



WAKE UP! WAKE UP! YER PRIVATES ARE UNDER ATTACK

# SchNEWS

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## RIP IT UP

**“With the exception of the original Official Secrets Act, rushed through in a single afternoon in 1911, the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (RIP) Bill is probably the worst piece of legislation ever laid before Parliament. It proposes to give the Interior Minister the kinds of powers Robert Mugabe can only fantasise about.”**  
Observer, 26.3.2000

Imagine if the police or government officials could force you to hand over your house keys, so they could let themselves in and have a quick shuffle through the mail every morning. Well, in a new draft of Home Office legislation, the cyber equivalent of ‘state mail sorting’ will make any computer user failing to hand over their encryption keys (or computer password codes) a criminal facing up to two years in prison. And under an even darker scenario, if you happen to ‘tip’ someone off that their e-mails are being screened, then you could face a five year stretch inside.

Jack Straw, the Grim Reaper of cyber space, quietly announced the second reading of the RIP Bill on March 6th in the House of Commons. The RIP, which will give powers as wide as the World Wide Web to police, security services and customs to ‘tap’ your computer correspondences, first surfaced in the Electronic Communication’s Bill (see SchNEWS 237). But at a risk of offending Bill Gates, bankers and big business, the Department of Trade and Industry removed Section III from the E-bill, and the Home Office created a separate interception and surveillance bill – the RIP. As Caspar Bowden of the Foundation for Information Policy Research says “This law could make a criminal out of anyone who uses encryption to protect their privacy on the internet. The corpse of a law laid to rest by Trade Secretary Stephen Byers has been stitched up and jolted back into life by Home Secretary Jack Straw.”

The RIP Bill is a year 2000 update of the Interception Of Communication Act (IOCA)1985, which gives police and security services the power to snoop on telecommunication traffic, and will extend the same to all PC based communication traffic. All Internet Service Providers (ISP’s) like Demon and Pipex, that hold personal

subscriber info on web sites visited and e-mails sent, will be legally obliged to open the data files to police. Under the flexible phrasing of the Bill, almost anyone sending e-mails using encryption software like Pretty Good Privacy could expect an on-line visit from the authorities. The RIP list of police reasons to break into an individuals e-mail box includes “national security, preventing or detecting crime; preventing disorder, public safety and protecting public health”.

**Here’s a quick history guide to the RIP and Internet surveillance:**

\* In 1993 the International Law Enforcement Seminar (ILETS) was created by the FBI to share hot surveillance tips and agree on communication interception standards with other Western law enforcement agencies.

\* In 1996, under pressure from ILETS and European police, the European Council of Justice and Home Affairs (CJHS) announced “An Action Plan for Safer Use of the Internet” which called for “close co-operation between ISPs and the police to deal with ‘illegal and harmful’ content”.

\* And in 2000 European countries like Holland and the UK are both pushing through similar surveillance laws that will force ISP’s to let police nose through people’s internet business.

### MAY DAY! MAYDAY!

Monday May 1st. Meet 11am  
Parliament Square for a bit of  
Guerilla Gardening!  
Followed by a free party at the  
Dome!  
Transport from Brighton to be  
announced.  
Watch this space...

So what happens if, when asked where your crypto keys are, you tell them you left them down the virtual pub? The same RIP rules are set to apply whether you’ve lost them, deleted them, or stashed them away on someone else’s hard drive. Sounds familiar? It’s the virtual equivalent of denial of the right to silence and a violation of the Human Rights Act. Both the Foundation of Information Policy Research and Justice

### CRAP ARREST OF THE WEEK

...For trying to die painlessly. Californian Todd McCormick has had cancer 9 times. He has a prescription for medical cannabis, where state law lets such patients cultivate it for relief. While researching a book to help fellow sufferers the Feds decided to nick him, along with his publisher Peter McWilliams- a wheelchair-bound cancer survivor living with AIDS, who also has a medical cannabis prescription. In court, the prosecution obtained an order forbidding Todd and Peter from mentioning their illnesses, or that cannabis is medicine and legal in the state, in front of the jury. Left with no defence, they both got found guilty and stand to get 5 years. Great country, eh? Info/support: [www.petertrial.com](http://www.petertrial.com)

have sent reminder notes to Jack Straw to warn him that the RIP Bill is illegal under article 8 of the European Convention of Human Rights (ECHR). And cyber activist group STAND, who last year burned Jack Straw’s encryption keys and made him an e-criminal, are calling for people to web-fax their local MP about the RIP Bill from their site [www.stand.org.uk](http://www.stand.org.uk).

\*Further information:

Green Net - [www.gn.apc.org/activities/ioca/](http://www.gn.apc.org/activities/ioca/)

### ACTIVISTS MELT AWAY

Police are still searching for two Greenpeace activists who vanished after abandoning their occupation of Enterprise Oil’s rig after a court injunction ordered them to come down. They had occupied the rig to protest about climate change and damage to the environmentally sensitive Atlantic Frontier in the North Sea. Meanwhile, in the Arctic more Greenpeace activists have set up an ice camp to prevent BP Amoco drilling under the melting Arctic Ice Pack. Flying in the face of its ‘green’ rhetoric and pronouncements on the dangers of climate change, BP Amoco is now trying to develop new oil-fields, the burning of which will inevitably add to greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. This area is already warming at a rate three to five times faster than the rest of the earth. At the other end of the globe an iceberg the size of East Anglia has broken free of the Ross Ice Shelf in Antarctica.

As a Greenpeace spokesperson pointed out “The use of renewable energy such as wind and solar power is essential if we are to reduce greenhouse gas emissions before it is too late.” [www.greenpeace.org.uk/](http://www.greenpeace.org.uk/)

## SELF-RIGHTEOUS-US?

While most SchNEWS readers probably won't be shedding tears over the loss of more cars being made at Longbridge or more nuclear waste coming out of Sellafield, what about the people who work in these industries? Like it or not, whole communities rely on these industries and thousands of people are facing redundancies with the spin-off effects of life on the dole, losing their homes, family breakdown etc.

So what's the alternative?

In Britain in 1976, the 13 unions at Lucas Aerospace, organising a 14,000 strong workforce across the country from London and Hertfordshire to Burnley, researched a 1,000 page "combine Plan" which proposed the production of socially responsible products instead of the military and space hardware for which the multinational was known. The unions painstakingly created unity between unskilled workers, craft workers and professionally trained engineers. They drew up a list of 150 products that the factories *ought* to be making, from kidney machines and equipment for kids with spina bifida, to a diesel-electric low-production car, and an energy-conserving household heat pump. They devised products for third world countries and used appropriate technology. On each of the 17 Lucas Aerospace sites proposals were thrashed out by shop steward committees and later by project groups which were widely discussed in the workforce. The Plan was provoked by the threat of mass redundancies as government orders dired up. The plan met with resistance not only by the employees but by bureaucratic trade union officials, while the Labour Party (then in power) offered vaguely radical words but refused to endorse or resource the Plan.

To find out more read "The Lucas Plan: A New Trade Unionism in the Making?" by Hilary Wainwright and Dave Elliott (Allison and Busby 1982). It's out of print, so try ordering it from your local library.

\* SchNEWS poser: If the government says that failing public services should be privatised, does that mean that failing businesses like Rover should be re-nationalised?

### Roll-up, Roll-up for yer Special SchNEWS cor-blimley-they're-practically-giving-them-away book offer

SchNEWS Round issues 51 - 100 £5 inc  
SchNEWS Annual issues 101 - 150 £5 inc.  
SchNEWS Survival Guide issues 151 - 200  
and a whole lot more £6 + £1.20 postage  
All three yours for £15 inc. postage.

In addition to 50 issues of SchNEWS, each book contains articles, photos, cartoons, a "yellow pages" list of contacts, comedy etc. All the above books are available from the Brighton Peace Centre, which is also SchNEWS new distribution point. So feel free to grab a bundle and give 'em out to smiling passers by!

\* We're looking for people with a bit of spare time on a Friday afternoon to distribute SchNEWS round Kemptown. Give the office a call.

\* We're also after pictures, cartoons etc for the next annual, so send 'em to us, with your address on the back if you want them back, and yer name if you want to be famous and followed around by cops at actions!

YEARZERO is a new paper about politics, people and protest and is well worth a read for only £1. For copies, PO Box 26276, London W3 7GO

## Subscribe!

Keep SchNEWS FREE! Send 1st Class stamps (e.g. 20 for next 20 issues) or donations (payable to Justice?) Ask for "Originals" if you can make copies. Post free to all prisoners. SchNEWS, c/o on-the-fiddle, P.O. Box 2600, Brighton, East Sussex, BN2 2DX.

Tel/Autofax : +44 (0)1273 685913 GET IT EVERY WEEK BY E-MAIL: schnews@brighton.co.uk

## SchNEWS in brief

Students occupying the **Tornoto University** campus have been blasted at night by bad pop music in an effort to get them to leave. One student, part of the campaign to get a campus-wide ban on the sale of clothing made in Third World sweatshops, commented "This is probably the first time the Backstreet Boys have been deliberately used as a form of sleep deprivation torture" \*\* A new web-site set up to highlight the government's **Prevention of Terrorism Bill** (SchNEWS 251) has been attacked by the Home Office as 'dishonest' who have threatened the web-server with legal action. Check out [www.new-labour.com](http://www.new-labour.com) to find out what all the fuss is about. Meanwhile the bill goes for it's second reading in the House of Lords next Thursday 01273 298192. \*\* In the build up to **May Day 2000**, The Bradford 1 in 12 Club have organised 'Taking Control' on Saturday April 8<sup>th</sup> which is basically loads of workshops on practical steps towards taking back control of your own life. 10-5pm 1in12 Club, 21-23 Albion St, Bradford, BD1 2LY. Tel: (01274)734160 [www.legend.org.uk/~1in12](http://www.legend.org.uk/~1in12) \*\* **Banner Theatre**, a political theatre company based in Brum, are looking for good political musicians to join their First of May Band. Banner do a lot of work with trade unions and are planning a series of projects and a tour later this year. For info contact Banner Theatre, The Friends Institute, 220 Moseley road, Highgate B 6 ODG te. 0121 440 0460 email: voices @btinternet.com" \*\* 'Raising a hue and cry against the forces of **global capitalism and materialism**. The dragon represents the spirit of the land, remember it on the day after St. Georges day.' Parade and actions through York. Bring costumes and cacophony. Meet front Museum Gardens, noon, April 24. York EF! c/o PO Box 323, York. \*\* April 10, 7.30pm: **Terrorist Tea Party**, Friends Meeting House, Mount Street, Manchester. Meeting will discuss how the existing 'Prevention of Terrorism Act' has been applied.

teaparty@nematode.freemove.co.uk

\*\*Prisoner **Mark Barnsley's** been moved since last SchNews: Mark Barnsley, WA 2897, HMP Long Lartin, Evesham, Worcs, WR11 5TZ

\*\*A group calling itself the "**Ministry of Forest Defense**" destroyed 100's of genetically modified test trees at a Canadian Ministry of Forests "Tree Improvement Branch" facilities to coincide with the opening of BIO 2000, the convention of the Biotechnology Industry Organization, which opened on Monday in Boston, USA. [www.tao.ca/~ban/ar.htm](http://www.tao.ca/~ban/ar.htm).

\*\*Public meeting on **Racism and Police Brutality** on 13<sup>th</sup> April, 7.30pm; Tottenham Green Leisure Centre, 1 Philip Lane, Tottenham N15. Speakers include Lorenzo Kom'boa Ervin, the community activist and former Black Panther and George Silcot, whose brother was framed for the murder of PC Blakelock. Contact Haringey Solidarity Group, 020 8374 5027.

## LISBON SUMMIT

Are you feeling confused and angry by the secretive little gatherings of European heads of state? Well, worry no longer! There's an excellent book that gives you all the info you need on the wheelings and dealings of all the corporations that you love to hate. 'Europe Inc.-Regional and Global Restructuring and the Rise of Corporate Power' is published by Pluto Press. 0181 348 2724 or [www.plutobooks.com](http://www.plutobooks.com)

## Corruption of all Knowledge Bank

The World Bank is fighting back. No more talk, please, about destructive projects, debt and neo-colonialism: this is your caring, sharing "knowledge bank".

With vast wealth and more economists than any university, the World Bank and IMF have long flooded the world with reports pushing capitalist ideology. Now Bank president James Wolfensohn has blagged US\$60m from Microsoft for a stab at internet propaganda, too!

Last month the plan was leaked. The World Bank (and its 'partners') hope to provide policy, guidance and staff for a 'global development gateway', a massive portal site on the web. The Bank is aiming to select and organise all the world's 'knowledge' about 'fighting poverty' - from it's own unbiased perspective, of course.

But hey- independent networks will still provide a cyber-voice for the dispossessed, won't they? Er...maybe not. The Bank's invited 'partners' include the usual suspects - corporations, dodgy dictatorships - but also key independent hubs for knowledge on the web including OneWorld On-Line and the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) at Sussex University. Both are tempted by the promised money...whoops, we mean grassroots access to electronic information. And it's only a short step from there to 'undesirables' having their communication channels denied them in the name of Truth, Inc. The World Bank/Microsoft global development gateway plan is still in development. It's not too late to keep our ways of knowledge from their grasp.

Info: [www.brettonwoodsproject.org](http://www.brettonwoodsproject.org). [www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org) for (ahem) the well-organised solution to world poverty [www.A16.org](http://www.A16.org) for events around the World Bank/IMF meetings in Washington,

9-16 April 2000

## HAPPY ANNIVERSARIES

It's 10 years today since the Poll Tax riots in Trafalgar Square, London in response to the standard tax levied upon all members of the population regardless of income. The tax was withdrawn after a widespread refusal of payment. For an in-depth analysis of the anti-Poll Tax movement check out Danny Burns' book 'Poll Tax Rebellion.' Copies available from AK Distribution, PO Box 12766, Edinburgh, EH8 9YE, 0131 555 5165.

Also approaching it's 10 year anniversary is the Strangeways Prison Riot. This occurred between 1<sup>st</sup>-25<sup>th</sup> April 1990 and came out of the appalling conditions at the Manchester prison. Inmates were held three to a cell for 23 hours a day, allowed only one shower a week and visits for remand prisoners were restricted to just 15 minutes.

A good book on the full inside story is 'Strangeways 1990-a serious disturbance' by Nicki Jameson and Eric Allison published by Larkin Publications.

## ...and finally...

Now available! Internet Spy and You...the software they're trying to ban. Yep, folks- US company Helpful Hints is marketing software that will help you discover ANYTHING about ANYONE! Secrets they don't want you to know! Family, friends, neighbours...even yourself. With Internet Spy, you'll be glued to your monitor, a neighbourhood Big Brother sifting through the soiled pants of the bloke next door. And all for only \$24.95. Ain't America great?

### disclaimer

Always do it in public. Honest