



WAKE UP! WAKE UP! IT'S YER BALACLAVA CLAD!

SchNEWS

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Soon appearing on a million t-shirts

MAGICAL MEXICAN TOUR

“Our general, Emiliano Zapata taught us not to struggle for power, because power poisons the blood and clouds the mind.”

Subcommandante Marcos

The Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN) marched triumphantly into the main square in Mexico City last Sunday to crowds of over 200,000. The 24 commanders, in full uniform and masks but no weapons, are now refusing to leave Mexico City until all their prisoners are released, Mexican troops withdrawn from the state of Chiapas and a bill guaranteeing the political and cultural rights of the 10 million indigenous Mexicans is passed.

The march into the capital was the last stage of a tour which has seen the Zapatistas stopping and speaking to thousands of supporters in towns and cities across the country. As a result 50 of the 56 indigenous ethnic groups have now united with them to form a National Indigenous Congress.

This has been overshadowed by some in the media who would have us believe it's merely some sort of rock tour with politics; a personality duel between Sub-Commandante Marcos and the new President of Mexico, Vincent Fox. But it isn't about personalities or only about indigenous peoples rights. The Zapatistas struggle has shown graphically that not everyone is happy with the 'neo-liberal privatise everything' version of the world that is being forced down our throats and that we all have the right to say NO!

ZAPATISMO!

“It is the self-activity of the Indians, above all else, that defines this struggle.”

Aufheben magazine

On January 1st 1994, the same day the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) came into force, the Zapatistas emerged from the Lacandon jungle and occupied four towns in the state of Chiapas (see SchNEWS 174/5, 250). The government response was swift and brutal, but the Zapatistas responded by dodging the army in the jungle, cutting off their supply routes, and when the army retreated, seizing the land from the landowners that had kept them as virtual slaves for years. Eventually a stand-off was established with the Mexican government signing, but never ratifying the San Andres Peace Accords, while surrounding the state of Chiapas with 90,000 troops. Over the next 7 years the Mexican Army conducted a

low intensity war against Zapatista communities including the butchering of 45 indigenous men and women in 1997.

The difference that distinguishes the EZLN and every other guerrilla uprising is that the EZLN don't bark commands from a central committee. Instead they take their orders directly from the civilian communities from which they get their support. Before the Zapatista uprising began every Zapatista community was consulted beforehand to see if they supported it and over 98% were in favour. These one and a half thousand communities which cover nearly a third of the area of Chiapas, still exist today, despite suffering continual harassment from over 90,000 troops from the Mexican army who are based there. They are divided into 35 autonomous municipalities that organise and operate collectively. The role of women in particular has changed dramatically, with women taking part in the decision-making process on an equal level with men, and a third of the EZLN made up of women. As Infantry Major Anna Maria says “It is just not the Zapatista men who have their rights, but now the women as well”

Making Waves

The Zapatistas have helped broaden their struggle by recognising the need for international solidarity. In particular foreign peace observers have helped to lessen the worst offences of the Mexican army, giving birth to a living, evolving internationalism. They also organised the first Intercontinental Gathering for Humanity and Against NeoLiberalism (Encuentro) where 4,000 delegates from many different countries attended.

More importantly as we all struggle to

CRAP ARREST OF THE WEEK

FOR SNOGGING! Forty-four Malaysian Muslim couples may spend up to two years in jail for the crime of ‘close proximity’, because they got too cuddly on Valentine’s Day. Other couples found holding hands in public were told to stop their activities.

articulate the way we want the world to be, the Zapatista are living and breathing examples of what is possible. As one person who'd spent time in Chiapas said “They're running the municipalities communally, they're organising their own education projects, their own water projects, have their own army, they're reaching out to the other indigenous people of Mexico – it's inspirational.” For a full list of web sites and resources: www.eco.utexas.edu/homepages/faculty/cleaver/zapincyber.html Or read the most excellent *The Zapatistas: A rough guide*, ChiapasLink, PO Box 79, 82 Colston Street, Bristol, BS1 5BB, chiapaslink@yahoo.com

Short-Crust

Clare Short- Britain's International Development Secretary got pied with a short crust banana turnover at Bangor University last week while delivering a lecture on how great neo-liberalism is. Agent Custard commented, “Clare Short's bananas policies are flying in the face of ministerial promises to help the world's poor and protect the environment. Short reckons greenies reaction to globalisation is reactionary and harms the worlds poor. Obviously the Zapatistas haven't quite got the message.

Positive SchNEWS

Governments around the world are always telling us that money will make us happy, and that when the Gross National Product (how much money changes hands) of our country goes up we should all be ecstatic. But in the small Buddhist country of Bhutan they don't agree that over consumption and destruction of their natural resources will really make them happy. Instead they are working on a new index called Gross National Happiness based around things other than money like how many people do things for other people because it's a nice thing to do. Sounds good to us. Check out more info at www.neweconomics.org

THE EVERYONE'S EQUAL IN THE GLOBAL ECONOMY QUIZ

If we could shrink the earth's population to a global village of 100 people...

- * 80 would live in substandard houses
- * 70 would be unable to read
- * 50 would suffer from malnutrition
- * 1 would own a computer
- * and no-one would read SchNEWS

So just think: If you have money in the bank, in your wallet, and spare change in a dish someplace, you are among the top 8% of the world's wealthy! (So that doesn't count us then)

Free/Donation

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Women around da globe

International Women's Day last week was celebrated in 59 countries, as well as the Global Women's strike there were loads of protests. Here's just a few:

A weekend of protest at Faslane in Scotland saw 8 women penetrating the base and board a French warship where they locked themselves on for 5 hours, they managed to stop the whole base working for the day, as they can't do anything when they've got intruders. The women were removed and (ironically) charged with breach of the peace. GAP were targeted across the world for their exploitation of largely female sweatshop labour. In the UK protests were held at twenty GAP Stores from Brighton to Dundee. In London the store on Oxford Road was picketed for six hours. A few women managed to sneak into the store and get into the shop window and strip off to reveal T-shirts bearing slogans like "Girls abused 4 profit". In Dundee the Technopunx padlocked the doors of their local GAP shut.

In Bogotà the capital of Columbia, the Mayor imposed a voluntary curfew for men in the evening of the day. Leaving the streets free for women to enjoy women only concerts, film shows, poetry readings and cycle rides. Even the cities emergency services male crew weren't allowed out leaving it up to female police officers and firewomen. The night was a great success with the usually violent streets taking on a carnival atmosphere. A few men who did break the curfew were pelted with water and flour by women and told to go home. In South Africa 2,000 women gathered in a sports stadium in Cape Town to listen to talks given by women from around the world. 1,500 later took to the streets as a mass demonstration of 'women in black' took to the streets of Cape Town to demand a permanent end to violence and oppression. Even with on looking armed police the women surged into the road and blocked a dual carriageway.

To get a full low down on other activities around the world check out www.womenstrike8.server101.com

The Hell-raising Anarchist Girls have 3 days of women's workshops in Brighton. Wednesday 21st, 12pm a launch with story telling, art exhibition and free buffet (everyone welcome). Women only workshops, Thursday and Friday, 10am-6pm, including bike maintenance, self defence and fertility awareness amongst others. All at the Old Post Office, College Road, Kemptown. Saturday 24th is a cabaret, Tindle Centre, Upper Gardener Street, 7-11pm, £3/2 Women and gentle men welcome. More info 01273-710900.

COP This!

Last week 10,000 people took to the streets of Trieste in Italy where the G8 Environment ministers (representing the 8 most powerful countries in the world) were having their first meeting since the collapse of the Hague Climate Conference. They were demanding a more havin'-it approach to the global climate crisis including the reject of emissions trading, that allows rich countries to buy themselves reductions in emissions (see SchNEWS 285). The ministers had barricaded themselves in behind over 3,000 police, and so again didn't listen to the voice of public opinion.

* Weekly Protest-vigil against US obstruction of international efforts to curb Climate Change, US Embassy, Grosvenor square, Bond Street Tube, Saturdays 1-4 pm

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SchNEWS in brief

SchWhoops! NAFA (Notts Anti-Fascist Alliance) were not involved in the attack on a fascist at the recent anti-fash demo in Nottingham. NAFA is an alliance of many diverse groups in Nottingham who are opposed to fascism. Many people and groups were at the demonstration, not just NAFA. They still need witnesses for arrests and police violence (one woman who was truncheoned over the head is bringing a case). NAFA 07949 312668 e-mail nafanotts@yahoo.co.uk ** On Monday **Gwynedd and Mon EF!** stopped work on the Brewery Fields site where 12 houses are being built on land trashed during the '98 evictions. EF! say they will resist any attempt to build on the fields. There will be regular actions, to join in call 01248 362911, orbangor-werdd@yahoo.com ** Meanwhile in London campaigners are trying to stop **Bellway Homes** bulldoze the former Hospital and wildlife site, Hither Green, London. They have a new website www.hgct.cjb.net ** A report by **Amnesty** about last September's IMF/World Bank protest says that the demonstrators were subject to illegal arrest and detention, inhumane prison conditions, lack of legal representations and physical beatings. www.amnesty.org ** Anyone who was on the **Allsorts or Reclaim The Streets** info list needs to re subscribe (allsorts@gn.apc.org) because their knackered old computer has died with all the contact details on it. And if anyone's got a decent computer they can have to get them back up and running get in touch ** **Schwoops again!** In issue 295 we got the website for famers markets wrong its NOT www.farmermarkets.net, but it www.farmersmarkets.net ** Protest against a **genetics field trial** in Sussex, next Saturday 24th meet 12pm Quintiles Shopping Centre Car Park, Hailsham for rally and march, transport from Brighton. More details from 01273-628441 ** Don't Bypass **Hastings** public meeting at Phoenix Hall, Wiliam Parker School, Parkstone Rd., Hastings on 27th March 7.30pm More info from the Hastings Alliance 01424 429956 ** Next Saturday (24) there's **Direct Action** workshops from 10am -5.00pm in the Perth Museum and Art Gallery, 78 George St (near Perth Bridge and North Inch Park). For info contact radix@enviroweb.org or phone Scottish Genetix Action 0141 5880663 on the Same day **Reading Roadbusters** are having an "Ides of March" get together - an afternoon of mini-workshops and free space for tackling local planning, making banners, attracting new members and welcoming back old boys and girls. ** Also on the Saturday evening there's a benefit for **People's Global Action**, with Citizen Fish, Red Monkey, The Restarts, megabit sound system and Indymedia videos. Arsenal Tavern, 175 Blackstock Road, London N4. ** **Help!** Because we're busy checking the internet and on the phone chasing up people for articles for our next book our **phone bill** has gone thru' the roof - any of you lot fancy paying some of it off? Cheques payable to Justice? Send to the address below ...

Start planning your summer festivals - there's plenty of em' check out our ever expanding party and protest section on our website, but don't forget to protest, cos then you'll be all happy and contented-honest!

Inside SchNEWS

"Miscarriages of justice can occur under any system and I have no doubt they will occur in the future." - Chris Mullin MP

"Justice is something that is not on this government's curriculum." - Paddy Hill,

Bent, lazy coppers; crap lawyers; judges who are more interested in their own prejudices than the facts; witch-hunts led by the tabloid press - not just a list of SchNEWS's worst nightmares, but also all the ingredients for a miscarriage of justice. The cases of the Guildford 4, Birmingham 6, Cardiff 3, Sheila Bowler, Judith Ward, Stefan Kiszko, and many more are proof that British justice just doesn't work. Winston Silcott, Satpal Ram, and Mark Barnsley are just a few of the more well known names that are still inside.

On the tenth anniversary of his release from prison, Paddy Hill, one of the Birmingham 6, has launched MOJO - the Miscarriages of Justice Organisation to campaign on behalf of people who have been wrongly imprisoned. Locked away out of sight and out of mind, it's easy for us to forget anyone who has been put in prison. But our support is vital to help prisoners survive the prison system by letting them know that people outside are on their side. A letter to a prisoner is worth more than a letter to an MP any day. Just remember, it could happen to you.

SchFacts: 73% of miscarriage of justice cases which have been referred back to the courts by the Criminal Cases Review Commission (CCRC) have resulted in quashed convictions. The CCRC currently has a backlog of 1,200 cases to deal with.

More info: MOJO: www.appleonline.net/justiceuk/jus.html

INNOCENT: www.innocent.org.uk

* Haven distribution send free books to prisoners - if you are in prison and want one of their catalogues, send a second class stamp to Haven Distribution, 27 Old Gloucester Street, London, WC1N 3XX. Bargain!

* Solidarity Evening organised by the **Free Winston Silcott Campaign**, Saturday 24th March, 6-11 pm, Hundred Flowers Cultural Centre, Stoke Newington.

* **Satpal Ram** has also been moved - back to HMP Blakenhurst where he has been put back into segregation. Please write to him at HMP Blakenhurst, Hewell Lane, Redditch, Worcs B97 6QS

* There is another "noise demo" in support of framed anarchist prisoner **Mark Barnsley** on Saturday, 24th March outside Wakefield Prison. Meet at 12pm at Wakefield Westgate Train Station. Bring stuff to make a noise. www.freemarkbarnsley.com.

* For prisoner news check out the Brighton Anarchist Black Cross webpages on the SchNEWS site

...and finally...

"Green Fire" a coven of anarchist witches have claimed responsibility for the recent Seattle earthquake. Its epicentre was targeted at Nisqually ancient burial ground where the Weyerhaeuser Corporation is building a golf course. Seattle's Mayor has declared a "No Earthquake Zone" and police have orders to use tear gas, pepper spray, and rubber bullets on any tremor trying to enter the area. Green Fire meanwhile are hoping for another "shaker" action at the upcoming Free Trade Area of the America's meeting this April in Quebec. greenfire@xmail.com

disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all readers yer siesta's over. It's time to be full of Mexican jumping beans and take a walk on the tequilla side. Honest!