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SchNEWS

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GET ME OUT OF HERE

LACK OF REALITY TV SPARKS RIOTS AT HARMONDSWORTH

As predicted, the top finally blew off the pressure cooker at Harmondsworth Detention Centre this week. Riot screws had to be bussed in from across the South-East to quell the prison uprising.

It all kicked off when prison guards tried to turn off a news programme detailing a report on the terrible treatment and conditions at Harmondsworth. Chief of the Inspectorate (HMIP) Anne Owers' damning report concluded the centre was not performing satisfactorily against *any* of the Inspectorate's tests of a "healthy custodial environment", that poor relationships between custody officers and detainees were "worse than had been seen at any other detention centre" and it was, "Undoubtedly the poorest report of any detention centre" issued by HMIP to date.

Reaction to the prison guards' attempt at censorship snowballed and it took the Home Office 18 hours to restore control.

As the central bastion of the government's racist immigration policy, Harmondsworth is run by profit-hungry private firm Kalyx. The company, despite claiming they provide "nationally recognised standards of service, delivered by high calibre staff", have the unenviable prestige of the being responsible for the worst detention centre in the country. There have been constant complaints about treatment and a number of hunger strikes and suicides since it was opened in 2001.

It was actually temporarily closed after two took their own lives in July 2004, the

initially peaceful response to which culminated in a riot and extensive fire damage. Still, the authorities knew how to handle the problem - all those involved in the peaceful protest were moved to "secure cells" (solitary confinement) and anyone suspected of being an organiser shipped off to other centres.

Despite exhaustive rebranding, changing from Burns International (they knew that name had to go!), to United Kingdom Detention Services, to now Kalyx (a subsidiary of French group Sodexo - see SchNEWS 545), the prison profiteers carried on as normal. Ill-treatment of the de-humanised inmates, bullying and abuse by staff have remained standard operating procedure. In 2005, fifty Zimbabwean detainees had to resort to hunger striking to improve conditions and more people have been pushed to the point of no return, such as Bereket Yohannes, a 26-year-old from Eritrea who was found hanged in January this year.

Partly because of the fire damage, all the inmates will now be moved off to other barely-any-better centres (see SchNEWS 538) and perhaps this time Harmondsworth will finally be shut for good. Whilst this would be welcome, ironically the people who would really relish this eventuality would be the British Airport Authority who would just love to see it cleared so they can build a proposed third runway at Heathrow. As ever with national immigration policy, it could be a lose-lose situation.

* For more info see www.noborder.org and www.ncadc.org.uk

CRAP ARREST OF THE WEEK

For winging it...

Bird-brained cops failed to keep their peckers up when attempting to arrest a couple of runaway avian citizens in Germany.

One lawman had his trousers ripped off when attempting to bring down an anti-social emu which was pestering passers-by at a park (well, that was his story anyway!) and the next day a three foot red and green parrot (not hooded, apparently) ripped the arm off a policeman's jacket when he tried to grab it after it was spotted screeching at hikers in a southwestern forest.

Police found a secure nest for them while they searched for the owners. Apparently the feathered convicts thought about hatching an escape plan, but have now decided to take their chances up in front of the beak instead...

Mass Demonstration at Harmondsworth and Colnbrook

This Sunday, 3rd December

Assemble 12 noon at the detention centres - Colnbrook by Pass, Harmondsworth, West Drayton, UB7 0HB

- * The Home Office to be Prosecuted for Recklessly Endangering Lives
- * Full Public Inquiry into Home Office Repeated Failure to Act on HMIP Reports
- * Immediate Closure of all Immigration Removal Centres

Called by **Barbed Wire Britain**, and for further details contact George Mwangi on tel: 07947 794945 Email: georgemwas@yahoo.com

www.barbedwirebritain.org.uk

POURING ON CARMEL SOURCE

Six people completely blockaded all entrances to Carmel Agrexco's main UK distribution depot in Hayes, North-West London last Sunday.

Carmel are an exporter of fruit and veg and are 50% owned by the state of Israel. The company exports goods produced on illegally occupied Palestinian land. Israeli settlers, backed by military force, have plundered land and water resources, whilst Palestinian exports are routinely stopped on grounds of 'security'. The UK is Israel's largest importer of fresh produce, taking in 60% of its total exports. Every major supermarket stocks their products.

In the early hours, protesters erected a pen with two people d-locked inside, in front of the largest gate. Two others locked themselves on to the second gate and two more plucky souls locked on to a traffic barrier inside the property. All this happened before Carmel's dozy security guards could lift their knuckles off the ground!

Unfortunately shortly after everyone got settled in it began to tip it down, but this didn't dampen the spirits of the otherwise damp protesters. Protesters and supporters shivered in the cold. The cops helpfully told those locked-on they were likely to get struck by lightning in a laughable attempt to scare them into leaving.

Throughout the day lorries satisfyingly queued outside the gates and employees had to climb a ladder to get into the depot, obviously finding it easier to scale than the separation wall in Gaza...

Despite the disruption Carmel's management were reluctant to press charges, scared of having their dirty laundry aired in court, leaving the police struggling to justify their presence.

Arriving on the scene just too late, a couple of van loads of police cutting teams appeared just as the blockaders had decided to unlock. The cops threatened to nick the about-to-un-

lock blockaders, but hadn't quite decided what for. They eventually settled on 'public nuisance' with an outside possibility of aggravated trespass and confiscated the protesters banner (to 'prevent criminal damage to the fence'). However, without anyone pressing charges there was little outlet for their arrest-crazed paws and everyone walked away scot-free.

The Met, clearly frustrated by not being able to nick anyone at the protest, then stopped a van they suspected as being linked to the demo. Finding a minor problem with the number of seats in the van they told the driver that she would be breaking the law if she drove any further. Luckily for the rain-soaked anarchos a sympathetic driver was found to get people home.

For more info on profiting from the Palestinian occupation and news of actions see www.waronwant.org/?lid=12671 and www.palsolidarity.org

CALDERON STIRRED

The situation in Mexico remains volatile following the attempted retake of Oaxaca by state security forces at the end of October (see SchNEWS 567). Six months of strikes, protests and deadly (for the protesters) clashes began with striking teachers and expanded into a broad mass movement of up to 800,000 people. Many are represented by the coalition of groups known as APPO (Popular Assembly of the Peoples of Oaxaca). An autonomous and democratic collective, the group is run by the *asamblea* (assembly) in which the people have the power, and the "leaders" are actually administrators who carry out the decisions of the community – those who won't are removed. Its principles include *guelaguetza*, a Zapotec word meaning mutual aid, and *tequio*, which is unpaid community work. They continue to hold out in the city, demanding the removal of Governor Ruiz' corrupt regime, despite increasingly brutal treatment from government forces.

The occupation of the city by the Federal Preventive Police (PFP) has continued, with military deployed around more rural areas of the state. The repression intensified on the days leading up to the 96th anniversary of the Mexican revolution on 20th November, the day of national action called for by the Zapitistas, who took part in numerous solidarity blockades across Chiapas. Reports of women being sexually assaulted by the PFP have been on the increase and there have been frequent running battles on the streets with pepper spray, snipers and even hydrochloric acid being used by cops. Despite the intimidation and repression, the people have remained steadfast and continue to call for the removal of state governor Ulises Ruiz Ortiz.

Nationally, the presidential election back in July was won in questionable circumstances by the centre-right candidate, Felipe Calderon. He managed to take the vote from defeated left-wing candidate Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador by a landslide of less than 1%, amid allegations of fraud and fixin. Although dodginess has been practically mandatory in past Mexican elections, we at SchNEWS are convinced it must have been all above board this time, as experts like US company ChoicePoint were involved. Or maybe not - ChoicePoint provided Bush supporters with the means to remove thousands of black voters from the electoral role in Florida during the bent presidential election of 2000.

'Defeated' Obrador has decided to declare himself the new president anyway, holding an inauguration ceremony in front of over 100,000 supporters in Mexico City's main square. Calderon meanwhile signalled his intent by announcing the usual cartel of pro-business types for his provisional cabinet. His official inauguration today (December 1st) looks set to a stormy one – earlier this week congress had to be suspended when PRD (the left-wing party) delegates kicked off in protest and fighting broke out. It certainly doesn't look like it'll be all smooth sailing for the powers of the corporate-right in Mexico...

* For news on Oaxaca keep an eye on www.narconews.com and www.indymedia.org

**For the low down the election fraud see www.narconews.com/Issue42/article1972.html

NORWAY TO BEHAVE?

Norwegian workers for Statoil have given their support for West Ireland's environmental campaign Shell-to-Sea (see Schnews 570). Mr Nustard, head of the oil and gas workers union SAFE, told a meeting in Ireland that Statoil would "not dare to act this way in Norway" and pledged to bring the issue to his members at home.

Statoil, along with Shell, (who else) are one of the big interests in the Rosspport pipeline project, despite widening opposition locally, and now abroad.

* For more see www.corribsos.com

FUMING MAD

To cater for the McDonald's generation, and draw attention to the catastrophic prospect of 250 Onyx waste trucks rumbling by every day, the world's first **Drive-Through Demo will be held in opposition to the planned incinerator in Newhaven**. Waste company Onyx Aurora won a 25 year contract worth £1 billion for the building of a new incinerator to burn 250,000 tonnes of East Sussex's rubbish every year (see SchNEWS 488).

Onyx has secured a similar deal in Sheffield, where the new incinerator is near completion. As well as emitting greenhouse gases and poisonous dioxins which increase rates of asthma and lung cancer in fallout areas, incineration produces 'fly-ash', a mix up of the stuff that won't burn, which contains toxic metals like lead, copper and zinc. The long term contracts give no opportunity for recycling to be prioritised above incineration for decades to come, and the volume of rubbish that is expected to be burnt does nothing to encourage cutting down on waste, or actually composting the potential 80% of waste that's produced in the first place.

Cars will meet at 12noon at North Quay Road and travel in a crawling convoy around Newhaven, arriving at the Hollingdean Depot in Brighton at 3pm, to be met by more protesters (on their less polluting feet). The best dressed car wins. Visit www.dove2000.org and www.no-burn.org for more info.

Party & Protest

DECEMBER: 1 - **Critical Mass** Birmingham: meets this Friday 1st at 6.00pm outside St. Phil's Cathedral. ** 2 - **National anti-war demonstration at RAF Brize Norton** - where British troops are flown to and from Iraq and Afghanistan, and from which Iraqi and Afghani asylum seekers are deported from. This demo seeks to draw attention to the massive array of military bases around us, & broader militarisation of the UK. Assemble Saturday at 12 noon in Carterton, Oxfordshire. www.stopwar.org.uk

** 2 - **Stop The Gaza Siege**, an International Day of Action. Candle vigil in London, 5pm at Edith Cavel statue, next to National Portrait Gallery, Trafalgar Sq. (for more call 07957-486 379), as well as similar events in Liverpool, Keswick, Brighton and Edinburgh – see <http://gazasiage.net/international/london.html#7>

** 2 - **Defend the Right to Protest** - a day of discussions by Campaign against Criminalising Communities, 10am-5pm at London Metropolitan University, Holloway Road. With speakers from Smash EDO, Mark Thomas, Craig Murray and more www.cacc.org.uk

** 4 - **Open Olympics Forum**. For those in East London communities affected by the 2012 Olympics, gentrification and corporate developments. 7.30pm at Hornbeam Centre, 458 Hoe Street, E17, free entry, call 020 8558 6880 www.gamesmonitor.org.uk

** 5 - **Stop Arming Israel** campaign launch and public meeting. 6.30pm, Tues (5), Room U8, Tower One, LSE, Houghton St, Holborn, London WC2. www.stoparmingisrael.org

** 5 - **Support Meeting for lesbian and gay asylum seekers**, as well as community groups, solicitors, and others involved. 7pm – 9pm, Conway Hall, 25 Red Lion Square, London, WC1R 4RL (Holborn Tube) www.uklgig.org.uk

** 8 - **Kebele Birthday Bash** - 11 years and Bristol's social centre is still kicking! Featuring bands and DJs including Don Bradmans and a lot more. Black Swan, Stapleton Rd, Easton, Bristol, 10pm to late. www.kebelecoop.org/events/11thParty.html

** 9 - **Unite against the BNP** in Barking and Dagenham – where the BNP has 12 councillors. 1pm, Central Park, Dagenham. www.uaf.org.uk

SALE OF THE DECADE

It's nearly the end of another year, so we're slashing the price of the last book, the SchNEWS At Ten, to a mere fiver. Get yer bargains NOW!!

Positive SchNEWS

Mooreen squatted social centre in Sheffield is open – and will be a hub of grassroots autonomous activity, run by collective for mutual aid and cooperation from Nov 29th – Dec 13th. The location is the Old Commerce House, 33 Earl St, just off the moor opposite Sainsburys.

If you would like to be involved – eg putting on a gig/workshop/film screening etc, get in touch. For more call 07989 874965 or see www.mooreen.aktivix.org and www.myspace.com/sheffieldsquatters

GEEK CHIC

We love the sounds of breaking windows, even virtual ones. Following on from our article about the rise of the free alternative to Microsoft Windows – Linux (See SchNEWS 560) - it's not just anarchist hackers and alternative media geeks who are into freeing themselves from a corporate monopoly. As we reported, governments in Latin America, China, and India are ditching Big Bill Gates. While Scandinavian governments were the first in Europe head towards Linux – and are currently booting out Apple's iTunes in an anti-monopoly ruling, now the French government is saying au revoir to Windows by moving all PCs in its parliament over, plus switching to Firefox web browser and Open Office. And you'll be pleased to hear that this comes after the roaring success Open Source Software has been with our French counterpart's good mates the Gendarmerie (para-military police), who are changing their 70,000 PCs over to it. Maybe the Gendarmerie might be persuaded next to move over to BAE's new environmentally friendly weapons (See 'And Finally' SchNEWS 562).

We hereby invite you lot to the SchNEWS 12th Birthday Party

Thurs 7th Dec, at The Church, Dyke Rd, Brighton, SchMOVIES from 9pm & two floors of DJ's playing everything from Techno to Ska til late. £3 - no guest list cos we're still skint.

...and finally...

Those whacky tossers over at www.globalorgasm.org are working themselves up for December 22nd, which they have declared as Global Orgasm for Peace day.

They predict that huge numbers of people simultaneously getting their rocks off (especially those in countries with Weapons of Mass Destruction) will - and now for the science bit, as the special 'science' section of their website explains - effect change in the energy field of the Earth through input of the largest possible surge of positive human energy.

Basically, they're hoping that their members swell dramatically on the big day and that horny do-gooders from every cuntry will join together and prove the penis mightier than the sword. Quite what happens to the energy field five minutes later when the depressing post-coital slump kicks in is not addressed...

Disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all readers, when the revolution comes, you can be sure we'll be keeping our ends up. Honest!

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