

WAKE UP!! WAKE UP!! It's yer due to be replaced by 2024



SchNEWS

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Free/Donation

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DECLASSIFIED ADS

Loot



Perfect for city-breaking! Barely deployed intercontinental V class sub. (dark black) One prev owner, heavy mileage, slight radioactivity. Extras inc. sat-navy sonar and ballistic 16 mgton stereo. Suit hobbyist or half-hearted megalomaniac. Offers (no time wasters, no UN inspectors). Call Tony on 0207 616 666

The IDs of March

CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE SURVEILLANCE STATE BUILDS MOMENTUM

The NO2ID campaign is organising a national day of action on March 26th to raise awareness of Neo Labour's database state. 'Cos from March 26th, anyone applying for a new passport will have to visit one of the 69 new interrogation centres in order to have their identity 'validated' (see SchNEWS 578).

Got no ID? Then you've got no rights. Rights will only belong to 'valid' citizens of the state. Our identities will be defined and controlled through the bureaucratic ID card system - and without a 'valid' ID, for example, there'll be no free health care. The most vulnerable will become non-people in the eyes of the law. Under the excuses of 'fighting terrorism' and 'defending our way of life' the total surveillance society is being ushered in.

The ID scheme is particularly dangerous because of the way it's to be tied in with a massive database. Unlike in Germany or France, Tony & Co intend to store all our personal data from the card on the National Identity Register (NIR). The NIR will be the largest single store of personal data in the

world. And by sharing its data, it will link with all governmental databases and potentially those of 'agreed' organisations and corporations too. So 'data mining' is set to become a large earner for the government - well there's all manner of firms willing to pay to find out our personal histories, lifestyle habits, preferences etc. - a marketing wet dream!

Costs are estimated at £5.8 billion and massive overspends on these types of big government projects are pretty much compulsory - but of course it won't be UK Plc forking out. Such an expensive programme would make too big a dent on profits, so it's Joe Public who'll now be shelling out 100 quid a passport - up from £20 a decade ago.

With other proposed ID / surveillance plans include fingerprinting kids at school, people in pubs and by the roadside (all already trialled). There are plans to track and record all car journeys and a massive increase in routine criminal record (CRB) checks for everybody. Big Brother is here and he's watching you!

* National demo details at www.no2id.net

* Brighton NO2ID demo 26th March at Churchill Square from 5pm.

RADIOACTIVISTS

As parliament rubber-stamped a new generation of UK Plc's WMDs, protesters clashed with Police. Ministers told MPs that a bout of nuke-building was just what was needed to ensure a peaceful future on Planet Earth.. If you're dubious about that one, then maybe our need to be 'on the top table' will persuade you. That means being on the UN security council, the supreme body which divides up the planet's spoils - i.e using megatonnage as a fig leaf for a lost empire. No doubt Blair feels comfortable there amongst other has-been imperialists (France), current bullies (US) and future overlords (China).

With such a big thing as the big bang on the table, celebs couldn't resist getting in on the act. Bianca Jagger, Anita Roddick and Annie Lennox all posed for cameras whilst, together with demonstrators, they brandished a cheque for £76,000,000,000 (the potential cost of replacing Trident). Cops subsequently nicked the cheque, maybe thinking that this was some kind of money laundering operation (which it is - just the financial crimes were being committed inside parliament).

Four people were arrested after blocking the entrance to Faslane and five more nicked for unfurling a banner reading "Whatever They Vote Trident is Still Wrong" on the Scottish Parliament building. Meanwhile, activists from Block the Builders locked on to some

concrete-filled bins labeled 'Bin Trident' - holding traffic up outside the corridors of power for more than half an hour. Cops took a lot longer to dismantle a fake Trident missile and some people were still locked on after six hours! Nine arrests followed under SOCPA for 'participating in an unauthorised demonstration in the designated zone' and for obstruction of the highway.

As the 'debate' ensued inside Westminster, two peace protesters in the viewing gallery were jumped on by hired goons for holding up a peace flag. One unlucky fella was nicked for applauding this act of terrorism. As dusk fell a critical mass bike ride took to the streets and Seize the Day gave an impromptu gig as MPs voted 'yes' to global insecurity. www.blockthebuilders.org.uk and www.faslane365.org for more info.

* **Central London Arms Trade Crawl.** London Campaign Against Arms Trade (CAAT) is to highlight the fact that the arms trade is corrupt, indiscriminate and part of the UK establishment by protesting outside three central London arms dealers on Feb 19th. From 11am at BAE Systems, 6 Carlton Gardens; 12pm: LRLIH, 80 Haymarket; 1pm: MBDA, 11 The Strand. Tel: 07939 159283. Email: londoncaat@riseup.net Web: www.platinal.com/caatlondon/map/16017

CRAP ARREST OF THE WEEK

For being followed...

Sussex cops continue with their supreme indifference to law-breaking by foxhunters.

After a recent Crawley and Horsham Hunt meet, a van load of hunt monitors were followed home by landrovers full of hunt thugs. Spotting a copper, they stopped and asked for help. The cop got everyone out of the van and nicked one for allegedly letting the air out of a hunt vehicle earlier in the day. This is particularly ironic as these hunt monitors have repeatedly suffered harassment (SchNEWS 569), including slashed vehicle tyres (SchNEWS 578), all with no police action taken.

See www.huntsabs.org.uk

Inside SchNEWS

Three animal rights activists got banged up last week for a total of almost eight years. The three - a husband and wife from Yorkshire and a friend - are the latest to be prosecuted under the new SOCPA laws designed to criminalise any form of protest against 'animal research' (See SchNEWS 565), this time for 'interfering with a contractual relationship'.

Mark Taylor got four years. His wife, Suzanne, who had been involved in the campaign for only three weeks, was given 2 1/2 years. Teresa Portwine was given 15 months. None of them was accused of any violent conduct. They were involved in a series of noisy demos at companies linked to Huntingdon Life Sciences and their 'Terror Tactics' included inviting themselves into offices wearing skull masks, filming and shouting, apparently left staff so traumatised that the judge had no option but to bang 'em up.

This comes together with a police crackdown on street collections for animal rights campaigns, as across the country police use a variety of legal fictions to rob grassroots animal rights activists of their funds and campaign materials to silence them. This comes on top of the police closing down AR street stalls in London and increasingly tight restrictions on demos across the country. "Those who abuse animals have no valid argument to rely on so use intimidation and force, but those who defend animal nations will respond as they've been doing for 40 years - with ingenuity and impact". See www.shac.net www.speakcampaign.org.uk

* Addresses for prisoner support:

Mark Taylor (TT6636) HMP Belmarsh, Western Way, Thamesmead. London SE28 0U
Teresa Portwine (TM7153) HMP Cookham Wood, Rochester, Kent ME1 3LU
Suzanne Taylor (TM7154) HMP Cookham Wood, Rochester, Kent ME1

INFORMATION FOR ACTION

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H2OWNERSHIP

There's been more disappointment for the greedy people working in the water privatisation industry (see SchNEWS 536), with Severn Trent Water International being booted out of Guyana earlier this month. Company bosses had, er, failed to get water where it's needed most, despite promises to the contrary and being supported by millions of pounds of UK government cash. This money is part of a £30 million hand out of the World Bank to fund privatisation schemes in 37 countries under the Public-Private Infrastructure Advisory Facility (PPIAF).

This latest expansion to the welfare state for business bungs corporations more than a few quid to spend on various propaganda campaigns, better known (in the jargon) as 'consensus building'. In Zambia, when residents of the capital city Lusaka rebelled against the corporatisation of their drinking water, PPIAF refused to meet demands to discuss alternatives, instead employing well-paid consultants to persuade the awkward natives that privatisation was the way forward. Perhaps Zambians had been talking from experience - most of the country's successful water projects are run by public bodies!

Alternative 'public-public' partnerships have proved successful in several countries. In Porto Alegre, Brazil, residents have assumed part responsibility for their own water supply. In Uganda, after several failed attempts at privatisation, the government ditched the corporations and opted for a public body which focussed on boosting supply and access. Over the past ten years the percentage of Ugandans with access to water has increased from 48% to 70%.

Seven Trent however are still eager to make some money and you can find out more about the campaign against their plans to push their way into Nepal at www.wdm.org.uk/campaigns/water/action/severntrentinternational.php

See also: www.wdm.org.uk/resources/briefings/water/downthedrainbriefing11012007.pdf

SchNEWS in brief

MARCH: 17 - International day of protest on the 4th anniversary of the invasion of Iraq. In London demonstrate 12-3pm, North Pavement of Trafalgar Square. Open mic, street theatre. Tel 020 7837 1688, email eventsfrfi@yahoo.co.uk * In Edinburgh there will be a Stop The War Vigil, 12noon, Mound Precinct, Supported by Edinburgh Stop The War Coalition and Edinburgh CND. * Manchester - meet 12pm at Piccadilly Gardens, city centre. **
17 - Live Animal Export Demo - Meet Sheerness, Kent (by Woolworths) at 10.30am for leafletting and at 12noon to march to docks. See www.veggies.org.uk/event.php?ref=921 **
19 - Global Day Of Action against the "War On Terror", see <http://m19wiki.pbwiki.com> **
18-19 - Aldermaston Atomic Weapons Establishment Blockade & Vigil: Minibus from Bristol at 2pm on Sunday. Tour of base followed by a meal, planning meeting & crash space in Newbury (bring sleeping bag & mat etc). Blockade starts 7am Monday. Return to Bristol in the afternoon. Only £5. Reserve your seat now. Email Nicefella@tesco.net or tel 0117 951 2157 **
20 - "Don't Attack Iran" Peace Strike at Parliament Square, London, all day from 10am. Tel 07818 221473, web www.peacestrike.org **
24 - Protest the England vs Israel Euro 2008 Match, from 1pm outside the Football Association HQ, 25 Soho Square, London W1D 4FA. The Boycott Israeli Goods Campaign calls for a sporting boycott of Apartheid Israel until Israel complies with international humanitarian law. Protesters are also urged to contact the FA to complain - email info@thefa.com or tel 0207 7454999. For more info tel 020 7700 6192, email boycott@palestinecampaign.org web www.palestinecampaign.org **
For full Party & Protest listings, see www.schnews.org.uk/pap/guide.htm

DOW CHEMIKILL

As reported last year (SchNEWS 548), survivors of the world's largest peacetime killings - the 1984 Union Carbide disaster in Bhopal, India which killed over 20,000 people and maimed 120,000 more - are still battling for justice whilst being poisoned a second time by the same murderous factory.

Twenty-two years ago a huge gas cloud spewed out of the US multinational's pride and joy, burning and choking everything in its path. Today, local drinking water is a hive of deadly toxins oozing from the former pesticides plant, company bosses can't be bothered to clean up. People are exposed daily to a cocktail of carcinogenic and mutagenic chemicals and are suffering predictable health effects: cancers, brain damage and birth defects are all rife.

The business that created and dumped the mess is now called the Dow Chemical Company and boasts a bigger annual turnover than the GDP of Uganda or North Korea. It is outraged that anyone thinks it should pay for the clean up of one of the world's toxic hotspots. It says that either the survivors' compensation money - a wallet-busting 7p per day per victim should suffice, or the Indian taxpayer should pay.

While Dow flouts the internationally accepted legal principle that the 'polluter pays', a succession of apparent well-wishers have stepped forward offering to do the clean up through the goodness of their limited liability company hearts. Upon investigation, both Cherokee (see SchNEWS 548) and Tata, proud new owners of Corus (formerly British Steel), happen to be directly connected to Dow.

Bhopal's survivors say they would rather carry on drinking poisoned water than let Dow escape its legal obligations, for if Dow gets away with it, and voluntarism replaces the law, polluting businesses everywhere get the green light to follow in Dow's toxic sludge prints.

Victims would be spared the worst if local authorities simply supplied them with clean water. In 2003 the Indian Supreme Court agreed and ordered the Madhya Pradesh state government to supply poison-free water to the 26,000 affected immediately. Central government sent millions to pay for the work but nothing happened. When contamination-affected women and children protested the broken promises, they were met with police boots, fists and sticks.

As you read this, six hunger strikers are in their third week without food, part of a 'Right to Live' sit-in aiming to force the Madhya authorities to give clean water, proper health care and livelihoods to Dow's many victims in Bhopal. The six have already lost kilos in weight and are facing starvation until local officials deign to flick their pens and grant basic rights.

The Bhopal campaign is urging people to call and fax the Madhya government to demand it provides clean water and health care to the affected. India is 5½ hours ahead, so it's easy to bother callous officials at night. You can call the Chief Minister's home on (0091 755) 2442241 or 2442231. Calls cost 25p per min, BT rates. When you do, let the campaign know at SfB.RSVP@gmail.com

For more details see www.studentsforbhopal.org/RightToLive.htm & www.bhopal.net

Right to Protest Demo March 17th - From 12 noon, Churchill Square, Brighton

Called by Sussex Action for Peace and Brighton & Hove Palestine Solidarity Campaign. For more info see:

www.brightonactivist.net/right2protest
www.safp.info
www.smashedo.org.uk

Round the Camp fire

Nine people were injured following a fire and riot at Campsfield detention centre early on Wednesday morning with seven immigration staff and two detainees being taken to hospital for smoke inhalation.

The fires were started after forcible removal of an Algerian male asylum seeker from his room by guards. Recent testimony given by prisoners to detainee support group Bail for Immigration detainees (BID), complains of the brutal treatment by staff - including one incident of a cancer patient being handcuffed and dragged out of his hospital bed while still emerging from general anaesthetic.

A Campsfield detainee reported that, "They used force to drag the person from the bed and after that everything kicked off." Consequently, riot police, fire and ambulance teams and a number of ominous sounding 'Tornado units' from the Prison Service were called to the scene. Once the fighting had stopped, the frustration was still evident. One detainee commented, "They've stopped fighting now but they're destroying every bit of equipment they can find - computers are getting smashed, shops are getting broken into, they're stealing everything"

Throughout Campsfield's history, (See SchNEWS 237, 549) detainees locked up inside have individually and collectively protested about their conditions and for their release. Every form of resistance has been tried from letters to ministers, press coverage, rooftop protests and hunger strikes. Those who dare complain are victimised and transferred to prisons. Both Amnesty and UNHCR have condemned this practice.

Campsfield is a prison run for private profit by GEO, a US corporation in Kidlington, Oxfordshire. It opened in November 1993, despite local opposition, and can hold 196 adult male detainees. Most are political refugees fleeing danger, torture and even death from countries such as Nigeria, Algeria, Ghana, Turkey, India and Zaire. They are held without charge, without time limit, without proper reasons given, and without proper access to legal representation. Amnesty report that these are breaches of internationally recognised human rights. The former Chief Inspector of HM Inspectorate of Prisons (Judge Stephen Tumim) and The Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture have all condemned conditions at Campsfield House. In fact the centre has even been condemned by David Blunkett of all people, who promised to close Campsfield in 2002. The Home office since did a complete U-turn and now plan expansion from 196 to 290 places.

The Campaign to Close Campsfield continues to fight to have the voices of the detainees heard and to end immigration detention with demonstrations outside Campsfield on the last Saturday of every month. Bring banners and instruments or saucapans to make noise. Protests start at 12 noon at the main gates, Langford Lane, Kidlington. www.closecampsfield.org.uk for more info.

...and finally...

The Airline industry's cavalier disregard for the planet's future has been on display loud and clear at British Mediterranean Airways, who've found it cheaper to keep empty planes in the air than on the ground. It seems that the few million quid it costs BMed to fly empty planes from Heathrow to Cardiff six days a week is "cost effective" when compared to the £10 million it costs to get a new landing bay. BMed had to scrap their flights to Uzbekistan after civil unrest and to hold on to their parking spot, they have to continue to make 80% use of their allocation - so bugger the waste of resources and the even-more-needless-than-usual climate damage done - talk about not giving a flying f*#k...

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SchNEWS warns all readers they're watching us, watching them, watching you. Honest!

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