



WAKE UP!! IT'S YER BLATANTLY BIASED...

SchNEWS

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inpower
TEST



...NOR SHALL MY SWORD SLEEP IN MY HAND... UNTIL WE HAVE BUILT... JERUSALEM... IN ENGLAND'S GREEN AND PLEASANT LAND...



NOW
BATTING
AT No.10
FOR
ENGLAND

ASHES TO ASHES

**“Even those of us who have tried to follow the war closely are not aware of a fraction of the horrors unleashed in Iraq.”
Author Arundathi Roy at the World Tribunal on Iraq, Istanbul, 2005.**

This unimaginable devastation is largely this country's responsibility and we are unaware of the intensity of it because Western broadcasters continue to suppress the atrocities and destruction unleashed on a defenceless country. Along with the corporate media being anything but informative, there's Bob ****off and other gormless pop stars saluting Bush and Blair's man-handling of the third world at Live8, further separating people from the truth. However, despite Gandalf's nauseating carnival of PR (recently described by a Make Poverty History senior figure as their 'worst nightmare come true'), some people couldn't quite shake off their blood-tinted sunglasses this summer. While many were preparing for the G8 circus, some headed off to Istanbul for the world's largest ever public inquiry into the war on Iraq. News of this event didn't make you choke on your cornflakes though did it? Here's why Big Media weren't so keen on shouting about it...

The World Tribunal on Iraq (WTI) was held in Istanbul from 24-26 June. The objective of this meeting was to discuss the illegal invasion and occupation in Iraq, point a finger at the scum responsible for it and emphasise the significance of justice for the Iraqi people. This was the culmination of twenty hearings held in different cities across the world and based on the tribunals organised by Bertrand Russell into the US invasion of Vietnam in the late '60s.

One of the main outcomes of WTI was their confirmation that the war in Iraq was indeed illegal. Never?! Other key facts, established after reviewing much evidence, were "blatant falsehoods about the presence of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq" and that the imposition of sanctions back in 1990, the establishment of no-fly zones in Iraq and the continuous bombing over the last decade were all aimed at "degrading and weakening Iraq's human and material resources and capacities in order to facilitate its subsequent invasion and occupation" (as if they would). And why has this happened? Well...most evidence supports the conclusion that the main motive behind this is the US's need to control and dominate the Middle East and its vast reserves of oil as a part of "the US drive for global hegemony".

So how many people have paid the price for this latest planetary power play? Whilst the Iraqi body-counters reckon between 24-

27,000 have been massacred in Bush'n'Blair's crusade against er, civilians, recent reports have shown that this was far from accurate. At the beginning of this year, leading health journal the *Lancet* reported that 100,000 people had been killed by the invasion in Iraq. After a lot of throat clearing the government declared that this was "misleading" and "entirely unfounded" due to the estimate being based on an "extrapolation technique" (using figures from one specific case and then generalising and applying to other similar cases, a technique which had to be employed due to no-go areas in Iraq.) However, on the ground Iraqi Human rights organisation Maskarat al-Islam put the number of civilian dead at 128,000 as of July 2005.

It's Just Not Cricket

The WTI heard 54 testimonies from advocates and witnesses who came from all over the planet including Iraq, the US and the UK. These gave a voice to the victims of the war crimes and atrocities that had occurred on their own soil at the hands of US and British soldiers.

Independent Lebanese journalist Dhar Jamail described the horrific story of a civil servant in Baghdad who went to a US airbase

A Tale Of Two Protests

And if you think the media coverage of Iraq is bad, look a bit closer to home. This week saw two contrasting protests: a miserable 40 truckers protesting about higher fuel prices affecting their profits, and many hundreds in London there to disrupt UK Plc's arms fair – the world's biggest – DSEi at the Excel Centre. The first protest was a flop while the other saw several days of sustained action - from marches and a baby bloc through to people locking onto trains - and a large police presence aggressively harassing everyone in sight.

The truckers were part of the Fuel Lobby's attempt to get the government to cut fuel duty – and it is in the interests of the oil companies to let everyone know that oil supplies can hold the country to ransom, and sell a lot of overpriced petrol in a panic buy. So the more the media puff it up the better.

Disarm DSEi was about stopping the weapon-flogging UK government's arms industry – the second biggest in the world – as it sells arms to every regime going. (see SchNEWS 511). This event needed to go off with the minimum of fuss and not a messy protest splashed over the front pages.

The truckers got rolling coverage...while the other hit a wall of silence (as well as an exclusion zone).

To get some real news reporting about Disarm DSEi see www.indymedia.org.uk

CRAP ARREST OF THE WEEK

For being there...

The Met police have been showing us how they serve the community at this year's DSEi arms fair. As long as you're only in the area to sell or buy guns and bombs, that's ok, guv, but if you step out of line...here's a sample of some of the reasons for the 31 (so far) arrests...for having 2 mobile phones, for having spray paint, for 'going equipped to cause criminal damage' by carrying 2 marker pens and for not wanting to be photographed by a FIT (cop surveillance) team. One poor chap was arrested for blocking the road even though he was standing on the pavement.

to ask what had happened to his missing neighbours. Instead of being invited in for a cuppa (and an explanation) he was stripped naked, hooded and forced to simulate sex with other prisoners. Sound humane so far? Other barbaric tricks for kicks included being beaten in the genitals, electrocuted in the anus and being smeared in shit. This account was typical.

So why did the US military get the idea that they could carry on like this then? "Our aim is to put you in hell. These are the orders from our superiors. To turn your life into hell." explained one female soldier to prisoners in Abu Ghraib.

BBC's refusal to broadcast any of the copious amounts of footage and interviews it recorded at the WTI reflects the mainstream media's agenda and only helps thicken the fog of war. After a flood of complaints about the blackout, the BBC released a statement explaining why they had decided not to cover the WTI: "We are committed to evidence-based journalism. We have not been able to establish that the US used banned chemical weapons and committed other atrocities against civilians in Fallujah" said the BBC spokeswoman.

Leading journalist John Pilger reckons this is "simply ridiculous... The US has admitted using napalm, a banned weapon, and the evidence of atrocities in Fallujah is too great to list here. Read, for example, the statements of doctors at Fallujah General Hospital and of other independent eye witnesses. The reason the BBC 'has not established' all this is because its reporters are embedded with the Americans and British and report the occupiers' news, about which there is nothing 'impartial'." (on www.medialens.org, a UK media watch project).

This is all another reminder why independent media are so important. And while SchNEWS, Indymedia and others may be drops of truth in an ocean of bullshit, as we say in the spirit of do-it-yourself resistance - "don't hate the media, become the media".

* For more on WTI see www.worldtribunal.org or www.indymedia.org.uk/en/2005/08/320190.html

CAP DE VILLANS

Out of the freezer into the frying pan? Whilst still busy polluting the pristine wilderness of Iceland (See SchNEWS 506) US aluminium company Alcoa has turned its attention to somewhere a little warmer. It is now over a planning a 340,000 metric ton smelter plant in Cap De Ville in the Caribbean Island of Trinidad. The island is one of the most densely populated places on earth with 249 persons per sq. kilometre and also already ranks very high in pollution levels - 5th in the world for carbon dioxide pollution due to rampant industrialization.

The proposed plant, one of the largest in the world, is to be located within a mile or less of the population centre of Cap-de-Ville/Point Fortin in the Cedros Peninsula. However, the residents have now woken up and are organising massive protests on a regional and international level. While similar protests in Chile, Brazil and Vietnam successfully blocked similar proposals, Trinidad's government seems determined to push ahead.

The citizens group Cedros Peninsula United managed to obtain a copy of Alcoa's application of Environmental Clearance - jointly signed by Alcoa and the government's Energy Corporation - and found it full of omissions, inaccuracies and outright falsehoods.

"We are very worried about a company that promises us an 'environmentally friendly' smelter, yet is already lying about things like waste and pollution before the smelter is even built. How can we trust them," warns the citizens' group. The local press totally ignored the findings in Alcoa's application but had no problem accepting three-page ads by Alcoa promoting their project. God bless the free press! Alcoa already have a shipping facility in the northern part of the Island in Carenage, still operational despite an air-monitoring report proving pollution of residential areas.

See www.nosmeltertnt.com and www.therepublicofcedros.org

SchNEWS in brief

Wednesday 21st is the **UN International Day of Peace** and Brighton & Hove Council in a token gesture will raise the UN flag at 3 of their buildings. But they've said nothing about local bomb making component manufacturers EDO, so there's gonna be a protest at the council's lack of action on the presence of EDO, at Hove Town Hall, 4-6pm next Weds 21st. www.smashedo.org.uk ** The **Smash EDO** campaign are giving a talk and showing films at a meeting of **Worthing Against War** at the Labour Hall, Lyndhurst Road, Worthing, from 7.30pm, Weds 21st, Worthing Against War 01903 206588, www.worthingagainstarwar.cjb.net **Former political prisoner and miscarriage of justice victim Mark Barnsley will be speaking in Belfast on the subject of '**Resisting the Prison State**' on Thursday 22nd Sept, 7.00pm at Glor Na Gael, 145 Falls Rd. **Also on 22nd, Special screening of '**Still We Ride**', a US film about "bicycling, police, traffic, the law, the media and the first amendment." The Fringe Basement, Kensington St, Brighton. 8pm. ** **Films of the Edge** a three day festival of radical and anarchist films and discussion. October 7th-9th in Bradford. Full details: www.lin12.go-legend.net **8th Oct, '**Keep space for Peace**' demo. Called for by Global Network Against Nuclear Weapons And Power In Space (GN) at US National Security Agency's global communications monitoring centre, Menwith Hill, North Yorkshire. 12 noon. See www.caab.org.uk for more.

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BRISTLE FASHION

Bristle - the quarterly independent alternative magazine from Bristol is celebrating its 20th issue. Issue 20 features a special section on health with a look at the campaign to save local hospitals and a wider look at Western medicine and the motives behind it.

Also featured are a look at rural racism in the south west; and the appropriation of Native American culture. Plus reports from the animal rights frontline, an interview with radical Bristol musician Mark Stewart, the British state's terror campaign against local refugees, and their attack on Bristol Indymedia. Plus news, reviews, campaigns, an extensive contacts list, and subverts.

A packed out 28 pages for a mere £1.20 - to find out your nearest outlet go to www.bristle.org.uk and click on 'get'. Or send a cheque payable to "bristle". Bristle mag, c/o 14 Robertson Rd, Bristol BS5 6JY * The Bristle collective has lost two key members and are considering their future both in terms of format and effectiveness. If you are interested or have a constructive opinion, there's a meeting: 'Bristle mag - what next?' Sunday 25 September, 2-5pm, Kebele social centre, 14 Robertson Rd, Easton, Bristol, BS5.

* Bristle's 20th issue party, and benefit for local G8 defendants, on Saturday 17 September, 9pm-3am. Malcolm X Centre, City Road, St Pauls, Bristol.

Inside SchNEWS

US Animal/Earth Liberation remand prisoner, **Chris McIntosh**, is on hunger strike in protest at the lack of being provided a decent diet by prison authorities. Chris is a vegan and is demanding soya or rice milk, fresh vegetables, a nutritional replacement to eggs, and peanut butter or tofu or tempeh. All of these demands are perfectly reasonable and something every vegan prisoner should be able to expect. To support Chris write letters to the prison supporting his demands. Send letters to: The Prison Governor, FDC Seatac, Federal Detention Center, P.O. BOX 13900, Seattle, WA 98198, USA. Also send letters of support direct to Chris: Christopher McIntosh 30512-013, FDC Seatac, Federal Detention Center, PO BOX 13900, Seattle, WA 98198, USA.

Babar Ahmed has been given a reprieve from being deported to the USA (SchNEWS 474). The Home Secretary has applied for another two month extension for his decision. His wife says "This may be a good sign that the Home Office is taking matters seriously enough to be further asking the Americans about issues which have arisen through Babar's case. We have said from the start that this is not just a clear cut case, but in fact one where there are many Human Rights issues that need to be taken into consideration." www.freebabarahmad.com

Omar Deghayes is a 35 year old resident of Brighton, originally from Libya, who has been in solitary confinement in Guantanamo Bay since 2002 and is now on hunger strike. Friends and family believe he could be dead in a fortnight, but this comes after constant physical and psychological abuse including being blinded in one eye by prison guards. He has not been charged with any offence and the only evidence against him is a video tape allegedly linking him with terrorists which has been dismissed by experts as a case of mistaken identity.

* Save Omar campaign will be demonstrating on the opening day of the Labour Party conference outside the Brighton Centre at 4pm on Sunday, Sept 25th.

* Send gifts to Omar via his lawyer, Clive Stafford-Smith. Mail to c/o Sabri Ben Aneur, 15 Blois Road, Lewes East Sussex BN7 2TR. 07867 773723

* For Full Details Visit www.save-omar.org.uk

WIBBLIE WOBBLIES

This year sees the 100th anniversary of the **Wobblies, or the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW)**. Their mission? To organise one big union that would "form the new society inside the shell of the old". The Wobblies organised amongst the marginalised poor of the burgeoning US empire, seeking to challenge the capitalist system at the point of production, be it factory or farm. They recognised that "Liberty without socialism is privilege; socialism without liberty is slavery."

The Wobblies had their heyday in the early 1920s, with wildcat strikes, sabotage and direct action. Their black cat logo struck fear into the heart of industrialists. Hundreds of thousands strong, they won rights still under attack today, like the 8 hour day and public freedom of speech. (Wobblies were often nicknamed "the soap-box orators".)

They emphasised rank-and-file organisation, as opposed to leaders who would bargain with employers on the workers' behalf. They were one of the few unions to welcome all workers including women, black workers and immigrants.

Activists were often imprisoned or lynched by state-condoned mobs and state criminalization increased with Wobblies' stance against World War I (IWW says no to WWI!), and the movement went into decline until the 1960s. New interest in grassroots politics revived the Wobblies fortunes, and recently they have been organising union action in branches of Starbucks and amongst road hauliers in the US. See www.iww.org

*Good reading: "Wobblies!: A Graphic History of the Industrial Workers of the World" (Verso, 2005)

...and finally...

Do you believe big business is bad? That it is structurally bound to screw everyone over for profit? That there is no hope that Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) will ever make companies treat the environment right and act in the interests of society and not shareholders? Shame on you. Just take a look at the Business for Social Responsibility 2005 Annual Conference (Nov 1-4) and apologise. Blessed with a location at the heart of the beast - Washington DC, corporations are queuing up to explain how lovely they are really. Listen to keynote speaker Jim Skinner, Vice-chairman and CEO of McDonald's and you'll realise how wrong you were to consider CSR merely greenwash.

Or if he doesn't convince, how about attending some of the 'breakout sessions'? We have Elise Bean (Staff Director and Chief Counsel Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee) talking on "Tax Management and CSR", Dan Bross (Director, Corporate Citizenship, Microsoft Corporation) on "Shaping the Public Agenda: What, When, How?" or how about Charlotte Grezo (Director of Corporate Responsibility, Vodafone Group PLC) on the difficulties of "Accounting for Economic Impacts"?

If none of these take your fancy, don't worry there are other speakers from such social justice organisations as Ford, Intel, Sony, Shell, Reebok and Gap. Don't worry there's a few well chosen token Oxfam/academic type speakers to make sure they've covered all viewpoints. So rest assured business has cleaned up its act and there's nothing for any of us to worry about anymore... Tickets are around \$2000 - not bad for complete peace of mind. www.bsr.org/BSRConferences/2005

Disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all readers... don't try to play the top class spin bowling from the media - it always swings off to the right. Honest.