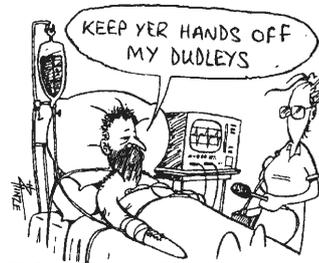




WAKE UP! WAKE UP! IT'S YER PILLED UP

# SchNEWS

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## In Sickness & In Wealth

**"This isn't some isolated struggle but part of the huge web of market madness sweeping the globe." - Dave Carr, Branch Chair, University College London Hospital**

**On Wednesday, 600 hospital workers from the Dudley Group of Hospitals voted to escalate their strike to stop their jobs being transferred to a private company. Summit Healthcare want to build a new 'superhospital' under the Private Finance Initiative - so super that out of the four hospitals, 170 jobs will be shed, one hospital will be closed, two hospitals will lose inpatient services and overall 70 beds will be lost.**

Winnie Whitehouse, a hospital catering assistant told SchNEWS, "We are on strike to keep our jobs within the NHS and to fight job losses. We want to win and set a precedent for everyone else around the country." Mark New, a nurse and branch secretary added, "The strike has given us an opportunity to build opposition to privatisation...and we can win."

The Private Finance Initiative (PFI) is an interesting little scam where corporations manage to get their grubby mitts on more of our public services. When in opposition, New Labour's one time health spokesperson Margaret Beckett called PFI "privatisation by the back door" - now New Labour can't get enough of PFI.

The consortiums who want to take over Dudley's hospitals include: McAlpine - the building firm; Siemens - the electronics firm who last year managed to bugged up the passport and immigration computer systems; the Bank of Scotland Infrastructure Investments and Building and Property (who are 75% owned by venture capitalists CVC Capital Partners Ltd) - names synonymous with healthcare who will obviously have patients' best interests at heart.

As Bob Piper, UNISON's West Midlands Regional Convenor put it, "The private sector care - they care about the profits they can make." And there's a nice load of profits to be made. Just take a look at the new Edinburgh Infirmary, which would have cost the government £180 million to build, but thanks to the PFI will cost the taxpayer £30 million a year for the next 30 years - £900 million for some lucky company thank-you-very-much.

Meanwhile Building and Property are already part of a consortium involved in Cumberland Infirmary in Carlisle, the first hospital in the country built under PFI. And what a success! Ceilings have collapsed -

narrowly missing patients in the maternity unit; the sewerage system could not cope with the number of users and flooded an operating theatre; clerical and laundry staff cannot work in their offices because they are too small; new trolleys had to be ordered cos those supplied didn't fit the spaces between beds; and the transparent roof means that on sunny days the temperature inside the hospital reaches 33° C, and the hospital has no air conditioning. 40 cleaners have so far lost their jobs thanks to 're-structuring' and there has already been a shortage of beds. All this for a £67 million hospital that will eventually cost the taxpayer a staggering £500 million

Still, that hasn't stopped the government pressing ahead. 38 PFI hospitals are now in the pipeline - with a lot more to come. Unless, perhaps the Dudley workers win. Robert, a striking hospital porter earning just £4.86 an hour said, "We need the public, the nurses, we need everybody really we can get on our side, to show what the people of the country want, to keep the NHS for the people." As Dr Kay Phillips said at a recent rally in support of the hospital workers, "We need Dudley to win. We need to turn the tide back." And if they don't? Perhaps London hospital worker Dave Carr, summed it all up, "If we don't beat the Private Finance Initiative it's the end of the NHS as we know it."

### How you can help

\* Next demo Sat Oct 28 assemble 11am Priory Park, The Broadway, Dudley next to Dudley College. Followed by a rally at the Town Hall

\* Get along to one of the picket lines.

\* Send money (payable to UNISON Dudley Group of Hospitals) and letters of support to Union Offices, Wordsley Hospital, Stourbridge, West Midlands DY8 5QX. Tel/Fax 01384 244350

\* For more on the strike and other trade union activities around the world check out [www.labournet.net](http://www.labournet.net)

### Profit-for-all-Initiative

Like hire-purchase, PFI allows the government to avoid paying up front for the cost of schools, hospitals or roads. Instead, private companies get to build and run the 'assets' (in hospital PFIs these so-called assets include cleaning, catering, portering, technical services etc.) and the taxpayer then has to buy back these services, usually over a 20-30 year period.

### CRAP ARREST OF THE WEEK

...for having a wall fall on you

A chap at last weekend's Nine Ladies anti-quarry action was peacefully sitting on a wall when the crap masonry collapsed, leaving him shaken but unhurt. Helpful coppers rushed over - and nicked him for criminal damage.

\*Nine Ladies stone circle, Derbyshire, threatened by quarrying. Protest camp 1 year old- Happy Birthday! <http://pages.zoom.co.uk/nineladies/>

\* The King's Fund, an independent think tank who have criticised PFI hospitals, say they are in danger of becoming white elephants unable to adjust to changing health needs. "New hospitals are being built without regard to how they fit in with other health services. That could leave the NHS with expensive hospital buildings which become outdated within a few years, but for which it still has to pay."

\* Closer to home, the Accident & Emergency Dept at the Princess Royal in Haywards Heath is threatened with closure to save money. If this happens, the nearest A&E Dept. will be in Brighton, which is already both overstretched and 20 miles away, meaning that emergency cases could face dangerous delays in getting to hospital. A recent meeting to protest about the proposed closure attracted over 300 people.

\* More Sell-offs I: Defend Council Housing National Conference, October 21<sup>st</sup> 11-4pm Friends Meeting House, 6 Mount Street, Manchester. Fighting to stop the privatisation of council houses. 179 Haggerston Rd, London E8 4JA 020 7275 9994 [www.defendcouncilhousing.org.uk](http://www.defendcouncilhousing.org.uk)

\* Sell-offs II: Demonstrate against government plans to part-privatise the tube. Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> October 11am outside Railtrack House (front of Euston station).

### SQUAT A PARTY!

On 15<sup>th</sup> October 1975, 200 West London squatters barricaded against the bailiffs finally forced the GLC to securely rehouse them. Come and celebrate the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the "Great & Glorious Victory of Elgin Avenue Squatters"- part of UK squatting legend! Meeting and fun social with squatters old & new... Sun 15 Oct, 6.30pm at WECH Community Centre (on the site of the battle), corner Elgin Ave/Harrow Rd W9. Tube Westbourne Pk & left over bridge. Bring leaflets, literature, news, food. Details 0410 432320

## Flagged Down

West Papua, the western half of the island of New Guinea is home to a rain forest and a huge range of different tribal people- accounting for 0.1 percent of the world's population, but speaking up to 25 percent of all known languages.

The tribal people of West Papua (officially known as Irian Jaya) have been fighting for independence from Indonesia since it was annexed by them in 1963. In 1969 after a referendum the region 'officially' became a province of Indonesia. Tribal people claim that the ballot was unrepresentative as they were considered 'too primitive' to be consulted. For decades a determined low-level resistance has been fought against the Indonesian security forces by OPM (Organisasi Papua Merdeka), or Free Papua Movement. The response of the Indonesian government has been brutal, as it is eager to maintain control over the region, with its wealth of natural resources. 300,000 people (one-sixth of the 1963 population) are reported to have died since the occupation began, and there have been gross human rights violations.

Demands for independence have been rising in the past few years due to the Indonesian government's policy of "transmigration" which has seen farmers from other heavily populated islands of Indonesia being moved to the region. The tribal people are angry that their beautiful islands and their way of life is being destroyed. The aim of their fight is simply "Yi Wa O" - "Just leave Us, Please."

Last Friday saw the latest attempt by Indonesian Government's to crack down on the pro-independence movement, when the Chief Police Officer demanded that all pro-independence flags be pulled down within the month. Earlier in the year the Indonesian President, had given permission for the independence flag to be flown as long as it was lower than the national flag. However this was not endorsed by parliament who reversed the decision.

In the highland town of Wamena widespread protests broke out after police moved in to remove a flag. By the end of the day, two tribal people were dead and 21 injured. This provoked people of the Baliem Valley, the heart of the pro-independence movement, to start organising a fight back. Over the weekend the main bridges that connect the town of Wamena to surrounding regions were cut off by thousands of angry people from various nearby villages. On the Sunday police were reported to have been ordered to shot-to-kill protesters. By the end of the weekend there had been at least 30 deaths, including some migrants targeted by the protesters. The police have now given pro-independence groups a week to pull down their separatist flags or face stern measures. Military build up is intensifying in the region including the deployment of 6 British made Hawk jets. For the latest situation contact: TAPOL, the Indonesia Human Rights Campaign 020 8771-2904 [www.gn.apc.org/tapol](http://www.gn.apc.org/tapol)

## Positive SchNEWS

21<sup>st</sup> October sees the tenth national Apple Day organised by Common Ground. In this country we have some of the best conditions for growing apples. Over the years we have bred over 6000 varieties, yet only a handful of these are in daily use. Apple day aims to celebrate this diversity and also to raise awareness about the value of traditional orchards. Over the past 30 years 60 percent of our orchards have been destroyed. Events will be being held all round the country around this date including an event at Ryton Organic Gardens, Coventry on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup>. Common Ground 0207 267 2144 [www.commonground.org.uk](http://www.commonground.org.uk)

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## SchNEWS in brief

65 Greenpeace Activists invaded Britain's biggest rubbish incinerator plant in Edmonton (north London) - the Government plans to enlarge it by 50% as opposed to encouraging more sustainable resource use. [www.greenpeace.org.uk](http://www.greenpeace.org.uk). \*\*Hunt Sab benefit gig, Saturday 14th October. Music from Inner Terrestrials and Tragic Roundabout at the Freebutt pub, Brighton. \*\* 31<sup>st</sup> October **Rally Against the Ilisu Dam** 12-2pm in Parliament Square, Westminster, London. Putting the spotlight on the UK Government and Balfour Beatty (see SchNEWS 266). \*\* Last week saw the biggest gathering of chemical giants ever at the **IndiaChem 2000** conference in New Delhi, India - following Clinton's visit in May this year, the conference was a green light to the unaccountable western-based chemical corporations to step in, hand in hand with the World Bank, WTO and IMF - to further exploit the human and environmental resources India does not want to offer (as if Bhopal wasn't enough). Not sure how much destructive policy-making got done as a few protestors got into the conference centre early with the aim of structurally adjusting the delegates' air. With just a couple of bottles of colourless stinkbomb liquid they managed to severely flood the entire air-conditioning system with 'mineral water' so much so that the area surrounding the centre was still pretty ripe the next day. Shame.

## PIE-EYED!!

The Biotic Baking Brigade are at it again. The Canadian wing has branched out into beverages, hurling chocolate milk over one Stockwell Day, leader of the Canadian Alliance. Dutch agents, meanwhile, remained loyal to patisserie when Filip DeWinter, leader of Belgian far-right party 'Flemish Block', turned up for a TV appearance in Amsterdam a couple of weeks back and received a chocolate pudding in the mush-the brown gateau being 'symbolic' of his shit policies. This cake-related assault came after DeWinter's limo was kicked in by Dutch AFA-with him inside it- and just before his live telly appearance was abandoned 'cos the barrage of fireworks let off by protesters outside drowned out the crap he was talking... And while we're in Amsterdam, it seems poor old World Bank president James Wolfensohn ('The Elvis of World Economics' - Bono) can't go anywhere without protesters turning up to piss in his pint. In town last week to open a conference on 'Poverty reduction and the role of private capital', our Jim turned up to find the conference centre ringed by riot cops, watercannons and a bulldozer. On his arrival activists stormed police lines, chucked a bike in front of the limos and let off smoke bombs. 'Wolfie' attempted to apologise to conference-goers for the racket outside, but members of the audience retorted that maybe the demonstrators had a point... Come noon, 100 activists invaded the local branch of Czech Airlines ('official airline of the IMF conference') and insisted they publicise their demands- namely, the release of all Prague demo prisoners and compensation for those beaten up in the nick. When staff refused, the activists seized control of the fax machine and did it themselves. The filth turned up in due course, threw everyone out and nicked 40, including a passing postie... A few hours later, the cops have all gone home and Jim and cohorts turn up for a 'Banquet for World Poverty' at posh art gallery Rijksmuseum- to be met again by loads of troublemakers! A bit of a ruck ensues, rioters pelting cops with plates of whipped cream (?) followed by sticks 'n' bricks; Wolfensohn was smuggled in round the back, leaving Dutch ex-PM Ruud Lubbers to receive a super special creamy pie-ing.

## Inside SchNEWS

The people below are all inside for protesting at the June 18 or May Day demos. Please find a bit of time to put pen to paper, they wouldn't mind a few words from you on the outside...

**Kuldip Bajwa** BN7230 sentenced 7/2/00 - 21 months and **Darren Sole** DN9381 sentenced to 1 year, HMP Highpoint, Stradishall, Newmarket, Suffolk CB8 9YG

**Angel Makoly** FB4689 sentenced 22/3/00 - 24 months HM(YOI) Onley, Rugby CV23 8AP

**Ashley Warder** FR5464 sentenced 4/7/00 - 12 months, **Paul Revell** FR5599 sentenced 17/7/00 - 18 months, **Darryl Walker** FR5483 sentenced to 15 months and **Michael Collins** (Remand Prisoner) all at HMP Wandsworth, PO Box 757 Heathfield Road, London SW18 3HS

**Matthew Macdonald** EA4146 sentenced 24/8/00 - 6 months, HMP(YOI) Huntercombe, Huntercombe Place, Henley on Thames, Oxon RG9 5SB

**Simone Sabeddu** FB2520 sentenced 18/8/00 - 14 months, HMP(YOI) Feltham, Bedfont Road, Feltham, Middx TW13 4ND. (If possible please write to Simone in Italian).

**PRAGUE UPDATE:** A new web site has been set up for those imprisoned by the Czech Police [www.crosswinds.net/~jailsolidarity](http://www.crosswinds.net/~jailsolidarity).

Four years ago **Samar Alami** and **Jawad Botmeh** were sentenced to 20 years after being fitted up for the Israeli Embassy bombing in London in '94. Evidence was withheld in the name of National Security, but now the case is going back to Court on appeal due to the testimony of David Shayler, the ex-MI5 agent. There are a lot of theories concerning this case, one of them being that Mossad (the Israeli secret service) bombed their own Embassy in order to bring a halt to the peace process. Samar and Jawad definitely didn't do it, so go and show your support on the 29th October, 10 am outside the Court of Appeal, The Strand, London. [www.freesaj.org](http://www.freesaj.org)

## ANIMAL CRACKERS

On Wednesday 18 sabs from Croydon and Brighton were nicked in dawn raids on their homes and later bailed on suspicion of violent disorder in connection with a demo last month outside the kennels of the Old Surrey, Burstow and West Kent foxhunt. The demo followed the near-killing of sab Steve Christmas by the hunt (see SchNEWS 274); Steve continues to make a slow recovery, while the nutter who ran him over has been charged with GBH with intent to endanger life.

\*Movement Against the Monarchy (MA'M) have called a 'Smash the Beaufort Hunt' sabbaging action on Sat 4<sup>th</sup> Nov. Meet 9.30am Malmesbury, Wilts 'or thereabouts'- exact location 0771 5779843 on day or before. [www.geocities.com/CapitolHill/Lobby/1793/index](http://www.geocities.com/CapitolHill/Lobby/1793/index)

\*Don't forget anti-McDonald's day- Sat 14<sup>th</sup> Oct. Latest McExpansion Plans: 5 new outlets per day. 650 in Asia, 550 in Europe, 350 in Latin America, 200 in US and 250 rest of world this year alone! [www.mcspotlight.org](http://www.mcspotlight.org)

## ...and finally...

This week's hypocrite of the week award goes to the Vice President of Nestle who reckons that people who campaign against genetic food are encouraging starvation in the third world. A bit rich coming from a company responsible for 4000 infant deaths a day thanks to their aggressive marketing of their powdered milk products. Baby Milk Action 01223 464420 [www.babymilkaction.org](http://www.babymilkaction.org)

**Disclaimer** SchNEWS promises all readers no more ill-thought out puns and sick jokes. We'll just keep taking the tablets. Honest!