

SchNEWS

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DRAG QUEENS TERROR

"Animal rights, and to a lesser extent environmental rights activists have mounted, and continue to pursue, persistent, and destructive campaigns. While the level of terrorist activity by such groups is lower than that of some of the terrorist groups in Northern Ireland there is nothing to indicate that the threat they pose will go away." Home Office consultation paper.

Yesterday's Queens Speech confirmed what SchNEWS has been going on about over the past few months, when a new Prevention of Terrorism Act was announced. The bill introduces a new definition of terrorism: "the use of serious violence against persons or property, or the threat to use such violence to intimidate or coerce the government, the public or any section of the public for political, religious or ideological ends."

Oi! you, pulling up that genetically modified test site, you're now a terrorist!

This definition comes from America's Federal Bureau of Investigation and will give sweeping new powers allowing the police and security services to target all those pesky protestors that have been getting in the way of big business making a nice profit.

It will also cover foreign-based groups and dissidents living in Britain, giving police and customs officers powers to seize bank accounts and other assets of suspected terrorists. Would that have meant people in this country supporting the ANC during its armed struggle against apartheid would have been targeted?

Ironically, the new measures are more or less identical to the 1974 Prevention of Terrorism Act emergency legislation, introduced in Northern Ireland, and whose powers were described as "unprecedented in peace time." How ironic that the government announce these brand spanking new sticks to beat protestors with on the same day as the apparent breakthrough in the Good Friday agreement.

SchNEWS, celebrating its fifth birthday today, would never take the opportunity to be all smug and say we told you so but... (See SchNEWS 224 and continuing hysteria about June 18th). With the definition of terrorism now so broad maybe it's time to drop all this direct action nonsense and instead sit at home, watch TV and go on endless shopping sprees....then we will all feel content. Honest.

Twenty Seven new bills yesterday, not all of them bad, but here's a few SchNEWS readers might find interesting:

TRANSPORT

When the New Labour shadow transport secretary complained that the Tories had dreamt up a crazy new scheme to sell off air traffic control he thundered "Our air is not for sale!" Er, it is now.

MANDATORY DRUG TESTING

If you find yourself the wrong side of the law, then the police will have the right to carry out compulsory drug tests.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

The bill that is anything but.

POST OFFICE

Rule changes which many fear are the first stages of privatisation.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Includes the end of the right of trial by jury for some people.

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS

At the moment e-mailers can keep their correspondence private by using software which encrypts or scrambles messages into secret codes. But if the government get their way people could receive a 2 year prison sentence for refusing to hand over their private 'key'.

MAD AXEMAN

People are needed desperately to help save the remains of ancient forest - Pressmennan Wood, near Edinburgh- from the chop. SchNEWS has learnt that this ancient forest - around 13,000 years old - is being logged again, "for the excellent reason of equipping stately homes with nice-looking timber." The activists say that a single woodcutter has a contract to cut down 369 trees - he's already felled 160 but the rest can still be saved.

A camp has been set up and more people are needed. Tel: 07771 771240.

REBEL ALLIANCE

Wednesday 24th November
7pm. Meet at the Hobgoblin Pub
Get their early as the brewery have taken a dim view of the alliance and we will be going to another venue.

CRAP ARREST OF THE WEEK

For going home: Michele Naa-Obed was arrested at the Jonah House Community in Baltimore in June for "leaving the district of Minnesota without permission and associating with felons" and given the maximum 12 months prison sentence. You see Michele had recently spent 18 months in gaol after disarming a fast-attack submarine and part of her parole was that she couldn't return to the house where she lived! While awaiting trial for the new heinous crime of living back home, Michele refused bail conditions which said she should avoid public protest, public speaking, live at a residence approved by the court and associate only with law-abiding persons!

As the Virginia Pilot magazine points out "It's amazing how we become more like the countries we criticise, and worse yet, put sanctions on, because of their abuse of human rights."

NO BUDGET DAY

New Labour reckon yesterdays Queen's Speech was all about "enterprise and fairness" but there were lots of sticks to bash those who don't want to play the game.

Coupled with last weeks tight-fisted budget, the boot is really being put into those lazy ne'er do wells who refuse to take dead-end low-paid jobs.

It's the end of the "something for nothing" culture (unless your a big business fiddling your tax like Rupert Murdoch) with a new benefits regime that "will be far tougher than people think" with the New Deal for everyone and anyone suspected of fiddling made to sign on daily.

As one commentator summed up "we are moving towards American workfare system, where not taking a job is not an option."

* If you want to find out more about all these nasty new benefit changes send an SAE for the latest copy of 'Where's My Giro'. Brighton Against Benefit Cuts, 4 Crestway Parade, Hollingdean, Brighton, BN1 7BL

DROP TILL YOU SHOP

"The plain fact is that we are starving people, not deliberately in the sense that we want them to die, but willfully in the sense that we prefer their death to our own inconvenience." Victor Gollancz

As SchNEWS went to press there were just 6 no-shopping days left until the 6th International No-Shop Day on Saturday 27th November.

The Ad-hoc Ad-heckling hit squad will strike in Manchester plus many other cities and towns. All will see sights such as bemused alien tourists and shop free zones. As this day of action is well established, instead of coordinated stunts, everyone is being invited to poke their tongue out at commercialism or a finger in the eye of the absurd excess of throwaway, consumerist culture. So either participate, or participate by not participating.

Adbusters magazine is available from book shops and www.adbusters.org and Enough, the Anti-Consumerism Campaign can be contacted at One World Centre, 6 Mount St, Manchester M2 5NS or www.enviroweb.org/enviroissues/enough

SEEING IS BELIEVING

Footie fans beware; PVI tells us they are "spearheading an assault on European Soccer". Did this threat come from an obscure Dutch football team heralding the return of the glory days of football hooliganism? Alas no, it is scarier than that! PVI is an American advertising company peddling new ways of getting you to buy more shitty products. Virtual Advertising gets products and logos right inside telly programmes, the USA is lapping it up and it'll soon be coming to a screen near you. By digitally attaching images to scenes before broadcasting. Companies like PVI can create adverts that are, in the words of PVI boss Dennis Wilkinson, "embedded in the magic of the show." So for a match broadcast in both Turkey and England, the sidings, team strips and even the pitch itself could show different brands in each country, even each region, allowing the ultimate in consumer targeting. It doesn't stop at sports advertising - sitcoms and soaps are full of characters 'unrealistically' using no-name shampoos, consuming unbranded drinks and passing anonymous shops, which PVI can easily change to Lor'al, P**si or Mac***alds. In fact, every episode of yer favourite soap contains thousands of potential sites for 'brand placement' so they can get you watching ads even when you think you're safe from commercial crap - or as Dennis Wilkinson puts it "From tremendous virtual spectacles to subtle product placements that you barely notice, PVI provides the magic. Viewers are being impacted by virtual advertising." And they'll never even know it.

* *Spy TV: Just Who is the Digital TV Revolution Overthrowing?* edited David Burke (ISBN: 1 899866 25 6) £5.00 www.whitedot.org "What is all the fuss about interactive TV? Interactive means that when you act, someone at the other end is keeping track, of what you watch, of what you buy online, of your tastes." This book tells you what it will really mean, and how to fight back.

Shamrock Ltd are the largest providers of monkeys for vivisection, if you are outraged that up to 300 intelligent, social animals are caged inside windowless sheds and subjected to a barrage of painful tests before being sold to vivisection labs, then come to the national demonstration at 12 noon on 28th Nov. in Small Dole, West Sussex. Save the Shamrock Monkeys, P.O. Box 3090 Brighton, BN1 3QU Tel 07020 936956

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SchNEWS in brief

There's a **Winter Solstice** gathering (21st December) at St Catherines Hill, Twyford Down, Winchester. Bring friends, mead and cake, music merriment and magic, camping tat. Needed: yurts/domes, good weather, Tarmac director for pagan sacrifice... Contact tel 01248 750539/ email sop04a@bangor.ac.uk ** Late shout for the **West Country Activist Gathering**, a weekend of direct action workshops, 19th-21st Nov at Calstock Village Hall, Calstock, Cornwall. Tel: 01822 833457 or WCA99@hotmail.com ** **Corporate Watch** has a brand new spanky autumn issue out now. Issue 9 looks inside the heads of corporate men and women, as well as specials on genetics and the Wal-Mart supermarket empire. £3.50 inc. postage from 16b Cherwell St., Oxford, OX4 1BG ** This year marks the 25th anniversary of **National Tree Week**, which takes place from 24th Nov to 5th Dec. Great - except its sponsored by those well known lovers of the environment ESSO. Contact The Tree Council, 51 Catherine Place, London, SW1E 6DY or www.treecouncil.org.uk ** Ibogaine is apparently a 'revolutionary medical treatment for drug, alcohol and nicotine addiction', and a speakers tour (including a Dr.Mash!) has been organised in the UK to blow its trumpet. For a list of dates ring 0171 287 2828 ** Medha Patkar from the **Narmada Dam** protests in India will be speaking next Friday (26th) at G2 SOHAS, Russel Square, London, WC1 Tel 07974 125411 email narmadauk@yahoo.com.

HORROR HOUSE

While Europe last week celebrated the tenth anniversary of the end of the Berlin Wall, asylum seekers to Europe might have something to say about the new wall being built around 'Fortress Europe'. Across Europe countries are closing borders and clamping down on refugees. Campsfield 'House' is an Immigration Detention Centre. It is run for profit by Group 4, and supervised by the Home Office. 200 people are held inside Campsfield, most are political refugees fleeing danger, torture and death. They are penned in behind a twenty-foot high, razor wire topped fence. Throughout the centre there are surveillance cameras and relatives wishing to visit are searched before passing through five secure doors. This is a high security prison! There are no procedures for detainees to make complaints. This means when they protest they can suddenly find themselves arbitrarily transferred to HM/private prison without appeal - a threat used to maintain order. Despite this a rooftop demonstration took place at the weekend by about 15 refugees complaining about their lengthy detentions (one has been in Campsfield 15 months)

A big demonstration will be held on the 6th anniversary of the opening of Campsfield - the 27th of November. These asylum seekers are isolated from the world and worn down to accept voluntary deportation. Let them hear that there are people on the outside on their side! Meet 11:00 am, Carfax Tower, Central Oxford, or 12 noon at Campsfield House.

Contact Campaign to Close Campsfield c/o 111 Magdalen Rd., Oxford, OX1 Tel 01865 557282 www.users.ox.ac.uk/~asylum

* The Home Office have applied for planning permission to convert Oakington army barracks near Cambridge into a detention centre to gao 400 asylum seekers.

* A network of groups have got together to take direct action against prison building in the UK As they point out "The British state sends more people to prison than any other in Europe and its getting worse." To find out more contact CAGE, c/o 180-188 Mansfield Rd., Notts, NG1 3HW cage@veggies.org.uk

WOT THE WTO!

"If they [NGO's] are allowed to hijack the World Trade Organisation talks, it will be a dangerous precedent that every government and every global company will regret long after the protests in Seattle."

Business Week magazine

SchNEWS has banded on about the World Trade Organisation (WTO) enough recently (see issue 233), so let's cut the crap and just say that they're an unelected and unaccountable shadowy organisation - effectively the new world govt for multinational corporations. And their next round of free trade madness takes place in Seattle, USA from 29th November to 3rd December.

30th November has been picked for the big day of protest when tens of thousands of people will converge on **Seattle** and transform it into a festival of resistance. www.agitprop.org/artandrevolution/wto

On the same day in **London** Reclaim the Streets and the Strike Support Group have organised a Reclaim The Railways speakers and music evening between 5 - 7 pm to oppose tube privatisation. The govt want to sell of tube lines to Railtrack - a company more concerned about its £1m a day profits, (fattened by more govt dosh than when the railways were publically owned) than about preventing accidents like Paddington and Southall.

In **Cardiff**, there's a Street Party-bring an instrument and dress regal. Meet Band Stand, Queens St. 12 noon.

Up North, there's a *Doing It Up North* action. Bring a sleeping bag and head for the 1 in 12 Club, 21-23 Albion St., Bradford. Tel 01422 844710

* The Seattle Noise Ordinance where you could be nicked for shouting to loud has apparently been vetoed at the last minute by the mayor, who said "Grunge put this city on the map - we don't want to do anything that might damage that" - so presumably the police will leave us all alone if we turn up in ripped jeans, Nirvana T-shirts and teenage sulks.

* China this week came one step nearer to joining the WTO, a deal President Clinton said was "good for the United States, good for China, good for the world economy." (Nothing to do with China being the worlds largest 'untapped' market for consumerables) Leaving aside China's dodgy human records, it won't be so good for all the Chinese people. "The cost will be defined mainly by unemployment. The number of people out of work is bound to surge" said one researcher at Beijing's Academy of Sciences. A flood of cheaper agricultural imports could also risk devastating the country's rural economy which supports 900 million.

...and finally...

If you haven't got yer boss a Xmas prezzie yet, don't start fretting cos the Class War 2000 calendar should be right up your street. Anarchic photos and historical dates galore such as 15th April. *In 1912* Titanic sinks. More children from 3rd class perish than men in 1st class, 1st Feb. *In 1973* Australia - prisoners riot at Bathurst jail, burning it to the ground, 14th Nov. *In 1948* London - after a difficult birth due to the size of the baby's ears, Prince Charles is born.

Cheques for £5.50 to 'London Class War' at LCW, P.O. Box 467, London E8 3QX.

disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all readers not to get the ridiculous idea to start a weekly newsletter unless (summer) you like sitting in an office when everyone else is on the beach (winter) like sitting in a cold office when everone is in the pub.