



SPOT THE DIFFERENCE
One is an evil tyrannical ruler intent on taking over the whole universe and the other is the Dark Lord of the Sith

ROCKET ROULETTE

“It’s politically sensitive, but it’s going to happen,” sneered Commander-in-chief of US Space command, Joseph W. Ashy “We’re going to fight from space and we’re going to fight into space.”

Unlike the rest of the planet, who generally agree that space should be used for peaceful and beneficial purposes, the US still think that it would make a nice location to lobb missiles from. Back in 1983, President Ronald Reagan introduced the original ‘Star Wars’ plan to defend the US against what was hailed as ‘the evil empire’, the Soviet Union. We are told that the original cold war relic was a very ‘complex and extensive’ strategy but apparently the next episode is a bit more Bush friendly. The ‘Son of Star Wars’, otherwise called the Ballistic Missile Defence programme (MDP), is a project hoping to create a defensive screen for the entire US, which would be able to detect any incoming missiles through ground and space-based radar. A rocket is then launched, destroying the enemy’s missile in space before it reaches American soil.

The fact that the US had signed the Anti-ballistic Missile treaty didn’t act as an obstacle to George Wanker Bush and within months of his presidency the treaty was effectively killed by US withdrawal. After bulldozing their way through government negotiations, Star Wars bases have been set up all over the world with six MDP missile interceptors in Alaska and 4 in California waiting for deployment. Of course it was easy as pie getting Tony to participate in hijacking the planet despite a large number of Labour MPs said to be “disgusted” with Britain’s interest in backing the US. “Flyingdales” is US ground-based radar which has been set up in North Yorkshire and a communications installation now graces Menwith Hill. Bush is reported to be keen to get the system up and running as soon as possible! So what’s the hurry then? Well first of all, the US have decided that military conflict in Iraq is a perfect indication of how ‘important’ the use of space is to national security and military operations. But those whose heads are screwed on don’t get why waging a completely unnecessary war means that this grossly expensive project with an eerie apocalyptic ring to it should be at the top of the US’s ‘to do’ list. Well, there’s also the supposed growing threat from North Korea who the US intelligence community insist have developed long-range missile capability. However, a number of outside experts highly doubt that this is the case. Joseph Cirinione, a special-

ist in weapons proliferation reckons that this would have meant “a huge technological leap for them”. So, the urgency to find a new missile menace continues. Step up the next phantom threat contender ...Iran! US officials have often quoted Iran as close behind N. Korea in its pursuit of longer range rockets, even though all they have come up with is a missile just capable of limping to southern Europe. Of course, believe it or not there is actually another country America really fears but doesn’t like to actually mention too much. Behind closed doors, they engage air force space workers in a bit of innocent brainwashing against this mystery country - freebee computer war games are handed out in which the enemy “red team” just happens to be named after a little place beginning with C n ending in A! No, not Canada, but China! The fact that they have a gigantic population and rapidly increasing wealth and military space ability is pissing the US right off!

But whilst Bush’s grubby hands are reaching for the stars, China is trying to slow things down and is hoping (with Russia) to renew a new global veto on weapons in space. You see, China and Russia are likely to contest the MDP, only they do not yet have the funding to match up to the US’s loony investments. A big fear is that if Bush gets the system up and running, it is unlikely the planet is going to chill out while the US military looms above the Earth’s surface. Other countries will be under enormous pressure to start developing their own space weapons and devices to blind US satellites. The US will only increase their expenditure and justifications (more wars, people!) whilst other countries struggle to meet the challenge of creating a costly and lethal arms race into space. Frightened yet? Well you probably don’t have to be for a while...

IT IS ROCKET SCIENCE

All this extra-terror-estrial talk and no action! ‘Why?’ you might (or US taxpayers should) ask, when \$10 billion a year is being spent on star wars (while US education, health care, social security etc constantly get cut back)? Well fortunately for the universe, the missiles are, ahem, refusing to take off.

Even though the US have spent decades launching satellites, space shuttles and oh, man on the moon (nudge, nudge) the missiles are veering far off course. Maybe this is ‘cos although the US now accounts for 43% of world military spending, they thought

CRAP ARREST OF THE WEEK

“For, erm, well, let me think a minute...”

500 citizens weapons inspectors were arrested by cops in Belgium last Saturday.. Amazingly, not one charge was brought against any of them! How could the police get it so wrong? Surely the point of making an arrest is because a law is being broken, in which case charges should naturally follow? .To do it once in a day is perhaps forgivable, but 500 times seems....suspicious. At Schnews Towers, we reckon the Boys in Blue are Company Men, one and all, and not fit for our company.

they’d save themselves a bit of cash, relying on commercially proven motors. “We thought off-the-shelf technology was kind of a slam-dunk!” quipped Air Force Lt. Gen. Ronald T. Kadish. Despite a \$45 million bonus being offered for a successful test (which cost \$10 million each), the shabby missiles are still careering off all over the gaff, often having to be postponed due to bad weather! The US had better hope that they don’t get attacked by any missiles when it is raining.

All this work in the name of defence...America must have a serious missile neurosis don’t they? Or do they? ‘Full Spectrum Dominance’ is a term coined by US space command, meaning COMPLETE military dominance of land, sea, air, info and space. Two documents by the US Space Command, “Vision for 2020” and “Long Range Plan”, also bring to light what Americans are really salivating over here; “The United States will remain a global power and exert global leadership...Widespread communications will highlight disparities in resources and quality of life - contributing to unrest in developing countries. The global economy will continue to become more interdependent. Economic alliances, as well as the growth and influence of multi-national corporations, will blur security agreements. The gap between ‘have’ and ‘have-not’ nations will widen - creating regional unrest. One of the commonly understood advantages of space-based platforms is no restriction or country clearances required to overfly a nation from space.” Maniacal power plays such as this and the US effort to “control space” in “Vision for 2020” are reminiscent of the great empires of Europe ruling the waves, and thus the earth, and all point to a very unsettling reality of ultimate global control - and as Bush stated in his post 9-11 speech “It’s going to be a long, long war.”

*www.space4peace.org/

*www.stopstarwars.org/

ALUMINATING

Indian villagers fighting a massive aluminium strip mine (see SchNEWS 487) have been cheered by the announcement that employees from one of the companies involved will "refuse to smelt any alumina shipped to British Columbia from Alcan's eventual operations in Orissa."

Canadian mining giant Alcan want to get their hands on one of the world's richest deposits of bauxite - the raw material for aluminium - in the Kashipur region of India. The \$1.4 billion monster strip-mine and refinery promises to displace up to 20,000 people, destroy their livelihoods and culture, contaminate food and water sources and obliterate their spiritual sites.

Villagers have been fighting the mine for the past 12 years but in November politicians decided that the Alcan mining project was to be launched at any cost - since then repression has been seriously stepped up.

Protests are being planned at Alcans AGM next week
www.saanet.org/alcant/intro_en.html

BP AGM ASBO?

While 15 vanloads of cops patrolled outside and Greenwash Guerrillas warned the public to steer clear due to toxic levels of 'greenwash', shareholders planning to protest at BP's Annual General Meeting last Thursday were refused entry after the company issued a statement declaring - illegally - that "We do not permit entry to persons whose conduct, behaviour or general demeanour may interfere with the good order of the meeting."

But what about BP's anti social behaviour? It ranges from bankrolling Colombian paramilitary death squads, backing the environmental disaster that is Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline and of course expanding fossil fuel production. They have also been busy trying to hoodwink everyone that they are in fact a caring oil company who are really into looking after the planet; (this is known as greenwashing.) In fact BP invest less than 1% of its annual budget in solar and other renewable energy sources, much less than it ploughs into advertising and PR.

Plans are underway to make a legal challenge to BP refusing entry to shareholders. 07708 794665 www.londonrisingtide.org.uk, www.nationalpetroleumgallery.org.uk

* Join the protests against arms dealers BAE systems who are holding their AGM on Wednesday 4th May. Queen Elizabeth 2 Conference Centre, Broad Sanctuary, opposite Westminster Abbey. (Nearest tubes St James' Park & Westminster) 020 7281 0297 www.caat.org.uk

Coca-Colonisation

Purveyors of tooth rot juice Coca cola are in the spotlight in India again, for all the wrong reasons of course. Their plant in the southern Indian State of Kerala has been closed for a year now, due to public pressure. The Plant was drinking all the water reserves in the area, leaving the surrounding villages facing drought. This week, the High Court gave them permission to drain no more (!) than a half million litres *per day* from the water table.

But the local council have yet to decide whether to give the Company permission to reopen the plant, and have 2 weeks to do so.

The Campaign against Killer Coca Cola has been gaining momentum in recent times, especially in places they hit hardest, i.e. India and Columbia. Protests are greeted Cokes AGM during the week. <http://www.indiaresource.org/news/index.html> & <http://killercoke.org/>

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Positive SchNEWS

Students in Canada have been leading by example recently, organising massive opposition to their Governments attempt to convert student bursaries into loans. A seven week strike at Quebec university culminated in a 100,000 strong demonstration in Montreal last month. Big Business areas of the city were blockaded, offices of the ruling Liberal Party invaded - but outside of Canada, no-one has heard a thing about it.

Receiving support from unions and university staff, this was about much more than student fees. The Canadian State are moving to dismantle, piece by piece, the hard-won welfare system (er, does this ring any bells?) Turning grants into loans hits the poorest in society and represents the thin end of the wedge of the neo-liberal agenda. The State capitulated, however, and the bursary system is to remain!

SchNEWS hopes students elsewhere are taking note (s)...
<http://quebec.indymedia.org/en/>

SchNEWS in brief

The people who gave us the **Use Your Loaf** Social Centre are once again running a Friday night cafe starting tonight (22) at a temporary centre - the Ragged School, Hales St, Deptford SE8. 7-12 midnight. ** The **Oxford Action Resource Centre** opens with a week of events from Monday (25th) to 1st May. The centre is in Room 1 of the East Oxford Community Centre, Princes St off Cowley Road. <http://ocset.funpic.org> ** A series of events are being planned to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the "**Battle of the Beanfield**" when travellers vehicles were attacked and hundreds arrested on their way to the Stonehenge Free Festival (see SchNEWS 25) **

email beanfield20years@hotmail.co.uk ** Want to oppose the Iraq Oil Petroleum Conference happening London in June? Then get along to a planning meeting next Tuesday (26) 6.30pm The Institute of Autonomy, 76 Gower St "We may not have stopped the war but we can stop their spoils of war." <http://corporatepirates.gzzzt.net/> ** There's **Direct Action Affinity Group** training for DSEi arms fair and G8 on Saturday 7 May 10.30am The Institute for Autonomy, 78 Gower St, London WC1. www.dsei.org ** The Dissent network have set up a '**trauma group**' and are offering training to people who want to get some skills in counseling and support ahead of the upcoming G8 meetings. www.activist-trauma.net ** **Manchester Radical Bookfair** Saturday 30th April the Basement, 24 Lever Street (off Piccadilly Gardens) www.radicalbookfair.org.uk ** 'Now we are free - **Lessons from Vieques**' Conference 29-30 April. Come and share strategies for effective resistance against depleted uranium testing, live firing ranges, military bases, low-flying, nuclear convoys and other issues. - and celebration the liberation of Vieques who finally persuaded the US to leave their island are 60 years of bombing practice. Pearce Institute, Govan, Glasgow www.scotland-uxb.org

Belgian Waffle

Citizen Weapons Inspectors were out in force in Belgium last Saturday. People from around Europe gathered at three NATO military centres around the country and, despite a huge police presence, attempted to enter buildings to check for WMD's. "At a time when key NATO countries are doing so much to encourage Iran to give up its nuclear aspirations, it would be hypocritical for NATO not to do the same", said Nicky Davies, from Greenpeace International who supported the action.

Police made 500 arrests. See this weeks Crap Arrest for more.

HAVE I GOT SCHNEWS FOR YOU

Have I Got SchNEWS For You- The Tour 2005 (AKA The Anarchists Quiz Show With Real Answers) tour dates so far
Oxford - Thursday 28th of April at East Oxford Community Centre, 7pm.
Newcastle - Sunday the 1st of May at The Green Fair, 6pm Tyneside Social Centre marquee.

Glasgow - Wednesday the 4th of May venue and time TBC.

Edinburgh - Friday the 6th of May venue and time TBC.

Coventry - Monday the 9th of May at The Earlston Cottage pub, 7pm.

Reading - Friday the 13th (AAHHHHH!) at The Rific Centre, 7pm.

For more information ring the SchNEWS office on 01273 685913.

Inside SchNEWS

Lindis Percy, the veteran peace campaigner arrested 30 times in the past 11 months in protests outside Menwith Hill Spy Base (SchNEWS 492) has been convicted of four charges of obstructing a police officer and one of obstructing the highway. Now the cops have applied for an Anti-Social Behaviour Order against her. The prosecution said that they would not call any witnesses in support of the application. The application for the ASBO will be heard on 17th May at Harrogate Magistrates Court, the ASBO seems to be a forgone conclusion as the judge said that on the evidence he had heard and looking at the list of convictions he didn't need want any more evidence. The use of ASBOs against protesters is the latest tool in the armoury of the state of silencing dissent, to add the Harassment Laws, Anti-Terrorist powers and a vast array of Public Order legislation.

Weekly vigils against Menwith Hill continue, every Tuesday 6-8pm. Campaign for the Accountability of American Bases 01943 466405 www.caab.org.uk

* Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism! - the paper of the Revolutionary Communist Group - has been banned from Belmarsh prisons for being er...racist! Inigo Makazaga, who is a Basque political prisoner, and Kevin Nevers, have both been refused the paper and given empty envelopes, with the words 'racial paper, needs to be returned to sender or destroyed under 10 day rule. rcgfrfi@easynet.co.uk

...and finally...

God works in mysterious ways...in this case via the mortal coils of Tory Coucillor Allison Bucknell and Andy Humm. These two are begging for an Anti Social Behaviour Order (ASBO) to be served on the creator of www.lynehamvillage.co.uk website, Mitch Hawkins (no relation to Stephen, the international professor of Outer Space). Based in Wiltshire, Mitch ran a few Dead Pope jokes on his site, much to the annoyance of Humm, who runs similarly named www.lynehamvillage.com. Humm teamed up with the Lyneham Councillor Bucknell, who is no doubt upset at the heavily anti-right wing content of Mitch's site. They consider his site to be causing "damage to the community", with spoof adverts for new pope "Fancy a new job? The Vatican is now looking for a new Pope now that the current one has snuffed it," and jokes like: "The pope was watching the reconstruction of Michael Jackson's trial on telly and saw all the boys coming up to testify against Michael. Pope says: "If he shags anymore little boys, I will have to make him a priest!!!"

Disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all readers strike us down and we will become more powerful than you can ever imagine ... Honest!