



WAKE UP! WAKE UP! END OF THE 20TH CENTURY FOR YER

SchNEWS

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More S&M than M&S

"It is no exaggeration to say that this decision will have the most disastrous impact on the UK textile industry for more than half a century.... they are guilty of an act of cold-blooded betrayal"

Des Farrell, National Secretary GMB Union.

Marks and Sparks, that good old fashioned British institution, whose carrier bags once boasted that they sold only British-made goods have now ditched that sales ploy in a desperate bid to placate angry shareholders who have seen their cash go down the pan.

M&S's overpriced and sub standard clothing has been blamed for their staggering 43% fall in profits this year. In a bid to recoup these losses they have resorted to the new trendy fashion (popularised by GAP) of employing child labor to churn out the same old tat. Their recent run of "bad luck" has also seen M&S plummet from 11th to 151st in the most admired companies poll revealed in this month's "Management Today" (see back page).

M&S said they would use "aggression and determination not seen before" in a bid to restore those oh-so important profit margins. All mouth and no trousers? These lot are all crappy trousers and no morals. The threatened aggression was demonstrated last month when they cancelled contracts with British textile firms in favour of buying clothes manufactured in dodgy foreign backstreet sweatshops making 4,000 workers, mainly women, jobless & cashless in time for Christmas! (goodwill to all men and the seasonal tinkle of cash registers-consumer heaven) Not so cheering for Santa's little helpers in Indonesia working for for less than 50p for a 10-hour day. With 1 in 4 of the UK's 300,000 textile workers employed solely in making goods for M&S, more redundancies are expected in the New Year pushing the number up to at least 8,000. Can't you just hear their hot toddy glasses clinking as the company directors congratulate themselves on their business prowess, and tough shit to the trusty employees of yesteryear.

"M&S say their customers don't care where their clothes are made" says Des Farrell of the General Municipal Boilemmakers, who will be demonstrating on British highstreets in the run up to Xmas in a desperate bid to mobilise consumer power to save these workers jobs.

Stella Rimmington, ex boss of MI5 has been hired to track down a new director for the corporation using all her secret service skills. Ms Rimmingtons appointment comes complete with security worthy of the frosty spy catcher. SchNEWS was informed by M&S that they were not prepared to answer questions over the phone but would send a glossy greenwashed propoganda pamphlet to interested parties. We're still waiting!!! It has proved easier to find info about the highly secretive Bilderberg group than good old M&S.(For more info on the Bilderberg group see the SchNEWS web site.) Presumably their investigations into this interested party have revealed an unhealthy preoccupation with parties of the techno variety.

Indonesian trade union and labour rights advisers have pulled-up M&S on switching their production to the Indonesian textile industry and investing in clothing produced by grossly underpaid child labourers. They have revealed that working conditions in the factories M&S patronise are so bad that employees are developing chronic health problems made worse by living in slum conditions as a result of their shitty wages.

So, to be a happy shopper, next time you're in M&S check the label b4 you buy, and remember folks, don't get palmed off with all that sweatshop bollox, let them know you've had enough of our high street stores putting prof-

SchNEWS FAREWELL MESSAGE FOR THE MILLENNIUM

SchNEWS is having a three week winter break cos we deserve it. Unless the Millennium Bug nutters were right and civilisation collapses, the next issue will be out on **7th January 2000**. Now, if you're looking for a New Years resolution why not help SchNEWS out next year. Although it's only two bits of A4 and therefore obviously isn't much work at all (honest), somehow it miraculously comes out most weeks. But we can always do with more people getting involved. So, why not come along to our next Training Day on 12th January... Ring to book your place now.

* If you bought raffle ticket numbers 5, 32 or 60 at our birthday bash and want to claim your prize give the office a ring quick sharp.

CRAP ARREST OF THE WEEK

For hiding from the rain!

A resident of Faslane Peace camp was shopping for candles in Glasgow City Centre last week, when it suddenly started to pour down with rain. Diving for cover in the nearest shop doorway to shelter and roll a cigarette, she was immediately arrested for Breach of the Peace and kept for six hours in a cell. Well that's one way of keeping dry.

For preventing kids being run over!

Derek Potter was arrested after building his own zebra crossing outside his cafe in Swansea. Derek sent a petition to the local council after his six year old daughter suffered a broken leg after being hit by a car. The Council replied that they had 50 requests for crossings but could only afford to build one this year (does that mean it would take half a century to build them all?) So Derek went out one evening, installed battery operated beacons and railings and began painting the zebra crossing himself, before being nicked by the cops. "I had to do it in the middle of the night when there was little traffic around," said Derek. "The playground is just over the road and children are always risking their lives to get there."

Don't forget to keep sending SchNEWS yer crap arrests

its before people, we ain't buying it any longer. Keep the Xmas stress levels down by buying your pressies from ethically-sound shops who are members of British Fair Trade Shops Or better still, don't bother shopping at all.

DOWN THE PAN 2

The Teigngrace campaign has had its second and final victory this week. In brief the open cast mine company, Watts, Blake and Bearne (WBB) dig up beautiful stretches of land to mine for white china clay which is then exported to Germany to make toilets. The Germans were shitting faster than the company could find clay, so they decided to extend their quarry, which meant redirecting two rivers, trashing old orchards and digging up badger sets. A camp was set up in the summer of '97 to call for a public enquiry, which they got.

Two years later the villagers of Teigngrace have just won the public enquiry! WBB are to pay £100,000 in costs to both the Teigngrace Parish Council and the Devon Wildlife Trust. The land is now in the pipeline to become a SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest) Nice-One! ps. SchNews would like to note that plans on how to build compost toilets are now available in German from all recommended retail outlets.

BIG UP BIG BUSINESS

After the collapse of the World Trade Organisation talks in Seattle (see last weeks SchNEWS) the Financial Times has been whinging on that people are increasingly seeing big business in a bad light. So SchNEWS would like to repair some of that damage by reporting on the "Oscar of the British business world." At the beginning of this festive month Tesco scooped the award, given by Management Today, for the most admired company for a record breaking three consecutive years, while Sir John Browne of BP Amoco won Britain's most admired Chief Executive.

TESCOS out of town shopping centres - get 3 green-sites destroyed for the price of 2!

BP AMOCO Top-dog polluters of land, sea & air with dodgy connections to the Colombian military

Runners-up include SchNEWS faves like VODAPHONE Who backed the Newbury Bypass, then got permission to build a massive new HQ in greenbelt land beside it, after bribing Newbury Council that they'd leave if they didn't get their own way.

GRANADA GROUP As the Public Sector Privatisation Unit told SchNEWS "Even though Granada are on the low pay commission, they actually fought hard to keep the minimum wage as low as possible." Cos we all know pay keeps yer profits higher.

UNILEVER You might not have heard of these people but they are one of the worlds biggest food and household goods corporations and they've got their dirty little fingers in every pie from tea plantations (they own 20% of the tea-market) to animal testing. They're also big on human rights - which is why they lobbied the World Trade Organisation (remember them?) to get them to overturn a Massachusetts's law which refused to award public contracts to companies that do business with Burma.

ASTRA-ZENECA We have this lovely company to thank for the first introduction of commercial gm novel foods to Europe, in the form of tomatoe puree.

SchNews just can't see why big business are having such a hard time and so would like all our readers to use this the season of goodwill as an opportunity to love thy corporate neighbour and spend, spend, spend making sure they've got enough capital for the next millennium.

* According to some estimates, the value of City Christmas bonuses could exceed £1 billion to be shared out amongst a few thousand how-do-they-manage-living-on-the-breadline stockbrokers, investment bankers and the like. Again we ask our readers to spare a thought for them this Yuletide.

Or maybe take out a subscription to Corporate Watch magazine, 16b Cherwell St., Oxford, OX4 1BG www.corporatewatch.org. Send an SAE for a copy of their resources list with all the dirt on the oil industry, supermarkets, genetics etc.

** Is somebody taking the piss - this year's American Business Ethic award was on its way to McDonalds when the whistle was blown by an animal rights group that McDonalds mistreat their animals before killing them and sticking them in buns.

Business Ethics magazine reckoned the company deserved the gold-star award for its "excellence in environmental management" such as recycling. (SchNEWS points out, if people ate off proper plates with knives and forks in the first place, then there wouldn't be a problem with recycling.) The magazine added, "We see you as a giant that is trying to step carefully." Pass the recycled sick bag

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SchNEWS in brief

French firefighters, some of them wearing gasmasks, clashed with police by the Eiffel Tower this week, tearing down protective barriers and throwing stones and bottles injuring 53 coppers. Rather ironically, the police used water cannons on the firefighters who want earlier retirement and their job's officially considered a "risky profession", which would provide them with extra benefits.**

There's a Winter Solstice Celebration and Full Moon Party at Catherines Hill, Twyford Down, Winchester. (Dec 21/22). They need yurts/domes to stay warm and cosy and a Tarmac director for a pagan sacrifice. Bring booze and cake! Tel 01248 75039 email sop04@bangor.ac.uk ** Primal seeds "exists to challenge corporate domination of the global seed supply." www.primalseeds.org ** Spiral, is a new womens centre in an environmentally-welcoming squat at 402 QueensBridge Rd, Dalston E8, free entry. For info 01712542227 or Email-ROSTENKA@Netscapeonline.com **

Leonard Peltier, the imprisoned Indian leader who has been languishing in an American jails for the past 23 years has just written a book, 'Prison Writings: My Life Is My Sun Dance' published by St. Martin's Press. ** A new camp has been set up to defend Stanton Moor in the Derbyshire part of the peak district. The site is under threat from a proposed quarry development that recieved planning permission in 1952 - permission that would never be approved if it went up for planning now. The camp has good local support, especially since the quarry company has been threatening villagers with violence, including a local shop for having a stop the quarry petition! Tel 07977748436. HTTP://pages.zoom.co.uk/~nineladies

NARMADA OFFICES RANSACKED

The Save The Narmada River campaign office in Gujerat, India, has been ransacked, and an activist threatened at knife-point, by pro-dam vigilantes. The campaign is fighting against the destruction of their valley against a series of large dams that is already displacing hundreds of tribal folk from their ancestral land. The issue is sensitive in Gujerat as many people have been duped by the widespread propoganda of the State Government who, needless to say, have vested interests in the proposed Narmada dams.

Six men stormed the building. The one activist in at the time was beaten up, held at gun and knife point, and told to leave Gujerat or face dire consequences. Documents were burnt, the computer was destroyed, and money was stolen. The office has been receiving threatening calls since October, warning the protesters that they will be killed if they do not leave the state.

For an excellent lowdown on the campaign, read For The Greater Common Good by Arandhati Roy.

For more info contact narmadauk@yahoo.com

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In addition to 50 issues of SchNEWS, each book contains articles, photos, cartoons, a "yellow pages" list of contacts, comedy etc. All the above books are available from the Brighton Peace Centre, saving postage yer tight gits.

GLEN OF THE COMEDOWNS

Last week, the supreme court rejected an appeal by environmentalists who have been trying to stop the building of a £20million dual carriageway through the Glen of the Downs.

The Glen is a beautiful broad leafed forest between the Sugar Loaf mountains in north county Wicklow. Wicklow County Council is widening and expanding the Arklow-Dublin road, linking Larne with Paris. The men and machines are bludgeoning miles of oak, beach and hazel, and aim to cut down 2000 trees. The Glen of the Downs was proposed as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) by Dúchas, the Irish Government's heritage service, and should enjoy the protection of European Law. However, bureaucratic bullshit came to the rescue of the forces of environmental destruction as officials took 4 years too long to send a list of SAC sites to the EU, prompting them to threaten withholding Structural Funds from Ireland.

Eviction of the longest Irish road protest started on 10th December, and despite lock-ons and people up trees, some trees were felled because there weren't enough people to defend the whole site, so ring the number below and get yerselves down there.

What with roads being a much more eco-friendly method of transport than trains, as part of the National Development Plan, the National Roads Authority received £4.8 billion, while the public train system received nothing. Ireland, long famed for its unbelievable traffic jams and congestion caused by the fast pace of modern life, may soon breathe a sigh of relief. According to the National Road Authority, "there will never be another traffic jam in Ireland. Congestion can become an unpleasant memory for the people of Ireland." Just like the trees and habitat they nurture. Directions etc from Dublin Friends of the Earth: 0035 31497 3773/3734 or website www.emc23.tp/glen/news.htm

Urgent: Hockley Protest camp in Essex, set up to prevent 66 luxury houses being built on greenbelt land, is being evicted too. People desperately needed. Tel: 08381 717815 for directions and info.

FOOD GRAB

Last week the Chateau Champlain hotel in Montreal, was invaded by the "Commando-bouffe" who "reappropriated" buffet food and brought it outside to a 100 + waiting support demo. People then marched along a street chanting slogans, eating and giving food to beggars and street people. The bouffe commented "These food-grab actions are done during the Christmas season, when we hear all this crap about helping the poor and homeless. The poor should just help themselves, which is what they did today."

...and finally...

Looking for a Christmas present for a loved-one whose feeling all paranoid about their job security. SchNEWS may have just the answer to push them over the edge, and make 'em have a thoroughly miserable Yuletide.

"How to Dismiss Staff" is the catchy title from the Employers Institute that has apparently been selling like hot-pants and has been a godsend to some employers already. "We needed to dismiss Tim or face disaster. This book showed us how." This is a practical, step-by-step guide for employers to give their workers the heave-ho quickly and efficiently on issues such as lateness and having a life, without having to cough up unfair dismissal damages.

disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all readers not to attend any illegal gatherings or take part in any illegal activities. Always stay underneath the mistletoe. In fact just stay in, watch the Queen's speech and go on endless present opening sprees filling your lives and homes with endless consumer crap...then you'll feel content. Honest!