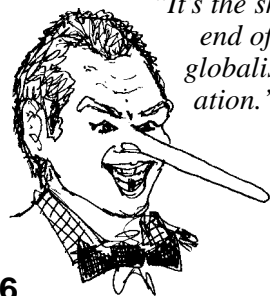




WAKE UP! WAKE UP! IT'S YER BULLSHIT BUSTIN'

SchNEWS

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"It's the sharp end of globalisation."

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BLAIR-FACED LIAR

A week after the massive protests in Genoa, the free-trade-is-good-for-you brigade are on the offensive. In the New Labour corner Prime Minister Blair and Chancellor Gordon Brown went on a tour of Brazil and Argentina with an official government spokesman saying, "The Prime Minister believes people at the sharp end of the globalisation debate have a much more realistic view of the benefits of globalisation."

Maybe the 12,000 people attending the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre, Brazil earlier this year just weren't listening. The Forum was set up to counter Davos - another one of those corporate shindigs where the ruling elite decide how to carve up the planet - and to declare that "another world is possible." Francois Houtart from the World Forum of Alternatives certainly hasn't got Blair's message. In Porto Alegre he described globalisation as "a fragmenting and destructive process; destroying communities, cultures, economies and the environment."

Meanwhile in Argentina this week, thousands of jobless people and state employees set up roadblocks in more than 40 cities, protesting at the government's austerity plan and demanding jobs. Argentina has been in recession for the past four years and the government's answer to this economic hiccup is the usual one of slashing wages, pensions, deep spending cuts and increasing privatisation. This is in order to save about a billion quid, and to assure creditors that it won't default on its debt which, currently stands at a staggering £91.5 billion.

Blair reckons the spending cuts were "a very significant step forward" but for who? The banks maybe, but certainly not for ordinary Argentinians. In a ruling last year a federal judge concluded "Since 1976 our country has been put under the rule of foreign creditors and under the supervision of the International Monetary Fund by means of a vulgar and offensive economic policy that forced Argentina to go down on its knees in order to benefit national and foreign private firms."

Moore of the Same

Over in the World Trade Organisation corner, Director General Mike Moore has been seriously getting his neo-liberal knickers in a twist. At a two-day meeting in Geneva this week he told negotiators to pull their fingers out or there won't be a new global trade round in Qatar in November. Moore is scared that the WTO will become irrelevant if a new trade round isn't launched after the kicking it got in Seattle (see

SchNEWS 240). Along with his pals in the European Commission and some of the world's richest countries, he's been threatening developing countries by telling them that "a[nother] round would help the poor and weak countries more than anyone else. The big guys can fend for themselves. But without multilateral rules, the poor are subject to the law of the jungle."

Like Blair, Moore doesn't take too kindly to the "stuff-capitalism posse", telling anyone that will listen "If you oppose the WTO, you are opposing lifting the poor out of poverty."

But it's not only protestors who oppose a new round. India's Ambassador to the WTO, Srinivasan Narayanan, said just a few weeks ago, "We're not ready for it [a new round]. We'll lose more than we'll gain."

While one delegate from Lesotho added "What has the WTO and market liberalisation brought for Lesotho? Up till now, I haven't seen anything. The only thing I have seen is the opposite. The agreement on agriculture has almost wiped out our domestic industry." Federico Cuello Camilo the Dominican Republic's Trade Ambassador added "The WTO was supposed to have been an impartial referee of common rules, where countries could learn to play the game...It hasn't turned out like that. The rules are biased against the weak, and nothing has changed since Seattle."

As Aileen Kwa from Focus on the Global South points out, "Negotiations at the WTO institutionalise the law of the jungle. Arm-twisting is commonplace and weak countries are constantly threatened that their food aid would be cut off, or their loan suspended, if they do not tow-the-line." She adds, "While the majority of developing countries are refusing to back down, their positions could easily collapse without massive civil society backing."

The real problem for Blair, Moore and cronies is the growing movement opposed to the way the world is being run. At its most spectacular you've see it on the streets and TV screens when the global elite meet up to plan further carving up of the planet. But every day across the world people are fighting for a better, fairer world.

* Trade Union leaders worldwide have declared a Global Day of Action on November 9th on the opening day of the WTO Conference in Qatar. www.global-unions.org

* For more information on next year's World Social Forum and a full summary of this year's meeting check out www.forumsocialmundial.org.

CRAP NEAR ARREST OF THE WEEK

For looking too happy! A man hitching up north was standing by the side of the motorway trying to thumb a lift - as you do - when a cop van pulls up. "We have reason to believe you are under the influence of drugs," says the blue crew, "You look far too happy. We have reports of a drug-crazed lunatic wandering across the motorway causing havoc. You fit the bill. Now get in the van." The man explained that he was ecstatic cos he was on his way to see his newly born niece. The embarrassed blue crew let him go and sent him on his way.

* That global loan shark the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have slapped Ghana with a \$39 million fine "for misrepresenting the state of the economy", something the IMF should know all about. The fine comes just a few days after giving the same government \$46 million in new loans! As Soren Ambrose from the 50 Years Is Enough Network points out, "Is the most appropriate punishment for failure on this score to take away 85% of the money lent to a struggling economy a few days before? The fine must be paid now, but the people will be paying that \$39m back for years. The IMF's priority is not development, nor people. It's obedience. To the neo-liberal model, and to the IMF itself." www.50years.org

* For a detailed analysis of the Argentina debt go to www.personal.umich.edu/~russoj/debt/argentiniandebt.htm

Bare Faced Facts

In 1969 David Oluwale was the first recorded black person to die in police custody, today one person dies in police custody a week, without a single police officer being convicted. 'Injustice', a documentary film, has taken 7 years to make and follows the struggle and resistance of the families that have been campaigning for justice. Brian Douglas, for example, was buried with his brain missing. Due to the nature of the film, 6 police officers with the assistance of the Police Federation's lawyers are threatening any organisation that tries to screen it, because it 'accuses them of murder'. Commercial cinemas have been intimidated and only a sit-in at Conway Hall in London forced the venue organisers to show it. In Manchester, the 'arts' cinema Cornerhouse pulled out, but in a last minute change of venue, the Okasional (squat) Café managed to screen it to 150 people. Venues - not the film - have been served with threats because an injunction would bring the film to court and those 6 police officers would have to go on trial. If you want to arrange a screening contact Migrant Media on 0207 254 9701 www.injusticefilm.co.uk. Watch this space for details of a Brighton screening.

GENOA GOOD LAWYER?

In the aftermath news which is coming back is mostly in the 'verification' stage – but certain things are confirmed:

* Still at San Martino hospital: a German woman with a punctured lung, one person with head injuries, and another still in a coma. Meanwhile Sky – who is bringing a case against the police – was ordered by a Judge (higher than the Carabinieri) to perform a 'reconstruction' at the scene of the crime, but just before this was to happen the Carabinieri rushed in with a Deportation Order, which the medical staff at the hospital repelled by refusing to discharge him – and he still got to do the reconstruction. Sky will be home soon.

* 25 people from a theatre group moving around the no borders camps during the summer are still banged up in Italy. They were arrested on the Monday after Genoa as they tried to travel onto Frankfurt. They are currently in an 'investigative prison' – which they could be held theoretically for 6 months. The weapons they were found with included fireshow and juggling stuff, and the orange overalls and helmets with No Border No Nation stickers on them. Actions are being held at the Italian Embassy in Austria. www.noracism.net/nobordertour/index_uk.html

* Meanwhile the body of an English person – believed to have been dead a week – was washed up on the beach at Genoa.

* On Weds August 1st 50 activists from the "Ya Pasta! Collective" occupied the Italian consulate in Amsterdam in protest against the violence, as well as a noisy demo outside the Italian Embassy in London last Saturday.

* Renato Ruggerio – the ex-director general of the WTO – is to lead the investigation into the police violence. Well that's in safe hands. And while all police chiefs are still in power, the head of the Genoa Social Forum, (also the head of the Italian AIDS association) has been forced to resign.

* Around 47 people are still being held with charges – and money is needed to pay lawyers. Contact the legal support office in Torino - 0039-0115806888 blackout@ecn.org

* A whip round is being made to help six British residents who were arrested, to pay for expenses including the £230 air fare, phone bills, lost money and possessions, and funds to mount a legal campaign. Contact Genoa Bust Fund, MelanieC@theseed.net

WALK THE PLANK

A couple of weeks ago animal rights activists visited the home of the President of Capital Markets to the Bank of New York (BNY), the one that bailed out animal torturers and murderers Huntingdon Life Sciences (HLS). Hardcore pirates fucked up the twat's 30 foot yacht in fine style, drilling holes in the side, tampering with equipment, and when it began to take on water they cut the moorings and pushing it out to sea. The boat and dock were tagged up, and as a final touch the Amerikkkan flag on the money man's estate was replaced with a skull and crossbones. Nice one!

* Meanwhile, an animal rights sympathiser at BNY leaked internal documents listing codes to confidential info on the accounts of high profile BNY clients and put the info on the web.

* Over here, at the beginning of July campaigners blockaded the gates of HLS by driving up cars, letting down the tyres and then locking on just as staff were due to end work for the day. Blue crew in six cars, three riot vans and a helicopter fuffed around for an hour before security cut a gap in the hedge so that humiliated workers could finally leave. Eight activists were arrested after unlocking themselves three hours later and released without charge.

Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty (SHAC)
0845 458 0630 www.shac.net

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SchNEWS in brief

RIP Steve Coward, father of Rowan and Heather, a former activist at Menwith Hill, Molesworth and many other places, who died on July 14th, a few days after the birth of his grandson Joe. More giggles than frowns ** Sick of biased and ignorant reporting on the TV? Then head to the Cinematheque in Middle St, Brighton, 8pm, Aug 9th for a premiere of the **Indymedia Newsreal**. Focussing on ordinary people taking action. Only 50p in ** The 'Red, White and Blue Festival' happening next weekend (11-12) in Powis, North Wales is in reality a training school for Nazi thugs. Antifascists are meeting next Saturday (11) 10 am Welshpool Railway Station. More info 020 7924 0333 ** SchNEWS desperately needs people with a couple of spare hours on a Friday afternoon to help with the mailout and get paper SchNEWS out to activists, info shops and arm-chair anarchists. Call the office for directions.

WRIGHT IS WRONG

Earlier this month Mr. Justice Wright ruled in a court case that the Government was not liable for anything that happens to inmates in the privatised immigration detention centre at Campsfield, near Oxford. In August 1997 Group 4 security guards, who run the place, physically attacked inmates after they protested about conditions in the jail. This led to nine asylum seekers being charged with violent disorder and riot. The trial, however, collapsed when the court was shown CCTV evidence which totally contradicted the guards statements - basically it was the screws who caused the damage and started the violence (See SchNEWS 172/173). John Quaqua, one of the 9 defendants, sued the Home Office over his injuries and after a long case the judge decided that the government was absolved of any blame for the violence because the jail was privatised. This could set a dangerous precedent given New Labour's privatisation policy – not only prisons but schools and hospitals soon won't be the state's responsibility, especially if things go wrong.

** On 26th July 100 asylum seekers held in HMP Liverpool refused lunch and so started a hunger strike in protest at their inhumane conditions. They're locked up for 23 hours a day, denied education and forced to wear prison clothes. All this and their only crime was to leave their homeland because of either extreme poverty or state oppression. No court has sentenced them to serve time - it's only on the say of an immigration officer and it's often an indefinite amount of time they have to stay. Contact gregd@gn.apc.org ** Free Liverpool Detainees Demo Saturday 4th August 1-2pm HMP Liverpool, Hornby Road (nr Walton Merseyrail Station) Tel. 0161 7408206.

Inside SchNEWS

* A member of Solidari@s con Itoiz – who are resisting the building of the Itoiz dam in Spain – has been arrested and is awaiting transfer to another prison. Inaki Garcia Koch was sentenced to nearly 5 years for cutting cables on the dam construction site. The other 7 activists sentenced remain free and on the run. Show Inaki your support by writing to him: Inaki Garcia Koch, Centro Penitenciario, "Villa Hieros", Mansilla de Mulas, 24210, León, Spain

* Mumia Abu-Jamal, a renowned African-American journalist framed for murder (see SchNEWS 228), is in court on Friday, August 17th in Philadelphia. This is a hearing to take the appeal back to the state courts. Back in 1995, international demonstrations showed the US legal system that we are watching and will not tolerate their racist actions. Mumia has now been on death row for 18 years, it's time he was released to carry on the good work he was doing in his community. In the US, call 215-476-8812/5416 or www.mumia.org, Mumia Must Live! BM Haven, London WC1N 3XX.

RANK OUTSIDERS

Four years down the line (and up the trees), the West Wood of Lyminge Forest (near Canterbury) is finally safe from the developers. The Rank Organisation had wanted to build a leisure centre on over 1,000 acres of the North Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (SchNEWS 114). Protesters have made camp on the site since 1997. After Rank lost interest two years ago, other developers initially looked as if they might build some middle class holiday crap, but planning permission expired this April and no renewal has been submitted. Wahey! To celebrate this great victory, there's a De-tattooing Party next weekend (10-12 August). Walkways and platforms will be taken down, if we don't do it, the Forestry Commission will use heavy machinery and damage the trees. Bring climbing gear and other useful stuff for a clean-up and party. Directions and more info: 07803 173805 / 07767 604409 <http://westwood.enviroweb.org>

There are concerns that protesters will stay on in Lyminge, but don't bother, there are at least two other camps in need of support:

* Faslane Peace Camp (Scotland): monitoring and taking action against the naval base and the Trident nuclear submarine program. Tel: 01426 820901, or Trident Ploughshares 01324 880744 www.tridentploughshares.org for details of other peace camps.

* Nine Ladies (Derbyshire): a 4,000 year old stone circle in a Bronze Age burial ground, with abundant wildlife. Blockstone UK want to re-open two quarries last mined in 1942. 0797 404 9369 <http://pages.zoom.co.uk/nineladies>

* SchNEWS is planning a Protest Camp section on our website, so if you're involved in frontline resistance up a tree or down a tunnel let us know.

* Meanwhile, ten years after Twyford Down, Winchester council has gone back on its word and is planning a car park on part of an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The site was originally part of the old A33, which was dug up and returned to meadowland to make up for some of the damage caused by the M3 extension. 200 species of flowering plants and 27 species of butterfly are already established. The car park – part of a Park and Ride scheme – will reduce traffic to the city centre by a highly significant ½ percent. But now the Council are going to set aside yet another wildlife area. So that's alright then. Local residents are resisting the development.

POSITIVE SchNEWS

Based in Wales, Green Dragon Energy have designed and installed renewable energy systems in the UK and Africa. Their aim is to make renewable energy accessible to as many people as possible, as it's the only way towards sustainability. They design and assemble user friendly small to medium-sized solar and wind systems, which can be custom-made for personal requirements, as well as larger units which can be used with a battery bank or connected directly to the electricity grid to sell surplus energy. Green Dragon also offers training courses and a consultation service. Check out their new website: www.greendragonenergy.co.uk

...and finally...

The internet has its very own Oscars now, 'The Webby's'. The star of this year's ceremony was a gas mask clad raider who took home the 'News award'. The winner was announced but it was the raider who grabbed the award, running off stage after a brief acceptance speech: 'Fuck corporate media'. The flummoxed host's come-back was the classic 'Someone just took off with the award' line, while a masked up Indymedia reporter took pictures from the side of the stage. Rumours of the after party erupting in a cloud of teargas remain unconfirmed.

Disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all readers that the only round of talks we're interested in is 'whose round is it anyway?'