



WAKE UP! WAKE UP! IT'S YER US VERSUS U.S.

SchNEWS

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SEATTLE'S A GAS

"I came here to get arrested – let's get back out there tomorrow" - Dan, protestor, Tuesday night

"My Trade Minister went to Seattle and all I got was this import quota" - T-Shirt for sale, downtown Seattle

"Whose Streets? Our Streets!" - Everyone!

Thousands of people are marching on Capitol Hill; the police are at a loss, their most vicious tactics ineffective against the masses gathered in the streets. The alliance of workers, environmentalists, students, human rights activists, anarchists, in fact everyone from the Church of the Underground Elvis to the Wobblies is rock solid. Hundreds of arrested protestors have cut their plastic handcuffs with nail clippers, barricaded themselves in the buses used to take them to the nick and are refusing to even give their names...yes, the SchNEWS team is in Seattle for what was gonna be a nice quiet winter holiday, and seems to have stumbled on America's biggest protest in decades.

As SchNEWS went to press downtown Seattle was still in chaos: riot police in armoured cars (called Peacemakers!) sped through the battle zone lobbing tear gas at anyone in the streets, while protestors still held many parts of the city centre, effectively shutting down the city for a second day running. A state of emergency has been declared; Martial Law is in force; a curfew declared every night between 7 and dawn in the centre of town *and* residential areas. The National Guard are on every street corner arresting anyone, riot cops still loosing tear gas at a peaceful student demos we write. For those Poll Tax/June 18th veterans who reckon they can handle the odd copper, riot police here are better armed than the average Storm Trooper, and the policy seems to be gas first, beatings and arrests later. On Wednesday afternoon a spontaneous march on Bill Clinton's hotel by the Steelworkers and hundreds of protestors was broken up by a constant tear gas barrage, gassing hundreds of shoppers, passers-by and people driving home. TOP TEAR GAS TIPS: Although we're not sure about toothpaste under the eyes, SchNEWS can confirm that vinegar on a scarf does help you breathe more easily.

SchNEWS has been bangin' on about the World Trade Organisation (WTO) for a

while (see SchNEWS 233, 190), but now as US Senator Pat Hayden says, "Yesterday no-one knew what the WTO was. Today the whole of America knows it as a household word, and they know it is bad."

Media attention focussed on the violence, but as one protestor said, "I don't think it's right to hurt someone, but property destruction is not violence." SchNEWS favourites like McDonalds, and the Bank of America lost their windows, while shops were pillaged.

Seattle is a pretty laid-back city, considering the amount of coffee consumed, so this was the first time the National Guard has been in action in modern times. An example of the hypocrisy which characterises American politics - in a country where you can buy rifles over the counter, the mayor announced that having a gas mask is illegal!

The WTO is a shadowy organisation that for the past five years has been busy dismantling labour and environmental laws under the guise of 'free trade' (see SchNEWS 220, 204, 187). Effectively this amounts to world domination by multinational corporations, fronted by national govts, with surprise, surprise the good ol' U.S. of A running the show. Seattle is the location for thrashing out new agreements, and activists have been arriving for over a week to show their opposition. The aim of the protests was to shut down the meetings - and shut them down they did, with Tuesday's opening ceremony delayed, then finally abandoned as delegates were stopped from entering the Conference centre. Thousands laid siege, blocking the streets in the face of tear gas, pepper spray, concussion grenades, and rubber bullets.

Many have been injured, protestors and delegates alike complaining about the cops' reckless and enthusiastic use of weapons. The crowds were later joined by a 40,000 strong union crowd, worried that the WTO will mean even greater job losses, worse working conditions, lower pay, less job security and greater profits for bosses. Students and schoolchildren walked out, and taxi-drivers with their own grievances went on strike, as buses were under siege round the Western Hotel in a situation reminiscent of Custer's last stand.

By Wednesday the protests were

CRAP ARREST OF THE WEEK

For juggling! Someone was nabbed by the taste police at the WTO protest in London on Nov. 30th for 'going equipped to cause wilful criminal damage'. And not even for trying to single-handedly bring down international capital. No, for twirling fire chains. His clothes were seized, his house searched, and then he was released until the cops can prove he'd set light to one of their vans.

smaller, anyone daring to raise their voice facing arrest and being shipped off to a naval base. The pre-conference hype had been immense, making Seattle the world's most clued-up city on the WTO. Everyone had an opinion, most unfavourable. One garage attendant told SchNEWS the WTO was "a global conspiracy to make us all eat poison shit."

An aircraft flew over on Sunday spelling out 'People Not Profit'; a 4-page spoof section of the Seattle Post Intelligencer was slipped into thousands of the papers. You could buy t-shirts, caps, and a whole range of other merchandise - even the local strip joint was getting in on the act. Seattle has become a wealthy city, symbol of a 'revitalised economy' and home to Microsoft and Boeing. All this despite a massive homeless problem, the same poverty found in any American city and new laws recently passed to sweep the poor off the streets. As one local paper asked, "Is Seattle nuts?" As Texas DJ and former senator Jim Hightower put it, "they got the fat cats, we got the alley cats." Preparations for the arrival of the WTO included a federal grant *and a stash of hidden medication in the event of a major biological or chemical attack!*

This was the 2nd time Clinton had flown into mass protests over the WTO, last May in Geneva, he saw 5,000 protestors, when cars were torched, offices occupied and trashed, etc (see SchNEWS 168). Clinton's hopes of ending his presidency on a high note, making up for last year's indiscretions and showing the U.S.'s command of international affairs has gone up in smoke. Last year the WTO were complaining about a low press profile, now it probably wishes it could crawl back into its murky world of secret tribunals and hope the protests go away.

ANTI-WTO CRAZY

On 25 Nov. 5000 French farmers with their sheep, ducks and goats, feasted on regional products under the Eiffel tower in protest at the impact of trade liberalisation. On Tuesday, 800 miners clashed with cops, ransacking a tax office and burning cars in 2 towns in eastern France.

The more random 'Spackparade' in Berlin left police confused as protesters waved mock banners demanding more order, more security and 'wealth for eels' (a pun on wealth for all).

In Iceland anti-American protests targeted a military base and embassy demanding "Yanks Out" (a promise still unkept since WW2).

At the home of the WTO in Geneva, a city of only 300,000 managed to produce 5,000 protestors made up of farmers and city-dwellers, expressing their solidarity with the struggle against globalisation; the farmers gathering at the UN building and the city folk marching on the international banking district.

Food Not Bombs served up in Prague, and supermarkets were leafleted.

On the 24th in India, 300 scaled the fence of the World Bank building, covering it with posters, graffiti, cow shit and mud, while others sang slogans and traditional songs at the gate.

In London over 1000 gathered outside Euston Station in support of rail and tube workers, and for a privatised and safe rail network. Speeches were made, drums banged, and people partied (despite the dull presence of Socialist Wanker Parasites). Everything was peaceful until the rally had ended and some protestors charged the cops in the return of rabid riot ravers ruckus. A police van was set alight and protestors and lots of heavy-handed cops pushed each other around. Arrests were made, capitalism was mentioned, people went home. And remember folks: you're not obliged to say anything to the cops or have your picture taken! Earlier in the day there were protests in Trafalgar Sq about asbestos, and outside Citibank, about student fees.

In Leeds city centre, around 50 protestors (and yet more SWP sads) were faced by over 300 cops. In the face of these daft odds, people wandered around, handed out leaflets outside summary companies, and generally had a laff.

A disused garage and an old Toll House, soon to be "luxury flats" have been squatted in Totnes, South Devon to draw local people's attention to the WTO. In Cardiff a procession marched through the centre of town. In Halifax a Nestle factory was occupied and a banner dropped outside; 16 were arrested.

HUNTINGDON DEATH SCIENCES

The good folk who brought you the closure of Hillgrove cat farm are now set to bring you the demise of vivisection Huntingdon Life Sciences. The labs, in Cambridgeshire, will be targeted by 'avin' it mass protests until they close. Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty Campaign promise the biggest actions yet. HLS holds 70,000 animals at one time and was seriously undermined by campaigners a couple of years back before being bailed out by Nat West. The first national demo is set for Dec 11: details/leaflets/etc 0121 632 6460. Last Sunday's demo against **Shamrock Monkey Farm** in Sussex saw activists blockading Brighton town centre while the riot squad and EG units waited on a country lane 20 miles away. Nice One!! Save The Shamrock Monkeys PO Box 3090, Brighton BN1 3QU tel: 0702 093 6956

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Keep SchNEWS FREE! Send 1st Class stamps (e.g. 20 for next 20 issues) or donations (payable to Justice?) Ask for "Originals" if you can make copies. Post free to all prisoners. SchNEWS, c/o on-the-fiddle, P.O. Box 2600, Brighton, East Sussex, BN2 2DX.

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SchNEWS in brief

Check out www.geocities.com/newburybypass for a huge archive about yer favourite road ** 2 hospitals are being closed to make way for a **Private Finance Initiative** (see SchNEWS 210/219) 'superhospital' with losses of beds and jobs. Demo. on Sat 11th Dec, 11 a.m, Selly Oak Hospital: details c/o B'ham TUC, The Union Club, 723 Pershore Rd, Selly Park, Birmingham ** **meals without squeals?** this vegan recipe book for just £2.80 is right up yer street, from VIVA!, 12 Queens Square, Brighton ** **9 Ladies** need your help! Stanton Moor, the Nine Ladies Stone Circle and related areas of the Peak District are in serious danger if the application to re-open two dormant quarries is accepted. Tel 01332 663031 ** Got a **spare video camera?** A Brighton activist heading to Arizona to document the forced relocation of Navajo Indians desperately needs video equipment. Contact SchNEWS office ** Don't know what to get the folk this **Christmas?** Check out Green Books, AK Distribution and Pluto Press catalogues. Green Books 01803 863260 www.greenbooks.co.uk; AK Distribution 0131 555 5165; Pluto Press 0181 348 2724 www.plutobooks.com ** Ethical Xmas pressies? check out the **Fair Trade Fair** at Kensington Olympia 2, 10th - 12th Dec. More info P.O. Box 1001, London SE24 9NL www.globalpartnership.org *

Car Sick

This week, John Prescott incurred the wrath of car-lovers with his proposals for higher fuel duty and city road tolls. Even Scum readers demanded a series of one-day car drivers' strikes to show John that they won't be pushed around - so now brave 'Two Jags' announces the money raised is to be spent on more *roads* rather than public transport. Yep, folks...time to dust down Swampy and prise him out of his Armani 'cos 37 bypasses and motorways are planned over the next 7 years. And of course, there's also the Fat Hypocrite's sell-off of London Underground, although he's ousted Railtrack from this process, but privatization goes on nonetheless, including a widely criticised plan to remove air traffic control from the public sector. Overcrowding, high fares, delays and accidents are all a result of shareholders' concern for profits rather than people. But before you unpack yer climbing harness, get a copy of *Statewatch*. Cops are calling for new legislation to combat road protestors. In an interview in Police Review, Chief Constable Stephen Green calls for new laws and police powers to deal with non-violent protest and a change in definition, 'upping' road protest from public order to terrorism!! *Statewatch*: P.O Box 1516, London N16 0EW Tel: 0208 802 1882

SchNEWS AGGRO GUIDE: Mayday 2000

MayDay 2000, a 4-day gathering to be held across London from 28 Apr. - 1st May 2000. Conceived at the Bradford '98 conference and born at the June 18th action. Plans include workshops, speakers, into-the night discussions, stalls, a bookfair, film festival, art exhibition, footie tournament, tours of revolutionary London, a MASSIVE Critical Mass bike ride, plans for a permanent social centre, top gigs, parties, a May Queen event with a twist, maypoles, mayhem and a MASS ACTION in London on Monday May 1st to celebrate "our diverse struggles against capitalism, exploitation and the destruction of the planet." Any offers of help organising the festivities are welcome, as are donations. **MayDay 2000** BM MayDay London WC1N 3XX Email enquiries to : mayday2k@email.com Discussion group: mayday2000-subscribe@egroups.com www.freespeech.org/mayday2k

Inside SchNEWS

While you're all out 'avin it over the winter hols, spare a thought for those locked down and send a card, or better still a letter. It's important to support those who are serving time for trying to make the world a better place, and contact with the outside world can really make someone's day. Don't forget it could be you... Here's a list to start you off, for more info on letter-writing and prisoner support contact London ABC, 27 Old Gloucester St, London WC1N 3XX londonabc@hotmail.com

Harold H. Thompson, #93992, N.W.C.C, Site 1, Route 1, Box 660, Tiptonville, Tenn. 38079, USA

Edward Mark Williams, P15135, E Wing, HMP Wormwood Scrubs, Du Cane Rd, London W12 0AE

Mark Barnsley, WA2897, HMP Full Sutton, York YO41 1PS

Burley William, 097234 - A1 - P110GW, Box 221, Raiford, FLA 32083, USA

Hannah Thompson, CF 4997 - 01.20, HMP Eastwood Park, Falfield, nr. Wootten-Under-Edge, Glos GL12 8DS

Andrew Kerry, HMP Swaleside, Eastchurch, Kent ME12 4AX

Pablo Locke, MM2797, HMP Kingston, Milton Rd, Portsmouth, Hants PO3 6AS

Richard Gilbert, DP4786, Houseblock 3, HMP Belmarsh, Western Way, Thamesmead, London SE28 0EB

Will Hudson, HG0089, D Wing, HM Prison Blundeston, Lowestoft, Suffolk NR32 5BG

John Bowden, B41173, HMP Long Lartin, South Littleton, Evesham, Worcs WR11 5TZ

Tim Pockett, JW1522, HMP Littlehey, Perry, Huntingdon, Cambs PE18 0SR

Raphael Rowe, HMP Kingston, Milton Rd, Portsmouth PO3 6AS

** And another prisoner's being held in relation to June 18th. Letters of support: Darren Sole CW 9599, HMP Wandsworth, P.O. Box 757, Heathfield Rd, London SW18 3HF

...and finally...

After years avoiding anything more strenuous than rushing to the shops for a pack of biscuits, SchNEWS was very surprised by the results of a survey into people's attitudes to work published in the Financial Times this week. We're not sure who was interviewed or if they come from the same planet as we do, but here's some of the 'statistics' that had us running to get on the sick:

* 10% said they go to work because they enjoy it

* 2% go to work for the company of others

* 79% are 'very' or 'fairly satisfied' with their job

* 89% would seek work at once if made unemployed

* Managers are rated as 'very good' or 'quite good' by a staggering 78%

And the survey said, "Are you out of your fucking minds?" On the basis of the above, some employees are too unimaginative to think of anything better to do, have no mates outside the workplace, and love being ordered about by power-crazed nutters. The results might surprise those who continue to endure shit working conditions, get paid virtually fuck-all, and are on a one-way fast-track route to old age with no pensions.

disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all readers not to attend any illegal gatherings or take part in any criminal activities. Always stay within the law. In fact please just sit in, watch TV and go on endless shopping sprees filling your house and lives with with endless consumer crap...you will then feel content. Honest.