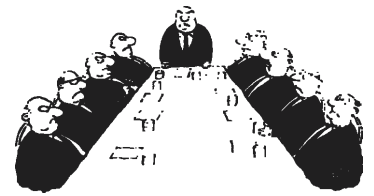




WAKE UP! WAKE UP! IT'S YER BEEFED UP & BONED

# SchNEWS

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## Raging Hormones



*"It is not unrealistic to regard the World Trade Organisation as representing effective world government for the first time in human history"*

Steven Shrybman, West Coast Environment Law

In the same week that Europe lifted their beef ban on Britain's mad cows, those bully-boys from the World Trade Organisation (WTO) gave America the green light to apply sanctions on the European Union, because of its ban on hormone-treated beef.

A secret panel decided that we Europeans are missing out and want to get our teeth stuck into some meat laced with artificial hormones. Its scientific panel, stuffed with corporate nominees and US officials, reckon the stuff is safe to eat. However, they somehow forgot to test the effects the six injected chemicals have on levels of natural hormones in the body. They also failed to find out what they might do to kids, even though a new study has concluded that one of the hormones is a potent carcinogen placing children at particular risk.

But they, the *Arbitrators* reckon the 11 year old ban has resulted in \$128 million a year in lost revenue to the US and Canada.

So how will these two countries get their compensation money? By hitting certain European goods with massive import duties. A list is currently being drawn up which will penalise companies that have nothing to do with the beef trade, effectively triggering job losses and bankruptcy. Once again, the ruling has shown that the WTO is nothing more than "an international bill of rights for multinational corporations".

\* Last month environmentalists highlighted WTO plans to speed up the destruction of the worlds remaining forests (SchNEWS 206). The WTO wants amongst other things, a reduction on tariffs for forest products, which even the American Forest and Papers Association have admitted could raise world-wide consumption of wood and paper products by as much as 4 percent. Environmentalists are also worried that logging companies will gain the right to claim damages against any environmental regulations that get in the way of profits. In a joint statement, the groups said "Our forests don't need more logging...they need stronger protection...The WTO is bad for forests." Make that 'bad for the planet'.

\* Earlier this year the US imposed \$191m of sanctions against the EU in a dispute over bananas (SchNEWS 204)

\* The US actually got a slap in its corporate face a few weeks back when the international food standards body broke with long established tradition and finally produced a ruling the US didn't like; that BST-treated milk is not the same as ordinary milk. BST is produced from cattle treated with genetically engineered growth hormone, is linked to appalling animal welfare problems and breast and prostate cancer in humans. The US quietly withdrew its attempt to force the EU to import its poisoned produce and the EU won a silent victory

A US court recently ruled that it was illegal for Massachusetts to have a law that penalized firms doing business with Burma. The EU had filed a complaint with, you've guessed it, the WTO. The ruling basically gives the thumbs up for countries to trade with any old dodgy dictator, bugger their human rights record.

\* Seattle is the next stop for the WTO. 29th November is the date for the Millennium Round of "negotiations" For details of protests planned : [PGA\\_Seattle99-subscribe@listbot.com](mailto:PGA_Seattle99-subscribe@listbot.com)

\* A Canadian company is suing the US government for nearly \$1 billion in damages after the state of California banned methanol as a petrol additive. The chemical is leaking into water supplies, a potential health hazard, but so what, the company are using the terms under the North American Free Trade Agreement to railroad environmental laws they say are affecting their profits.

### CRAPARREST OF THE WEEK

For trying to house the homeless. Nine members of the Kensington Welfare Rights Union were arrested and charged with attempting to house homeless families and refurbish abandoned houses. The Union were acting on the bizarre assumption that some of the 40,000 empty properties in Philadelphia could be put to good use. [www.libertynet.org/kwru](http://www.libertynet.org/kwru)

\* For a low down on the WTO get a copy of the latest 'Ecologist'. £3.50 inc. p+p from Cissbury House, Furze View, Five Oaks Rd., Slinfold, W.Sussex, RH13 7RH Tel 01403 786726. Or why not take out a yearly subscription on this essential publication. £24/£18 concessions.

### SO JUST WHO ARE THE SHADOWY PEOPLE BEHIND THE WTO?

The WTO was established on January 1st, 1995 and is currently made up of 135 nations (surprise surprise though, it's America who pull the strings with their delegations meeting with multinational corporations before and after every set of negotiations). Their mission statement is the promotion of global free trade. They monitor and settle trade disputes, then set the rules which, if broken by any nation, result in punishments including sanctions. Most importantly, the WTO rules are supreme over the laws of nations, taking power away from local communities and governments and handing it to corporations - sod environment, labour and human rights. "The WTO is this un-elected body which is taking decisions which then become binding. It's going to take a huge amount of public pressure to remove it, because the avenues aren't there. It's not as if we could have elections and throw them out, it's not as if we have elected representatives that are overseeing their proceedings, it isn't as if we even have an independent judiciary".

Susan George, author and researcher

### CRITCHLEY BOTTOMS UP

*'I pay tribute to our members, whose strength and dignity is as deep as the spite and stupidity of Critchley.'*

Gasp in shock horror, the longest running industrial dispute in Britain has ended in victory for the workers. A few years back, British Telecom sold their bussiness/ factory in Gwent to Critchley Labels, who derecognised the union despite over 70% of its employees being members. 31 people were then sacked in February 1977 for having the bloody cheek to take strike action in February 1997. Dubbed 'the worst employer in Wales', the staff mounted a continuous picket line outside the factory, triggering a collapse in Critchley's UK sales. Eventually the company bowed to pressure and gave £325,000 compensation to be divided amongst the strikers. To cap it all, they have now been offered full-time employment by their old bosses BT. Funny how things come round. The campaign against the company continues, with the newly-formed Critchley Shareholders' Action Group, who plan to attend the company's AGM on 29th of this month. Nice one.

## Reclaim yer Bristols

Last Saturday 350 party people closed off part of the M32 for a few hours for a Reclaim The Streets party. Despite the best efforts of the organisers and lengthy negotiations with the cops to keep things peaceful, the boyz in blue came in heavy handed in full riot force and dogs only an hour after the celebrations commenced. The cops made 20 arrests on the day with 8 appearing in Bristol Magistrates on Monday.

So why the major panic on the part of the forces of law and order? Post June 18 hysteria? So it seems, as the Bristol Evening Scare Mongerer dutifully informed its readers that the party was organised in a squat in Stoke Newington and a pub in Hackney (this was news to the Bristol party people!) The paper then surpassed itself in the paranoia stakes by saying "In previous marches the women and children have been lined up in front while the militant fringe have come up behind armed with poles and sticks. The women and children, who frequently get hurt, are known as cannon fodder to some extremists" Amazing the lengths some people will go to have a bit of a boogie whilst making a statement! Speaking of dirty tactics, the police were ushering people through the police cordon assuring them that they would be allowed to leave the other side only to be trapped by police who would not let them out again. People and children suffering from the heat were forced to remain inside the cordon without water.

If anyone has any film footage or photographic evidence pertaining to events at the street party please contact Kebele, 0117 9399469

\*The same evening, over 50 police in 8 riot vans cordoned off the Bishopston Community Centre to foil the evil intention of a planned community dance. Residents at the centre were denied access to their home and other local residents were questioned and obstructed by police. The police justified their actions by quoting section 63 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994, a law that applies only to open air dance parties but hey, who cares about the law! Though there was no sound system in the building the police remained until midnight. Another stylish operation in public relations from your friendly neighbourhood bobbys!

\*Keeping it in the area, a kilometre length of the most beautiful section of the most famous cycleway in the UK - the Bristol & Bath Railway Path - is due to be closed for destruction at the end of July 99 to make way for the building of the Avon Ring Road - Bristol's version of the M25. STARR campaign, which has been fighting this wanton vandalism, meets every week in Bristol Tel: 0797-999-0389

## WE FUCKING TOLD YOU SO

Guess what? The Newbury by-pass doesn't work. Yes, the little bit of road that cost £125 million, destroyed countryside and converted peaceful old ladies and previously law-abiding Volvo-owners into environmental activists has only succeeded in cutting rush-hour traffic in the town by a piddling 15%. Adrian Foster-Fletcher, spokesman for Newbury Friends of the Earth, has described the scheme as "an appalling waste of money". He believes Newbury's traffic problems, barely eased by the bypass, are destined to get worse. Sandleford Park, a new college development and Vodaphone's expansion plans will all lead to an increase in traffic. Lib-Dem Council transport spokesman, David Beckett, admitted the new road has not eased rush hour congestion as much as the Highways Agency promised, hinting that the new road may encourage people to drive who didn't before. He agreed Newbury's traffic problems will soon be back to square one. Still, at least Lib Dem Newbury MP David Randel is pleased. He says the road has been "the fulfillment of our dreams".

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## KAOS IN KOREA

South Korea used to be the showcase economy, a shining example of how great free enterprise and capitalism was. After the Korean war and the split with communist North Korea, the Masters of the Universe set about transforming South Korea into an investor's paradise. Koreans were promised all the riches of Western style consumerism, and so much cash around that they could even afford to be nice to their workers. Growth levels went through the roof and South Korea joined the big league of consumer economies, while North Korea sank into poverty and isolation. And so the whole world witnessed the triumph of capitalism, and everyone imagined the boom would go on forever...

Unfortunately those nice men from the West who designed this miracle economy didn't mention some of the less savoury aspects of joining the consumer capitalist club, and the inevitable crash that hit the Asian Tiger economies two years ago came as a bit of a shock. Unable to cope with the end of innocence, the South Koreans needed to be taught IMF Lesson Number 2 - leaving the boom-time nursery. With fucked up finances, they needed a fat IMF loan (\$57 bn), which of course comes with Structural Adjustments - ie sacking people and cutbacks. There ain't no room in the rock 'ard world of free market capitalism for soft little mummies-boy economies, and in their youthful innocence South Koreans had developed a dangerous habit of giving people jobs for life, social security and so on. Keen to show the IMF how tough he could be, President Kim Dae-Jung started cutting services and 'restructuring' firms.

To implement all this you need to deal with any potential trouble makers like unionists, so the Public Security Prosecution Departments (PSPD) was created to suppress trade unions. So far this lovely piece of IMF weaponry has nicked 11 union leaders, and 60 striking union members, for resisting the government's restructuring programme. The PSPD's other strategy only came out when its former chief got too pissed one night, and let slip that they had actually encouraged an illegal strike at the national mint, to create an excuse for a savage clamp-down on the unions.

All this, and an on-going government corruption scandal, pissed a few people off, and 41,000 workers have gone on strike demanding an end to the IMF's plans and the PSPD's plots. Learning their new game fast, the South Korean government quickly engineered yet another naval 'confrontation' with North Korea to divert international attention, and vowed to hold out against the workers. SchNEWS is confident that with such dirty tricks and military posturing South Korea has proved that its really grown up now, and ready to play with the big boys in the deregulated, de-unionised global market.

## NOT SO POPLAR

Checky activists sneaked into a genetically modified tree test site on Monday felling and ringbarking 115 Poplars, that had been growing since 1995. In an anonymous phone call to Genetic Engineering Network the activists said "Genetic Modification of trees is a major threat to the environment and those manipulating the DNA of trees are using powerful but dimly understood technology and show contempt for our planet. They respect only profit for themselves and their shareholders."

Smash Genetics action - Saturday 31st July Meet 12 noon in Cambridge. For details of location ring 07808 191858 email [smashgenetics@yahoo.com](mailto:smashgenetics@yahoo.com) (bring transport with a full tank of petrol)

Check out the 1999 NORTHERN GREEN GATHERING next Wed 28-1st August, Pontefract, WYorks £30 Tel:0113 224 9885 The Northern Permaculture Convergence will be there to put permaculture in the north on the map.

## INSIDE SCHNEWS

"It is vital that people such as Michal are defended from victimisation by the state. On July 30th we will burn a Czech flag, symbolising the Czech States' collusion with neo-nazis. We call on the Czech prosecution service to immediately drop the charges." A spokesperson for the Solidarity Federation, the British Section of the International Workers' Association (IWA)

On Friday 27th November '98 Michal was attacked by neo-Nazis. Convinced that they were aiming to kill him, he shot the leading nazi with his legally held pistol, in self defence, and escaped. Michal was arrested and charged with attempted murder. Though released on bail, he still faces up to 15 years inside. None of the neo Nazis have been charged with any offence.

The IWA believe that Michal has been framed for his political activity, in a country where more than one third of police officers are members of neo-fascist organisations. The Czech government is totally failing to deal with incidents of racism and xenophobia. Human Rights groups have warned that neo Nazi violence is now reaching "epidemic proportions" in the Republic, mainly targeted at the Roma Gypsy minority. Direct co-operation between police and neo-nazis is well known.

The address of the Czech Embassy is 25 Kensington Palace Gardens, London W8. Contact: The Solidarity Federation 0181 374 5027 e-mail: [da@directa.force9.co.uk](mailto:da@directa.force9.co.uk) Web: [www.directa.force9.co.uk](http://www.directa.force9.co.uk)

## Stalked

Last month the High Court decided to uphold an appeal by the Crown Prosecution Service against Diane Selvanayagham, who had the cheek to protest against Comyhaugh fur farm near Newcastle. Diane had originally been acquitted after being charged under the stalking laws for causing the owner of the farm harassment. However two wise judges decided that the actions she was involved in (such as candle-lit vigils and veggie burger stalls), were such a threat to the farmer's safety that they overturned the original decision.

The anti-stalking legislation became law in 1997, but the powers that be seem rather keen to use it against animal rights protestors. They are a lot more serious than civil injunctions that were previously used in such disputes, and can land people who break them with a 5 year prison sentence. There are weekly demos outside the Comyhaugh fur farm, Contact Northern Animal Rights Coalition PO Box 1JY Newcastle-Upon-Tyne NE99 1JY

## IN BRIEF

Workers' Aid have organised a public meeting entitled 'After the Bombing' with speakers from Prishtina and Belgrade. It's on Thursday 22nd July 7 pm Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London, WC1 (Holborn tube)

## ...and finally...

The new Lord Mayor of Belfast, Unionist 'Big Bad' Bob Stoker, has refused to invite 13 local Sinn Fein councillors to his inaugural lunch(out). However Sinn Fein local councillor Mick Conlon who chairs a sub-committee was phoned by the mayor's office to put together the official menu.

SchNEWS reckons it just shows that not only have the Unionists no ideas for the negotiating table but they have none for the banqueting table either. Perhaps they should bite the bullet and not the prawn cocktail?

## disclaimer

SchNews warns all veggie and vegan readers not to go all mad cow about the word beef in the front page story. Hey, we're not saying eat the stuff, its just a good example of the topsy-turvy free trade for all world we live in then we'll all be content, Honest!