



# SPAIN IN THE ARSE

**“Terrorism is not only a group of commandos who act, but is a project that tries to root itself in society, and to combat it, it is also necessary to struggle against the social, economical, political and also communication structures which support and nourish it” - Jaime Mayor Oreha, Spanish Minister of Internal Affairs.**

When Oreha spoke at the European Conference on Terrorism in Madrid in January last year his government was already cracking down on Spanish citizens' civil liberties; long before September 11<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of an international 'war on terrorism'. In the past year alone, belonging to the wrong political party, supporting prisoners, teaching the Basque language, publishing books and records, editing a magazine, being in a band, running a radio station, or simply being a journalist has become a crime in Spain. There have been mass arrests with people taken to isolation wards where they are often tortured then released a few days later without charge. This targeting of Basque political activists has now spread to anarchist and other radical movements, with raids and arrests being part of a general clampdown.

## Euro nicked!

No surprises then to find that Spain is using its presidency of the European Union to push forward radical proposals that would label demonstrators at European summits 'terrorists'. The document, issued last month to the European Working Party on Terrorism, states that they have "noticed a gradual increase...in violence and criminal damage (at anti-capitalist protests) orchestrated by radical extremist groups, clearly terrorising society." The proposals go on to state that this 'new breed' of terrorist menace are "organisations taking advantage of their lawful status to aid and abet the achievement of terrorist groups' aims."

Post September 11<sup>th</sup>, the European Union agreed new legislation for combating global terrorism, along with a European arrest warrant. The Spanish proposals go further, asking for a more proactive EU wide database to keep an eye on protestors. They reckon that this extension "would provide a very helpful tool in preventing and, where appropriate, prosecuting violent urban youthful radicalism, which is increasingly being used as a cat's-paw by terrorist groups in order to achieve their criminal aims."

But it's not just Spain that is widening the definition of terrorism; we in the UK are 'fortunate' enough to be protected by some of the

world's toughest anti-terrorist legislation. Barrister Stephanie Harrison, from the Campaign Against Criminalising Communities reckons that the Terrorist Act 2000 (SchNEWS 268), alongside its even tougher little sister, the Anti Terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001 (see SchNews 331), are not only criminalising dissent amongst the locals, but are a direct attack on the rights of vulnerable groups - mainly immigrant communities.

Dr Ghayasuddin Siddiqui, Leader of the Muslim Parliament of Great Britain told SchNEWS that the situation within the British Muslim and Arabic community is becoming unbearable. "We are the target of this legislation - there is a witch hunt going on - a fishing expedition... Innocent people are being harassed, families are being disturbed, children traumatised... there is a climate of fear in our community". And it doesn't stop there, as new legislation allows instant internment, providing the police with powers to detain people indefinitely without trial. Often based on the most circumstantial of evidence, Asians and Muslims the length and breadth of this fair and pleasant land are finding themselves being detained under this new legislation. Dr Siddiqui's message is clear "The whole Muslim community is frightened, intimidated and traumatised; as a result the people are not getting involved in community activities, and people are asking 'is it worth it?'"

In January Yasadigimiz Vatan, a Turkish language socialist weekly magazine had its last two issues confiscated by police who said it was "property for the use of terrorism." Vatan has been distributed in the UK for the past two years so what has changed? According to one of its workers "The Terrorism Act 2000, which is not being used to fight terrorism but to fight democrats and prevent press freedom in this country."

## BASKET CASE

Pepe Rei, editor of radical Basque paper 'Ardibeltza' was imprisoned last year without charge (See SchNEWS 303) - on the allegation that ETA (militant Basque separatists) were using his paper for information, and so therefore *he* was supporting terrorism.

After being released 5 months ago because of lack of evidence, the same judge has shoved him back in prison again without any evidence and upped his charge to 'membership of an armed organisation'! 'Ardibeltza' has been banned, but a similar paper has since started on the French side of the Basque Country called Kalegorria. www.kalegorria.net (in Euskal/Spanish)

## CRAP ARREST OF THE WEEK

*For sitting down...*

At a protest against the arrival of the nuclear submarine H.M.S. Vanguard to Plymouth Davenport Docks, a 62 year old granny was nicked for sitting down outside the base. After being held for six hours she was released, but as part of her bail conditions she is now banned from using the Tor Point ferry which is her mode of transport to get to Plymouth for shopping and the bank.

Estella Schmidt from the Kurdish National Congress (KNK) told us that as far as UK based Kurds are concerned it is more a case of harassment than actual detention. Demonstrators are constantly being filmed, and follow up calls from police to homes of Kurds is commonplace often late at night and unannounced. "These people are not from this country, and despite protesting innocently, and making it quite clear that they are not supporting terrorists, they are still harassed by police - it is similar to the way the Irish have been treated in the past."

As the Spanish example shows, it's not long before the authoritarian finger starts pointing at anyone who dares to disagree. Raif, a lawyer from Coalition Against the Terror Acts, told SchNEWS "With so much police activity against refugees and Muslims, many people are becoming complacent. This new document confirms exactly what we've been warning of for ages. All effective dissent will be treated the same: you are either with them or you are a terrorist and outlaw."

\* Coalition Against the Terror Acts c/o Haldane Society, Conway Hall, 25 Red Lion Square, London WC1R 4RL www.cacc.org.uk <http://go.to/ta2000>

\* To find out more about crack down in Spain <http://barcelona.indymedia.org/>

\* The Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) is today mounting a legal challenge to its banning under the Terrorism Act 2000. The PKK are one of 21 political groups whose activities were outlawed under a Proscribed Organisations Order which came into effect in March last year. Peace in Kurdistan Campaign 020 7586 5892

\* On Wednesday people across America wore blue triangles to show support for the thousand plus people - mainly Arabs and Muslims - who have "disappeared" since September 11<sup>th</sup>. Many of those detained are being held on the basis of secret evidence - or no evidence at all. Prisoners are held without being allowed any contact with a lawyer, and the US government is refusing to reveal their identities, nationalities and whereabouts. To find out more go to: [www.laresistencia.org](http://www.laresistencia.org)

\* For a list of anti terrorism events check out the party and protest section on our website.

## THE ITALIAN JOB

**"In my opinion these raids were meant to intimidate some of the only independent media in the country. Now that Berlusconi has given more money to RAI, the Italian equivalent of the BBC, he has direct control or influence over 90% of Italian print and radio media, state owned or otherwise."**

– *Indymedia spokesperson.*

On Wednesday morning, the Carabinieri (Italian paramilitary police) raided three social centres that were partly being used as offices for Indymedia. Two attorneys from Genoa gave the order for the nation-wide operation in which police seized computers, archives, and equipment as part of an ongoing enquiry investigating the events of last summers anti G8 protest in Genoa. The raid was meant to confiscate footage and info on the brutal police raid of two buildings during the protests (see SchNEWS 314/315). These were being used for accommodation, medical, media and legal services by protestors and the raids received international condemnation. Amnesty and the United Nations have each ordered independent enquiries into police conduct.

One of the social centres raided was the Cobas Trade Union centre, which with over 10,000 members is the biggest of its kind in Italy. During the raids police confiscated over 160 hours of original video footage of the protests including film of the murder of Carlo Gulliani by police and the school raid. Two days ago Italian Defence minister Skajola admitted that he did in fact give the order of 'shoot to kill' if any sizeable number of people moved into the red zone during the protests. A spokesperson from Indymedia told SchNEWS, "It's not likely that they will use the stuff they've nicked from Indymedia to properly investigate and try the police for murder and excessive violence. We reckon they'll just use it to identify and arrest more protestors...they already have loads of cctv footage of the protests, why else would they need ours too?"

Indymedia was established in Seattle to cover the protests against the World Trade Organisation, and the idea has now spread across the world. In the Berlusconi controlled media world of Italy, Indymedia is one of the few independants – during the G8 demonstrations they were getting over one million hits a day.

A demonstration will take place at the Italian embassy in London on Saturday. There will also be a demo in Rome on March, 16th. <http://italy.indymedia.org> Check out [www.indymedia.org.uk](http://www.indymedia.org.uk) for updates.

## POSITIVE SchNEWS

Question: How do you turn a vegetable into a dangerous pollutant?

Answer: Simple, just put it in the bin!

As much as 40 per cent of what households throw away in their bins is compostable, and yet the UK currently composts just 3 per cent of its total waste. So instead of being put in a compost bin and being turned into an amazing organic pick-me-up for the garden, it gets thrown into landfill sites where it produces methane, a potent 'greenhouse' gas and 'leachate', a liquid pollutant which can contaminate ground water supplies. Composted household waste - ideally home made - is an excellent alternative to using peat. Alternatively you can buy peat free compost, or get hold of some animal dung. For a guide to home composting check out [www.hdra.org.uk/](http://www.hdra.org.uk/)

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## SchNEWS in brief

This years **Big Brother Awards** are being held on 4th March at the London School of Economics. To check out the nominations for Worst Public Servant and Most Henious Government Organisation go to [www.privacyinternational.org/bigbrother/uk2002/](http://www.privacyinternational.org/bigbrother/uk2002/) \*\* **Street Medic** training weekend, essential first aid training for activists. 9-10 March at the film Akademie, overtoom 301, Amsterdam. Details [cia\\_infocafe@disinfo.net](mailto:cia_infocafe@disinfo.net) \*\* The next **Mayday 2002** meeting is taking place on Sunday 24th Feb at The Calthorpe Arms pub on Grays Inn Road, London 2pm\*\* **Central America** Conference with speakers from the continent, food and creche 9 March at Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts, Mount Street, Liverpool, and Sunday 10 March at The Casa, 29 Hope Street £12/5. Info and tickets from [ruth@esnet.co.uk](mailto:ruth@esnet.co.uk) \*\* A strike at a Paris McDonalds that has been going on since October has ended in victory, with the workers winning their right to go **back to work**- lucky them!. This was the longest strike in McDonalds history [www.ainfos.ca](http://www.ainfos.ca) \*\* A planning meeting for possible actions during the next **NATO conference** in Prague at the end of the year is being held from 9-10th March For more info email: [intersec@csaf.cz](mailto:intersec@csaf.cz) \*\* A community conference on the proposed changes to the council system in Brighton and Hove organised by '**Our Power**' 23rd Feb 2-5pm at Brighthelm Centre [www.ourpower.org.uk](http://www.ourpower.org.uk)

## AVIN' A PEASANT TIME

During the 1970's a number of peasant struggles started in Pakistan, with the most successful and militant land-grab taking place in Hashtnagar, an area close to the Pakistan-Afghan border. Organised by the Mazdoor Kissan Party (MKP), the peasants were able to liberate the area from feudal land-owners, who had always brutally oppressed the poor with the full backing of the state. Since those days, Hashtnagar remains a liberated area despite several attempts by the state to evict the peasants, with nearly 300 people losing their lives in 30 years of conflict.

Taking advantage of the "War-Against-Terrorism" hysteria, the Pakistani government is once again trying to take-over the lands of Hashtnagar. They also aim to retake Okkara, Khanewal, Sargodha and Pak-pattan in other parts of the country in order to reverse gains made by the peasant movement in Pakistan over the past 10 years.. On 22nd January, 3,500 police armed with guns, tear-gas shells, armoured vehicles and jeeps attacked the village. Tractors were used to destroy peasant crops. MKP party activists and students surrounded the armoured vehicles to stop them firing into the crowd. Police attacked another village several kilometers away in the hope that they would have an easier time of it since the men of the village weren't around. The peasant women attacked the convoy and again the police had to retreat. The same night police arrested a peasant leader called Gulab Gul.

In retaliation peasants attacked a police convoy, capturing some police officers, before going on to raid the police station where Gul was being held. Peasants then threatened to burn down the police station if their leader was not released! The entire area was surrounded by police arresting people who hadn't even participate in the fighting. 16 arrests were made in total, 8 of which were of people so old they couldn't even walk properly without support. The situations is very tense and may erupt into full scale armed conflict at any time. [www.ptb.be/international/](http://www.ptb.be/international/)

## Inside SchNEWS

Ulla Roder, an anti-trident nuclear protestor was arrested at the Faslane anti-Trident Blockade last Wednesday, is being held on remand until the 25th March. Ulla has refused to accept restrictive bail conditions and so police have said they will hold her for five weeks, even though this amount of time is far in excess of any sentence she would receive for the actual 'offence.' Write to Ulla at Cornton Vale Women's Prison, Stirling, Scotland SK9 5NU.

## FIRED UP

Last Friday part of Yarl's Wood detention centre in Bedfordshire, which only opened in November, was burnt down. The fire followed disturbances after an elderly detainee was being moved to hospital in handcuffs after a three-day delay.

At Yarl's Wood, as with other detention centres, asylum seekers are locked up prison-style. According to Emma Ginn from the Campaign to Stop Arbitrary Detention only 4 % of asylum seekers in centres are awaiting removal deportation, most haven't even had a hearing. There have been almost constant hunger strikes in protest at conditions since November. 07786 517379 [www.stoparbitrarydetentionsatyarlswood.co.uk/](http://www.stoparbitrarydetentionsatyarlswood.co.uk/)

## FOR PEAT'S SAKE

On Monday activists stormed six UK offices, plants and peat extraction sites in protest against the destruction of rare peat bog habitats. The actions were part of the campaign against Scotts, the worlds biggest horticultural multinational.

Peat Alert is a recently formed national campaign network, which aims to stop peat extraction in the UK and Europe. Danielle Locke, a spokesperson for the network explains, "Some of the most diverse and exciting habitats on this island are being systematically destroyed by the peat industry. Thorne and Hatfield Moors, Britain's two largest Peat bogs which support over 5,500 species, are being turned into grow bags by US Multinational Scotts. Once again, the call for resistance must go out to defend what little nature we have left."

The Moors are home to 25 endangered species and are an essential haven for fast disappearing peat bog bio-diversity. English Nature, Peat Alert and Thorne and Hatfield Conservation Forum say that despite decades of extraction having severely degraded Hatfield Moor, regeneration is possible if peat extraction is stopped. In a few years they reckon there won't be enough peat left to allow this diverse bog ecosystem to re-establish itself. Scotts disagree, claiming that the hydrology of the peat bogs is so badly damaged by years of peat working, it can no longer be restored and is not worth protecting. So, they're gonna keep digging rather than handing the sites back to English Nature to conserve.

\* Easter blockade 2002! 25-28 March. 4 days of direct action at the Scotts Peat works, Hatfield Moor, near Doncaster. Bring tents and equipment, food provided. 0113 2629365 [www.peatalert.org.uk](http://www.peatalert.org.uk)

## ...and finally...

Fourteen activists were banged up in Guildford nick for ten hours on Monday after police arrested them for the burglary - of three pieces of paper! After a seemingly smooth Peat Alert office occupation against horticulture multinational Scotts, the activists, who were driving home, were considering writing a book on 'how to plan and execute the perfect action' when they were pulled over by police and nicked. They have now been dubbed the Guildford 14 (plus one).

## disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all police officers attracted to anarchy that based on our evidence, the feeling ain't mutual.