

WAKE UP!! WAKE UP!! IT'S YER FIFTEEN-ALL...

# Weekly SchNEWS

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Free/Donation

Issue 700

## GOOD COP BAD COP

### INFORMATION FOR ACTION FOR THE COPENHAGEN COP 15 CLIMATE CONFERENCE

The climate summit at Copenhagen is drawing closer and closer, and various factions are mobilising across the world, some to push global elites into waking up and smelling the carbon and others to shout that capitalism cannot be reformed - it must be destroyed. Based on our leaders' last sorry effort don't expect too much from COP 15. Kyoto amounted to not much more than a system of carbon bribing offsetting (and even that the US pulled out of). Politicians are already baulking at the idea of actually limiting growth and are announcing that COP 15 will not produce a binding agreement.

The talk is of carbon trading i.e more capital speculation to undo the damage caused by capital speculation. So once again the responsibility falls to us to push the pressing and essential need for a dramatic rethink in environmental policy on a global scale. With this in mind thousands of activists and concerned environmentalists will be attending the talks held on 7th - 18th December. Here's just a quick round-up of the actions and groups who will be converging on Denmark.

#### KLIMAFORUM

Running from 7th - 18th December alongside the COP15 is Klimaforum, the climate counter-summit run for and by grass roots activist movements, the scientific community and individuals to 'create an open space where people, movements and organisations can develop constructive solutions to the climate crisis. It's taking place in DGI-byen, (a conference complex in Copenhagen's centre). Free and open to all. [www.klimaforum09.org](http://www.klimaforum09.org)

#### OPERATION BIKE BLOC

Climate Camp and Bristol-based artists the Laboratory of Insurrectionary Imagination is constructing the ultimate 'resistance machine' - a pedal-powered, art-bike carnival. Sounds good huh? On 16th December the Bike Bloc will take to the streets as part of the Reclaim Power! event. To get involved go along to the Arnolfini Gallery, Bristol 24th and 29th November, or at Copenhagen at the Candyfactory to help put together the final design. [www.climatecamp.org.uk/actions/copenhagen-2009/bike-bloc](http://www.climatecamp.org.uk/actions/copenhagen-2009/bike-bloc)

#### CLIMATE CARAVAN

As well as COP 15, the WTO Summit in Geneva from 30th November - 2nd December

is another target for action. 60 activists from the global South, plus local affinity groups, will be travelling across Europe from Geneva to Copenhagen. The 12 day caravan kicks off with 5 days of action based in Geneva, then leaves on 3rd December to protest their way to COP 15, arriving on the 9th. [www.climatecaravan.org](http://www.climatecaravan.org)

**Now your appetite for action is truly whetted, what can you expect to be going on during the event?**

\* **11th December: Our Climate! Not Your Business!** Day of direct action targeting participating corporations. See 'Don't Buy The Lie' on Facebook.

\* **12th December: Flood for Climate Justice** - People power on the streets organised by Friend of the Earth. [www.foei.org](http://www.foei.org)

**Never Trust a COP** - March to conference centre through Copenhagen see <http://nevertrustacop.org/Main/GetHeardNotHerded>

**Global Day of Action** If you can't make it all the way to Denmark, plan your own day of action wherever you are. [www.globalclimatecampaign.org](http://www.globalclimatecampaign.org)

\* **13th December: Hit the Production!** Mass blockade targeting the harbour of Copenhagen and industry. <http://http.noblogs.org>

**Farmer's Action** - Direct actions against the agro-industry organised by La Via Campesina [www.viacampesina.org](http://www.viacampesina.org)

**14th December: No Borders, No Climate Refugees!** Day of action in support of freedom of movement and international no borders groups. See <http://info.interactivist.net/node/13135>

**15th December: Resistance is Ripe! Agriculture Action Day** - Collective action in support of changing the global food production system. See [www.climate-justice-action.org/mobilization/agriculture-action-day](http://www.climate-justice-action.org/mobilization/agriculture-action-day)

**16th December: Reclaim Power! Pushing for Climate Justice** - This is the biggie. Coordinated mass action on the streets of Copenhagen, drawing together for a people's summit for climate justice in the middle of the lion's den. [www.climatecamp.org.uk/actions/copenhagen-2009](http://www.climatecamp.org.uk/actions/copenhagen-2009)

**These are just the published events. More actions will be taking place throughout the conference by affinity groups and individuals, so where do you go to find out about them once you're there?**

AS THE US AND CHINA AGREE NOT TO AGREE ANYTHING MEANINGFUL AT COPENHAGEN...



We can't tell Hu's the more relieved

### CONVERGENCE CENTRES/ INFO POINTS

Four spaces will be the hub of action planning and accommodation: The "main" convergence, Støberiet on Blågård's Plads on Nørrebro, which will feature medics, trauma support, legal aid, meeting and social spaces and info point; Bolsjefabrikken, The Candy Factory social center (Copenhagen near Nørrebro) will host a kitchen and workshop areas (both kinds - tools and discussions/hand waggling).

A smaller convergence, Råhuset by KlimaForum09 on Vesterbro will feature a social space and info point along with the main communal kitchen;

The House of Solidarity on Nørrebro - near the main centre - will feature a be-the-media activist centre open for everyone.

There will also be an info point at the Central Train Station, to redirect you onto these centres.

For loads more info and advice [www.climate-justice-action.org/practical-info/copenhagen-info](http://www.climate-justice-action.org/practical-info/copenhagen-info)

**So now you know who will be there, when they will be doing, and how you can get involved with it. All that remains is getting there...**

#### TRANSPORT

\* **Ryanair flights** are a bargain at £29.99 plus airport tax - YEAH RIGHT. Don't fly there, like the team of writers for *The Guardian* will be.

\* **Two coaches are leaving from London and Leeds**, organised by Camp for Climate Action. For times and booking info see [www.climatecamp.org.uk/actions/copenhagen-2009/coaches](http://www.climatecamp.org.uk/actions/copenhagen-2009/coaches)

\* Or get in touch with your local branch of Climate Campers, most groups are sorting their own transport. See [www.climatecamp.org.uk/get-involved/local-groups](http://www.climatecamp.org.uk/get-involved/local-groups)

\* **For ferries and sleeper trains** see [www.seat61.com/Denmark.htm](http://www.seat61.com/Denmark.htm) or coach [www.eurolines.com](http://www.eurolines.com)

\* **Once you're in Denmark**, use Danish Railways to get about the city. For KlimaForum09 you need to get off at Hovedbanegården, the main station in Copenhagen; and for the convergence centres in Nørrebro, get off at Nørreport St. For times and booking see [www.dsb.dk](http://www.dsb.dk) (Right corner to switch to English)

**Stand up, fight for your voice, and make it heard. See you there!**

## TAMIL TORTURE

Six months after the end of the Sri Lankan army's assault on Tamil Tiger-controlled territory in northern Sri Lanka (See SchNEWS 676), over a quarter of a million Tamils remain incarcerated in internment camps.

Conditions in the camps are appalling, with no basic sanitation and chronic shortages of food, drinking water and medical supplies. Although the Sri Lankan government has barred journalists from the camps, reports have leaked out of hundreds dying every day, with the dead often left where they fall. There have also been reports of torture, rape, extortion, extra-judicial murders and child recruitment by government backed paramilitary groups operating in the camps and during 'screening' processes.

The government insists it needs more time to root out insurgents amongst the Tamil population through its 'screening' of the incarcerated Tamils. Military aged men are frequently taken from the camps and around 13,000 people suspected of links with the Tamil Tigers have disappeared, many sent for 'rehabilitation' at secret camps around the country. Hundreds more are being held without charge in prisons.

While thousands have been released from the camps, there have been reports of police taking people from their homes days after release, with no indication of where they have gone. With many returning to homes destroyed in the conflict, official reconstruction efforts have been focusing on the militarisation of the region with the construction of police and army facilities taking precedence over civilian infrastructure.

In Britain, campaign group Act Now are calling for a boycott of Sri Lankan goods, tourism and cricket. On November 8th they staged a London 'Day of Action' with pickets focusing on Marks and Spencer due to their heavy investment in Sri Lanka. This Sunday (22nd) the campaign will be rolled out nationwide, with groups already established in Totnes, Bristol and Coventry. The campaign is also set to expand its targets to other stores including Tesco, Top Shop and Next.

\* To get involved and for more info see [www.act-now.info](http://www.act-now.info)

## NOT A LEG TO STAND ON

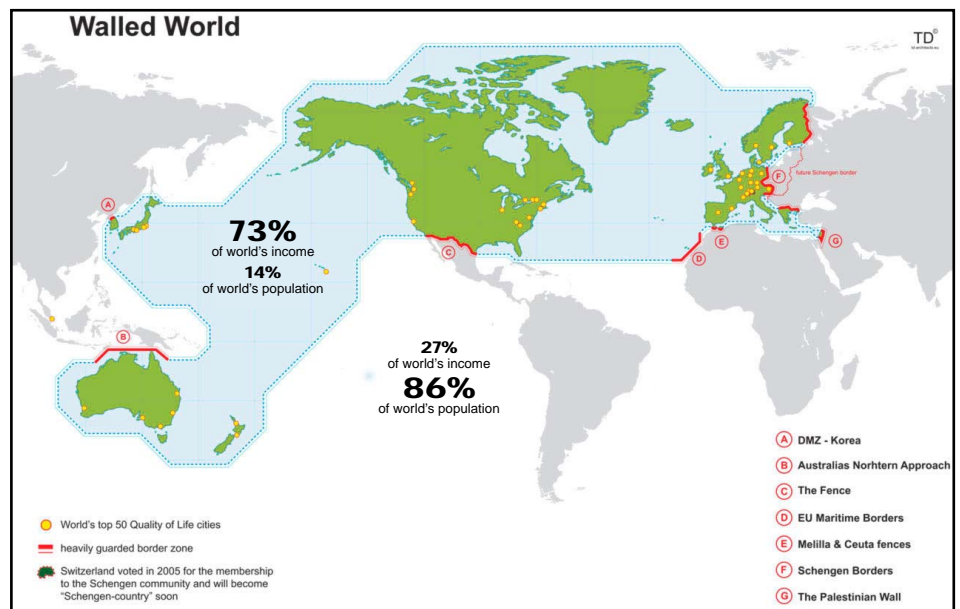
Photojournalist Guy Smallman may finally see some measure of justice after a police stun grenade left him badly injured six and a half years ago at the G8 summit in Geneva (See SchNEWS 410).

A video of the incident clearly shows police firing stun grenades continually at a fleeing crowd. Guy is towards the back of the group and as the fire zeroes in on him he is eventually hit.

Guy won the first court case despite police lies saying that he was injured by protesters. However the police appealed successfully (the guidelines on use of the stun grenades were changed retrospectively to avoid paying him any damages). This is the final appeal and Guy's last chance for justice.

If the court decision falls on the state side, Guy will end up owing massive costs. In other words, he will end up paying the Swiss authorities for blowing off the back of his leg. Guy told SchNEWS, "I'm just looking forward to getting the fucking thing over and done with to be honest with you - the injury has left me only able to run flat-footed, I've got nerve damage and only got half the strength in my leg - but I try not to let it interfere with my work."

\* View Guy's work at [www.guysmallman.com](http://www.guysmallman.com)



## WALLS OF STEEL

"...the fall of the Berlin Wall serves for us all today as a call to fight oppression and to tear down all the walls that still separate the world, that divide cities, regions and nations. This is the message that a unified Europe proudly embodies and delivers to the world. We are brothers, we are Berliners..." - Nicolas Sarkozy 9/11/09.

Well SchNEWS ain't gonna argue that the fall of the Berlin Wall was a bad thing - the collapse of East Germany and the triumph (however short-lived) of people power in Eastern Europe back in '89-'91 are things to be celebrated. But in the middle of last week's hype you'd be forgiven for thinking that the Wall was the last barrier between humanity.

In fact the Berlin Wall now looks embarrassingly lo-tech, a Soviet neo-brutalist construction in concrete and barbed wire, compared to the futuristic barriers being constructed around the whole of Europe to keep out the world's poor. Checkpoint Charlie just went biometric.

Just days before Europe's heads of state gathered in Berlin to gush about the passing of tyranny, they were in Brussels at the summit of the EU Council voting for expanded funding for a crackdown on migration. Against a background of continual brutalization, isolation and forced return of migrants they collectively announced "A determined European response based on

firmness, solidarity and shared responsibility remains essential, in line with the European Pact on Asylum and Migration," and called for "the enhancement of the operational capacities of FRONTEX".

The European Union's frontline force against migration is FRONTEX - a transnational border agency. The force employs over a thousand people directly and has an annual budget of 22.2 million Euros. It's growing too - personnel increases and a budget doubled since last year. It aims to co-ordinate all EU border agencies and, through the use of cutting edge biometric technology, ensure that the division of the world into haves and have-nots remains impenetrable.

The EU's borders now extend for many more miles than the Iron Curtain ever did, there's plenty of barbed wire of course but the maritime boundaries are now on the other side of the Med and even off the coast of Africa (see map).

But don't worry we're not the only ones at it - the US-Mexico border is similarly militarised, the Apartheid Wall stealing Palestinian land is virtually complete and don't even think about trying to get in or out of China. The barrier is to the 21st century what the railroad was to the nineteenth century and the motorway to the twentieth. We are all still 'Berliners' - only now divided into North and South.

## NAE TO NATO

There was nearly a week of actions and events in Edinburgh this week in protest against the NATO Parliamentary Assembly. Here's a round-up:

**Friday:** A group of around 30-40 gathered at the meeting place for a demo, and after a preliminary visit from some plain-clothes cops, were quickly surrounded by three van loads. They avoided a kettle and within an hour had mostly found their way to the conference centre. A group of around 40-50, with reinforced banners, tried to blockade the road outside, but were forced back by police, who attempted another kettle. The crowd managed to get away and marched towards the centre of Edinburgh along Princess St, finally ending up at the Forest Cafe, where a FIT team started filming them.

**Saturday:** During the day there was a No To NATO rally of about 5,000 led by Stop The War Scotland and CND. (While other protest-

ers spent the day in Glasgow demonstrating against the far-right SDL - see 'Out Of Their League' in this issue). Later that evening, as the NATO delegates met for post-meeting drinks at a posh hotel, a group of six protesters gathered with a banner to make some noise, but were met with heavy police aggression, and were pushed back from the hotel, and filmed again by FIT. They remained to cause problems for police for two hours.

**Tuesday:** On the final day of the meeting, early in the morning Trident Ploughshares blocked the entrance to the conference centre. Protesters recited the names of the Afghani dead, and had pictures of wounded Afghans on their shirts. Six were arrested for attempting illegal entry into a secured building.

\* See <http://natowc.noflag.org.uk>, [www.indymediascotland.org](http://www.indymediascotland.org)

## BLACKBOARD RUMBLE

A school in Leeds has been returned to the community recently after over five years standing empty, neglected by Leeds County Council. Local residents formed a collective to squat the building last Monday (9th) and have been using the space to hold a range of community-led activities, with huge support from the local area.

The school was initially shut down in 2004 during a spate of closures and educational budget cuts by Leeds County Council. Their next step was to turn down bids for the space from community groups in favour of plans put forward by a large conglomerate development company to turn the site into flats for elderly people. This company pulled out of the deal in 2008 and since then the building has remained derelict. Despite a £15,000 a year security budget paid by the council the school has been repeatedly targeted by vandals and the lead stripped from the roof (which the council is currently refusing to give back, ignoring the desperate need for repairs).

The Royal Park Community Consortium is putting together a business plan to present to the council, and is calling out for locals and interested parties alike to contact the local councillors in support of the project, as well as encouraging anyone to pop in for a visit or join in with one of the many community events being held. The group were served with eviction papers this week and are due in court on Monday 23rd, so get yourself down to the Leeds Magistrates Court by 10am to show your support.

\* For more search 'Save the Royal Park Primary School for community use!' on Facebook

**ALSO, with educational occupations taking place in the UK**, mass strikes and occupations of university buildings are also happening in the rest of Europe. Student protests have been kicking off in support of the continent-wide week of action (9th - 18th November) dubbed 'Education Is Not For Sale', covering issues like the commercialisation of education; the shift in a focus from a public-serving education system to a privately-owned employee factory, churning out the perfect white-collar worker; and the continuing homogenisation of degree programmes due to 1999's Bologna agreement.

In Germany 85,000 students took to the streets in over 50 cities and 16 university lecture halls were stormed and occupied all over the country, Switzerland saw three universities being temporarily squatted, all of this following similar large scale action in Austria at the beginning of this month.

\* To find out more about the **Education Is Not For Sale** movement see [www.emancipating-education-for-all.org](http://www.emancipating-education-for-all.org)

## CRASBO SELECTA

"What they're trying to do is bring in control orders for 'domestic extremist' via the back door" - Animal Rights campaigner.

The repression of AR activists by fair means and foul continues unabated. Following two dawn raids in Evesham and Gosport on November 10th, four activists were arrested and charged with conspiracy to criminal damage. NDET and NETCU officers orchestrated the raids.

The four were released after over eighteen hours in custody but with wide-ranging police bail conditions. Those conditions were designed to prevent them from engaging in any form of animal rights activism. They were forbidden to "participate in, assist travel arrangements, facilitate or organise in any way any animal rights related activity, stall, website, protest or demonstration". Although the bail conditions were overturned at the first opportunity in court, being replaced with far less stringent residency conditions they represent yet another development in police attempts to stifle dissent.

The raids, which involved over thirty cops, some sporting balaclavas and carrying fire extinguishers, followed on from earlier raids on the same property back in October 2008 (See SchNEWS 652). In that case, where a banner-drop was transformed into 'conspiracy to blackmail' the raids were justified because spray paint had been used to make the banner, and similar spray paint had been used to do graffiti elsewhere - all charges were dropped. The recent raids were carried out on similarly flimsy grounds

In fact the same property had been raided three times previously that year - (perhaps they should just give up and install a revolving door). No convictions resulted from those raids. Incredibly this time round police attempted to get the arrestees remanded!

It has now become standard for animal rights activists to receive CRASBOs - (anti social behaviour orders imposed following convictions), which forbid participation in otherwise legal activities on pain of re-imprisonment.

Two men, Bob Griffiths and Robert Lewis were recently sentenced to 18 months each for breaching the SOCPA laws that specifically make campaigning against 'animal research' establishments illegal. They were also issued with ten year CRASBOS that will prevent them from taking part in any form of animal advocacy. CRASBOS were also imposed on all those convicted of the SHAC blackmail offences (See SchNEWS 663) - in some cases these ASBOS which prohibit all forms of campaigning legal or otherwise are set to last a lifetime.

\* For more see <http://netcu.wordpress.com>

## TRUCK OR TREAT

Early next month a giant convoy, organised by Viva Palestina and The Palestine Solidarity Campaign, will embark from the UK on an overland journey of over 2000 miles to bring humanitarian aid to the long suffering citizens of Palestine. Following in the wake of the hugely successful convoy which left last February hundreds-strong (See SchNEWS 668), solidarity activists are once again stock-piling medical equipment and humanitarian aid for the vehicles which will leave London on 5th December. Altogether more than 200 vehicles are expected to converge in the capital including ambulances, fire engines, refrigerated trucks and vans all laden with desperately sought supplies.

A spokesperson from the Swansea Palestine Community Link (SPCL) who are currently fund-raising for the Palestine Trauma Centre which mainly treats traumatised children said "The people of Gaza are lacking most of the basic necessities so the vehicles will be carrying critical medical, maternity and post-natal supplies, as well as much needed supplies for the schools - paper, exercise books, pens and crayons."

After most media networks have packed up and gone home, the convoy is a sign of the growing support from the international community to raise awareness for the Palestinian struggle to survive in the face of the continuing Israeli onslaught. Check out the following links for more info and ways to join in with fund-raising efforts.

\* See [www.vivapalestina.org](http://www.vivapalestina.org), also <http://bglink.ning.com>

## TAKING THE CISSBURY

The campaign against a land sell-off around Worthing's Cissbury Ring hill fort got off to a blustery start last Saturday (14th) when over 300 people staged a rally at the site. Organised by campaign group Stop the Cissbury Sell-Off (SCSO), demonstrators brandished banners and placards and set off distress flares before braving gale force winds and lashing rain during a four mile guided walk around Cissbury Ring.

Campaigners have already got the council wobbling with local planners promising to "review" the proposals. SCSO are not relaxing yet though. After the demo, Spokesman Trevor Hodgson said, "There was a very strong feeling amongst everyone there that we cannot assume the council will do the right thing, despite the massive turnout today.

"They clearly hoped to sneak through the sale of the land without anyone noticing and we are suspicious that this so-called review may turn out to be just a delaying tactic."

The land in question surrounds Cissbury Ring, which according to one campaigner is "a first rate wildlife habitat, but really only a pimple in an agribusiness desert. We want the council, instead of flogging the land off for £3-4 million, to use some of the grants available to re-integrate the land with the downs in a landmark land restoration."

Campaigners stressed that Saturday's action was just the start. Trevor said, "There are now a huge number of people actively involved in this campaign and the council can be assured that we are not going away.

"We will fight on until we are completely satisfied that this crucial piece of Worthing's environmental and historical heritage is fully protected and secure for generations to come."

\* See [www.eco-action.org/porkbolter](http://www.eco-action.org/porkbolter)

## SchNEWS IN BRIEF

\* In a case of 'our gun is bigger than yours', campaigners against small arms manufacturer **Heckler and Koch** marched a 25ft rifle through the streets of **Nottingham** and up to H&K HQ at Lenton industrial estate last Friday (13th). Having failed to end militarism with big small arms, activists are now planning to turn to the even bigger death machines and have decided to march a 15ft tank to (ironically-named) Chilwell army barracks in protest against Britain's war mongering. See [www.shutdownhk.org.uk](http://www.shutdownhk.org.uk)

\* **Newhaven Stop Incineration Now!** the campaign against the planned incinerator at Newhaven, near Brighton, is staging three days of workshops, forums, music, film and free food

and wine on November 27th-29th. Venues to be announced around Newhaven, six miles east of Brighton. For more information call 07505016362, write [mkechnge7@wildmail.com](mailto:mkechnge7@wildmail.com), or see <http://stopincineration.webs.com>

\* What a bunch of twats - SchNEWS is now on Twitter (not that any of us know how to use it) see [www.twitter.com/schnews](http://www.twitter.com/schnews). Also - did you know that the SchNEWS website now takes comments on articles (but we remove nutcase postings so don't bother.)

### PARTY & PROTEST

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



## OUT OF THEIR LEAGUE

After their disastrous attempt at rallying Welsh racists (See SchNEWS 696, 697), the EDL scrambled over Hadrian's Wall last Saturday (14th) to try their hand at instigating racial hatred in Scotland. The Scottish Defence League assembled in a Glasgow pub and were quickly surrounded by police. Hundreds of Antifascists gathered outside waiting for police to release the racists on an unsuspecting Scottish public.

However, before that could happen, the UAF contingent of the crowd broke away and marched off to a nearby Glasgow Green to have a natter about how important it is keep fascists off the streets. With only around 50 people left to actually try and keep fascists off the streets, the afternoon lock-in came to an end and the SDL and were let out. Tightly kettled by the police, they marched about 200 metres up the road then stood around singing popular Scottish nationalist ditties Rule Britannia and God Save the Queen.

After 20 minutes, the SDL marched back down the road and were put onto buses taking them away. After they had departed a demonstration of over a thousand people returned from Glasgow Green, ready to confront the spectre of fascism only to have completely missed the fash themselves.

Later some right wing nutters were arrested after doing Nazi salutes near the train station, and an Asian guy was also arrested at the scene for breach of the peace.

\* The EDL are set to rear their ugly heads in **Nottingham** on December 5th. On the same day soldiers from the Second Battalion Mercian regiment will be marching through town to receive a salute in Nottingham's central Market Square. There are concerns the EDL will try and hijack the event to garner support. While the EDL have yet to announce their meeting point, Notts Stop the BNP will be gathering outside the Royal Centre at 10am, while UAF have stated that they will be holding a rally at 10am in the Market Square. Autonomous antifascists are being urged to act independently and stay mobile to try and avoid being kettled in and reducing the antifascist presence to confined chanting.

## FRENCH LETTER

Attacks on migrants in Calais continue with police raiding Egyptian, Palestinian, Sudanese, Afghan and Ethiopian squats and camps in the last two weeks. Following the now all too familiar pattern, police have been arresting those that can't escape before destroying or confiscating the migrants' personal belongings, including tents and blankets.

With the level of police repression in Calais showing no sign of abating, many migrants have moved on to other towns along the coast. Unfortunately, they have found little respite. On Wednesday (18th) French border police raided a camp of Afghans and Iraqis in Dunkerque. They arrested around 30 migrants before razing the camp with bulldozers.

No Borders and other migrant rights groups remain active but are desperately short of people. Without more people they are struggling to actively intervene to prevent arrests and violence. Instead they can do little more than record police brutality.

To get involved call UK 07534 008380, the Calais office from outside France on 00 33 634 810 710 or from France on 0634 810 710. For more information see <http://calaismigrantsolidarity.wordpress.com>

## ATOMIC ACQUITTEN

Four Aldermaston blockaders were acquitted last week at Reading magistrates of 'obstructing the highway'. The trial related to an action that took place last October. In uncanny echoes of a previous case at Sizewell (See SchNEWS 693), the four were acquitted on the grounds that the access road to the facility is not a public highway.

The Atomic Weapons Establishment at Aldermaston, Berkshire is in the process of spending billions of pounds of UK taxpayers' money building the facilities for a new generation of nuclear warheads. Britain's submarine-launched Trident nuclear missile system already endangers us all, encourages global proliferation and undermines international law and disarmament negotiations.

Trident Ploughshares are organising another day of mass action, saying "Come and join the blockade at Aldermaston on Monday 15 February, 2010 and help us make it BIG. The action will begin at 7am and continue for as long as possible. You can sit, lie down, lock-on, perch atop a tripod, or just support and entertain blockaders." \* See [www.tridentploughshares.org](http://www.tridentploughshares.org)

## R.I.P IVAN KHUTORSKOY

**Ivan Khutorsko**y, a renowned Russian anti-fascist, was gunned down by the far-right outside his home in Moscow on Monday 16th. Ivan's life and death show the perils of fighting the increasingly state-assisted far-right movement in Russia and the bravery of those who do so.

A well-known anti-fascist his address had been publicised on neo-nazi websites. This was the fourth attempt on his life. A keen sambo fighter and mixed martial artist, nick-named the 'Bone-crusher', the only way they could get him in the end was with a bullet. In the words of his friends "He lived for the streets and the punk rock."

The next evening anarchists and anti-fascists gathered for a commemoration at a metro station. After being attacked by riot police they dispersed and re-grouped outside the offices of a pro-Kremlin youth organisation "Young Russia", that openly co-operates with "Russian Way" - a group behind the assassination of lawyer Stanislav Markelov and anarchist journalist Anastasia Baburova. The office came under bombardment with rocks, fireworks and road-signs. A fitting memorial then..

## ...and finally... Milestone Or Millstone?

**So happy 15th birthday SchNEWS! - and issue 700 falls on the same week.** A big thank you to everyone who has been involved in SchNEWS, past and present. And a big thanks to all our readers, many who have helped by contributing information and donating money. Their continued support has kept us going through the leanest times and justified our existence.

In 1994, when the Justice? campaign were campaigning against the Criminal Justice Act in Brighton and squatting the old Courthouse, they were urged by a visiting group of women who were part of 'Women Against Pit Closures' - whose legacy went back to the 80s miners' strikes - to start a news letter. Justice? responded to this and began producing something called SchNEWS on a weekly basis. Most newsletters come and go but the resourceful crew who started SchNEWS (none still on the writing staff), moved on from covering the CJA and quickly found a niche as an info-hub for the UKs direct action movement.

The road protest movement was just starting to gain momentum then, with the urban M11 campaign at full throttle. Schnews was a cruder, more direct beast in those days with headlines such as "You're Nicked" and "Mother-Fucked". (although dedicated SchNEWSologists have found early proto-puns such as 'Silence is Olden' within the first fifty issues). Although there were other independent media around, SchNEWS' frequency and focus on current events made it a must-read. Remember (if you still can) that this was all before the internet or even mobile phones were in general use.

The nineties is now talked about like a golden era for ecological direct action and D.I.Y culture (alright, mostly by the likes of us). Obviously the summers were longer and the drugs were better (remember purple ohms?) but in retrospect it looks like quite a politically fluffy decade for us in the West. The major class battles of the eighties were over. The attacks on travellers, ravers and squatters were a by-product of Thatcher's victory over the organised elements of the British working class. The CJA seemed hideously draconian at the time and sparked major resistance but most of its clauses would pass without mention in any of the more recent

Crime/Police/Justice Acts.

For many of that generation, particularly the ones who eventually grew up, cut their dreads off and got a proper job, the nineties is looked back on as the baby boomers look back at the 1960s - a radical time, which ended (and ended roughly the same time they went straight). A window of craziness and change that opened, but then closed.

But the need for direct action and grass-roots community mobilisation never went away. Despite notable successes - road protests, reclaim the streets, anti-GM struggles, animal rights, summit hopping etc etc we've still never made the breakthroughs we need to. Yes, meanwhile we've championed issues that are now mainstream media fodder (witness the recent outpouring of liberal ire around police behaviour at protests, something regular SchNEWS readers wouldn't have found much of a surprise) but, despite the anti-Iraq war march of a million-plus, there hasn't been a real popular uprising since the anti-poll tax movement.

Even last year's economic collapse seems to have caused nothing more than increased ratings for X-factor and Strictly Come Dancing. Global elites have gambled by mortgaging a huge slice of government tax income for decades, and given it to themselves to continue with business as usual. Maybe the shock of the sheer audacity of what's taken place has hit home yet and will need the effects of the recession to really bite before the penny drops.

And if the bailout doesn't hold then we'll really be in uncharted waters. With some kind of new crises, economic or environmental, almost inevitable sooner or later, there will be less and less room to manoeuvre for those in power - and a dangerous likelihood of totalitarian tendencies coming to the fore.

It's in precisely these times that we need to be pushing for real democratic social change and rejecting the narrow nationalist non-solutions that are inevitably gonna arise.

Here's to the next fifteen years...

### Disclaimer

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