



WAKE UP! WAKE UP! IT'S YER 'WINSTON' WINNIN'

# SchNEWS

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# ORWELL'S OSCARS

*"Imagine the future as a boot stamping on a person's face"* - George Orwell, 1984

The first annual UK Big Brother awards took place in London on Monday. Awards went to various government and corporate institutions - those forces of darkness that keep a shady eye on us all. They love to watch us, but we laughed to watch them exposed to the unwelcome spotlight, in a ceremony organised by watchdog group Privacy International and compered by Channel 4 comedian, yer man Mark Thomas.

Bigger and sexier than the Oscars or any other such pieces of tack, these awards featured a golden boot stamping on a head. For the truth is becoming stranger and scarier than the Orwell's fictional dystopia\*. We are all being watched, every day by an ever-tightening web of video cameras, police systems, and a vast range of computer-based surveillance databases. Uh-oh: too many powerful people have been reading their Orwell and taking it too seriously. Time to kick up some fuss....

Earlier in the day, cameras followed an activist doorstepping the unwilling recipients with their awards. Among those upon whom the dubious honour was bestowed was Newham Council, winners of the 'local government' category for launching a digital facial recognition system that allows their 140 CCTV cameras to identify up to 1000 people per second as they walk down the streets, matching them against police databases. Council officials appeared disgruntled when the cameras were turned on them, but after half an hour of playing with PR men and invading council meetings, the receptionist finally accepted the award on the Council's behalf - just as two coppers walked in through the entrance.

Next was the Department of Trade and Industry, who want us to hand over to the government our key passwords so the security services can read encrypted email. Funnily enough, the impetus for this comes entirely from the US, who have been instilling in our compliant government their outrage at people's ability to send messages to one another that the authorities can't read. What's the difference between a Dti policy maker and a shopping trolley? - *A shopping trolley has a mind of its own.* Yet they were pretty quick to make up their mind when presented with their award - this time a whole posse of police carried out the award bearer, still clutching the trophy.

Other award winners included arms manufacturers *Procurement Services International* (PSI) - featured on 'World in Action' selling surveillance technology equipment to the Indonesian regime with a nod and a wink from Tony Blair - scooped the award in the 'corporate' category. Another firm, Harlequin, took the 'product' award with their *Watcall* telephone billing software. *Watcall* allows UK police to analyse personal BT phone bill information to monitor links between friends and contact networks without a Home Office warrant.

But if you're really the sort of person who grew up looking through keyholes, opening other people's mail and listening at the bedroom door of newly-married couples, perhaps you too should consider a career with the US National Security Agency (NSA) winners of the 'Lifetime Achievement' award. At Menwith Hill in North Yorkshire they maintain the largest spy surveillance base in the western hemisphere since WWII, monitoring *e-mails, telephone and fax communications*' day in day out via 40,000 phone lines and satellites (see SchNEWS 160). Even Ladbroke's wouldn't offer odds on the American spies scooping this special golden boot.

Shouts went up as Mark Thomas presented the Winston ('Winnie') awards (after the character Winston Smith in 1984) to people who have been striking back a blow for the little people against these snooping bods. Peace campaigner Lindis Percy picked up a 'Lifetime Achievement' award for her running battle with the US Menwith Hill spy base. Among the others, Tash Lodge received a Winnie for his work photographing police harrassment of travellers and festival-goers, and

SchNEWS also scooped one, which made our bosoms swell with pride.

Having promised an annual awards event in the future, Privacy International are looking at doing the 'Brothers' in eight countries across the world, starting with the US in April 1999. Simon Davies, director of PI said *"it's taken over 8 years to get here, but now we have a solid platform of campaigners, activists and people power to take it to them. We have a serious anti-surveillance movement on our hands"*

\***Dystopia**, n. Nightmarish fictional world (opp. *utopia*). - SchNEWS VocabWatch

The Big Brother Survival Kit is now available, comprising a wealth of no-bullshit explanation, plus practical advice on how to protect yourself from the nosey-parkers. Includes Bloggers' guide to encryption - essential reading. Send £1 worth of stamps to SchNEWS with an SAE.

## "EVERY DAY IS PIE DAY"

Robert Shapiro, Chief Executive of Monsanto, was hit in the face with a tofu creme pie on Tuesday night at the *"State of the World Forum"* (a mere \$5,000 a ticket), in San Francisco. Shapiro addressed the audience (with a little help from Burson Marstella-the PR company responsible for making bad,nasty companies look nice and yummy) by explaining Monsanto's crucial role in saving the earth from soil erosion, pollution, overpopulation, famine, and the destructiveness of industrial society' (ehmm.) On leaving the stage, he stopped to chat with a heckler on genetic engineering and corporate crime. At this point the Biotic Baking Brigade (BBB) Field Agents Custard and Lemon Meringue approached him and let fly with tofu creme and sweet potato pies., before getting nicked.

The BBB struck another blow against globalisation in the same city earlier this month when one of its operatives threw a pie in the face of free-market obsessive Milton Friedman (friend of General Pinochet and adviser to Thatcher too boot) at a conference he organized on the privatization of public education. The fan-thrower cried *"Mr. Friedman, it's a good day to pie!"* before flopping the tasty coconut creme pie in his face. Pie-thrower Al Decker was arrested and charged with misdemeanor battery. The flanning incident is part of BBB's campaign of 'delicious mischief'.

\*Check out the Biblical text for all creme crusaders, Noel Goddens book, 'Cream and Punishment, the inspiration behind the International Brigade Patisserie, who's ultimate target is to pie the Pope!

[www.cinenet.net/users/jaybab/noel.html](http://www.cinenet.net/users/jaybab/noel.html)

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## DOVERS RACIST SOLE

"While Labour luvvies dribble on at that most historic of northern pleasure outposts, Blackpool, we are left with the backdraft of a nation's human sewage and NO CASH to wash it down the drain." **Dover Express Editorial**

"They are 'parasites' who milk the welfare system, shoplift, pick-pocket, hang around insulting women and run brothels". No, these aren't crude lies about Jews from the pages of Adolf Hitler's "Der Stürmer" in the 1930s; they're crude lies about Roma and Kosovan asylum-seekers from recent issues of the **Dover Express** - Kent's premiere rabble rousing rag. Last week three families of asylum-seekers had their windows smashed. A missile narrowly missed a child and fireworks were thrown through the broken window, a sign left said, "we will burn you out". The addresses attacked had been printed in full by the Daily Mail in an article. Dover Residents Against Racism (DRAR) met to discuss their response, "...it's starting to feel like Montgomery, Alabama down here". Meanwhile the Dover Express reported that local, Paul James intends to stand for the BNP, and is refusing to do building work for anyone who supports the asylum seekers

As racist assaults continue, DRAR is convinced that the Dover Express bears a large share of responsibility. The latest cycle of hostility began in early October when the Express ran a poisonous editorial on 'Scroungers Incorporated', arguing that Dover police were badly overstretched by refugees, bootleggers and drug-traffickers.

Ever since last year, when the first Roma refugees arrived in Dover, there has been a nasty undercurrent of racism in the town, with the National Front holding two minuscule rallies to help whip up racism. In August there was a successful Multi-Cultural Festival in the town, but in the past few weeks the bigots have gone back on the offensive, following the arrival of refugees fleeing the civil war in Kosovo.

But not everyone in the town is racist. One letter writer argued "We are supposed to be proud of British law which assumes anyone is innocent until proved guilty. But treatment of asylum-seekers in Dover assumes the exact opposite.. It's no good saying we support genuine refugees when nobody wants to believe any of them are."

DRAR who have been out leafletting in Dover told SchNEWS "The fascists are weak and poorly organised. Nevertheless, if they are allowed to try and exploit the present circumstances they could well have an influence out of all proportion to their size." More info: **\*Dover Residents Against Racism** c/o Refugee Link, PO Box 417, Folkestone, Kent CT19 4GT 8 \*Checkout the **campaign against the National Front** in Dover's homepage [www.canterbury.u-net.com/Dover](http://www.canterbury.u-net.com/Dover).

## SAB SEASON STARTS

If you thought sabs would be relaxing this season, safe in the knowledge that the long-promised ban had freed this country of one of it's most shameful traditions, think again! This season's killing is well under way. Some hunts around the country barely stopped over the summer and all have been out for weeks. Legislation has been so ineffective at deterring sabs that our worthy government have sunk to the pathetic level of trying to ban face masks! But sabs will be out there making our presence felt until the day hunting is banned. And shooting. And fishing. But we need you.. For more info: PO Box 2786, Brighton BN2 2YD. Tel: 01273 622827 \*A national week of action against the fur trade will take place from Monday 16th November till 21st.- Coalition to Abolish the Fur Trade PO Box 38, Manchester, M60 1NX/ London Animal Action 0171 278 3068 \* **Shoreham Protestors Meeting** - every Tuesday 8pm at Harbour Cafe, Hove Lagoon, Hove, East Sussex. **The Shoreham Protestor**, issued fortnightly 30p + SAE from 7 Stoneham Road, Hove BN3 5HJ \* National Demo against **The Meat Industry's Smithfield** show Sunday 29th November 9am - 6 pm Earl's Court Exhibition Centre, London SW5 (Earls Court tube) 0171 278 3068

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Oi you Brighton student! - want to look radical in front of your friends? Then grab a bundle of SchNEWS from the New Kensington and distribute them round college...

## SCHNEWS IN BRIEF

A bunch of people from Brighton are gonna try and organise a coach to the appeal date of **General Pinochet**, the delightful ex- Chilean dictator who was recently told by the High Court that it was OK for him to murder and torture thousands of people in his country because he was a head of state! Ring the office and leave your phone number if you want to go \*\*\* SchNEWS was saddened to hear the departure of **Rank's Chief Executive** for an undisclosed sum because profits dropped 16% to just £111million. So what about the future of Lyminge Forest in Kent, where Rank want to build a massive holiday village. Seems the 'village' is on hold at the moment and the forest is safe for now \*\*\* They've got to be 'avin a laugh, but apparently Manchester airport has objected to the Romper public house expanding its kitchens near one of its dirty great hangers. It complained to the planners that it wanted the kitchens smaller to "reflect the importance of the Bolin Valley, an area of special landscape value." Excuse us, but aren't these the same organisation who have poured 750,000 tons of concrete into the Valley to build a second runway \*\*\* Bored, SchNEWS went to the **Labour Party** web site and tapped in the word 'socialist' on our search drive. Guess how many times it came up on our screen? Pat yourself on the back if you guessed the number as zero \*\*\* **The Birmingham Northern Relief Road** benefit will now be on 21st November at Screamers, Worcester St Wolverhampton but with no Headmix Collective. Other DJs are being sorted out - £3 in. With the eviction of one camp so close, the benefit needs to be a big one. **WARNING! Road protest has not gone away... 01902 771920\*\*\* Reclaim The Streets - the movie** will be showing at The Meeting Room, Friends of the Earth Warehouse, Allison Street, Digbeth, Birmingham- Wed 11th November 7pm\*\*\*. Last week, the joint Master of the North Beaufort Hunt, Captain Ian Farquhar, pleaded guilty to poisoning a stretch of the River Avon to allowing a chemical to leak from the Hunts kennels. Thousands of endangered white crayfish were killed and Farquhar was fined £6,000 and ordered to pay legal costs \*\*\*Brighton Theatre Events are putting on a national tour of "The Football Factory". A tale of football, fascism and police surveillance'. For the tour dates ring 01273 821 054\*\*\* **Exodus** are hosting a 'Week-end' of discussion on **'Freeing the Weed'** starting Fri 13th Nov including a **Dubdiddly Extravaganga** starring **Headmix Collective** and **Tarantism** for details ring 01582 876 721\*\*\* **Brighton and Hove Green Party** are holding an Autumn Green Fayre on Saturday 7th November 10am - 5pm at the Friends Meeting House, Ship St. Come and say hello to SchNEWS

## INSIDE SCHNEWS

The Police Federation this week lost a £1.2million libel action against Channel 4. Former inspector Trevor Gladding of Gloucester police sued Channel 4 after the broadcast of a 'Trial and Error' programme concerning an 'alleged' miscarriage of justice in the case of Tony Poole and Gary Mills. The programme suggested that Mr Gladding had told a key witness not to attend the trial, and later perjured himself when he denied doing so.. Tony Poole and Gary Mills were jailed for life in 1989 for a murder they say they did not commit.. Gary admits fighting with the victim, Hensley Wiltshire, but denies killing him. When Mr Wiltshire was taken to hospital for the second time by the police, he was found to have more injuries than the first time. Coincidentally he was not injured by the local force.

\*Write to Tony Poole WM1030- HMP Long Lartin, South Littleton, Evesham, Worcs, WR11 5TZ.

\*Gary Mills WM469-HMP Earlestone, Earlestone, Devises, Wilts, SN10 STU \*Or contact their campaign, c/o Garry Blossome, Robert Blackford & co. Hill House, 1 Mint Walk, Croydon, Cr0 1EA

## AMNESTY CONDEMN US PRISONS

"Too often, human rights in the USA are a tale of two nations: rich and poor, white and black, male and female"

Pierre Sane, Amnesty International Secretary General

This month Amnesty International reported systemic abuse of basic human rights in America. Despite having the most powerful economy in the world it's people are marginalized because of race, poverty and deprivation.

Racist police persistently use force that is out of proportion to the threat faced. They use an arsenal that includes pepper gas, guns, electro-shock weaponry and batons. Young Black and Latino men are particularly at risk. Local community and civil rights groups say 'Zero Tolerance' has led to unacceptable levels of police brutality. No-one knows how many people the American police have killed, because of an effective internal 'hush-up' code.

There are 1.7 million people in prison in America. 60% are from ethnic minorities. Many are beaten, shackled, threatened with firearms or beaten up by other prisoners. Overcrowding has led to the increased use of chemical, mechanical and electro-shock restraint on prisoners; and physical and sexual violence, made worse by not segregating unsuited prisoners. Dozens of jails are reported to have overflowing toilets, rat infested cells no ventilation...and prisoners are forced to sleep on the floor. Public demand for harsher treatment of prisoners leads to such violations going unchallenged.

Since 1990, more than 350 people have been executed in the US. America has the highest known death row population on earth: over 3,300. America only comes behind China, Saudi Arabia and Iran in the total number of people it killed last year - 74, mainly by lethal injection or electrocution. The way the death sentence is used is shown to be racist: 82% of people executed since 1977 were for the murder of a white person.

Asylum seekers in America are often imprisoned and detained indefinitely. The number of asylum seekers detained has risen 75% in the last two years. They are frequently denied visits by lawyers, family and interpreters, making their claims for asylum very hard to process. Jailers do not differentiate in their treatment of asylum seekers and other prisoners. Despite America's leading role in creating the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, it seems to be doing it's damndest to disregard basic human rights for many of it's citizens.

For a copy of the report contact **Amnesty**, 99-119 Rosebery Ave., London, EC1R 4RE 0171 814 6200

## ...and finally...

Y2K, or Year 2000, and the idea of international chaos spontaneously happening over something so simple as a computer chip for some of us is poetry in motion. The panic is setting in. The news that 10 per cent of the US top executives are stockpiling canned goods, buying generators and even purchasing handguns gives an indication of the extent of a situation that's looming in less than 15 months from now, yet is being hushed for fear of scaring the public. Of 330 executives surveyed, 56 percent said they believed the millennium bug would not be fixed in time, 11 percent were buying generators and wood stoves, and 13 percent were upgrading personal security with alarm systems, fencing and firearms." Roughly 75 percent of the executives surveyed recommend that individual Americans check to make sure their banks' computers are prepared for 2000, and others are being advised to have printed statements as proof of savings. In Canada all Police leave is cancelled for the first three months of the year.

disclaimer  
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