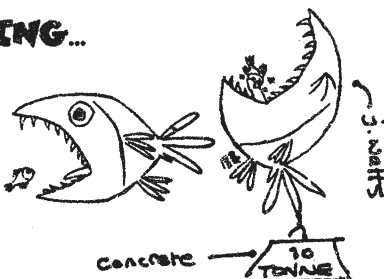


WAKE UP! WAKE UP! IT'S YER LEGALLY BINDING...

Weekly

SchNEWS



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Free/Donation

UP THE INJUNCTION!

Let's play a game. Imagine you are standing on a public footpath monitoring the activities of a waste company that's killing a protected species. The company isn't happy with your presence and get a court order banning you from 'spying' on them. You visit the proposed route of the Newbury Bypass and are arrested. *Go directly to jail.* You're a long term peace protester who decides to break an injunction telling you not to enter an RAF base. *Go directly to jail.*

In the never-ending quest to silence public protest, big business and government are using court injunctions to gag those who want to blow the whistle. Bans are a way for the rich and powerful to keep the polluters polluting, the loggers logging, and the toxic landfillers filling our world with hazardous waste.

In America, it's known as being SLAPPED - *Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation*. Professor Penelope Canan from the University of Colorado describes them as, "A new and very disturbing trend with grave consequences for politically active citizens and for our political system." The injunction is designed to silence people through legal intimidation, but hardly ever actually comes to court.

People have been SLAPPED for attending meetings, for signing petitions, reporting pollution violations, writing to newspaper editors, testifying at public hearings and even taking part in boycotts.

Irene Mansfield was SLAPPED for \$5,000,000 in 1986 for opposing a hazardous waste landfill in Texas and calling it a 'dump'. Mansfield's husband was also named in the suit, for failing to 'control his wife', even though he had not protested against the landfill! In 1990, the Pacific Lumber Company sued an American Earth Firster for \$25,000 for sitting in a Redwood tree.

Like all good American ideas, it's McSpreading... In Britain, court injunctions were supposed to protect people against harassment from named individuals (such as violent ex-partners) but, funnily enough, they are increasingly being used to try to deal with naughty protesters

who just won't go away.

First they came for the Travellers.

In 1985, after years of free festivities at Stonehenge, the authorities had enough, and decided to stop them happening. One problem: the gatherings were not breaking any law. Wiltshire police and the local Council came up with a civil injunction to prevent travellers from going to Stonehenge and used it as justification for arresting everyone at the Battle of the Beanfield.

Then they came for the Road Protesters.

At Twyford Down, the state began getting rather angry with hundreds of people constantly running round on site. So long as no-one caused any damage, then no laws were being broken. 76 people were put on a High Court injunction by the Dept of Transport (DoT), preventing them from entering the construction site or interfering with work. Disregard of these conditions meant the risk of a six month jail sentence for contempt of court. Undeterred, people continued to protest and at least 8 people were eventually sent down. The DoT then tried to sue the 76 for £3.2m in costs arising from the security and policing - so not only did you get dragged around and beaten up, you now had to pay for the privilege! Many people with homes or jobs were facing financial ruin, but luckily, the case was so badly organised, it eventually collapsed, with a few defendants having to pay a nominal £500 in costs.

Then the Criminal Justice Act came for us all.

This bigoted piece of legislation has made illegal just about any protest that is vaguely effective. But even the CJA cannot stop the demonstrations, so it's back to injunctions...

Klaus Armstrong-Braun, a Green Party Councillor on Flintshire County Council, has been ordered by a court to stop 'spying' on a waste company. The company, AD Waste, is wholly owned by the council of which he is a member and is busy turning Brookhill Quarry - containing the largest colony of Great Crested Newts in Wales and used by local people for the past 40 years - into a toxic waste dump.

However, before they could dump the waste they had to drain the main

pool, a principle habitat of the newts. Members of the public witnessed amphibians being minced up in the pumping operation. Using a public footpath to monitor the operation, Klaus went to see for himself and concluded the companies activities were breaching European law, their licensing conditions and the negotiated management plan. So he complained to the police and county council.

This didn't go down too well with AD Waste who decided to get heavy, accusing Klaus of trespass, causing a nuisance and interrupting and disrupting their rather dubious operations. They slapped a court injunction on him claiming damages for "interruption of their operations." and ordering him not to "annoy, disturb, spy upon, harass or picket" the company.

If he loses the case, he also risks losing his home. If the company succeed a precedent will be set: threatening the rights of us all to monitor and check the activities of companies degrading our environment.

SchFacts

* Peace campaigners are increasingly coming up against court injunctions. British Aerospace have so far given 13 people lifetime injunctions not to interfere with their business in any way - even encouraging people to protest by handing out leaflets or speaking at a public meeting could land these 13 in jail. ** Lindis Percy, long time peace campaigner, has been given 9 months for breaking an injunction restricting her from entering RAF Lakenheath. Letters of support: D1 Medical Wing, HMP Holloway, Parkhurst Rd., London. ** *SchTOP Press!* On Wednesday, Tracey Hart from the Peace Prisoner Support Group had her home raided by CID and some of her belongings swiped - including her diary and mailing list. She's warning everyone to make sure they don't have anything lying around which could be "misinterpreted" like the odd pair of boltcutters... ** At Newbury, information gathered by Brays Detective Agency has been used by the DoT and Costain to get High Court injunctions served on 30 protesters, forbidding them from trespassing on the route of the bypass or 'interfering' in work. One man has already been inside for 3 months for breaking his injunction. ** Injunction advice from: EarthRights Environmental Law Centre, The Battlebridge Centre, 2-6 Battlebridge Rd., London, N1 2TL. Tel 0171 278 1005 **

MARCH FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE 12th APRIL. JUSTICE > COACH GOING. TICKETS £5/3 FROM THE PEACE CENTRE.

Pressmennan

The legal battle to save some of the Caledonian forest at Pressmennan Woods has failed. The handful of protesters evicted from the woods earlier this year are keeping an eye on the trees from a camp about a mile away. They desperately need urgent assistance to prevent the oaks ending up as dashboards in expensive German cars. Contact Heather 0134 385 0225.

Do you love SchNEWS?
Got any spare time on your hands?

WE NEED YOU!!!
SchNEWS training day, Weds 26th March.

12:00-12:30 Introduction to SchNEWS
12:30-2:00 Writing stories (with breaks!)
2:30-3:30 Desk Top Publishing those very stories for inclusion in that weeks actual SchNEWS!
3:45-4:30 Database & mailout

We are like Count Dracula, we cannot survive without a supply of fresh blood. Ring the office to book yourself on the training experience of the millennium!

RTS

Reclaim The Streets (RTS) is organising a rather fab sounding 'Two Day Festival of Resistance' in London on 12th- 13th April. On Saturday they will join forces with the Liverpool Dockers, Women of the Waterfront and the Hillingdon Hospital Workers for a 'march for social justice' meet 12 noon at Kenington Park. Sundays details are still not confirmed. 0171 281 4621.

SchNEWS in brief

*** Check out the excellent **Corporate Watch** magazine. A must for activists who want to get to the bottom of corporate dirty dealings. No 3 out now; £1.50 from Box E, 111 Magdalen Rd, Oxford, OX4 1RQ. 01865 791391. Also at <http://www.oneworld.org/cw>. *** Wirral TUC are holding a **music festival** on Sun 25 May. They are looking for bands who would like to play there. Info: Nick Kearns 0151 512 1868 *** **Justice** (without the question mark!) are a legal group who support miscarriage of justice cases after appeals have failed, but where fresh evidence is possible. They have produced '*How To Appeal - a guide to the criminal appeal system*', £2.50, or free to prisoners (send 3lp stamp). Contact: Justice, 59 Carter Lane, London EC4V 5AG *** The **largest compost site** in Britain opened recently in Bournemouth. The plant will be able to compost up to 40,000 tonnes of plant waste a year and plans are afoot for a kerbside collection of household compostable waste. *** The **Job Seekers Allowance Survival Guide**, newly revised and updated, is available from: Matt c/o St. Omer, Fore Street, Marazion, Cornwall TR17 0AH (Send an SAE and 2 x 1st class stamps) *** In anticipation of the **Millennium Cycleways**, Fourth Door Research have devised the idea of **cycle stations** along the cycle routes. These would provide rest and refreshment facilities, washrooms, cycle hire and repair. Details from: Oliver Lowenstein, Fourth Door Research Unit, 1 Grange Road, Lewes. *** Introducing **Penzance Earth First!** group for all you Cornish pixies. Tel: 01736 711770. *** Martin Callaghan Martin was **crushed in a digger** by the driver at the M65 Campaign in 1994. Now suffering permanent physical injury, he is trying to sue the contractor,

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Keep SchNEWS FREE! Just send 1st Class stamps (eg 20 for next 20 issues) or donations (payable to Justice?) Mark 'Original' if you plan to copy. Free postage to all prisoners. SchNEWS, c/o on-the-fiddle, P.O. Box 2600, Brighton, East Sussex, BN2 2DX.

tel/fax (call before faxing): (01273) 685913 e-mail: schnews@brighton.co.uk e-SchNEWS: <http://www.cbuzz.co.uk/SchNEWS/>

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but has been consistently been refused full legal aid. Can you help foot Martin's legal bill? He expects his expected contribution to be £300 - £500. Send your readies to: Chris Maile, 43 Swan Meadow Road, Poolstock, Wigan WN3 5BJ *** **Sat 15th - Schnewsnight** 'political cabaret' at the Sanctuary, Hove £1 B4 9pm/£2 after *** **Sun 16th** Celebratory walk & picnic along part of the no longer to be built Worthing by-pass. Meet 12 noon, Lancing Ring car park. *** **Wed 19** 'Education and Health in Cuba'. Talk by Prof. Theodore MacDonald, Brighthelm Centre, Queen's Road, 7:30pm. *** **Fri 21** - Spring Equinox Gathering at Womenwith Hill Women's' Peace Camp. Contact: 01943 468593 *** **Fri 21** - Greenheart Dance Party 01835 850364/ 01289 382565 *** **Fri 21** - Premiere showing of 'La Ballade des Sans-Papiers (The Ballad of the Sans-Papiers)' at St. Mary's Church, Eversholt St., London NW1. Sans-Papiers are 300 African asylum seekers campaigning against deportation from France. *** **Wed 26** Talk on the Police Bill by Mike Schwarz of Bindman's solicitors, East Oxford Community Centre, Cowley Road, 8pm *** The residents of **Holtsfield** near Swansea, battling to stave off eviction from their land since the '30's, have a last chance of justice with a hearing at the House of Lords. Walking from Swansea to London, they will arrive to present their case for the **20th March**. 24hr info service from the 1st to 20th March 01792 232463 *** Congratulations to Cornish group Cot Region Residents Against Pollution for winning best acronym of the week...

Glasgow protests

On Monday, over 50 people from the Scottish Socialist Alliance and Save Our Services campaign occupied Glasgow City Council chambers for nineteen hours. They tried to prevent the City Council from announcing £80 million worth of cuts, 1500 redundancies, closing down of 130 community projects - and a 22% rise in Council Tax! George McNeillage of the North Pollok Community Council said "We have as much right as the councillors to be in this building, they were voted in two years ago in a stand against cuts and redundancies. Now they have betrayed every citizen of Glasgow and should resist or resign". Embarrassed council leaders told police not to eject protesters because they feared smashing the oak doors to the chambers. However they did eventually meet and announce the cuts but Socialist Labour Councillor Tommy Sheridan told SchNEWS "The protests and actions will continue". For more info: 0141 287 3934.

Crap job of the week

Thanks to our Bedfordshire correspondent for this little gem. The National Intelligence HQ at Chicksands is advertising for security guards at the bargain rate of £2.20 an hour. Applicants must pay £90 for their own uniform, but MoD officials confirmed "you would be allowed to keep it afterwards."

SchURF the 'Net

As of this Friday the all new SchNEWS website is up and running, featuring back issues, diary dates and a comprehensive list of contacts. Best of all, the latest issue of the SchNEWS will appear on the site in it's full glory each Friday morning (probably) and due to the miracle(?) of technology, people all around the world will be able to download the SchNEWS from the ether, print it and photocopy it for all their friends. (Available in HTML text and Acrobat formats.)

<http://www.cbuzz.co.uk/SchNEWS/>

The + files

(Positive sides that don't even have negative sides)

The Centre for Alternative Technology in Mid Wales have created a paradise from an old slate quarry. They have built everything from a water-powered cliff railway, energy conservation house, solar-water heating and organic gardens. CATs seven acre visitor complex is not connected to the national grid, being powered mainly from a combination of wind, water and solar power. "Highlighting ecological problems is all well and good, but will have little effect until people become inspired to take up the solutions." Visit them, or send for more info: CAT, Machynlleth, Powys, SY20 9AZ Tel: 01654 702400.

Open Cast

Massive police presence at the home of Richard Budge, (owner of RJB mining) early last Sunday, prevented a posse of ecotypes, ex-miners and families telling the largest open cast mine operator in the country what they really thought of him. When asked why Michael Heseltine was guarded by only two policemen when he was paid similar visits, a copper replied "Well, no-one likes Heseltine". Miners Support Group: 0181 672 9698.

SUPPORT GROUP

A protester support group has been set up in South Wales, to provide warm clothes, food etc. to anti-open cast mining activists. Contact Endangered Species on 01686 412563.

...and finally...

Officers in Sussex decided that Valentine's Day was the ideal time to raid the home of suspected drug dealers. Sgt. Theresa Atkins found herself dressed in a bunny costume pretending she was delivering a romantic message "Inky Pinky poo, it's down to the nick for you." This more loved-up, fluffy style police action apparently worked, as the flat door was opened by the horrified owner only to see a giant rabbit, shortly followed by a number of police officers. Schnews warns all readers to avoid anyone dressed as a mammoth bunny, just in case they are amorous police ladies. Keep it fluffy.

...and FINALLY...

This week the chairman of the Prison Governors' Association said: "No one in their right mind would seriously consider the introduction of prison ships and abandoned holiday camps as prison accommodation." Well one person would and no prizes for guessing. Still, once SchNEWS heard that the good prison ship Lolipop (OK, it's called Resolution) was costing the Prison Service ten times more than it's scrap value (and creating two jobs at a cost of £4 million) we thought of a money making scheme. So, dear Fraulein Widdacombe, Justice? have a very old, knackered van that's worth about £100 scrap. Maybe you'd be interested? We're offering it to you at the knock down price of £1,000... a bargain, we're sure you'll agree...

disclaimer

The SchNEWS advises all readers not to get SLAPPED with an injunction. Always give your real name to when 'They' pursue you with big papery things. Never wear a dress and wig call yourself Gloria, and you will surely get away with anything. Then you will feel (bail) conditioned. Honest.