



WAKE UP!!! IT'S YER TIME TO YANK OFF

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GENTLEMEN - THERE'S A CONTRACT UP FOR TENDER TO BRING BODIES OF DEAD US SOLDIERS BACK FROM IRAQ - AND DICK SAYS THAT WE'VE GOT IT IN THE BAG



I'M AN AMERICAN GET ME OUT OF HERE!

"You, like me, know who the real heroes are: those brave service men and women, yours and ours, who fought the war and risk their lives still." - Tony Blair to the US Congress, receiving a Congressional Gold Medal for services to The Empire.

*"US officials need to get our @**s out of here... I say that seriously. We have no business being here... All we are here is potential people to be killed and sitting ducks."* - US reservist in Iraq with the 307th Military Police Company, July 1.

Think back about six months. If you spent too much time back then listening to politicians, you'd have been forgiven for thinking that life was going to be pretty sweet for US and British troops in Iraq once Saddam was out of the picture. Nothing much to do, just driving around in a jeep, waiting for grateful Iraqis to run up and thank you for 'liberating' them. Well, it's nearly three months now since Dubya decided the war was over, and the story that US troops are telling is a little different.

"What are we getting into here?" a Sergeant from the 4th Infantry Division asked the Washington Post last month. "The war is supposed to be over, but every day we hear of another soldier getting killed...Saddam isn't in power anymore. The locals want us to leave. Why are we still here?" It seems the occupying forces aren't as popular as they were told they would be. "Little kids wave at us and their parents slap them in the back of the head and make them stop", one soldier told Associated Press. "It makes me feel like I wasted my time over here and they don't appreciate what we did..."

But maybe it's not so much that they don't appreciate it, as that they can't forget it. Some soldiers can't. Here's how one Sgt. Meadows describes his combat duty: "For me, it's like snapshot photos. Like pictures of maggots on tongues, babies with their heads on the ground, men with their heads halfway off and their eyes wide open and mouths wide open. I see it every day, every single day. The smells and the torsos burning, the entire route up to Baghdad, from 20 March to 7 April, nothing but burned bodies." And as the occupation drags on, many are getting increasingly desperate to get out: "At night time you think about all the people you killed" one Corporal told the Evening Standard. "It just never gets off your head... There's no chance to forget it. We're still here. We've been here so long." "Most soldiers would empty their bank accounts just for a plane ticket home" wrote another soldier in an anonymous letter to Congress.

It's no wonder they want to go home. They were told that they were there to get rid of Saddam and his Weapons of Mass Destruction. But it's three months since Saddam legged it, there's not a WMD in sight, yet there's still 155,000 occupation troops in the country, and their commanders expect them to be there for the foreseeable future. They were told they would be welcomed as liberators; instead they've got angry demos and grenade attacks. 44 US troops and 6 Brits have been killed in ambushes since the war 'finished', and attacks are increasing. So far this week there's been an average of two troops killed a day.

It's harder to say how many Iraqis have been killed since the occupation began because (surprisingly enough) the occupying forces are less interested keeping those records. But they're being killed daily. Two men were killed in Baghdad today when troops opened fire on their car after they drove too close to an American checkpoint. Even after the Falluja massacre in May (when US troops used automatic weapons to break up a "boisterous but peaceful" demo, killing 15 and wounding 75), there are still reports of troops using live ammo against demonstrators. 2 stone-throwers were shot dead during a demo outside US HQ in Baghdad on June 18. And in late June US 3rd Infantry forces began Israel-style 'punitive demolitions' of the family homes of people thought to be involved in armed resistance.

Yesterday Amnesty International published a report accusing the occupying forces of a string of human rights abuses against Iraqi civilians, including murder, torture, detention without trial, and inhumane treatment of prisoners. The report highlighted the case of one 12-year-old boy who was shot on June 26 by US soldiers conducting house-to-house searches whilst he was making his bed. When neighbours tried to rush the boy to hospital they were stopped by US troops. "The soldiers forced the neighbours to the ground, and after 15mins ordered them to return home because the curfew had started. [The boy] was already dead." Hard to understand why Iraqis don't want them around, isn't it?

Unlike some troops, Iraqis know that the US didn't come looking for WMDs. And they know that the US isn't about to go until it's got control of the oil reserves, got a new base in the Middle East, and opened up Iraq to foreign investment. But plans for a quick in'n'out invasion have gone badly wrong. As journalist Maria Tomchick puts it, according to the original war plan, the Pentagon "expected the Iraqi military to

CRAP ARREST OF THE WEEK

For chatting to friends

A 15 year old French girl fell victim to a new French law which makes blocking the communal areas of apartment blocks illegal with a maximum two months in jail or a 3,750 euro fine. The girl was handcuffed and taken to the police station, where she was held for 17 hours. Youth worker Richard Moyon complained. "They were only standing outside their home at midnight, outside school hours.... that's hardly a crime!" <http://www.lemonde.fr/article/0,5987,3208-327416-00.html>

refuse to fight, to depose Saddam in a coup, and to maintain control of the security situation in Iraq so US troops could waltz into Baghdad and set up a new government." In other words, Iraqis were going to be kept in line by the same bastards who've been calling the shots for the past 30 years. But when war began Baath party officials all over the country legged it, went into hiding, or were killed by local residents who hated the regime. And the US/UK were left to do their own dirty work.

The US can't just leg it out of Iraq like it did when it fucked up in Afghanistan. There's too much at stake. George, Tony & Co. are going to keep this one going for as long as they can. But as one Iraqi exile warned last month "Some have claimed it is in the interest of the US to...stabilise the region and create opportunities for US investment and reliable oil supplies. [This] rosy scenario failed to take account of the views of the Iraqi people and the history of their...struggles for freedom. The dawning of this reality on the US administration helps to explain why the occupation forces are increasingly resorting to terror tactics to subdue the Iraqi people."

*Whilst US troops are wishing they could get out of Iraq, US corporations are queuing up to get in. The Corporate Invasion of Iraq, <http://www.occupationwatch.org/article.php?id=73>, gives a detailed run down of who gets what. SchNEWS favourites include Cheney-backed Halliburton, and building firm Fluor Corporation, who allegedly hired security guards dressed in KKK robes to terrorise black workers when they were contracting in apartheid South Africa.

*Stephen Funk, a Marine Corps Reservist and conscientious objector, is facing a 2 year sentence for refusing to fight. For info, or to support his defence, see paydaynet.org.

More info: www.occupationwatch.org Recommended reading *Weapons of Mass Deception - the uses of propaganda in Bush's war on Iraq* www.constablerobinson.com ...& while yer at it SchNEWS Annual 2003 - *Peace De Resistance*.

SchNEWS in brief

Want to get involved in some radical ecological direct action? Then get along to the **Earth First** summer gathering happening on 13-17 August somewhere in North Yorkshire. Costs £10 on the gate www.earthfirstgathering.org.uk ** "It seems that more people spend their Sundays in supermarkets than they do in Church. We live in a world where worship of the product is more popular than religion." **Whirl-Mart** is a shopping awareness ritual where a group of whirlers gently invade a cathedral of consumption (ASDA) armed with empty trolleys. If you wanna give it a whirl then meet at **Ye Olde Black Cross** beer garden, Bromsgrove for debriefing at 1pm sharp! www.breathingplanet.net/ ** A tenant at Brighton's council run **Horsdean Traveller** site has been given 3 days notice to quit for complaining once too often that the on-site toilet and shower block has been broken for six months. Rather than fix the block, the council have decided it would be easier, and presumably cheaper, to evict the tenant who is recovering from a recent hip operation. Raise your objections with Pat Foster at Brighton and Hove council 01273 290000. For more info call the Sussex Traveller Action Group 07941 460866. ** Indymedia Cinema presents **Necropolis Now!** about urban redevelopment and gentrification next Thursday (31) at The Other Cinema 11 Rupert Street, London W1 Tel: 020 7437 0757 (Piccadilly Circus tube) £5/£4 kicks off 9.30pm www.indymedia.org.uk ** Indymedia are also organising monthly screenings at **The Spitz** in Spitalfields Market and setting up an independent media centre for the global days of action against the massive arms

fair happening in London this September. <http://www.dsei.org/> ** There's a planning meeting next Tuesday (29) for the **London Reclaim The Streets** street party planned to disrupt the London arms fair. The meeting is at LARC, 62 Fieldgate Street, London E1 1ES (Whitechapel tube) partyintheroad2003@yahoo.com ** Target racist right wing rags who openly scapegoat refugees and asylum seekers for all of society's ills. Demo this Saturday (26) outside the **Daily Mail**, Derry St, next to High St Kensington tube 12 noon 07951 493 232 www.worldrevolution.org.uk ** **Cuba from an anarchist perspective** talk and debate 8th August at the London Anarchist Forum, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London (Holborn tube) 8pm www.trak.to/laf ** **All Our Strength: The Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan** is a newly published book, and the author is asking if anyone could help get the book published in other languages other than English: rawa-ml@rawa.org ** Volunteers are still needed for a summer work camp, sponsored by the **Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions** from August 8th-22nd in East Jerusalem. "We will build Beit Arabia (House of Arabia - House of Peace) on the site of a house, which was demolished four times for the lack of a building permit. The Centre will also be used for educational and activist events relating to the Occupation and peace building among Palestinians and Israelis." 0207 700 6192 www.palestine.campaign.org ** *For more party and protest dates check out the SchNEWS website.*

Kreminal

This week the Kremlin's human rights envoy, Abdul-Khakim Sultygov, accused NGOs of "terrorist activities..., psychological war and propaganda and moral terror". The crimes? Revealing the Russian military's abuses of Chechens. Sultygov went on to say that "pseudo-NGOs" are "misleading international opinion... by skilfully combining truth, semi-truth and blatant lies" in an attempt "to justify terrorist methods through certain political ideas". Eh? According to Anna Neistat, director of Human Rights Watch in Moscow, there is no evidence of any links between human rights organisations and terrorism. That may be true but that doesn't stop NGOs being guilty of moral terrorism in Sultygov's eyes. These NGOs have the cheek to support Chechens struggling for freedom against the might of the Russian army. Then these bleeding heart NGOs have the nerve to publicise the struggle of these Chechen 'terrorists' with woolly liberal political ideas such as 'freedom'. So, yes, the NGOs are guilty of terrorising the morals of poor Russians with images of massacred Chechens.

Those silly liberal NGOs should try and emulate the upstanding Kremlin who aren't petty moral terrorists but successful state terrorists. They don't just terrorise people's morals they massacre entire villages. The Kremlin claims that the war in Chechnya is coming to an end but crime and violence still plague the republic and Chechens say that Russian forces commit murder, rape and other abuses. Those fluffy human rights groups continue to speak out for Chechens but since Putin repackaged the conflict as part of the global "war on terror" the West has stopped listening (see SchNEWS 379).

COCA-KILLER

"We ask Coca Cola to stop killing ... and you to stop drinking Coke" **Carlos Julia, SINALTRAINAL, Colombia.**

Tuesday saw the fizzy beginnings of a global boycott of Coca Cola in Piccadilly Circus hundreds of people listened to speeches and danced to samba beats while four 'waitresses' wiggled through the crowd offering everyone (literally) bloody Coke drinks. Marta Hinestroza, a refugee lawyer representing peasant farmers called for a boycott of Coca Cola products. Earlier in the day Cardiff Anarchist Network took direct action against one of the blood bottlers' plants in north London. Protesters locked themselves to lorries, and the plant's gates, while others pressed emergency buttons to stop the production line. The protesters were detained but released after Coca Cola decided not to press the charge of 'conspiracy to commit burglary'. One protester overheard Coke managers saying over the police radio that £30,000 worth of output had been lost.

The aim of the boycott is to stop the violent repression that has seen the assassination of eight Colombian Coca Cola workers in recent years. Colombian food and drinks workers' union SINALTRAINAL accuses Coca Cola of working alongside paramilitary death squads to wipe out union activity in its plants. The most glaring example of this was the Carepa plant in Antioquia where 5 union members were assassinated between 1994 and 1996.

Since the US-backed Álvaro Uribe Vélez became president in August 2002, 92 trade unionists have been assassinated. 8,000 politically motivated assassinations happen every year. The UN estimates that the state and paramilitaries are responsible for more than 80% of them. The vast majority of the victims are unarmed civilians; most often targeted are peasants, human rights defenders, womens' organisations, indigenous groups and trade unionists. Peasants are

murdered or moved off their land to make way for BP pipelines. So how have the human rights defending UK / US governments responded? Well Blair gave Uribe's government a huge loan to continue his fantastic policy of 'democratic security', while Bush has made Colombia the world's second biggest recipient of US military aid.

Faced with such bottled up repression SINALTRAINAL and families of assassinated plant workers have taken Coke and its bottlers (Panamco and Bebidas) to court in Columbia and the US. In March a US judge ruled that the case for human rights violations can move forward, but strangely he removed the Coca Cola Company from the court case.

While the case continues, SINALTRAINAL and its supporters have called for a year long boycott of all Coke products until a number of demands have been met, including an end to assassinations, that Coca Cola prints a memorial of the murdered workers on its labels and pays full reparations to the victims' families. The union has also demanded that Coca Cola supports an annual forum on human rights for workers in multinational companies. Predictably Coke reckons the charges are "completely false" and are "a shameless effort" for publicity. But in the words of one hard core, anti-soft drink activist "There are a million and one shameless efforts we can make to publicise how completely false Coke's claims are."

See: www.colombiasolidarity.org.uk and www.caja.org/coke/

** Meanwhile, in India, communities near a Coca Cola plant are facing severe water shortages and pollution. Of course, Coke denies they're nicking local's water insisting that the charges are false and that the company is the "target of a handful of extremist protesters." Unfortunately for Coke, all the surrounding communities seem to have fairly large handfuls of extremist protesters that are taking direct action in their thousands against the blood bottlers. See: <http://www.corpwatchindia.org/>

Positive SchNEWS

Mention the words "school dinners" and many of us start reaching for the sick bag or think of chips with everything, but one woman who works at St Peter's Primary school in Nottingham is changing all that.

Jeanette Orrey started providing school meals on site using as many organic and locally produced ingredients as possible. And although ingredient costs have doubled, the cost of a dinner has stayed the same thanks to cutting out contract suppliers and bureaucracy. Soaring demand for school meals at St Peter's has also helped - 80% of the kids eat there now, compared to a national average of 45%.

Dinner time has also taken on an educational role - kids designing menus and learning about and the amount of pollution caused by food traveling thousands of miles. Parents can now eat at the school any day and on Wednesdays senior citizens are served by some of the older children who then sit and eat with them. See: http://www.eat-the-view.org.uk/pdf/Jeanette_Summary.pdf

* A new report 'Good Food on the Public Plate' by Sustain and East Anglia Food Link says that buying local food for use in our school, hospital and prison canteens would boost local economies by at least £5 billion. Copies: 020 7837 1228 www.sustainweb.org

...and finally...

Don't drink Pepsi if you work for Coca-Cola. Rick Bronson, a driver at a Coca-Cola bottling plant in California found this out when he dared to attempt to consume a rival drink. He wasn't aware that he was being watched by his bosses. A spokesman declined to comment on Bronson's case and wouldn't say whether drinking a rival company's products was a disciplinary offence. Despite this Rick was apparently fired for drinking Pepsi but insists that he didn't swallow.

Disclaimer

SchNEWS fanx everyone for last night's book launch on a flood of tears and booze. We're off to gather at the Big Green so no issue next week. Honest.

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