



wake up! wake up! it's yer rotten apple

SchNEWS

Printed and Published in Brighton by Justice?

NOMINEES



IGNOBLE PRIZE FOR WAR

Friday 8th February 2002

www.schnews.org.uk

Issue 341

BIG APPLE PIED

"This was perhaps the first action that was entirely put together by the 'bad' protesters. By standing up and taking action anyway, despite all the police and military force and manipulation of the press and public opinion we know are being marshalled against us, we are sending a message to the world that it is not necessary to be ruled by fear: we refuse to bow down to terror, just as we refuse to terrorise anyone else." -David Graber, *New York Anti-Capitalist Convergence*.

It was the usual thing we've come to expect - media hysteria and police threats aimed at scaring the numbers down. There was a difference though - this was New York in the wake of September 11th, where everyone knows someone whose been touched by the horrors of that day. President Bush had just announced trillions more dollars for the military and declared that anyone not supporting his policies was an Enemy of America. This was people taking to the streets to tell Bush and his corporate string-pullers that he didn't voice their grief - and he didn't bomb in their name.

The wartime atmosphere that has been whipped up by Bush and his billionaire pals in the wake of September 11th is aimed at directing grief and anger so that anyone challenging unbridled exploitation and the rule of powerful elites can be identified as supporting mass murder. More than a bit ironic considering who payrollled Bin Laden in the first place (the US government), but if you control the media, why waste an opportunity to promote capitalism as the alternative to barbarism rather than its creator? And that's what the World Economic Forum's travelling circus in New York was all about.

For the first time in its 31-year old history, the WEF was meeting outside Switzerland. They were all there - 2,700 delegates from Bill Gates to Colin Powell to less likely world-leaders like Bono and Naomi Campbell chinwagging over cocktails. It's estimated that they spent \$100 million between them on food and entertainment - so, just another boozy weekend for these folk, living the high life amongst the cleaners and cooks who make it all possible for them in the first place. As the New York Anti-Capitalist Convergence put it, "The WEF's choice to relocate to Manhattan is a cynical exploitation of grief, fear, and terror - they hope to exploit those emotions to make it easier for them to crush us."

The main protest on Saturday started off with a Reclaim the Streets (RTS) that immediately turned into a walk in the park -

Central Park that is. In the wake of the collapse of the Argentinian economy there was a definite Latin American vibe with samba, tango dancers and a whole lotta people banging on pots and pans, traditional symbols of resistance in Latin America. While the New York gutter press was trying to scare people off the streets, the people here were determined to have a party.

The RTS wound its way through Central Park to the start of the main march where about 12,000 protesters had gathered. It was a wide array of people, mainly from the US, marking the fact that in New York the rich and powerful don't speak for the people - and that grief over the horror of September 11th doesn't equate with support for the most right-wing government the US has ever seen (well, since the last one...) People vilified by the press as irresponsible troublemakers were demanding world-wide economic equality and an end to corporate power.

It was an entirely peaceful protest, but of course, this meant that the media who had talked up the violence pretty well failed to report the protests when they happened.

FAULTY TOWERS

And the 7,000 cops who had been mobilised for the event didn't sit quietly by just because the march was peaceful - at the beginning they arrested a group of demonstrators carrying plexiglass shields painted with colorful images. Janik Lewis, one of those arrested, said "Without any warning at all, the cops came running, targeting specific people, I had my face thrown into a barricade, some were pepper sprayed and battoned." Along with others, he was detained for 30 hours at the Brooklyn Naval Yard and charged with 'illegal assembly' at what was supposedly a legally permitted demonstration.

Smaller protests and action continued after Saturday's big event. Dozens were arrested on Sunday afternoon in New York's East Village when a 'snake march' - where people link arms and dance along streets and sidewalks in an unpredictable route - was met with riot police. New York Police Chief Raymond W. Kelly called for a crackdown on "hard core protesters". He must have heard his own call as dancers and walkers were met with pepper spray, violence and mass arrests. No permit for this one guys - you're goin' down!

As L.A. Kauffman of Reclaim the Streets said, "Some people were frustrated by the constraints under which we operated here, but holding these actions at all was a bold step.

Our movement is very much alive and seasoned enough to make solid and strategic choices based on circumstances." Or as one protestor from Brooklyn put it, "Seattle galvanized the movement. It said that we mean business. Today showed that there's a sizeable contingent of Americans who are fed up with corporate globalisation."

** 18 year old Sherman Austin became one of the first people nicked under the new USA Patriot Act, when 25 heavily armed FBI, Secret Service, and LPYD cops stormed his house and nicked him for masterminding anarchist website Raise the Fist. But not before asking him stupid questions. "Would you like to see George Bush Killed?" and "Why have you grown your hair, are you trying to disguise your identity?"

CRAP ARRESTS OF THE WEEK

Despite a ban on all demonstrations by Munich Council 10,000 people still protested against the NATO Conference on Security Policy last weekend, where government officials hobnobbed with 500 odd military experts. Central themes were the planning of current and future wars, the establishment of powerful mobile strike forces and the development of new billion-dollar weapons systems.

A few days before, the city council passed a law declaring all protests during the Conference illegal. The whole city was declared a "red zone", road blocks, were set up preventing people getting to Munich by train, coach or car, known activists were warned in letters and phone calls not to protest, organised info points and sleeping places were closed down and several people were arrested before it all began.

The police then desperately tried to prevent meetings and spontaneous demonstrations during the next three days, arresting people at random - 849 people in total - including a speaker at a press conference! Bans on demos are common in Germany, with one protestor telling SchNEWS "People usually still go ahead but it gives the cops more powers to nick people."

The main Trade Union building was surrounded by police for several hours, with people complaining that the last time the police threatened an official trade-union building was in 1933 when the Nazis seized power. Meanwhile Bayern Munich football club gave the police 1000 free tickets for their game against Bayer Leverkusen as a thank you to all the out of town coppers who'd been drafted in!

DON'T BOLIVIA THE HYPE

It's all kicking off again in Cochabamba, where two years ago massive protests halted the planned privatisation of the water system, (see SchNEWS 339). This time the battle is over Coca. For several months, the government has totally militarised the region in order to stop the traditional cultivation of the Coca plant, they have started a "war on drugs" – but the real objective of evicting peasants and indigenous people is that the land can then be sold to multinational companies. Over the last few weeks, dozens of demonstrators have been killed by the Army. Four soldiers were also shot during clashes which is a bit suspect considering the peasants don't carry guns on demos. Using this as a pretext the government had 60 community and union leaders arrested. The Bolivian human rights organisations have already denounced the abuse that they have suffered, such as beatings and wounds, electric shocks on the teeth, etc.

Parliament also voted the repeal of the parliamentary immunity of Evo Morales, one of the most popular deputies and foremost union leaders of the country. He now stands accused of being the "intellectual author" of the soldiers' deaths. Radio +, which belongs to the peasant confederation has been heavily damaged and closed down by the police, while organisations of other social sectors in solidarity with the peasants have also been brutally attacked. www.democracyctr.org/.

GUATEMALA'S GOING ON?

* Fancy a holiday that does more good than harm? Then we have just the thing – all you need to do is pack yer bags, pick up a passport and shift over to Guatemala to work as a human rights observer. The Guatemalan peasants union, (CUC) are urgently calling for volunteers to help defend their land rights and rights to protest without being killed. A British human rights observer told SchNEWS, "For the last three months the union has been in occupation of five large farms in the district of Izabal. They have also been blocking the main roads at strategic points and holding huge demonstrations in the capital... On the 23 and 24 of December three men were killed on the farms by the paramilitaries. As a consequence the union is desperate for foreign peace observers and human rights volunteers." If you're up for helping - waste no time – email them on: cuc@guate.net (in Spanish) and get yer flight booked.

POSITIVE SchNEWS

After going to a overcrowded and overpriced National Science week event sponsored and polluted by Glaxo Wellcome, a mum and her daughters were so unimpressed they decided that they'd run an alternative science event. They helped set up an informal network of people 'SEASoN' - South East Alternative Science Network, who've organised the Brickhurst Science Funday on the 16th March. The event will concentrate on ethical and environmental science and will run workshops principally for children on science, sustainability, nature and the environment. They'd like to get in contact with people who would like to help, or that can help with running a workshop or doing displays. Also if you'd like to attend the event then you need to book a place in advance. Tel: 01892 863 941 www.geocities.com/seasonscience/home

Subscribe!

Keep SchNEWS FREE! Send 1st Class stamps (e.g. 10 for next 9 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 0EF.

Tel/Autofax +44 (0)1273 685913 Email schnews@brighton.co.uk Download a PDF of this issue or subscribe at www.schnews.org.uk

SchNEWS in brief

Brighton's Premier Pirate Radio Station February 8-10 on 106.6F. Local DJs and music Sunday pm Free Speech – including SchNEWS 4pm. Live web broadcast at: www.radio4a.org.uk **This weekend starting on Friday (8th) is the 10 year anniversary since the start of the M11 road campaign. There will be an exhibition celebrating 10 years campaigning against Road building, being held at a house formerly used by security on the M11 Road Protest. 491 Grove Green Road, Leytonstone, London Images in Exile a photographic exhibit about refugees around the world by Howard Davies 25 Feb - 3 March (Closed Sat). The Meeting House, Sussex University 9.30am- 4.30pm. On Thursday 28 Howard Davies will speak about his work 6pm in The Meeting House** Seven people were arrested on Monday at Devonport naval dockyard during a protest against the refitting of nuclear weapon submarine HMS Vanguard there.** Next week 11-13th is the 'Bloc and Roll' at Faslane naval base, Scotland. Transport is going from around the country. Call the action line 0845 458 8361 www.gn.apc.org/tp2000 ** Want to keep up to date with the Enron scandal – "not just a business scandal, it's an indictment of our entire financial and political system" then check out www.alternet.org ** Next Friday (15) Lupercalia party is a benefit for the Queeruption DIY gathering in March, with cabaret, performers, kissing and whipping booth. It's in Shoreditch, East London for info/directions: 07947 489 617 or email: info@queeruption.com** Around 40 activists halted work on construction of a new logging road and bridge into the Weld Valley in Tasmania. The area has been nominated for inclusion as a world heritage site. A permanent camp has been set up to highlight the plight of these ancient wilderness and river systems www.tasforests.green.net.au

INSAINSBURY'S

For years Sainsbury's and their accomplices have been trying to build a supermarket on a derelict site next to Brighton Station. In 1997 the original proposal was strongly opposed by local residents, and was refused planning permission by the Council, a decision upheld by a Public Inquiry. Since the start public consultations have been organised by BUDD, in the absence of a democratic council. These consultations have shown that when residents have their say, they are well capable of sussing out that more developments will only benefit the fat cats.

Undeterred, Insanesbury's are back again, clutching a new (nastier) development application. This 'exemplar of 21st century urban development' includes (unsurprisingly) a huge supermarket, two luxury hotels, a car park that will obliterate the Sunday market, and "housing for key workers" (read yuppie flats). Never mind sustainability or open spaces – bring on the pollution say Brighton Council. The Council rejected the last application, but are set to accept the current proposal cos they have a development quota they have to maintain, passed down from Westminster.

The decision is due to be made at the end of the month. As well as a massive letter writing campaign, following last year's May Bug Ball further direct action is in the offing: watch this space...

Fundraiser for community resistance next Monday (11th) from 9pm, the Hobgoblin Pub, London Road. Protest outside Sainsbury's, London Road. Sunday 16th Feb from Noon. Bring banners, noise. Background info: www.solarcity.co.uk/BUDD

Inside SchNEWS

Nicolas Sguiglia has been issued with a deportation order after police violently attacked a demo outside Malaga immigrant detention centre in Spain. Nico was one of those nicked, after people blocked roads and chained themselves to the gates of the centre to try to stop vans carrying detained Nigerians who were on their way to being deported, from getting through. Although Nico has full legal rights to live anywhere within the E.U the Spanish government is using a loophole which allows them to deport foreign nationals without them being convicted of any crime. The international campaign to prevent his deportation can be found at www.noborder.org and support is needed urgently before the appeals deadline on Feb 15th. * Benefit party for Nico This Saturday (9) at the Radical Dairy, 47 Kynaston Road in Hackney, N16 * Two people who demonstrated against Britain's biggest arms fair are on trial next week (11-13) charged with "obstruction of the railway" an offence which carries a maximum penalty of two years imprisonment. The two were nicked after handcuffing themselves to the doors of a Docklands Light Railway carriage. They were trying to prevent delegates from Angola, Turkey and various other renowned supporters of human rights, arriving at the conference which in 1999 was found to be selling anti-personal mines in clear breach of the UK Anti-Landmines Act. The pair will be defending themselves on the grounds that they were acting in order to prevent a greater crime. Show your support outside Snaresbrook Crown Court, 75 Hollybush Hill at 9:30am Monday. Campaign Against Arms Trade 02072810297 www.caat.org.uk,

MAN. DISUNITED

Last Saturday, 50 people hung banners and leafleted around Manchester's historic Free Trade Hall, demanding that the building be returned for use by the general public. The hall is built on the site of the Peterloo massacre when militia attacked a mass meeting being held in protest of the Corn Laws and as part of the campaign for universal suffrage. The Free Trade Hall is a key monument of the struggle for democracy. It was built in 1840 to house the great Corn Law debates and to provide space for Manchester people to hold political, religious and cultural public meetings. The Manchester Corporation bought the Free Trade Hall in May 1921, "so that the Hall should not be lost to citizens." But now Manchester Council is all modern and new and have sold it as part of the councils asset-stripping programme to fund the Commonwealth games being held there this July. It has been sold to a private developer for £4 million, and is currently scheduled for 95% demolition to make way for a £45 million luxury hotel. Demolition is due to begin on 11th February www.freetradehall.org

...and finally...

Australia's Tabloid TV stations lost face big-time last Tuesday when they fell for a story about a gang of jobless sewer-dwellers plotting and getting militant in Melbourne. Gutter journalism sank to a new low when the country's biggest stations both paid for an expose on a fictional group of bin-raiding drain-dwellers called the Dole Army. The unemployment activists behind the hoax are happy with the attention – their www.dolearmy.org website received thousands of hits after the TV "exposes"... "They lapped it up like dogs," said one Dole Army rep.

disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all fat cats you've made a dogs' dinner of it. Honest guys.