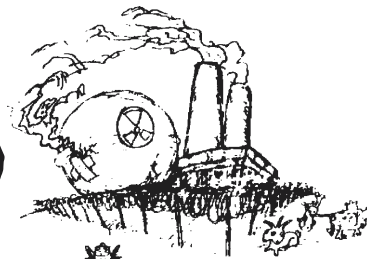




WAKE UP! WAKE UP! IT'S YER SMASHIN

SchNEWS

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TRIDENT TESTED

"Nuclear weapons have always been perceived as unlawful. Although the defence policy is official, it is not legal. For the last 50 years, the British government and judiciary have refused to look at the legal facts. They have basically said if it is official, it must be lawful."

Angie Zelter

What with the Filthy French and their dirty beef in the press this week, you might- as we did- have missed a little trifle in the news: Britain's Nukes are Illegal! Last Wednesday in Greenock, Scotland, three anti-nuke Ploughshares 2000 women- Angie Zelter, Ellen Moxley and Ulla Roder- were acquitted of malicious damage and of nicking a life raft, after Sherriff Margaret Gimblett ruled that under international law they were right to 'disarm' the research barge 'Maytime' in June this year.

Expert witness Francis Boyle, a top Prof. of International Law, convinced the judge that simply possessing Trident made a nation guilty of 'threatening genocide'- an act forbidden by international conventions, such as the Nuremburg Principles (drawn up in the wake of the holocaust) and an International Court of Justice ruling in 1996, which declared *all* nukes illegal. According to the judge the three were therefore not committing a crime but were acting to prevent crimes taking place- and after a four and a half week trial she directed the jury that under Scottish law they should be acquitted.

"I have the highest respect for these CND women, but I myself am not a CND supporter: I am totally apolitical I am rather worried about my job after this. I certainly won't be expecting a mention in the Queen's Honours list."

Sheriff Margaret Gimblett.

On June 8th, the women set off in a leaky dinghy and boarded the 'Maytime', part of the Defence Evaluation and Research Agency (DERA) at Faslane Naval Base, Argyll. Armed only with a hammer and screwdriver, they started to chuck computers and lab equipment overboard and expected to have about ten minutes before getting nicked. They ended up being in there for three and a half hours- and had time for a picnic before the MOD Plod arrived!

"The police pretended not to be embarrassed, but I'm sure they must have been" Ellen Moxley.

In court, Bargemaster Iain 'I ain't been nobbled, honest' McPhee was pressed by Advocate John Mayer to explain the function of the barge and its links with the Trident submarines. McPhee was so hesitant and evasive a witness that Mayer stated: *"This is not cross-examination, this is dentistry."*

Eventually McPhee admitted that the barge conducted important acoustic research for the MOD, that the research related to the operation of Trident submarines, and that the action of the women had had some effect on the ability of the research station to proceed with its work. Nice one!

It's a double whammy for Angie- she was one of four Ploughshares activists acquitted two years ago after trashing British-built 'Hawk' planes bound for Indonesia, where they would have been used, as the court agreed, in genocide against East Timor (see SchNEWS 84).

Naturally, the State is not happy with such conclusions and will be launching an appeal about the Maytime case. This won't affect the women, but it could affect any other 'have-a-go-heroes' foolish enough to try to stop the annihilation of millions. After all, as Shadow Conservative Defence Secretary Iain Duncan Smith points out,

"The judgment is quite absurd. What these women have done is immensely dangerous. In damaging our nuclear deterrent, they do nothing but help other regimes who have the intention of harming the citizens of the UK."

Like the bloody Frogs and their mucky beef, eh Iain? Get yer finger on that button!!

*Trident Ploughshares 2000, 41-48 Bethal St., Norwich, Norfolk, NR2 1NR Tel 01603 611953

*Scottish CND website (Especially useful on Trident) <http://ds.dial.pipex.com/cndscot/>

*The latest edition of the Ecologist is devoted entirely to the nuclear industry. £3. 0171 351 3578 www.gn.apc.org/ecologist

* **Aldermaston Womens' Peace Campaign** have repeated their call for the Atomic Weapons Establishment - which builds Trident warheads- to be closed down after the Greenock judgement and revelations about appalling safety levels. Apparently it's been 'perilously close' to disaster in the past few months. There's a peace camp outside Aldermaston 12-14 Nov. Tel 01222 396563

DID YOU KNOW?

The UK spends £4 million a day on nuclear weapons

CRAP ARREST OF THE WEEK

For chalking on the pavement

Jaggi Singh was nicked during a demonstration in support of jailed black revolutionary Mumia Abu-Jamal in Toronto, Canada and apparently charged with trespassing!

For tossing a flower onto the grass. Again during a Mumia demo, this time in Portland, Oregon. The man was nicked and fined \$999 for 'offensive littering.' When his friend asked why he was being arrested he was thrown to the ground breaking his arm and hauled away in handcuffs; when a woman tried to intervene she was first pushed into the road narrowly missing a bus and car - then arrested.

For using a megaphone. Same town, same demo, the man was arrested for 'sound violation.'

STOP-PRESS

On Tuesday Mumia was been given a stay of execution after a petition was filed in the courts listing 29 separate issues of constitutional violations during his trial when he was found guilty of killing a cop. The Ex-Black Panther has been on death row for the past 18 years and was due to be killed by lethal injection at the beginning of December.

* **Kvaerner-John Brown (UK)** is bidding to be part of a consortium to build the Akkuyu nuclear plant in Turkey- right in the middle of a well-known earthquake zone. The Turkish govt. seems keen to ignore reports that environmental and human catastrophe is 'inevitable', but then, the Canadians are stumping up the cash and the Turks get weapons-grade plutonium, so who can blame them? Kvaerner just need Blair and co. to grant something called 'export credit insurance' and the deal is on. This must be stopped! Contact Kurdistan Solidarity Committee Trade Union Group 0171 250 1315

*Following on from Railtrack, don't forget that the next "safety is our number one priority, honest guv" privatisation is... **British Nuclear Fuels Limited!** Sleep well, readers...

DYNAMITE

Two people who absailed down into a quarry, just in time to stop a meadow being blasted by dynamite have had the charges of aggravated trespass thrown out of court. The two protestors we're part of the campaign to stop part of Ashton Court Park being dug up by a quarrying firm (See SchNEWS183). The judge ruled that as protestors were still underground fighting the quarry expansion, the protestors actions were excusable under the rather obscure eighteenth century Explosive Substances Act.

DAM BUSTERS

The Solidari@s con Itoiz (SI) and Narmada Valley UK solidarity group scaled the London Eye on Monday protesting against dam-building projects in Spain and India. Two Basque protestors stayed on the wheel for a day and a night, sleeping in tents at the wheel's apex, 145 metres high! The protestors targeted London's £35m prestige millennium bollocks project for its prominent "banality", and dismissed it pithily as a "fatuous spectacle". Martin Errea from Solidari@s said, "the wheel is a really good example of the waste of money in Western society while other people are being displaced and becoming homeless because of projects like these dams."

The Itoiz reservoir has been under construction since 1993. Two of the region of Navarra's presidents from the time of the dam's building are currently in prison, interestingly, for "bribery, theft from the community, and illegal commissions." A Committee created in response to the project found that it was totally illegal, would flood 9 villages and result in great ecological damage. It threatens two valleys that have a very special microclimate, a thriving habitat for many animals and some of Europe's rarest plants. The Spanish courts condemned the project but unfortunately this did not stop construction and the European courts subsequently supported the dam. SI was set up as a result of this defeat and resolved on direct action. In 1996, 8 activists armed with circular saws cut six 15cm diameter steel cables that were essential to construction on the dam. Work had to be halted for 9 months but the protestors are now facing five year jail terms.

In India protesters claim that the Narmada Dam project will leave more than a million people homeless. The project dates back 40 years and has been resisted since work began 15 years ago. About fifteen villagers and activists have been standing in the waist deep waters confronting the submergence of their village. Similar protests and fasts are happening over the area and are being broken up by the police. Narmada UK concluded "The people of the Narmada Valley have resolved to drown, rather than move from their land."

* Activists from Solidari@s con Itoiz will be Brighton next Monday 1st November, upstairs Hobgoblin Pub, London Rd. 7pm.

NarmadaUK@yahoo.com.

SI: www.solidariosconitoiz.org.uk.

MAD-HOUSES

On Tuesday last week the protest camp in Hockley, Essex (see SchNEWS 224) was served with a possession order and on Friday security with cherry pickers moved in to clear tree houses. Developers want to build houses by a nature reserve - spending £150,000 on relocating up to 2000 great-crested newts. This despite a similar relocation in Peterborough ending in the deaths of 10,000 of this rare species.

This Monday a fella from Cornwall who owns some of the land Countryside Residential plan to build on appeared. He hadn't been consulted, and offered the protestors the use of his land for a year for 1p! Weird goings on recently include £11,000 worth of damage by militant badgers, a security guard stapling his finger to a piece of wood, a druid mate of King Arthur's showing up and staying, and the replacement with a teddy bear of a local councillor who failed to turn up at a local meeting.

People are needed. Contact C.A.S.H (Campaign Against Silly Houses): 0831 717815/01702 206353 www.angelfire.com/mt/GBH

SchNEWS in brief

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) is facing its first lawsuit after being taken to court by a group of South Korean unions over its policies "which inflicted a huge damage on the Korean people". It's the first time the IMF has been faced with a damages suit filed by labour unions in the countries to which it has provided bailout funds ** 'Whose Agenda? Development, Democracy and the World Trade Organisation' takes place on Monday 8th November 6 - 8 pm at the House of Commons, 7 Millbank SW1, organised by OXFAM. Hey, even the WTO are turning up 0171 931 9330

** Operation Century is a detailed report about Essex police's covert operation to nail the people who carried out the Rettendon triple murders. Police tactics included terrifying people into spilling the beans by posing as an IRA hit-squad! For a copy send £3 inc p+p cheques payable to Ian Cameron, 10 Knox Court, Studley Rd., London, SW4 6SA ** TAT news covers various travellers issues. It's produced by the Community Law Partnership Solicitors, 3rd Floor, Ruskin Chambers, 191 Corporation St., Birmingham, B4 6RP Tel 0121 685 8595. They've also got a 24 hour emergency eviction hotline 0468 316 755

** SQUALL in print form is back - not that the magazine ever went away on the internet. Issue One of the new handy sized download version is now available. Send them some stamps and an SAE to P.O. Box 8959, London, N19 5HW www.squall.co.uk ** Green Left is to hold its annual forum this year in Bristol under the theme of "Town and Country - our common future." Among the topics to be discussed are low environmental impact design and lifestyles, transport and access issues, GMOs & the future of organic agriculture/permaculture, as well as local planning issues such as new housing developments. It's at Central Friends' Meeting House, River Street, Bristol. 10.30 am - 4.00 p.m. To book a place ring 01823 321304.

** Platform 6 is a new non-profit making community centre now open in Southampton at 6 Onslow Road. Ring 07980 051929 email platform6@angelfire.com ** There's a screening of Undercurrents 10 - the alternative news video - at the Ray Tindle Centre, 40 Upper Gardner St., Brighton next Wednesday (3rd Nov) 7.30 pm. Just £1 entrance - popcorn available ** There's a national demonstration outside the Newchurch Guinea Pig Farm on Sunday 7th November. At least 10,000 guinea pigs are hidden behind sheds behind Darley Oaks dairy farm to be sold to the vivisection industry. Meet 12 noon Newchurch Village, Staffordshire (A515)

This Halloween Radio 4A broadcasts free speech on the Brighton airwaves on 106.6 FM from 10 a.m. till dawn the next morning

VEGETABLE OF THE WEEK

Protestors living on site to stop the Chelmsford to Southend bypass have won second prize in a best tomato competition in the local village horticultural show. The prize patch is due to be trashed by another road funded by the government's Private Finance Initiative scheme (See SchNEWS 219). The green-fingered campaigners also came second in the flower arranging section - by putting some sunflowers in a smelly old para' boot! (ok so there was only three entries). They are asking for solidarity actions against the developers Laing. Contact Gorse Wood Campaign 07957 915977

SchNEWS 5th BIRTHDAY PARTY

Thursday 18th November - 8 pm - 2 am £3/4
@ New Maderia Hotel, Marine Parade, Brighton
Ring office for ticket details

SLAPPERS

Next month five women from the GenetiX Snowball campaign along with their press officer will be back in court fighting for their right - to go to court!

In September last year the six were Slapp'ed * by Monsanto, in what has been dubbed the most "wide ranging injunctions ever seen in British law." (See SchNEWS 184) In April a Judge decided that the six had the right to a full trial. Something Monsanto obviously don't want as a lengthy trial will highlight the dangers of GM technology. So it's back to the High Court for an appeal.

Confused? Well get yerself down to the Royal Courts of Justice, Strand, London on November 8/9th. 9.30 am. It's essential to ring 0161 834 0295 from 5th November just to make sure the dates haven't changed.

GenetiX Snowball Campaign, One World Centre, 6 Mount St., Manchester, M2 5NS
www.gn.apc.org/pmhpgs

SchNEWS VOCAB WATCH SLAPP'S are Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation, and are a common weapon frequently used by American companies to silence their critics.

MORE FOUL PLAY

Two Catholic under-11 footie teams have been the latest target from those brave loyalists in Belfast. Last weekend the referee spotted nails on the pitch just before kick-off, a sweep of the pitch uncovering 400 razor sharp masonry nails in the ground that had been planted to injure the mostly nine and ten year olds. The two Catholic sides have to play in a loyalist area as the council has not provided adequate grounds in Nationalist areas. As An Phoblacht points out "Sectarianism in local football is rife with many teams forced to play in loyalist areas being subjected to abuse on a regular basis."

* First Minister David Trimble has announced at a 'Peace and Tourism' conference in Glasgow that he wants Orange Order Parades to be marketed as tourist attractions. His idea is to promote the parades as folk festivals! Is this the sort of folk festival where witch-burning, Klu Klux Klan lynching and Spanish Inquisition style debating are part of the programme?

ON THE HOUSE

In May Conservative Westminster Council unveiled a new hotline for residents to inform on benefit cheats. Within hours a call came in that led, last month, to a successful prosecution and a three month jail sentence for a fraudster who had falsely claimed £9,449 in a housing benefit. The cheat? Richard Stirling-Gibb - a Westminster councillor. (shamelessly stolen from Private Eye; we knew our readers would love it...)

...and finally...

A 21-year-old Welsh engineering student is recovering in a South African hospital after his buttock baring antics went horribly wrong. The unnamed man ("He has requested that we do not give out any further information," said a hospital spokeswoman) was returning from a sightseeing trip to Stellenbosch when he got the idea to "moon" drivers on the highway out the back of the bus he was riding. He dropped his pants and pressed his buttocks against the back window. The window, unfortunately was also an emergency exit and swung right open. He tumbled out, landing on the highway with his trousers around his ankles, and skidded along the highway in front of astonished motorists. He was listed in a "serious condition" with "severe abrasions and blood loss," but is expected to recover.

Stolen from Agitprop www.igc.apc.org/laborart disclaimer

SchNEWS hopes all readers are having a smashing time.

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