



WAKE UP! IT'S YER OLD BULL AND BUSH

MIAMI VICE

SchNEWS

www.schnews.org.uk



Friday 28th November 2003 Free/Donation Issue 432

MIAMI LICE

"It is sometimes easy to forget, in the midst of a furious crowd, that all our liberties were acquired not through polite representation, but by means of insurrection and protest."

- George Monbiot

While George Bush was telling us Brits how his country values its "civil rights" and "freedom" people demonstrating against the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) meeting in Miami were experiencing something a little different.

Thousands of militarised police, in full riot gear, armed with everything from tear gas, rubber bullets and bean bags, electrified shields, tanks, water cannons, automatic and semi-automatic weapons, were busy violently arresting peaceful demonstrators, in some cases with tazers, in others at gun point. Busses filled with union members were prevented from joining permitted marches; human rights activists had guns pointed at their heads at military-style checkpoints. Embedded journalists similar to those used in Iraq meant any independent ones were attacked, arrested and had cameras stolen.

Over 270 were nicked - 50 of them while holding a peaceful vigil outside the jail in solidarity with those inside! Those in prison reported sexual assaults and beatings with two men locked in small, dog-kennel size cages and sprayed with freezing water and pepper spray.

125 were injured, and a Centre looking after those injured was itself attacked by the robocops. One doctor remarked, "I've worked in emergency rooms, but this is really some of the worst onslaught of injuries I have ever seen."

For months beforehand, Police Chief John Timoney had portrayed protestors as terrorists and the gathering in Miami as a siege of the city. To cope with these 'terrorists' the Miami police had managed to get \$8.5 million earmarked for Iraq, to spend on "non-lethal" weapons. New laws meant that groups of seven or more people were forbidden to stop on the pavement for longer than 29 minutes without a permit. The City Council decided not to criminalize puppets but did ban materials such as stilts "more than three quarters inch in its thickest dimension" and "containers of any kind." All coconuts were removed from palm trees in case they were used as weapons!

Ed Hale, resident and singer for the rock group Transcendence complained that "Downtown Miami seemed like a third world dictatorship. What we saw tells us a lot about the system that brings together corporations and governments in an Enron-esque marriage

of corruption. A virtual army of 2,500 police used every brutal and sneaky tactic in the book to defend the corporate profit interests that are at stake in the FTAA against diverse demonstrators whose only crime was telling the truth about the global corporate takeover."

Miami Mayor Manny Diaz however disagreed describing the police presence as "a model for homeland defense." But then Miami, in the state of Florida, is the home of George's brother Jeb Bush who so helpfully fiddled the election result to make his brother president in the first place.

BISH-BASH BUSH BOSHING

While Bush has waxed lyrical that the FTAA is "a free-trade system that links all of the Americas" and "the brilliant new dawn of a splendid new world" others have called it "NAFTA on steroids." NAFTA - the North American Free Trade Agreement (see SchNEWS 200) signed between Mexico, Canada and the States was another one of those free trade deals that we were told would benefit everyone. Except that the only people it has benefited has been surprise, surprise multinational corporations. Just check out Chapter 11 of NAFTA which allows corporations to sue if they think certain environmental laws are stopping them making a profit!

So why do people let them get away with this? As Kevin Danaher from Global Exchange put it "If you're going to only have the elite, the billionaires, making the policy, how are you going to keep everyone else away from that table? Shoot 'em. ... The U.S. is the mother country of protectionism. (It wouldn't have a computer industry or an airline industry or a railroad industry or an auto industry if it wasn't for (this protectionism). The free market ideology is this bullshit that they put out there to pry open Third World countries and to keep people here stupid and think, "Oh, get the government out of the way. Let capital decide how the world will be run." Well, duh. If you let capital decide how the world is going to run, they'll cut down every tree, they'll kill every fish, they'll push our wages down to zero, they'll pollute the shit out of everything, because all they care about is making money."

In the end the business community didn't get their way and FTAA finished a day early with the Washington Post reporting that "corporate lobbyists... fumed at the outcome." Not surprising really when all they'd agreed to was to continue talks in the future.

As one of those journalists who refused to be 'embedded' Jeremy Scahill from

CRAP ARRESTS OF THE WEEK

For not Keeping off the Grass.

A man on the anti-Bush Critical Mass tried to get round a copper blocking his way by stepping off the path onto the grass of St James Park. For this heinous crime he was jumped on by two police, handcuffed and carted away for causing a Breach of the Peace. This arrest was apparently to protect the grass who felt intimidated by his actions and had nothing to do with a US motorcade driving up the Mall that the police were trying to prevent protestors seeing.

For interfering with the Queen's Bush!

After the Bush demo two cheeky protesters decided to leave their giant pretzel placard in a tree facing Buckingham Palace, for which they were surrounded by a dozen police, held for ages searched and threatened with arrest for climbing up one of the Queen's trees!

Democracy Now! said "In the times in which we live, this is what democracy looks like. Thousands of soldiers, calling themselves police, deployed in US cities to protect the power brokers from the masses." But with several cities sending law enforcement observers to the protests to study what some are now referring to as the "Miami Model" anyone who tries to exercise their 'civil rights' and 'freedom' in the Land of the Free better be ready to be beaten to a pulp.

* For more on the protests www.ftaaimc.org www.zmag.org

* Read 'Shafted: Free Trade and America's Working Poor' where farmers, fishermen, garment workers etc. describe the ruin that free trade agreements have unleashed on them. To order copies www.foodfirst.org

* The FBI has been busy collecting information on anti war demonstrations and has asked agencies for any suspicious activity to be reported to its counterterrorism squads. "It's obvious that there are individuals capable of violence at these events." one F.B.I. official said. Yep, just take a look at the Miami stormtroppers.

* Some 10,000 demonstrated last weekend outside America's very own terrorist training camp - the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation, formerly known as the School of the Americas, where Latin American militias learn 'counterinsurgency' techniques. www.soaw.org

* Cops and 'welfare officers' were out and about during last Thursdays massive anti Bush rally in London hoping to catch schoolkids having the cheek to go truant and protest. Today's schoolkids - tomorrow's terrorists.

* Yesterday's Queens Speech included the Civil Contingency Bill - giving the police unprecedented powers in a state of emergency. With the cops liberal use of the Terrorism Acts to stop and search anyone they don't like the look of, this will no doubt be another law protestors can look forward too finding out about in more detail.

Outside SchNEWS

Fantastic News! Simon Chapman and the rest of the Thessaloniki 7 were released on 26 Nov at 4pm Greek time. Their hunger strike has ended after between 49 and 66 days. Given their extremely frail health condition they will stay in hospital for at least another 5-7 days to recover. The 7 were released without bail and under the following conditions: They are not to leave Greece before the trial, and the 3 Greeks should present themselves to a police station twice a month. The Council of Judges ruled for their release after the District Attorney in Athens *ordered doctors to force feed the hunger strikers*. That move turned public opinion against the state. People were outraged at a decision that reeked of totalitarianism. The media started putting pressure on the government, and even members of the governing PASOK party came out to demand the release of the 7. The solidarity movement in Greece also put great pressure on the government, with lots of occupations, demonstrations, actions and publicity. Also, once word got out that the prisoners only had a week to live even the mainstream media began to take an interest. The coverage of this issue compared to that of the "plane spotters" (remember them?) was virtually non-existent despite overwhelming evidence that they had been. The Greek authorities and justice system have been made to look totally ridiculous, with clear video and photographic evidence being widely circulated. 28 European parliament members called for the prisoners' release and Amnesty International have called for an independent inquiry.

Indymedia Athens stated: *"This is a victory of the struggle for dignity and freedom by the 5 hunger strikers, of the other 2 prisoners, but as well the thousands of people that stood up for them all over the world! It is an outright defeat for the Greek state-repression complex, and for the global "anti-terror" mechanisms. Our passion for freedom was stronger than their prisons"*.

PRIMATE SCREAM

So you thought we lived in a democracy, where local opinion and due process count? Well, Deputy PM John Prescott has overruled a public inquiry, which rejected the building of a primate brain vivisection lab in Cambridge, and in his wisdom has given it the go-ahead. Of course this has absolutely nothing to do with the fact that the lab was backed by biotech entrepreneur Lord Sainsbury who happens to be the Science Minister and a multi-million pound donor to the Neo-Labour Party.

The primate lab will supposedly investigate brain disorders in humans, but the science is highly questionable and the practice extremely cruel. Monkeys will be deliberately brain damaged for use as "models" of human disease, but all this will tell us is how brain damaged monkeys behave. There are other more direct ways to study brain disease such as MRI scans, computerized modeling, cellular research and clinical observation but these are short of funds, while vivisection is given massive government funding. As the inspector at the Public Enquiry said: "It would be a stronger argument to say that it is nationally important [for Cambridge University] to catch up on alternative forms of research to that employing animals."

Stop Primate Experiments at Cambridge
0845 330 7985 www.primatemonitor.org

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SchNEWS in brief

Tom Hurdnall, an International Solidarity Movement volunteer was shot by the IOF leaving him brain dead and on a life support machine. After waiting 5 months for some recompense from the Israeli government for expenses incurred, Tom's family finally received a cheque. Thing was, the cheque bounced! If they're that skint maybe they should stop building that wall. That'll save them a few quid. ****Colombia Solidarity Campaign** have organized a Conference next Saturday (6th) 'Resist the Multinational Empire - The Coca Cola Boycott.' It's at SOAS, Russell Sq., London Tel: 07743 743041 www.colombiasolidarity.org.uk **** Looking for a Christmas present for your nan?** The 5th Manchester Radical Bookfair is taking place 6th December, Bridge 5 Mill, 22a Beswick Street, Ancoats. www.radicalbookfair.org.uk/ **** Are you an office temp fed up with being exploited by profit-making agency scum?** Then get along to a meeting to discuss establishing a workers co-op for temps next Friday (5th) 7.30pm at the Autonomy Club, Freedom Bookshop, 84B Whitechapel High Street, London E1 **** 'The Fourth World War'** - the untold story of the current global conflict across five continents - is showing next Wednesday 3rd 9pm at the Other Cinema, 11 Rupert Street, London W1 £7/5 020 7437 0757 www.indymedia.org.uk **** Mark Curtis** will be talking about his new book 'Web of Deceit' next Thursday 4th, 6pm at the Cowley Club, 12 London Road, Brighton. The book tells how Blair's warmongering and disregard for international law is nothing new - with chapters on Britain's wars in Malaya, Kenya, Iraq and elsewhere. Free. **** A Glasgow Anarchist Dayschool** is happening on 13th December at Annexe, 9a Stewartville St, Partick. For more info www.nocog.org/~autonomy/dayschool.html **** Two peace protesters** have been found guilty of helping to break open the gates of RAF Fairford, the base US planes used to bomb the people of Iraq. They were ordered to pay the MoD £500 compensation and were given a 2 year conditional discharge. www.bristol.indymedia.org **** There's going to be another Aspire Squatted Social Space** happening from 5-14th December in Leeds. For location and events nearer the time www.aspire.org.uk **** London Rising Tide** recently had a busy day haranguing BP bosses, trashing the company's 'we care about the environment' greenwash. Outside the Royal Albert Hall a 'new' think-tank, the Foundation for the Advancement of Big Oil, told people attending the conference: "Who needs human rights - all we need is rights to OIL!" If you want to get involved in actions during next month's governmental Climate Change Conference in Milan call Rising Tide on 01865 241 097 www.risingtide.org.uk/ **** Actions** continue against Bayer Crop Science who are desperate for GM food to be grown in Britain. After a noise demo outside their offices in Newbury a fortnight ago, last week 35 people paid a visit to their HQ in Cambridge. To get involved - www.stopbayergm.org/ **** London Earth First!** is holding a meeting to discuss Bayer next Monday 1st at the Autonomy Club, Freedom Bookshop, 84B Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7pm **** Entwoods Forest** protest camp was celebrating this week after plans to destroy it so hotels could be built there were thrown out by the Dutch high court. Activists intend to stay in the forest for the moment as the company involved, Efteling, has not yet decided what to do. www.groenfront.nl

GLAD TIDINGS?

The European Social Forum ended in Paris last Saturday. It was a meeting point for thousands that had mobilised all over Europe in the past year in anti-capitalist demos, anti-EU demos and the worldwide anti-war demos.

There were talks on the struggles against privatisation, GATS, and freedom of movement. The ESF also provided the platform to call for Europe-wide anti-war demonstrations in March and demonstrations in May against the new European constitution.

But the ESF was also rife with friction. Some were suspicious about the organisers and felt that groups such as the CGT trade union and communist parties wanted to use the anti-capitalist movement for parliamentary power and reformism. These suspicions were compounded by the fact the ESF received money from local councils and the state. All the plenary meetings were mass meetings with 'experts' enlightening the crowd. The young anti-capitalist movement, inspired by ideas of autonomy and non-hierarchical participation, saw the arthritic hand of the old left trying to seize its momentum.

In response to the old left's domination of the ESF alternative spaces sprang up. The Libertarian Social Forum, organised by anarchist groups and unions, ran parallel to the ESF and offered a range of workshops. However, it was too isolated from the ESF, exclusive, and there were rarely any translations! The most inspiring space was 'GLAD', an autonomous space within the ESF. Self-determination and participation were put into practice with workshops, collective kitchens and direct action. This lifted GLAD above the rest of the ESF.

Disobedience even seeped into the demonstration on Saturday where amidst the 80,000 protesters there was an unnerving presence of flag-waving old left parties. The presence of the repressive Parti Socialiste was too much for some, who showered them with plastic bottles till they skulked off. The week culminated in fireworks as 300 met on Saturday night in front of a prison united under the joyous theme of 'Lets burn down all the prisons'.

After a week of friction between mass meetings and self-organised workshops, between elitist organisation and transparent self-management, between talk and action, between State support and autonomy, GLAD shows the radical possibilities of the ESF. See: fse-esf.org

*Guess what? The ESF comes to London next year and has been hijacked by the Socialist Workers' Party, Globalise Resistance and the Mayor of London. Grassroots activists have formed a 'Democratise the ESF' group and are urging activists, community groups, unions etc, to attend the ESF Process meetings in December. Contact: democratise_the_esf@lists.riseup.net

...and finally...

Callers ringing up Miami cop shop to complain about police tactics during the Trade Area of the Americas demonstrations were dealt with in the sympathetic manner we'd expect from a tin pot dictatorship. One man was transferred four times before speaking to a cop who was clearly annoyed with people calling in to complain. "First of all, where are you from?" When the caller replied North Carolina, the cop asked what North Carolina had to do with Miami. When the caller said that he had participated in the demonstrations and was calling to lodge a complaint he was then asked if he paid Miami taxes. When the caller replied no, he was told "Then what makes you think anybody in Miami gives a flying fuck what you have to say?!" and cut off!

Disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all readers we're too bushed for any more warnings.. Honest!