



WAKE UP! WAKE UP! IT'S YER SHORT AND CURLIES

# SchNEWS

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## PUBIC ENEMY NO. ONE

*"Now is the time to act. The right of privacy of individuals needs to be guaranteed before all power passes to those who own the tools of surveillance."*

Editorial, *New Scientist*, April

An American company has developed spy cameras with the technology to strip people of their clothes, leading privacy campaigners to dub the invention *PubeMaster 2000*.

In April, the US Federal Aviation Authority provided \$26m to speed up research in the new surveillance technologies, principally for advance body search for airport surveillance. The system doesn't use X-ray; it recreates the human form from digitised analysis of thermal and density data.

One image has been released by the US government as part of a package designed to show it's cracking down on terrorist threats. It shows a naked man with clearly visible secreted objects such as "75gm of simulated cocaine taped to the abdomen" and "25mm thick plexiglass knife." *BodySearch* TM has been in the development stage for 4 years and is now being used in trials.

Simon Davies of Privacy International, argues that "as sure as night follows day" this technology will be adapted for much wider use. "*BodySearch* is the leading edge," he told SchNEWS, predicting, "it will be common technology, general purpose in the urban environment within ten years."

The cameras are already intruding into our private lives. Diana Sampson, who monitors CCTV for the London Borough of Sutton says, "I know for a fact that one leisure centre has cameras in its women's changing room, monitored by men and they can do anything with those tapes." CCTV is a honey pot for perverts. One camera operator in Mid Glamorgan has been convicted on more than 200 counts of using cameras to spy on women, and making obscene phone calls from the control room.

"Through urban design you strip away any hope that people may be able to escape the gaze of the cameras," says Davies, author of *Big Brother: Britain's Web of Surveillance*. "And through powerful tech-

nology you strip away their clothes. So in the end there's nothing left but threadbare civil liberties...and no clothes."

Even more alarming are the technologies already in place in Britain. These include computerised face recognition systems that can automatically compare faces captured on CCTV, infra-red radar systems able to detect activity behind walls and in darkness, and miniature devices designed for covert surveillance. 125,000 of these devices, as small as a matchbox, are sold each year from UK and can be picked up from as little as £60. The biggest market is keeping tabs on employees. The range of objects in which tiny cameras can be hidden means that they raise "absolutely no suspicion whatsoever".

The March edition of the industry magazine 'CCTV Today' reveals what we can expect next. Not only will we be seen, but heard. Audio in CCTV is an area of "exciting potential" says Julian Sharples, Managing Director of GEB Europe.

In their Codes of Practice, Sussex Police state that "no sound facility should be provided with any public CCTV system", but these are guidelines only. The camera industry itself is lawless.

As Simon Davies points out "Anyone can set up a CCTV system, you don't need a licence. There is no government oversight agency. The technology is outside data protection law - its free from any constraint."

The argument that "if you have nothing to hide, you have nothing to fear..." is a direct translation from the slogan of the Stasi, the old East German secret police! In many instances, CCTV system operators routinely exercise their prejudices to discriminate against race, age, class or sexual preference. One camera operator in Burnley told a Granada documentary, "People mainly with shirts and ties are OK. Most people you can tell just by looking at them". Another said: "I tell by the hair".

The vast majority of cameras at present are visible and it is fairly easy to know when we are being spied on, but as technology develops cameras are more likely to be used for covert

surveillance purposes.

"All the systems are now being marketed for their interconnectability.

Once you create a system that has a mass of potential links to other systems, not only does this increase the power of the system, but also its uses. This is very powerful military technology, becoming infinitely more powerful as each year passes. Systems are going to be linked to computers. These are the foundation stones of a surveillance society which will lock us in for all time."

Simon Davies will be speaking at the SchNEWS direct action conference III in the old Evening Argus building in North Rd, Brighton, Sat 10th at 2pm. The event runs Sat & Sun, from 12.00 to 5.30. Free. For more details of the conference ring 01273 685913.

### SHOREHAM FIT UP

"Conspiracy laws are massively more effective than the Criminal Justice Act, not least because they can do anyone including those who write about or are associated with a breach of the law".

Five animal rights activists involved in the Shoreham live export protests, were given sentences this week ranging from two to six years. All were charged with 'conspiracy to cause criminal damage' in a trial which lasted six months, cost £2m, and involved homes being raided with ridiculous search warrants, police informers, and solicitors having their phones tapped and offices burgled.

In effect the charges mean the defendants hadn't actually done anything - just talked about it. And in the Shoreham case even the judge in his summing up, invited the jury to acquit!

But who was so keen to nail those involved in the Campaign Against Live Freight (CALF)? This was no usual police investigation. A special unit led by a Superintendent Bentham set up Operation Kirby - not long after M15 said they were turning their attention to protestors - and seemed very keen on nailing activists for any charges they could dream up.

One Shoreham veteran told SchNEWS "CALF helped organise a very successful campaign of direct action, and the powers that be invented trumped up charges to try to destroy the campaign."

## Brazilians Go Nuts for Squatting!

Around 12 million people in Brazil are landless...In 1995 over 150,000 people were illegally occupying unproductive farmland on 147 organised camps...In 1996 thousands of activists blockaded streets in Sao Paulo, the worlds 3rd largest city - within 2 hours the underground shut down in support!

If you had 150,000 people doing direct action 7 days a week, week in week out you'd expect to a) be ruffling political feathers and getting towards what you wanted, b) have huge public support and increasing numbers taking up direct action, and c) face serious pressure from the powers that be. In Brazil this is reality. Brazilian politicians are seen scuttling for cover, or posing for photos (depending on political persuasion) as thousands upon thousands of landless peasants from "Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra" (Movement for rural workers without land), or MST for short, converge on Brazilia to demand land reform NOW. It is South America's largest - and most important social movement - and they demand "unused" farmland be taken from large landowners and given as small parcels to the millions of landless poor to grow food and live on. Land reform is firmly on the political agenda. As for public support, 83 % of Brazilians now agree there should be large-scale land reform, and direct action, usually by long term, large-scale occupations of unproductive farmland owned by business interests, is the tactic for the landless to realise their aims.

*"Widespread illiteracy has curbed 'write-a-letter-to-your-MP' style arguments."*

But as with every powerful movement, when the authorities go in it is nothing short of murderous. A fortnight ago was the first anniversary of a 'Reclaim the Streets' style blockade of a highway in the Amazonian state of Para (part of the month-long NVDA-fest - "Scream for Land") that ended in bloodshed. At the end of the day - familiar to UK activists - a police charge started, with 155 military cops charging from two directions firing on the crowd: in the resulting chaos supposed "leaders" (MST is reasonably non-hierarchical) were picked off and executed via a bullet in the back of the head. Nineteen activists were murdered. All 155 military police are still on active duty. No-one has been prosecuted. Hence the thousands marching on Brazilia in protest two weeks ago.

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## BRITI-SHARE-A-SPACE

Wednesday saw mass disruption of the British Aerospace AGM in London, where directors hid behind glass screens, pot plants and security guards - who forcibly removed 122 protesters (who had each purchased a nominal share in BAe to gain entry) amid chants highlighting the companies supply of Hawk attack aircraft to the Indonesian regime. Outside 200 other protesters staged a symbolic 'die-in', and more 'disarmed' a model Hawk jet, the whole lot resulting in what the Campaign Against Arms Trade reported as a '100% domination of the meeting.'

Yet another successful AGM disruption has not gone down too well amongst Britains' business leaders. The Institute Of Directors have called for the predictable 'tough new laws' to stop such embarrassing dissent at the one and only time of the year that big business are publicly accountable for their actions. They want to prevent shareholders who "have a minimum number of shares" or have only held them for a certain length of time from attending.

And the plot thickens: Corporate Watch have highlighted a proposed change to company law to remove the requirement for company directors to register their home addresses at Companies House. To keep such channels open Corporate Watch is compiling an address book of directors of unpopular companies, available to all who need it. Send any addresses you have to CW, Box E, 111 Magdalen Rd, Oxford OX41RQ, Tel/Fax 01865 791391 by May 10th

\*RTZ, the world's biggest mining corporation responsible for genocide and displacement of indigenous people worldwide, including the Pacific Island of Bougainville (where foreign mercenaries hired to crush rebels who had shut a copper mine on the island were recently expelled by the army), are holding their AGM on Wednesday 7th May at the QE2 centre in London. Meet outside the centre opposite Westminster Abbey (nearest tube St. James' Park) at 10:00 am. There may be transport available, ring 01273 685913 for details.

## VICTORY!

Newsflash! The residents of Holtsfield on the Gower Peninsula in South Wales have won their case in the House of Lords to stop a landlord destroying their homes. The article of law at stake was that the owner had semi-feudal rights to do what s/he pleased with the land underneath the dwellings. Thankfully this anomaly is no more, and dodgy landlords can shove their eviction notices where even Pubemaster 2000 cannot see them. Holtsfield: 01792 233596.

## CAUGHT IN THE KNIFE ACT

Oxford Police used section 60 of the Knives Act this week on a demo against vivisection. The Act gives increased powers for the police to stop and search anyone in a particular area if they fear that violence might occur. Nice little catch all law that means they have even more right to stop and intimidate people for any reason they feel like.

## SchNEWS in brief

Two weeks ago, 65 workers at a Tottenham Bakery went on strike in protest at intolerable working conditions. The 65 - mainly Somalian refugees - have to work six 12 hour shifts a week with an hours unpaid lunch, at a measly rate of £3.37 an hour. The bakers mainly supply Tesco's and Safeways.

Donations are urgently needed: Paddy Hill, Bakers Food & Allied Workers Union, Sinclair House, Unit 9, 66 Willoughby Lane, Tottenham N17 0SQ Tel: 0181 801 0980 \*\*\* Welcome and well done to Viva! (Vegetarians International Voice of Action) who recently moved to sunny Brighton. On April 18th a protest about religious slaughter was attended by over 500 people and received lots of media attention. Details: 01273 777688 \*\*\* May Bank Holiday weekend: Lots of stuff going on at the Campaign Against Runway 2 in Manchester. Details: 0161 834 8221 \*\*\* 18th - Benefit gig for Brighton Independent Supporters Association and Brighton Youth Team Development Fund. 8pm @ Hectors House, featuring Barnstormer, Sweet Nothing (starring Steve North!) and Core \*\*\* Simon Valder, the seventeen year old had up for making death threats to Brighton F\* C\* -face David Belotti has been sent down for 8 months to a Youth Correction Centre. And Bellotti walks free? That's rough justice...

\*\*\*Have I Got SchNEWS for You, Tues May 13th @ Bar Centro, (ex-Berlin Bar), 6 Ship St, Brighton E5/3. Starring Mark Chadwick (Levellers), Atilla the Stockbroker, Steve North, Margaret Pracy (Town Crier of Brighton), Sergeant Shitter of the Crap Arrest Squad & a special guest from Manchester Airport. Doors open 8pm, part of Brighton Fringe Festival. Tune into Radio Aktiv 106.6 FM - on the airwaves all May Bank holiday. Listen into SchNEWS 4 pm Monday 5th

## ...and finally...

What ever next? Last week your mutated SchNEWS heard of yet another genetic-engineering breakthrough: a potato which commits suicide if infected with 'late blight'. This little pest is evidently a major source of existential misery in the world of tubers claiming 20% of the annual UK crop. If this is the way forward, then we can look forward to carrots that scream abuse at marauding rabbits and lettuces that give slugs a good kicking. Happy eating.

### disclaimer

The SchNEWS warns all readers not to come under the gaze of PubeMaster 2000. Never smile for the cameras, and never do anything in urban areas, or the Masters of the Pube will get you by the short and curlies. Make sure you protect your privacy and your privates. Otherwise you will feel naked. Honest.