



WAKE UP!! WAKE UP!! IT'S YER RING OF IRE...

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CHILE CON CARNAGE

“The turnout is much bigger than we’d expected. This is a polite response to Bush’s barbarity” - Ernesto Medina, a march organizer.

An estimated 60,000 demonstrators marched against capitalism in Santiago de Chile last Saturday as the country played host to the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation forum. George Bush was in town with his mates from 21 other countries, to discuss trade, terrorism and other ways to screw the poor. Although between them these countries control 47% of world trade, they’re eager to get their hands on the other 53%, and to help them along their way they organised the weekend’s forum to discuss the creation of a Pacific wide ‘free trade’ area by 2010.

The demo was one of Chile’s largest since the ending of the country’s seventeen year military dictatorship in 1990. Three days before the conference even started there were clashes between students and police, with a McDonalds receiving the time honoured trashing. By Friday protesters were hurling Molotov cocktails and stones at police who retaliated with tear gas and water cannons. Despite 500 arrests by the Saturday, this made little difference to the 60,000 marchers’ determination to rally against the latest round of corporate sponsored free trade talks. Lucky Santiago residents got a public holiday on Friday as a result of the protests, but all police leave was cancelled (shame)!

The violence, however, wasn’t all poverty related. Bolshy Bush and his body guard goons insisted that all the politicians and their guests at a pre-conference banquet had to pass through metal detectors and be subjected to body searches. Chilean officials then responded by downgrading the ‘banquet’ to a ‘dinner’ (!?), after Chilean President Ricardo Lagos said that he wouldn’t let US security services search his guests. In a tit for tat response, Chilean police refused a US security guard entry to another official function on Saturday night. Clearly modelling himself on his pal Arnold Schwarzenegger, Bush lost his rag and waded in, ending up in a scuffle with the police as he pulled his guard into the room!

Debtor the devil u know

Over the past ten years, the World Bank and International Monetary Fund have been blathering on about poverty reduction, anti-corruption, debt relief and increased health and education spending, even naming the weekend conference ‘One Community, Our

Future’. Without a hint of irony, Wal-Mart sponsored Prime Ministers and Presidents declared their commitment to ‘sustainable and equitable growth’. “Chile is a prime example of the benefits of opening markets,” US Trade Representative Robert Zoellick said, “the Chilean people have charted a course toward economic growth, development and expanding prosperity.”

Perhaps Chile is seen as a success story because only 20% of its population live in poverty, compared to the 44% average for Latin America. Or maybe Zoellick’s just been feasting too much in swanky restaurants, to have noticed the homeless sleeping outside his hotel. “We have to do something to humanise this economic model that is now spreading in the world,” said Francisco Araya, an office worker who brought his two children along to the protest, “ten percent of the population own more than half the country’s wealth. This can’t continue.” Whilst 5% of Chileans live on the edge of starvation, their country exports apples, grapes and wine to the US and salmon to Europe, in a desperate bid to earn foreign currency so that the country can repay its \$38 billion debt to Western Banks. In comparison, last year Chile spent less than \$3 billion on education and one in ten Chileans still do not have access to drinking water.

Rather than tackling poverty, APEC leaders instead proposed a host of trade related anti-terrorism measures that are likely to justify clampdowns on future anti-capitalist actions. For the past year, the Interpol office in Santiago has been using a database of around 500 activists they believed would be coming to the protests. A week before the riots began, police arrested thirty people who attended a rally against the infringements on civil liberties.

Latin Lucre

Although leaders in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela have recently been elected on the basis of strong left wing agendas and independence from the US, all have been reluctant to say ‘no’ to the IMF

and World Bank which have crippled the countries with levels of debt that are unlikely to ever be paid off. Venezuelan president Hugo Chavez, recently attacked Bush’s vision of world trade domination, publicly calling him a *pendejo* (asshole) but Venezuela oversees the worlds 7th largest oil reserves and can afford to be a bit cocky. Ecuador, on the other hand, spends half of its national budget on debt repayments and, according to former economist John Perkins, the US literally has them over a barrel, “when we want more oil, we go to Ecuador and say, look, you’re not able to repay your debts, therefore give our oil companies your oil filled Amazon rain forest.” Or else.

In his new book, Perkins describes himself as a former economic hit man: a highly paid professional who cheated countries around the globe out of trillions of dollars. Perkins says that his job was to “build up the American empire. To bring and create situations where as many resources as possible flow into the US, to our corporations, and our government, and in fact we’ve been very successful. We’ve built the largest empire in the history of the world.”

Perkins was recruited in the late sixties by the National Security Agency and quickly found himself working for the World Bank. The Bank was giving huge loans to other countries, much bigger than they could possibly repay. Perkins would then strike a deal that ensured US corporations picked up the contracts for the infrastructure projects the loans were supposed to fund. “Those companies would then go in and build an electrical system or ports or highways, and these would basically serve just a few of the very wealthiest families in those countries. Basically they become our servants, our slaves. It’s an empire. There’s no two ways about it. It’s been extremely successful.”

Street protests may have helped put an end to Bush’s hopes to create a Free Trade Area of the Americas by 2005, but the White House is picking countries off, one-by-one. The US has armed the Colombian military in exchange for a deal on free trade and has created a huge sweatshop in Central America where women earn 25 pence an hour sewing Tommy Hilfiger sweatshirts that sell for £50 a piece. With 60,000 people on the streets of one of Latin America’s richest countries, things are sure to hot up.

* For more on the protests www.santiago.indymedia.org
* Read an interview with John Perkins www.democracynow.org/article.pl?sid=04/11/09/1526251&mode=thread&tid=25

CASH CONVERTERS

- * Money raised by first Band Aid single: £9.5 million.
- * Sub-Saharan Africa’s debt: \$256bn
- * Security budget for the 2005 G8 summit in Scotland (where Blair reckons Africa will top the agenda): £150 million.
- * Cost of Iraq war so far to UK taxpayer: £8 billion.

K-IDS

In the Queen's Speech the government announced plans to introduce ID cards, however a national ID scheme for children is much closer. The Children's Bill, which is likely to become an Act, will establish a national database of every single child in the country (SchNEWS 452). This all seeing database will have details on the child's school achievements, GP and hospital visits, police and social services records, home address and details about their family. The database will be accessible to just about every government agency you can think of and some private companies, but children and their parents won't have access to it, and will have to apply to see details held on their children under the Data Protection Act.

As Liberty say, this is a national ID database in all but name: "They are creating a national database through the back door. You start with information about all children, but, in 20 years time, you've got almost half the population." The creation of a national database is a clear invasion of privacy; the government's own Joint Committee on Human Rights says that it is incompatible with Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights.

Not that Ministers are worried about this, their only concern is the technical challenge of setting up the database. There has been a whole catalogue of failures of computer databases, most notably the Child Support Agency, which eighteen months after a £456m IT system was brought in only 61,000 parents had received any money out of 478,000 applications, with a

waiting time of 15-22 weeks (the target is six weeks). Or the Inland Revenue who deleted tax records due to a computer "glitch". Then there's the loophole in the planned NHS database, which allows any user to access any patient's records and make changes. One senior physician involved in the project said, "It's a system that's just asking to be abused." Other cock-ups with databases include the Criminal Records Bureau, Passport Service, Tax Credits the list goes on, in a pattern dubbed 'Repetitive Failure Syndrome'. With a track record like that the possibility of cock-ups for a database for children or a national ID card seems an absolute certainty. www.arch-ed.org/chldrnbill.htm

* The obsession with computer tracking of children is reaching silly levels. A new scheme called VeriCool is a "fingerprint verification system" based on a child's fingerprint. Apparently this can be used to take the class register or to see if everyone has got back on the bus after a school trip. Now call SchNEWS old fashioned but isn't a more simple way of taking the class register is for the teacher to read out the children's names? VeriCool is run by Anteon who are a US military company involved with, amongst other things, global intelligence systems, missile defences and weapons system modernization. Good to see our children are safe in such nice people's hands. www.vericool.co.uk

* STOP ID cards and the database state public meeting next Tuesday (30) The Brix, St Matthews Church, Brixton SW2 7 pm www.no2id.net

Inside SchNEWS

Continuing their record of violating civil rights of protesters, New York cops used the Republican National Convention in August as an opportunity to target the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) during a peaceful protest outside the Starbucks where they worked. The Union called for a march during the Convention to protest against the Bush Administration's support for anti-union actions at Starbucks. Daniel Gross, a co-founder of the Union and Starbucks employee is set to stand trial in January for disorderly conduct and resisting arrest and faces a maximum sentence of six months. The NYC Union have sparked a national campaign to organise against the massive coffee chain, aiming to bring workers together to rise out of poverty, put an end to understaffing, and achieve a guaranteed number of work hours per week.

Starbucks has a history of making false allegations about IWW rallies in New York City and so in keeping with tradition; company managers gave info to New York detectives before the protest began. "Once again, Starbucks has proven it will do or say anything to attempt to break our union," Daniel said. "Chairman Howard Schultz will likely use a conviction against me as a fear-tactic to deter workers from joining the IWW to improve their life on the job."

www.starbucksunion.org www.iww.org

Weymouth Wonderland

Would you like to have a seaside break over the Christmas period? The camp against the A50 Weymouth "Relief" Road would like help building more warm accommodation. Despite Dorset Council agreeing to evict the camp, no court proceedings have occurred, seeming to confirm local rumours that the ownership of the land the camp is occupying is under dispute. This campaign is very winnable, as there is no economic or strategic reason for the road, and it is hugely destructive. It goes through ancient woodland, dissects the Littlemore Housing Estate, and goes through an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. www.roadalert.org.uk

GOOD BOOKING!!

Can you help get us get SchNEWS at Ten distributed? Check out the list of those flogging it on the merchandise page of our website and let us know if there are other places that might like to take copies. And why not order a copy from your local library?

SchNEWS in brief

John Jordan co-editor of the anti-capitalist book '**We are everywhere**' is speaking at the Cowley Club, Brighton Thurs 2nd Dec, 6pm, also showing a film about Argentina's factory occupation ** **What's REALLY Happening in Iraq?**! Film night Thurs 2nd Dec. See uncensored footage of life in Iraq. Friends Meeting House, Ship Street, Brighton. 7:30pm. ** **End the Occupation** demo this Saturday (27th) Meet Altab Ali Park, Whitechapel Road, near Brick Lane. 1.30pm ** '**Occupation and Resistance in Iraq**: international teach-in' Sun 5th Dec University of London Union, Malet Street, London. £5/£2 www.iraqoccupationfocus.org.uk ** Noise Demos against Brighton based **arms manufacturers EDO** next three Thursdays, from 4pm Home Farm Business Park, Moulscroomb. www.smashedo.bpec.org ** On Tuesday, for three hours, activists blockaded the entrance to Stancliffe Stone who want to quarry the **9 Ladies** site (SchNEWS 437). No arrests were made, and more actions are planned depending on the outcome of a meeting they managed to arrange with Stancliffe Stone. www.indymedia.org.uk/en/2004/11/301742.html ** Demonstration against right wing, ex president of Spain, **Jose Maria Aznar** who is speaking at Oxford Union. Meet 7.30pm on Fri Dec 3rd, meet in St Michaels Street. Bring pots & pans. ** **Demonstration against indefinite detention without charge or trial** and fast track extradition to the US, Sun 28th Nov, 12.30-2.30pm, V2 Tattenhoe St, opposite Woodhill Prison, Milton Keynes www.mkstopwar.org.uk ** Cranes were occupied on Monday at the channel tunnel rail link site in Kings Cross in solidarity with workers protesting the "**concrick**". A call is being made for a national ballot of all construction workers. (SchNEWS 473/471) www.indymedia.org.uk/en/2004/11/301614.html ** This Saturday is the **Anarchist Book Fair** at ULU, Mallet St, London. But its also Buy Nothing Day, so you'll have to leave empty handed!

Positive SchNEWS

Indymedia was born five years ago out of the Seattle World Trade Organisation protests. Back then it was a way of coordinating actions and getting past the corporate media, since they either ignored the protests or only reported on damage to property.

It has grown into one of the biggest alternative news networks in the world, with over 100 centres all over the world. The really exciting thing about Indymedia is that anyone can post news onto the pages.

Of course all this grassroots empowerment hasn't escaped the notice of the authorities. A few weeks ago the servers for 21 sites were taken from the UK by the FBI in a highly suspect international policing operation (SchNEWS 469). The legal basis for the seizure is still not clear. Fortunately the servers have now been returned.

To celebrate their anniversary UK Indymedia is 'avin it large at Tufnell Park community centre, St George's church, 49 Tufnell Park Rd, London. The line up includes, Fun-Da-Mental, Rhythms of Resistance, The Rub, Penny Rimbaud (Crass), The Unpeople, with special guests The FBI plus films and more music! www.indymedia.org.uk

DISSENT briefs

The Trapese Roadshow aims to inspire, inform and mobilise people about the G8 and related issues in the build up to the G8 summit in Scotland next year. Touring in December visiting Stirling, Perth, Newcastle, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester and more. 07904452297 roadshow@riseup.net ** Dissent! Gathering in **Newcastle** next weekend (4th-5th Dec) Booking essential g8gathering@yahoo.co.uk ** Dissent! meetings in **Brighton** every Tuesday, 6pm Cowley Club, London Road, brightonantig8@yahoo.co.uk ** New Dissent! Booklet '**Reflections on Summit Mobilisations**'. Send £2 to Box 8, 245 G ladstone St., Nottingham, NG7 6HX. www.dissent.org.uk

...and finally...

Well, it's only six decades after troublemaker Lucy Parsons died and there's been loads of squabbling over whether or not a small park in Chicago should be named after her. Police were trying to prevent the park being named after the labour organizer who coined the infamous phrase "Behold your future executioners". Bearing Parson's quote in mind, the city police have been huffing and puffing over this dangerous issue "They're going to name a piece of property in the city of Chicago after an anarchist!" exclaimed one traumatized cop. However, despite objections, the city has given the green light to honour the activist and the park was christened 'Lucy Parsons'. Lucy and her husband, Albert, were a strong force behind the improvement of lives of women, minorities and workers. They were continually punished for defending workers rights and when a bomb went off on May 1st 1886 at a union rally in Haymarket Square, Albert was blamed, even though he was not there on the day, and executed along with 3 others (this was the origin of May Day, international workers day by the way!). Chicago police went to extremes to silence Lucy Parsons every time she tried to speak out and now 62 years after her death they are still trying to silence her.

Disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all readers not to rub their Bush up the wrong way with a Chile, it'll sting...Honest!

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