



It's yer WE CAN'T KEEP MEETING LIKE THIS.

SchNEWS

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TALE OF TWO CITIES

NEW YORK

“The World Economic Forum is, in a way, a big cocktail party for the global corporate elite. As an organisation, it has no power to actually set policy, but it creates a space in which international “leaders” can hash out their vision for the rest of us. In their own words, “they are fully engaged in the process of defining and advancing the global agenda.” More specifically, it’s our globe, but it’s their agenda.”

- NYC Indymedia website.

Anti-capitalists will be descending on New York at the end of the month to protest against the world’s largest gathering of government and business leaders, the World Economic Forum. (WEF). According to protest groups it will be the biggest thing to hit New York since Sept 11th. It has switched to New York from its traditional Swiss home of Davos for the first time in 31 years as a token of support for the City. The invitation-only meeting last year attracted over 3,000 delegates, including Britain’s Chancellor Gordon Brown and Microsoft’s Bill Gates. In fact you’ll find a whole host of SchNEWS’ favourite corporations from BP to Boeing and Nestlé rubbing shoulders with media moguls and politicians.

The decision to host the meeting in NYC was announced the day after the election of Mayor Bloomberg, whose company, Bloomberg L.P., is a member of the WEF. Politicians and business leaders are hoping that the event will stimulate NY’s lagging economy post Sept 11th - and the plan to divert badly needed public funds into such an event and its security bill are sure to benefit NY locals. The police, famous for their zero tolerance attitude, have been given the green light for military-style tactics, traffic will be halted around the hotel and a ‘frozen zone’ created, with the cops announcing that since Sept 11th they’re ready for anything.

The WEF – the club who helped create the notorious World Trade Organisation and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade - say that their meeting this year will focus on finding ways to “reverse the global economic downturn, eradicate poverty, promote security and enhance cultural understanding.” Another World is Possible, one of the groups organising the protests against the meeting, see it rather differently. “They’ll be looking to rescue failing corporate giants, exploit working people,

clamp down on dissent, and puree the diverse communities of our world into a single, American-style consumer culture.”

After Sept 11th the world’s media have been saying that the anti-capitalist movement is dead – but with 100,000 at Brussels for the EU summit in December, 50,000 in India during the WTO meeting in Doha - protests, big and small, have continued around the globe. New York will show that it’s certainly business as usual for global resistance. Another World is Possible say “The WEF is in for a surprise...the movement for global justice is alive and well and growing, and ready to stand in the way of their five-day corporate cocktail party!”

* February 2nd will be the universal day of action against the WEF. To find out more information see at www.accnyc.org or www.anotherworldpossible.com

* WEF Counter-Summit and National Student Mobilization, January 31st to February 3rd at Columbia University in New York City, for more information see www.studentsforglobaljustice.org/

MUNICH

Every February the NATO Munich Security Conference takes place. This year the official organiser of the conference is BMW’s own Herbert Quandt foundation. It’s a meeting of administration officials of the NATO-member states and about 200 military strategists, generals and experts on military equipment - the alliance between capital and the military could hardly be better demonstrated. For the participants of the Conference on Security Policy the central themes are the planning of current and future wars, the establishment of powerful, mobile armies, the development of new billion-dollar weapons systems and this year (surprise, surprise!) ‘Terrorism’ and ‘global security’ which could mean anything really (just ask David Blunkett). It’s obvious that it is only the security of the US and the EU and its capital that is

REBEL ALLIANCE

The irregular get together of Brighton’s direct action groups (7pm sharp), followed by Life Before Profit – speakers and discussion on ways to stop the corporate killers (8-9.30pm), then DJs till 12.30am. Monday 21st January at the Komedia, Gardner St., Brighton.

CRAP ARREST OF THE WEEK

For handing out leaflets: Five people were nicked in Usak, Turkey, for handing out anarchist leaflets. They’ve all been charged with being members of an ‘illegal terrorist organization’ and were badly beaten before being moved to a high security prison.

For wanting to learn in their own language: 526 Kurdish students were detained by the Turkish military after handing in a petition to be educated in their native Kurdish language. Recently over 20,000 Kurdish students have petitioned their universities requesting that Kurdish be recognised as an optional subject, many are being threatened with expulsion unless they withdraw their demands.

being discussed at the conference. What security does this system offer a Bolivian small farmer or Philippine woman working 16-hour days in a branded-label textile sweatshop? How secure is the future for the unemployed youth in the suburbs of Paris, or for a refugee in a deportation prison at Frankfurt Airport?

The conference has a pretty good track record. In 1998 US military operations in Iraq were on the agenda and the question of using German air force bases. Last year they talked about how the EU could join in with the US Missile Defence System madness. A conflict of interests between the USA and their European NATO allies call for their own EU-military block was resolved in November last year, when the foreign and defence ministers of NATO members took over the West-European Defence Union - this is being replaced by the EU ‘rapid deployment force’. By 2003 this new intervention strike force of 60,000 soldiers is due to be available for ‘assignment’ anywhere around the globe, which means the EU will have its own private mobile army.

Just to show some appreciation for all the effort over the years and all the good work NATO are doing in Afghanistan a well known travelling circus will be in Munich for a ‘Carnival against NATO’. From 1st –3rd February, the Pink n Silver brigade will be causing a commotion in Munich while others stuff custard pies in the faces of WEF (World Economic Forum) in New York. email:muenchen@rotehilfe.de www.anti-nato.de.vu/

BLOCKS AWAY!

Faslane in Scotland is home to all of Britain's Trident (nuclear) submarines. Last year there were two massive sit down blockades where over 500 people were arrested. The courts still haven't dealt with all those arrested at the first one in February and haven't even begun to deal with those nicked at the blockade last October. And those cheeky tridenting protesters are coming back for more. The 'Block n Roll' is taking place between 11-13th February and the aim is to have three days of rolling blockades and actions. There's accommodation available, so why not go up and join the court queue, or maybe try and provide us with a crap arrest. Call the action line for more info 0845-458-8361 or email: big_blockade@hotmail.com. www.gn.apc.org/tp2000/

* It's on late, so it must be good! The documentary 'Nuke UK' will be on Channel 4 tonight at 2:10am, it follows four members of Trident through shares at the blockade last February.

* **Three days of protest at Devonport, Plymouth** at the beginning of February. The focus of the demonstrations is the arrival of the first Trident submarines to Plymouth scheduled to berth on Monday 4th February. One of the organisers told SchNEWS "The protest is against Trident and against the storage of large quantities of nuclear waste at the Dockyard, representing a significant threat to the 270,000 people of Plymouth." Protests include a protest march and sit down blockades across all 5 gates of the Dockyard on the Monday. There will be accommodation on Saturday for people who want to go to workshops and discussion forums. Tel 07803620390 or e-mail tstaunton@aol.com

* **'Challenging the arms trade'** public meeting with Chris Cole who has recently published "A Matter of Life and Death", about the arms trade. 7:30pm, Tuesday 22nd, in the Meeting House, 7 Victoria Terrace, London. Tel: 0131-669 5591, www.araucaria.org.uk

SCHOOL REPORT

"Lately, our public servants appear to have gone surveillance-crazy, particularly where our children are concerned. It seems that hardly a week goes by without the announcement of yet another database to monitor selected groups of children in some way - small wonder that the Data Protection Commissioner has just announced her resignation" - ARCH.

A government's wet dream of complete surveillance of their citizens is making massive progress under Neo-Labour. At the end of last year we had Connexions cards for teenagers (See SchNEWS 335), and at the beginning of this year the government has sneaked into the Annual School Census the personal details of pupils which is usually anonymous.

The School Census is always carried out for statistical purposes but in this year's forms schools need to supply names and addresses with all the information which will then be stored on a central database. From starting school each child will now issued with their own personal student ID number which will follow them through their childhood (and possibly further). ARCH (Action for Rights on Children) reckon this is a 'National Identity Scheme' and want the DfES to halt the census until there is open honest debate. But don't hold yer breath. www.arch-ed.org/ or 01594-861107.

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SchNEWS in brief

'One law for them.... Another one for us!' - the **Mark Barnsley** benefit CD is available from: PO Box 381, Huddersfield. HD1 3XX, £7 UK, £8 Europe, & £9 Rest of World, cheques payable to Justice For Mark Barnsley. ** Irregular Records have a benefit CD for **Medical Foundation For The Care Of Victims Of Torture** in support of Asylum Seekers. It's called ARTICLE 14 and includes Chumbawumba, FunDaMental and others - www.irregularrecords.co.uk ** Denied access to your personal history by social services? Check out www.careleaversreunited.com for legal advice and support ** **After Ilisu** - Lessons For Export Credit Reform, Corporate Governance And Regional Stability - 7.30pm, 22 January 2002, Grand Committee Room, House of Commons, Westminster, London SW1. Organised by the Ilisu Dam Campaign. Speakers include Tony Juniper and Mark Thomas. 01865-200550 or ilisu@gm.apc.org ** **12 hour Benefit Gig for Red Cross Afghanistan Appeal** this Saturday (19) at the Cardiff Coal Exchange 2pm to 2am. Confirmed acts include Blue Horses, Zion Train Sound System, Alabama 3's. www.afghanplightnight.com ** **The Underdog** is "Walthamstow's monthly shit-stirring rag" put together by the Walthamstow Anarchist Group. Email wag@fuckmicrosoft.com or check out www.tao.ca/~lemming/wag ** The **GM crop trashing craze** has spread all over the globe, recently in New Zealand 1300 GM potato plants were destroyed at a research lab. ** **BUDD Open Meeting**. To discuss the latest dodgy proposal by Sainsbury's at the derelict Brighton Station Site. 23rd, 7.45pm at Church of the Annunciation in Washington Street, Hanover, Brighton. ** And don't forget next weekends (26-27) **Earth First! Winter Moot**, in Manchester. A get together to discuss thought provoking issues and tactics and hopefully inspire each other, as well as entertainment in the evenings. Accommodation and food available for £10. Manchester EF! 0161 226 6814 or mancef@nematode.freereserve.co.uk ** And don't forget the four day **Wakefield Festival of Rhubarb** at the end of this month. Call 01924 305841 for details.

Inside SchNEWS

A **Chiapas prison** in Mexico felt the full force of inmates' unrest earlier this month as 1,000 rioted against appalling conditions, beatings and corruption. All credit goes to the Prison Warden Fidel Velazquez, a retired military officer who oversees a brutal regime, he has denied all reporters, families and human rights groups access to inside the prison. Family members blockaded an access road in protest, facing around 200 anti-riot cops armed with shields, clubs and assault rifles. Members of a civil rights group joined the relatives in blocking access to the prison, demanding the release of at least 100 inmates who they say are political prisoners. www.eco.utexas.edu/faculty/Cleaver/chiapas95.html

* **Dave Blenkinsop** has been given 18 months for liberating 600 guinea pigs from animal abusers. Write to Dave Blenkinsop EM7899, HMP Birmingham, Winson Green Rd, Birmingham, B18 4AS.

* **Prison Abolition or More Prisons?** A conference on the abolition of prison. Saturday 26th January 10.30am - 5pm at Conway Hall, 25 Red Lion Square, London (nearest tube Holborn) email prisonabolition@hotmail.com or SAE to Prison Abolition Conference c/o BM Hurricane, London, WC1N3 XX

CHOC BLOC

A red and black anarchist flag flew briefly from the top of the Argentinean embassy in London last week. A group of anarchists calling themselves "Those Pesky Kids" occupied the Embassy in solidarity with the people of Argentina, who are protesting against the government and IMF imposed reforms (SchNEWS 336). They gave the Argentinian Ambassador his very own personal reception, giving him a box of Ferrero Rocher chocolates in a parody of the classic advert.... "oooh, with these chocolates you are really spoiling us."

So what logical punishment did the pesky kids receive? Six protesters received bail on condition they don't go within 100 metres of any embassy. Still, at least the magistrate had the sense to drop another condition imposed by police and allowed the defendants to talk to each other!

Argentina was once heralded as the golden child of economic liberalisation but has now plummeted into a state of poverty and chaos, saddled with \$155 billion debt and unemployment levels of 18%. The economic collapse is due to the expansion of free-market liberalisation and the imposition of IMF enforced Structural Adjustment Programs including the relentless privatisation of public services. These very same policies have caused ruin elsewhere, from the privatisation of water in Bolivia to the chaos of Railtrack in Britain.

With the economy going down the pan, Argentines are taking matters into their own hands not only by taking to the streets but by creating a bartering system, handling the equivalent of over \$400 million a year, with well over a million people involved (SchNEWS 319). The system is kept highly regulated, avoiding the influence of existing power bases in Argentina. It seems like the people of Argentina don't agree with Tony Blair's belief that global capitalism is helping the world's poor. <http://argentina.indymedia.org/>

TRADE BLOC N ROLL

A major trade war between the USA and EU looks on the cards after the World Trade Organisation (WTO) once again ruled against US corporate tax breaks. Companies like Boeing and Microsoft have been cashing in on "illegal subsidies" to the tune of \$4 billion. So what's going on here is the US preaching free trade to the rest of the world, whilst stuffing the pockets of its own companies. This is the third time that the WTO have ruled against US subsidies. One influential US businessman said if this isn't sorted out "things could easily get out of hand". While Robert Zoellick, the US trade representative said this could unleash "a nuclear weapon on the trading system".

...and finally...

Lard of the Rings.

The British Lard Marketing Board aim to change lard's bad image and promote the benefits of lard. Sneaky tricksters have set up a spoof website complete with a history of lard, lard merchandising and some exciting new recipe ideas, such as "Roulard: Take a block of lard from the fridge and roll it out to about half an inch thick. Sprinkle it with herbs, or parsley or grass cuttings. Roll it up. Looks and tastes delicious on the cheese tray at a posh dinner party." Alternatively lard has some non-culinary uses such as: "Lard is excellent for adding a danger element to Scalextric tracks - particularly those shiny-surfaced chicanes with the lumps either side."

www.blmb.freereserve.co.uk/frameset.html.

disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all blubberers to sort out the greasy leaders living off the fat of the land. Fat chance.