

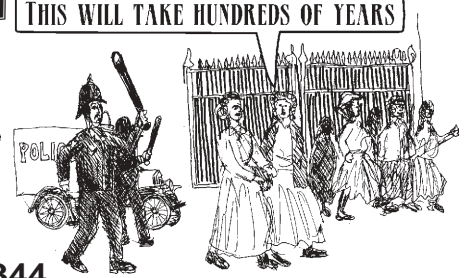


WAKE UP! WAKE UP! IT'S YER SON OF A BITCH

THIS WILL TAKE HUNDREDS OF YEARS

SchNEWS

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LADIES OF THE FIGHT

On March 2nd hundreds of women kicked off in the streets of London's West End. Armed with stones and hammers they smashed windows in Regent Street, Piccadilly, the Strand and Oxford Street, causing thousands of pounds worth of damage. Three women leapt out of a car in Downing Street and threw stones at the Prime Minister's house and the home office. Altogether about 120 women were arrested, 80 years ago, in 1912.

March 2nd marks 80 years since this mass suffragette demo. Protests took over the streets for nine months before women realised they would have to step up their militancy to get their voices heard. Women started burning the turf of golf courses with acid spelling "VOTES FOR WOMEN", breaking street lamps, torching letterboxes, chaining themselves to Buckingham Palace gates and attacking politicians on their way to work. Women planted bombs in empty houses and unused railway stations. They started massive fires. In February 1913 women blew up part of David Lloyd George's house - probably Britain's most famous politician at that time. Their first suffragette martyr was Emily Davison, killed when she threw herself under the Kings horse in June of 1913.

A year later over 1,000 suffragettes had been sent to prison for destroying public property. The jailbirds went on hunger strikes, and after the policy of force-feeding started looking too hard-line, the government watered down their response with the Cat and Mouse Act. This stopped the force-feeding, allowing the women to go on hunger strikes, and to get weaker and weaker. When they were very weak they were kicked out of prison so any deaths would not embarrass the government.

Forty years of peaceful protesting failed to win any changes for women. Women's suffrage only became a national issue when the suffragettes turned to violence. The first windows were smashed in 1908 and direct action continued until World War I. Once British women had gained the vote - a token gesture in any democracy - the struggle continued.

The First International Women's Day took place in 1908. Nine years later, after months of struggles and strikes, thousands of Russian women took to the streets to protest food shortages, high prices, the world war, and general impoverishment. Their defiance led to the last push of the revolution, and within a week Czar Nicholas II had gone. This day, March

the 8th, 1917, was then adopted as the official date for International Women's Day. In the early days International Women's Day was celebrated as a socialist holiday honouring working women. The third annual International Global Women's Strike has upped the profile of protests across the world on the same day.

Next Friday thousands of women will take to the streets and continue the centuries old traditions of disobedience twenty-first century style.

LASS IS MORE

This year's protests are being called as a reaction against the US government's militarist response to September 11. Women's groups are pointing out that amongst the hysteria nothing was said of the 35,000 children who died of hunger that same day, and every day, as a consequence of the policies of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. More than \$800 billion is squandered globally in military budgets that destroy life and guarantee the submission of Third World countries to globalization. The US government has already invested \$40 billion in this new war.

Demonstrations are planned in over 60 countries to highlight these global injustices as well as calling for recognition of women's unpaid, underpaid and undervalued work in and out of the home. In previous years' demonstrations, men have been forced to stay indoors for the night in the Colombian capital of Bogota and those that snuck out were pelted with eggs and flour. Meanwhile women in Uganda held a co-ordinated sit-down across the country, which led to the awarding of free hospital services.

Masked-up sex workers marched through Soho to protest against the council's attempts to evict them from their homes, and against trafficking being used as an excuse for deportations.

This year's planned demos range from one woman in Bolivia who has announced that she's planning to go on the game to support her family to huge high profile marches expected to attract thousands of protestors.

In India groups are organizing a

Women Speak Out
International Women's Day
 Anarchist-Feminist Weekend: 8-10
 March. Meeting to organise actions, discussions, films, performance, music. Vegan food for lunch and dinner. 'The Dairy' 47
 Kynaston Rd Stoke Newington. Info: 020-8809 1352 or 07985 365 992.

CRAP ARREST OF THE WEEK

For trying to live on their own land (see Bushman story overleaf).

meeting in Pithora where village women will put their demands to officials. They are calling for equal pay for equal work, land rights, safe drinking water, health and medical facilities, removing "untouchability" against Dalit people, and a bonus for Tendu leaf (smoke stick business that Tribal women particularly work in). "We are also raising our voice against globalisation, the World Trade Organisation, and the IMF which is affecting our people adversely."

In Argentina The Sindicato de Amas de Casa (Housewives Union) in Santa Fe which has co-ordinated the Strike since 2000, is holding daily women's assemblies in the poorest neighbourhoods as part of the popular uprising.

Women in London will be bringing pots, pans, and brooms into the town centre for an Argentinian-styled "cacerolazos" - pots and pans protest - in solidarity with their South American sisters. These noisy protests have become a feature of Argentinian life since last year's economic collapse. The first massive cacerolazos protest against IMF/World Bank policies brought down the government last December. Banging on pots and pans - the "tools of the trade" of those who do the vital but unrecognised work of feeding and caring, has become the symbol of the Argentinian uprising. The pots are now empty in most Argentinian households, but they are loud.

The London Strike Committee have organised a Whistle Stop Tour to Sweep Out the Global Killers: taking in Shell, Ministry of Defence, Institute of Directors and finishing at the World Bank. Lesbian/bisexual women are invited to march with the Dykes on Strike contingent. Rhythms of Resistance will be round for drum & dance Samba! Women mental health system survivors will protest outside a psychiatric hospital based near Shell.

Contact: International Wages for Housework Campaign, Crossroads Women's Centre, 230a Kentish Town Rd. NW5 2AB 020 7482 2496 <http://womenstrike8m.server101.com>

* *The Transfiguring Sword: The Just War of the Women's Social and Political Union.* Cheryl R. Jorgensen-Earp, University of Alabama, 1997.

* *The Disinherited Family.* Eleanor Rathbone, Falling Wall Press 1986

BUSHED AROUND

13 Bushmen from the Gana and Gwi tribes have been arrested on their ancestral land in the Central Kalahari Game reserve in Botswana, for hunting without a license. Despite having lived by hunting and gathering in the same area for 20,000 years, the government is now forcing the Bushmen to apply for hunting licenses! The accused were severely beaten and now face 5 years imprisonment. Two Bushmen bringing food and water to the communities whose supplies had been cut off by the government were told that entry to their ancestral lands was forbidden. The two were later allowed in but were told that in future they would have to have a special permit or pay to enter the reserve.

The Central Kalahari Game Reserve was set up in the 1960's as a home for the Gana and Gwi Bushmen, whose ancestral lands include the reserve area. Yet since the mid-1980's, the Botswana government has waged a campaign of harassment to force them off land that is theirs under international law. Last week they terminated supplies of water and food to those who were still resisting. They also seized solar powered radio transceivers, provided by Survival International, their only source of communication with the outside world. Hundreds of Bushmen have been trucked into government resettlement camps where they can't continue their traditional way of life. The families who remain on their land are now totally isolated and at risk from thirst and starvation.

The government claims it can't afford to continue to provide water and other services to Bushmen communities in the reserve, even though it costs only \$3 per person per week. Behind the government's attitude is a deep-seated racism - the president himself has called the Bushmen 'stone-age creatures.' His government wants to open the reserve to tourism, and believes the Bushmen would be in the way. SchNEWS wonders if the areas rich diamond reserves may also have something to do with it. Info: 020-7687-8731 www.survival-international.org

POSITIVE SchNEWS

The Slough Environmental Education Development Service (SEEDS) have been busy in that most sexy of towns since 1997 "linking environmental and social justice through the principals of earth care, people care and fair shares." Projects include teaching kids in 17 schools about the environment and getting them to grow trees themselves, from seeds, that are then planted out in tree nurseries and eventually in the school grounds. The Herschel Park Extension project is a 10-acre local nature reserve on an old landfill site where over 2000 native trees have been planted and a one-acre wildflower meadow created. A Woodland Crafts Skills Pilot Project is providing training to disadvantaged and excluded groups, with a derelict cop-pice in the Chilterns being managed and the materials used for making craft products. For the future SEEDS is hoping to establish a permanent crafts workshop at the old Council Nurseries, and tapping into the diversity of the towns population - with Asian, Afro-Caribbean gardens etc. - to supply organic vegetables to local people.

As Janine, one of the workers of the project explains "I find myself apologising for living here sometimes - but I shouldn't. This is so exactly the sort of area where the principles behind our work can make such a huge impact on peoples lives and for future generations." SEEDS, 1st Floor 29 Church Street, Slough, SL1 1PL Tel 01753 693819 Email: theseedstrust@netscapeonline.co.uk

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SchNEWS in brief

Benefit for the **no to Sainsbury's campaign**, Albert Pub, Trafalgar St, 7pm Monday 4th with bands and the MayBug Ball Video. ** The **2002/3 Animal Contacts Directory** is out now. An impressively comprehensive directory of everybody involved in animal welfare: from hunt sabs, to riot grannies and sanctuaries for donkies from the Holy Land. Get your copy from Veggies, 245 Gladstone Street, Nottingham NG7 6HX Tel 0845 4589595 £4.95 + 85p p&p www.veggies.org.uk ** **Joint Worthing Eco-Action and Protect Our Woodland** meeting to decide on what to do about council plans to cover Titnore Woods with concrete. Tuesday 5th 7.45pm @ the Downview pub, West Worthing station. www.worthinga27.freereserve.co.uk ** **Aspire**, Leeds' occasional squat venue opening today. Free gigs, parties, radical films, good food and other things www.a-spire.org.uk 07796 343085 ** **Last chance rally opposing GM trials** in Long Marston 9th March Startford Upon Avon Town Hall 12pm start, coaches to the field trial at 2pm. Transport from around the country 020-72721586 ** **Injustice**, the film about deaths in police custody has been screened at the Crown Prosecution Service and the Attorney General has agreed to meet with families of those that have died. It's also being shown at the Duke of York's in Brighton on 10th March, 4pm. www.injusticefilm.co.uk ** Last year Argentinas economy went into freefall, leading to massive riots and strikes (SchNEWS 336). **Argentina Arde** (Argentina burns) a documentary on the uprising and its brutal suppression by the police. See it at a special SchNEWS screening 11th March 8pm upstairs at the Albert pub, Brighton.

Fartin' Around

Last week Dutch activists caused a stink at a carbon trading conference in Amsterdam. Armed with water pistols, blue wigs and "farting-gas" they held up the conference for 2 hours. But their demands for an immediate 60% reduction in greenhouse gases was not met, instead 13 of them were arrested. Carbon trading is a dubious capitalist scheme, which claims to deal with global warming by giving emission reductions a monetary value which can be traded. Unfortunately it probably won't make much difference for the climate, but it will undoubtedly make a lot of fat cats even fatter. www.risingtide.nl

Police Lose Face

A man who was arrested outside the Labour Party Conference last September for wearing a Palestinian flag as a face mask, has won his appeal against the conviction. He was charged under Section 60 of the Public Order Act for failure to remove his facial covering.

A solicitor told SchNEWS: "...the judge said that police had overstepped the mark: that it was wrong for the police to ask everyone to remove facial masks - and then arrest anyone who didn't comply - unless they had reason to believe that a person was deliberately concealing their face."

Police will get the message that they can't assume things like cycle masks at critical masses are an offence. The good thing about doing demos in Britain is that it always rains - the perfect legal reason for needing that toasty balaclava.

Inside SchNEWS

On the 19th February, Dr Margaret Jones was sent down for 40 days by the Bristol Magistrates court for painting stuff like, "What have Iraqi's ever done to deserve this?" "UK Iraq policy equals atrocities and failure" on the Foreign Office building. Her other 'crimes' were cutting a hole in the fence at Aldermaston where nuclear weapons are kept and 'breach of the peace' for sitting down at Faslane. Write to Margaret at: Eastwood park prison, Eastwood Park, Falfield, Wotton Under Edge, Gloucestershire.

GREAT SCOTT!!

On Wednesday the UK government announced that US multinational Scotts will be paid £17.4 million to immediately hand over Thorne Moor, in Yorkshire and Wedholme Flow in Cumbria to English Nature, the government wildlife watchdog. The Government has decided to buy the company's peat extraction rights in order to turn the moors into nature reserves.

However, another site, Hatfield Moor, which is a Site of Special Scientific Interest, will continue to be degraded for a further two years even though Scotts is being paid shedloads to sling its hook.

The campaign to stop peat mining on these moors has been going on for over 10 years, but according to Craig Bennet from Friends of the Earth, "little was achieved until campaigners started targeting specific companies and retailers... Now we have to really focus on pressuring retailers and companies so that we don't just export the problem. Environmental groups in other countries haven't woken up to the peat issue yet and it is our duty to export the campaign to the rest of the world."

Last week, environmental activists occupied seven of Scotts office buildings, factories and peat extraction sites as the latest in a series of direct-action protests against the company - and the planned Easter blockade of Hatfield Moor is still going ahead with Peat Alert declaring "We should also target other companies such as Sinclairs and Westlands who will continue to extract peat after Scotts pull out."

* Easter blockade 25-29 March 0113-2629365 www.peatalert.org.uk

Hanging Around

Nine Greenpeace activists occupied a rubbish incinerator in Lewisham this week closing it down for nearly four days. The nine attached themselves to industrial rubbish grabbers and suspended themselves above a stinking mound of waste! They were protesting at the discharge of dioxins which are known to cause cancer. Early on Thursday morning 'special' bailiffs were brought in and spent all day to get the protestors down off the grabbers. At the same time other protestors were sneakily working on sealing the flues. Speaking from the top of the chimney Greenpeace volunteer Mark Strutt said: "We are 300 feet up and we intend to make it as difficult as we can for the bailiffs to get to us. We are sealing the chimney flues to keep this toxic plant closed for as long as possible. Every hour this incinerator remains shut we are protecting people from cancer causing chemicals and other poisonous gases."

The government has already admitted that one in three Britons are taking in the maximum amount of dioxins that is considered 'safe' and more than half of Britain's babies and toddlers exceed this limit. Info: 0207 8658255 www.greenpeace.org.uk

...and finally...

The Spanish government recently decided to stamp down on yob culture by banning drinking on the streets. In Madrid the local trouble-makers were outraged and so took to the streets, national police in riot gear were called in to give 'em a good twatting. Unfortunately for them they weren't facing a load of pisseheads, but the local municipal cops (protesting about the extra work this law would give them) who'd also been trained in unprovoked violence, and so gave as good as they got. Just proves that coppers don't care who they beat the shit out of.

Pictures at www.stlimc.org/front.php3?article_id=1775&group=webcast

Disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all broad-based readers we don't skirt around but throw a monkey-wench in. Yes, Ma'am.