



CRIKEY MATE!! IT'S YER DUCK'S GUTS...

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GOIN' UNDER

A DROP OF STRENGTH IN AN OCEAN OF BULLSHIT

Last weekend was the **International Day of Action Against Climate Change**, coinciding with the start of the latest UN Climate Talks in Nairobi from 6th-17th November. The buzzword at this summit is 'adaptation' - i.e. we've left it too late to stop climate change, so how do we adjust our markets to survive and prosper from the now inevitable changes? Also being discussed is what to do when the Kyoto agreement lapses (and the world ends, according to Mayan prophecy) in 2012.

The day drew marching crowds worldwide, while one country facing a nasty climate-changed future saw some of its biggest ever environmental rallies - Australia.

The 40,000 in Sydney, 40,000 in Melbourne, plus twenty six other population centres who protested could be having their 'Katrina' moment over the next few months as the country goes into its worst droughts for 1000 years - after the hottest year on record - and the reality of climate change becomes irrefutable, even to right-wing politicians.

Australia generates the highest carbon emissions per head in the world, as well as the highest water usage per head, yet these marches show a clear distance between the population and a government which remains a firm ally of the US's 'flat earth society' climate change denial club. During his recent speaking tour, Al Gore asked to meet prime minister John Howard who refused saying he "didn't take policy advice from a film." The Industry Minister Ian MacFarlane also declined, saying he wouldn't listen to the opinion of "an unsuccessful US presidency candidate who could not convince (his) own people."

Time To Give A XXXX

The climate change prognosis for Australia is harsh - less rainfall in the populated southern areas, with a possible 40% drop in rainfall and 6 degree increase in temperature by 2070. While this will drastically affect all the eco-systems in the country with a myriad of knock-on affects, extinctions and other chaotic ecocide, it will also make supporting a resource-greedy population on the driest continent on earth even less sustainable than it already wasn't.

For starters the production of food will become much more difficult; large areas of farmland will stop being viable, crops will get damaged by extreme weather and savage bushfires, as well as outbreaks of pests and disease. Already Australian farmers use

75% of the country's water - on arid soil bolstered with artificial fertilizers - and this usage makes Aussies the biggest consumers of piped water per head in the world. As this year's drought kicks in - for a fifth year in a row - wheat harvest estimates are down by 62% from last year, while global grain stores are at a 25 year low. And on top of this, Oz agriculture relies on freighting food large distances, which makes it very oil dependent. SchNEWS' correspondent in Melbourne knows a man moving to New Zealand claiming to be Australia's first environmental refugee.

But Down Under, human-created environmental problems are nothing new as massive deforestation, urbanisation and radical changes in land use have already had major affects over the past century. Take Perth, Australia's most precarious city water-wise: due to deforestation, south-west WA has seen an incredible drop of 85-90% in winter rainfall, and inflow into Perth's reservoirs is down 66% since the 1970s. This in a rapidly growing city of 1.5 million which has doubled its population since 1975.

But it's not all just desertification; as sea temperatures rise by 1.5-4.5 degrees this century, the Great Barrier Reef off the coast of Queensland - the world's largest coral reef system stretching for 1600 miles with 3,000 reefs and 900 islands - could lose 95% percent of its living coral by 2050 due to climate change. And that's the best-case scenario!

The far-sighted government is committing itself to more coal power. The New South Wales government trying to push through a massive expansion of exports with the doubling of the world's biggest coal port at Newcastle NSW, and there are proposals for a large open-cut coal mine at Anvil Hill in the Hunter Valley - a plan currently the being taken to court by environmentalist Peter Gray. Last Saturday during the climate protests, 800 assembled on the beach to spell the words 'Beyond Coal' (for more see www.risingtide.org.au).

The majority of Australians who enjoy a high-consumption lifestyle are facing a steep 'descent' in consumption, and similar to everywhere else, will be forced to make changes while their government tries to pretend it's not all happening. For an Aussie take on dealing with 'energy descent', surviving peak oil and looming food insecurity, **Eat The Suburbs** have this guide www.eatthesuburbs.org/edap-primer

* For more see www.cana.net.au

WHINGING POMS

It's been climate action season in the UK lately. Last Monday's **'Day of Action Against Short Haul Flights'** saw actions under the 'Plane Stupid' banner hit polluters across the UK. Easy Jet's London HQ was blockaded by activists and a group of mischief makers from London Rising Tide occupied the Civil Aviation Authority's, unfurling a banner suggesting that CAA really stood for 'Climate Armageddon Accelerators'.

In Manchester, Cambridge, Reading and Bristol, local activists targeted a number of travel agents forcing the closure of offices 'for a total rethink'. An assortment of D-locks and chains ensured that the pollution pushers were closed for a good few hours.

The week before there was **'The No Widening M1 Alliance'** actions to hang banners from bridges from Luton to Sheffield claiming the M1 was a 'road to nowhere'. Meanwhile, mother of two Penny Eastwood was nicked for assaulting a police officer as activists daubed Bradford airport with stickers giving the hard facts about the amount of carbon emissions (that's at least 1.2 tonnes of carbon for a New York weekend Xmas shopping spree, by the way).

November 4th, the **International Day of Action**, saw as many as 25,000 protesters descend on Grosvenor and Trafalgar Squares. Around 10,000 people started off opposite the US embassy with a Seize the Day gig - anti-Bush gags a-plenty and a welcome visit by the peddle-powered Rinky Dink sound system. A mellow kind of affair, followed by a nevertheless packed out Trafalgar Square with speakers including George Monbiot, who called for a direct action campaign every day until the politicians agree to reduce carbon emissions by 90%. The march kicked off with three separate Climate Change Bike Rides with probably close to 1,000 cyclists peddling their climate change banter past such pillars of environmental responsibility as Exxon and Shell's London headquarters.

With all the media coverage giving the opportunity to educate and inform, what's being recommended to the public to prepare them for the drastic changes required in their lifestyles? Well, er, you can always plant a tree to offset carbon guilt! Fully endorsed with a certificate signed by celeb Bill Oddie, Carbon Footprint™ will plant a tree for every flight you make. A short hall flight is just one guilt-reducing tenner (plus £1.75 postage and packing).

Of course, why even mention that catching a train or bus will emit 90% less carbon than flying, yet the government's own figures reveal nearly half of all flights leaving the UK are for distances of less than 300 miles. Meanwhile UK plc refuses to tax jet fuel, uninterested in the annual £9billion that could be recovered by putting VAT on it. Aviation is the fastest-growing source of greenhouse gas emissions and planting millions of trees is just not enough - so check out www.planestupid.com for up and coming actions.

LIEB IT OUT - YOU'RE AVI'N A LAUGH

As if the Middle East wasn't already the sketchiest it's been in years, in the aftermath of the Lebanon (ok, for the sake of ease we'll agree to call it a) war, Israel has chosen its most rabidly racist politician to join the small group of people with access to Israel's red button. Yes, that's right, the Israeli cabinet has just selected own its home-grown Nick Griffin to the new and highly dodgy sounding post of 'Minister for Strategic Threats'.

Avigdor Lieberman, head of the far-right national party "Israel Beiteinu" (Israel Our Home), now charged specifically with dealing with the Iranian "threat", is well-known for his history of physical violence and intimidation. Within the context of Israel's economic and ideological deterioration, Lieberman is the perfect example of putting the wrong person in the wrong place at the wrong time.

His appointment has come at a very low point in the history of Israeli democracy, when the Olmert government is desperate to survive after public criticism of the moral and military failures of the Lebanon war. Despite calls for the resignation of PM Olmert, Minister of Defense Peretz and Chief of Staff Halutz, the Israeli public has once again retreated into a nationalistic fervour.

In an already highly militarized culture, with 25 percent of Israel's population living under the poverty line and the massacre of Lebanese spun as a "war for survival", it was no problem for a member of the far-right, spouting fascist ideas, to be welcomed in to the government with open (small?) arms.

He emigrated to Israel from Moldova in 1978 and studied at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. With a fascist pedigree easily able to match any Combat 18 bone-head, he and his friends from the Betar youth movement used to sabotage left-wing meetings on campus by storming in and beating the students with bicycle chains. In 2001, the man was prosecuted for using excessive violence and threats against three schoolboys, one of whom Liebers attacked even as he fell to the floor crying and begging for him to stop.

Lieberman's beliefs are evident in his recent

political rhetoric. In threats to Arab MPs, he called for parliament to arrange a Nuremberg style court to put all the Arab MPs on trial for war crimes and execute the guilty. As disturbingly, he also remarked that if Egypt did not cooperate with Israel, the Israeli Army should bomb the Aswan Dam, flooding the vast area beside the Nile, probably killing hundreds of thousands of Egyptians. Just this week, at his first cabinet meeting, he suggested that Israel use the Russian tactics in Chechnya (death toll 100,000+ and still counting) as its model for dealing with Gaza. And in his election platform, Liebers proposed to raise the minimum number of votes necessary to gain a seat in parliament to 10 percent, knowing that this would effectively exclude any Arab representation.

Although his views are unrestrainedly extremist, on closer examination, maybe they are actually not so different from Olmert, Peretz and the rest and other recent Israeli leaders. Some would say that Lieberman merely says openly things that every one else is thinking.

Some claim that his appointment will wake up the Israeli moderates and reactivate those struggling for peace and justice in the region. This could be true in another country but unfortunately there is still no mass movement of protest in Israel to reinvigorate.

In 2001, when he was Minister of Transportation, he tabled a motion to invest 3 billion quid in trains all over Israel. As environmentalists tried to figure out what had brought a right-wing capitalist to make a decision that so opposed his free market ideology, one commentator said that it was simple: Liebers was preparing the ground not for mass transportation, but mass deportation...

Now that he's that much nearer the real levers of power and the large stockpile of conventional and nuclear weapons, all Israel's neighbours had better look out.

* To join those who boycott Israeli goods, see www.boycottisrael.co.uk

* For more about the current Palestinian situation, see SchNEWS 566

INSIDE SchNEWS

On Friday November 3rd, about a dozen people visited the Philippines Embassy in Kensington Palace Gardens to highlight the case of the **Sagada 11** - eleven young Filipinos, aged between 15-25 and involved in projects such as Food not Bombs and Earth First! who were arrested on February 14th this year en route to the Sagada mountains area to go hiking.

They were brutally arrested without a warrant, taken to the station and tortured, only finding out later that they were being charged with involvement in a communist guerrilla attack on a military outpost a few days before. They were not allowed to contact anyone and have been held in terrible conditions, without basic necessities or enough food in overcrowded cells. The two youngest have been released, but despite the guerrillas themselves declaring no connection with the group and no evidence being presented, the others are still being held in legal limbo without knowing when they will actually come to trial.

The Filipino Embassy is actually on Crown Estate, i.e. gated and protected, but people managed to walk on in. Some went inside the embassy and spoke to the Minister Consulate about the case, while 13 armed police removed people outside.

On Friday 17th November there will be a day of protest phonecalls, letters, faxes and emails to the prison and the Filipino embassy. Please ask them to free the 'Sagada 11'. Remember they are being accused of being part of communist/terrorist actions so take care not to associate them with anything overtly political. Embassy: 0207 9371600 or embassy@philemb.co.uk - Jail: 0063 744222304. For more info see www.brightonabc.org.uk

ITS ALL GREEK TO US

It's been kicking off in Greece again as the 'New Democracy' centre-right party's attempts to privatise education have led to six months of striking and resistance by teachers and students alike.

Plans to cut funding and free textbooks, introduce consultants and managers into academic institutions and enter into the equivalent of public private partnerships have not proved popular. Back in June, teaching staff went on strike in protest and students occupied their universities and schools in solidarity. On June 8th there were large mass mobilisations, with over 15,000 marching in Athens (met with riot cops and tear gas) and many thousands more elsewhere.

Since the beginning of the school year in September, there have been ongoing strikes by the different teaching sectors and by the end of October 1,000 senior high schools were being occupied by their students, in spite of violent attacks against both teachers and students.

It seems the British could learn a lesson or two from the Greeks about fighting the great school sell-off.

* See www.athens.indymedia.org/?lang=en for more information.

...and finally...

It's our up-your-crappier arrest of the week: A naked Californian man has managed to get nicked for carrying a concealed weapon (phnarr). He was disturbed (in both senses) when police found him lying on a tree stump, masturbating beside a nature path. He was initially arrested on suspicion of indecent exposure, but when asked whether he was carrying anything police should know about, he coolly mentioned a bradle he had stashed in his arse. Sure enough, he removed the 6-inch metal tool (wrapped in tape) from his rectum and was promptly nicked on suspicion of parole violations, indecent exposure and one felony count of possessing a concealed weapon. Cheeky.

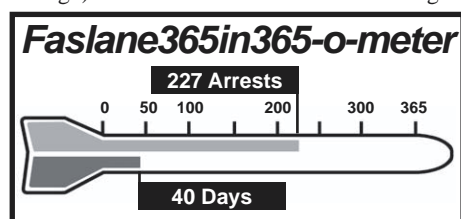
Disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all readers... our jokes are as dry as a dead dingoes donger. Honest!

BOMBY & CLYDE

Police resources are starting to be stretched up in Scotland as **Faslane 365** enters its second month (see SchNEWS 565). "In isolation these kind of operations can be handled easily" says Jim Duffy, chairman of the Strathclyde Police Federation, "but when you get something taking the shape of the 365 demonstration, then that starts to be something that causes problems." Nice one! The year long blockade of the Faslane Nuclear base promises plenty more action for months to come. The end of October saw five elderly Quakers nicked, including 77-year-old Jeanne Jones who was held in custody for almost 11 hours. Keeping up with the religious theme, on another occasion the cells were alive with the hymns being sung by one Reverend Ainslie Walton as they added a vicar to the arrest list. November kicked off with a half hour long and 40 strong blockade by wittily-named CANDLE (Cumbria AND Lancashire Etc) which ended in 9 arrests.

Despite all their protestations, the cops are doing wildly well, and keeping the average arrests-per day count well above five. At this rate our Faslane365in365-ometer will be redundant by christmas (and don't think we Schrooges won't let it go) * For more see www.faslane365.org



PARTY & PROTEST

NOVEMBER: 10th - Eleven years on from the murder of Nigerian writer and activist **Ken Saro-Wiwa** and 8 others as part of Nigeria's crackdown on Ogoni People campaigning against destruction of the Niger delta caused by Shell (see SchNEWS 49). There will be talks and films from 6.30pm with speakers from Nigeria, and Ireland, where they are also fighting Shell (See SchNEWS 549) at the Common Place social centre, 23-25 Wharf Street, Leeds, LS2. For more see www.thecommonplace.org.uk ** **10th - Spoil the Dalston Class Cleansing Party!** Punish Institutional Anti-social Behaviour! Go and annoy Ken Livingstone and the Hackney mayor as they attempt to celebrate the yuppie-development based clearance of Gillett Street Market, Dalston. 3pm. ** **11th - Remembrance Day for Iraq and Afghanistan** organised by Sussex Action For Peace (www.safp.org.uk) at Churchill Square, Brighton, at 2pm. With stalls and speakers. Similar events are being organised across the country by groups affiliated with Stop The War Coalition www.stopwar.org.uk ** **15th - Mass Lone Demo** (see SchNEWS 560), Parliament Square, London 6-7pm. www.markthomasinfo.com ** **19th - Benefit Gig for Mumia Abu-Jamal** - the former Black Panther and journalist framed on a murder charge in 1982 and on death row since (See SchNEWS 228, 34). Mumia's appeal is currently on 'fast track', and the Pennsylvania state is determined to carry out execution soon. With film, discussion, live music. 7pm-12am. Grosvenor Pub, Sidney St, Stockwell, SW9. £5/£3 - money going to legal defence campaign. See www.mumia.org and www.brixton4mumia.wordpress.com

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