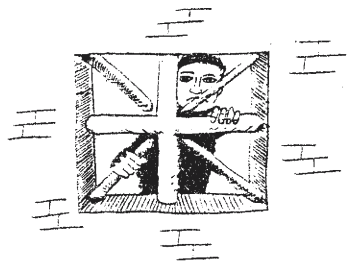




WAKE UP! WAKE UP! IT'S YER STIR CRAZY

SchNEWS

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Free/Donation

HOSTILE HOSTEL

Asylum prisoners show their anger

Spoil the Oil Toil

"Campsfield is not a prison, it's a hostel regime" Group 4 spokesman

Last week, 200 asylum seekers at the Campsfield detention centre near Oxford staged a full scale protest which caused an estimated £100,000 worth of property damage. Several parts of the building were completely destroyed.

The 13 hour 'riot' began after one person was removed to a prison without warning, a move campaigners believe was designed to punish troublemakers. Over a quarter of detainees were involved in the protest.

More than 100 riot police were drafted in to the centre to quell the protest and access roads were blocked to stop campaigners who turned up to offer support.

A spokesman from Group 4, the security group that runs the prison, denied that removal of the asylum seeker to a prison sparked off the protest. The company couldn't conclude what had created the disturbance. *"It is not up to us to speculate why it started... it is down to the Immigration Service to decide who is moved."*

An activist from the Campaign to Close Campsfield believed that the decision was *"more likely made by Group 4, and rubber stamped by the Home Office"* - as a way of making their lives easier.

100 detainees have since been moved to other places "for their own safety" as a result of the damage.

Asylum seekers are held at Campsfield while they wait for their cases to be resolved, which means in most cases until they are deported back to the hellholes they fled from. It is run like a prison and surrounded by a razor wire perimeter fence. A spokesman from Group 4 told SchNEWS that, *"the fence is just as much there to protect the inmates from people outside"*!

Since Michael Howard's immigration reforms, asylum seekers are detained in 'secure institutions', and are not eligible to receive benefit while they wait for their claim for asylum to be heard. Any employer found hiring a refugee without a work permit is liable to a £5,000 fine.

They have been charged with *no crime*, but are detained as if they were criminals, often without access to their families or legal

representation. So who are these refugees? Just people, who come to this country seeking refuge from military regimes and political persecution. People who have left behind their lives, and often their families, in Nigeria, Russia, Romania, Algeria, Somalia - to name a few. They seek refuge in a country completely alien to them, often in a traumatised and confused state.

The average length of wait at Campsfield for asylum seekers is 4 to 8 months, and this is steadily increasing. The number of people waiting is also going up. A recent inter-departmental study of the asylum problem admitted *"the backlog of more than 52,000 people awaiting processing of their applications is unacceptably high."*

- * 52,000 people awaiting asylum decision
- * 1,295 asylum seekers granted UK entry (1996)
- * 750 refugees placed in detention centres each year

"Before the new administration meddles in human rights issues abroad, it should take a look at what's going on here." Letter to the Guardian
But where are the practical plans by our nice new Home Secretary to deal with the applicants more quickly, and grant more people asylum?

Despite claims by New Labour that they are *"putting human rights at the centre of foreign policy"*, they aren't making it any easier for those fleeing persecution to claim asylum.

An asylum activist told SchNEWS, *"It takes a riot to get their attention. There's no sign of anything positive in the new government; the law hasn't changed, and there's no commitment to stop detaining people"*

This is the third protest at Campsfield this year, and was by far the biggest. Police are now considering whether to bring criminal charges against protesters.

* Vigils and demos are held on each Saturday at noon. Meet by the camp gates, Campsfield, Langford Lane, Kidlington, 6 miles North of Oxford. Ring 01865 558145 for more details.

* Sans Papiers - The new French movement of asylum seekers and immigrants without papers - have published "A Woman Draws The First Lessons", by Madjiguene Cisse £2 available from Crossroads Books, PO Box 287, NW6 5QU. 0171 482 2496.

Saturday saw the launch of 100 Days of Action against the oil industry. That's 100 days until the Kyoto climate summit (see SchNEWS 131), follow up to Rio, when world leaders will get together to decide to do nothing much about the climate change and environmental destruction caused by fossil fuels. Over 40 BP garages across the country were targeted on Saturday and more actions will follow in the coming weeks, including on 23-24 Sept "The Future of the UK Oil and Gas Industry" Conference at the Mount Royal Hotel, London W1. All your favourite oil industry bosses will be in one place at one time. Watch this space for more info or Corporate Watch: 01865 791391. To get involved in the 100 Days call Jim on 0171 865 8234, email 100days@waveland.org or write: 100 Days c/o Corporate Watch, Box E, 111 Magdalen Rd. Oxford OX4 1RQ

The Action That Never Was

The planned action to close down Ashton Court quarry this week proved incredibly easy. Around fifty, mainly local, activists arrived at the site of the quarry near Bristol early Tuesday morning. The entrance to the quarry had been blockaded by a tripod, the handful of police and security put up little opposition to those who entered the site. Unfortunately (!?) the eager digger-divers were unable to stop work as some spoilsports had, allegedly, entered the site the previous day and "tampered" with machinery. The site is expected to be "closed for repairs" for some time.

The Première of Undercurrents 7

3rd Sept 7:45 at Cinematique, 9-12 Middle St., Brighton 01273 384300. £3/2 conc. tickets from the Peace Centre, Gardner St. Including films on Economic Sabotage, Global Warming, The Holtsfield Community, CS Spray, Street News and Much Much Much More. Undercurrents 7 now available £9.95 (student or UB40) or £12.95 (waged) from 16b Cherwell Street, Oxford, OX4 1BG. 01865 603663. You can also order it from their website: <http://www.undercurrents.org>.

GANDALF TRIAL UPDATE

The trial of the editors of Green Anarchist started this week with over 40 people demonstrating outside Portsmouth Crown Court, protesting against state oppression and attacks on the free speech of those reporting animal and earth abuse. There was also a cycle blockade outside the local Police station, and leaflets advertising the trial were distributed. During the first day the defence were not allowed into court, while the judge and prosecution decided what information to censor with Public Interest Immunity Certificates. The judge, David Selwood, conceded in the first day that 2 people whom the defence suspect of having MI5 links (Tim Hepple and Tim Hall) do indeed have MI5 files, and that the branch of MI5 that dealt with Green activists folded 2 years ago, and passed its files on to Special Branch, who deal with the Animal Rights National Index (strangely this was around the same time that the original operation by Special Branch against Green Anarchist began!).

A troublesome jury selection was completed on Thursday: The defence wanted to exclude jurors with connections to roadbuilding, animal abuse or the military, while the prosecution wanted to exclude anyone who opposes the above-mentioned evildoers. The result of these objections is that the original pool of 45 potential jurors has been reduced to 14, ie 12 jurors and 2 reserves, and more may yet drop out. Judge Selwood, perhaps not incidentally, has spent almost his entire career as a judge in military courts, and still holds the rank of Major-General. Another rather ominous sign is that Det. Supt. Desmond Thomas, the officer commanding the Special Branch operation against GA, was spotted giving Masonic signals from the witness box. Nice to know British courts are as impartial as ever.

For more info contact the GANDALF Defendants Campaign, PO Box 66, Stevenage SG1 2TR, or Green Anarchist, BM 1715, London WC1N 3XX

HOORAY! IT'S ANOTHER NEWBURY ANNIVERSARY ACTION!!

To mark the anniversary of the granting of the main contract at Newbury the Third Battle of Newbury are organising a "Bicycles and Biped's" action. Meet 12 noon on 6th September 1997 at Newbury Railway station, bring bikes if possible, although this is not essential. For those who want to go there will be a camping space provided for up to two days, but bring a tent. Contact Jim: 0468 505 344 or Third Battle on 01635 45545 <http://www.gn.apc.org/newbury>.

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

The bottom line this week is: it takes 4-6 people 4 hours to do the mailout. 'nuff said.

SchNEWS in brief

Help! The Lifespan community - based in the Pennines for the past 20 years is going down the drain. The place is vested as a community-in-perpetuity for community living but only one person is now there! A large number of people needed to go in pronto and rebuild to secure continuation of this valuable space. Contact Lifespan, Townhead, Dunford Bridge, Nr. Holmfirth, S30 6TG *** Corporate Watch and the New Internationalist are hosting an **Alternative Media Conference** in Oxford 5-7 Sept. 01865 791391*** Join **The Great Millennium Peace Ride!** 500 cyclists from around the world will be pedalling for peace starting from Vancouver, Canada in August 1998 and ending in Hiroshima, Japan on New Years Eve, 2000. For more info or to help or join the ride contact "Threading the World" c/o Andrea Siegl, Brockmannsgasse 50- 111, A-8010 Graz, Austria. phone/fax (43) 316 833 633. email: gmp-r-tw@htu.tu-graz.ac.at*** As of this week, ephedrine, yehembe and khat, and all herbal highs containing these substances are to be outlawed. The sellers of these harmful and damning substances will be arrested and up to a 2 year sentence could be slapped on their foreheads *** A **Boycott of Argos** has been launched in solidarity with the Liverpool Dockers. The firm continues to use the Merseyside port to ship goods to Ireland. Info: Liverpool Docks Shop Steward Committee c/o 19 Scortop St. Liverpool L6 4AS *** The **Shoreham five**, convicted of Conspiracy to commit criminal damage have been granted leave to appeal. 01342 811377 *** Worried by SchNEWS's paranoia-inducing coverage of genetic engineering of yer foodstuffs, but still don't know exactly how to avoid it? Well, there's a big public meeting entitled "How Safe Is Your Food?" at the Unitarian Church, New Rd., Brighton Thurs. 4th Sept. 7.30 pm which will set you straight and make you weep, courtesy of Brighton Genetic Engineering Network.

***** WINDMILL HILL FUR FARM...STOP PRESS...

We highlighted the upcoming national demo for this Sunday a couple of weeks back- 12 noon outside the farm in Child Okeford near Blandford, Dorset- but if you want to hear the speaker from Respect For Animals then meet outside Tesco's in Blandford 11.15-11.45 am for a pre-demo warm-up.

Mailout Apologies

Due to the ever increasing subscribers (683 to date) and a lack of regular help in Brighton to help post it out every week, we, the massively overworked and incredibly pissed off mailout 'few' are sorry to make this announcement: **AS FROM THIS ISSUE SCHNEWS CAN ONLY BE SENT OUT TWO AT A TIME, FORTNIGHTLY** (weekly if you reproduce). If you have access to email and currently subscribe please switch. If you can photocopy and distribute let us know and by all means do it! **Brighton People:** Are you able to dedicate an afternoon (Fri or Mon) on a regular-ish basis RING THE OFFICE. It's a laugh if there's many participants, a nightmare if there's one or two... Make new friends - make the effort! That's the bottom line!

Inside SchNEWS

Barry Horne, veteran animal rights campaigner, has now been on hunger strike for 19 days, following a Labour U turn. Last Dec, Elliot Morley, the Gov't spokesperson for animal welfare promised a Royal Commission to look into the necessity of animal experimentation. The Gov't has done nothing since the election and Barry is on his 2nd hunger strike in protest. Details: London Animal Action: 0171 278 3068 or letters of support to: Barry Horne VC 2141, HMP Bristol, Cambridge Road, Hornfield, Bristol BS7 8PS *** **Mark Gillan** was involved in the Risley prison riot in '89 and more recently the Full Sutton prison disturbance at the end of Jan. As a consequence he was beaten up at Swaleside last week, then moved to Lewes prison. Write letters of support to: Mark Gillan, HMP Lewes, Brighton Rd. Lewes, East Sussex, BN7 1EA *** The Prisoners Families and Friends Service, and the Federation of Prisoners: Family Support Group both exist to provide a support service. Write to them at: Prisoners Families and Friends Service, 20 Trinity St, London SE1 1DB; Federation of Prisoners: Family Support Group, c/o Save The Children Fund, Cambridge House, Cambridge Grove, London W6 0LE

...and finally...

Hey, did any SchNEWS readers spot irritating Tory chief git William Hague at the Notting Hill Carnival? I hope he wasn't near any of those soundsystems playing "music characterised by a series of loud and repetitive beats" - you know the music his government made illegal under the CJA? And I hope he was wasn't standing next to groups of black people - 'cos as former Tory MP Terry Dicks once said when they all get together it leads to "street crime and all kinds of vice-related crime." And what about his government's Immigration and Asylum Act clamping down on those fraudsters who pretend they've been tortured so they can live here and sponge off our welfare state? (cue Bernard Manning)... **...and f***ing finally...**

The foul mouthed fuzz of Fulham and Brompton are raising money... by swearing! The West London boys in blue turned the air blue by raising £1,500 in two weeks (!) by putting a quid a cuss in the station swear box. The shining example of the plods filthy stream of gutter language has inspired 'effin and blindin' SchNEWS scribes to completely fund the SchNEWS from a swear box in the office... anything you can do, we can do better!

disclaimer

The SchNEWS warns all readers not to seek refuge in Britain from oppressive uniformed thugs. We have far too many of them here. Never stay at holiday camps with inordinately high fences, or else you may get a hide-hiding. Always stay within the walls. Then you will be happy campers. Honest.