



WAKE UP!! IT'S YER CINEMA VÉRITÉ ...

# SchNEWS

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## COPS, LIES & VIDEOTAPE

### AS SUSSEX POLICE RAID BRIGHTON FILM MAKER

Given the amount of aggro handed out to those brave enough to document Babylon's excesses we wondered how long it was before we started getting our collars felt. Of course they'd need a task force to batter down the steel doors of the SchNEWS bunker - let alone take us alive - so Sussex Police took a more indirect route.

At approximately 8.30am on Tuesday 2nd June, Sussex cops arrived at the home of Paul Light, now revealed as one of the SchMOVIES collective. (For anyone thinking that SchNEWS was still stuck in the Dark Ages with just a scrappy sheet of A4, we've moved right into the twentieth century and have our own slightly estranged film-making department.) Paul's arrest has wide ranging implications for anyone who reports on controversial issues.

When the cops came round Paul was getting his ten-year old son ready for school. He was immediately arrested on suspicion of being involved in the 'decommissioning' of the EDO ITT weapons factory in January (see SchNEWS 663). The actual charge was 'conspiracy to commit criminal damage'.

This vague charge was enough for the police to launch into a full-blown fishing expedition. "The only evidence they [Sussex po-

lice] have is that someone phoned me, asking if I wanted to film the police response," Paul told SchNEWS, "I said I couldn't because I had my son and his friend sleeping over that night. That was the end of it as far as I was concerned. As a film maker I frequently get phone calls about possible incidents to film - this was one shoot I couldn't and didn't make."

Paul was held and questioned for eight hours and his home was raided. The police took Paul's son to school in a police car, where he burst into tears due to the stress. His father was released on bail and is awaiting the outcome of the arrest.

Police took every item that could possibly be used for data storage as evidence, including cameras, computers, external hard drives, software, mobile phones, personal accounts, diaries and even his music collection. "Put bluntly they have concocted this arrest to see what material I have," said Paul, who regularly films at protests and demonstrations.

Police have recently attempted to use a film credited to SchMOVIES as evidence in court. The film '*Batons and Bombs*' documents events at last year's *Carnival Against the Arms Trade* (See SchNEWS 634) and was downloaded from the web by cops. They were refused its use as



evidence in court on the grounds that the film was edited and they did not possess the original footage. The Crown Prosecution Service are currently appealing that decision via judicial review. The discovery of the original footage would greatly strengthen their hand.

"The raid has effectively shut me down and I am no longer able to make films," said Paul. "Film work is my livelihood, so effectively they have put me on the dole." Paul makes films about many different campaigns and issues, and the arrest and raid has been a major setback in his ability to earn a living. "They have left me with nothing," he said, "I have three commissions in production at the moment and I have had to phone people up and tell them the news - that their films will have to be postponed indefinitely!"

\* See [www.schnews.org.uk/schmovies](http://www.schnews.org.uk/schmovies)

\* **SchMOVIES is not new to controversy.** The release of the 2008 film "*On The Verge*" ([www.schnews.org.uk/schmovies/index-on-the-verge.htm](http://www.schnews.org.uk/schmovies/index-on-the-verge.htm)), a documentary about the Smash EDO campaign was met with bans across the UK by various police forces, claiming the film would need certification to be publicly viewed (See SchNEWS 626).

## YARL'S WOOD HUNGER STRIKERS ATTACKED

A mass hunger strike by families detained at Yarl's Wood refugee detention centre in Bedfordshire has been met with violent assaults on men, women and children by security guards working for Serco - who manage the prison on behalf of the UK Border Agency. The detainees started the hunger strike on Monday and since Tuesday prison managers have stopped detainees from speaking to visitors and reporters, and denied them internet access.

Having collectively prevented the deportation of a family on Tuesday, all the detained families left their rooms to stage a sit-in in the corridors

on Wednesday. At about 4pm, between 30 and 40 Serco goons waded in, using excessive force, to remove all men involved in the protest, separating them from the women and children. Two women, who had their clothes ripped off, were also violently removed. In the struggle, one of the women's child, aged 19 months, fell from her back and was stepped on by a guard, and her husband was also injured. A guard was reportedly seen filming one of the semi-naked women. Another detainee who had spoken to the press and put out a statement calling for support for the hunger strike was also violently assaulted. Doctors have not been allowed access to examine the casualties, some of which are reportedly severely injured.

One of the women detainees, who had been snatched from Newcastle on Friday, reported "I have never ever seen such violence. They were beating the men like they were animals. They say if we dare to go back into the corridor they will spray us all over [with pepper spray]. We need your help from outside. We don't have any rights in here. We need your support from outside."

By the end of Wednesday, at least two men, two women and two children had been removed from the wing and at the time of writing their

whereabouts is still unknown.

Shamelessly, the UK Border Agency have issued a press release saying "Officers have separated a small number of detainees from the general population at Yarl's Wood Immigration Removal Centre. This was conducted by staff trained in conflict resolution... This separation was conducted with the utmost sensitivity and there have been no injuries to detainees." These lies were echoed by mainstream media reports.

Many Yarl's Wood detainees, including pregnant women, have medical conditions but don't receive proper medical attention, whilst many children are ill and suffer anxiety, crying and screaming all night.

A lively demo with street theatre in solidarity with the hunger strikers and against immigration prisons was held outside outside Government Offices North East in Newcastle on Wednesday with another one planned for Saturday. A solidarity protest called for by No Borders London will be held today (19th) outside Serco's London offices at 22 Hand Court, Holborn, WC1V 6JF.

\* See [www.ncadc.org.uk](http://www.ncadc.org.uk)

\* Also last Friday (12th), detainees rioted and lit a fire at the new Brook House detention centre at Gatwick Airport (See SchNEWS 669).

### NO BORDER CAMP Calais, June 23rd-29th

This week of protests calls for the freedom of movement for all, an end to borders and to all migration controls - as well as highlighting the realities of the situation in Calais and Northern France for migrants. It will build links between migrants support groups, challenge the authorities on the ground, and protest against the increased repression of migrants and local activists alike. There will be a big demo on Saturday 27th.

\* See [www.noborders.org.uk](http://www.noborders.org.uk)

**INFORMATION FOR ACTION**

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## CLEAN SWEEP

### IMMIGRATION TRAP SET FOR UNIVERSITY CLEANERS

Early last Friday (12th) morning nine sub-contracted cleaners at the University of London's School of School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) were summoned to an 'emergency staff meeting'. They were met by twenty riot-gear-clad immigration officers who detained the cleaners and took them into detention. The following Monday morning, at an emergency demo, around 40 university activists took matters into their own hands and occupied the university director's office.

The cleaners meanwhile, who were all from Latin America, were being interrogated by immigration police without legal representation, union support and possibly even interpreters. One suffered a heart attack while in detention and was denied medical assistance and even water. Another was six months pregnant.

Six of the cleaners have already been deported and one who is still in detention is due to be deported in the coming days. The two that were released have gone into hiding.

The timing of the raid comes after a recent victory for the 'Justice for Cleaners' campaign which ensured the SOAS cleaners would receive the London 'Living Wage' of £7.20 an hour, improved working conditions and the right to union representation. The campaign was established in 2007 by activists working with the University and College Union (UCU), the Student Union and the trade union Unison, when it came to light that a group of SOAS cleaners had not been paid for over three months by the company contracted to clean the university, ISS. The campaign has spread to other campuses including Birkbeck and the London School of Tropical Medicine.

ISS, however, weren't so keen on having properly paid workers with rights and representation. Shortly after the victory one worker and leading activist in the campaign, Jose Bermudez - known as 'Stalin' (not, we are assured, because of his fondness for gulags and rewriting history) - was sacked.

Angry not only about the raid, but also the complicity of the SOAS management in permitting the raid to take place and not forewarning the cleaners, the occupiers issued a list of demands. As well as calling for the release of the detainees and the prevention of their deportation, the return of the deportees, as well as the re-instatement of 'Stalin', they also demanded, amongst other things, that all contract staff be brought in-house; that no further immigration raids take place and that the SOAS management complicit in facilitating the raid be brought to account.

The university authorities responded with threats and intimidation, preventing anyone from entering the building and threatening the occupiers with the police. They also attempted to serve them with an injunction, although it wouldn't have come into action until the 22nd. The activists countered the aggressive response and maintained pressure on the management with a live blog, garnering support and publicising exactly what they - and the SOAS management - were doing.

An agreement was finally struck on Wednesday afternoon after what the activists described as "intense and complicated" negotiations. In the final agreement the SOAS management made a number of concessions: They agreed to petition the Home Secretary for exceptional leave to remain for the cleaner who is still being detained and the

return of those deported. They also agreed to hold discussions with ISS, UCU, UNISON and the Students' Union to review the immigration raids, for the issue of outsourced cleaning to be raised at the next Governing Body meeting and for an amnesty for all those involved. In addition to this the management agreed to hold talks with other heads of universities about the wider implications of the government's policy on immigration.

Campaigner Clare Solomon who was involved in the occupation told SchNEWS that aside from providing critical support to the cleaners the outcome was important because it had sparked academic debate on the issue which could be used to pressure the Governing Body. She said that the next meeting would raise crucial questions as to "who (the university) is run by and for whose benefit".

\* See <http://freesoascleaners.blogspot.com>

## OFOG OF WAR

Last Friday Swedish anti-militarist direct action campaigners from Ofog narrowly escaped being bombed, as they spent 36 hours occupying restricted military land near Vidsel, Lapland, being used by NATO for a live aerial bombing exercise called 'Loyal Arrow'. Ofog alerted those in charge of the range that peace activists had breached the fence, but the wargames went ahead anyway. Three large explosions went off near the protesters, but fortunately they were able to hike across the harsh terrain and get away from the danger zone. The RFN missile range is the largest in Western Europe. This was one of a series of actions by Ofog against the Loyal Arrow operation.

\* See [www.ofog.org](http://www.ofog.org)

## DARKEST PERU

Following the massacre of up to a hundred indigenous protesters by police in Peru earlier this month (See SchNEWS 679) solidarity demonstrations have been taking place across the world with protests outside Peruvian embassies in Bonn, Milan, Madrid, Barcelona, Rome, Paris, Washington DC, Brussels, Quito, Houston and Denver. Last Monday (14th) a lively demo was staged in London with more set to follow.

Meanwhile in Peru protests have spread throughout the country and a general strike called last Thursday (11th) saw thousands of protesters on the streets, not only in the Amazonian region but also in the capital, Lima, where riot police were called in to break up the demonstration.

The government of president Alan Garcia is now looking increasingly shaky. The Minister for Women, Carmen Vilodoso resigned last Thursday while Prime Minister, Yehude Simon, has now also announced his intention to step down in protest against the actions of his government.

In an attempt to calm the situation down the Peruvian congress last week voted to suspend two of the contentious laws which open up the region to exploitation (See SchNEWS 675). The protesters however, are refusing to be pacified, holding out for the full repeal of all 10 of the laws that Garcia passed as part of a Free Trade agreement with the US.

\* See also [www.amazonwatch.org](http://www.amazonwatch.org) and [www.aidesep.org.pe](http://www.aidesep.org.pe)

**PARTY & PROTEST**  
For events listings updated weekly see  
[www.schnews.org.uk/pap](http://www.schnews.org.uk/pap)

## ALDERMAST-OFF

Four gates at nuclear weapon facility Aldermaston were blockaded on Monday in protest at the building of new nuclear weapons facilities and the lack of democratic accountability. The surprise blockades, using several cars and including someone in a wheelchair, caused massive road blockages and prevented construction vehicles getting into the site. Although the locks at one gate were broken quickly enabling traffic in, the other gates were blocked for 2-3 hours. The eleven blockaders were arrested, charged and bailed away from the site.

Angie Zelter of Trident Ploughshares said, "When our Government refuses to comply with the fundamental principles of law and undermines the whole Non-Proliferation process then it is up to us, ordinary people, to prevent 'business as usual' at Aldermaston. The blockades today are responsible non-violent attempts to prevent nuclear state terrorism."

\* See [www.tridentploughshares.org](http://www.tridentploughshares.org)

## GUERRILLA GARDEN TO STAY

In the last month locals in Brighton have been transforming a derelict former ESSO garage into a community garden. The concrete Lewes Rd site, empty for five years, was cleared of rubble before being laid with flower beds and lawn. Benches, flower pots, sculptures and other decorations have made the space an oasis of calm on a busy, heavy-traffic, high street.

Last week site owners tried to spoil the garden party by chaining the access gate, but undeterred, the gardeners ensured access to the site by removing the gate. The owners have now given consent for the continued use of the garden until 'development' begins.

Volunteers are still needed to help with the garden and run workshops as well as garden materials.

\* See <http://lewesroadcommunitygarden.webs.com>

## ...and finally...

SchNEWS wishes to issue a humble apology to all the police we've unfairly maligned over the years. Apparently the boys in blue's over-zealous friskiness with the boots, truncheons and tasers isn't 'cos they're the front-line of state repression after all. It's because the poor dears are getting their brains fried by microwave energy when they're sat in their paddy-wagons.

According to an article in *Jane's Police Review* - the 'UK's best-selling policing title', "Police behaviour at the G20 protests in London could have been caused by the frequency used by the officers' Airwave radios interfering with their brainwaves", one expert has said."

So what turns yer average easy-going liberal bobby from helping old ladies across the road into an armoured truncheon wielding storm-trooper? "Officers were waiting in metal vans for hours, and their Airwave radios effectively turned the vehicles into microwaves. Airwave radios send out microwaves at a greater rate than the brain's natural rhythm, which controls decision making in emergency situations. If you put waves through the brain, you end up with entrainment, which makes you do something you are not programmed to do."

Next up we expect to see police violence excused on grounds of poor Feng-shui (insert gag here excess Gamma Rays etc) inside New Scotland Yard. Stay tuned!

### Disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all film makers - don't film anything political - stick to romantic comedies. Honest!

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