



WAKE UP! WAKE UP! IT'S YER DIRT DIGGIN'...

# SchNEWS

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## DIG THAT! Sheriff Sore After Seven Day Shafting

*"It's the only way to get a voice these days. I feel if I had just written to my MP, would I have achieved all this? Would you lot [the assembled media] all be here? I think not."*

Swampy, yesterday.

The last protester along the route of the A30 in Devon emerged from the tunnels at 8:45 p.m. last night after a week underground - setting a post-war eviction record.

Fairmile, the last of the three camps on the A30 route to be evicted, was established over two years ago (predating Newbury) to block Britain's first private road from being built. Not only does it cover more countryside in Tarmac but it's also a symbolic starting point for a disastrous new government policy. Swampy, Animal and the now-famous moles didn't put the Earth first for the media to focus on their lifestyles, they did it to expose this scandal. So here are the facts:

In 1992 the Chancellor announced a private finance initiative which would give a new lease of life to the road building industry. The Design, Build, Finance, Operate (DBFO) scheme was announced. This meant that companies who build roads are not paid immediately, but instead after a 30 year period are given an undeclared amount based on pre-set shadow tolls. In other words the road builders get paid for each vehicle that uses their road. Responsibility is then given to the road builders to encourage motorists to use the road - flying in the face of the government's own admission that new roads create more traffic. This would be done by sign-posting and by encouraging development along the route. Devon County Council has already set aside land along the route for a new town with an expected population of 10,000, a technology park, a power station and an extension to an existing quarry, effectively extending the urban fringes of Exeter to the east by eight miles. This DBFO

scheme, dubbed Destroy, Burn, Fell, Obliterate, is the first road of its kind (it's nearest cousin is the Channel Tunnel). It's a financial nightmare and one with a dubious safety record. The new roads programme means that safety and environmental protection are of little relevance to the private sector profit-making companies who are responsible for the construction of this and many other roads. And just to show they mean business, the Government chose this week to announce the widening (to dual-carriageway) of another section of the A30. European super-trunk route here we come.

The main problem facing bailiffs were the complex tunnels into which protesters have dug - *"Built by gypsies with candles"*, as the Deputy Under-Sheriff put it on Thursday. Meanwhile police have been hassling tunneller's parents for information. But this has been countered by devious actions from activists determined not to let the forces of darkness get away with the abuse of the planet for profit. Last week the Under Sheriff and his men were woken at 4 a.m. by a hoax fire alarm and were forced to wait in the cold car park while the building was subject to an intense safety inspection. Another group of activists targeted *Balfour Beatty*, the company who are building the road, by climbing a crane opposite Parliament owned by the company and unfurling a banner saying *"Privatised Vandalism - stop DBFO roads. We Love You Fairmile!"* The crane was held for most of the day, and all the crane's occupants were arrested for offences including Aggravated Trespass.

The demands made by the protesters include: removal of harsh bail conditions; secrecy behind DBFO schemes be dropped; and what's left of the beautiful site is preserved until an unbiased & open public inquiry looking at all secret information surrounding the scheme.

A30 campaign: 01404 815729

### SMUG SELF-CONGRATULATORY BASTARD OF THE WEEK

*"We'll have them out in 24 hours ... I think you'd call it a hat-trick"*

**Trevor Coleman, The Under Sheriff of Devon.**

Employed by the High Court, Under-sheriff Coleman has the satisfying job of evicting travellers and gypsies. Usually a solicitor, this man has been hassling people in his spare-time for the past seven years. Now he has finally come up against a group of individuals organised enough to keep his bailiffs from taking control of any land. If you would like to have a friendly chat with the Under Sheriff call his office on 01392 436244.

### RECLAIM THE COAST!

On 15th Feb '96, heading for the Texaco refinery at Milford Haven in Wales, the Sea Empress oil tanker ran aground off Pembrokeshire, spilling 72,000 tonnes of crude oil.

14th-16th Feb sees actions to mark the anniversary - and the oil industry's cover-up. Milford Haven Port Authority cut back on safety procedures, whilst Texaco squeezed the tanker into the Haven at low tide to save money, then refused to pay any of the clean up costs. The same could happen again.

It's time to hit the earth rapists where it hurts. The UK economy depends on bleeding the Welsh coast dry. Most of the coast is a "Special Area of Conservation" (Europe's highest conservation legislation) but despite this, Texaco, Elf and Gulf all have refineries in Milford Haven. By October full-size oil rigs will be in operation. National Power are now planning to burn Oremulsion, "the worlds filthiest oil", at Pembrokeshire Power Station. The "fly ash" from burning is incredibly dangerous to the eco-system, and would be catastrophic in the event of a spill - Oremulsion does not float on the water surface.

The only way to stop another Sea Empress disaster is to shut down Milford Haven. Direct Action to save the Welsh environment is already established with the most high profile campaign being the one in response to the devastation from open-cast coal quarrying tearing across the valleys. A massive action is planned for the anniversary of the disaster on Sat 15th Feb. A safe camping space will be set up the day before. Arrive from noon, Feb 14th for briefing on the issues, safety at oil refineries, direct action training, legal briefings etc. There's also a crèche. Details (from 12th Feb): 01749 812665. Bring very warm clothes and bedding, and waterproofs. If you can't make it to Wales then target your local oil industry outlet. See SchNEWS in long for travel info.

SchNEWS training day - find out how to get involved. Mon 3rd Feb @ the Justice? office - call for details.

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## 2 years for no crime

Ejike Emenike, 30, is pastor of *The Lord's Anointed Ministry*, Lagos. He arrived in Britain last February after being beaten and held by Nigerian security forces for denouncing the government over the execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa and many other campaigners. Lying close to death in Rochester Prison, Kent, he has been on hunger strike since January 6<sup>th</sup> and refusing fluids since the 26<sup>th</sup>.

Although he has now agreed to start accepting rehydration treatment, another 5 refugees are also refusing all liquids, and a further 11 are still refusing food. A prison office spokesperson said, "We cannot force them to take any water if they have made a rational decision of refusal". Ahem, excuse us, but where does rationality come into it? The Home Office told us that a mere 1,295 asylum seekers (at refugee status) were granted entry into the country last year, and an estimated 750 refugees are placed in detention centres and jails each year - for committing no crime.

They come seeking refuge from military regimes and political persecution. The hunger strikers at Rochester come from Nigeria, Russia, Romania, Algeria and Somalia. They left their homelands in the face of persecution. They seek refuge in a country completely alien to them, traumatised and confused. It's ridiculous that the first thing any refugee would do is to confide in an official...yet one of the Asylum Bill's main provisions is to deport refugees back to their home country in circumstances where refugee status isn't sought immediately in the first country they reach.

These people have committed, and are accused of, no crime. Yet they are subject to strip searches, fingerprinting, and have no access to legal aid. There are long delays in processing their applications. Currently 60,000 detainees are awaiting decisions.

Despite Widdicombe's protestation, a spokesman from the Church's Commission on Racial Justice said, "I consider the authorities to be responsible for these men, as there is no need for them to have been detained for this amount of time."

\*\*\* Any employer found hiring a refugee without a work permit is liable to a £5,000 fine - so employers will not consider job applicants that look like they are "illegal immigrants" \*\*\* **Michael Howard's** attitude is rather two-faced in light of his family background. Howard's father, Bernat Hecht, was a Romanian Jew, who - thanks to the liberalisation of Britain's asylum laws in the late 30s - got out before the Nazis and their Death Camps arrived \*\*\* **Banner Theatre** launch a new show on Valentines Day, about the plight of asylum seekers under the new Immigration Act. Info: 0121 440 0460 \*\*\* On January 18<sup>th</sup> a vigil was held for animal rights prisoner **Barry Horne**, currently on his third week of hunger strike, demanding the government end all links with vivisection within 5 years. About 200 supporters attended the vigil at HMP Bullingdon in Oxfordshire, then outwitted the police by heading straight for a mice and rat breeding house. One protester said, "The supplier of rodents for vivisection was taken aback as people ripped down fencing and smashed anything that could be broken. Eventually police reinforcements arrived, so the 'Tactical Demolition Squad' moved to Hill Grove Farm - a cat breeding house for vivisectioners. 15 cats were rescued, but police roadblocks later led to 7 arrests and 5 of the cats being taken. The other 10 have safe new homes."

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eco-trip party and gathering 8th Feb, 24 Porden Rd., Brixton 10pm onwards £6/£4. And the Anarchist Teapot are back in the area, Monday to Saturday 12 noon till 6 p.m., bottom of North Road.

## SchNEWS in quite long

\*\*\* Transport from Brighton to Reclaim The Coast in S. Wales (Reclaim the Valleys III - remember Selar); Manchester (Reclaim Daisy Nook & Airport camp) and then home again is being sorted out. Cost for the week is £25 including petrol. There's only 12 seats - get your tickets now! Call 01273 685913

\*\*\* A Newbury protester is on Hunger strike demanding a judicial review of the policing of the Newbury protest. He could do with letters of support, send them to Sean O'Reilly, KG 3399, HMP Bullingdon, P.O. BOX 50, Bicester, Oxon, OX6 0TR \*\*\* The financial collapse of Russia is more than a storm in a D-Cup. Women at one underwear company are now being offered payment in bras! One woman said "It's convenient for me, you can earn up to 40 per cent more than your salary by selling these items." \*\*\* Pepsi are to pull out of Burma as of May 31. The largest corporation so far to respond to the growing consumer pressure to get the hell out. They must be feeling pretty blue... More info from the Burma Action Group 0171 359 7679 \*\*\* Hundreds of street vendors ran amok in the Indonesian capital this week after public-order officials drove over the merchandise they had laid out on the roadsides. 500 of them looted, set alight the official's cars then burnt down the district chief's three-storey office in revenge \*\*\* Zimbabwe's Forestry Commission has announced that it plans to give baboons the Pill - the timber industry is losing "valuable trees" to the voracious creatures. Strange considering that Africa's forest are the most depleted on the planet. And why could that be? 'Cos the timber industry's chopping down all the trees, of course! \*\*\* A Turkish landlord, determined to out-do Brighton police who recently smashed through the wall of a grade II listed building to evict three squatters, climbed onto the roof of a building brandishing dynamite as a threat to a tenant with qualms about his rent. \*\*\* OK, so their demand - an end to state intervention in the banking world in favour of good old free market capitalism - leaves us disaffected types somewhat cold, but we'll still raise a glass to the 3,300 staff of French bank *Credit Foncier de France* who took their Governor and 10 top executives hostage for six days and festooned the marble pillars of their hallowed edifice with cartoons of the French president and finance minister in various stages of painful execution! Although the fat cats have now sadly been freed, pin-striped protesters continue to occupy the building and for what it's worth, the action has resulted in a government pledge that planned bank restructuring will be revised. \*\*\* What a surprise - a new report out yesterday by the Round Table Group says that bus de-regulation has been bad for passengers. Predictably, the Conservatives won't do anything, Labour won't say anything - and after their support of the Newbury Bypass the LibDems can shut their hypocritical public transport faces. \*\*\* SchNEWS would like to squash rumours that the Royal yacht Britannia is gonna end up as a prison ship - and point out that the old Pontin's holiday camp being looked at for a jail is the shape of... a liner! \*\*\* SchNEWSnight meeting, Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> Feb 7pm Albert Pub for anyone willing to help perform in or help organise these mega-monthly fund raisers. \*\*\* Protesters from Cyndeithas Yr Iaith Gymraeg (Welsh Lan-

guage Society), fighting for equality of the Welsh language in Wales, occupied offices of William Hague, the Englishman imposed on them as Welsh Secretary. They found more than they expected when a filing-cabinet examination uncovered pornography belonging to David Moyle, the MP's election agent. Info: 01970 624501.

## PLANE PANE

Protesters at Manchester Airport objecting to the building of a second runway have squatted trees on the route of the new construction. They intend to broaden out direct action campaigning from roads to all transport issues. However, after spending six nights being camped 500 yards from Manchester's current runway, opponents have had enough of being kept awake by screaming planes and are applying to Manchester authorities for a grant to cover the cost of double glazing on their treetop homes. One activist said, "After a late night round the camp fire discussing alternative strategies for creating jobs in the region, the last thing I need is to be woken up at 6am by a jumbo jet."

## THE + FILES

*Well Health* are still running their "Give & Take" stall at the local Thursday market at Conahs Quay in Flint, Clwyd. Everything on the stall is FREE; people bring what they don't need and take what they do. Simple! The stall is going great, but their main problem is storage and they are trying to raise money to fund a depot. So far they have raised £3000. Contact: "Sharing", 10 Corporation St., Flint, Clwyd, CH6 5PG.

## and finally...

Last week, in the continuing moral panic debate about ravers, ecstasy and all things associated with such devil worshipping, Barry Legg's Private Members Bill went through on the nod. The Bill will give police the power to shut down clubs immediately where they suspect drug taking or dealing is taking place. Supported by Leah Betts' parents, the Bill will apparently help save young people's lives. On its second reading it was unopposed, but still MPs waffled on and on. Why? Well, so they could waffle so long that they "talked out" the next scheduled debate - on the Cold Weather payments (Wind Chill Factor) Bill. Cold weather payments of £8.50 are issued when the average recorded temperature is freezing or below over a seven day period, but takes no account of the wind chill factor, which can make things feel a lot colder. Age Concern had hoped the legislation would have benefited nearly 2 million of the UK's poorest pensioners who face a deadly struggle with the cold every winter. It's estimated that winter weather kills up to 50,000 pensioners every year - rather more than any ecstasy tablet.

## disclaimer

The SchNEWS warns all readers not to dig the notion of tunnels. Subterranean living for any length of time can leave you truly shafted, and Going Underground can get you in a real Jam. Stay away from probing Sheriffs, and ensure that your only contact with moles is with the ones infiltrating your meetings. Then you will feel soiled. Honest.