



HOWARD AHOY!

113.—(1) The Secretary of State may declare to be a prison—
 (b) any floating structure or part of such a structure constructed or adapted for the purpose,

Provision of new prisons.

Seasick? Well watch out, 'cos Britain could be getting it's first prison ship if plans by the Home Office get the go ahead. Britain's prison population continues to soar which means more buildings are needed to house everyone - the problem is not many local authorities want them in their areas, so the Home Office has come up with a cunning plan. They are turning to a little known clause contained in the 1994 Criminal Justice and Public Order Act to help stay afloat in the rising tide.

The purpose-built ship with a capacity to hold 480 inmates is currently in New York harbour- and 'surplus to requirements'. The American company involved still remains a mystery to SchNEWS as we went to press, with the Prison Service press office telling us such information was 'confidential'.

The ship is due to be moored in Portland harbour and plenty of local people are up in arms - they've already got one prison, a Young Offender's Institute and a Ministry of Defence base. The site is near a nature reserve in waters that are clean and used for commercial fishing. But even if local Weymouth and Portland Council object to the decision, the Home Office application could get the go ahead 'in the national interest'. And as the Chief Planning Officer told SchNEWS "it's not on land, so does it

even need planning permission?" SchNEWS hopes it doesn't go the way of Britain's last prison ship-a converted ferry called the Earl William which was home to Tamil immigration detainees until the ship ran aground from its moorings off Harwich in the storm of '87!

IT PAYS TO GO TO PRISON

Inmates in some America jails are now required to pay \$40 for each night spent in prison! In New Mexico inmates are being charged \$21,352 for their first year behind bars. To pay this off they are allowed to labour at \$5 per hour...this means it would take over 2 years of full time work to pay off the first year of prison. When they get out, the state can repossess whatever property a prisoner may have or deduct from their wages. Nothing in the law keeps officials from forcing prisoners to remain in custody (after their sentence is served) to work - theoretically forever- to pay the ever-mounting debt.

*So many people are being sent down in the USA, that telephone 'helplines', just for prisoners have been set up. For \$2.50 a minute you can hear answers to Frequently Asked Questions about the Big House, such as how to reduce your sentence, what things to bring to prison, and tips like: see a dentist before you go in.. Something for British Telecom to think about.

ROADRAGE

Re-union rampage antics on Thursday when people opposed to the Newbury Bypass decided to build a road through Sir George Young's back garden! 10 people were nicked for "conspiracy to cause criminal damage" in an action Assistant Chief Constable Robert Davies described as "deplorable". But what about these 'deplorable' bail conditions - banned from within 3 miles of Maidenhead and Newbury and 1 mile from the Bypass. They must stay at home in the evening and are not allowed to attend any demonstrations. The cops also confiscated everyones boots for forensic tests. 01635 45544

Crap arrest of the week

Lawrence O'Dowd was fined £100 by York magistrates for saying "Miaow" to a police dog. The unemployed 18-year old was arrested by Sergeant Fred Taylor and charged with using threatening and abusive words and behaviour. Poor Lawrence was also bound over for two years to keep the peace. He was unavailable for comment. Obviously the cat got his tongue!

ALL OUT FOR A WORLD WIDE STRIKE

Liverpool Dockers, on strike now for 15 months against casual labour practices, have called for a world-wide strike of docks on the 20th January. Ports around the world that have agreed to go on strike include Japan, Australia, New Zealand and the West Coast of America, and they are now working on Europe and Canada!

There will also be a mass picket on Seaforth Docks, Liverpool on the same day. Call 0151 207 3388

* 350 workers at the Magnet kitchen manufacturing factory in Darlington are in their 20th week of striking, after six months of negotiations about pay increases broke down. They are holding a Mass Picket on 14th February. The St. Valentine's Day Wipe Out will protest on the picket line outside the factory all day. Get up there for some action. Magnet Factory, Allington Way, Yarm Industrial Estate, Darlington 01325 282389

* Workers at the Glacier RPB engineering plant in Glasgow are continuing with their round the clock sit-ins. The 103 skilled workers were sacked two months ago when they objected to the introduction of unsafe working practices and changes in their contracts, which included a reduction in their wages.

* Next Justice? meeting on 21st January features "Flickering Flame", the Ken Loach film about the Liverpool dockers. Plus Reclaim The Future film by Conscious Cinema 7.30 p.m. @ the Albert Pub, Trafalgar St.

Did you know?

- 75% of prisoners were unemployed before they went inside
- 46% had drink problems
- 35% had drug problems
- 33% had been in care
- 28% had chronic housing problems
- 15% had mental disorders
- 10% had tried to commit suicide.

(1994 figures)

It is not enough to curse the darkness. It is also necessary to light a lamp

VIVA ZAPATISTAS!

January 1st 1994. Thousands of Indians armed with machetes, clubs and a few guns occupy four of the major towns in the Chiapas region, southern Mexico, and declare war on the Mexican government. The government respond by sending in troops thinking the uprising would be over in days. Three years later and they're still there!

*Read Rebellion from the Roots by John Ross; First World ha,ha,ha by Elaine Katzberger and Post Scriptum - the European Zapatista solidarity paper available on disc or paper (English, Spanish and a bit of French) from: L'Europe des luttes, c/o Schwarzmarkt, Kl.Schaferkamp 46, 20357 Hamburg, Germany. Zapatista's web-site <http://planet.com.mx/-chiapas/>

THE PLUS FILES

It's not all doom and gloom and endless direct actions...is it? From now on each issue of SchNEWS will spotlight people out there doing it, building a better future now...if you're one of those people or would like to make a nomination, drop us a line at the SchNEWSdesk.

SLEAZE PLEASE HOTLINE!

Fed up with MPs who moan about dole-scroungers while they give themselves a nice pay rise and a few more directorships? Bosses who sack half the workforce, cut the remainders pay then give themselves a nice big bonus? So are we - so let's expose them. Ring the SchNEWS desk with your sleaze please..... **No.1 Steven Norris MP.**

Yes, the ex-minister for transport, instrumental in the privatisation of railways, and the growing mess that is Britain's bus services, has become part-time director of Stagecoach Ltd - one of the most prominent companies buying up the bus and train network. Stagecoach actions have been described by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission as 'predatory, deplorable and against the public interest', so Norris should fit in well. His salary? £50,000 a year.

SchNEWSround

SchNEWS issues 51 -100 and lots more. If you want to a copy, send us a fiver. It would also be handy if people could order the SchNEWSround from their local library, so that we get increased sales, and other people get a chance to read it. The ISBN number of the book is 09529748 0 0.

We could really do with a couple of people in the Brighton area who are willing to help distribute the SchNEWS each Friday around town to various cafes, shops, pubs etc. Can you type? Know anything about web sites? We need help in giving our website a good spring clean, and get the back issues on line. E-mail Toby at: schnews@brighton.co.uk.

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Warning: Both our computers are very ill and our database has got a migraine...we are working day and night to rectify the situation...in the meantime expect a few blips till the end of the month, dear long suffering subscribers. We *are* sorry...Honest

SchNEWS in Brief..

Haringey Solidarity Group have produced an informative leaflet about **filling in the Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) forms** for new claimants or those attending a restart interview. Send SAE to PO 2474, London, N8 or call 0181 802 9804 *** The TUC have produced a leaflet outlining the implications of the **JSA for people in work** SAE to Jobs not JSA!, TUC, Gt. Russell St, WC1 B3LS. Tel. 0171 467 1319 *** The anti roads protest continues to grow with the occupation of the four lane B31 in Freiburg, Germany. 50 activists built a village of tents and treehouses for nine days, before being **evicted by 2500 police** in a ten hour marathon. 700 protesters were blocked from the site so shouted support from outside *** 100 activists turned up at Chatsworth House, near Chesterfield last Sunday to protest against plans by the Duke of Devonshire to start open cast mining on his land With a sound system playing noises from open cast mines they certainly made their presence heard! 0181 672 9698 *** **The British Hemp Stores** have produced a glossy catalogue of their creations, cool clothes (okay we stand accused of promoting consumerism, but we all need clothes, eh?) *** Latest from the Luton massive - **Exodus** are waiting for an appeal date to try and overturn the decision to evict them from Long Meadow Community Farm. Contact us for details of how you can help defend the farm *** **The Terry O'Halloran Memorial Fund** present an afternoon of poetry readings and messages in honour of the prison rights campaigner who died at a tragically young age. Meet 2pm, Sat 18th Jan, @ Karl Marx's tomb, Highgate Cemetery, Swans Lane entrance (Tube: Archway) *** Do the recent reports on genetically engineered soya beans worry you? How about this one? Scientists are well on their way to perfecting **xenotransplantation** - the art of breeding a genetically engineered pig as a living spare parts factory, then using its organs for transplantation into humans. Lovely... *** Any of you Somerset lot fancy a gander at some **cool photos?** Matt will be exhibiting pictures taken over the last seven years, charting the rise in the direct action movement. Get down to the Brewhouse Coal Orchard in Taunton, (01823 274608) ***How CJA defiance has spawned such babies. The latest is the **Lancaster Bookcellar**, a radical book/infoshop at 9 Meeting House Lane, Lancaster (01708 381204) *** **Direct Action On Tour!** there will be gathering in Bradford/Leeds on 25/26th Jan, to get involved in a direct action trip to Germany in May. Details: 0113 262 9365

*** **The Garden Gnomes Liberation Front** are doing people a favour in Normandy, where masked commandos nick gnomes and free them into the woods. *** A new mag for all you tokers **Cannabis UK No. 3**, only £1 and includes a free bag of seeds. SAE to Conscious Shopping, 1a Market Place, Glastonbury, Somerset *** Did anyone see Dave Heard get run over by a police van at the **Whately Quarry** protest on 4th Dec? Contact us and we will pass on your details *** We'd like to try to get together a list of **friendly solicitors**. If you know of a legal practice dedicated to fighting for our rights, please let us know *** Midland free party heads might want to check out the **Tribe of Twat** parties. The cheeky blighters have been stompin" it up...under the M1! they have also sent us a guideline sheet produced by solicitors McGrath & Co, which will be useful for any travellers currently facing eviction proceedings. Send us 4 first class stamps for a copy *** Paul Flynn, Labour MP for Newport West, has told a Welsh language news programme that '**magic mushrooms**' are the 'truffles of Wales' and the Welsh Development Agency should help local youngsters exploit them! He swiftly added that he was joking!

AND FINALLY

Going down for going down

Watch out kids, oral sex can get you a life sentence in the State of Georgia! American media were silent on this point as the recent Olympic "games" got under way in Atlanta, but foreign newspapers took pains to warn their readers. The Melbourne Australia "Age" advised any in its readership who might be thinking about attending that "The full fury of Deep South justice is reserved for the crime of oral sex, which can incur a life sentence and a prison category second only to death row." There are more than 30 prisoners in Georgia jails with sentences of 16 years or more. The newspaper notes that in Georgia's law books this offence is classified as sodomy "suggesting a certain confusion in some quarters". Quite - but what SchNEWS would dearly like to know is how do they catch the culprits in the first place - undercovers cops?

Taken from the excellent anarchist publication 'the Match' PO Box 3012, Tucson AZ 85702, USA. A fiver should cover the cost of one issue - no cheques tho' please....

Disclaimer. The SchNEWS warns all readers not to get too close to any floating vessels at present, especially if Michael Howard is stood next to it rattling a big bunch of keys. Always take a snorkel, and do not be so wet behind the ears as to believe that prison ships are to answer to society's ills. Then you will have your sea-legs for life's long tempestuous cruise. Honest.