, as it has proved how unified community action can overcome even the most fierce and well-funded adversity.



Organ Play

Next Saturday (21st) people will be marching to the Home Office to protest against **xenotransplantation** - the transplanting of animal organs into humans. Two years ago the High Court, following legal action by research company Imutran, put a stop to a report written by Uncaged entitled 'Diaries of Despair'. The report exposed the negligent and cruel research methods used by Imutran, a subsidiary of the biotechnology giant Novartis.

Research mostly involved the transplantation of hearts and kidneys from genetically-engineered pigs into macaque monkeys and baboons caught in the wild. In some of the most horrific experiments, Imutran researchers implanted hearts from transgenic piglets into the necks of baboons. One of these primates was observed holding the transplant, which was 'swollen red' and 'seeping yellow fluid', for most of the last days of its life. Animals are often 'sacrificed' - jargon for being killed - both as a direct result of the experiments and due to sloppy lab practice. A baboon quickly got the chop when scientists discovered, mid operation, that the pig's heart it was supposed to receive was still in the freezer.

Imutran, who have used thousands of pigs, monkeys and baboons in their five years of research, claim to be on the verge of conquering the problem of 'organ rejection' - where the immune system sees the 'new' heart or liver as a foreign object, and attacks it. But the documents tell a different story. In one experiment, two baboons, who suffered 'hyperacute' organ rejection and quickly died, were left out of the published results which had claimed success. In another, the animals were pumped full of immuno-suppressant drugs to make sure their bodies didn't reject the 'new' parts.

Many scientists are worried about the safety of xenotransplantation itself. They believe there is a danger that putting bits from one species into another could easily trigger new and unheard of diseases. While scientists routinely screen transplant organs for viruses, they can only screen for those they know the existence of. And there may be many viruses which lie harmless and undetected in pigs but which could kill humans. Pigs are known to contain



600 go ape-shit around central London on September 21st, visiting the Home Office for a die-in to bring attention to the primates held by the bio-tech company Imutran.
Pic: Corin Jeavons

certain viruses closely related to human ones that cause blood leukemia.

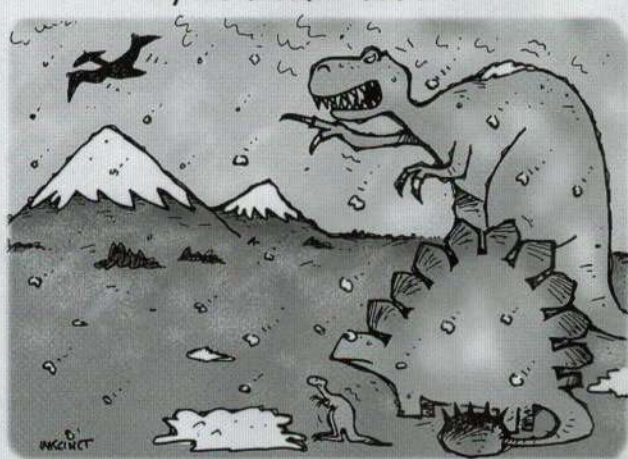
An obvious alternative to cross-species transplants would be a decent diet and improved living standards for everyone. It would also make more sense if everyone just used 'Opt Out' donor cards instead of 'what we have at the moment. People would have to carry an 'opt out' card to show that in the event of their death they didn't want certain or all of their organs to be used, as is the case in some other European countries.

The march next Saturday starts 12 noon in Temple Place, Central London. 0114 272 2220
www.xenodiaries.org

Taking the peace

The Brighton Peace and Environment Centre, North Laines' own radical book and re-usable nappy shop, is closing this weekend due to rising rents. BPEC will be moving to temporary office space, from which it hopes to attract new volunteers and funding by dropping the bit about peace cos it just doesn't sell. If you can help in the search for new premises, or want a say in BPEC's future, e-mail them at info@bpec.org With the Peace and Environment Centre closing, pick up your copies of SchNEWS from Infinity Foods in North St.

Why the dinosaurs died out.



"Don't worry about the coming Ice Age. The important thing is to deal with the terroradactylist threat!"

SchNEWS in brief

Radio 4A, Brighton's Premier pirate station is back on the airwaves this weekend 107.8 FM across Brighton and worldwide on www.piratetv.net ** There's a noise **demo outside HMP Frankland**, Brasside, Durham this Saturday (14) 2-4pm in support of four prisoners who are on a 'dirty protest', and are 'down the block' (in segregation/solitary confinement) at Frankland. 07944522001 nicki.rens ten@prisonersadvice.demon.co.uk ** **John Pilger's new documentary, 'Palestine is still the Issue'**, is on ITV next Monday (16) 11pm ** From sinking Icelandic whaling ships to burning down fur industry buildings, Native American **Rod Coronado** has engaged in militant and uncompromising direct action which eventually led to prison. Listen to his engaging stories in Sheffield next Monday (16) at the Showroom Cinema, Pater Noster Road; Manchester (17) at Briton's Protection Pub, Great Bridgewater Street, 8pm; Leeds (19) Woodhouse Community Centre, Woodhouse Street 7pm ** People are urgently needed at the **Lappersfort protest camp in Brugge, Belgium** which has just been given its eviction notice. Protestors are trying to prevent the destruction of a green oasis in the city by a new motorway bypass and industrial zone. For directions call 0032 494 59 14 67 lappersfort@ziplip.com ** Volunteers are needed to help with the **Reclaim The Future** event happening the weekend 20-22 September, everything from cooking to building work to help on the Saturday. Call 07931 560 569 rtparty2002@yahoo.co.uk. They are also looking for old Reclaim The Streets/direct action exhibition materials e-mail maxsvoboda@hotmail.com if you've got any stashed under your bed ** **No Sweat, the anti sweatshop group**, are asking people to get their kit off during the Nike Fun Run in Richmond Park on Sunday 22 September. Meet at Barnes train

station 9am. 07979 046 219 Email yesgaryjarvis@hotmail.com www.nosweat.org.uk ** A massive campaign has been launched to stop Redditch Borough Council giving the go ahead to an **animal carcass incinerator** in the village of **Astwood Bank**. The incinerator would be next to the village school, with the chimney 100 yards from the kids' playing field! The incinerator would burn up to 1 tonne of animal carcasses per hour, 24 hours a day. www.abai.org.uk ** Villagers in **Kingskerswell, Devon** are fighting a dual carriageway proposal and 600 new homes www.kingskewalliance.org.uk ** A **McDonalds in Linköping, Sweden** was recently completely burnt down by animal rights activists ** An **anti-fascist** phone tree is being set up in **Brighton** in response to the lack of opposition to anti-Islamic fascist demonstrations which took place in London on Wednesday the 11th. Call 01273 540717 ** Battersea and Wandsworth TUC are holding a demo outside **Balfour Beatty Offices** at 130 Wilton Road, Victoria next Monday (16) 9am to coincide with the launch of their report 'Corporate Killers in Wandsworth'. The report, which focuses on the deaths caused by casualisation, is being launched at the Bread and Roses in Clapham at 7pm the same evening. Speakers include Bob Crow and Mark Thomas 020 8682 4224 ** After development plans were stopped by local protests 4 years ago (SchNEWS 203), Bromley Council has again fenced off part of **Crystal Palace Park** with unsightly 2.4m high wooden hoardings and are preparing to sell it off. Local opposition is organising and a candle-lit vigil is being held on the 21st Sept from 7.30 - 8.30pm near Crystal Palace Parade beside the fence (you can't miss it!). save crystalpalacepark@yahoo.co.uk ** **"Battle For Chile"** video showing, Sept 15, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London, 2pm, £5

Lode of crap

Rio Tinto, one of the world's biggest mining corporations, has pulled out of plans for the Jabiluka uranium mine in the Northern Territory, Australia. The mine is in the ancestral homeland of the Aboriginal Mirrar people and would have contaminated huge parts of their land which is also part of Kakadu National Park, a listed World Heritage Site.

Since uranium was first found there in the early seventies, the Mirrar have been fighting to stop mining on their land. The struggle escalated in 1998 after the government reversed long-standing environmental policies permitting new uranium mines to be built. A protest camp then sprang up, blockading the site for several months and resulting in hundreds of arrests. This, along with constant acts of sabotage on site and pressure on the government from UNESCO (UN environment quango) and the World Heritage Organisation, forced Rio Tinto to pull out of Jabiluka. www.jag.org.au/

...and finally...

We at SchNEWS Towers are facing meltdown! We're staring at ground zero as all our support staff leave us for better jobs in the City, sun themselves in tropical climates, or leg it from the bailiffs, leaving the remainder of us drowning in deadlines, emails and uneaten biscuits.

So we are looking for new volunteers to pen some articles, help with our mail-out and do a bit of desk top publishing. Rates of pay are crap but the fringe benefits make up for it (honest). To make sure you don't miss this opportunity of a lifetime call our hotline now -- 01273 685913.

Disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all readers about the world's most lethal weapon of mass destruction - our greed. Honest



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WAKE UP! IT'S YER BOMB THE FUCKERS...

Weekly SchNEWS

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I GAVE AWAY ALL I HAD...



Friday 27th September 2002 Free/Donation Issue 373/374

WEAPON OF MASS DECEPTION

"They know we own their country. We own their airspace... We dictate the way they live and talk. And that's what's great about America right now. It's a good thing, especially when there's a lot of oil out there we need." - *U.S. Brig. General William Looney (Interview Washington Post 1999)*

"While the unresolved conflict with Iraq provides the immediate justification, the need for a substantial American force presence in the Gulf transcends the issue of the regime of Saddam Hussein." - *Washington think-tank report, September 2000*

The first world war of the 21st century is already underway. Bush and the oilmen who run his government have given orders to make the oilfields of the Middle East safe for America. The US military are deploying their unimaginably powerful flotilla of death against Iraq, a country they have been bombing and denying medicine to for over 10 years. The corporate media are spinning their lies and whipping up war fever in exactly the way they always do. With its overwhelming military

superiority, and without the Soviet Union or any other competing superpower to restrain its ambitions of world domination, the United States is not even pretending to conform to international law. It is left to Blair, like a gangster's shiny-suited lawyer, to come up with pseudo-legal justifications for the violence that's already been agreed on. Capitalism doesn't get much more naked than this.

For the vast majority of humanity it's perfectly clear what the United States is doing. The most powerful nation on earth, and capitalism in general, is totally dependent on oil to keep it running - and most of that oil is in the Middle East. Since 1945, the US has armed and relied on puppet Arab regimes like Saudi Arabia to ensure the cheap oil has kept flowing for the West's ecologically suicidal way of life. It has armed the Israeli State to terrorise its Arab neighbours and ensure that the people of the potentially richest region in the world (the Middle East) are kept in poverty.

Iraq has the second largest oil reserves after Saudi Arabia, and for years Saddam Hussein was given western support to keep it flowing. For years, Bush Senior gave Sadd-

CRAP ARRESTS OF THE WEEK

For going to the wrong meeting! Last month a photographer, Stalingrad O'Neill, returning from a Troops Out Conference in Belfast was detained by police for two hours under the Prevention of Terrorism Act and had his camera seized and his documents taken and copied. www.nuj.org.uk

am loans and sold him advanced technology with clear applications for weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Britain was still authorising export of military equipment and radioactive materials to Iraq even after Iraq invaded Kuwait. Iraq has been so important to the US that Saddam was able to get away with attacking a US naval vessel, the USS Stark, at the cost of dozens of American lives without any comeback.

ISRAEL POLITIK

But things are changing. The level of oppression in the Arab world is so great that capitalism fears popular uprisings in the region will overthrow its puppet regimes and threaten its oil supplies. Israel has been armed to the teeth but has been unable to defeat the risen Palestinian people. The Saudi Royal family have been bankrolled to maintain their brutal regime but popular opposition to their rule is growing. The oilmen in the White House live in fear of being unable to control a region they have become so dependent on. Direct military intervention, shrouded by a thick layer of propaganda for the public, has become the preferred tactic for the new century.

Saddam is, of course, a brutal dictator - like Suharto, Pinochet, and all the others the US has payrolled. But the excuse for invasion, that he may have weapons of mass destruction and

Over a thousand people have signed a **Pledge of Resistance**, committing themselves to taking part in acts of nonviolent civil disobedience should Iraq - or any other country - be attacked in the course of the 'War on Terrorism.' Hundreds more have pledged to support them.

Sign the Pledge on-line at www.justicenotvengeance.org or call 0845 4582564. Also check their website out for a list of regular anti-war protests across the country.

Stop the War, Stop the City: direct action against the war in Brighton. Meet the day after ground troops enter Iraq. Churchill Square, 5.30pm bring pots and pans to bang for "rough music." Make your voice heard. brightonagainstawar@hotmail.com

Weapons of Mass Deception cont...

be a danger to his neighbours and others, is clearly just that - an excuse. The terrorist state of Israel has 200 nuclear weapons targetted at Arab capitals. It has illegally occupied Palestine for 35 years and breached dozens of United Nations resolutions - yet it wouldn't exist without US support. When Saddam invaded Iran and gassed Kurds, the West just made money out of it, because its strategic interests were not threatened. The terrorist attacks of September 11th were carried out by an organisation payrolled not by Saddam Hussein but by the United States itself to fight its war against the Soviet Union in the 1980s. Anyone who thinks this new war will be a war to make the world a safer place just hasn't been paying much attention.

BLAIRY-EYED

The vast majority of humanity is against this war. If the United Nations votes to support it, it will only be because Washington has bullied, bribed or terrorised poorer countries

into supporting its plans. In the US, millions oppose Bush's imperialism. In Britain, despite Labour and Tory support for Bush and the usual media bullshit, half the population is against the war. If we wanna put a spoke in the wheel of capitalism's war machine, we've got a lot of friends.

But we won't achieve anything unless we really make a noise. When Blair gave a warmongering speech to the Trade Union Congress last month, he wasn't even heckled - this pathetic response allowed Blair to appear statesmanlike and led directly to increased public support for the war in the following week. If even one person had stood up and refused to shut up it would have resonated around the world - but no one did. We won't oppose this war effectively with that sort of cowardice.

It won't be union leaders or paper sellers or 'organisers' that will stop this war. It will be ordinary, angry, active people - us, you, your neighbours, your mates - taking direct

action. Stopping high streets at rush hour. Shutting down government and military buildings. Having sit down protests on marches instead of moving on whenever the police tell us to. As Mukhtar Dai of the Birmingham South Asian Alliance said recently, "If it means disruption by our people who work in various service industries that will happen. People working in taxis and buses will stop work and there should also be strikes in factories." As even one ex-Labour MP said "The moment the bombing of Iraq begins we should stop for one hour. We should remember the women of Baghdad who will be widows, the children who will become orphans. I've never said this before. Non-violent resistance to the government will show they cannot claim to do this in our name. We should stop the buses, the trains, the schools. Everyone here should raise the threat of war in their schools, places of worship, where they work & live. We could be facing a Third World war triggered by stupid men."

Anti-War Actions

Saturday 28th **Stop the War, Don't Attack Iraq Demo.** Huge anti-war demonstration meeting at the Embankment @ 1pm then going to Hyde Park. www.stopwar.org.uk Buses from Brighton 01273 502241. Join the **Anti-capitalist Bloc:** Meet at Cleopatra's needle on the Embankment 1pm. anticapbloc@mail.com Or join the **SchNEWS Bloc** Meet 11am Brighton Station - and help us hand out these bloody newsletters. ** **A Peace Camp** has been set up outside the Imperial museum in London. 07986 465552. ** Sunday 6 Oct, **No Nukes, No War action** at USAF Lakenheath 11am - 3pm, A1065, near Thetford. Lakenheath is the main American tactical airbase in Europe, armed with nuclear weapons and hosting the 48th Fighter Wing of the U.S.A.F. This wing has been heavily involved in attacks on Iraq in the past, including campaigns from 1991 to 1994 and 1999. There are around 30 tactical nuclear weapons deployed at Lakenheath, the last remaining American nuclear weapons in Britain. These bombs each have a maximum explosive yield of 80 kilotons. The Hiroshima

bomb had a 13 kiloton yield. 01508-550446 www.lakenheathaction.org ** 6th October **Protest against war with Iraq**, Southsea Common, Portsmouth 3pm 023 9229 3673 ** **Scrap Trident Demo**, 12th October, 12 noon Plymouth Hoe www.cnduk.org ** For other anti war events check the **SchNEWS party and protest** bit on our website.

* **For those of you wanting to take direct action against the war**, here's a few resources we thought you might find useful: ** For the addresses of all 123 Army and Navy Recruitment Offices in the UK visit: www.army.mod.uk/careers/recruit_office/a_z_results.htm#a ** For addresses of the MoD Bases in the UK, listed by area: www.100megsfree4.com/farshores/ukufobas.htm ** Addresses and maps of US Military Bases world-wide: www.globemaster.de/regbases.html ** The Defence Procurement Agency proclaim, "Our mission: To Equip the Armed Forces". Their website lists their 'projects' to design and build equipment for the Army, Navy and Air Force. Follow the links to find out which company is building what: www.mod.uk/dpa/

[projects/index.htm](#)

* **Stuff to get you going:** ** Get hold of the CD '**The Fire This Time**' "Deconstructing the Gulf War and revealing the devastating effect of sanctions on Iraq" www.firethistime.org ** '**Hidden Wars of Desert Storm**' Essential viewing for anyone wanting to understand issues such as Oil, weapons inspectors, depleted uranium, Gulf War Syndrome and why America is now including Iraq in its so called 'War on Terrorism.' www.Cultureshop.org ** A new tune "**The Evil Plans of George W Bush IIIrd**" has just been released under Copyleft license so people can copy it, give it out, play it out and remix it as long as they give credit. www.twisted.co.nz/djdb/viewdj.php?dj_id=18

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SchNEWS in brief

Imagine an area bigger than Brighton and Hove closed to traffic; Brussels managed it last Sunday and shut 160 square kilometres to traffic during **International Car Free Day**.

1,400 cities around Europe also took part. www.carbusters.ecn.cz.

** Speaking of cars (and the climate change they cause), **Rising Tide** are holding a gathering in Manchester next weekend (4-6th Oct) looking at global warming, oil, pipelines, corruption, water privatisation and other dodgy practices. 01865-241097 www.risingtide.org. **

Last Saturday, angry residents tore down fences in **Crystal Palace park**. The barriers were erected by Bromley Council who want to sell off some of the historic parkland for re-development. savcrystalpalacep@yaho.co.uk ** Authorities estimate 20,000 people will welcome the ringleaders of globalisation, the International Monetary Fund and World Bank to Washington next week. www.infoshop.org have organised a spoof "**anarchist scavenger hunt**" to amuse protesters: 300 points for smashing the window of a McDonald's or 400 points for a pie in the face of a corporate executive or World Bank delegate! Follow the protests at www.dc.indymedia.org.

** "**About Anarchism**" by Nicholas Walter has just been reprinted and is well worth reading. Copies from Freedom Press for £3.50,

020-7247-9249

www.ecn.org/freedom ** As

part of the regular **international day of action against McDon-**

aids on October 16th, McDonald's workers have organised the first ever international industrial day of action. Burger flippers the world over are being encouraged to check out the website - <http://mwr.org.uk>

** **Zut Alors!**

Millions of French teenagers are in for a shock if they swear at their teachers. New legislation means pupils could face fines of up to 7,500 euros and even custodial sentences for such serious misdemeanours as unruly behaviour and that most heinous of crimes - swearing at rail guards. ** This Sunday there's an **Earth First Strategy and Action** Discussion Group meeting, near Norwich Which will discuss the direct action and anti-capitalist movement in present form and where it's going. For a copy of the agenda and to book, call 01986 781 789. ** A new road construction project that is being proposed near **Stonehenge** in Wiltshire could pose



ARIEL

MASSIVE POWER OF CLEANSING...

a real threat to the World Heritage site. At the moment they can't decide whether to go overland or underground, but either way, if the road-building goes ahead, the land surrounding the stone circle which also has World Heritage status and includes important archaeological remains will be destroyed to make room for a new four lane highway. www.savestonehenge.org.uk ** There's a **benefit gig** at the Concorde 2, Brighton, for the street kids of Cape Town, South Africa next Tuesday (1 October) 9pm Tickets £4 ** The following day (2) there's another **Fun raiser** at the Volks, Maderia Drive, Brighton supporting Zapatista communities in Mexico.

**THIS PERSON DESERVES
\$692 AN HOUR FOR THEIR WORK**



**THIS PERSON DESERVES
8¢ AN HOUR FOR THEIR WORK**



**AND ANYONE WHO SAYS OTHERWISE IS A DANGEROUS,
NAÏVE, WOOLY MINDED, BLEEDING HEART TROUBLEMAKER**

OCCUPATIONAL HAZARD

Reprinted here are a selection of excerpts from the diary of a British activist in Palestine, who has spent the past two months working with the International Solidarity Movement (ISM) and other groups, to monitor the conditions of life for Palestinians living under the occupation and to offer physical and moral support.

I've been in Askar refugee camp, Nablus for the past eleven days now. Four of us internationals (our numbers here are TINY now, we really need more people) travelled up here after completing our training as 'official' ISM volunteers. Official in that you have to sign a contract committing yourself to no drugs, alcohol, violence - that includes NO stone throwing at the soldiers. Even if the kids are all bang on it and you're standing in - literally - piles of stones: hand-sized, hard, easily reached stones.

Our main co-ordinator for the training was a small, earnest Japanese woman named Maki. As we are going to be staying in the houses of local Palestinians - mainly the homes of the families of suicide bombers and martyrs which are under threat of revenge attacks - usually a total bulldozing, we were taken through the do's and don'ts of Palestinian culture: don't sit with your leg up at a right angle, crossed over your knee - showing the bottom of your foot is considered very disrespectful. If you bring a gift to the family - make sure it's never bread - they will think you think they haven't even got enough cash for bread and are destitute - better to make it chocolates and coffee and then give it very matter-of-fact, don't make a song and dance about it, otherwise you might embarrass the family; give the gift to the father of the house; no low-cut tops, vests or shorts; and do not kiss or touch men in public.

We also get an introduction to the politics and roots of ISM. The first ever ISM action, December 2000 saw locals and internationals march up to an Israeli Military base, walk straight past the soldiers guarding it, march raucously through, banners and Palestinian flags aloft, and up to the top where they took down the Israeli flag and raised the Green, White, Black and Red. That's quite an achievement in an occupied police state. The Israeli media have tried to discredit the ISM by saying its full of anarchists and communists. Everyone from Anarchist Youth Network UK people, Wombles, huge Ya Basta! Italy contingents, comedian Jeremy Hardy, and McDonald's smashing, GM crop-torching farmer Jose Bove have come out on ISM missions. The most interesting part of the training is handling the various projectiles the Israeli Army is likely to shoot at us... After passing round some weighty sound bomb shells, tear gas canisters, rubber bullets (rubber-coated steel balls), sharp pointed M16 bullets, Uzi bullets, and tank shells, Maki adopts a very stern, serious voice. We pay attention. 'What you will see here is very, very depressing. Many people feel very upset by what they see. You may get beaten or shot. You may see your friends get shot and Palestinian people shot or beaten very, very badly. You may need counselling after this

[nods up and down]. Yes. And the counselling, it might work. [nod, nod] It might work'.

Since the curfew was imposed, Nablus residents (numbering around 150,000 - making it the largest city in the West Bank outside of Jerusalem) have been allowed to leave their homes for an average of four hours a week. The lifting of the curfew is erratic and unpredictable. It was lifted for the first day of school just last week (Aug 31) but then re-imposed again, and hasn't been lifted since. Children are unable to get to school. It's a problem for them and their parents. A similar tactic of intellectually impoverishing whole generations was adopted by the South African apartheid regime. Demonising those living under an internal colonialism as inherently backward, retarded, and unmanageable, the state attempts to make this image a reality through the routine prevention and denial of education.

The Israeli Defence Force (IDF) has also occupied the homes of those unlucky enough to live on the outskirts of camps, who are positioned at good vantage points for snipers and provide key locations for military operation launches. One such family is the Alar Samfeh family, living on the edge of Askar. The house was forcibly occupied by soldiers in June to be used as a make-shift base for terrestrial operations in the area. The 19 people living in the home were prevented from leaving and as a result lost their livelihoods - builders, land surveyors - for the past three months. During the occupation, if the father of the family wanted to move from one part of the house to another he was forcibly blindfolded. Soldiers destroyed chairs, tables and a music system, and towels and linen were regularly used to clean oily guns.

Tank Dust Lunch - September 2nd

The idea is to march from the Askar Mosque, out to the house (only a 20 minute walk) and have a picnic outside the house/military base, and try if possible to deliver food to the family. We bring 100 falafel, houmous and salad pittas for the kids. The women from the Askar community women's centre come too - they control the megaphone, and the kids who are yip yipping around, all excited and carrying the placards we made last night: 'Żolnierze WON, Dzieci do Szkoły' - Soldiers OUT, Children Back to School (Polish), Japanese peace symbols, the word peace in Arabic and many others. There are about 200 of us. We manage to get as far as the first intersection before the house when the sound of a tank begins to grind against our ears. All of us internationals (about 10) are at the front holding hands, to act as a barrier between the soldiers and the kids. We brace ourselves for the tank. It comes roaring up to us, stops, spins its barrel round and round and then points it squarely at us. It then begins to rotate its entire body in circles churning up dust and spewing out bilious clouds of carbon monoxide. It disappears in its own thick grey exhaust. People cover their mouths with their t-shirts, turn away, cover their eyes, cough and splutter, but all stand firm. It eventually stops, gradually reappearing as the noxious fumes clear. The military plod turn up in a jeep. Negotiators, an international and a Palestinian, step straight up. We can't go to the occupied house. We end up staying where we are and eating the falafel's while kids take turns on the megaphone - singing freedom songs, shouting out demands,

slinging the odd stone. We chant along to. 'Mur-der-ers!' 'Mur-der-ers!' 'Let the child-ren go to sch-ool!'

We don't retreat, we just all take the decision that we'll go. Although we didn't make it to the house, the kids are jubilant. We weren't even supposed to stay at the intersection, let alone sit down and have a picnic. Everybody agrees that the demo was a great success. People have barely left their houses for months, let alone taken back their streets collectively and had the chance to give the soldiers a piece of their minds.

Checkpoint Demonstration

A military checkpoint has been in operation opposite Mukhata - the Palestinian Authority prison in Nablus that was destroyed by the IDF - for nine days now. A tank and Armoured Personnel stand at the dust-bowl junction between Old Nablus and the Ballata refugee camp. Directly behind the checkpoint are three blocks of flats and a number of homes nestled into Askar Mountain. Checkpoints are crucial to IDF (Israeli Defence Force - Israeli Army) operations in the Palestinian territories. They are the lynchpins of the occupation.

Checkpoints curtail all movement. Daily tasks and activities are criminalised or made nearly impossible by endless checks and searches. According to the IDF, the searches are necessary to prevent terrorists moving weapons around. One suicide bomb-belt was found - in front of much media, this year. No other armaments have been reported since. Meanwhile, over 80 people have died since the second intifada began, after being held up at checkpoints and prevented from accessing essential medical attention: cancer the new term started: August 31. Normally, during the occupation, they have had nowhere to go, and no education, although work is being done to set up schooling spaces in the refugee camps. The economy in Nablus has ground to a halt. Once the industrial heartland of the Palestinian territories it is now a daily ghost-town. Many people cannot go to work, cannot earn money, cannot obtain medicine or groceries, and can barely feed their families. This applies more stringently to the people forced to actually live amongst Israeli soldiers who've set up camp, inside their homes, using them as look-out points, human shields and operations bases, plus the people who have the soldiers on their doorstep, such as those living above the checkpoint at Mukhata.

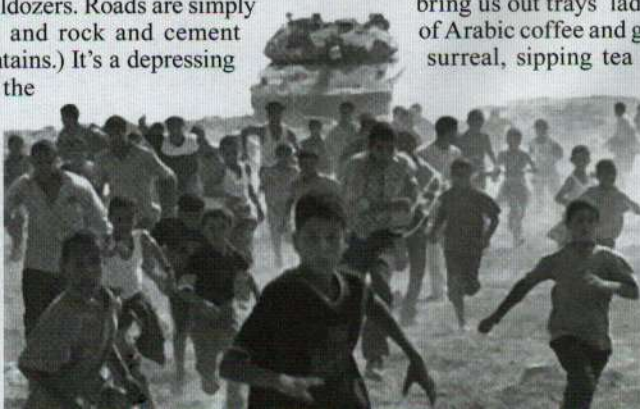
We'd been doing checkpoint-watch every day there for the past nine days, monitoring the soldier's activities. Children from the surrounding area regularly gather by the wrecked prison to throw rocks (Plenty of them around - the IDF regularly makes roadblocks using Caterpillar and local Palestinian bulldozers. Roads are simply cracked open, dug up, and rock and cement piled up into mini mountains.) It's a depressing ritual. The kids detest the occupation, they are oppressed daily by Israeli soldiers. The soldiers regularly shoot at children. I got a taste of this last week, whilst I was hanging out with the stone-throwing streetfighter

kids. An Israeli commander and his colleague were using the exhaust fumes of an advancing tank as cover to get closer to the kids, all young raggedy boys aged 10-17. As the tank pulled back up to its position in front of the flats, the kids pointed wildly to a white square building in between the Mukhata and the checkpoint. 'Soldiers, soldiers' they shouted, pointing at the white building. 'I know I know', I said, pointing up at the checkpoint. 'No No No!' (cue sound of machinegun fire and more manic pointing at the white building). It was only then that I realised what they were doing. They opened fire, and we ducked behind a trench of rubble. The kids ran to hide behind some broken rocks. I got up and ran over to them. They were taking aim. I direct my question at the commander - a young, good-looking Israeli. 'You're not really going to shoot those....' 'FUCK OFF'. It's a curt acid command. 'Oh right, so, tell me, how many kids have you killed in your service?' His response was a round of ear-searing rapid fire at the scattering kids. He put the gun down, keeping his gaze trained straight ahead, and said '27'.

A demonstration is organised by ISM volunteers and local block residents against the checkpoint. The idea is to reclaim the area in front of the flats and have children play games, draw posters and generally have a laugh as an act of resistance to the occupation. It's a way of showing kids that there are alternative forms of resistance to the usual stone-chucking ritual, and it's good to flummox the soldiers. The ones on shift today are the same lot which policed our last kids' demo to the occupied house. As kids tried to gather for the demo outside before we all came up they were shooting at them. Only yesterday they were firing intimidation shots at us. Before we even start the tank's barrel is trained squarely at us. Around 100 kids turn up, tentatively at first, holding the placards we drew together yesterday. They chant at the soldiers. They are all over the shop but they're enjoying their chance to vent their frustration, as are the adults present. Demonstrations here are pretty much non-existent - how do you collectively protest against a military curfew? The presence of internationals is one of the only ways collective acts of civil disobedience can take place. The soldiers have orders not to shoot us. Palestinian civilians, yes. Internationals, no. Bad PR.

Following a bout of shouting and general fist-shaking, we have a drawing and painting session and a plastic sack race. The kids hop, leap and wriggle in white plastic sacks, whipping up dust and getting breathless with exertion. We join in too. Everybody is clapping and laughing and the atmosphere is festive. Neighbours bring us out trays laden with tiny china cups of Arabic coffee and glasses of sweet tea - it's surreal, sipping tea at an impromptu kids'

sports day amidst swirling clouds of grey dust, under the gun barrel gaze of a forbidding Israeli tank, and soldiers standing around armed to the hilt. But we're having a laugh...





www.mahjoob.com

Baha

"Baha is an energetic, vibrant local kid, 14 years-old, with twinkly green eyes, all 'mush mushkele - No Problems', and as capable as an adult, looking after international activists staying in the old city by doubling up as guide and mediator between hostile kids and us. He takes time out to explain who we are and why we're in their town when our governments are funding the occupation.

We go out on the tank-hunt. Baha in tow. It's the usual. The APC and tank out on curfew patrol. We stay back at a street corner on our way into the old city, a warren of sandy big-rocked houses, archways, and piles of rubble (bulldozed ex-homes, factories, workshops). The April attack saw 25,000 soldiers, approx. 400 tanks, and multiple apache rocket-fire hit the city and surrounding camps. The 4th strongest army on the planet doesn't fuck about when it goes in for the kill. 87 Nablus residents were slaughtered within 4 days. Over 200 people were used as human shields.

Back to the present...The APC soldier gets on his phone. Nablus was declared a closed military zone about an hour ago. We could be nicked and dumped in Tel Aviv or deported. Whatever. We stay put. Kids pelt the APC with stones, a couple, chucked over from behind the safety of a wall, clomp the soldier on the top. He responds with a round of live ammo. A family wants to cross the road, right in front of the tank's line of fire. They're in a hurry and looking fraught, mother father, and four kids. Baha helps them across. We rush up to be in front of him and them at once. Baha's brave, just goes straight across, head-on, by their sides, defiant. Baha knows the city like the back of his hand. In the aftermath of the April incursion he was one of the most plucky volunteers, clearing rubble, helping the sick.

We make our way down the street to where we expect the APC and Tank to be but it seems like they've rumbled off. Just curfew enforcement we think. No big deal. Later we'll find out that it's illegal for the Israel Army to use anything stronger than teargas to enforce curfew. Definitely not live ammo. They do what they want anyway though. The entire occupation is illegal under the Oslo Accords, The Geneva Convention, multiple United Nations directives etc

We get a call... the tank and APC are outside. We decide to just check out what they're doing. As we make our way down the road we hear the sound of the two vehicles whurring towards us. It's blazing hot. The

street is clear at this point. Nothing is being thrown. I see the soldier in the APC take aim. I think it's with his M16 but it could be the mounted gun. I'm not afraid. Guns are constantly being pointed at Palestinians in the territories - at their backs, in their faces, up at their windows, from the middle of the street, from the mountains. A shot rings out, whizzes straight past me. I feel the air rush and duck down instinctively. 'FUCK that was so close', I say, turning round. 'is...Oh my God.' Baha is lying on his back in the porchway of a closed shop. Blood is blooming from the right side of his chest. His eyes are bulged back in shock. A Palestinian man is instantly above him, pumping his chest with short sharp thrusts of his crossed hands. Blood is welling up in Baha's mouth, flowing freely, it streams fast from his nose, his ear. 'Turn his head, turn his head, he's going to choke' I yell. It's too late though. We all know...

The examining doctor at El Ethad Hospital said that the massive internal damage caused by the "dumdum" bullet was consistent with an intentional kill. Dumdum's explode and fragment on impact causing maximum multiple injuries.

The Israeli army initially stated that Baha was carrying a bomb at the time of his assassination. This is not true. The statement then changed to accuse Baha of carrying a molotov cocktail. This was supposed to have exploded in his hand. Setting him on fire and killing him. 'It was his fault'. This is what the IDF said about the 17 year old boy they shot in the head in Balata the night before. He died when the ambulance carrying him was refused entry through a checkpoint to the hospital. They said he killed himself, shot himself. This a common statement released after the Army murders people here. All armies and police do it. Blame and demonise the victim. Here, it's because 'they're terrorists'. 328 children have been murdered by the Israeli army or armed settlers since September 2000."

Since the beginning of the second Intifada, people having been going to Palestine under the banner of the International Solidarity Movement (ISM). The ISM provide human shields against Israeli military crimes, break curfews to provide food and medical supplies, protest against Israeli tank blockades, and dismantle checkpoints and roadblocks - and this October they are looking for people to help pick olives.

In the past two years hundreds of thousands of Palestinian trees have been bulldozed, uprooted or set ablaze by Israeli soldiers and settlers - 200,000 of these olive trees. As the ISM point out "Olive trees are a symbol of the life of the Palestinian, and their destruction by Israeli forces is an attempt to de-root the Palestinians from their land. The economic impact of Israeli policies on the olive sector has been massive - over 10 million dollars lost to damage in the past two years, and millions more due to Israel's barring farmers from their land. And these policies are designed to have impact not just now, but for years to come - olive trees produce for generations. This year we are calling on you to join us for the olive harvest in Palestine."

To get involved 07817 554 814

www.ism-london.org/

TRIP OUT!

There's a day of action against immigration detention and deportation and racist border controls at 10am, 19th October outside Dover Immigration detention centre, The Citadel, Western Heights, Dover. Following on from the demo some of the protesters are crossing over the channel to the Sangatte detention centre to show solidarity with refugees there. Bring yer passport if you want to go. "The closure of Sangatte and the widespread incarceration of innocent people, men, women and children in prisons are actions of politicians that do not have respect for human life. It is up to us to ensure that refugees are given a voice until they have a chance to recover enough to tell us their stories themselves and to attempt to ensure they are treated with as much respect or dignity as we would hope for." noborder.org 07789-961744

ON THE CASE

Oil giant Unocal could be sued for forced labour, rape, and murder committed by Burmese soldiers who guarded a Unocal gas pipeline project. Because according to a US federal appeals court. "Unocal knew the acts of violence would probably be committed, it became liable as an aider and abettor". Cases are also pending against Royal Dutch Shell, Texaco and ExxonMobil for various abuses by security forces "defending" their installations. www.burmadaily.com

*Burma Campaign UK has forced Premier Oil UK out of Burma after producing evidence that investors in the company were breaking UK and US sanctions. For more info 020 7272 3559 www.burmacampaign.org.uk

DROP OUTS

Seems like while Bush and his cronies are foaming at the mouth waiting to create new wars they were unwilling to go down that road and put their own precious lives at risk. An independent newspaper in the US has published a list of 'Chickenhawks', high ranking politicians and other public figures who trumpet on about war and 'fighting for freedom' but were unwilling to get their own hands dirty. Their excuses to avoid service range from bad knees, to skin problems and our personal favourite 'anal cysts'. Does that mean that when he's trying to give the world a whole new war 'Dubya' is just talking out of his arse? See the whole list at www.nhgazette.com/chickenhawks.html

SKIN-UP!

Patients at Salisbury hospital are being asked to do their bit for the war effort by consenting to donate their "surplus skin" after surgery, to the notorious Porton Down "defence" research establishment in Wiltshire. Early last year the hospital was forced to stop supplying skin to Porton Down after it was revealed that it was being sold without patients knowledge. The Defence Evaluation and Research Agency (DERA) has now requested that the supplies are reinstated for their essential research into "defences against chemical warfare agents", the patients consent though will now be required.

The highly secretive Porton Down establishment has carried out the world's longest-running programme of chemical and biological experiments on humans and animals. Officials have always claimed that the tests are for purely defensive purposes - cos we is the nice guys - honest!..

...and finally...

Having given up on the ability of fast food, Mickey Mouse, and countless CIA-sponsored dictatorships to win them global love, the US has now decided to try and win world popularity the good old-fashioned way—by launching a multi-million dollar public relations campaign. According to senior white-house officials, the propaganda, er, public relations effort will be supervised by the newly formed, "Office of Global Communications," yet another shadowy Washington organisation set to ram the stars and stripes down everyone's throat.

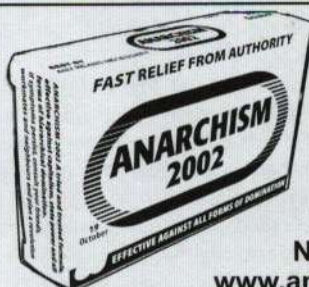
Among the many pet projects the Office of GC will oversee—various pro-American radio stations throughout the Arab world, as well as the "American Room" concept, "corners of Americana established in existing local libraries or other cultural sites worldwide." Yippee!! Just what the world needs, more American cultural imperialism!!

Inspired by the events of 9/11, the Office of GC will attempt to get to the bottom of the mystifying question posed by George Dub'ya after the attacks, "Why do they hate us?" Well gee George, let's think about it for half a second... Could wagging maniacal world war on anyone who doesn't bow down to you have anything to do with it?? Or could it be the last 60 years of terrorism and atrocity known as American foreign policy*... hmmm.... In a quote too good for us to have made up, Charlotte Beers, the advertising agency executive Bush appointed last year to the State Department's top public diplomacy job, said that America needed to "influence the attitudes of foreign audiences toward our country." Beers has pledged that all U.S. diplomats will receive more extensive training in the American "message" of democracy, personal freedom and free markets and learn how to spread it through local societies. Guess those bombs just don't speak loudly enough...

* see the last issue of SchNEWS for a variety of examples

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Iraq Anorag

There aren't many people who have worked as hard as Milan Rai, author of *War Plan Iraq*, to dig us out of the bullshit we've been buried in about the 'war on terror'. Active in Voices in the Wilderness, Justice Not Vengeance, and ARROW (Active Resistance to the Roots of War) his research has systematically cut through the lies about weapons of mass destruction, regime change, and democracy sent down the pipeline to justify the latest war in Iraq. SchNEWS caught up with him in April - a few days after US troops entered Baghdad - to talk about oil, uprisings, US power in Iraq, 'Vietnam Syndrome', and the anti-war movement in the West.

Sch: *Do you think that this war is the beginning of something new in the way that the US plans to maintain its global dominance, in the way that it disciplines weaker countries?*

Rai: Typically - and I think rightly - people divide US foreign policy since the Second World War into two phases; and now we're in a third phase. There's the phase up until the early 1970s, where you have a fairly free use of military power. Then you have the post-Vietnam period, where you have what they called the Vietnam Syndrome [massive anti-war feeling amongst the US population, which for decades after the war made it nearly impossible for the government to send troops into battle]. This forced the US to move much more clearly towards a 'proxy' system of controlling the world, [where the US armed and trained obedient states and used them to provide a military threat to anyone who threatened US interests in the region]. In the Gulf [at the time] it was Israel and Iran, 'the two guardians of the gulf', or whatever.

Now, Bush is hoping we're in phase 3: the post-Vietnam Syndrome era. So what the Vietnam Syndrome is, or was, is a crucial issue. From the point of view of US elites, it's what one neo-conservative called 'a sickly inhibition against the use of force'. That's why you call it a syndrome, because it's a disease, it's a bad thing. From the point of view of most of the world, and probably most of the US people as well, it's - as Noam Chomsky said - 'basically an aversion to massacring and slaughtering other people'. Reagan thought that the Vietnam Syndrome was cured by the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan [in 1979]. That's why he was happy to start making noises about military action in Central America, [but this led to] a huge mobilisation in the US, which turned into the Central America solidarity movement, so they couldn't have a direct military intervention there.

What President Bush and the US political elite are thinking now is that September 11th has definitely cured the patient, and now the US can do

stuff that it would have liked to have done years ago, decades ago, but couldn't because of public opinion, and the level of mobilisation which it could expect from the US public. So that's why this stuff is happening now, because they think that a traumatised US public is willing to, if not actively support, at least accept all kinds of brutality in the name of anti-terrorism which they wouldn't have done before the Twin Towers went down.

Sch: *At the moment people are saying that the US may even be planning to run Iraq as an old-fashioned colony. Do you think this is a possibility?*

Rai: In December 1989 the US invaded Panama, set up a puppet regime, and left. It still had its big base there, but it didn't have an official in each ministry or whatever. I think that we're seeing the same pattern now, which is why in *War Plan Iraq* I suggested that what the US was intending for Iraq should be called 'regime stabilisation and leadership change', rather than 'regime change'. I think the same goal, of basically keeping the same political and military establishment but changing the inner circle at the top, was the goal in 1991 and it was the goal this year. In 1991 they managed to stabilise the regime, by helping to destroy the rebellions, by authorising the flight of helicopter gunships, by refusing to hand over weapons which they'd captured from the Iraqi military to the rebels, and so on. So they achieved regime stabilisation but they didn't achieve leadership change.

In 2003 they achieved leadership change, because that's pretty much happened, but they fell down heavily on regime stabilisation. They were desperately hoping that - [with] the military build-up, all the threats about 'shock and awe', and all the talk about 'exile options' for Hussein and his family - they would be able to create a coup without firing a shot. [The US announcing before the war] that Saddam Hussein and his senior leadership should go into exile made it very clear that the people who they objected to in the regime [were] a very small group, and that the rest of the regime was basically going to be given immunity. And I think that both the US and Britain were deeply disappointed that they had to go to war.

What's happened is, because there wasn't a coup, and because the Iraqi forces didn't surrender en masse as [the US and Britain] were desperately hoping they would, they had to destroy, or disperse, the military forces who they wanted to hand power to, like the Republican Guard. The Republican Guard has been the backbone of the regime, and they were really hoping that the Republican Guard would remain an organised military unit, who would surrender and who they would then hand power to. There'd be some kind of integration of civilian exiles, [military]

exiles, and Generals who were in power, some kind of pick-and-mix thing. But because the Iraqis didn't go to the script, they had to kill a lot of the people who they were going to put in power.

Why did they invade with so few soldiers, when they knew that if they won they'd be in charge of a whole country? Iraqis watching all the looting that's happening now are saying that these guys are terrible planners. No, they're not terrible planners: the plan was 'we'll hand it over to the military, we'll hand it over to the police, we'll hand it over to our troops – the Baathist regime'. They invaded with a small force, but they were expecting that at the end of the war they would be in charge of an enormous military machine, because there would be a continuation of the regime.

So, what's going to happen now? My guess is that they'll put something together out of the remains of the regime, but they're not going to be able to get out as fast as they would have liked to. So they're saying they might be in there for a year. I think they're desperately hoping that won't be the case, I think they're hoping they can put something together out of the military, out of the police, and get out of there faster. I don't think they want to have US officials or US officers in all the ministries for a moment longer than they have to. [They're hoping] it'll be like Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia's a dictatorship, [it's] run by these guys who wear funny clothes and things on their heads, but they've been to Harvard, they know how to take orders, and they know how things are supposed to run. In Iraq, as soon as they can get the personnel together, they'll just hand it all over; that's the plan, if it can possibly be done. As with everything to do with this war, the schedule is out, but I think it's entirely realistic for them to expect to be out of Iraq within a year.

Sch: So you think they will be able to put together some kind of military/political structure that will be capable of putting down looting and uprisings and maintaining control?

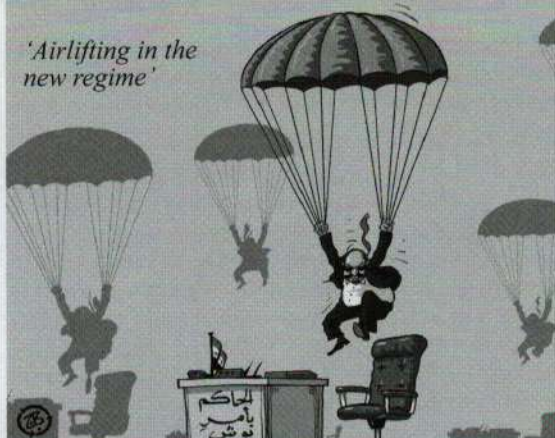
Rai: I think they can put something together. But, because the military/political structure is so weakened [by the war], the big question is 'what happens if there is a real nationalist uprising?' What if large parts of the general population have real uprisings and they say 'Yes, we want liberation, US, US puppets and Baathist torturers, get the hell out of our country?' In 1991 what we saw [when popular uprisings began against Hussein's regime] was the US tacitly enabling the Baathist repressive system to put down the rebellions. If there are rebellions again (and, at this point, I'd say it's unlikely but it's possible) we might see the US not tacitly enabling, but actually directing, arming and empowering the remains of the Baathist repressive system in putting them down, and that'll be a very ugly sight. It'll be dressed up in all sorts of ways, like 'we're stopping Iranian revolutionaries...'

Sch: Or 'terrorists'...

Rai: ... 'terrorists', and stuff like that.

Given that, I would guess, the US would have to

'Airlifting in the new regime'



fight that with their hands tied behind their backs because of all the sensitivities around it. I think if it did happen sometime this year it's not at all clear that the remains of the Baathist system would survive that, because they've had a lot of damage done to them and they're in a pretty demoralised state. I think that's the big danger for the US. I think they can put something together, but if that rickety system is challenged, seriously, then they've got lots of problems.

What they've got to do is they've got to make sure they bring enough of the opposition inside, they co-opt enough of the opposition, so that there isn't a real, strong, unified challenge to their designs for Iraq. And I think they've got a good chance of doing that, especially with the lifting of economic sanctions. With the lifting of sanctions everyone's going to be saying 'how can I earn a living for my family?' that's going to be the number one priority for everybody in Iraq. I think that's going to be their main help in diffusing political challenges.

Sch: There's been a lot of talk about the US's obvious need to have obedient leaders in the Middle East, but less about the 'problem' of disobedient populations. So could you go back and explain a bit more about the uprisings that happened in Iraq in 1991, during the first Gulf War: where did they come from and when did they happen?

Rai: OK, in terms of the timing, the uprisings happened after Iraq had basically been driven out of Kuwait. A large part of [the people involved were] Iraqi conscripts, coming back into Iraq extremely fed up with the whole fiasco, because what was the point of all of their friends getting killed? There turned out to be no point at all, they didn't even really fight. That was one major spark for the whole thing in the south [where] there was something of a spontaneous uprising. A strong element of the Shia population became involved in that, because they're 60% of the population but they've been excluded from political and economic power since the beginning of the Iraqi state, so they have a lot of grievances. In the north, the Kurds had been organising for some kind of uprising, so once things started in the south they launched their own semi-organised thing but, again, events outran the 'organisers' there.

Fourteen of the eighteen governorates, or counties,

of Iraq fell to the rebels. It was just the heartland, Baghdad and Tikrit basically, that were still under government control. So the regime was hanging by a thread.

Sch: *And what was America's response?*

Rai: One of the things which triggered the uprisings was President Bush Senior saying that 'the Iraqi people and the Iraqi army should make their leader stand aside'. Now, according to one account Bush had just been going to say 'it's up to the Iraqi military to make their leader stand aside' but he chucked in the bit about 'the Iraqi people' as a populist touch. Whatever its origins, this was taken by a lot of the people of Iraq as a signal that if they rose up they would be backed to the hilt by the government who had just inflicted this humiliating defeat on Saddam Hussein. So they rose up, they took most of the country and, just before the uprisings really got going, the US civilian leadership took the decision to let the Republican Guard survive the war.

A large part of the Republican Guard had been boxed in by the US military and were about to be destroyed, and the war was called to an end hours before that final onslaught. They were released, they were allowed to slip away [and] help put down the uprisings. The US military allowed Iraq to fly helicopter gunships and watched as they cut down the rebels and columns of refugees. They refused to release weapons which were captured from the Iraqi military: you see, sometimes the rebels were the soldiers from the barracks, they were going back to their own barracks and saying can we have our weapons, we want to fight the regime. The US said no.

So the rebellion was crushed, brutally, and the US played a very important role in that. If they hadn't allowed the gunships to fly, if they'd withdrawn and let the rebels get their hands on weapons, then probably the regime would have gone down. But the US didn't want that to happen, the US wanted there to be a military coup and a continuation of the regime. The National Security Advisor at the time, Brent Scowcroft, said very candidly afterwards in a US TV interview that he regretted the fact that the uprisings took place because he'd looked forward to a military government. But because the uprisings took place the Iraqi military elite realised they had to hang together, because if they started turning on each other they'd all go down.

Sch: *Can you explain the difference between a war for access to oil and a war to control the flow of profits that come from oil?*

Rai: If the US just wanted to get as much Iraqi oil out of Iraq as possible, and on to the world market so that [the US] could buy it, the easiest way to do that would be to lift the economic sanctions, which I guess is going to happen pretty soon. But the US isn't dependent on Middle Eastern oil, it's mainly dependent on Venezuela and Latin America. It's not a question of the US needing a physical supply of oil so that millions of cars can continue to roam around on the freeways; and if that were the case, then with

serious energy-saving measures, investment in the energy industries, changes in public transportation, whatever, they could probably deal with a lot of those problems, they could probably [get rid of] the need for Middle Eastern oil altogether.

That's not the issue. The issue is, firstly, that US-based oil companies have to secure a 'proper' share of the profits flowing from oil, and, secondly, that the profits from oil that are garnered by Middle Eastern states have to be put in the right places.

The first count is pretty straightforward: I mean everyone's presuming that the oil resources of Iraq are going to be largely handed over to US and perhaps British-based oil companies, and they're going to have these incredibly favourable production-sharing agreements, in which the rest of the world is left behind, because of their kind of colonial relationship. They're probably going to have these incredibly favourable deals, there'll be huge profits from that. That's pretty straightforward.

The other thing you need to do is to make sure that whatever revenues the oil producing state gets [are] used in the 'correct' way, i.e. the problem with Iraq under the Baathist regime [was that], despite their appalling record on human rights and civil rights, the Baathists actually invested their oil wealth in the social fabric of the country. That's why they had one of the best health sectors in the Middle East, they had one of the best education systems in the world – they won literacy prizes, and so on. That's why child mortality declined in a straight line from 1960 to 1990. There was a real investment in the social fabric of Iraq and that's how they legitimised their rule. That kind of stuff is wrong, that's the wrong priorities. The right priorities [involve] that money [being turned] into profits for western companies, and... [being] used to prop up western financial markets. What they have to do is 'recycle' petrodollars or petrosterling [i.e. western currency that is paid to oil-producing states].

There are two basic routes for doing that. One is for [western countries to] sell stuff to oil producers. Preferably it's high technology, because there's lots of profit there, it's rapidly obsolescing so you have to keep selling more and more of it, and also economically it's wasteful, so they won't actually start producing any competitive goods for you. The ideal thing is weapons, which fit all those criteria. You want a country which will buy a whole lot of weapons, and keep buying them in a steady stream. The other thing that you want to do is... get them to invest their treasuries in western financial markets. We can see this discussed very candidly by Foreign Secretary Selwyn Lloyd in 1957 in Britain: he [said] that one of Britain's main interests in relation to Kuwait [was] to get them to invest their money in the British stock market, because Britain's economy [was failing and it needed that] kind of support. The US economy isn't doing great [at the moment]: it relies heavily on investments from the rest of the world in order to keep afloat. So you

have to get these countries to do that as well.

So that's the distinction between the flow of oil – which is energy in liquid form – and the flow of profits – which is power. That [power] is derived from oil sales, but it's a very different stream and that's the crucial stream really. The oil itself, the price of oil, these are secondary matters.

Sch: Finally I wanted to ask you about the anti-war movement in this country. We're now looking at a situation where the war is becoming an occupation, and it's possible that the US/Britain now have the political strength that they need to use this attack as a model for other countries, like Syria or Iran. In this situation, what do you hope will happen to the anti-war movement: where do you think all that energy and feeling should be channelled?

Rai: Firstly, because I'm sure that most people in the anti-war movement are feeling extremely depressed and unhappy about the way things have gone, that's my guess, I think it's really important for us to realise how close we came to getting Britain out of this war. On the 12th of March, when Rumsfeld made his remark about 'we can go to war without Britain', he made [it] because at that moment, in the Ministry of Defence, they were drawing up contingency plans for pulling Britain out of the invasion force and relegating them to peacekeeping and stuff like that after the war. It's now said that when Tony Blair went to the House of Commons for the final vote he had those plans in his back pocket: [it all depended] on how the vote went that night.

I haven't heard of an anti-war movement in the western world doing that [before]: before a war is started, forcing the government which is about to launch the war to draw-up contingency plans and to seriously consider pulling out its major foreign policy commitment of the decade. That's how close we came. There were all sorts of forces that went into that: the fracturing of the establishment; the problems in terms of legality; the way that the rest of the world denied the US and Britain the second resolution which would have been some kind of fig leaf of legitimacy... all sorts of factors, but one of the big factors was the anti-war movement in this country combined with the anti-war movements around the world.

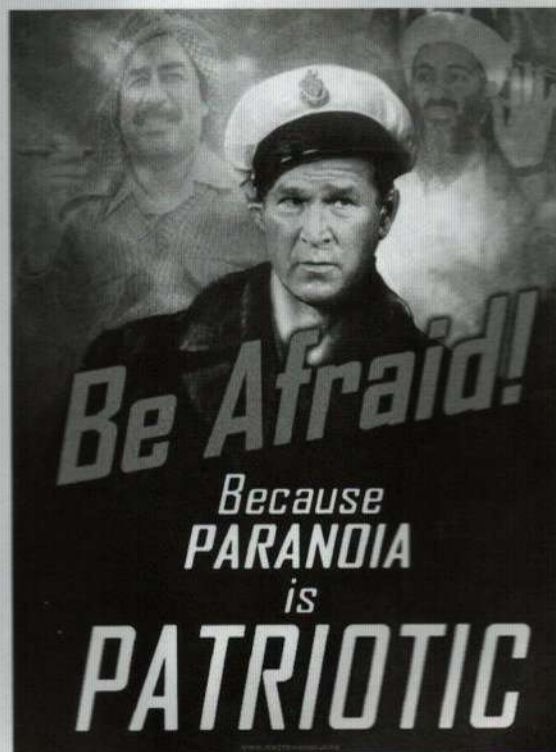
We came incredibly close to pulling Britain out of this, and really it came down to the fact that a whole load of Labour MPs preferred to sacrifice the people of Iraq rather than sacrifice Tony Blair. That's what it came down to in the end, but it needn't have been that way: in Turkey the Turkish parliamentarians were under such enormous pressure that they didn't give way in their major turning-point vote. If we'd put our [government] under a similar amount of pressure, things could have been different. I think that's a sad, but accurate judgement about it.

What happens now? Well, at the core of the movement is a fear about what kind of world it's going to be for us to live in if there's this unchecked, unilateral US vandalism and rampage. So there's a fear about the US as a rogue state and there's also

compassion and concern for the people who could get trampled underneath in other countries. I think that if the anti-war movement is going to grow, they will continue to be at the heart of the... movement. So exposing the claims about liberation, exposing the claims about WMDs being the core issue, these will be very important things for the movement to continue doing. However, there will also be elements of the movement which are trying to deepen people's understanding of the deeper issues which have brought us into this and what this war is all about. And I think that's a really important part of it. Educating people about the roots of this kind of imperialism, about why the US and Britain have this pattern of assault on other countries. And of course that leads very quickly into questions about globalisation and about corporate rule and so on and I think that's all a very important part of the agenda for one element within the movement.

I think that movements to develop and build resistance and civil disobedience to future assaults are going to be really important. We should be aiming to revive the movement, to make the movement grow, and we should be making it so the natural destination for people, and I'm quoting something Michael Albert said in Znotes, is to grow in their understanding and their militancy and that they're heading towards supporting, being closely involved in, or taking part in non-violent civil disobedience against these kinds of assaults. I think that's a natural way for things to develop.

The ARROW anti-war briefings are available on the Justice Not Vengeance website, www.j-n-v.org



September 28th

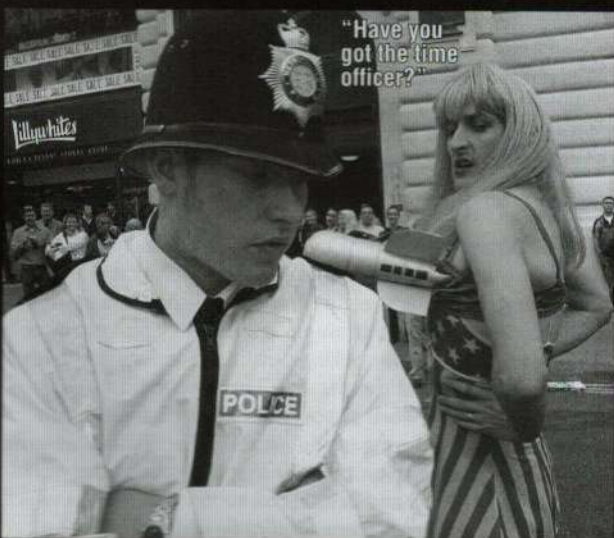
"Biggest peace protest in a generation in London"

- UK Indymedia



28th Sept: In a powerful turnout of the opposition to the proposals for war on Iraq, the anti-war demo organised by the Stop The War Coalition and the Muslim Association of Britain, and supported by CND attracted around 400,000 demonstrators. The numbers at least equalled the numbers on the right-wing Countryside Alliance march a week earlier, when (probably for the first time in history) police and organisers agreed on the same number of 'disaffected rural protesters' which included members of the Tory party, aristocracy and the BNP. That march was prepared for two years and cost 2 million pounds. Police had yesterday informed City of London Security that they were expecting 30-40,000 people on today's anti-war march, but by the afternoon had counted 'more than 150,000 people', adding there had been two arrests for minor public order offences.

- uk.indymedia.org



Pic Jeff Brewster www.graphicattack.org.uk





www.schnews.org.uk

Friday 4th October 2002

Free/Donation

Issue 375



ACRES AND PAIN

Two large marches in a week sounds like a good thing - politics out on the street where it belongs. But according to most of the media, making sure foxes die is more important than making sure innocent Iraqi civilians don't.

It was a tale of two very contrasting marches: The Countryside Alliance's 'Liberty and Livelihood' march attracted mass media hype for the three weeks leading up to it and plenty after it, while the Stop The War demo was draped with a raft of 'conservative' estimates of numbers in the papers - think of the police estimate and halve it. The Stop The War march brought together a 400,000 strong crowd - the most racially diverse group SchNEWS has ever seen on a demo - with the clear message that Iraq must not be bombed, and supporting the related issue of ending Israel's occupation of Palestine. The Countryside Alliance could hardly claim the same clarity of purpose. They were out on the streets for... er apart from being pro-fox hunting what the fox were they on about?

The supposed Liberty and Livelihood message was that the Countryside Alliance are the guardians of the misunderstood rural way of life championing 'country ways', one of which just so happens to be killing for fun... but hey, they've been doing it for ages so doesn't that make it a minority right? The Alliance claim to be finding time to fight just about every rural issue that springs to mind, whether it be broadband internet access for rural poor, questioning pricing practices of supermarkets

or campaigning for the provision of public services throughout our green and pleasant land.

The truth is far more sinister. The Countryside Alliance does little more than pay lip-service to major countryside issues by creating a broad base of touchy-feely policies muddying rural issues with the political dead dog that is bloodsports.

Last year the Countryside Alliance spent three million pounds on their pro-bloodsports campaign, compared to £200,000 on all other campaigns. Yet the CA policy statement only mentions the hunting issue once - why? What do the CA have to hide, other than the fact that they know that the media war surrounding the hunting issue is all but lost, that the great British public will never come to accept the hunting of wild animals and that the only way to stop the ban is through the back door? Under such circumstances it should come as no surprise that the CA are keen to wrap themselves in just about any rural flag they can lay their hands on, whether it be protecting rural post offices or fighting modern threats to the tweed industry.

It's when the Countryside Alliance claim to represent all country folk - including the small farmers and rural labourers - that the smell of manure really wafts in. How can the CA justify putting so much into fighting to protect the bloodlust of an elite landed gentry with huge arable estates funded by massive subsidies? According to ActionAid's *Farmgate report: the developing impact of agricultural subsidies*,

CRAP ARRESTS OF THE WEEK

For being in a park!

Hundreds of people were arrested in Washington DC last weekend for the cheek of being in a park on a permitted demo during protests against the IMF/World Bank. People were "pre-emptively arrested" in Pershing Park by riot cops, handcuffed for over 22 hours, given barely any water or food, denied access to lawyers and made to spend the night on a wooden floor while half hog-tied. Most were charged with a misdemeanour equivalent to a traffic violation. For more about the protests and the usual American protest clampdown <http://dc.indymedia.org/>

80% of subsidies are swallowed up by 20% of the richest 'farmers'. Meanwhile the remaining majority are being driven against the wall as they try to cope with inadequate subsidies and farm gate prices lower than those of production.

RURAL WARRIOR

As Charles Secrett of Friends of the Earth, put it: "the Countryside Alliance spends way too much time worrying about hunting, and not nearly enough working on the major threats to rural life... Unless there is a new system of sustainable food production, the next Countryside March may find there are very few farmers left to mobilise."

Well what are the real issues facing country folk on a daily basis? The right to hunt foxes? Spokesman for the foxes, Basil Brush, said "Not in

Acres and Pain cont...

my back yard old boy! Boom boom." Brendan Boal recently spent nine days interviewing small farmers in Devon and Dorset, who voiced concerns over issues as diverse as low milk prices, abusive business practices of supermarkets and the impact of rich urban 'incomers' buying up their 'weekend country retreats' and destroying the social structure of rural communities. When asked about the significance of the Countryside Alliance, however, Brendan said that the overwhelming response was very much to the effect: "they're nothing to do with the likes of us, the whole thing is for... hunting people". While Brendan and his team travelled from farm to farm (sustainably by bicycle you'll be pleased to know) he observed that "what was noticeable on our travels was the preponderance of Alliance placards outside of expensive homes that were clearly no longer working farms. In short, the very incomers [that] farmers feel alienated from are the ones that are providing a large measure of support for the CA".

Last week some country folk from the Wye Valley told SchNEWS about the plight of rural and farm labourers – those who have

worked on the land over generations but are not farm owners – who are in fact the majority of rural folk. "The large scale argo-businesses, and the massive supermarket food distribution stitch up crushes small farms who can't compete with the economies of scale, and the intense mechanisation takes away many rural jobs." "We know of rural workers who were threatened with the sack if they didn't come down for the march last week". A MORI poll at the march found that 73% of marchers thought that hunting should not be the key concern of the Countryside Alliance.

Next week half a million foxes are marching to Hyde Park to hear Basil Brush talk about the ban on chicken hunting, but apparently most foxes are more worried about the threat of hunting. Boom boom.

Recommended reading

'The rich at Play: Fox hunting, land ownership and the countryside alliance' by RPM 07967 886257 www.red-star-research.org.uk

'The World is Not For Sale: farmers against junk food' by Jose Bove and Francois Dufour. (Verso 2001)

'Farmgate: The developmental impact of agricultural subsidies' compiled by ActionAid. 0207 561 7614 www.actionaid.org

Fight War, Not Wars

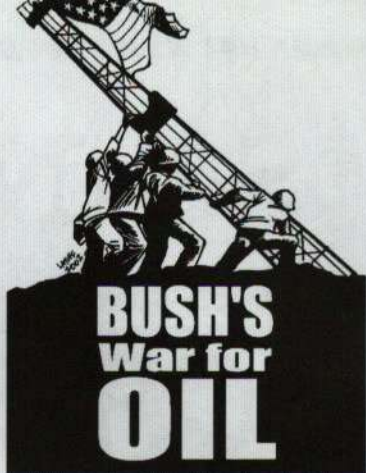
The Stop The War Coalition has called for a day of action on the 31st October to oppose the possibility of full-scale war on Iraq. They have suggested occupations, teach-ins and blockades as suitable actions for the day.

A London-based group of activists have called for help organising a series of proposed actions on the day including an anti-war themed Critical Mass, a tour of London's military offices, and a set of moving blockades. Until they get more help with organisation these suggestions will remain merely ideas, so if you've got any time or ideas to contribute get in touch. <http://www.cm-london.cjb.net>

* There's lots of other anti-war

events planned for this month, including a 'stop 'star wars' and stop the bombing of Iraq' demonstration at US spy-base Menwith Hill, North Yorkshire, on 12th October 12noon-4pm, organised by the Campaign for the Accountability of American Bases 01943 466405 www.caab.org.uk. On the same day there's a Stop the War Teach-in at London's SOAS University: a day of lectures, discussion, debates and film covering all aspects of Bush and Blair's "War on Terror". In the Main Building from 11am-7pm www.soasstopwar.org/events.htm#disc

* For full listings of regular anti-war activities check out www.justicenotvengeance.org



No Dutch Luck!

On Thursday (3rd Oct), Colin Davies, owner of The Dutch Experience Café in Stockport was sentenced to three years in prison at Manchester's Minshull Street Crown Court, after being found guilty on all eight of the charges he was facing. The heaviest sentences were for the November 20th offences because he'd carried on opening the café after the September busts. Colin Davies "persistently flouted the law" by being involved with cannabis even while he was on bail for other drug-related offences, even though he uses it a pain killer for back injuries he sustained in a work accident in 1995.

There may be an appeal, but in the meantime, when we know which prison Colin is going to end up in we will give details for letters of support. After already doing 9 months on remand, he will have another 9 to still do. Colin's dad was also in court to face charges of perjury.

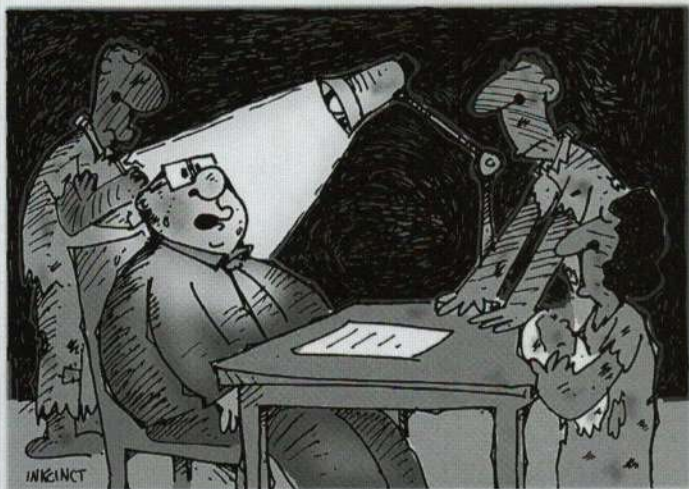
Just to rub it in, that afternoon The Dutch Experience Café was raided by hoards of police, including the 'Special Colin Squad', who spent the afternoon preventing the café from re-opening. www.dutchexperience.org

Rebel Alliance

Brighton's irregular gathering of Direct Action Groups - will be screening 'Escape From Woomera' about the breakout of refugees from the Woomera Detention Centre in the desert of Central Australia. After the film there will be a speaker from Barbed Wire Britain talking about the campaign against the Yarlswood detention centre for asylum seekers in Bedford. Monday 7th October 7pm @ Unemployed Centre, 6 Tilbury Place, Brighton (off Carlton Hill, behind American Express building). Free.

SchNEWS in brief

Last chance to hear Native American activist **Rod Coronado's** perspective on ecological direct action next Thursday (10) at the Friends Meeting House, Hill St., (off Corporation St. in the city centre) Coventry. ** This Sunday (6) there's a Leeds **Underground Film Festival**- Another World is Possible running from 1-9 pm @ City Art Gallery, The Headrow, Leeds, LS1. Films include 'Argentina In Revolt', 'Gaza Strip' and 'Another World Is Possible' made by 33 Italian Directors about G8 summit in Genoa. Admission free. www.leedsundergroundfilm.org.uk ** There's a national demo this Saturday (5) in support of the **Hackney Library strike** - meet 12 noon, Hackney Town Hall. The bankrupt Labour led council is currently recruiting scabs to break the 10-month-old strike. 0207 8356 8710 unilibs@yahoo.com ** An Orwellian political satire book '**Hard Choices**' by Brighton writer Carol Hayman is now on the web after being dropped by publishers Times-Warner because it was too close to the bone post 9-11. Read it at www.hardchoices.co.uk ** A new email list has been set up to discuss **Solstice celebrations** "that include the possibility of amplified music in the Wiltshire area and near Stonehenge if at all possible!" <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/stonehengeentertainmentsdiscussion> ** Party this weekend at **Squatgate Park**, 167 London Road, Brighton 12noon to 9pm - bring your own CD's and vinyl ** And don't forget pre **SchNEWS 8th birthday benefit night** upstairs at the Albert Pub, Trafalgar St on October 14th with L.S.D.S, Miss CMC & MAMA, Judge Trev, Jelly & more. ** **RIP Martin Callaghan**, much loved Liverpool activist - who once spent a year in a tree-house at the M65 Stanworth Valley road protest, and later worked on festivals, allotments and community direct action with Greenloops.



"OK I admit it! I am a member of the IMF!!!"

Polish Top TEN

Missed out on Newbury? Well get over to Poland where the country is having a huge road building programme inflicted upon it - and the environmental and social costs of being in 'Europe' mount up. The rail system which served the country for years is being starved of funds, and the tentacles of TEN are extending eastward. TEN - the Trans Europe Network - is the world's biggest transport project pushed by the transport and oil industry to help the movement of consumer goods across Europe, and is currently reaching the new frontiers of countries soon to join the EU like Poland. The Poles are bringing in new legislation which will enable roads to be built without environmental impact studies and force people in their paths to sell at a price offered to them. As service stations, concrete ramps and truck parks spew forth over Poland, the average Pole had better consider getting a car and ditching public transport if they want to be like us in the EU club. So - if you're up for a bit of digger diving... pbielski@oremost.org.pl www.aseed.net * Bialowieza Forest, Poland - Europe's last primeval forest of high bio-diversity including bison, wolf, lynx, and much more is under threat from logging. www.zb.eco.pl/gb/3/workshop.htm

Inside SchNEWS

On 4th September, anarchist George Karakasian was sentenced by a Cyprus court to 7 months in prison for 'assaulting a police officer' at a demo outside the Israeli ambassador's home. George also received a fine for 'possession of an explosive device': an old bullet found when his home was raided following the demo.

The charge of 'causing serious physical injury to a police officer' was incurred by no more than a grasp at the cop's hat; by contrast, George was then dragged inside the ambassador's home and beaten by five state riotcops, whilst they shouted 'fuck your anarchy' at him. After being hospitalised with his injuries, he discovered when he attempted to pick up his case notes that his medical records had mysteriously 'disappeared'. Send letters of support to George to Leukosia, Central Prison of Cyprus, Wing 2B 6523, Nicosia, Cyprus.

* Did anyone see Philip Paden, get arrested in Wardour Street at 8.50pm during this years Mayday demonstrations? He's charged with affray and accused of using a plastic dustbin lid to hit police officer's shields. Philip was wearing a white paper suit, white arm guard and holding a pink plastic dustbin lid. If you can help call his solicitor Andrew Katzen 0208 986 8336.



Lancaster Bombers

Last Friday more than a hundred protesters on skateboards, bikes and feet reclaimed the streets in protest against plans that will destroy parts of Lancaster (pic above). Chelverton, a mega construction company backed by Carillion (formerly known as Tarmac), and Richardson Developments are planning to rip the soul out of Lancaster by building a 63,000 square feet super-store, dozens of "large-scale" retail units and a major new road on land between the tranquil Lancaster canal and the city centre. According to the council's own studies this would close down local traders in the city centre as well as in neighbouring Morecambe, never mind more traffic, noise and pollution. The plans also threaten the Homeless Action Centre, the Polish Centre and the Musician's Co-op (well-used rehearsal rooms and recording studio). Stop Chelverton! really need to hear from anyone who is fighting the company elsewhere or knows anything about them. 01524 383 012. stopchelverton@gmx.net www.nephridium.org/lancaster

UPDATE FROM CAMPAIGN: Chelverton went bankrupt and the project has been taken over by our old friends Carillion (aka Tarmac - those road building tree haters who we met on the M65, Newbury and now the Birmingham North Relief Rd). It is believed that they're using

this to test the strength of local opposition before they start their real project - a toll road bypass through SSSI, international bird reserves and the beautiful Lune estuary (secret negotiations have already started with one of the local MPs)...

The council have passed a resolution to prevent council land being sold off for warehouse retailing outlets or a road along the canal, but local people are worried that when Carillion pile on the pressure they may cave in.

A group called Real Planning for Lancaster has been set up by locals to work on a plan for the threatened area with the community, and planning officials at the council love it - they can use it to fend off Carillion's destructive plans.

Carillion are lying low, preparing their plans, and will probably ask for planning permission in spring or summer this year. In the meantime locals are preparing to occupy the threatened area. www.eco-action.org/lancaster www.realplanningforlancaster.org.uk

*A group has been set up to campaign against a planned Safeway's expansion in **Bridport**, because they know that the store would add to problems of rural exclusion, reducing access for those who use public transport and leading to the closure of local shops. The campaign group has organised a benefit gig with Billy Bragg and local performers for 12th October @ Bridport Arts Centre, 7.30pm.

* The revised plans for redevelopment of land at **Brighton Station** including a giant Sainsbury's can be seen at the council offices in Bartholomew Square from next Wednesday. BUDD (Brighton Urban Design & Development) have organised a public meeting on October 24th at the Brighthelm Centre, North Rd, Brighton 7.30pm to discuss the revised application. 07966 528944 www.buddbrighton.org

Positive SchNEWS
Congratulations to Greenleaf Bookshop of Bristol, who celebrated their 20th anniversary last month. Give them, and other independent bookstores, your support. Greenleaf, 82 Colston St, Bristol, BS1 5BB 0117 921 1369

* SchNEWS now has a list of radical bookshops and distributors on our website - let us know if we've missed any.

...and finally...

It would be funny -if it wasn't so tragic- the way British justice works. Martin Maynard, the man who nearly killed the hunt sab Steve Christmas (see SchNEWS 274) by deliberately running him over in his Land Rover had his court case last week.

Steve, who was very lucky not to die, suffered a crushed pelvis, four broken ribs, a damaged lung and severe internal bleeding. He also had a metre of intestine removed and metal plate fitted in two different operations in hospital where he was on the critical list for months. So after Maynard was arrested you would have bet your last quid on him going down for a long time. But no. After not turning up for court a total of four times, and the police not bothering with an arrest warrant, last week he finally made it into the dock. He must have been the judges best mate because the charges of GBH with intent were dropped to driving without insurance or license and he was fined the sum total of £75 plus costs. Meanwhile four women could be going to jail when their court case begins next week.

After Maynard tried to kill Steve, other hunt sabs were quite understandably angry and held a demo outside the hunt's kennel. A few windows were broken by people unknown but the women have been caught by the catch all conspiracy laws. www.sahc.org.uk

Disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all countryside dwellers - Bean there, dung that. That's why we're non-compost mentis. That be the truth, Squire.

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MAD MAX MINDS THE GAP

In October over 500 people travelled thousands of kilometres to converge on Pine Gap - the top secret military intelligence base at its remote desert location somewhere near Alice Springs in central Australia.

It is a key part of the US communications satellite network - playing a role in all US military campaigns including the first Gulf War and would be used extensively in a second invasion.

After sunset on Sunday 6th October a mysterious UFO containing an Intergalactic Cosmic Powered Sound System (called the Unified Galactic Body Of Ontological Terrorists or UGBOOT for short) landed on the road in front of the infamous spying facility. On board were strange alien life forms playing crazy alien beats for a group of even stranger humans. They pumped out tunes from outer space places until 8am the next morning.

At that time another mob of strange red and blue lights appeared on the horizon. Unfortunately, at a closer look it turned out to be the Northern Territory Police, carrying a range of not-so intergalactic riot shields and batons. The police charged onto the road from all directions pounding, tackling and maiming people at random.

The aliens in the space craft kept playing music until the police smashed their intergalactic power source. The cops then smashed a space ship window and snapped off the steering wheel, successfully ruining all the fun as usual. Eight people were arrested for having fun and once again the police looked like stupid party poopers. Still, the party protest had strategically blocked the facility for fifteen hours.

Earlier that day five protesters got inside Pine Gap



and took video footage of the facility. Unfortunately they were arrested about 10km into the compound and their footage was confiscated. The only comment by police when asked about the video and the camera was "What camera?"

Later the Alien Space Craft visited the Alice Springs car wreckers where it found a new steering wheel and is now taking observational photos over Pine Gap for either another crazy inter-galactic party on top of one of the facility's golf ball domes, or a roller disco in the main satellite dish." - Sydney.Indymedia.org

Bomspotting

Laatste Bomspotting op de militaire basis van Kleine Brogel
5 oktober 2002 /// Kleine Brogel
12u Ontmoetingscentrum Kleine Brogel, Pieter Breughellaan 10



BOMSPOTTING



Als de overheid na 5 oktober 2002 nog niet bereid is om de kernwapens terug te nemen en er nog kernwapens in België zijn, dan organiseren we de komende jaren nog meer BOMSPOTTING.

BOMSPOTTING
BOMSTOPPING

Kernwapens · De Wereld · Uit

Alle mensen zijn verantwoordelijk voor hun eigen handelen. Het is de verantwoordelijkheid van de overheid om kernwapens terug te nemen. Het is de verantwoordelijkheid van de burgers om de overheid te dwingen om kernwapens terug te nemen.



Intergalactic Sound System lands at Pine Gap

Over 500 bomspotters broke into the Kleine Brogel military base in Belgium - where illegal nuclear weapons are based - for a picnic on 5th October. This was a good effort seeing as the Belgian government had put on 2,000 soldiers and 400 police with helicopters, dogs and the works to stop them. They got past the hoards of uniforms by going around the perimeter fence in groups of four, spreading themselves around, and helping each other over. Out of the 2,000 protesters who descended on the base that day, 1,117 were eventually arrested - all later released without charge.



NUNSENSE

On 6th October, three American nuns disabled a U.S. nuclear missile silo in northern Colorado. Dressed in white boiler suits with 'Disarmament Specialists' written on the front and 'CWIT' (Citizen Weapons Inspection Team) in big letters across the back, the Dominican

sisters bashed up the silo lid and the tracks that carry the lid to its firing position, cut cables, and cut through the surrounding fence.

The action, which took place on the first anniversary of the U.S. bombing of Afghanistan, is the 79th ploughshares or related disarmament action since 1980 in the United States, Europe, and Australia.

In a statement carried with them onto the site, Carol Gilbert, Jackie Hudson, and Ardeth Platte stated that they had "come to Colorado to unmask the false religion and worship of national security... We hope in the light of [God's] Word to name things what they are, to unmask the lies, abuses, and racism hidden in the rhetoric of patriotism, security and moral superiority."

All three have been charged with Sabotage and Malicious Destruction of Property of the United States and each faces up to 30 years in jail. Write to them at: Clear Creek County Jail, Box 518, Georgetown, CO 80444, USA. For more info email: disarmnow@erols.com or visit http://baltimore.indymedia.org/newswire/display_printable/2065/index.php

Emerson, Lake'n'Heath

RAF Lakenheath is the largest US Air Force-operated base in England, and the most important tactical nuclear bombing base in Europe, which makes it in urgent need of weapons inspections:

7th October saw the biggest direct action at Lakenheath in a decade. Around 200 people were at the main gate closing it for the day, while nine people entered the base by cutting or climbing the fence.

Once inside one of the climbers scaled a water tower and draped a banner from it which said 'LAW NOT NUKES' (don't laugh she was a law lecturer from Southampton), while two

others entered the base within yards of the main munitions store to get a closer look. Three of the 'inspectors' were arrested, but not charged, including one man who'd been a magistrate for 10 years, and while it may have been his first bit of arrestable direct action, it certainly wasn't for the perennial Margaret Jones, who'd cut her way through the fence with bolt-cutters.

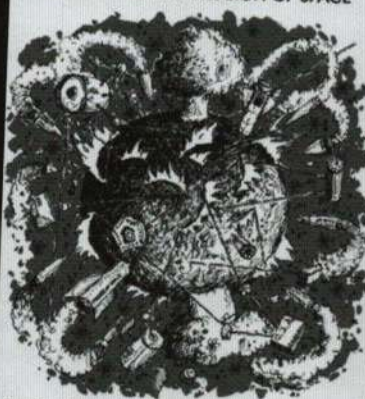
People on the action reckoned the police were keen to avoid a mass arrest situation so as to not draw attention to the fact that the weapons facility is illegal under international law.

The protesters discussed politics and philosophy in the bus on the way home.

OCTOBER 4-11, 2002

KEEP SPACE FOR PEACE

INTERNATIONAL DAYS OF PROTEST TO STOP THE MILITARIZATION OF SPACE



Help us build this vital global movement to stop the militarization and weaponization of space by organizing local events throughout the week. Working together we can create a new consciousness about protecting space from the bad seed of war!



1.5 Million March In Italy

5th October: More than 1.5 million Italians took to the streets of dozens of cities on Saturday afternoon and evening to protest against possible U.S. military action in Iraq. Earlier in the day 60-80,000 marched in Milan, along with large rallies in Bologna, Florence, Naples and Palermo. About 100 activists surrounded the British consulate in Venice. The day culminated with as many as 200,000 gathering in Rome.

3,000 also demonstrated in Cagliari on the Mediterranean island of Sardinia.



SchNEWS

www.schnews.org.uk

Friday 11th October 2002 Free/Donation Issue 376

THE NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

- i. Champion Aspirations for Human Dignity.
 ii. Strengthen Alliances to Defeat Global Terrorism and Work to Prevent Attack Against Us and Our Friends.
 iii. Prevent Our Enemies from Threatening Us, Our Allies, and Our Friends with Weapons of Mass Destruction.
 iv. Ignite a New Era of Global Economic Growth through Free Trade.

① Choose OUR ENEMIES
 ② BOMB THEM
 ③ BOMB THEM

DOCU-MENTAL!

"This is a time of opportunity for America. We will work to translate this moment of influence into decades of peace, prosperity, and liberty... We will actively work to bring the hope of democracy, development, free markets, and free trade to every corner of the world." From the recently published National Security Strategy of the USA.

We couldn't make it up if we tried, ladies and gentlemen. Last month, the Bush Administration released its new National Security Strategy of the United States of America. A document whose contents list included agenda items such as the obviously ironic, "Champion Aspirations for Human Dignity," the arrogant, "Ignite a New Era of Global Economic Growth through Free Markets and Free Trade," and the downright scary "Develop Agendas for Cooperative Action with the Other Main Centers of Global Power." The document also contained gems such as:

"Today, the United States enjoys a position of unparalleled military strength and great economic and political influence" (and we will kill anyone and everyone who threatens this position).

"We seek to create a balance of power that favours human freedom" (and America)

"We will defend the peace by fighting terrorists and tyrants" (i.e. anyone who has the slightest criticism of America).

"Free trade and free markets have proven their ability to lift whole societies out of poverty" (and into our clutches)

"The United States will work with individual nations, entire regions, and the entire global trading community to build a world that trades in freedom and therefore grows in prosperity" (too much bullshit to even parody).

"Freedom is...the birthright of every person—in every civilisation" (as long as we get to dictate 'freedom to do what?').

"Today, humanity holds in its hands the opportunity to further freedom's triumph over all its foes. The United States welcomes our responsibility to lead in this great mission" (and to cash in on all the profits that come with it).

The Bush Doctrine

This idiotic new document is already being hailed as the new Bush Doctrine. But the idiocy contains an evil little twist. Included in the paper is a section titled 'Prevent Our Enemies from Threatening Us, Our Allies, and Our Friends with Weapons of Mass Destruction'. The section basically says that the cold war strategies of 'containment' (preventing the spread of communism) and 'deterrence' (being so incredibly tough that no enemy could attack you without guaranteeing their own destruction) are no longer sufficient to guarantee US security. The US government now thinks it must reserve the right to use its overwhelming military might pre-emptively to attack and overthrow governments that it suspects of attempting to acquire WMDs, harbour terrorists, or contain any ill-will whatsoever towards the good ol' US of A. SchNEWS reckons

CRAP ARRESTS OF THE WEEK For being Palestinian...

Last Friday nearly a hundred soldiers surrounded Iraq Burin - a small village near Nablus city. They were 'looking for terrorists' and 'suspicious Palestinian men.' For five hours 3 houses were repeatedly hit with rockets and bullets, families were evicted from their homes, belongings were smashed, and 16 men were arrested, tied up, driven 25 km to Huwara military base, interrogated, and then released. "Sorry," said the Israeli Defence Force. "We made a mistake."

that pre-emptivity (read: kicking the shit out of everyone before they can make a peep) has always been America's policy (Vietnam anyone?). It's just that now, they've put it down in black and white.

And what's the justification for this newly publicised strategy? That the terrorists and rogue states that threaten America aren't motivated by a rational power-lust like the USSR was, oh no. Instead they are of course driven by an irrational hatred of justice, liberty, and freedom. According to the Bush Doctrine, because the new enemies of the US are not just evil, but also mental, it can't be assumed that they will act as 'responsibly' as previous forces of darkness have. And this, supposedly, is what justifies the Bush Doctrine of pre-emptive strikes—rogue states' sheer insanity.

On this basis, the Bush administration reckons that they can justify upsetting the UN by officially

tearing up the rulebook on when it's acceptable to bomb the shit out of people in other countries. The problem is that no one, not the US's allies, 'citizens' or even their secret service is ready to buy the argument. According to the director of the CIA, George Tenet, there is no evidence that the rogue state currently in Bush's sights (Iraq) has any immediate desire to attack Western populations. He argues, however, that the kind of pre-emptive attack that Bush and his cronies are pushing for "could trigger the very things [Bush] has said he's trying to prevent—the use of chemical or biological weapons". The Bush government might think they're powerful enough to re-write the rules to justify their ambitions, but there's one rule that they would do well not to forget: playing with explosives makes you look hard, but if you don't know how they work, they just might blow up in your face. Tick, tick, tick...

For more ridiculous reading, see the full document at www.statewatch.org/news/2002/sep/nss.pdf

Positive SchNEWS

Radical Routes is a network of over 50 small co-operatives who work together to support collective ownership of houses and buildings for groups working for radical social change. It also aids small worker-controlled businesses involved in socially useful work, supports and promotes de-schooling and home education, and helps facilitate the development of radical clubs and social centres. Radical Routes members meet four times a year. The next gathering is Manchester 26th-27th October. On the 26th there's an afternoon of discussions open to non-members who want to find out more about co-ops and the work of Radical Routes. Bridge 5 Mill, 22a Beswick St., Ancoats, Manchester www.radicalroutes.org.uk, info@radicalroutes.org.uk 0161 224 4846

LULA-LA LAND

Yer on-the-ball SchNEWS is in downtown Sao Paulo this week to give you the lowdown on the man they call Lula ("The Squid" in English, it's short for Luiz Inacio da Silva).

This week, Brazil's Workers Party (PT), led by Lula, won an unprecedented 4-2 victory against the US-backed government team in the first round of the Massively Important Presidential Championships of Latin America. The PT almost doubled their seats in the Senate, and at the final whistle, with 46.4 percent of the vote to his nearest rival Jose Serra's 23.2 percent, Lula was just short of outright victory. In the second and final leg, to be played on October 27th, the scores are back to 0-0 with everything to play for.

In Brazil, Lula is as recognisable a name as Pele or Ronaldo. He became famous as the leader of illegal metalworker strikes that helped bring an end to the military dictatorship in the mid-1970s. He has run for president and lost three times since becoming co-founder, in 1980, of the Workers Party.

GOOOOAAAAL!!! Lula opposes the Free Trade Area of the Americas, which he calls Bush's 'Annexation of Latin America.' He opposes Plan Columbia. He opposes sanctions on Cuba. He has the support of the landless movement in Brazil, Movimento Sem Terra. He promises to end endemic corruption by getting people not aligned to politics or business in on the budget-making decisions.

There's talk of an axis between Lula, Castro and Hugo Chavez in Venezuela, who foiled another attempted coup this week, timed to coincide with the Brazilian elections. With strong left gains in neighbouring Bolivia and Paraguay and elections in Argentina next March, Latin America's face could be unrecognisable from just 12 months ago, a complete rejection of the US-led free market reforms.

But however good all this may sound, Lula still may be foul. Because of his previous campaign defeats, Lula has changed much of his lefty tune this time around and many in the Workers Party

are angry but, for the moment, are keeping schtum.

DODGY KEEPER!!! Despite being locked-up and having his 1970s rallies buzzed by army choppers, Lula has made friends with the military, suggesting the signing of nuclear non-proliferation treaties was wrong. He is also supporting a move by Embraer, Brazil's massive aircraft maker, to develop a serious fighter jet and missile programme.

OVER THE BAR!! Despite previously fighting on a platform of defaulting on Brazil's crippling \$260bn debt - more than half of what the country produces in a year - he now says they'll pay up. (But some people think he'll still default) Lula also says he'll work with the IMF and honour the new record-breaking \$30bn loan. Lula has also attracted a few dodgy new geezers including his vice president and running mate, Jose Alencar, a textile baron worth \$500M, from the centre-right Liberal Party. Seeing which way the wind is blowing, other business leaders have also backed Lula.

SchNEWS fought through the crowds last week at Lula's final emotional rally at the metalworkers union in the industrial suburbs of Sao Paulo, where he worked as a lathe operator and transformed the 100,000-strong union. "Everything that we have done until now hasn't been done to gain the Presidency, that is just a consequence," he told the crowds. "The most symbolic thing about me winning is that we will prove to anybody the truth of something that I said in 1979, which is that nobody will ever again be able to doubt the working classes." Does Lula deserve a Red Card? You make the call!

Inside SchNEWS

A new Zine is now available to support Jeff 'Free' Luers, the US anarchist prisoner serving an amazing 22 years for burning a few cars. The zine called 'Let's Get Free' - includes writings for, by and about 'Free'. It's available for a donation of \$5. Proceeds of the sale will (after paying copy costs) go to Jeff Luers directly. From NA-ELPSN, POB 50082, Eugene, OR 97405 USA. naelpsn@tao.ca. www.spiritoffreedom.org.uk/prisoners/fc/freezine.html

DAFT TAFT

We thought that full-scale global war and U.S.-instigated regime changes the world over would be enough to keep George Dub'ya busy, but no. Now Georgie has to take aim at unions as well. For the past two weeks, in 29 major docks up and down the American west coast, the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) has been locked out by their bosses over contract disputes that have been raging since last June. The meanie bosses, the Pacific Maritime Association (PMA), want to sack a large number of dockers and attack workers' rights. Understandably, the ILWU have been threatening to strike and recently did a work 'slowdown', which lead to the lock-out. Enter our old friend George. Deciding that the union shouldn't be allowed to use the lockout time to work out a better contract with PMA, as the whole dispute was costing the U.S. economy billions of dollars, Bush decided to call in the draconian Taft-Hartley Act.

The Taft Act was passed in 1947 as an anti-union law. It commands both the employers and the union to return back to work under the conditions of the old contract for 80 days. The act goes on to call for fines and prison sentences for those violating the terms of the contract (i.e. striking or engaging in slow-downs). This part of the bill is aimed at workers and effectively breaks the back of the union for the 80-day period, leaving them open to whatever the abusive bosses can come up with, with no real way to fight back. The 80 days of the Taft-Hartley injunction also gets PMA through the peak shipping season and to the slowest time of the year, thus relieving them of any urgency to bargain once the 80 days are over. PMA loved the government intervention, but labour unions were furious that the president had once again acted in the interests of big business. "PMA will start alleging supposed slowdowns straightaway. Taft-Hartley gives them 80 days of free shots at the union and we expect the employers will be dragging us to



"Unions? Fuck 'em!"

**GET BACK TO WORK,
YOU LAZY DEMOCRAT
DOCK MONKEYS!**

Corporations need their STUFF!

court daily, trying to bankrupt the union and throw our leaders in jail" said ILWU president James Spinosa. "No one should be surprised by the turn of these events," Spinosa said. "Bush has always actively sided with employers against workers. This collusion between the government and the employers was planned well in advance." www.labournet.net or <http://sf.indymedia.org/>

Lappersfort forest evicted

The Lappersfort Forest in Bruges, Belgium is a unique area. The 30 hectares of ground have lain undisturbed for such a long time that it had the chance to restore itself to its natural state, an example of what the whole of the northwest of Europe must have been like some 3000 years ago. It has become one of the last pieces of natural forest and marshland left in this part of the world, and unique in that it supports 7 different ecosystems.

One would expect a city that holds such richness within its limits to do its utmost to protect it. Not so Bruges. After a developer (the Fabricom group, part of the multinational company Tractebel) bought the land, it chose to let the terrain be developed for industrial purposes. The Mayor of the City, Patrick Moenaert, happens to be a member of the board of directors of Fluxys, another Tractebel company.

Since August 2001, activists have occupied this threatened forest. The goal of this permanent action camp was to save the forest from being chopped down for industry and a planned road and bus station. The occupation went on for more than a year, until NV Fabricom took the occupiers of the Lappersfort Forest to court to get them evicted. On 9th September 2002, the judge granted an eviction order, despite the fact that Fabricom bought the area 20 years ago and now wanted to sell it for a huge profit.

The eviction happened on Monday 14th October. Police stopped sympathisers and press from reaching the site as activists were violently removed from the

trees and tunnels, with the forest being heavily damaged in the process. Meanwhile, sympathisers who had travelled to Bruges to protest against the eviction were also arrested.

Since then, many people have demonstrated their support for the forest and have protested against the violent behaviour of the authorities. Actions have been held every evening against the eviction, and the police brutality. These solidarity actions achieved their climax in a big 'family' demonstration on 20th October when around 4000 people made it one of the biggest ever seen in Bruges.

Despite the eviction, the struggle for conservation of the Lappersfort Forest just goes on.

Indymedia West-Vlaanderen - www.lappersfront.tk



War BRIEFS

Last week 160 people shut down the gates of **US Air Base Lakenheath** in Suffolk where about 30 US nuclear war heads are kept. www.lakenheathaction.org ** **Some Americans don't agree with Bush!!** Last weekend 87,000 protestors took to the streets across America to protest against war on Iraq. www.indymedia.org ** An anti-war group has squatted the former **Brighton Peace Centre** in Gardner St. Open day Saturday 12th, check it out! ** Demo outside **Menwith Hill Spy Base**. Sat 12th, 12 - 4 pm, 01943 466405 www.caab.org.uk ** **Whose Terror?** Speakers from three countries facing "War on Terror" state terror-Palestine, Iraq, and Columbia. Sat 12th 2pm Friends Meeting House, Ship St, Brighton. ** **Films** against economic sanctions and war on Iraq. Sat 12th from 2.30pm, Rio Cinema, Kingsland High St., Dalston, London. £4/£2.50 0845 458 2564 voices@viwuk.freemove.co.uk ** **Threat of War and Future of the Kurds** public meeting. Tue 15th 7pm, Committee Room 10, House of Commons, Westminster, SW1. 020 7435 4547 Liberation@btinternet.com ** **Why is the Anti-War movement ignoring Saddam's crimes?** With Peter Tatchell. Tue 15th 7:30pm, Upstairs Bar, Rugby Tavern, 19 Great James Street, London. www.newhumanist.org.uk * **Don't Attack Iraq** March & Rally, Sat 19th 11.30am George Square, Glasgow. 0141 423 1222 scnd@banthebomb.org ** **One SchNEWS reader** has been getting their anti-war message across by adorning bank notes with anti war messages - not a bad idea. ** **National day of action** against the war, 31st October, see www.stopwar.org.uk 020 7053 2155. In Brighton, a critical mass is planned, meet 3pm, University of Sussex. At 5:30pm there's an action planned, meet at the War Memorial, Old Steine. ** **Stop the War, Stop the City**. Meet on the day after war is announced against Iraq. 5:30pm in Churchill Square, Brighton. Bring pots and pans!!

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SchNEWS in brief

SchNEWS nearly 8th Birthday Party, with LSDS, Miss C MC & Mama, Harry Diezel, Judge Trev and Jelly, 7-11pm, 14th, Albert Pub, Brighton. ** SchNEWS excusive: we're the first to announce that **Noam Chomsky** speaks at St.Pauls Cathedral, 9th December as a benefit for the Kurdish Human Rights Project. Tickets £15/£8 will be snapped up quick, get yours from Hannah 020 7287 2772 ** **Gianfranco Fini**, the Italian Foreign Minister, well known fascist, and director of police operations at last years Genoa protests, is speaking in London on the 22nd. He'd love to see you!! Meet 8am onwards outside Claridge's Hotel, 53 Brook Street, London, W1 ** The offices of SHAC (**Stop Huntington Animal Cruelty**) were raided again by police last Friday. Five computers were confiscated and two people nicked. SHAC desperately need donations to replace the stolen property. Four other SHAC protestors, including a 70-year-old woman, have also been arrested in Kent and are on remand. SHAC, c/o Lynn Sawyer, 6 Boat Lane, Evesham, Worcestershire, WR11 4BP. 0845 458 0630 www.shac.net/resources.html ** Sat 12th is a silent demo in **Cambridge** against the University's proposed primate research lab. Noon, Guildhall, Market Square 01223 311828 info@x-cape.org.uk ** 1000 students are expected for next months **Shared Planet Conference**, speakers including Mark Thomas and George Monbiot are hoping to inspire students to start campaigning for a better world. 2-3 Nov. Warwick University Arts Centre. £16 (incl. accommodation) www.peopleandplanet.org/sharedplanet ** There's a **European Social Consulta** which aims to build activist networks across Europe in Barcelona, 19th-20th October. Info www.europeanconsulta.org encuentro@consulta-europea.org ** 18th October is **Media Democracy Day**, a day dedicated to the promotion of independent media. Events in London see www.mediademocracyday.org.uk ** Special Screening of **McLibel Two Worlds Collide** film, 8pm 16th October, Cinematheque, Middle Street, Brighton.



...and finally...

What would you do if you'd got yourself a nice countryside pad with a sea view, but your neighbours, whose land your house is built on, keep making extensions that are reducing the price of your property? You could maybe move house, become more tolerant, or maybe even kill your neighbours!!

This last option may seem extreme, but for a family of badgers in Saltdean, East Sussex this is exactly what's going to happen. Residents in houses that were built on top of a badger sett have complained that the badgers subterranean extensions are undermining their foundations. And rather than look for alternative ways to cope with this problem, the Animal Welfare Minister, Elliot Morley, has granted a licence for the family of badgers to be killed under the 1992 Protection of Badger Act (Ummm). SchNEWS would like to suggest that a load of property developers out there be culled instead.

This Saturday there's a demonstration against the slaughter of the badgers at Saxon Close, Saltdean 10am- noon. www.geocities.com/wildlifeambulance/index.html

* The culling of badgers by the government in their long drawn out attempt to prove a link between badgers and the spread of TB in cattle is restarting in two areas of the UK. To get involved in stopping the culls contact 07773 572970 (Devon) or 07811 629846 (Derbyshire) www.badger-killers.co.uk

Disclaimer

The SchNEWS Doctrine warns all readers that we reserve the right to pre-emptively use our weapon of mass distraction against any bush-shit. Honest.

Scenes Of Autonomous Resistance In Argentina

Faced with huge state debts, more than half the population living 'below the poverty line' and 30% unemployment, many people in Argentina rejected political solutions from both the left and the right and began taking steps to control their social, cultural and economic infrastructure.

The movement started in December 2001 as the country's social and political institutions collapsed under the weight of foreign debt (see SchNEWS 350 for coverage of the events of Dec 2001). Autonomous collectives sprung up across Argentina; neighbourhood groups were formed creating their own health clinics, education centres and other social services. Around 200

bankrupt and closed factories were re-opened under workers' control, supplying everything from food to farming equipment (see SchNEWS 383).

These ways of organising explicitly reject the hierarchies and centralisation of the political parties, as well as the 'shut up and join the party' left, who typically interpret demands for change as demands for a change of wording. What started as a survival tactic blossomed into self-empowerment based on solidarity, dignity and freedom of expression. When the police came to the occupied spaces demanding to speak to someone in charge, they were told, "We are all in charge".



El Padelai: Many examples of direct democracy came under threat in the build up to the elections in April 2003. On 25th February the repression began in Buenos Aires with the eviction of the squat El Padelai, a building occupied for the last 20 years, and home to around 500 people. Police fired rubber bullets and tear gas as the squatters tore down metal barriers and lobbed stones at a nearby police station. An elderly woman being evicted sobbed "I don't have thousands of pesos to buy a house."



Bruckman Factory:

On 21st April 2003, six days before the presidential elections, police attacked the Bruckman factory in Buenos Aires, which was being run by 55 women textile workers who took over the bankrupt site two years ago. In solidarity, 7,000 of the town's population turned out to defend the factory. They were met with rubber bullets and live ammunition; some were chased into a children's hospital and tear gassed.



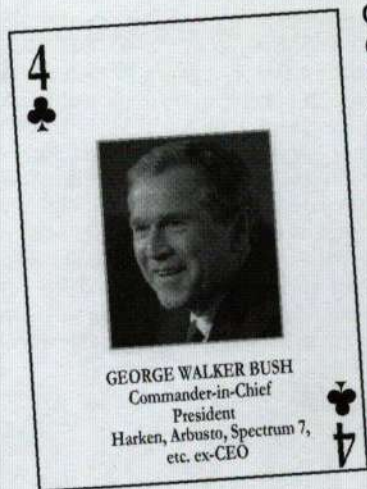
(above) 8th April 2003: Workers and supporters manage to fight off eviction by the police at Zanon Ceramics Factory.

The Zanon Ceramics Factory is a classic example of the 150 or so factories currently under worker control. The state, which had given massive subsidies to the factory when it was under the control of bosses, continually uses the police force to attack workers and try to throw them out. Even the official trade union sent scabs to break the occupation but the workers stood firm and proved they could run things without managers. An elected workers' committee now oversees the normal running of the factory and major decisions are made in an assembly of all the workers. Everyone has the right to speak and vote. The Zanon workers have strong links with the community, selling tiles at cost price so every house in Neuquen - many of which still had dirt floors - could have a tiled floor. The indigenous Mapuche people are letting the factory use their local clay having refused supplies to the previous owners, and now the factory has ditched the Italian styled tiles in favour of Mapuche designs.

(right) Protests in regional capital Neuquen on March 12th against imminent eviction of Zanon ceramics factory.

The lettering on the steps says: "police prefecture - it's killing you, it's torturing you, it's repressing you, it's intimidating you, it's persecuting you, it's controlling you, it's watching you"





jokers in the Pack

We all know that conspiracy theories don't explain why the world's fucked up. Capitalism isn't a conspiracy, and governments aren't really front organisations for the freemasons, aliens, or giant lizards. It would be nice if it turned out that war, exploitation, and environmental devastation were all just the work of a small, sinister group of complete bastards, but sadly life's more complicated than that. That said, it's hard to remember all this when you take a look at the current US president. From his rigged election to his CIA-poster-boy dad, from his oil-trading, arms-dealing cronies to his oil war and his plans for mini-nukes, it's clear that Dubya crosses the line from (normal) evil politician bastard to cartoonish, Dr Evil-style supervillain. So, for all you conspiracy theorists out there, here's a quick look at some of the big numbers in the SchNEWS deck of cards...

Keep it in the Family

Bush's granddad was a nazi.

In 1942 the US government seized a company called the Silesian American Corporation under the 1941 Trading with the Enemy Act. It was a steel and coal company, based in Poland, near Auschwitz, turning out artillery that would be turned on Allied soldiers, produced by a steady flow of slave labour in the form of healthy Jews, gypsies and trade union leaders. The company was owned by Union Banking Corporation, and Prescott Bush, the man responsible for the giving the world the two George's, was a director and shareholder. When the funds were finally free he passed them on to George Senior, who in turn passed them on to his son...

When it comes to business, no connection is too sordid if your name's Bush. It ain't what you know, it's who you know, which is exceptionally lucky if you've got the IQ of a twiglet, but have better connections in corporate America than Satan himself, eh Junior?

Before looking into the shark-infested waters of the Bush Administration, we'd better have a look at the man himself. Born (at the stroke of midnight?) in Connecticut, 1946, he went to Yale and then Harvard business school, with suspiciously average grades. Still

with a name like Bush, who needs to work for a living? After university he used his father's contacts to launch a series of failed business ventures in the oil and mineral exploration game, starting with Arbusto Energy. He managed to get a reputation as "the only oil man in Texas who couldn't find oil". Arbusto was eventually bought up by Harken Oil, who kept Bush on as a director and gave him a tasty shares package.

During this time he made fantastic contacts in the oil scene, at home and abroad. One such contact, an investor at Harken, was Khaled Bin Mahfouz, who bought a 12% share in the business. Bin Mahfouz was known as the 'kings treasurer' to the house of Saud, with strong connections to Osama Bin Laden. He is currently under house arrest in Taef under the behest of American authorities.

Bush didn't actually make much money in oil. He got rich (basically) by buying a small part of a baseball stadium in Arlington, Texas, and getting the taxpayer to pay the rest. This made him popular with Texans (don't know why) and he was able to get himself appointed as Chief Executioner (erm... Governor) in 1994. And so began the career of another Great Man in American history. A few years and \$190million in campaign contributions later, he became the most powerful vampire on the planet...

Look, we don't expect anyone to be surprised that politicians use their political connections for business advantage, and their business connections for political advantage. That's nothing new. But it's traditional for ruling class wankers to at least attempt to hide their dodgy connections. Usually they also like to make a pretence of trying to 'represent' those of us who don't have a couple hundred million stashed in a trust fund. On the other hand, the present US government actually seem to take pride in backscratching and backhanders - it's like they're trying to rub our faces in it. Do they think we're really stupid? Or have they just decided that they're now so powerful that they can afford to take the piss a bit? Either way, it's not funny. Let's take a look at some of the corporate interests currently ruling the planet.

Oil

When it comes to oil connections, you might as well start with the right-hand man, and bastard in chief. Dick Cheney has been dominating the corridors of the White House since Nixon, serving in almost all of the republican administrations up to the present. Cheney is the Father Christmas of American politics, having voted against the equal rights movement, the Head Start programme, a resolution calling for the release of Nelson Mandela, and federal funding for abortions, even in the case of rape.

When he wasn't voting against civil liberties or dropping bombs on the poor, Cheney enjoyed making a fortune as CEO of America's largest oil-services company, Halliburton. Like Bush, Cheney never lets politics get in the way of business. Under Cheney's leadership, Halliburton signed \$30 million worth of contracts with Iraq through foreign subsidiaries. Cheney denied he knew about it. Likely. Halliburton is currently a leading bidder to 'restructure' Iraq's oil fields.

Listening to Cheney dribble on about liberating the 'people' of Iraq (that's people remember, not oil) it's

funny to recall how, under him, Halliburton had few qualms about doing business in Burma. Or that in 1997, while Dick was still at the helm, the group Environmental Rights Action (ERA) alleged that Halliburton was behind an order for Nigeria's mobile police to shoot and kill activist Gidikumo Sule in Warri, where they were contracting for Chevron.

Reflecting on his transition from politics to business and back again in 1998 Cheney remarked, "in the oil and gas business, I deal with many of the same people." That's right... if you've got a moustache, a beard, and an oilfield and Dick's not selling you pipelines, the chances are he'll be bombing you. He is a vocal proponent of closer links between government and the energy business (if that's possible without penetrative sex), was a major player in quashing the Kyoto treaty, and is a big supporter of drilling in Alaskan nature reserves. He is also a member of far-right think tank Committee to Preserve American Security and Sovereignty (COMPASS), definitely one to watch if you're curious about the dark forces governing our world.

If you were in any doubt about the stranglehold that the energy business has on the current administration (which you're probably not, but if you were) then consider Miss Condaleeza Rice. As if having an oil tanker named after you weren't enough to give most right-thinking people the fear, Rice has achieved the kind of neo-conservative reputation that would make Enoch Powell look like some kind of Guardian-reading aromatherapist. As National Security Advisor her doctrine is to support only American interests, believing the 'international community' to be a myth. She has deep oil ties, serving a decade on the board of Chevron during their controversial penetrations into Nigeria, where there is an increasing US military presence. She has been known to describe environmental and human rights groups as "the enemy".

Cheney, Bush and Rice are by no means the only members of the administration to have oil ties, Rumsfeld and Wolfowitz both have ties to the black gold. Gale Norton, secretary to the interior started her career in the Mountain States Legal Foundation: sounds nice, but is in fact a conservative think-tank, funded by oil companies. She became notorious after entering her new government position by taking down the pictures of national parks and putting up photos of mining operations.

Not to mention Don Evans, Commerce Secretary, who was Bush's campaign manager (and secured the record-breaking funding), and who sat on the boards of Tom Brown Inc. and Sharp drilling. In his current post he is in charge of sustainable development and economic growth (!) and will be overseeing the National Oceans and Air Administration that protects coastlines. Nothing to worry about there then...

Cars

If you gotta sell oil, you gotta have something to burn it in. Cars. Lovely big ones. That's what Secretary of Energy Spencer Abraham deals in. Coming from Michigan, home of Detroit, it's little surprise that Daimler Chrysler, General Motors and Ford were major contributors to his campaign. He paid them back when he voted against legislation to improve fuel economy in SUV's, at a time when Daimler Chrysler brought out a model that does just 10 miles per gallon. He also voted against federal fuel tax and research into renewable energy.

White House Chief of Staff, Andrew Card Jr is not only a good friend to the wheels industry, but one of the big hitters in the new administration. He worked as General Motors' chief lobbyist and as CEO of the former American Automobile Manufacturers Association, which lobbied against stricter fuel emissions and passenger safety, before landing his current job.

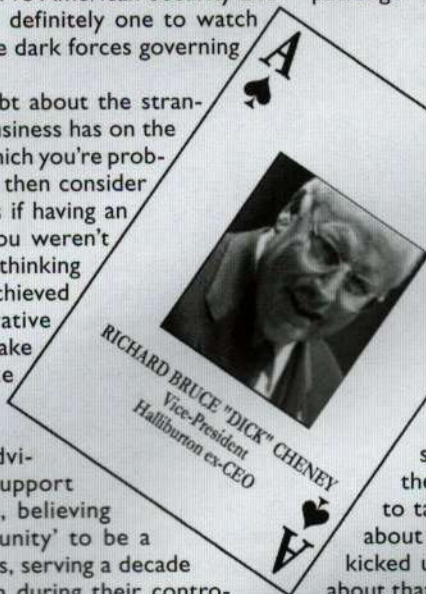
Enron

Talking of Energy, what happened to Enron? Well if the twin towers hadn't come down, you might have heard a lot more about Kenneth Lay, Director of Enron and shadow advisor to the president. Enron earned their White House privileges with massive electoral contributions, including the loan of their private jet. Consequently, when Cheney was formulating his National Energy Policy 'Kenny Boy' was lucky enough to be called in for a private consultation. When this came out before 9/11 the General Accounting Office was preparing to take it to court, then in all the excitement about the War on Terror the Enron scandal got kicked under the carpet. Sighs of relief all round about that, then...

The ties between Enron and the Bush administration are almost too numerous to go into. Altogether 32 administration officials held Enron stock, and many of the 'disgraced' executives were fast tracked straight into the administration. These included Enron Vice Chairman Thomas White, who made vast profits creating a false energy crisis in California, and even more when he sold his stock before the scandal broke. What do you do with a man like that? Offer him the post of Secretary of the Army.

Health, Fags and Pharmaceuticals

So the near future doesn't look too good if you in some way rely on clean air or unpolluted water. But if other members of the Bush administration have their way, you may not live that long anyway. Who better to head the department of Health and Human services in the US than Tommy Thomson, friend of fag-merchants. Thomson served on the Washington Legal Fund, an advisory board that campaigned on behalf of the tobacco giants, and went around the world promoting free trade sponsored by Phillip Morris.



According to Corpwatch, he is not the only one to watch as far as smoking sponsorship goes in the White House. Karl Rove is one of the big guns along with the likes of Cheney – he fills the position of Senior Advisor to the president. He is a long-standing friend of George and helped secure his Texas victory. He worked as a consultant for Phillip Morris for 7 years in the nineties, and admitted that he steered Bush toward 'tort reform' in Texas, which made it harder for victims to sue the makers of harmful products. He has come under constant fire for abusing his position. Rove recently held a secret meeting with Intel executives about a prospective merger; two weeks later a merger was approved; two weeks after that Rove sold his inflated stock, valued at around \$1.5million. Cha-ching!

The Director of the office of Management and Budget, Mitch Daniels Jr sat on the board of Eli Lilly pharmaceuticals. Handily in his new position he will be overseeing any federal decisions concerning how much and what prescription drugs will come under the Medicare plan, the only free health-care in the US and something the big drug companies are fiercely opposed to.

Oh, and, let's not forget, the genetics and agribusiness giants have also got a foot in the door. Secretary of Agriculture Ann Veneman had a spell on the board of Calgene, one of the first companies to market genetically modified food, later bought out by Monsanto. Veneman has also served on the International Policy Council on Agriculture, an independent think tank, sponsored by Nestle.

Guns

OK so we're likely to see genetically modified cigarettes, huge fucking cars and lots of drilling in the near future, but what about guns?

Yes, lots of guns too. Not only does the Attorney General find himself (against all odds) to the right of the National Rifle Association, but the administration has, unsurprisingly, formed a close, loving relationship with Lockheed Martin, the US's biggest arms manufacturer.

Probably most shocking though are the activities of the Carlyle Group, a multi-billion dollar private investment firm that has fingers in just about every pie, but particularly communications and defence. Why? Because these are the most heavily government-regulated industries, and, well, looking at this company's payroll, they are the government.

Founded by ex-secretary of defence Frank Carlucci and ex-secretary of state James Baker, the firm uses its unbelievable contacts to secure unbelievable deals. Amongst those on their payroll are George Bush Senior, consultant to Asia, John Major, Ex-Thai and Philippine presidents and many, many more. The Group briefly courted scandal after 9/11 when it emerged that the Bin Laden family had major investments in the firm, ironically in the defence portfolio. The largest defence companies that are now under Carlyle's control are America's United Defence and Britain's own Qinetiq,

the research branch of the MoD, both doing rather well out of the war on terror.

Arch-bastards

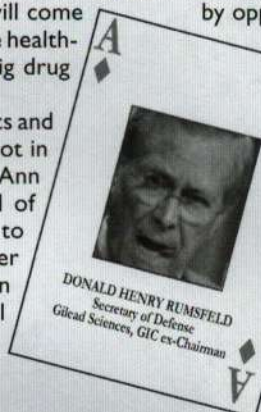
No one's 'Big Book of Bastards' would be complete without a spot for Donald Rumsfeld, 'Defence' Secretary. 'Rummy', or 'Darth Vader' as he is commonly known, has been so fanatical in his incitement of international violence that even war criminal Henry Kissinger has described him as a 'despot'. Like every other fucker in the Bush administration he's loaded, to the tune of about \$200 million, and shows the same respect for human life in business that he does international affairs. As head of one drug company he reputedly used his connections to get approval for a food supplement linked to brain cancer.

Rummy's initiation into American politics came as a Congressman in 1962, and he made staggering inroads by opposing food stamping, Medicare and a rise in the minimum wage. Making an impression with his obvious lack of a soul, he was snapped up by the Nixon administration, and later became a Defence advisor to Reagan. He is an avid supporter of son-of-star-wars and deploying nuclear capacity in space. He was influential in America refusing to sign a Chemical and Biological weapons treaty, and opposed a ban on testing of nuclear weapons, as that would make difficult the creation of the next generation of warheads. I know: the irony's a little too strong even to mention.

If you want to know what motivates Rumsfeld, then check out the plainly evil right wing think tanks he's linked to, like the Committee for the Present Danger, the International Rescue Committee (Thunderbirds Are Go), the Centre for Security Policy, or the Committee for a Free World. Or look at the incubi who've got his ear on defence thinking, like Richard 'Prince of Darkness' Perle, who until the end of March this year was Chairman of the highly influential Defence Policy Board. Perle was forced to give up the post when it emerged that he was lobbying on behalf of Global Crossing, a bankrupt telecoms company who called on him to help 'overcome Defence Department resistance'.

This is not the first time Perle has been hit with the old conflict-of-interest fish. When he served as assistant secretary of defence in the Reagan presidency, he was caught urging the department to buy arms from a contractor who paid him a \$50,000 'consulting' fee. He remains in contact with makers of big guns, as a non-executive director of Morgan Crucible (UK) and director of Memorex Corp. His role is questionable in the venture capital firm Trireme Partners, which invests in homeland security and defence projects.

Of course, none of this has anything to do with his advocacy of a defence policy that he touchingly describes as "total war". He recently spoke at a conference entitled "Implications of an Imminent War: Iraq Now, North Korea Next?", where his subject was the possible investment opportunities that might arise from future war. Well, if anybody, he should know...



Mate - I reckon I'll
be staying home
for my holidays
next year.



SchNEWS

www.schnews.org.uk

Friday 18th October 2002

Free/Donation

Issue 377

SARI SIGHT

The horrific bombing in Bali last weekend was not the first act of terror Indonesia has suffered. But somehow, other events that have claimed thousands of Indonesian lives have never managed to dominate the world's news pages. Australian tourists killed by terrorists must matter more than Indonesians killed by religious conflicts or an Australian and US-backed dictator.

In the wake of the bombing of the Sari night club, little has been said about the deaths of the Balianese men and women who make up 40% of the victims, or the injured locals who are left to suffer in third rate hospitals while westerners are flown out. It's the same with Iraqi civilians who are targeted by bombs, sanctions and depleted uranium and pronounced 'collateral damage' because they have the wrong leader; or refugees fleeing in the hope of a better life jailed and sent back if they don't face *quite* enough hardship at home. It's September 11 all over again, kids - when Westerners die, people pay more attention. Here's one Australian's take on the unfolding events in Bali:

"There's a well known song in Australia titled 'I've been to Bali too'. 'Wired home for money, short of cash; A dose of Bali belly and a tropical rash; Daddy came through - American express; Bali t-shirts magic mushrooms Redgum bootlegs, I've been to Bali too,' go the lyrics.

"Bali has a special place in the hearts of many Australians. For most, two week holidays are cheaper

there than to travel interstate - and the shopping!! Well, those locals really know how to please us Aussies. And then there's the cheap beer, cocktails, mushrooms and sexploitation. Bali really does epitomise the global consumerist tourist culture. A tiny island in the Indonesian archipelago, its entire social fabric has been irrevocably altered by Western tourism. The handicraft sector is now completely tourist-oriented, as well as about 80% of employment on the island. How do I know all this? Because I've been to Bali too - three times in fact - the first time as a very naive, very white, middle-class, Australian 14-year-old.

"Australia is now shocked by the events of the last 24 hours... Why us? The horror of it! We're being plied with images of 'our own' running down the streets (which many of us have been to), blood pouring down faces, skin peeling off bodies. And yes, it's horrid. But so was the drowning of 353 refugees off the coast of Australia only one year ago, while our government sat by and watched. Not only watched, but blamed those trying to save their children, for 'throwing them overboard'. Not only that, but our government has now been caught - and not for the first time either - assisting in the sabotage of boats such as these...

INDOMNESIA

"This time around, however, the Government has jumped to the defence of innocents, with promises from the Prime Minister, John-munchkin-Howard, that 'all of the resources of the Air Force will

CRAP ARRESTS OF THE WEEK

For bad taste in literature...

Egyptian webmaster Shohdy Surur has been given a one year jail sentence for posting a poem on a website! *Kuss Ummiyat*, a poem written by Surur's late father 30 years ago, has been on the US-based www.wadada.net for the past three years, and although Surur senior was never prosecuted for writing it, Egyptian authorities are now justifying Shohdy's sentence by claims that the poem contains passages that are "an affront to public morals." Nothing to do with the fact that the poem also harshly criticises Egyptian culture and society, of course! www.rsffr/article.php3?id_article=4030&var_recherche=surur

be available for the task' of bringing the injured back to Australia for treatment. How blatant is our government's treating of some lives as more important than others? After being caught in the blast, Forbes Rugby Club President explained how important it was to get the injured Australians home, because 'he wouldn't admit his dog to the hospital he was treated in'.

"But the most worrying thing about these events is the ability of our government to use them to justify its slavish military support for the US-led, so-called 'War on Terror.' Already Howard is talking of a national review of security measures against terrorism. And of course we are now being bombarded with constant reminders that this, or something like it, could happen to any of us, anywhere, at any time. In practice this means the tightening of immigration border controls and even harsher treatment of refugees (who have become one of the Australian targets of the 'War on Terror'), a bolstering of the pro-

Sari Sight cont...

posed terror laws in Australia, and most importantly, a huge push for the war in the Gulf. But as demonstrated by the 40,000 people on the streets of Melbourne last Sunday, not all Australians back this war.

"Amid the current hysteria, one bright commentator is even claiming that 'This is the worst act of terror in Indonesia's history,' (Gen. Da'i Bachtiar, the national police chief). Please! We have such short memories!! It was only a few decades ago that the Indonesian Government, enthusiastically cheered on by Australia, the US and Western Europe, massacred millions of Communists, activists and anyone associated with them, as part of the coup that installed the hated Suharto regime in Indonesia. Sorry – not just cheered, but advised, encouraged, armed and even directed.

The Sari nightclub is not simply a random target. While the clientele may change throughout the year, the description is essentially the same – drunken, obnoxious, young(ish) Australians. It is a hated symbol of Western imperialism for many – no matter what the age of the 'revellers' inside. Every year thousands travel to the island, stay in their Western Hotels, visit their Western nightclubs, flaunt their money and feel like royalty for two weeks, then travel home to a country which supports the repressive regimes of the world. As the Sex Pistols put it, it's 'a cheap holiday in other people's misery'.

"That's not to say I support what happened last night. But let's be clear... as long as our governments continue to wage war on the world's poor and working class – whether through economic, diplomatic or military means – our government will develop enemies... enemies which unfortunately mistake us for our governments."

For the full article check out <http://melbourne.indymedia.org/>. The site also includes stories on the Indonesian military being linked to extreme Islamic groups including Jemaah Islamiyah, the group being blamed for the blast.

SchNEWS in brief

- **Sir Mark Moody-Stuart**, chairman of the ironically named Business Action for Sustainable Development (see SchNEWS 361/2) was **custard pied** in London last week before speaking at the Global Development Forum. The former Shell boss, now heading the corporate lobby group that likes to sound like Mother Teresa whilst making damn sure the Big Business profits keep rolling in at any cost, shrugged off the attack by protestors saying, "It was meant in good fun". Yeah right Mark, we love you really!

- **Lt General Shaul Mofaz**, Israeli commander of the illegal occupation of Palestine from May 98 to July this year, is coming for some dinners in the UK this month. He'll be in Glasgow (26), Liverpool (28) and Leeds (29). Contact Leeds Earth First! to make sure his tour goes off without a hitch. leedsef@ukf.net

- The second issue of **SchOUND OFF!**, Plymouth's direct action newsheet, is out now. To subscribe, email schound_off@hotmail.com

- This Sat (19) **London Animal Action** are celebrating **anti-McDonalds day** by having a demo at the Kings Cross branch of McD's, cnr Belgrove St and Euston Rd, WC1, from 4pm onwards – just up the road from the Anorak's Bookfair.

- The **Park Nook woodland protest site**, near Liverpool, has been squat-

ted for the last five months and now has a 24-hour presence. An eviction is imminent and people are needed to defend the space! 0780 360 9721 <http://rts.gn.apc.org/diary.htm>

- Police tactics of mass arrests at **Faslane Blocades** have been undermined by the recent High Court ruling that Tommy Sheridan's breach of the peace charge doesn't stick, which will set a precedent for hundreds of others facing similar charges. www.tridentploughshares.org

- The folks at **Counter Information** news-sheet are holding meetings to discuss the future of the paper. If you're interested in going to a meeting or getting involved with the paper, contact them in Edinburgh on 0131 557 6242 (ask for CI) or email ci@counterinfo.org.uk

- There's still room on the Brighton mini-bus going to the **protest at the Dover Removal Centre** this Saturday (19). For a mere £3/£5, you get a seat on the bus, as well as a ferry ride across the Channel to attend a later protest at the Sangatte Red Cross Centre, soon to be shut down by the French government. The bus leaves early (7am!!) but plans to be back to Brighton on the same day. To book your spot, phone the Unemployment Centre on (01273) 540 717.

- **SchNEWS Of The World is now up on our website**. Or if paper's more your style grab a copy from us for £7 this weekend at the Anorak's Bookfair.

WAR BRIEFS

- * Read John Pilger's '**Lethal Hypocrisy**' about the Bali bombing <http://pilger.carlton.com/>

- * If you would like to financially help the Balinese victims left in the chaotic and hopelessly overstretched hospitals with no medical insurance, no government support and few facilities email: idep@dps.centrin.net.id

- * The old Brighton Peace Centre in Gardner St. is still being squatted by anti-war kidz. Visit them Friday (18) and Saturday (19) nights for radical films & good food. £1.50 7:30pm-10:30.

- * Last Saturday saw an anti-war demo at Shannon airport,

where US war planes land daily to refuel before heading to the Middle East. Around 10 people were arrested and then released without charge. <http://struggle.ws/wsm/news/2002/shannonOCT.html>

- * Anyone interested in anti-war propaganda being put out in Manchester, take a look at: www.uhc-collective.org.uk/warpages/warpages.htm

- * An anonymous caller to a San Jose, California TV station took credit for a pre-dawn fire at a military recruiting office on Monday. Three military cars were set on fire, and the words "pre-emptive strike" were painted across the front of the office in red lettering.

S-Pacific Target

The people of Bougainville are attempting to sue British mining giant Rio Tinto over the genocide and environmental devastation that were a regular part of Rio's 25 years of operations on the small South Pacific island. The lawsuit seeks compensation for every person who suffered during the nearly three decades of mining that went on at the giant, now-defunct Panguna copper mine located smack in the middle of Bougainville.

Bougainville is only a small island, but it's one that has been under siege since Papua New Guinea (PNG) took control of it from Australia in 1975. Even before this, CRA, an Australian subsidiary of Rio Tinto, had forced its way onto the island to build the Panguna mine. 220 hectares of rainforest were destroyed to build Panguna, and after 20 years, the mine had grown to a huge crater half a kilometre deep and nearly 7 km in circumference, creating over a billion tonnes of waste. This waste was dumped in the Jaba River Valley, creating a wall hundreds of metres high and turning one of the island's biggest river systems fluorescent blue.

By 1988, the islanders had started to fight back, successfully



closing the mine. The PNG government, which relied on the mining for 45% of its export earnings, responded swiftly and violently with Australia's help. But despite ten years of violent oppression, the Bougainville Revolutionary Army managed to keep the mine closed and eventually PNG got out. Bougainville is now in the midst of seeking its independence.

In solidarity with all indigenous peoples of the South Pacific, there was a week of actions from October 5-12 targeting companies and groups

involved in ecological and cultural destruction in the region. Rio Tinto was the first to be targeted. Entrances to Anglesay Aluminium, a North Wales subsidiary of Rio Tinto, were blockaded for most of Thursday (10). A Toyota office in Redhill was paint-bombed, highlighting Toyota's involvement in logging in the South Pacific. On Wednesday, the Indonesian embassy in London was forcibly entered in protest over the country's continued occupation of West Papua and the murder of an estimated 100,000 indigenous people. And last but definitely not least, the New Tribes Mission offices were paid a visit at their UK headquarters in Grimsby. The missionary group has stated that it is their intent to reach and preach to every "dark corner" of the planet.

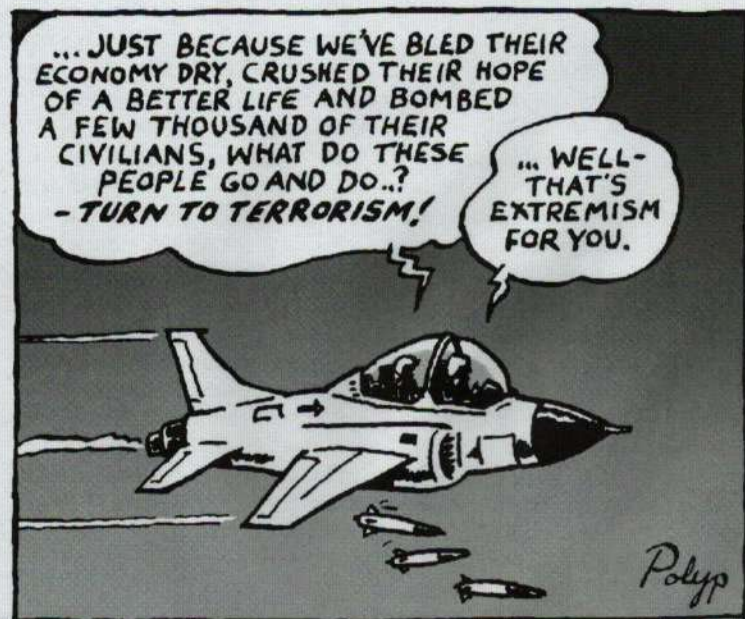
But the people of West Papua have declared missionaries to be one of the 4 biggest threats to free peoples--one of the biggest reasons being that they build airstrips in remote jungles which are eventually used by businessmen, corporations and military personnel. First comes Christianity, then comes Coca Cola.

For more details on the week of actions, see www.eco-action.org/ssp For more Bougainville history, check out the excellent film "The Coconut War."

Inside SchNEWS

Please send letters of support to the 5 Stop Huntingdon Life Sciences protestors who are on remand and facing charges of "Conspiracy to Harass". This raucous, harassing mob include Gavin, who is partially sighted, and Rylma, a 70 year old pensioner...Gavin Medd-Hall [JK4564], Kevin White [JK4576] and Paul Baker [JK4584], HMP Canterbury, 46 Longport, Kent, CT1 1PJ, Robert Lewis [JK4563], HMP Elmley, Church Road, Eastchurch, Sheerness, Kent, ME12 4AY, and Rylma White [KV4069], HMP Holloway, Parkhurst Road, London, N7 0NU

The Jeff 'Free' Luers' zine we mentioned in last week's SchNEWS is available from Brighton ABC. Send 80p and a stamped self-addressed envelope to PO Box 74, Brighton, BN1 4ZQ, East Sussex.





One Sizewell Fits All

150 Greenpeace activists occupied the roof of Sizewell B nuclear power station this week. Greenpeace have produced a report showing that a quarter of the UK's energy demands can be supplied by offshore wind in East Anglia, but the nuclear industry insists that our ever increasing needs can only be met by them. www.greenpeace.org.uk



Sizewell B denies freak cloning accident of one of its workers at the nuclear plant.

Pain In The Ukraine

On September 30, anti-nuclear campaigner Ruslan Synivsky was gunned down by an unidentified man in Kiev. One month earlier, Public Control, an organisation Synivsky was deeply involved in, had filed a lawsuit against the Ukrainian government's plans to build two new nuclear reactors in a country still haunted by Chernobyl.

The police's official story is that Synivsky was killed in a bungled robbery attempt, but the fact that the Ukrainian Secret Service has been harassing and threatening anyone who openly opposes the new reactors makes the official version kind of hard to swallow.

In the Ukraine, whose population suffered the world's worst nuclear disaster in 1986, the vast majority of people oppose nuclear energy. Knowing the opposition the project would face, Energoatom (the nuclear company contracted to build the new power stations) skirted the issue by neglecting to hold legally required public meetings on the topic, and didn't publish any information about the reactors in Ukrainian!

Funding for the proposed reactors would come from the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and from one of the European Commission's 'EuroAtom' loans (set up to find new markets for Western Europe's

stagnant nuclear industry). The whopping £400 million EuroAtom loan would be nearly impossible for the Ukrainian government to repay, not to mention that it comes with major strings attached—one of the loan conditions is that the Ukraine allow for privatisation of its energy industry as well as an immediate hike in energy rates. Bottom line—the average Ukrainian's energy bill would rise by 30% or more.

The EBRD's support for the project has been pure comedy. EBRD's president, Jean Lemierre, went on record as saying his bank would not support the reactors unless they were proven safe and economically feasible. To prove this point, EBRD hired their own team of experts to investigate. Unfortunately for Lemierre, the experts issued a report stating that the building of the two new reactors was neither safe nor affordable. Not being what the Bank wanted to hear, they then commissioned Stone and Webster, a US-based nuclear contracting company, to produce a second report. Surprise, surprise, the second report stated that the new reactors were a fantastic idea! www.aseed.net/publications/ebdrreader http://russia.indymedia.org/front.php3?article_id=3389&group=webcast

Doubled Dutch

When is a political refugee not a political refugee? When the Bush administration decides they're not. Prof Jose Maria Sison, founder of the Communist Party of the Philippines, has lived in the Netherlands since 1987, where he is seeking asylum as a political refugee. But now he's been labelled a terrorist by the American and Dutch governments, his 'funds' (a meagre joint bank account shared with his wife) have been frozen, and he is being threatened with extradition to the US. There is a meeting on Oct. 24, 4-9pm in support of Sison at the Tohum Cultural Center, 2A Belgrade Rd, London N16. There's also an action on Oct 21, 12-2pm, outside the Dutch Embassy, 38 Hyde Park Road, London. <http://defendsison.be/>

...and finally...

What goes around comes around... A local politician in a village near Lugansk, Ukraine, was out one night taking his dog for an evening pee when an over-zealous officer – albeit junior in rank to him – pointed out that his dog was in fact in breach of regulations by being off a lead, and unmuzzled. An argument broke out between the two men – culminating in the politician pulling a hand grenade from his pocket, pulling the pin, and throwing it at the young officer. What he didn't bargain for was his loyal pup running to chase the grenade... and faithfully bringing it back to his master. The macho man politician and his poor dog were both killed in the explosion.

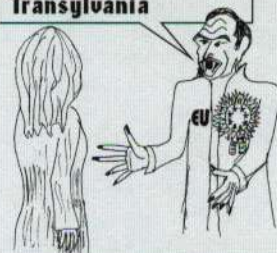
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TRICKY TREATY

"We are being asked to give more powers to the EU commission, an unelected, secretive body that is so corrupt it was forced to resign in its entirety in March 1999. We are being asked to give our support to the pro-business agenda of the EU, where the richer farmers receive enormous subsidies under the Common Agricultural Policy, where corporation taxes are slashed while public services are cut. Is this the Europe we want?" - Libertarians Against Nice.

Big business got its way when last Sunday Ireland finally voted "Yes" to the Nice Treaty. (Ireland had voted "No" a few months earlier, but as this was not the right answer, the powers that be gave it another go with even more "Yes" propaganda.) The yes vote now paves the way for ten more countries to join the European Union. While these countries are being ordered to privatise essential services if they want to climb aboard (see SchNEWS 287), the Nice treaty is an important step in the EU's privatisation agenda for those already part of the club.

Nice will, amongst other things, bring changes to Article 133 of the Treaty of Europe. Alarm bells should always start ringing when our old mates at the World Trade Organisation (WTO) give something the thumbs up. The WTO, who help eliminate 'barriers to trade' (silly things like workers rights and environmental laws), have admitted how important the changes to Article 133 are in their 'Trade Policy Review of the European Union,' a document which SchNEWS recommends any insomniac readers to rush out and buy. But this is how the bureaucrats work: boring us to death with gobbledegook so they can drive forward their business-friendly agenda while we yawn and check the footie scores.

Changing Article 133 means that, instead of national governments, the unelected EU Council bureaucrats and the unelected European Commission will be responsible for negotiating trade deals with organisations like the WTO, "fast-tracking" their deals behind everybody's backs. Fast-tracking is described by Pascal Lamy, the EU Trade Commissioner, as "modernising decision-making." That means swift, centralised decision-making that ensures that elected EU governments don't interfere with Big Business's deals as lobby groups push business demands through an already industry-friendly European bureaucracy.

GATS Piss

"The GATS is not just something that exists between governments. It is first and foremost an instrument for the benefit of business." - European Commission (1998)

For the past few years, the WTO have been trying to expand the General Agreement on Trades in Services (GATS - see SchNEWS 286), whose "privatise everything!" small print is a wet dream for corporations. Now with the Irish ratifying the Nice treaty, it's full steam ahead. Around 20 key basic services have been named by the WTO as ripe for privatisation. Postal, finance and banking, telecommunications, hospitals, transport - you name it, it's all gotta go private because, under WTO rules, government-run public services are a subsidy that 'discriminates' against foreign businesses and are an unfair 'barrier to trade.'

The problem for the WTO has been the mass protests whenever governments try to sell off essential services. But the Nice Treaty will take care of those pesky protestors! Article 133 lets the EU Council and Commission "act by a qualified majority." This means that, when they have made a

CRAP ARRESTS OF THE WEEK

For being overheard...

Two brothers in Sheffield, aged 12 and 13, noticed police watching them 3 weeks ago. When one of them asked the police why they were being watched, he was told "People that dress like you are trouble causers." A bit later, one of the boys was talking to a friend and made the mistake of exclaiming "Fucking hell!" just a bit too loudly. He was promptly roughed up and arrested for the heinous crime of swearing in the presence of a police officer, even though he hadn't been speaking directly to the copper. His brother was then arrested for trying to defend him, and when a female friend of the boys' asked the police why they were being arrested and bullied, she was arrested for "obstructing a police officer from doing his duty."

trade agreement, all member states have no choice but to go along with it. As one WTO official put it, GATS helps "overcome domestic resistance to change." Because even if a government wants to take back control of a failing private company, it won't be able to unless it is ready to face the trade sanction consequences. Take Britain's railways, for instance. Late trains, crap service, over the top prices - tough. A privatised rail network is here to stay, courtesy of agreements like GATS and Article 133.

Frights of the Round Table

It's estimated that Brussels - the home of the European Parliament - hosts some 500 industry lobby groups who employ some 10,000 professional lobbyists. Their job is to make the European Union more industry-friendly - and they do a good job. In 1999, for instance, there was a multi-million lobbying campaign by biotech companies that saw the introduction

Tricky Treaty cont...

of the industry-friendly 'Patents on Life' directive.

One of the most important lobbying groups is the European Round Table of Industrialists (ERT), made up of over 40 "European industrial leaders" from some of SchNEWS's favourite corporations. The ERT is fairly honest about the privilege it enjoys, boasting on its web page that "The ERT has contacts with the European Commission, the Council of Ministers, and the European Parliament. ...Every six months the ERT meets with the government that holds the EU presidency to discuss priorities." And it usually gets what it wants. It was the ERT that wanted revisions to Article 133 for fast tracking - and hey presto!

SchNEWS in brief

The Porkbolter, Worthing's 'radical local newspaper with a historically vindicated pig obsession' has a 5th birthday bash 7.45-midnight, Nov 1st at Vintners Parrot, Warwick St, Worthing, with live band Becomes The Water of Death, Attila the Stockbroker, and various DJs. Donations on door ** Planning meeting for protests against next years **DSEi arms fair**, 30th Oct, 7pm at St. Ann's Church Hall, Berwick Rd, Canning Town, London Info 0781 7652 029. Join the e-mail discussion at DSEi2003-subscribe@yahoo.com. **www.dsei.org** ** Where to next with the **Anarchist Bookfair**? Anyone with feedback/ideas for how it can be developed get y'self along to an open meeting, 17th Nov, Conway Hall, 25 Red Lion Square, London WC1R 4RL 6pm-9pm or e-mail comments to mail@anarchistbookfair.org ** **Protest against custody deaths** - Remembrance Procession organised by United Fami-

As Andrew Flood of Ireland's Libertarians Against Nice says, "The message is clear. A substantial part of the Nice treaty, Article 133, has essentially been drafted by the European corporations to increase their profits at the expense of the people of Europe and those we trade with. The nature of these changes are things that huge numbers of Irish workers would oppose if they were presented in plain English in a referendum."

* Recommended reading: 'Diverse Voices of Struggle in Western Europe - Restructuring and Resistance' edited by Kolya Abramsky. AK Distribution 0131 555 5166 **www.akuk.com**

* For more on the Nice Irish Refer-

lies and Friends Campaign. Sat 26th Oct, Trafalgar Sq 1pm. Please wear black. 07770 432 439 ** **Burger King** in Bristol found their locks glued and their windows repainted last week. The action was done as a protest against Burger King's continued profiteering from the stores they have opened in the Israeli occupied regions of Palestine ** Meeting about the **Baku-Ceyhan BP backed oil pipeline**. Thursday 31st with a speaker from Georgia, 7.30pm, Manchester University Student Union Main Hall, 1st Floor. ** The trial of **five antimilitarist activists** concludes in Watford today. The protestors are charged under the 1908 Public Meeting Act for "disrupting a public meeting", although the army presentation they disrupted was private invitation only. Two are also charged with criminal damage, although the Army has yet to say what was damaged. **www.northwood.cjb.net/** ** Pickets are taking place outside supermarkets in Brighton, in support

endium, visit the Libertarians Against Nice website at: <http://struggle.ws/anarchism/nice/index.html>

* The World Development Movement is running a campaign against GATS 0800 328 2153 **www.gatswatch.org**

* Read all about the WTO's hidden agenda **www.corpwatch.org/issues/PID.jsp?articleid=722**

* With a few weeks to go till the WTO summit in Sydney (14/15 November), 3 anti-WTO websites face the prospect of being banned. Indymedia Melbourne is amongst the websites targeted by New South Wales Police Minister Michael Costa. Censoring the censorship lists? See **www.melbourne.indymedia.org** and **www.nowto.cat.org.au**

of the **BIG (Boycott Israeli Goods)** campaign. Saturday mornings 11 - 1 p.m. Currently at Sainsbury's, London Road ** **The Iraq Journal** website features reports of independent journalists Jeremy Scahill and Jacqueline Soohen, providing a forum for the distribution of independent information and views from Iraq. **www.iraqjournal.org** ** In New York this week 19 activists from the **No Blood for Oil Campaign** were arrested after occupying the UN General Assembly and demanding that the UN at no time give its support for the invasion of Iraq **www.PeaceNoWar.net** ** **Work & Welfare, not Weapons Conference** organised by Greater Manchester and District Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament and Campaign Against Arms Trade @ Manchester Town Hall on 2nd November. Will look at diversification from military production and the creation of a non-military economy. 0161 273 8283 **www.gmdcnd.org.uk/worknotweapons**

STRIKE A LIGHT!

Remember how great firefighters were about a year ago? When it looked like the thought of merchant bankers leaping to their deaths on 9-11 might not be tragic enough to convince us of the importance of bombing the shit out of Afghanistan, we were treated to a stream of tear-jerking speeches and articles reminding us of all the firemen who lost their lives trying to rescue victims of the WTC attacks. Firefighters were heroes and the sacrifices they made were priceless.

Erm, well now it seems that all that was a bit of a misprint. It turns out that firefighters are actually lazy, greedy, and irresponsible and the sacrifices

they make aren't worth very much at all. All this according to the same papers and politicians who were kissing their arses last year.

Why? Because the firefighters are now set to go on strike. And how dare they put other people's lives at risk to get the wages they deserve? The firefighter's union is calling for a 40% increase, the cheeky gits, which would take the wage for a qualified firefighter from £21,000 to £30,000. Don't they know that the country can't afford to actually pay a decent wage to workers who risk their lives every day?

For the Schnews reader's benefit, here's a short list of things the Labour government can afford:

* **A 40% pay increase for the Prime**

Minister: 2 weeks after winning the last election, Blair congratulated himself with a £47, 000 pay increase, taking his salary to £173, 000.

* **A £20,000 pay increases for cabinet ministers:** Not wanting to be tight, Blair also handed out pay increases to Prescott and his mates, taking the cabinet minister's salary to £120,000. Cha-ching!

* **£3.4 billion** to underwrite arms exports in 2001 through the Export Credit Guarantee Scheme.

* **Approximately £1 billion** for 'low-intensity' bombing raids on Iraq since 1997.

...and remember, now we've really got to tighten those purse strings, cos we've got a **proper** war on the way.

WALK ON THE WOODSIDE

Tired of the powers-that-be yanking them about, a community of 200 Romany travellers and their supporters intend to resist eviction from Woodside caravan park in Bedfordshire on November 1st.

After years of being told to buy their own land and stop trespassing on other people's land twenty-seven Gypsy families purchased Woodside, a 17-acre touring caravan park with full planning permission, for £300,000 in 1997. But when the families moved to the park, Mid-Bedfordshire council claimed they did not have permission for permanent occupation. The council have been trying to oust them from their land ever since, even allocating £230,000 of council money to finance clearance of the community!! After a long court battle, the council has been given the go ahead to evict the community.

Help and support is urgently needed!! There will be a protest outside the council offices (Dunstable St., Amptill, Bedford) at 6:30 p.m. Thursday 31st during a meeting about the planned eviction. Demonstrators are then invited to camp at Woodside (at Hatch, near Sandy, off A1) and help defend the site on Friday 1st, when the council is scheduled to try to force the 52 families from their homes. The Gypsy Council is asking people to donate tents, bales of hay or straw, scrap wood and rope for the action. The travellers also are working on a last-minute legal appeal. More info: 01206 523528.

ANTI-WAR ACTIONS

There's a whole load of actions coming up on the 31st to oppose the possible war against Iraq. Here are just a couple:

London: Critical Mass Ride Against Death - meet 2pm by the peace camp at Imperial War Museum, Geraldine Mary Harmsworth Park, Lambeth Road, SE1. Move off 3pm. Dress scary - www.cm-london.cjb.net And Houses of Parliament, 6pm. Dress in white, disguised as ghosts, and converge on Parliament. 020 7377-9088 disobedience@riseup.net

Brighton: Critical Mass Ride starting from Sussex University at 3pm and 3.30pm from Moulescomb Wild Park. Stop the City Stop the War demonstration. Meet 5.30pm at the War Memorial, The Old Steine. **For your nearest action contact: Stop the War Coalition 020 7053 2155, www.stopwar.org.uk

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SQU'ART ATTACK!

On Saturday 12th October Russian police illegally evicted Moscow's only political squat giving one man a broken skull and hospitalising 3 others. The squat started out as a studio given to artist Evgeni Schetov two and a half years ago by the Moscow Union of Artists. Since then the space has become an important base for ecological activism. Not liking this turn of events, city officials and bureaucrats from the Union of Artists threatened to evict Schetov. In retaliation, Schetov stopped paying his rent - making the space the first political squat in Moscow since 1997. On the morning of Saturday the 12th, the police and members of the Union of Artists managed to smash the door down with axes and then violently attacked squatters inside. Everyone was arrested and all their property was thrown into the street. The squatters are launching a campaign against the eviction. Info: dikobrazi@lists.tao.ca

DIRTY MAC

October 16th was the annual worldwide anti-McDonalds day, where crappy fast food outlets the world over were picketed and free veggie burgers given away. But this year a load of workers got involved too: Workers at six McDonalds in France went on strike, there was a strike in Norfolk, attempts at strikes in three London stores and a walkout in Nottingham. McTrash was dumped back into stores in Australia, locks glued and stores painted in Austria, freezers and toasters sabotaged in Chicago, a mass resignation in Toronto... the list goes on: www.geocities.com/globaldayofaction

Unfortunately, there are serious repercussions for anti-Macs in Mexico: 94 protesters were arrested and detained following complaints from McDonalds. They were accused of damage to an umbrella and window and carrying explosives - i.e. fireworks. The state has set a bond of \$14,000 for each protester, a fee which could buy untold numbers of replacement umbrellas. Financial help is now desperately needed. http://mexico.indymedia.org/front.php3?article_id=3486&group=webcast (In Spanish)



TUNNEL VISION

Europe's increasingly racist immigration policies have brought tighter border controls, higher surveillance, and more people being detained and deported.

Detention centres have been a focus of actions against these policies and last Saturday (19) people demonstrated outside the Dover removals centre. Later that day, they crossed the channel to join up with French activists at the Sangatte camp. Sangatte is a humanitarian Red Cross camp which is home to 1,500 people who are hoping to apply for asylum in Europe. Both the French and English governments have schemed together to close the camp by March 2003 because sheltering and feeding migrants was seen as far too liberal. The UN has very kindly offered to help sort the 'genuine' from the 'non-genuine' refugees and will be giving the 'non-genuine' the option of being sent back home with a bit of cash or living on the streets of Calais now that Sangatte will be shut down. On Saturday, many of the refugees came out of Sangatte to talk to the protesters. One protester told Schnews, "The hardest thing was meeting children who were telling us that England was their dream country when we really know the truth of what will happen to them when they come here."

For more information about the actions visit www.noborder.org, www.barbedwirebritain.org.uk and www.campsfield.org.uk

* Next demo at Sangatte is on Friday November 15th - the day that Sangatte closes its doors to newcomers. Info: goldfish1967@hotmail.com

* There will be a Brighton No Borders Meeting, 28th October, 7.30pm Tilbury Place. Unemployed Centre off Carlton Street.

...and finally...

Only weeks after announcing (then quickly retracting) that the solution to the annual 'fallen leaves' problem would be to fell all trees on the banks of their rail lines, it looks like Rail Track now have a new enemy. Taking the form of a giant inflatable hamburger, the new menace disrupted services from Newport to London on Tuesday. Rail Track have since announced a national cull of large inflatable hamburgers and of any giant inflatable clowns that might be making them. http://uk.indymedia.org/front.php3?article_id=44217&group=webcast

Disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all readers Bognor Regis is not Nice. Honest.

WAR IS BUSINESS\$ A\$ USUAL

The strength of popular feeling against the UK's involvement in the war on Iraq led to actions and protests at military bases in this country on a scale that hadn't been seen since the Cold War. For many people these actions will have been the first time they visited a military base. But for others, direct action at the nerve centres of the military-industrial complex has been a familiar and regular part of life for years. As dodgy military establishments have been in place for so long, so have a lot of the networks that spread information and take direct action against military activity. However much the media persist in labelling anti-war protests 'echoes of the sixties', peace protest did not die at the end of the Vietnam War to be resuscitated after September 11; it never went away, and will not go away until it has achieved its aims.

See the map for military and anti-military stuff going on in your area.

1. **Faslane Naval Base** is where the Trident submarines, and some other British and American ships, are based. Britain has four Trident submarines, each of which can carry up to 48 nuclear warheads. For nearly 21 years, Faslane Peace Camp has been situated across the road from the base, as a permanent presence of opposition. The peace camp is both a focus for direct action and an attempt at a more positive way of life, using renewable energy and making decisions by consensus.
2. **RNAD Coulport**, five miles from Faslane, is an arms depot where Trident warheads are kept. For the last few years, Trident Ploughshares has held summer disarmament camps at Coulport.
3. **Dundrennon** is the only place in Britain where depleted uranium shells are tested. For more information contact the Campaign Against Depleted Uranium (CADU)
4. **Cape Wrath** is a NATO test bombing site. For more information contact Scottish CND or Faslane Peace Camp.
5. **Sellafield** is a nuclear reprocessing plant run by BNFL. There are women's peace camps on an irregular basis there, and occasional CND camps. Nuclear waste comes to Sellafield from all over Europe and beyond. Action has been taken at various places to try to stop the lorries and trains that carry it.
6. **Menwith Hill** is a US listening base. There was a women's peace camp there for many years. Contact the WoMenwith Hill Women's Peace Camp, Yorkshire CND or the Campaign for the Accountability of American Air Bases (CAAB).
7. **RAF Fylingdales** is another US base in North Yorkshire, soon to be upgraded for incorporation into America's National Missile Defence programme, AKA 'Son of Star Wars'. There have been regular protests at Fylingdales and since 2002 there has been a peace camp.

8. **Rolls Royce**, based in Derby, produces reactors and other equipment for nuclear submarines.
- 9 and 10. **Lakenheath and Mildenhall** are US military bases.
11. Situated next to a boring-looking town near Reading, **Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) Aldermaston** is a bomb factory which manufactures parts for Britain's nuclear arsenal. It was a focus for the early years of CND. Women continue to camp there one weekend every month, a campaign that has lasted since the Eighties. In recent years it has also been a focus for Trident Ploughshares disarmament camps, and Youth and Student CND camp there at least once a year to practice climbing fences.
12. **AWE Burghfield** works closely alongside Aldermaston, and is often another focus for the Aldermaston women's camp and Youth and Student CND camps.
13. **Fairford** is an air base that was used by the US in its recent attack on Iraq as a base for B52 bombers. (see other articles in this book).
14. **Welford** is a base that stores bombs to be taken to Fairford.
15. **Devonport** dockyard in Plymouth is where Trident submarines are refitted and refuelled with radioactive fuel. Trident Ploughshares held a disarmament camp there in 2002 in which two people boarded a submarine. Seven people have been acquitted for blockading a gate to the dockyard.
16. **Northwood** is a British and NATO war command centre. (See other articles in this book.)
17. **The MoD at Whitehall** is where a lot of decisions are made...

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17. **The MoD at Whitehall** is where a lot of decisions are made...

And the moving targets...

Nuclear convoys travel in groups of up to five carrying warheads for Britain's weapons of mass destruction. They drive on civilian roads, escorted by several support and police vehicles. They are not marked with radiation symbols, but they are still easy to identify. There have been a large number of mishaps involving these vehicles, and several near disasters.

Since the convoys began, people have been taking direct action against them. This is important - a major reason why American cruise missiles were removed from Britain in the 1980's was ordinary people persistently hindering their movements. In Scotland an attempt has been made to stop nearly every nuclear convoy that has passed through since 1982, sometimes with inspiring results. Nukewatch is a national network that keeps an eye on the movements of nuclear convoys.

It's fairly easy to stop a convoy by going out in front of it far enough in advance for it to stop. A place where the vehicles have to go slowly, such as a roundabout or junction, is good for this. Then people can attempt to climb on top of the vehicles, or lock on underneath or in front of them. In February 2003 a convoy was prevented from leaving Coulport for 2 - 3 hours when people locked on in front of the gates through which it was going to leave.

In 2002 a convoy was stopped in Balloch, a town in Western Scotland through which the convoy regularly travels. The town was leafleted that morning so local people knew what to expect. When the convoy arrived and was stopped, there was a large crowd of supportive onlookers - perhaps next time some of them will join in...

Convoy-stopping tactics have also been used recently to stop weapons convoys going from Welford and Fairford (see article in this book).

Contacts: Scottish CND 0141 423 1222, www.banthebomb.org ** **Faslane Peace Camp** 01436 820901, www.faslanepeacecamp.org.uk ** **Nukewatch** www.gn.apc.org/pmhp/convoys, 02380 554434 ** **Aldermaston Women's Peace Camp** 07904450307, www.aldermastonwpc.gn.apc.org ** **Trident Ploughshares** www.tridentploughshares.org, 0845 4588366 ** **Gloucester Weapons Inspectors** www.gwi.org.uk ** **Yorkshire CND** www.cndyorks.gn.apc.org ** **CAAB** www.caab.org.uk ** **WoMenwith Hill Women's Peace Camp** 01943 466825, www.cndyorks.gn.apc.org/mhs/wpc/wpcmh.htm ** **Lakenheath Action Group** www.motherearth.org/lakenheathaction, 01508 550446 ** **Free Fylingdales Network** www.freefylingdalesnetwork.co.uk

We Can't Keep On Meeting Like This

They were called the "biggest anti-war demonstrations in the US since the Vietnam War". As part of an international day of action against the war, on October 26 more than 200,000 people formed a two mile long human mass through the streets of Washington, D.C. Meanwhile over 100,000 marched in San Francisco in addition to tens of thousands in other cities around the US.



San Francisco

(left) October 27: 3-4,000 visit the home of Donald Rumsfeld in Taos, New Mexico to give him some feedback about his push for war. Protesters said it was a bit difficult knowing which house to have a go at because he owns seven properties in the area.



(above) On October 25 at the US Embassy in Manila, Philippines some argy-bargy broke out between protesters and police. A strong theme running through the protest was a demand that U.S. troops permanently go home. Washington has used the excuse of alleged terrorist organizations to reintroduce U.S. military forces into its former Pacific colony.



(above) In San Juan, Puerto Rico, hundreds gather in front of the Puerto Rican National Guard armoury to denounce a possible war and the continued U.S. Navy use of the Vieques bombing range.

In Germany US Airbases were targeted for direct action: at Spangdahlem, near Trier, several hundred converged on the airbase, while in Berlin 20,000 gathered in Alexanderplatz for a march which included large sections of the Muslim community. Despite rain and gale-force winds, thousands took to the streets in Frankfurt and Stuttgart, but a hurricane kept numbers down in Hamburg!



October 24th: Entrances to the US Spy Base at Menwith Hill are blocked for four and a half hours by a group braving the cold morning. D-locks and handcuffs in metal tubing were used to block the gate - with 1,000 employees at the base being turned away from work. Another gate was jammed using good-old superglue in the lock.



More Halloween Madness

The Spanish had it on the streets on October 26, with large crowds in Madrid, Barcelona, Bilbao, Oviedo, Valencia, Caceres and Sevilla as well as actions in many of the smaller towns and villages. The largest was in Barcelona with more than 30,000 (left).

Other events on October the 26th: In India the Kerala chapter of the All-India Anti-Imperialist Forum held a demonstration in front of the State Secretariat. ** In Holland, 10,000 came out in Amsterdam, and 1,200 in Rotterdam ** 3,000 gathered at the US Embassy in Copenhagen ** Another 1,500 hit the streets in Stockholm, Sweden and Oslo, Norway. ** In Italy 20,000 marched in Florence, 2,000 in Turin.

In Indonesia on October 24 demonstrators rallied at the U.S. Embassy in Jakarta. This Embassy was to become a very popular place in the coming months...

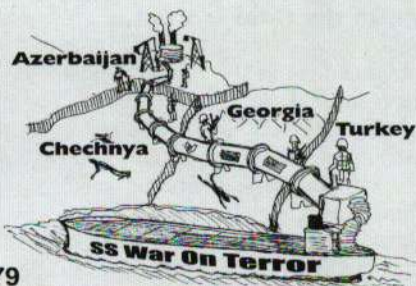
In Japan anti-war demos took place on October 20 in Hiroshima and Toyama, on the 21st in Tokyo, Osaka, Fukuoka, Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and then all over again in Tokyo on the 26th.

In Ankara, Turkey on October 21, students braved attacks by riot cops to protest a visit by U.S. Central Command Chief General Tommy Franks, who has been named as the regent of Iraq should the U.S. occupy the country.



Masking up for some direct action - Rotterdam, October 26th





PUTIN THE BOOT IN

"Is it a real victory - so many victims? The tragedy of the musical did not spring out of the blue. It is not the end, but the beginning. Now we shall live in fear, as we see our children and our elderly go out into the street. Perhaps this is how Chechen people live?" - Anna Politkovskaya, Russian journalist who went in to talk to the hostage takers.

Russia's very own war on terrorism came back to haunt it last weekend when Chechen rebels took hundreds of people hostage in a Moscow Theatre. Their demand was that Russia pull out of Chechnya which over the past few years has been bombed back to the iron age - retribution for a number of bomb attacks in Moscow that were blamed on the rebels. Russian troops captured the capital Grozny - already a pile of rubble after the last war with Russia five years earlier - and in the process killed up to 40,000 civilians. Although the 'conventional' war has largely ceased, human rights organisations have reported a rise in the disappearance, torture and summary executions, in what is called the 'Wild West' of Russia.

There is a catalogue of human rights abuses perpetrated by the Russian Army: In June, a ditch containing 50 mutilated bodies was discovered near the Russian army post in Chankala. The corpses were missing eyes, ears, limbs and genitals. In July in the village of Meskyer Yurt, 21 men, women and children were bound together and blown up, their remains were thrown into a ditch. The list goes on...

Some those who survive sometimes wish hadn't. In Zernovodsk this summer, townspeople say they

were made to watch women being raped. When the men tried to defend them, 68 were handcuffed to an armoured truck and raped too. After this episode, 45 of them joined the guerrillas in the mountains. One older man, Nurdi Dayeyev, who was nearly blind, had nails driven through his hands and feet because it was suspected that he was in contact with the fighters. The Russians do not deny that these things happen, there's even an official order issued banning such abuses.

Theatre of War

Last weekend's tragedy has refocused attention on the conflict, which Russia has repeatedly claimed is winding down, even though its soldiers continue to die at a rate of two to three a day. Russia's President Putin has tried to sweep the embarrassing brutalities of the ongoing 'anti-terrorist' operations under the carpet, whilst the West has turned a blind eye so they could get Russian support for their own wars of terror in Afghanistan, Iraq and elsewhere.

The problem according to Krystyna Kurczab-Redlich, a Polish reporter is that "the brutality of the Russians has also resulted in a growing radicalisation of their opponents." Russia has tried to link the rebels to al-Qaeda, as some of the Chechen leaders no doubt see the conflict as a holy war. Now Chechen's everywhere face a further crackdown. Soldiers are surrounding refugee camps, while Chechen's in Russia are being rounded up and arrested. Russia has tried to stop the World Chechen Congress in Copenhagen, they persuaded Denmark to arrest

CRAP ARRESTS OF THE WEEK

For kicking a balloon...

One of Turkey's most famous singers, Hulya Avsar, faces the prospect of six months in jail for kicking balloons displaying the Turkish flag. Avsar allegedly kicked some balloons that were in her way as she walked to meet guests on her TV show. Unfortunately for the popular singer it's illegal in Turkey to display the flag on objects and near blasphemy to have the sacred flag on the ground. The TV crew and the balloon makers also face a six month stay in jail for the malicious act.

Akhmed Zakayev, Chechnya's top European representative, who was to be the main speaker, who they accuse of playing a part in the theatre siege. As one Russian journalist commented "The search for participants in the terrorist act is turning into a cleansing operation to rid Moscow of all Chechens."

* For conspiracy theories that it was the Russian secret police who carried out the 1999 bombings of apartment blocks that sparked the latest war with Chechnya and swept Putin to power see http://uk.indymedia.org/front.php3?article_id=24275

* Amnesty International this week published a new report on the human rights situation in Russia and Chechnya. For copies 020 7814 6200 www.amnesty.org

More Shit in the Pipeline

Both Russia and the US are fighting the 'war on terror' to justify attacks on (largely) Islamic societies with racist rhetoric about the need to combat 'fundamentalism', but the real reason behind it is justification for anything the state does to protect

Putin the Boot In cont...

its interests. Nowhere is this more obvious than in the former Soviet republic of Georgia.

Back in July, this tiny country was granted \$64 million of aid by the US government, making it the third largest recipient of US aid in the world. The reason? Both the US and Russia reckon that Georgia is in the frontline of the 'war on terror'. Russia argues that Georgia's mountainous Pankisi gorge, which sits along the border with Chechnya, is a hideout for Chechen rebels, who are able to move across the border to launch attacks on Russian troops. The US reckons that amongst these fighters there might be as many as a dozen Al-Qaeda members. The \$64 million is for counter-insurgency training and equipment for the Georgian army, allegedly so that it can flush out these bad guys. Russia was furious about this move, which amounts to the US establishing a base for its Special Forces on the Russian border. Russia accused Georgia of 'complicity' with international terror and Putin wrote to the UN saying that Russia reserved the right to use 'pre-emptive strikes'

on Georgia to defend itself.

The US claim that it's pouring money on the Georgian military so that they can take out al-Qaeda just doesn't stand up. As one journalist wrote, 'why would the dozen or so suspected al-Qaeda terrorists hang around until a new force is trained?' But what other reason would there be for making sure the Georgian army is tooled-up like the Green Berets? Hmmm, maybe it's got something to do with the massive oil and gas pipelines that the US and Britain want to run through Georgia, to take oil from Baku, Azerbaijan, to Ceyhan in Turkey. For the last 10 years the US and Britain have been investing in central Asian oilfields, but have been struggling to find a way of getting the oil to the West without taking it through Iran or Russia. The proposed solution is the Baku-Ceyhan pipeline, which if built would transport 1 million barrels of oil a day along a route that runs across (amongst other things) 20 major rivers and 2 dense primary forests, and borders on several zones of conflict.

The consortium of companies backing the pipeline is only offering

to provide 30% of the £3 billion costs. BP, the company heading the consortium, has said that the project would not be possible without masses of 'free public money' (i.e. our money), including £65 million from the UK's own Export Credit Guarantee Scheme. It will also need military or paramilitary patrols all along the route to protect the pipe from sabotage and theft. Campaigners opposing the pipeline say that the proposed route 'as well as passing through war zones, cuts through villages and bisects peoples' lands. Many will be evicted, or forced to trespass on oil company property in order to lead their daily lives. Similar situations in other countries (such as BP's pipeline in Colombia) have led to major human rights atrocities.' Whilst Georgian peasants worry that Russia's 'new hard-line' approach to Chechnya will drag their villages back into conflict, Western greed for Central Asian oil is driving plans that, if carried out, will ensure that Georgia is threatened by war and environmental crisis for decades to come.

More info: www.bankwatch.org

Earth First! Baku-Ceyhan Action Briefing

If there was any doubt left in anyone's mind, the past year definitely made one thing clear: the oil industry's got it coming. At a time when some predict that oil reserves will run out within a couple of generations, when global warming is an imminent reality, the petrochemical giants are still one of the main forces standing in the way of developing sustainable energy, and are still scouring the globe for new sources of oil to burn. In the twisted logic of capitalism, the less oil there is left, the more profitable it will become for the energy barons to prevent investigation into alternatives. This isn't good for anyone, but it will be worst for people unlucky enough to live around areas where new wells and pipelines are being constructed. Extraction is a messy and expensive business: local environments are destroyed by leaks, and local people subjected to violence, as oil companies employ paramilitaries and support repressive governments to protect their massive investments. One oil company project threatening to make life nastier and shorter for a lot of people is the Baku-Ceyhan pipeline (see SchNEWS 379). In the following article activists working against the pipeline give an overview of the plan, and some of the stuff that's being done to stop it.

The Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) pipeline is BP's latest project. Running from the Caspian Sea through 8 conflict zones in Turkey, Georgia and Azerbaijan, this 1000-mile oil pipeline will bring 1 million barrels of oil a day to Europe and the US for the next 40 years, and will have a devastating impact on the climate, the environment and human rights.

The pipeline is the key to unlocking vast oil reserves, the burning of which directly contradicts Britain's Kyoto climate change commitments and will wreak havoc on the earth's climate. In terms of human rights, we only have to look at BP's track record (or that of any other oil company, such as Shell in Ogoniland) to know what this pipeline will mean for people on the ground. Pipelines invariably exacerbate conflict in the regions where they are built. BP funded paramilitaries in Colombia to protect its pipeline from local opposition and guerrilla activity, and to silence its own workers. Kurdish communities in Turkey have already been evicted from their land in preparation for the Baku pipeline. Militarisation is already happening along the length of the Baku pipeline (see SchNEWS 379): ABB recently won a security contract and use of US unmanned drones to patrol pipeline routes in Georgia.

Local communities will not see any benefit from this pipeline. They will lose their land, their independ-

ence, their skills, and some will lose their lives. No one except BP and its project partners will benefit from this proposed pipelines system, yet BP is asking that 70% of the US\$3.3 billion project be financed by public money. It is courting the UK government to influence banks such as the European Bank of Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and the International Financial Corporation (IFC, an arm of the World Bank), which generate their funds from taxpayer's money. If these banks don't cough up the dough, the pipeline cannot go ahead.

Although these banks are 'minded' to give BP the money they need for the pipeline, and the construction company AMEC is in line for building it (\$330 million contract so far), the project is not yet a dead cert. Which gives us an opportunity to stop it.

Earth First! and other concerned groups such as Rising Tide have been visiting many of the companies involved in the pipeline. In January, a group of people visited the offices of Environmental Resource Management (ERM) for a day. ERM are responsible for the Environmental and Social Impact Assessments that BP are required to do for greenwash purposes. These assessments are a joke. Independent researchers found that consultations had not been done in local languages, that many villages had been ignored and key locations excluded. The consultants from ERM claimed to have talked to 100% of villagers in Hacibayram in north-eastern Turkey - a village which was, at the time, completely abandoned following local conflict! The most recent Baku-Ceyhan Campaign fact-finding mission to northeast Turkey just returned having uncovered disturbing human rights abuses and it was itself detained by the Turkish gendarmerie.

In February, an Earth First! group occupied the offices of the European Bank of Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) in the city of London, interrupting an executive meeting about the pipeline. They refused to leave until they had spoken to those responsible for signing off the project and the very eager-to-appease directors attempted to 'dialogue' the group for four hours, confirming the group's understanding that the EBRD had already promised BP the money and were now just working out how to justify it! When asked to name one oil pipeline ever that had delivered the benefits promised to affected communities, they couldn't. An invitation to return as part of a focus group was declined.

In March, another group occupied the offices of

a RSK in Cheshire, a greenwash company similar to ERM, with a client list that makes your blood run cold, but this time providing Cultural and Heritage Impact Assessments. Because not much was known about RSK - and because the group had no desire to listen to bullshit - the group decided on a silent occupation, refusing to engage with any of the staff and simply gathering whatever information they could from files and computers.

Also in March, the trading floor of the International Petroleum Exchange in the City of London was stormed and closed down for three hours in an action designed to crystallize the link between oil and the war in Iraq.

Action against the pipeline in the UK is also linking up with efforts to stop the pipeline in the countries which will be directly affected. As 16 Georgian, Azerbaijani and Russian NGOs presented their objections to the EBRD office in Tbilisi, Georgia, 120 people in the UK constructed their own pipeline starting at the EBRD in the Square Mile and passing the bank ABN Amro and ending up at BP headquarters in the City of London.

The Baku pipeline is a big deal, not only because it's a nasty project but because it is happening at a time when the first phase of the oil wars has begun. As for BP, it is already on shaky ground. Because of visits like those described above and due to pressure exerted by groups like Rising Tide and the broader Baku-Ceyhan Campaign, the Baku pipeline has already been put back by 6 months. At 1 million barrels of oil a day, every day's delay means the loss of millions of dollars. Furthermore, despite an aggressive greenwash strategy (including a BP-sponsored Ecology exhibition at the Natural History Museum!), concern about BP working practices in Alaska and in Colombia have already caused investors to question their involvement with BP. So get out there and shut BP down!

For information on the pipeline, contact Rising Tide (a UK grassroots network against climate change) at info@risingtide.org.uk or look at the following websites: Baku-Ceyhan Campaign at www.bakuceyhan.org.uk and www.burningplanet.net. Or get a group together and go and visit one of the following: ERM (London and Manchester), the EBRD (London), AMEC (London and Cheshire), RSK (Cheshire), Lazard Brothers (London) and any BP petrol station or office. Contact Manchester EF! for disk detailing companies involved or look on www.baku.org.uk





Causing a climate of chaos at the Motor Show in Birmingham

STORMING

Last Tuesday (22nd October) workers on the Birmingham Northern Relief Road were able to enjoy an unscheduled break when a dozen people stormed the construction site of a bridge over a canal and disabled diggers and a crane. The protesters say it represents the start of a new phase of the campaign against car culture and climate change in the face of a renewed road building program under the Labour Government. The action happened one day before the start of the British International Motor Show and the UN climate conference in New Delhi, India (COP 8).

At the Motor Show in Birming-

ham, Europe's largest car show, actions continued highlighting how the car industry is part of the problem of climate change. It's not just people in the west who have been protesting against climate change. Those communities most affected (mostly in southern countries) met at a Climate Justice Summit held at the same time as the UN climate conference to provide a platform for climate change impacted communities from around the world. "The negotiations to solve the climate change crisis have been hijacked by corporations and industrialised nations, especially the US. These meetings resemble a trade meeting to push globalisation over developing countries rather than a meeting to address the genuine needs of people," said Medha Patkar of the India Climate Justice Forum. The summit was followed by a 5,000 strong rally in New Delhi.

And while the people directly affected by climate change met to discuss the issues affecting them

the world's Governments met to carve-up another commodity - the earth's climate. The conference looks like being yet another failed opportunity, with the initial draft resolution in combating climate change being described as "unacceptable" and "worthless". Expect more storms and floods of hot air from the conference which finishes today. www.corpwatchindia.org
Car show actions:
www.anticarshow.net

* 600 protesters managed to shut down all 28 Esso petrol stations in Luxembourg last Saturday in a climate change protest by Greenpeace.

*** Protests at two Brighton Esso Stations** at Lewes Rd and Dyke Rd. Meet Sat 2nd 12pm.

* While our government's Environment Minister talks about cutting down greenhouse gases, there are plans for a massive extension of airports which will do nothing to curb air travel, the fastest growing source of greenhouse gases. A new Midlands airport would threaten the country's leading organic organisations gardens at Ryton (024-7630-3517 www.hdra.org.uk). And a new airport at Cliffe marshes in Kent would affect internationally important wetland sites that are home to 200,000 wading birds. The government has a consultation about air travel at www.aviation.dft.gov.uk or phone 0845 100 5554. You can email objections to the Department of Transport apd@dft.gsi.gov.uk for what its worth.

*** Runway No Way Demonstration** against Stanstead Airport, 2nd Nov Montessori School, Mole Hill Gn, nr Broxted. 07817 708113.

* Public meeting to discuss the current aviation consultation 14th November at Plants Brook School, Upper Holland Road, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands 7.30pm.

* Remember the fuel blockades a couple of years ago by truckers and farmers? Welsh farmer Mr Brynle Williams one of its leaders claimed to have no political bias: "I'm not a politician, I'm just a simple farmer." Well guess who has been selected as Conservative candidate for Clwyd West? But then he did say "I don't want a career in politics at all" so maybe joining the dinosaur Conservative Party is the right thing to do.

LISTEN UP!

Last Thursday protestors used D-locks, Superglue and good ol' determination to blockade the US spy base in Menwith Hill, Yorkshire. The blockade started at 5am with protestors D-locking themselves to the main gates and then handcuffing themselves to each other. With alternative gates sealed off by Superglue and locks, all traffic was blocked and the 3 scheduled shift changes were disrupted. Most employees were prevented from entering the base to do their daily spying and so ended up heading back home. After 4 1/2 hours the ever-friendly men in blue were threatening arrests and the protestors ended the blockade, happy with the results.

So what's this spy base about then? Well, it's an 'interception centre' that would be used to co-ordinate any bombing of Iraq. It's part of America's murky 'Echelon' programme set up during the Cold

War - a network of 'listening posts' able to intercept millions of phone, fax and e-mail messages. Our upstanding government assures us that 'communication interception' is covered by strict legal guidelines - honest! But the EU parliamentary committee set up to investigate 'Echelon' reckons that Uncle Sam uses it for industrial espionage to benefit US companies. So the committee recommends that all EU capitalists encrypt everything...now!

*** Fylingdale Star Peace Camp**, outside the US airbase, which is now 5 months old, have received eviction papers and are appearing in court next week. Vigil outside the court 10.45am, 6th Nov, Whitby Law Court, Waterstead Lane, Whitby. The camp also urgently needs funds send money payable to 'WoMenwith Hill Women's Peace Camp', P.O. Box 105, Harrogate HG3 2FE. Tel 01947896481 www.FreeFylingdaleNetwork.co.uk.

SchNEWS in brief

Sick of prefab pop music? To help the sporadic network aimed at bringing down 'Pop Rivals' visit www.killpop.org ** The global arms trade has flourished since the end of the Cold War. Find out in the '**No-Nonsense Guide To The Arms Trade**' - available for £7 from CAAT, 11 Goodwin Street, London N4 3HQ www.caat.org.uk ** **Taking Aim** - a Revolutionary Conference for the libertarian left, activists and other rebel-rousers, will be held in Bradford next year. To get involved email conference@riseup.net. ** **Sic** - Chumbawamba's very slicker 'zine' is out. All good stuff with Mark Thomas and others contributing, available now for a fiver www.chumba.com/_sic.htm ** To get a copy of **Que Se Vayan Todos**, the excellent newsprint

publication about the events of the last 12 months in Argentina send SchNEWS a 4lp SAE ** **Zapatista** - A benefit for Mayan autonomous communities, Tues 4th downstairs at the Sanctuary, Brunswick St, Hove. With food, info and world and rebel beats. Kicks off at 7pm with the film **Zapatista** ** **Remember Barry Horne**. Anniversary of the death of the animal rights prisoner who died on hunger strike against the government broken promises of animal welfare reform. Memorial demo Tues 5th 2pm followed by night vigil at HLS, Alconbury, Cambs.0845 458 0630 or 07899 775493 ** **Scottish Anarchist Day School** Sat 9th, Kinning Park Centre, Glasgow, Scotland. 10.30am-5pm. Workshops, discussions, and much more! £3/1. anarcho-scots@lists.mutualaid.org <http://lists.mutualaid.org/mailman/listinfo/anarcho-scots>

Inside SchNEWS

Pelle Strindlund from Bye Bye Meat Industry - a group that carries out "animal rights ploughshares type actions" - has been given 8 months for rescuing hens from a battery farm. He'd appreciate letters of support. Pelle Strindlund, Ostragård kriminalvårdsanstalt, Box 215, SE462-23 Vanersborg, Sweden

Cassidy Wheeler an US anarcho-primitivist serving 8½ years for petty theft is looking for penpals to keep up with what's going on whilst he's inside. Cassidy Wheeler #1428456, SRCI, 777 Stanton Blvd., Ontario, Oregon 97914-8335, USA.

...and finally...

Boom, Boom...For those readers old enough to remember Basil Brush the country's favourite fox, you'll remember that he wasn't all sweetness and light. Well he's back on TV screens and he's still causing a bit of a stir, not only is he fatter and now allegedly a bit camp, but his fox's natural instinct to dislike farmers has resulted in an episode of his series being 'temporarily withdrawn' by the BBC. The episode, which featured Basil calling a bad-tempered farmer 'manure breath', and then ALF-style liberating the farmer's chickens from a chicken pie fate. The BBC insisted that the programme was not being screened because it was "not yet ready for transmission" and that it was nothing to do with complaints from Richard Haddock, a member of the National Farmers' Union council, who said: "I am absolutely disgusted. The BBC in London seems to be going down this anti-farm agenda." Which is obviously laughable considering the unquestionable support they gave to last month's Countryside Alliance March.

This story was stolen from October's brilliant Shoreham Protester - which includes loads of interesting info about the Countryside Alliance. 50p plus SAE from The Shoreham Protester, 7 Stoneham Road, Hove, BN3 5HJ. www.shoreham-protester.org.uk

Disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all warmongers to stop taking the peace. Honest.

WOODSIDE LINED

The Woodside Caravan Park - a legitimate campsite in Bedfordshire bought in 1997 by 27 gypsy families - is under threat of eviction from this Friday (1). A protest camp has been set up to help the community resist eviction, and needs more people and tat. This comes a week after a gypsy from another camp, a 22 year old father of two, was subject to a murder attempt and dumped in a coma outside Woodside in a racially motivated act of intimidation. For Woodside residents this is even more reason to remain on the site as they feel safer together. Info. 01767 681 651 www.f-f-t.demon.co.uk/fft/WOODSIDE.HTM



BARRED FOR LIFE

The indefinite detention of 12 people without trial in the UK under last year's knee jerk Anti-Terrorism Crime and Security Act (see SchNEWS 363), has been deemed legal by the High Court. In July an appeal by those detained under the Act, led to an immigration appeals commission to rule that it contravened the European Convention on Human Rights. That decision has now been overturned by the High Court who believed the government that these 12 people are a threat to the nation's security in this 'time of emergency'. And what evidence did the government need to produce to show that we're in a state of emergency - well the evidence put forward by the government to back it's argument remained secret and was not considered by the court in it's decision. As according to the judges the government is in a better position than the courts to make such important decisions. Two of those detained have now left the country, the remainder now face indefinite imprisonment for the duration of the 'emergency'.

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Friday 8th November 2002

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Issue 380



ASSAULT AND PEPPER



Police lose it on Brighton Seafront, Halloween

Thousands took part in last Thursday's nationwide day of action against the threat of war on Iraq. In Brighton, SchNEWS joined in with hundreds of others for the best bit of direct action on the city streets since the heady days of Reclaim The Streets parties way back in the mid 1990's.

The Brighton demo started at 3pm with a critical mass bike ride from Sussex University with the Peddlers for Peace blocking both lanes of traffic and, despite the best efforts of the cops, riding triumphantly all the way to the war memorial at the Old Steine. Over 500 people from a range of backgrounds - students, Christians, greens, socialists, anarchists and a peace choir were entertained with speeches, MCs and some crazy dancing people before they set off to block the main roundabout by Palace Pier.

Seeing as it was Halloween the cops, who had obviously done their PR training with the Seattle police department, were busy dishing out their own special trick or treats - a pre-emptive blast of pepper spray, boots and batons for all the poor protesters who were just too tired to carry on and ended up having

to sit down in the road. Still, what did the demonstrators expect? They were only trying to protest that thousands of innocent Iraqi civilians could be killed, while the police had the much more

important task of keeping the traffic moving. And contrast this response to the City's small traders, who for the past few months have been disrupting traffic by driving through town at a snails pace in protest at increased parking fees, without a whiff of pepper spray or baton in sight.

One man was taken to casualty after being pepper sprayed twice. The weapon in his hand was a notebook in which he was recording police ID numbers, many of which weren't on display. He told SchNEWS "Ironically one of the justifications given for attacking oil-rich Iraq is Saddam's brutal treatment of dissenters in his country. He has been accused of using chemical

CRAP ARRESTS OF THE WEEK

For doing as you're told!

At an anti-war demo outside Yorkshire TV in Leeds, a policeman asked a protestor to move his bicycle backwards, which he did. In doing so, the cyclist bumped into an officer who had suddenly appeared behind him, and was arrested for assaulting a police officer!

weapons such as mustard gas to suppress rebellion. How lucky we are to live in a civilised country where pepper spray is used instead."

According to their own rules cops can only spray when they are physically threatened - and apparently people sitting cross-legged in the road posed such a huge threat - but the heavy-handed tactics only succeeded in partly clearing the roundabout and nudging the crowd into going on a walkabout. The demo outmanoeuvred the cops for hours, heading towards key spots around the city, with riot wagons scurrying to get numbers to block-off roads.

Even the local rag, The Argus, said "The fact that so many people in Brighton alone were willing to take to the streets shows the strength of public opinion and that

HOT STUFF

Pepper Spray is not in fact made from pepper, but from a synthetic substance called PAVA which when sprayed causes burning to the skin, eyes, nose, mouth and breathing passages. The good news is that the effects are temporary. But for infants, the elderly, people who suffer from respiratory diseases, etc. the risks are possibly life-threatening.

If the police carry on behaving like

this on demos it would be a good idea to start carrying goggles. If you are sprayed the best treatment is to wash your eyes with a solution of half-liquid antacid (like Maalox) and half water, or failing that just use water. To treat skin wipe with a cloth saturated with vegetable oil, and immediately wipe off the oil with alcohol (But don't get alcohol in your eyes, it will hurt as much as the spray!) For more info on pepper spray and first aid see www.blackcrosscollective.org

Assault & Pepper cont...

cannot be ignored by politicians." The cops capped off a great day with the old chestnut that it was a small minority of troublemakers who had spoiled it for everybody. We agree and they are based at John Street Police Station.

* Next Wed (13) **Sussex Action for Peace Benefit Night** with various DJ's at Club New York, Dyke Road, Brighton £5/£3

* The next **Rebel Alliance**, Brightons get together of direct action groups, will also be about 'Peace and Pepper Spray' with a discussion and short film about the anti war demo. Monday 18th Nov Brighton Unemployed Centre, 6 Tilbury Place 7pm

* **March for Peace in Brighton** on 23rd November. Meet 12pm Preston Park. 07815 983022 sussexactionforpeace@hotmail.com

Were you baton charged or sprayed?

Under the Data Protection Act you have the right to see any CCTV footage of yourself. This would include both footage from static CCTV cameras (there are loads in Brighton, including one above the roundabout by the pier) and hand held cameras carried by police evidence gatherers. All you need to do is send a letter with your name and address, a description of yourself, where you were and at what time. You will also have to send £10 to cover costs. (cheques payable to S.P.A.) Send to Data Protection Officer, Sussex Police, Malling House, Church Lane, Lewes, East Sussex. Tel: 0845-6070999.

More info and a sample letter can be seen at www.mtcp.co.uk/campaigns/dataprotection.htm

BRIGHTON ALLIANCE OF SOUND SYSTEMS presents

SchNEWS' 8th Birthday Party
with DJs and films.
Sun 17th November, 8pm-1am
@ The Ocean Rooms

Tickets £2.50 in advance from
Klick-Klick records, Trafalgar St.
Or £4 on door.

(right) Who you gonna call? Weaponsbusters! Gloucestershire Weapons Inspectors pay a visit to Fairford Airbase on October 31st - the base which the US Military have used in past conflicts to reload bombers, and which is about to feature strongly in an attack on Iraq. www.gwi.org.uk

This One's For Pa!

Our guess is that you've never heard of the investment firm the **Carlyle Group**. Well there's a reason for that—even Business Week describes it as, "One of the most powerful, well connected and secretive organisations in the world". Founded fifteen years ago by Ronald Reagan aide David Rubenstein, the company shot to the top when Frank Carlucci, former US Secretary of Defence, joined the team and started acquiring a list of staff that'll leave conspiracy theorists with unpleasant stains on their trousers.

Carlyle now boasts the likes of James Baker, former Secretary of State, Arthur Levitt, chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission, and Karl Otto Pohl, former president of the Bundesbank. The list also includes former presidents of South Korea and the Philippines, and our own man of morality, John Major. But wait! There's more! CEO Carlucci is a 'close friend' of Donald Rumsfeld, current US Secretary of Defence, and also sits on a board of 'independent' defence analysts. Bush Senior also holds large interests in the company. Add to this the fact that Bush Jr himself was given a seat on the board of one of the Carlyle group's first companies in 1990, and you begin to wonder exactly how big this 'revolving door' between government and politics really is.

But this isn't just your average love affair between business and government. Carlucci and chums have used their extensive political connections to acquire control of heavily regulated industries at bargain prices,

most notably *defence* companies. At present Carlyle owns United Defence, the fifth biggest arms contractor in America, Bofors, a Swiss munitions manufacturer, and since September the 3rd of this year, a substantial stake in Qinetiq, the research branch of the MoD. What does this mean? Basically as the bombs fall and the sabers rattle, Bush's mates and his family are getting rich. Don't believe us? Ask them.

Carlyle sold United Defence stocks on the stock market only one day after Congress ratified Bush's new Defence Budget for the War Against Terrorism (a wee \$11 billion more than the previous defence budget). Carlyle cleaned up \$237 million in one day and spokesmen for the company admitted that the timing was fully intentional. Not to mention the renewed contracts that United Defence received to the tune of \$2 billion.

So daddy Bush is doing very well out of the new crusade. Sickening, but not really unexpected, nor in this system of ours, illegal. What has got the watchdogs howling, however, is the fact that the Bin Laden family themselves were stakeholders in Carlyle until October of 2001, as part of a deal brokered by Bush Snr himself! Funny that when the administration was freezing the assets of any organization with links to terrorism this didn't include daddy's piggy bank! www.dyncorp-sucks.com/carlyle.html#Citigroup www.hereinreality.com/carlyle.html www.eco-action.org/porkbolter/carlyle.html



SchNEWS in brief

SchNEWS is **really desperate** for people to help with the mailout for a couple of hours on Friday afternoons. Give the office a call if you can help ** On Wednesday, Clive Codona, Chair of the National Travellers Action Group, lost his appeal at the High Court and so the travellers who bought **Woodside** campsite in Bedfordshire are once again facing eviction. Bailiffs are expected 5pm today (8th) where Clive will ask them just where he and the other 27 families are supposed to go? Tel 01767 681 651 www.f-f-t.demon.co.uk/fft/WOODSIDE.HTM ** Brighton's premier pirate radio station **Radio 4A** is on the air this weekend (8th-10th). 107.8FM and www.piratetv.net, details at www.radio4a.org.uk ** **RIP. John Moore**, primitivist writer and poet, died suddenly on October 22. John was one of the UK's leading primitivists and frequently wrote articles for Green Anarchist and other publications. ** Around 200 people reclaimed the streets in **Copenhagen** last Friday, protesting against big business & private cars and demanding the right to party! ** Copenhagen is also the setting for mass protests against the **EU Summit** there from the 12-14 December. www.disobedience.dk ** **Greenpeace's Rainbow Warrior ship** is currently on a three month educational tour of UK ports including Trinity Quay Plymouth Wed 13th, Poole Quay 16th-17th, Liverpool, Greenock, Belfast, Dublin, Cardiff,

Plymouth, Edinburgh, Newcastle, Ipswich and London. 020 7226 6059 www.greenpeace.org.uk/rainbowwarrior.htm ** The **Berkshire Citizens Inspection Agency (CIA)** will be visiting **2 nuclear weapons establishments** this weekend, where they will demand to carry out inspections to ensure that the weapons establishments are complying with international law. The team will be visiting **Aldermaston** today and **RAF Welford** on Saturday. 0118 966 8328/07790 409339 ** Support the **13 asylum seekers being fitted up for arson!!** Following the fire in **Yarl's Wood Detention Centre** last February, the Crown is bringing **charges of arson and violent disorder against 13 detainees** whom it is desperate to scapegoat for the blaze. On Sunday (10) there will be leafletting outside of Harrow Crown Court, Hailsham Drive, Harrow at 10am, followed by a planning meeting, then a drive over to Wormwood Scrubs to visit detainees. On **Friday the 15th there's a pre-trial hearing at Harrow Crown Court**. Meet at the court 9am for a demo & leafletting. Info: ginn_emma@hotmail.com / 07786 517379 ** Some people from Brighton will be taking a mini-bus up to Harrow on the 15th. If you're interested, come to the next **Brighton No Borders meeting**, Monday the 11th at 7:30pm, Unemployed Centre, Tilbury Pl.

COP8 & ROBBERS

The **COP 8 UN Climate Change conference in New Delhi** fizzled out last week – the latest in the series of meetings which benefit the five star hotel industry more than the environment. Each time the UN climate folks meet they tinker with their 'declaration' – and now it doesn't even mention the Kyoto protocol! Kyoto was supposed to be a pledge for the US, Europe, and Co. to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions by 5.2%. Sounds good, except when you consider that experts agree this figure should be 60-90%. In short, the New Delhi conference was a complete sham. But as a sidenote, the US—who cause 25% of worldwide emissions and aren't even signing up for Kyoto—were said to be happy with the 'progress'. 01865 241097 www.risingtide.org.uk

DARK AGES

Work has started on construction of a privately financed road at **Bilston, 8 miles south of Edinburgh**. The road will destroy a local woodland, part of which is an SSSI. The woods contain many mature trees and a medieval bridge and tower. A protest camp was set up in June this year—they desperately need more people and more tat! Directions by car - take the A701 towards Pennicuik until you get to Bilston. Search for a metal gate on your left (opposite VW garage), go through & follow the path. By bus - take the 37A from E'burgh towards Pennicuik, get off at the 1st bus stop in Bilston. Contact the site mobile 0798663249 or email: bilston.glen@dhmail.net

IF ORDINARY PEOPLE BEHAVED LIKE-

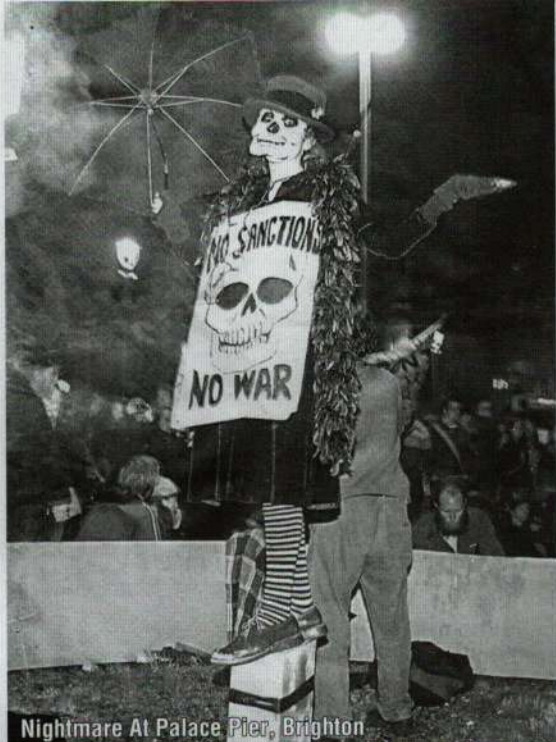
Microsoft





Projection on parliament

Pic: Paola Desiderio



Nightmare At Palace Pier, Brighton

THE USUAL HAUNTS AT HALLOWEEN



Manchester

Manchester Despite heavy handed police and use of police horses Oxford Road (one of the main streets) was occupied for an hour by up to 1000 protestors, accompanied by a samba band.

Sheffield University occupied, Bikes not Bombs ride, large rally and a samba procession.

Walthamstow: A Territorial Army base graffitied with "Fight the rich not their wars".

More reports: <http://uk.indymedia.org>

Bedford The Britons V Bush demonstration attracted 150 people – the largest protest in the towns recent history.
Cardiff On the 30th, protesters halted the Welsh Assembly and scattered Mass Destruction Flyers about. One of the protesters zip-tied himself to the speakers desk as security and police bundled the protesters out of the chamber.

Cambridge Women in Black supporters 'died' outside Great St Mary's, while 230 students occupied the Defence Evaluation and Research Agency building on New Museum's Site. Some lecturers cancelled their lessons in solidarity.

Essex University: Air raid sirens played over a sound system! Hundreds gathered to watch as the deafening crash of bombs rolled over the campus and 50 performed a die in.

Leeds Students disrupted lectures, occupied the Business School and local BBC studios, then joined the main Leeds protest outside Yorkshire TV.

Liverpool Students backed by the lecturers union walked out of lessons and some occupied Senate House, the main finance and administrative building of The University of Liverpool.

* The Stop the War Coalition have called another mass London demo on February 15th 2003.

* Plans are still underway for widespread civil disobedience as soon as any military action against Iraq begins.

...Errr... I would just like to repeat what the previous ten speakers have already said...





FTAA Protests October 31, Quito, Ecuador

Quito Fooling

While thousands of UK residents took to the streets this Halloween to fight against the impending war, people in North and South America were making their voices heard against yet another Big Business trade agreement. In the Americas, October 31st was a Hemispheric day of action against the FTAA (Free Trade Area of the Americas), a pending trade agreement between every nation in North and South America barring Cuba. Based on the model of NAFTA and the WTO, the FTAA goes far beyond the trade liberalisation schemes brought about by those models, giving multinational corporations sweeping authority over virtually every aspect of life in the Americas.

By promoting IMF-style Struc-

tural Adjustment, the FTAA will bring about the privatisation and downsizing of public services such as health care and education and will also ensure that all public utilities - water, power, and telecommunications - come under the control of the private sector. Many in South America are certain that the FTAA will also wipe out small farmers and hand corporations a sweeping new set of tools to evade environmental and labour laws.

On October 31st, Quito, Ecuador was the unfortunate home of a FTAA Trade Ministers meeting. In response to this meeting, 15,000 people took to the streets. The crowd was nearly 90% campesinos (peasant farmers) and indigenous peoples, and chants of "No queremos, y no nos da la gana, ser una colonia, norteamericana," ("We don't want,

and it doesn't do us any good, to be a North American colony") were heard everywhere. After being met by seas of teargas, the demonstrators marched to the Suissotel, where the trade ministers were meeting with assorted CEO's

and trade lobbyists. There the crowds stood outside the gates and demanded that some of their representatives be allowed to speak with the ministers.

Eventually, 40 representatives of social movements from across the hemisphere were allowed in. What followed were two amazing hours of the FTAA trade ministers being forced to stare real people in the face. The protestors who had been allowed in chanted and yelled at ministers, aiming much of their noise at Bob Zoellick, the US Trade Rep. One woman from Nicaragua seemed to sum it up when she addressed the trade ministers, "Don't think you can simply take your picture with us and push forward. We will stop the FTAA." www.indymedia.org www.stopftaa.org

* Solidarity demos against the FTAA Trade Ministers meeting in Quito took place in many cities across the Americas. On the 31st, 5,000 marched against the FTAA in Sao Paulo, Brazil. On the same day, 10,000 marched in Montreal, Canada. A few days earlier, on the 28th, 13 San Francisco activists occupied the entrance to the world headquarters of Bechtel Corporation. Bechtel, one of the world's largest engineering firms, was targeted by the San Francisco activists because of its strong support for the Free Trade Area of the Americas and its frontline position in the rush to commodify and privatise the world's dwindling supply of fresh water.

...and finally...

During last week's anti-war actions, protesters in Swansea chose Sainsbury's to make their protest taste better. They invaded the store and occupied certain areas. Customer service obliged them by announcing the following over the intercom: "Sainsburys apologise for the inconvenience, there is an anti-war protest going on in aisles 6,7,8, and 9." ...www.indycymru.org.uk

Disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all readers the sting in the disclaimer can be peppered with enuff puns to make your eyes water or make you gag. Honest.



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...TO THE
GOD GIVEN RIGHT
OF AMERICA AND
OUR ALLIES TO
DRIVE OUR CARS

FLORENCE OF ARABIA

"Bush, Blair, Berlusconi - they don't speak for the people. We speak for the people. And we the people are going to stop this war."
- Speaker at European Social Forum, Florence.

Last Saturday over half a million people marched through Florence in Europe's biggest demonstration yet against the forthcoming US invasion of the Middle East. Maybe it was a million as some reports have said, but SchNEWS ran out of fingers and toes to count on after four hours of seeing people stream along the well-reclaimed city bypass that was the only road in town big enough for the protest.

The march took place during the European Social Forum meeting in Florence and was always going to be a big march, with communists and anarchists, unions and peace groups, and social forums from across Italy taking part. But it was more than that. It was another example of the growing, often unreported movement against Bush and Blair's war plans that is sweeping the US and Europe.

While Britain was represented by everything from Essex Students to Dundee Trades Council, the march was largely Italian, young and unaligned. Local residents clapped and cheered, hanging out anti-war banners. The conference before the march saw meetings in aircraft hangers overflowing with people - 60,000 turned up for the Forum instead of the expected 20,000 - wanting to discuss anti-capitalism and the coming war. At one meeting of 2,000 people, a Vietnam war veteran told the crowd, "We didn't start protesting about

the Vietnam war until it had been going on for years. This movement is much bigger, and you can stop them too". During the conference, a local Caterpillar factory that makes vehicles used to crush Palestinian homes was occupied and its contents rearranged. Demos, discussions and direct action are all part of the growing global movement against this war and the crazy system that is making it happen.

OIL JUNKIES

In order to regain control of Iraq's oilfields, the US is willing to let the Iraqi people pay a very high price. According to a new report by British health professionals, a war against Iraq could kill half a million people, mostly civilians. 260,000 are likely to die in the conflict and its immediate aftermath, with a further 200,000 dying later from famine and disease - the US will target bombs on water systems and other infrastructure to cripple the country and will ensure these deaths. In the report's worst case scenario, nuclear weapons are fired on Iraq in response to a chemical or biological attack on Kuwait or Israel, leaving a massive 3.9 million people dead.

REBEL ALLIANCE

The get together of Brighton's Direct Action Groups.

With a discussion and short film about the Brighton Halloween action against the war on Iraq - where police attacked protesters sitting in the road with batons and pepper spray. Plus a speaker from the Middle East.
Monday 18th November, 7pm @ Brighton Unemployed Centre, 6 Tilbury Place

CRAP ARRESTS OF THE WEEK

For praying!

Veteran peace activist Lindis Percy totted up yet another arrest at the beginning of this month. Lindis was peacefully praying at a Quaker meeting outside Fylingdales airbase (soon to be part of the Americas Star Wars programme) when the MOD cops swooped in and arrested her for breaching her bail condition of not going within 50 yards of the base. www.caab.org.uk

* The peace camp at Fylingdales is facing eviction and they need more support!! 01947896481

But all that's just for starters. US Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz has said that a US-imposed regime in Iraq would "cast a very large shadow, starting with Syria and Iran, but across the whole Arab world". Iran is a country with a population larger than that of the UK and was described by Bush as part of the "Axis of Evil", perhaps making it the next country to be made safe for "US vital interests". The brutal Israeli occupation of Palestine could become the norm for the rest of the Arab world as a foreign power imposes its will by military force. The people of the Middle East are about to pay a very high price for capitalism's addiction to oil.

The diverse, growing movement against war knows all this. A new generation of activists in the rich countries of Europe and North America who want to live in a sustainable and just world are challenging their own governments and finding friends and allies in the



Pic: Jeff Brewster

A renaissance of the European Anti-capitalist movement takes place in Florence at the ESF

Florence of Arabia cont...

countries attacked in their name. There have been over 400 major demonstration in the US against an attack on Iraq. This was described as "a burgeoning national anti-war movement," by the Washington Post, "with protesting by people who have never protested before". Many US and European activists, often Jewish, have gone to Palestine, risking their lives in order to provide Palestinian families with some protection from Israeli attacks. In Florence, groups discussed blockading US airbases across Europe, jamming airbase radar systems with balloons and tinfoil, taking direct action to stop the supplies necessary for war. As one protester told SchNEWS, "If Bush and Blair think this movement is going to write letters, march politely and then go home, they're in for a fright."

* To read about the report on Iraq deaths www.newscientist.com/news/news.jsp?id=ns99993043

* Recommended reading 'War Plan Iraq' by Milan Rai (Verso 2002)

BASS
BRIGHTON ALLIANCE OF SOUND SYSTEMS

presents

SchNEWS' 8th BIRTHDAY PARTY

with DJs and films

Sunday 17th November, 9pm-1am @

The Ocean Rooms, Brighton.

Tickets £2.50 in advance from

Klick-Klick Records, Trafalgar St.

Or £4 on the door.

SchNEWS

poser of the week

How come Neo-Labour has got enough money to bomb Iraq, but can't afford to pay striking firefighters a decent wage?

* The Brighton Firefighters support group is meeting Wednesday 20th at St. George's Community Centre (Crypt of St. George's Church), St. George's Road, Kemptown 7.45pm to discuss what steps they can take to support the strike.

* For more on the strike www.30kfirepay2.co.uk
www.labournet.net

Vanguard Adult Videos Proudly Presents

DEEP TROT

from the makers
of 'Debbie
Leaflets Dallas'!

Starring LINDA LOVEBOMB as a girl who just can't get enough Trot propaganda rammed down her throat.

But does she swallow it...

...or spit it out?



SchNEWS in brief

Help! SchNEWS needs people to help with the mailout on Friday afternoons for a couple of hours. And with desk top publishing on Thursday evenings. There will be a DTP training evening Thursday 28th, give the office a call if yer interested in either. **** Aspire** have opened a **new social centre in Leeds** and promise a week packed with workshops, film shows, food and other groovy stuff. Buckingham House, Otley Road, Leeds. Also a free shop where you bring anything that you don't want and take things you do. **** Woodside Caravan Park**, the travellers who brought their own site, have managed to delay eviction. They have lodged an appeal and are safe until then (although the appeal date has yet to be set). www.f-f-t.demon.co.uk/fft/WOODSIDE.HTM If you want to be on their Red-Alert list ring 01206 523 528 **** Undercurrents Beyond TV 3rd Annual Video Activist Festival**. 23rd Nov. noon- 9pm, Swansea Environment Centre, Pier Street, Swansea. www.undercurrents.org/beyondtv/ **** Mad Pride** have a benefit night Tuesday 19th, Bull And Gate, 389 Kentish Town Road, London NW5. 7.30 pm. £5 on the door with performers and comedians 020 7388 8679 **** Good SchNEWS**

- McDonald is closing lots of its restaurants! Many of these are in the Middle East, where a boycott of US goods and services is having an impact. A total of 175 restaurants in 10 countries are closing, and McD shares worth £31 two years ago are now worth only £10! **** Anti-Capitalist Social Night**, Nov 19th, 9pm upstairs at the Princess Louise, 208-209 High Holborn, London. 07944 586416 www.temporary.org.uk **** On November 7**, over 2500 people in Chicago marched in protest of the annual meeting of the **Trans-Atlantic Business Dialogue (TABD)**. TABD is yet another 'government in bed with big business' think tank and is made up of the 100 most powerful captains of industry from the EU and America. Their mission is to "remove obstacles to trade" between the EU and US, including such nuisances as the restrictions on marketing GM products. According to US officials, up to 80% of TABD's recommendations have been turned into official policy. www.schnews.org.uk/archive/news284.htm. **** Women Speak Out Gathering next weekend (22-24)**. A gathering of women activists from all kinds of movements and backgrounds to meet and exchange experiences, views and ideas. MERCi Centre, 22a Beswick Street, Manchester. Children are welcome

and there's even crash space. £10 donation requested for the weekend including vegan food. 0161 227 8086/ 07753 606723 www.bellow.org.uk **** Sweatshops, Globalisation and International Solidarity** Sat 23rd Nov. Conference to bring together campaigners and campaigns from the anti-sweatshop movement. 12-6pm, School of Oriental and African Studies, London. £5. 07904 431 959 www.nosweat.org.uk **** Say no to US training of terrorists!!** The US Army School of the Americas has been training Latin American soldiers in counter-insurgency (read: torture, oppression, and genocide) since 1946. **Protest against the School of the Americas** Sat 16th from 1-4pm at the US Embassy, Grosvenor Square, London. **** Week of action against Newchurch Guinea Pigs** (who breed them for vivisection) 18th-24th Nov. www.guineapigs.org.uk or 01902-564734 **** The new Sussex Anti-Corruption Alliance** want groups and individuals to get involved www.sac-a.human-rights.org **** "Riding the Dragon"**, a new book highlighting the abuses that **Shell oil company** have committed, was published on Tuesday accompanied by protests outside some of Shell's worst refineries. The book and other facts about Shell can be seen at www.shellfacts.com

MAPUCHE

Since the late 90s the **Indigenous Mapuche people**, whose ancestral lands have been occupied by the states of Chile and Argentina since 1885, have been occupying land and engaging in other forms of nonviolent direct action to defend their communities. More recently they have been involved in campaigning and land occupations to defend the environment from forestry companies and large dams. These actions have sparked a violent response from the state at levels that would make General Pinochet proud! Hundreds of Mapuches have been arrested under State Security and Anti-terrorism laws. Two community leaders have been murdered, and last week 17-year old activist Edmundo Alex Lemun Saavedra was shot in the head when police attacked a non-violent land occupation of the Mininco forest. He later died in hospital. www.mapuche-nation.org or www.chile.indymedia.org (in spanish)





War Briefs

Groups in a number of places including Brighton, Leicester and Bristol are planning **Stop the City, Stop the War** demonstrations if war is declared on Iraq. Check out the full listings on the Party and Protest section of our website and if we don't have your event listed, let us know what your plans are. ** The Stop the War group at the **School of Oriental and African Studies** have launched a new website: www.soasstopwar.org ** **Disobedience Anti-war Benefit** –with Citizen Fish, P.A.I.N. and Subsister, plus DJ's, Food & Stalls. 23rd Nov. 7pm, Chats Palace, 42-44 Brooksby's Walk, Homerton, E9. £5/£3.50 www.disobedience.org.uk ** Discussion on war coverage and the risks faced by journalists. In memory of BBC journalist **Mylvaganam Nimalarajan** who was killed two years ago reporting from the war torn Sri Lanka. NUJ, 308 Grays Inn Road, London WC1. 25th Nov, 6pm. www.rsfor.org ** **NATO war-mingers** will meet in Prague, Czech Republic (21st-22nd Nov) to discuss, among other things, the so-called "War on Terrorism" and the expansion of NATO into Eastern Europe. Actions are being planned against the Summit. Border actions are also planned in the likely event that protesters are stopped from entering the country. Latest info: www.antinato.cz

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CORPORATE CORPSE

Neo-Labour promised to get tough on criminals this week - but if you happen to be a company director who kills one of your workers, you're in luck! This so-called 'justice for all' doesn't include you. Five years ago, the Labour Government promised that it would do something about corporate crime. Unsurprisingly, victims and their families are still waiting. Chris Jones, father of Simon who was killed at work 4 ½ half years ago, told SchNEWS, "This is the same old Blairite crap: go for soft targets and easy results. Graffiti artists haven't killed or injured anybody. Yes, paedophiles are nasty, but corporate cowboys killed Simon at work, and at least 1500 people since him. Neo-Labour has done nothing about it. The Home Office is fast becoming the political wing of the CBI. Apart from ratting on their promise to bring in the corporate killing bill, they are also trying to sneak in the removal of compulsory inquests into work-related deaths, and have specifically excluded victims of health and safety crimes from the much-hyped 'Victims' Charter'. The cover-up goes on."

So remember - tough on chewing gum and spray paint, but not on corporate crime.

Centre for Corporate Accountability 020 7490 4494 www.corporateaccountability.org
www.simonjones.org.uk

Positive SchNEWS

Another node of international resistance has sprung up in Caracas, Venezuela, with the opening of the Libertarian Social Studies Centre. The centre - which runs along the lines of promoting self-organisation, anarchy, and solidarity free from party politics - has opened a vast library and hopes to buy a printing press for some pamphleteering. But it needs donations (in US\$\$) for rent and resources! centrosociallibertario@yahoo.com www.nodo50.org/llibertario/llibertario

Inside SchNEWS

Robert "Seth" Hayes, a former member of the Black Panther Party and in prison for the past 30 years, has been moved from the hospital ward where he was receiving treatment for Hepatitis C and Diabetes and has been transferred to the general prison. He is suffering from dizziness, weakness, headaches, and loss of feeling in his extremities. The prison has cut off all monitoring of his medical status, claiming that it is no longer needed. They have also refused to purchase personal blood sugar testing units for Seth or any of the 40-50 other diabetics in the prison. Please write to Dr. Lester Wright, Chief Medical Officer, Department of Correctional Services, Albany, NY, 12226, USA, to demand Seth be given adequate medical care. Letters of support to: Robert "Seth" Hayes #74A-2280, Clinton Correctional Facility, Box 2001, Dannemora, New York, 12929, USA. Full details: www.wildgreens.ca/110402-3.htm



...and finally...

Security services in Germany who'd been secretly tapping the phones of 50 people got caught out recently after the people whose phones they were eavesdropping on got charged for the privilege! One confused customer complained to the phone company about a mysterious phone number on his bill that he was supposed to have made calls to. But when he called the number he was told by a message that he did not have authorisation! Oops! The security services admitted there had been some error and said it was caused by a software glitch. Any geeks out there know how to cause the same "problem" in Britain?

Disclaimer

SchNEWS warns Florence not to mess around with Dougal or else Zebedee will go boing!



FIREBRANDED

As SchNEWS went to press the Fire Brigade Union were planning an eight day strike over Neo Labour's refusal to pay them a decent wage. Because some people in authority are lining up to condemn the firefighters, SchNEWS has come up with a new Are You Worth It? Quiz and asked three leading figures just how much they think they're worth...

"I do not think we impress the public if we set too low a value on our own worth... If we believe our work here is important we should not shrink from putting proper value on it." Who said this? Step forward leader of the House, Robin Cook, voting with other MPs for an inflation busting 42% pay rise last year.

Bank of England governor Sir Eddie George, who over the weekend said that a "high settlement (for the firefighters)... would be very damaging indeed", earns just under £257,000 a year and can look forward to an annual pension of £167,000.

Sir George Bain, chairman of the so-called 'independent' inquiry into firefighter pay, became principal of London Business School in 1989 and secured himself "one of the most lucrative remuneration packages in the whole of academia", according to the New Statesman. He's also vice-chancellor of Queens University of Belfast, director of Blackwell Publishers, the Economist Group, Canada Life and Bombardier Aerospace Shorts Brothers.

SchNEWS knows what these people are really worth, but we do

wonder if any of them went on strike, would anybody notice?

Meanwhile, greedy, selfish firefighters want £30,000 and according to the government are putting all our lives at risk by going on strike. Which is a bit rich coming from a government that can't wait to start bombing Iraq, a war which, according to a new report by British health professionals, could lead to the death of half a million people, the majority of them civilians.

The new pay deal offers pay increases with serious strings attached - what Neo Labour likes to dress up as modernisation, but what everyone else calls job cuts, penny pinching and creeping privatisation. Already Fire Stations are being built by and leased back from private companies, while fire appliances and even fire tunics and fire boots are maintained and owned by outside companies.

As a nation we are very rich - the UK is the fourth wealthiest industrial nation. But when people ask for the wealth to be distributed a bit more fairly, we are told we can't afford it. But we can, of course, afford to bomb Iraq at a cost of billions. And we can apparently afford to let big business fiddle their taxes.

Don't attack Iraq, Freedom for Palestine - demonstration in Brighton

Saturday 23rd, 12pm at Preston Park.
Anti-war speakers before a nice stroll down to the Seafront. Info: 01273 685946 www.safp.org.uk (More stewards are needed - get in touch.)

CRAP ARRESTS OF THE WEEK

For stealing your own car!

A Brighton man was pulled over in his car on a routine police check, arrested with his two passengers, and held for 11 hours for "suspicion of theft" - of his own car which was taxed and insured. When he tried to get his car back he was told by Worthing cops that he'd have to wait. Meanwhile at the police compound, cars are only kept for a week and when he didn't show up, his car was crushed!

In 1997, a report by accountants Deloitte & Touche put the figure for legal tax avoidance at £85 billion! Minutes of an Inland Revenue meeting revealed the agency was soft on multinational tax returns for fear of driving investment away from the UK.

As one Fire Brigade Union (FBU) official said, "They are not serious about modernisation. They are serious about cutting costs and about breaking the fire brigades union for daring to ask for more. This dispute is highly political because the New Labour government are scared that the scandal of low pay in the public and other sectors will be exposed and the floodgates will open. The government want to break the FBU as a lesson to all public sector workers."

Perhaps Andrew Smith, Neo-Labour's Secretary of State for Work Till You Drop, spelt it out fairly clearly when he said, "The biggest challenge of the new decade is to encourage people to work longer." For less pay and for longer hours no doubt - unless of course you're an MP or company director, then of course we all know that's different 'because you're worth it.'

Firebranded cont...

Support the firefighters: Donate to their hardship funds, take them tea and cake on the picket lines, or just tell them you support what they are doing. Get a striker to come and talk at your workplace or group. And keep an eye out for support groups around the country. In Brighton there will be a stall outside the Open Market, London Road, 10am till 12 noon this Saturday – come and find out how to get involved. www.30kfirepay2.co.uk/ www.labournet.net

Pay the Fire Fighters, not the Fire Starters: Join the anti-war protests at the Confederation of British Industry AGM this Sunday (24th) 3.30pm at the GMEX, Manchester City Centre. Rolling protests continue till late Monday. Guests at this year's event include Gordon Brown MP; Paul O'Neill; the US Treasury Secretary; Lord Browne, boss of BP, and Tony Blair MP, plus the bosses of the arms companies and private firms after our public services. ANSWERmanchester@aol.com



"... and when I got me hose out she just said 'keep it pumpin'..." Striking firefighters stoke a fire in the rain outside Crawley Fire Station, 21st January

Pic: Alec Smart

FIRE STAIKES: What's it all about?

Let's start with the nuts and bolts:

At the moment a full-time firefighter under 19 earns £16,941 a year. After 5 years service they get £21,531. After 15 years service they can look forward to £22,491. A fire control operator starts on £15,825 and can expect £20,577 after 15 years. Compare these with the pay of a police constable outside London, who starts on £17,733 and gets £32,721 after 14 years.

This is where the Fire Brigade Union's demand for £30K comes from, not because they want to be paid like coppers, but from the average pay of the so-called "Associate Professional and Technical" category of workers, to which they are supposed to belong. Contrary to Government propaganda, demanding more than £20K is not greedy, and there are not 40 applicants fighting for every firefighter's job. One nurse wrote to the FBU's official strike bulletin: "Firefighter's defense of their profession and fight for decent pay and conditions is the only way that the fire service will be prevented from sliding into the mess that teaching and nursing are now in."

Pay-rises of 16 - 42% have been negotiated in other public sector areas in recent years. The £650 million estimated to finance the FBU's pay demand gets spent at the drop of a hat when it comes to bailing out failing privatised polluters such as British Energy. The

vehemence with which the Government has refused to consider the FBU's pay claim unmasks its resolve to break one of the few highly unionised workforces left after Thatcher. The plainest expression of this intent is the repeated threat to ban strikes.

And they may well be worried enough to ban them. All over the country there was huge support for the strike action. Pickets were overwhelmed with donations of food, money and kids' toys. Many tube stations were closed as workers refused to work on grounds of health and safety. One haulier in South Humberside drove to his local picket, parked up and said he would refuse to work while they were on strike. Despite the Union leadership's best efforts to play down the political nature of the strikers' action, it provided a focal point for many people's hatred of Labour and disillusionment with traditional politics. At ground-level the message was clear: an effigy of Blair was hung on the picket in Brighton.

The government is trying to link any deal on pay to acceptance of a "modernisation" programme embodied in the infamous "Bain Report". This hastily scribbled document proposes a series of cuts and flexibility measures that will weaken firefighter's ability to defend themselves against their employers:

*Firefighters are to be trained as paramedics, a move emphatically opposed by the Paramedic's Association.