



WAKE UP! WAKE UP! IT' SLEEPLESS IN SEATTLE!

SchNEWS

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Oi, WTO... NO!!

Anybody out there in SchNEWS land got a soft spot for forests, marine creatures, endangered species or clean air? You have? Then start a f**king museum. If you've a soft spot for exploited, downtrodden, penniless, starving peasants however- don't worry: there'll soon be plenty more...

Yes, folks- the 3rd Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) is taking place in Seattle, USA, from 29th November to 3rd December. A low-profile global fat-cattery of unelected, unaccountable trade bureaucrats from 135 countries, the WTO meets annually to try and remove those little niggles standing in the way of uninhibited free trade- like laws protecting environment, health, human rights and working conditions. Current fuhrer is one Michael Moore- although fat, specky and bearded he is, alas, not 'the American answer to Mark Thomas'. He's Australian, for starters.

"Defence of local and national interests should be a democratic right. But nations' ability to reflect cultural, economic and environmental uniqueness is increasingly under attack from the WTO."-Tony Juniper, FoE

Top objective this year will be the 'Millennium Round' (MR), the new round of far-reaching trade negotiations aiming to further 'liberalise' the global economy. Not just the latest crap idea to feature the word 'Millennium', the MR is also the latest in a series of developments which represent the most serious changes in global capitalism for many years. Under the existing regime, if a country believes its companies' trading interests are being "unfairly" discriminated against by environmental laws, for instance, or sanctions against an oppressive regime- it can file a complaint to the WTO. This can result in the 'offending' countries being ordered to change their laws, or get fined and sanctioned; the WTO has already forced the EU to take un-PC US bananas and hormone-pumped beef (see SchNEWS 204/220).

"If the WTO had been around in the 1980's, Nelson Mandela would probably still be in prison"- Chris Keene, Anti-Globalisation Network

And now it's gonna get worse...

1st World governments and trans-national corporations are looking to the MR negotiations to further open up the free market. This would mean incorporating into the regime an agreement very similar to the infamous MAI treaty (see SchNEWS

"As humanity speeds towards ecological disaster, the World Trade Organisation has its foot on the accelerator." Tony Juniper, Friends of the Earth.

141 and loads more..), supposedly defeated earlier this year. They also seek to 'expand' WTO agreements on agriculture- a main cause of misery for small farmers worldwide-, to eliminate food security policies, to concentrate production in the hands of agribusiness and force GM technologies on an unwilling world. Oh, and they want to expand 'intellectual property' rights, too- which forces countries to give private patent rights over lifeforms to the corporations.

YER SchNEWS GUIDE TO WHO'S GETTING SCREWED

We've already mentioned penniless banana growers and people who don't want a stomachful of growth hormones. What else? Here's a brief selection...

"WTO rules are undermining 7 of the worlds' most important environmental treaties"

World Wide Fund for Nature

Farewell, Flipper! Last year, a WTO dispute panel ruled against the US Marine Mammal Protection Act, which banned the import of tuna from countries whose fleets use fishing methods that kill dolphins. Congress weakened the Act, and unsound tuna is now in US shops again.

So long, Shellfish! The US Endangered Species Act banned shrimp imports from countries that do not use devices designed to keep endangered sea turtles out of shrimp nets. In 1995, four nations challenged this law, claiming that it violated the rules of the WTO. Last October, the WTO ruled against the US ban on unsafe shrimp imports. The US government is now considering weakening the Endangered Species Act to comply with the WTO's ruling.

Bye bye, Burmese! In 1996, the state of Massachusetts, appalled at Burma's human rights record, passed a law to discourage state government purchases from companies doing business there. The EU and Japan, egged on by guilty multinationals who were losing business, have challenged the law at the WTO.

Clear Off, Clean Air! On behalf of its oil industry, Venezuela went to the WTO about the US Clean Air Act, which unreasonably demands clean gasoline. This was biased against foreign producers and was thus a 'barrier to trade'. The WTO agreed, and in 1997 the US was forced to rewrite its pollution rules.

(And if they do all that to the USA, think what they'll do to everyone else)

CRAPARREST OF THE WEEK

Police lost it last Saturday at Veggies 15th anniversary birthday bash. Here's some of the highlights...

* **For shouting "Oi, mate keep running."** For such cheek the man's face was scraped across the pavement before he was nicked.

* **For saying "Er excuse me!" to a copper.** For this heinous crime the woman spent 48 hours in Kentish town nick, hauled up in front of a magistrate who refused bail and threatened with two weeks in Holloway. Bailed finally for £250.

* **For putting his hands in his pockets.** A dodgy looking geezer from Manchester was asked to back off as his friends were being arrested. One officer screamed that he had a concealed weapon. He was jumped on and nicked for obstruction.

The more conspiratorial amongst you might well ask how 23 police vehicles managed to arrive in a quiet backstreet in Holborn within a minute of an 'Emergency Back-up' call being made? Did the police know that the Anarchist Bookfair had taken place just down the road and those very same people might be at Veggies party? Why did a police van from the City of London Police attend an incident in (non-City) Holborn. Were they hoping to find people from June 18th? Or was it due to an hysterical copper who ran off screaming into his personal radio 'there's hundreds of them' and asking for assistance, causing a near riot. If you witnessed any arrests, have lost property etc. ring Veggies 0115 958 5666

Farewell, Forests! Eagerly expected is a Global Free Logging Agreement; proposed by the USA, this calls for the elimination of import taxes on forest products, which means increased consumption and accelerated destruction of already endangered forests and a new mahogany table for the SchNEWS office. So it's not *all* bad...

Concerned? Fear not, people. The world is in safe hands:

"...any interference with free trade and the open markets is anti-environment to begin with. Economic progress and wealth creation are what clean up the environment and minimise pollution..."-Jack Kemp, Competitive Enterprise Institute, writing in the FT

SchNEWS does NOT recommend readers who disagree with Mr Kemp to join in our 'Millennium Round'-up, where WTO delegates are herded into a field to 'debate' with an AK47...

THE FORCES OF RESISTANCE.

Opposition to the WTO is growing. A mass action is planned in Seattle on November 30th. For information and updates about the November 30th preparations around the world, etc. contact: www.n30.org

EVERYTHING YOU WANNA KNOW ABOUT THE WTO: Get yerself a copy of 'Demystifying the WTO', an easy-to-read A4 booklet. Contact ASEED Tel + 31 20 6682236 aseed@antenna.nl

NATIVE STATE

Actions called on by the Zapatistas for Indigenous Day, the 12th Oct, to protest at the actions of transnationals - the new conquistadors - against indigenous peoples in Chiapas and other parts of Mexico. The offices of accountants KPMG in Bristol were targeted for their involvement with Nestle who are one of the main investors in Chiapas. The newly opened Nestle café in Bristol was blockaded and leaflets were handed out. In York and Newcastle Nestle factories were targeted. In London a demonstration was held in front of the US Embassy where one speaker accused the US government of helping the Mexican army set up paramilitary groups that are operating in Chiapas - "Bill Clinton, you have blood on your hands". e-mail: chiapaslink@yahoo.com. On the same day solidarity events were held to demand that the Colombian government and Occidental Petroleum cancel their plans to drill for oil on the sacred ancestral homelands of the U'wa people. Protestors targeted all ten Colombian consulates in the US and other events took place in Prague, Dublin, Madrid, Amsterdam, Geneva, Toronto, Vancouver, Santiago Chile, Bogota and in the Narmada Valley in India where communities fighting against the Narmada mega-dam project held a 24 hour vigil and sent a message of solidarity. www.ran.org or contact Patrick at rags@ran.org.

* Colombia is going through a grave institutional, political and social crisis - and the good 'ole USA wants to send in the military to sort out the mess. US officials have visited Ecuador, Peru, Argentina, Bolivia, Venezuela and Panama promoting the formation of a multinational force to intervene including the installation of radar systems in different parts of the country, increased financial support to the Armed Forces and military bases on the frontiers of Colombia's neighbouring countries. There will be a picket next Friday (29) outside the US Embassy 24 Grosvenor Square, London W1A 4-7pm Contact: Collective Against the North American Invasion of Colombia c/o 36 Vauxhall Street, London SE11

MUMIA MUST LIVE

A national rally to protest against the signing of the death warrant against Mumia Abu-Jamal is to take place in Trafalgar Square, London on November 6th (2pm). Mumia a radical black journalist, community activist and revolutionary prisoner has been on death row for the past 18 years convicted of the murder of Philadelphia cop. Despite dodgy prosecution evidence, witness intimidation and an ongoing campaign by the right-wing Fraternal Order of Policemen (of which the trial judge, Albert Sabo, was a member) Mumia has continually been denied the opportunity for a retrial. In 1995 international action stopped him being executed. This year on his birthday in April, ten's of thousands of people in both Philadelphia and San Francisco marched for Mumia. He is due to be executed by lethal injection on Dec 2nd. Once again a show of worldwide solidarity could save him.

Next Mumia Must Live! organising meeting
Thursday 28 October at Conway Hall,
Holborn at 7:30pm mumia@callnetuk.com
www.callnetuk.com/home/mumia/

REBEL ALLIANCE

It's happy first birthday to Brighton's direct action forum on Wednesday 27th October 7:30pm upstairs at the Hobgoblin Pub, London Rd. Food and music will be provided.

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"CITY ANARCHISTS STOCKPILE ARMS"

FANTASY WORLD

"ANARCHISTS are stockpiling illegal weapons worth thousands of pounds for a planned riot in the City of London on November 30. In two separate transactions in the past six weeks, at least 34 containers of CS gas and four stun guns capable of delivering a 50,000-volt electric shock were purchased by Reclaim the Streets - one of the groups that wrecked property worth £2m in the June 18 "carnival against global capitalism". The weapons...were imported from France and sold by a gang of nightclub doormen working in the Euston and Camden Town areas."

DRIVE A WEDGE BETWEEN PROTESTORS "The revelation is certain to outrage many of the anarchists' sympathisers, who support the cause but do not approve of the increasingly violent tactics used by groups such as Reclaim the Streets and Earth First!. This is the first evidence of dangerous weapons being stockpiled for campaigns."

SCARE THE PUBLIC AND GIVE THE POLICE THE RIGHT TO GO IN HARD

"Detective Chief Inspector Kieron Sharp of City police, who is heading the investigation into the June 18 riot, said he was concerned but not surprised by the purchases. 'This is a new and dangerous trend and we are taking it very seriously...They are obviously getting ready for a big one... It fits in with the way these groups are becoming increasingly militant'."

WHILE WE'RE AT IT, HOW ABOUT NEW TERRORISM LAWS TO HELP LOCK UP THESE ECO-PROTESTORS

"Last month The Sunday Times revealed that the November protest is planned to mirror the riot that occurred on June 18 targeting banks and other financial institutions in the City. Anarchist groups, including Reclaim the Streets and Earth First, have been in contact with their American counterparts to launch a simultaneous campaign on November 30, making it one of the biggest militant protests ever organised. The date has been chosen to coincide with the meeting of the World Trade Organisation in Seattle."

This masterpiece was in last weeks Sunday-Times. Subtitles by SchNEWS

* Help! **Legal Defence and Monitoring Group** are desperately in need of a hand with monitoring June 18th court hearings and help with fundraising/donations. LDMSG, BM Haven, London WC1N 3XX. Tel: 0171 837 7557.

* One June 18th prisoner who could do with some letters of support, is Sean Brown BP5610, Huntercobe HMYOI, Howard Nutfield, Henley on Thames, Oxon, R69 5FB

* **Pete Loveday**, the creator of the legendary Russel comics has done a cartoon version of SchNEWS account of June 18th. Send the office an SAE for a copy. Send us A4 SAE + 40p as well and your get **Reflections** a booklet on June 18th.

* **MAYDAY 2000** - a festival of anarchist ideas and actions April 28th - May 1st. More details from BM MayDay, London, WC1N 3XX mayday2000-subscribe@egroups.com www.freespeech.org/mayday2k

SchNEWS 5th BIRTHDAY PARTY

Thursday 18th November

New Maderia Hotel,
Marine Parade, Brighton

8 pm - 2 am £3/4

Ring office for ticket details

SchNEWS in brief

Saturday the 30th is a Day of Action against **Huntingdon Death Sciences**. This evil company was recently saved by NatWest Bank who lent them £24.5 million when major clients pulled out following an expose revealing an horrendous record of animal abuse. Video evidence showed monkeys being thrown into cages and staff shaking and punching beagles. Meet from 10am, NatWest, Emmanuel St, Cambridge. Evening vigil will follow at the labs. Tel. 01223 476596 **

Moulseccomb Forest Garden and Wildlife Project are having a kids' Halloween Party (31st) with story-telling, face-painting, a bonfire and pumpkin soup Ring Kate on 01273 628535 to tell them you're coming. ** The UK's so-called best selling policing magazine (how many are there?)

Police Review has recently featured a couple of articles entitled *Winning the Eco-war* revealing new strategies for policing environmental protests. Important reading - you can see a copy by sending an sae to SchNEWS. ** If you saw Mark Thomas on the box this week and wants an in depth analysis on that Export Credit Guarantee scam - then get **Snouts in the Trough** available from The Corner House. 01258 473795 or e-mail comerhouse@gn.apc.org to obtain a copy. ** More arms fairs than you can shake a stick at - next on is **COPEX** at Sandown Park Racecourse, Surrey on 2nd to 4th Nov. More details from Campaign Against Arms Trade 0171 281 4369 and on 5th Nov you are invited to **TORCH TRIDENT**, transport from all round Britain will take you to Falsane Naval base north of Glasgow, home of Faslane Peace Camp 01436 820901 ** Are you bursting with ideas? even if you've only got one, you can promote it at the **FROME IDEAS FAIR** on Sat 6th Nov, at the Cheese and Grain centre 01373 455420.

** **RAISE YOUR BANNERS FESTIVAL** of Political Song will be held at several venues in Sheffield for a week from 12th Nov. contact RYB at PO Box 44, Sheffield, S4 7RN, 0114 249 5185 or www.ryb.org.uk ** 'Our schools are not for sale' public meeting about the **Private Finance Initiative** scheme in Hackney. Monday 1st November @ White Hart Lane School, 7.45 pm ** The **Right To Protest** Forum meet 1st Thurs of every month (next meeting 4th November) at Conway Hall, 25 Red Lion Square, London (Holborn tube). Tel 0171 727 0590 email jb1@netlane.com

CHINESE JUNK

The Queens gracious hospitality of the Chinese president Jiang Zemin is motivated entirely by UK plc's greed. Prudential has recently been granted an insurance licence, BP Amoco want to build a petrochemical plant and are among a diverse line of grovelling British companies awaiting the deregulation of Chinese industry and finance in anticipation of WTO membership. Free Tibet Campaign, 1 Rosoman Place, London EC1R 0JY. Tel 0207 833 9958 www.freetibet.org

...and finally...

Get all fired up for the start of the Hunt Sabbing season (1st Nov) with a raunchy calendar that exposes members of the Sir Watkin Williams-Wynn's Hunt (phooar). Don't buy too many though, 'cos all proceeds go to those bloodthirsty scoundrels at Countryside Alliance, who need all the light relief they can get after an independent research project on the rural economy trashed their exaggerated job loss claims if hunting is banned. To help bury these bawdy sadists, ring 01273 622827 and leave a contact number.

disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all readers having sleepless nights worrying about J18 to just settle down with a nice cuppa Tibetan butter chai- it does wonders for flagging spirits. Honest.