



WAKE UP! WAKE UP! IT'S YER SHAKIN' IN IT'S SHOES!

SchNEWS

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JACK BOOT TERROR

'I believe that we must have some confidence in the law enforcement agencies and the courts. If we look back at the past 25 years, we can see that the [anti-terrorism] powers have been used proportionately.'

- Jack Straw

On Thursday last week, the government's spanking new Terrorism Act gained royal assent - and Jack Straw was delighted. But our illustrious Home Secretary still exhibits a rather poor appreciation of irony. If the above quote is anything to go by, it seems we can all of us look forward to this anti-terrorism law being used in a similar spirit of moderation and sensible proportion as was the old one against the Guilford Four.

The victims of that previous, infamous miscarriage of justice were the first to feel the force of the previous Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA), brought in as an emergency measure in 1974. Last autumn, the present government decided to clear the legislative decks and come up with a set of permanent, UK-wide counter-terrorist provisions.

'Terrorists... are no respecters of borders, continuously developing new methods and technologies to further their aims through violent means anywhere in the world.' Jack Straw warned us, darkly. That's enough to strike terror into all of our hearts. But how about a reality check - since the original PTA we've seen the end of the cold war, and an uneasy truce hold out in Northern Ireland. Who are all these terrorists that the new Act is aiming at?

persistent

'Animal rights and to a lesser extent environmental activists... and... [their] persistent, and destructive campaigns' says the government consultation paper which led to the new law, pointing a stern finger. And section 1 of the Act offers a clear new definition to cut the wheat from the chaff.

Apparently, 'terrorism' is 'The use or threat of action, designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public or a section of the public, made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause, where the action (a) involves serious violence against a person, (b) involves serious damage to property, (c) endangers a person's life, other than that of the person committing the action, (d) cre-

ates a serious risk to the health or safety of the public or a section of the public, or (e) is designed seriously to interfere with or seriously to disrupt an electronic system.'

Got that? Thank goodness dictionaries aren't written in Whitehall. The Home Office has been using some pretty broad brush strokes to give us their picture of what a 'terrorist' might look like. In fact, their definition casts its net so wide, you'd be forgiven for thinking they'd been - er - taking liberties.

'Potentially, it turns activist movements into terrorist movements', says Alan Simpson MP, one of a noble but tiny band of MPs to have opposed the legislation. 'Somehow the threat to the stability of the state has given way to threats to the corporate estate, and that will be the basis for the new definition of social terrorism. That is a desperately dangerous path to go down.'

Luke, an anti-GM activist, is more blunt; 'The Government is creating a private security service for transnational corporations'.

Many people have been speculating as to how the new law might be used. The law comes into force in mainland Britain next spring; possible scenarios abound.

special powers

Police will have the power to arrest anyone they 'reasonably suspect' to be a terrorist (clauses 38/39). Then they can detain them for 48 hours - or a week with permission from a court - without access to a solicitor. Jack Straw himself tells us 'The main purpose of the Act is not to extend the criminal code, but to give the police special powers.'

And the Home Secretary has the power to proscribe - ban - any organisation deemed guilty of terrorism (Part II of the Act). In that case, it will be an offence not only to belong to such a group, but to speak openly in support of it, or speak at the same meeting as someone who is a member.

Unsurprisingly, Amnesty International aren't keen - in their annual report they singled out the (then) Terrorism Bill as the 'worst piece of legislation in the UK last year' And the UN Special Human Rights Rapporteur has called for the PTA to be repealed.

Less than 7% of those - 5000, mainly Irish - nicked under the first seven years of

CRAP ARREST OF THE WEEK

For Using Deodorant! A 17 year old boy in Halifax, Canada has been arrested for wearing deodorant as the city council has a "no-scent encouragement programme". Maybe he was trying to mask the smell of a city heavily reliant on the fishing industry. The perfume industry reckons the policy stinks.

the old PTA were even charged, let alone convicted of any offence. And like that law campaigners reckon the new Terrorism Act will be used for 'dragnet' info-gathering sweeps, and general intimidation of activists. Leon Brittan, the former Home Secretary, said as much of the old PTA in 1985; 'The object of the exercise is not just to secure convictions but to secure information.'

The provisional IRA haven't done much for the public image of balaclava wearers. This piece of law doesn't aim to do much for that of banner wavers. Funnily enough, once nicked under the Act, an anti-GM crops activist will have less rights than would Myra Hindley. Perhaps Jack Straw did have a sense of irony after all.

* For more on the act check out <http://go.to/TA2000>

* Wanna play the Terrorism quiz? Go to www.new-labour.com

PRAGUE - THE PLACE 2 BE

In case you don't know by now The International Monetary Fund and World Bank are meeting in Prague 26-28 September. The World Bank and IMF are basically global loansharks, lending governments' money with no real democracy or justice for affected communities.

To counter this starting on 22nd a festival of political arts and culture is planned for this historic city, with groups co-ordinating internationally, continuing the ethos of 'resistance as transnational as capital'. Leading up to the S26 Global Day of Action.

Czech police have announced that streets will be evacuated, schools closed and 30,000 residents moved out to give the 20,000 delegates a 'protective ring' of 11,000 police. A full on 'teach-in' is planned for early September, and simultaneous actions in the UK would be welcome on S26.

Further info: S26 Collective, PO Box 30549, London SW16 2WD. 07989-451096. Send a blank e-mail to september26collective-subscribe@egroups.com. BristolS26, Box 80, 82 Colson St, Bristol BS1 5BB

For a fortnightly bulletin, contact michael_bakunin@hotmail.com or 07941 355 508. www.s26.org; www.bristle.co.uk; www.amp2000.cz; www.whirledbank.org

POOR SHOW BY RICH

When the world's eight most "powerful" leaders (G8) met in Japan last weekend they were supposed to discuss how to help the world's most indebted nations. They were, however, unfortunately so distracted by the 140-metre fake beach and fake volcano that erupts every half an hour at the Seagaia resort that they totally forgot the world's poor. The summit has been criticised by Jubilee 2000 and other international charities as being a complete failure.

The Japanese government have also come under heavy criticism over the cost of the conference, which was nearly a hundred times more expensive than last years' summit in Cologne. The estimated £500 million cost, more than Japan's annual budget for international aid, was largely spent on building up the island of Okinawa which was totally unsuitable for such an event. The island, which has the highest unemployment rate in Japan, will gain little benefit as many of the new buildings such as the new state-of-the-art press centre is now going to be knocked down!

Infact instead of spalshing out on a conference 12 million children in poor countries could have been put into schools, or the debt of Gambia paid off.

"It's £500m for the world's most powerful men, nothing new for the world's poor," Henry Northover, policy analyst, CAFOD

At last year's G8 summit in Cologne a plan was announced to write off \$100 billion of debts to 41 of the world's poorest countries. A year later, not one country has had any debt cancelled, and only nine of 41 have had limited relief. The reason why countries have not begun receiving any relief is that in order to qualify they have to consistently meet rigorous economic criteria similar to the IMF structural adjustment programmes. The reason given by the G8 for their inactivity was 'corrupt governments'. Unable or unwilling to reach an agreement on debt relief, the G8 settled for announcing targets on health care, education and IT. A new IT initiative to help bridge the 'digital divide' was announced with Japan promising \$15billion. But as Jubilee 2000 Director Ann Pettifor has stated "If they are hungry, the poorest people in the world cannot eat laptops. An internet connection will not help them survive malaria."

One of the few protesters who managed to reach the remote island - and who could afford the £300-a-night accommodation - set fire to a laptop computer on the beach at dusk.

Unlike the debt strangled nations of the world, the accompanying press did not leave empty-handed. Each of them received complimentary bags to keep them occupied, which included a digital tape recorder and beach wear. It's a shame they weren't thrown into the shark infested water surrounding the island.

* The Belizian Housing Minister caused a bit of a stir last week when he called the IMF the "international mother fuckers" live on the radio! (and cussing 'em in Creole as the "rass mother")

For information on the Jubilee 2000 campaign for debt relief contact them on: 020 7739 1000 or visit www.dropthedebt.org

*The UN estimates that if funds were diverted back into health and education from debt repayment, the lives of seven million children a year could be saved. That's 134,000 children a week.

*For every pound we send in grants to developing countries, nine pounds come back in debt repayments.

*Over 20 years, it would cost each person in industrialised countries less than £4 a year to cancel all debts - which is less than 1p a day.

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SchNEWS in brief

Free Party! with Ground Zero next Wednesday (2nd August) 9 - 2pm at The Enigma, Ship St., Brighton (but seeing as all donations will be going to SchNEWS, we expect you lot to dig deep). ** **Midsummer Mass Trespass.** Following on from the successful mass trespasses two years ago. Meet Midday Brighton Station, Sunday 6 August, bring a packed lunch. ** From the people who brought you the "N30 Big Rattle In Seattle" video comes a new film about the April 16 Washington World Bank Protests (see SchNEWS 256) Cost £5 plus 80p SAE from SchNEWS, cheques payable to Justice? ** Who better to fund last week's Aldershot Green Day than BAE systems - arms dealers extraordinaire. ** **Greenham Common Commemorative Sculpture** On the 27th August 1981. 36 women, four babies in pushchairs and six men set off on their march to RAF Greenham Common, Berkshire to protest about the American ground launched cruise nuclear missiles to be deployed there. When they were refused a TV debate with the Government they set up camp where they stayed until early this year (not the same people though!). To commemorate this, money is being raised for a statue to be set in Cardiff or another suitable venue. Information and Cheques to: Women for Life on Earth, Glangors, Ynyslas, Borth, Ceredigion, SY2 45JU, Tel: 01970871360 www.wfloe.fsnet.co.uk ** Stewards are desperately needed to help out with the **Hackney Volcano free festival** on 12th August. If you can help ring 020 8509 3353 ** After preventing the deportation of Salim Rambo, campaigners managed to stop the removal of Kurdish Asylum Seeker **Amanj Gafor** on 21st July. Amanj, who was being held at Tinsley Detention Centre near Gatwick Airport, was due to board a flight to Munich when Home Office officials heard of planned resistance to the deportation the night before and cancelled proceedings. His future fate is as yet unknown. National Coalition of Anti-Deportation Campaigns 0121 5546947, CAGE 07931 401962** There have been around 300 deaths in **Southern Nigeria** in less than 10 days thanks to two major oil pipeline explosions. In keeping with the liberal state of affairs in Nigeria, three schoolchildren were arrested and subsequently executed for gathering to watch locals collecting fuel from a leaking pipeline. DELTA 0116 2109652 ** Vincent Bethall from the **Freedom to be Yourself** campaign has big plans. He stated, "On 13th August I will take off my clothes and will remain naked until the way that the human body looks is considered to be legal." Sounds interesting! www.geocities.com/thehumanmind/ ** And don't forget to visit the SchNEWS website and check out **Party and Protest** for full listings of all festivals, demos and events.

CIA UK

A call is going out to all people to converge on **Cambridge In August** on Saturday 19th. Actions from early morning till very late in Cambridge City and around the county. Plans confirmed are: Demo at Huntington Life Sciences (vivisectors), midday at the lab (0121-6326460); Midday Demo at Oakington Detention Centre (asylum seeker prison); a Genetix action is planned (0961 517324) and Hunt Sabs will be active across the county (01273-622827). With police resources stretched it would be an ideal opportunity to hit a target in Cambridge-shire: Get together with some friends and plan an action: roof top raves, pavement parties, office occupations, or perhaps an unannounced visit to a company director.

Further details 0777-6497005.
www.cambridgeinaugust.org.uk

CLEAN SWEEP

"No woman should lift a finger on July 22nd," **Dunia Rodriguez Garcia**, women's rights campaigner.

July 22nd is International Housework Day and was celebrated by Mexican women who took to the streets demanding respect and recognition for housework and other domestic labour. Banging wooden spoons on pots and pans, the procession of maids, farmers, housewives and professional workers made its way through the centre of Mexico City, calling for a government ban on sexist depictions of housework. Mexican men are among those least likely to assist with domestic chores, despite the number of women being employed outside the home rapidly increasing. For Mexico City's estimated 1.7 million maids, for whom housework embodies class as well as gender struggles, July 22nd was an opportunity for them to publicise their largely forgotten existence.

"There are a lot of disrespectful names used for maids...home employees don't get health care, benefits or vacation," said Gaudencia Valdez a maids association worker, "Our work must be recognised as being equal to any other kind of job."

Shutters on Hutters

The Carbeth Huts are wooden self-built holiday cabins used over the last 60 years by people on low incomes. Their bastard landlord Carbeth Estate has served 90 eviction notices and is seeking to recover all their legal costs which is bankrupting the Hutters. Over £10,000 is needed by the end of the year. Please send donations to; Carbeth Hutters' Association, c/o Billy Coote, Treasurer, 7 Cleddans Crescent, Hardgate, Clydebank, G81. Carbeth Hutters' Association bank account no.00112283 Bank of Scotland, Bathgate branch, sort code 80-05-56. Phone 0141-562-5640. For full information, write or phone for the booklet "The Fire that Never Goes Out" www.crosswinds.net/~carbeth

...and finally...

August 13 sees the seventh Smokey Bears' Picnic in Portsmouth, the popular annual mass pot smoking event. Since previously tolerant local police decided to clamp down on last year's event, this year scheming tokers are rumoured to have a few more tricks up their sleeves. Word about town is that people will be turning up with 'dud' joints filled with legal herbal mixtures, aiming to throw dopey coppers off the scent of the real ones. All the police resources thrown into analysing and identifying the contents of such spliffs, will only bring about the release of those nicked for possession of duds. Having caught wind of these plans, police may be unsure at the picnic whether it's a real reefer they've caught wind of, or whether to smell a rat. ***Smokey Bears' picnic:** 2.00pm, Southsea Common, Portsmouth, Hants.

* **Stone me!** After the guerilla gardening exploits on MayDay, police have discovered cannabis growing outside the House of Commons. In fact a spokesman for the Royal Parks Police said there was a wide variety of flowers and vegetables popping up all over Parliament Square, including gladioli, carrots, onions, marigold, barley, broad beans, potatoes, lettuces and radishes! Pro-cannabis Labour MP Paul Flynn, pledged to mount a vigil to protect the crop.

* Read all about it! 'Churchill, the Cenotaph and May Day 2000 - a response to the graffitening of official monuments in London.' www.geocities.com/pract_history

disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all readers on reading this to immediately report themselves to the appropriate authorities as required under the new Terrorist Act.