



PUTIN THE BOOT IN

“Is it a real victory - so many victims? The tragedy of the musical did not spring out of the blue. It is not the end, but the beginning. Now we shall live in fear, as we see our children and our elderly go out into the street. Perhaps this is how Chechen people live?” - Anna Politkovskaya, Russian journalist who went in to talk to the hostage takers.

Russia's very own war on terrorism came back to haunt it last weekend when Chechen rebels took hundreds of people hostage in a Moscow Theatre. Their demand was that Russia pull out of Chechnya which over the past few years has been bombed back to the iron age - retribution for a number of bomb attacks in Moscow that were blamed on the rebels. Russian troops captured the capital Grozny - already a pile of rubble after the last war with Russia five years earlier - and in the process killed up to 40,000 civilians. Although the 'conventional' war has largely ceased, human rights organisations have reported a rise in the disappearance, torture and summary executions, in what is called the 'Wild West' of Russia.

There is a catalogue of human rights abuses perpetrated by the Russian Army: In June, a ditch containing 50 mutilated bodies was discovered near the Russian army post in Chankala. The corpses were missing eyes, ears, limbs and genitals. In July in the village of Meskyer Yurt, 21 men, women and children were bound together and blown up, their remains were thrown into a ditch. The list goes on...

Some those who survive sometimes wish hadn't. In Zernovodsk this summer, townspeople say they were made to watch women being raped. When the men tried to defend them, 68 were handcuffed to an armoured truck and raped too. After this episode, 45 of them joined the guerrillas in the mountains. One older man, Nurdi Dayeyev, who was nearly blind, had nails driven through his hands and feet because it was suspected that he was in contact with the fighters. The Russians do not deny that these things happen, there's even an official order issued banning such abuses.

Theatre of War

Last weekend's tragedy has refocused attention on the conflict, which Russia has repeatedly claimed is winding down, even though its soldiers continue to die at a rate of two to three a day. Russia's President Putin has tried to sweep the embarrassing brutalities of the ongoing 'anti-terrorist' operations under the carpet, whilst the West has turned a blind eye so they could get Russian support for their own wars of terror

in Afghanistan, Iraq and elsewhere.

The problem according to Krystyna Kurczab-Redlich, a Polish reporter is that "the brutality of the Russians has also resulted in a growing radicalisation of their opponents." Russia has tried to link the rebels to al-Qaeda, as some of the Chechen leaders no doubt see the conflict as a holy war. Now Chechen's everywhere face a further crackdown. Soldiers are surrounding refugee camps, while Chechen's in Russia are being rounded up and arrested. Russia has tried to stop the World Chechen Congress in Copenhagen, they persuaded Denmark to arrest Akhmed Zakayev, Chechnya's top European representative, who was to be the main speaker, who they accuse of playing a part in the theatre siege. As one Russian journalist commented "The search for participants in the terrorist act is turning into a cleansing operation to rid Moscow of all Chechens."

* For conspiracy theories that it was the Russian secret police who carried out the 1999 bombings of apartment blocks that sparked the latest war with Chechnya and swept Putin to power see http://uk.indymedia.org/front.php3?article_id=24275

* Amnesty International this week published a new report on the human rights situation in Russia and Chechnya. For copies 020 7814 6200 www.amnesty.org

More Shit in the Pipeline

Both Russia and the US are fighting the 'war on terror' to justify attacks on (largely) Islamic societies with racist rhetoric about the need to combat 'fundamentalism', but the real reason behind it is justification for anything the state does to protect its interests. Nowhere is this more obvious than in the former Soviet republic of Georgia.

Back in July, this tiny country was granted \$64 million of aid by the US government, making it the third largest recipient of US aid in the world. The reason? Both the US and Russia reckon that Georgia is in the frontline of the 'war on terror'. Russia argues that Georgia's mountainous Pankisi gorge, which sits along the border with Chechnya, is a hideout for Chechen rebels, who are able to move across the border to launch attacks on Russian troops. The US reckons that amongst these fighters there might be as many as a dozen Al-Qaeda members. The \$64 million is for counter-insurgency training and equipment for the Georgian army, allegedly so that it can flush out these bad guys. Russia was furious about this move, which amounts to the US establishing a base for its Special Forces on the Russian border. Russia accused Georgia of 'complicity' with international terror and Putin wrote to the UN saying that Russia reserved the right to use 'pre-

CRAP ARREST OF THE WEEK

For kicking a balloon...

One of Turkey's most famous singers, Hulya Avsar, faces the prospect of six months in jail for kicking balloons displaying the Turkish flag. Avsar allegedly kicked some balloons that were in her way as she walked to meet guests on her TV show. Unfortunately for the popular singer it's illegal in Turkey to display the flag on objects and near blasphemy to have the sacred flag on the ground. The TV crew and the balloon makers also face a six month stay in jail for the malicious act.

emptive strikes' on Georgia to defend itself.

The US claim that it's pouring money on the Georgian military so that they can take out al-Qaeda, one journalist wrote, 'why would the dozen or so suspected al-Qaeda terrorists hang around until a new force is trained?' But what other reason would there be for making sure the Georgian army is tooled-up like the Green Berets? Hmmm, maybe it's got something to do with the massive oil and gas pipelines that the US and Britain want to run through Georgia, to take oil from Baku, Azerbaijan, to Ceyhan in Turkey. For the last 10 years the US and Britain have been investing in central Asian oilfields, but have been struggling to find a way of getting the oil to the West without taking it through Iran or Russia. The proposed solution is the Baku-Ceyhan pipeline, which if built would transport 1 million barrels of oil a day along a route that runs across (amongst other things) 20 major rivers and 2 dense primary forests, and borders on several zones of conflict.

The consortium of companies backing the pipeline is only offering to provide 30% of the £3 billion costs. BP, the company heading the consortium, has said that the project would not be possible without masses of 'free public money' (i.e. our money), including £65 million from the UK's own Export Credit Guarantee Scheme. It will also need military or paramilitary patrols all along the route to protect the pipe from sabotage and theft. Campaigners opposing the pipeline say that the proposed route 'as well as passing through war zones, cuts through villages and bisects peoples' lands. Many will be evicted, or forced to trespass on oil company property in order to lead their daily lives. Similar situations in other countries (such as BP's pipeline in Colombia) have led to major human rights atrocities.' Whilst Georgian peasants worry that Russia's 'new hard-line' approach to Chechnya will drag their villages back into conflict, Western greed for Central Asian oil is driving plans that, if carried out, will ensure that Georgia is threatened by war and environmental crisis for decades to come.

More info: www.bankwatch.org

STORMING

Last Tuesday (22nd October) workers on the Birmingham Northern Relief Road were able to enjoy an unscheduled break when a dozen people stormed the construction site of a bridge over a canal and disabled diggers and a crane. The protesters say it represents the start of a new phase of the campaign against car culture and climate change in the face of a renewed road building program under the Labour Government. The action happened one day before the start of the British International Motor Show and the UN climate conference in New Delhi, India (COP 8).

At the Motor Show in Birmingham, Europe's largest car show, actions continued highlighting how the car industry is part of the problem of climate change.

It's not just people in the west who have been protesting against climate change. Those communities most affected (mostly in southern countries) met at a Climate Justice Summit held at the same time as the UN climate conference to provide a platform for climate change impacted communities from around the world. "The negotiations to solve the climate change crisis have been hijacked by corporations and industrialised nations, especially the US. These meetings resemble a trade meeting to push globalisation over developing countries rather than a meeting to address the genuine needs of people," said Medha Patkar of the India Climate Justice Forum. The summit was followed by a 5,000 strong rally in New Delhi.

And while the people directly affected by climate change met to discuss the issues affecting them the world's Governments met to carve-up another commodity - the earth's climate. The conference looks like being yet another failed opportunity, with the initial draft resolution in combating climate change being described as "unacceptable" and "worthless". Expect more storms and floods of hot air from the conference which finishes today. www.corpwatchindia.org
Car show actions: www.anticarshow.net

* 600 protesters managed to shut down all 28 Esso petrol stations in Luxembourg last Saturday in a climate change protest by Greenpeace.

* **Protests at two Brighton Esso Stations** at Lewes Rd and Dyke Rd. Meet Sat 2nd 12pm.

* While our government's Environment Minister talks about cutting down greenhouse gases, there are plans for a massive extension of airports which will do nothing to curb air travel, the fastest growing source of greenhouse gases. A new Midlands airport would threaten the country's leading organic organisations gardens at Ryton (024-7630-3517 www.hdra.org.uk). And a new airport at Cliffe marshes in Kent would affect internationally important wetland sites that are home to 200,000 wading birds. The government has a consultation about air travel at www.aviation.dft.gov.uk or phone 0845 100 5554. You can email objections to the Department of Transport apd@dft.gsi.gov.uk for what its worth.

* **Runway No Way Demonstration** against Stanstead Airport, 2nd Nov Montessori School, Mole Hill Gn, nr Broxted. 07817 708113.

* Public meeting to discuss the current aviation consultation 14th November at Plants Brook School, Upper Holland Road, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands 7.30pm.

* Remember the fuel blockades a couple of years ago by truckers and farmers? Welsh farmer Mr Brynle Williams one of its leaders claimed to have no political bias: "I'm not a politician, I'm just a simple farmer." Well guess who has been selected as Conservative candidate for Clwyd West? But then he did say "I don't want a career in politics at all" so maybe joining the dinosaur Conservative Party is the right thing to do.

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LISTEN UP!

Last Thursday protestors used D-locks, Superglue and good ol' determination to blockade the US spy base in Menwith Hill, Yorkshire. The blockade started at 5am with protestors D-locking themselves to the main gates and then handcuffing themselves to each other. With alternative gates sealed off by Superglue and locks, all traffic was blocked and the 3 scheduled shift changes were disrupted. Most employees were prevented from entering the base to do their daily spying and so ended up heading back home. After 4 1/2 hours the ever-friendly men in blue were threatening arrests and the protestors ended the blockade, happy with the results.

So what's this spy base about then? Well, it's an 'interception centre' that would be used to co-ordinate any bombing of Iraq. It's part of America's murky 'Echelon' programme set up during the Cold War - a network of 'listening posts' able to intercept millions of phone, fax and e-mail messages. Our upstanding government assures us that 'communication interception' is covered by strict legal guidelines - honest! But the EU parliamentary committee set up to investigate 'Echelon' reckons that Uncle Sam uses it for industrial espionage to benefit US companies. So the committee recommends that all EU capitalists encrypt everything...now!

* Fylingdale Star Peace Camp, outside the US airbase, which is now 5 months old, have received eviction papers and are appearing in court next week. Vigil outside the court 10.45am, 6th Nov, Whitby Law Court, Waterstead Lane, Whitby. The camp also urgently needs funds send money payable to 'WoMenwith Hill Women's Peace Camp', P.O. Box 105, Harrogate HG3 2FE. Tel 01947896481 www.FreeFylingdalesNetwork.co.uk

WOODSIDE LINED

The Woodside Caravan Park - a legitimate campsite in Bedfordshire bought in 1997 by 27 gypsy families - is under threat of eviction from this Friday (1). A protest camp has been set up to help the community resist eviction, and needs more people and tat. This comes a week after a gypsy from another camp, a 22 year old father of two, was subject to a murder attempt and dumped in a coma outside Woodside in a racially motivated act of intimidation. For Woodside residents this is even more reason to remain on the site as they feel safer together. Info. 01767 681 651 www.f-f-t.demon.co.uk/fft/WOODSIDE.HTM

BARRED FOR LIFE

The indefinite detention of 12 people without trial in the UK under last year's knee jerk Anti-Terrorism Crime and Security Act (see SchNEWS 363), has been deemed legal by the High Court. In July an appeal by those detained under the Act, led to an immigration appeals commission to rule that it contravened the European Convention on Human Rights. That decision has now been overturned by the High Court who believed the government that these 12 people are a threat to the nation's security in this 'time of emergency'. And what evidence did the government need to produce to show that we're in a state of emergency- well the evidence put forward by the government to back it's argument remained secret and was not considered by the court in it's decision. As according to the judges the government is in a better position than the courts to make such important decisions. Two of those detained have now left the country, the remainder now face indefinite imprisonment for the duration of the 'emergency'.

SchNEWS in brief

Sick of prefab pop music? To help the sporadic network aimed at bringing down 'Pop Rivals' visit www.killpop.org ** The global arms trade has flourished since the end of the Cold War. Find out in the '**No-Nonsense Guide To The Arms Trade**' - available for £7 from CAAT, 11 Goodwin Street, London N4 3HQ www.caat.org.uk ** **Taking Aim** - a Revolutionary Conference for the liberationist left, activists and other rebel-rousers, will be held in Bradford next year. To get involved email conference@riseup.net ** **Sic** - Chumbawamba's very slick er 'zine' is out. All good stuff with Mark Thomas and others contributing, available now for a fiver www.chumba.com/_sic.htm ** To get a copy of **Que Se Vayan Todos**, the excellent newsprint publication about the events of the last 12 months in Argentina send SchNEWS a 41p SAE ** **Zapatista** - A benefit for Mayan autonomous communities, Tues 4th downstairs at the Sanctuary, Brunswick St, Hove. With food, info and world and rebel beats. Kicks off at 7pm with the film Zapatista ** **Remember Barry Horne**. Anniversary of the death of the animal rights prisoner who died on hunger strike against the government broken promises of animal welfare reform. Memorial demo Tues 5th 2pm followed by night vigil at HLS, Alconbury, Cambs.0845 458 0630 or 07899 775493 ** **Scottish Anarchist Day School** Sat 9th, Kinning Park Centre, Glasgow, Scotland. 10.30am-5pm. Workshops, discussions, and much more! £3/1. Anarcho-scots@lists.mutualaid.org <http://lists.mutualaid.org/maillman/listinfo/anarcho-scots>

Inside SchNEWS

Pelle Strindlund from Bye Bye Meat Industry - a group that carries out "animal rights ploughshares type actions" - has been given 8 months for rescuing hens from a battery farm. He'd appreciate letters of support. Pelle Strindlund, Ostragård kriminalvårdsanstalt, Box 215, SE462-23 Vanersborg, Sweden

Cassidy Wheeler an US anarcho-primitivist serving 8 1/2 years for petty theft is looking for penpals to keep up with what's going on whilst he's inside. Cassidy Wheeler #1428456, SRCI, 777 Stanton Blvd., Ontario, Oregon 97914-8335, USA.

...and finally...

Boom, Boom... For those readers old enough to remember Basil Brush the country's favourite fox, you'll remember that he wasn't all sweetness and light. Well he's back on TV screens and he's still causing a bit of a stir, not only is he fatter and now allegedly a bit camp, but his fox's natural instinct to dislike farmers has resulted in an episode of his series being 'temporarily withdrawn' by the BBC. The episode, which featured Basil calling a bad-tempered farmer 'manure breath', and then ALF-style liberating the farmer's chickens from a chicken pie fate. The BBC insisted that the programme was not being screened because it was "not yet ready for transmission" and that it was nothing to do with complaints from Richard Haddock, a member of the National Farmers' Union council, who said: "I am absolutely disgusted. The BBC in London seems to be going down this anti-farm agenda." Which is obviously laughable considering the unquestionable support they gave to last month's Countryside Alliance March.

This story was stolen from October's brilliant Shoreham Protester - which includes loads of interesting info about the Countryside Alliance. 50p plus SAE from The Shoreham Protester, 7 Stoneham Road, Hove, BN3 5HJ. www.shoreham-protester.org.uk

Disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all warmongers to stop taking the peace. Honest.