



WAKE UP! WAKE UP! IT'S YER TAKEAWAY

SchNEWS

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CHINESE HORRORSCOPE

You may not have been kept awake sweating over the outcome, but Wednesday's vote in the US Congress to grant China permanent normal trade relations was one more step in the Chinese bid to become members of the World Trade Organisation.

The thumbs up from Congress will help smooth China's integration into the global economy. With a fifth of the world's population the multinational corporations are no doubt itching to get a slice of the Chinese cake. For the poor of China, it's likely to be a bit of a different story. Even the World Bank estimates that of 140 million workers in the state and collectively owned sectors in China, up to 35 per cent may be "surplus to requirements". Words like 're-structuring' and 'trade liberalisation' sound oh so modern and with-it, but basically mean the closure this year of thousands of steel mills, metal and textile factories, cement works and coal mines. And already the Chinese government is moving in to quell the protests. All across the north-east of the country there are regular reports of demonstrations by retired workers who can't get their pensions, and the jobless protesting at the lack of welfare. In February this came to a head in Yangjiazhanzi, a north eastern mining town which became the scene of China's worst outbreak of industrial unrest for several years. More than 20,000 people smashed windows, blocked traffic, burned cars and fought with the police and the army for days after a steel mine was declared bankrupt. Workers were told they would be getting a one-off payment of just £43 for every year served at the mine - with no further unemployment welfare of any description. With the economy of the area almost entirely dependant on the mine, residents have little hope of finding other jobs locally.

The rioting was eventually suppressed by the army and news of the event suppressed for over a month. The Chinese authorities take a dim view of labour unrest and any ringleaders can expect long sentences in the vast network of prison and labour camps (see SchNEWS 186).

Still, what does this matter to the multinationals, who will be licking their lips over the opening up of the Chinese economy. And hey, if American or European workers complain too much and start wanting more of the cake, maybe just maybe the companies will simply up sticks and move to an-

other country - let's say China, where wages are low and workers who step out of line can expect the gulag.

* Surveys by the Trade Union Advisory Council and the Washington WorldWatch Institute showed that surprise surprise, corporations are increasingly relocating to countries with lower wages and weaker environmental standards and enforcement. A look at the production patterns of 22 computer companies based in industrialised countries showed that they had moved half of their manufacturing and assembly operations, which involve highly toxic materials, to the South.

Meanwhile on Wednesday at a hotel in Brussels, the European Union's trade commissioner Pascal Lamy, renewed calls for another global trade round after the failure of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) talks in Seattle last year (see SchNEWS 240). The Commissioner was telling a meeting of the Transatlantic Business Dialogue that once China joined the WTO it would be much harder to reach trade agreements (something to do with the West's silly insistence on decent environmental and labour laws). The Transatlantic Business Dialogue? Come again.

TABD was set up in 1995 and is a working group of the West's 100 most powerful chief executives. US Commerce Secretary Bill Daley described them as "the most influential business group advising government on US-EU commercial relations."

Their goal? "The realisation of a true transatlantic marketplace through developing an action plan for the removal of obstacles to trade and investment flows across the Atlantic." The TABD produce wish-lists which it hands to governments. These demands are in the form of a 'scoresheet', setting 'priorities' for governments to focus on, and even going so far as to set 'deadlines' for completion. And they've been pretty successful. According to US officials up to 80 per cent of TABD's recommendations to the EU and US governments have been turned into official policy!

According to TABD's European director Stephen Johnston, "there is... almost daily contact" with European Commission officials. "The commission is co-operative, helping business by giving them the information that they need. But eventually it's business that makes its recommendations."

And the recommendations on this week's TABD agenda was a wish-list made up of

CRAP ARREST OF THE WEEK

For having a pee! At 1.30 in the morning, on the side of a road verge with no one else about. Except the police who said they we're "shocked and offended". Just what did he have down his trousers? The man was fined £75 for an indecent act. No jokes please about taking the piss.

Remember to keep sending SchNEWS yer crap arrests.

33 environment, consumer and worker protection laws in selected nations which TABD wishes to defeat or water down. 'Obstacles to trade' you see.

Maybe the corporations won't need to re-locate to countries like China after all.

* For a comprehensive look at how big business is running the European Union roadshow read 'Europe Inc' published this year by Pluto Press.

* Conspiracy theorist alert! The next Bilderberg Conference (see SchNEWS 213) is in Brussels on 1-4 June. at the The Chateau Du Lac Hotel, Avenue Du Lac 87, Brussels 1332, Belgium Phone: 02-6557111

SHADOWY GATHERINGS

* 7-11th June nestled in the mountains of Snowdonia is the **Earth First! Summer Gathering**. The gathering will have over 100 workshops focusing on planning and networking for resistance. There will be a £10 cost at the gate to cover expenses for putting the gathering on. Food is available for £3 a day, or you can cook your own. More info c/o Norwich Direct Action Forum, PO Box 487, Norwich, NR2 3AL www.eco-action.org/gathering

* Sat 17th June. **The Global Marketplace: In Whose Interest?** Conference at Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq, London WC1 (Holborn Tube) £5/3 conc. Organised by Amis UK, 9 Hilsa Street, London, tel 020 8444 4322 www.amisuk.btinternet.co.uk

* Sat 8th July **Insurrection 2000: Organisation and Disorganisation**. A one day conference to share experiences of radical disorganisation. At the Rainbow Centre, 182 Mansfield Road, Nottingham, 12-6pm. Contact 0115 9585 666 or nasa13@veggies.org.uk

* 26 September is the next big date in the calendar of international anti-capitalist demonstrations when the **IMF/World Bank** will be meeting in Prague. To help coordinate the protests, there's a meeting next month (16 -19 June) in Prague. If you want to attend e-mail h.summers@merseymail.com or contact Zeme predevsim! (Earth First! Prague), PO BOX 237, 160 41, Praha 6, CZECH REPUBLIC, Europe www.ecn.cz/zemepredevsim

BURNING ISSUE

Albert Einstein said "A clever person solves a problem. A genius avoids it." However it doesn't need a genius to realise that the best solutions to this country's waste problems are to not produce the waste in the first place and to separate it out for composting and recycling.

We are not insinuating anything, unlike the dim-witted government, who are planning to build 160 incinerators over the next 20 years, yet they aren't going to announce any new money for local authorities to set up recycling schemes. While up to 80% of household waste can be recycled, Britain only manages 6%, Germany 18%, Holland 45% and Switzerland 53%, even the US manages 24%. Recently in East Sussex the government awarded £49 million to help fund a new incinerator, while there is no help for door-to-door recycling collections.

In Sussex, Wealden Council have achieved a 55% recycling rate in a pilot area and 30% across the borough, proving that high rates of recycling are possible. Friends of the Earth say that £250 million collected yearly in waste tax could be used to build new recycling centres. Plans for building more incinerators should be seriously questioned after a leaked US Environmental Protection Agency report revealed that up to 10% of cancers could be caused by dioxins.

Dioxins are persistent chemicals produced from burning medical, household, hazardous and sewage sludge waste and some industrial processes (British Steel is the biggest producer in the UK). Dioxins have been described "the Darth Vader of toxic chemicals because it affects so many systems of the body."

Modern incinerators are supposed to produce very low levels of dioxins, however dioxins can reform in the chimney, and if incinerators are not operating at full efficiency the amount of dioxins produced increases dramatically. Dioxins from the chimney are not the only problem with incinerators, the ash from incinerators is also toxic. 2000 tonnes of ash from the Byker incinerator in Newcastle that was spread on allotment paths over a period of 7 years was recently found to contain dangerously high levels of dioxins and heavy metals.

The Government constantly reassures us that the industry is heavily regulated and that all emissions are within safe levels. But considering that a Government report criticised its own environmental watchdog, the Environment Agency, for a "lack of vision and ineffective management" and that Christopher Hampson, ex-director of ICI and Costain was recently appointed as deputy chair of the Environment Agency hardly gives yer cynical SchNews cause for comfort.

Campaign Against Incineration of Refuse (CAIR), fighting enlargement of the Byker incinerator 0191 2762320/2654833.

Communities Against Toxics, PO Box 29, Ellesmere Port, South Wirral, L66 3TX Tel 0151 3395473 email cats@recycle-it.org.uk

Positive SchNEWS

Want to know about setting up a housing co-op, DIY media, permaculture and home education? Then the "Take Control 2000" tour is for you, starting at Birmingham 10th June, followed by meetings in Lanarkshire 1 July, Elsmere Port 15 July, Yeovil 12 Aug, Nottingham 19 Aug, Llandeilo 31 Aug, Brighton 9 Sept. and Cambridge 27. Radical Routes 0121 551 1132 www.gn.apc.org/ss/upstart/tc

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SchNEWS in brief

If you're having trouble getting your head around the ins and outs of the **Terrorism Bill**, there's an excellent cartoon booklet now available. Send a SAE to SchNEWS HQ for a copy. Meanwhile on Monday 5th June there's a meeting in Manchester to discuss the way forward for the campaign against the Bill. Contact Terrorist Tea Party 0161 226 6814 teaparty@nematode.freeserve.co.uk ** **A-Infos** is an excellent multilingual alternative news service which distributes news for activists to activists. Check out www.tao.ca/ainfos/ ** Help is desperately needed to defend land at **Leys Farm** in Blackpool. Builders need to be delayed until an application to get the land designated a town green is decided. 01253 351765 ** **SchNews needs help** : our distribution crew are going on holiday for the whole of June and so we need someone to get on their bike and drop 'em around Brighton town. We also need people to help with a SchNews stall every Saturday in the North Laine. And remember you can pick up bundles at the back of the Peace Centre shop in Gardner St (in front of the magazines) and give them out festivals/gigs/bus queue's (swop 'em for kisses) ** **Building Bridges to the People of Yugoslavia**. Conference organised by the Committee for Peace in the Balkans. 10th June, Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq, London, WC2. 10.30-5pm.020712750164 www.peaceinbalkans.freeserve.co.uk ** **Resist the Private Finance Initiative**. Conference by the Welsh Socialist Alliance on Labour's privatisation of everything that moves. June 17th, Methyr Tydfil. 0290 830029 for more details. ** **Fight Privatisation-Stop the Cuts!** 3rd June. Conference at Friends Meeting House, Mount Street M2, 11.30-4.30. Unison 0151 236 1944. ** **Intellectual Property Rights and the Welfare of Indigenous Peoples**. Talk by Dr. Darrell Posey, Rainold's Room, Corpus Christi College, Oxford. 7.30pm ** **How to Stop and Influence Planning Permission**. 10th June. Free training event by Community Action on Empty Homes. Wiltshire, 020 7828 6288. ** **A world without money**. 6th June. Discussion on a moneyless world and networking of anti-capitalist groups. Yard Theatre, 41 Old Birley Street, Manchester M14, 7.30pm. 0161 226 6814. ** **Campaign for Free Education Conference**. May 31st. Sheffield Hallam University Students Union, Pond Street, Sheffield. 11am-6pm. 0958 556 756 http://members.xoom.com/nus_cfe ** **Bath Fringe Festival**. Monday 5 June. An evening of alternative films including 'Rattle in Seattle', 'Unreasonable Force' and 'Not this Time' (Simon Jones memorial). 8pm at the Hat & Feather pub, Walcot Street, Bath. £1 donation. 07773 920284. ** **FOR THE LATEST PARTY AND PROTEST DATES CHECK OUT THE SCHNEWS WEBSITE**

THIS WAS YOUR LIFE

The International Centre for Life is a multi-million pound showcase for the genetics industry based in Newcastle-upon-Tyne. It consists of the Bioscience Centre, which provides subsidised office space for biotechnology companies and the Genetics Institute which offers 'genetic counselling'. On the 27th May the 'LIFE' Interactive World visitors attraction is due to open. GeneNo! are planning an action to reclaim LIFE! on it's opening day. Meet 11am at the LIFE centre, bring dark clothes and banners. GeneNo! PO Box Newcastle NE99 1TA, Tel: 07788 520037 www.sandyford.techie.org.uk/indexicflAm

Inside SchNEWS

June 8th marks 6 years since Mark Barnsley was attacked by a gang of drunken students in Sheffield (see SchNEWS 169). Despite it being clear that he was the one viciously attacked, Mark was the only person to be arrested and subsequently sentenced to 12 years imprisonment. If he was to admit guilt, then this June could see him released from prison, yet Mark refuses to confess to a crime he has not committed and continues to fight for justice. He stated back in 1997, "I am an innocent man. I am not prepared to compromise myself by submitting to any form of conditional release."

June 8th will be a National Day of Action. Pickets will be held at Sheffield Crown Court at 11am and the Sheffield Star (for their bias reporting of Mark's case), York Street, 2pm. There will also be a public meeting at the SADACAA centre, 48 The Wicker, Sheffield, 7pm. There's also a new booklet out about Mark's case entitled 'Beaten Up, Fitted Up, Locked Up'. £2 from PO Box 381, Huddersfield, HD1 3XX, cheques payable to Justice for Mark Barnsley. 07944 522001 www.appleonline.net/justice/eddie/mark.html

* **Darren Murray** was arrested during the evictions at the Golden Cross protest site in Ashingdon, Essex. (See SchNEWS 259). He is now in HM Prison Chelmsford and may be there for several weeks, and would really appreciate letters of support and reading material. Darren Murray, FM 4729, HM Prison Chelmsford, Springfield Road, Chelmsford, Essex, CM2 6LQ.

* **Delroy Lindo** and his family have been subjected to constant intimidation from the police since 1985, resulting in 15 malicious charges and 6 court cases, all of which he has been successfully acquitted. Not surprisingly all this police 'interest' stems from the fact that Delroy is committed to challenging the system, and in 1985 formed the Winston Silcott Defence Campaign. He's back in court on May 31st and there's a picket outside Haringey Magistrates Court 9.30am. Contact Haringey Racial Equality Council, 14 Turnpike Lane, London, N8 OPT Tel 0973 313139.

...and finally...

It's all getting a bit too much...

180 television channels, 101 kinds of bottled water, 250 radio stations, 40,000 supermarket products, 1,600 makes of car...we now have more choice than ever before, yet it is making us any happier? The Future Foundation and the Co-op have both recently commissioned research into the impact of this American-style consumer revolution upon the public. The Co-op's study, which focused mainly on food issues, showed a profound loss of faith with the food industry with only 43% trusting farmers and 42% believing scientists. 85% of those questioned believed that multinational corporations had too much control over what they ate; 72% felt that intensive farming was damaging to the environment; and 84% worried about conditions for farm animals.

The Future Foundation's research revealed that stress levels are now at an all time high, with people even worrying about what to do with their leisure time. However Sainsbury's disagree "We think it is fantastic that the public can be offered so much variety."

disclaimer

Confucious warns all readers that he who follows the third way in the year of the capitalist pig will be domed to build Great Wall Street.