



WAKE UP!! IT'S YER HERE WE GO AGAIN...

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IRAN-MONGERS

"The push by the UK, France and Germany to refer Iran to the UN Security Council, while rooted in the language of diplomacy, is really nothing less than an act of war." - Scott Ritter; former Chief UN Weapons-inspector in Iraq.

Iran is the new Iraq. The reaction of the US and UK leaders to a comment made by the Iranian President couldn't have shown that more clearly. OK, so President Ahmadinejad's comments about wiping Israel off the map were never going to help them get a win-win-Western-friends award but they weren't supposed to be taken as a statement outlining foreign policy intentions. They were part of a speech to a student conference in Tehran where he went on to say that the Palestine issue would continue until "a democratic government elected by the people comes to power". And comments like this have been standard rhetoric for Iranian Presidents ever since the Islamic revolution of 1979. So why all the big fuss now?

Jackboot Straw has already shifted from saying that military action against Iran is "inconceivable" to saying that it is "inconceivable in relation to the nuclear issue". So is the 'War on Terror' about to spread democracy to Iran?

For some time UK plc and US Inc have been moaning about Iran's support for the Iraqi insurgency. Prime Sinister Blair recently declared, without any sense of irony, "There is no justification for Iran or any other country interfering in Iraq." Come again?! Hello Mr Kettle, meet Mr Pot.

And this isn't the first time that the UK and US have clubbed together to mould political events in Iran to their strategic needs. Back in 1933, the government of the Iranian King (Shah) guaranteed British control over Iranian oil for 60 years. Leading a movement against this, Mohammed Mossadegh was elected Prime Minister in 1951 and quickly started to enforce an Oil Nationalisation Act. Not best pleased at potentially losing their grip on the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, the CIA and MI6 agreed to support the Shah and help him dismiss the Prime Minister and his nationalist cabinet. Shortly after, massive rioting erupted in support of the Prime Minister and the Shah legged it to Italy. But three days later the spooks weighed in and a tank attack on Mossadegh's home was organised. Within a few hours Mossadegh and his top cabinet leaders surrendered. The Shah promptly flew back to Iran and ruled the country with an iron fist for another 29 years, toeing the Western line and leaving the oil multinationals in charge of Iran's black gold.

Not that getting into bed with the West bought much loyalty of course - during the Iran-Iraq war in the 1980s, the West covertly supported and armed the aggressor, our old friend Saddam Hussein. Well, shucks, we never meant anything by it...

And the current posturing is about more than just making sure the oil flows in the right direction. Ensuring that the dollar remains the basis for transactions in the world economy guarantees US dominance over the process of economic globalisation. Now a mob of disrespectful countries, including Iran, is seriously threatening the US economy by moving to trade petrol in euros rather than dollars. Such a move has the potential to cause an economic crisis in the US and helps to explain why the Bush mob is so determined to wipe out the leaders of countries like Iran, Iraq and Venezuela ('Axis of Evil' anyone?)

PA\$\$ THE BUCK

Iraq started to trade oil in euros in 1999. Four years later Iran did the same and may soon be joined by others. Such a move would mean consuming nations having to swap some of their dollars for euros to be able to buy or sell oil, leading to a freefall in the value of the dollar. The US economy is already knackered and is only propped up by rabid consumption. The US is the most debt-ridden nation on earth - owing \$3,500,000,000,000 to various creditors (and we thought our bar tab was bad!). China, meanwhile, holds the second largest reserves of dollars in the world which means they could wreak havoc on the US economy by selling greenbacks. Similar tactics against currencies have been well used as an economic weapon by the US, not just against upstart third world countries but also against the UK during the Suez Crisis in 1956.

The comments about Israel by the conservative Ahmadinejad were part of local political shoring up manoeuvres in the face of the impending UN Security Council's condemnation of Iran's supposed intentions to build a nuclear bomb. In response, Ahmadinejad sacked his ambassador to London and announced a trade embargo of British goods, busily adopting the tactics of Saddam: when under threat, pose as the defender of Palestine and lambast the Israeli state. Ahmadinejad was a student of Khomeini and hopes to revitalise the decaying Islamic revolution. Despite the continued grip on power by Khomeini supporters, a large part of Iran's youthful population is far more hostile to fundamentalism than before. If the UK and US wait a while longer, there could be an Islamic democracy in the region. But that's

the problem: any alternative to Westernised corporate democracy must be avoided and an excuse for war quickly found.

As the war drums grow louder, UK Defence Secretary John Reid recently commented that "some countries, for instance, Iran, have been trying to develop nuclear weapons by deceiving the world, not complying with their obligations under the non-proliferation treaty". But it's Reid who's deceiving: under Article IV of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), of which Iran is a signatory, the country not only has the right to develop nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, but nuclear powers have an obligation to help it in furthering this aim.

OH, THE IRAN-Y...

Not that SchNEWS reckons anyone developing nuclear anything is a good idea, but the director-general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Mohamed El Baradei, has said that Iran is fully compliant with its obligations under the treaty, confirming that "all the declared nuclear material in Iran has been accounted for, and, therefore, such material is not diverted to prohibited activities." Some countries that have nukes, whether they admit it or not, including Israel, Pakistan and India, won't even sign up to the NPT never mind allow IAEA inspections. And all the while the Bush administration is developing nuclear "bunker busters" that can strike deep underground, and Britain has ordered a new generation of Trident missiles, blowing away their own obligations under the NPT about reducing their nukes.

But when has a total absence of Weapons of Mass Destruction ever stopped an invasion? The doctrine of pre-emptive war adopted by the White House means that once again we face the manipulation of intelligence to justify an attack that has been planned for months. A recently leaked document from the CIA confirmed that, under orders from Dick 'Vice' Cheney, US Strategic Command had drawn up contingency plans for a "large scale air assault on Iran employing both conventional and nuclear weapons."

Speaking at a recent conference, the former UN Weapons Inspector, Scott Ritter, predicted that the US will attack from Azerbaijan and head straight for Tehran. By hitting Iran hard with air strikes, then applying pressure on the regime with the presence of ground troops on the country's borders and encircling the capital, the aim is to create the conditions for a civilian uprising to depose the regime. Iranians will then presumably embrace their US liberators and become nice little consumers of Western goods happy to be living in a country free of Islamic fundamentalism. Er, just like the roaring successes of Iraq and Afghanistan? Remember, the US and UK aren't really too concerned about peace in the Middle East, they want control. Take a look at the corporate involvement in Iraq and you might be able to gue\$\$ why.

ROADKILL

Save Dalkeith Park: A green park area south of Edinburgh, on a listed wildlife site has been 'compulsory purchased' by the Scottish Executive, and guess what they plan do with it? Put in a road bypass of course! A protest camp has recently been set up to defend another beautiful woodland from unnecessary destruction and urgently needs help because trees are contracted to be felled in the next two weeks. If you would like to get there, visit the Bilston Glen anti-bypass protest site where there is a van going between the two sites. For directions there see: www.bilstonglen-abs.org.uk / For more information see: www.save-dalkeith-park.org.uk

* **Camp Bling** protest camp was set up in opposition to a road being built on **Priory Park** in Southend, Essex. Located above the site of a recently discovered Anglo-Saxon burial (See SchNEWS 514), it's now into its fifth week, and although they've had loads of support from locals and people from around the country they still need help to set up a strong camp as work won't start on the road till next year. 07817 182394 www.savepriorypark.org

* For more information on these and loads of other protest camps and campaigns check out www.roadalert.org.uk

Positive SCHNEWS

'The Revolution Will be Televised' is a ten day festival of films, talks, gigs and art exhibitions in The Common Place – an autonomous social centre that is reopening in the yuppified Calls district of Leeds centre. It has been organised by a network of Leeds-based anti-capitalist activists committed to the expansion of autonomous social centres in the UK. The festival runs from the 4-13th For a full programme see www.thecommonplace.org.uk

* **Aspire** are opening another 'temporary autonomous zone' in the Leeds area 17-20 November. To get involved call 07974 781017 www.a-spire.org.uk

GET UP STAND UP

London's longest surviving squatted street – **St Agnes Place** is under threat. It's not just that 200 people could be left homeless as winter approaches because St Agnes Place is a 30 year old ethnically diverse community which is the focal point for many Rastas in London, and home to the International Rastafarian Headquarters – a place Bob Marley frequented during the 1970's. The council want to redevelop the street with new social housing, and claim St Agnes Place is riddled with crime, yet it has a much lower average crime rate than neighbouring areas.

This street resisted eviction several times in the late 1970s and more recently in 2003, but now the council have permission to begin sending bailiffs in, which could happen from any time now. The community are asking that people get down there and help if and when a mass eviction begins – SchNEWS and others will keep you posted.

FRIENDS, ROMANY & COUNTRYMEN

Next month the Commission for Racial Equality will tell the High Court that Basildon council's decision to evict the largest traveller community in Britain, Dale Farm, is racially motivated. Chairman Trevor Phillips says he intends to ask the court on 29th November to allow CRE to join with Dale Farm residents in their application for a judicial review of the \$4 million eviction plan.

The largely Romany Gypsy community are part of a long-time persecuted ethnic group – and by long, think centuries; they were originally forced to flee the Punjab region of India around 800-950AD to escape invading Islamic forces. With no homeland, not unlike the Jews, they were forced to move around and were always an easy target for the power-hungry slick talkers of the day to point the finger of blame at for all their societies' ills. Treated with suspicion, fear and prejudice they nonetheless managed to survive, sustain some of their culture and live alongside so-called locals (ie. slightly earlier settlers). For hundreds of years they have been a feature of British life, at times joining with others with common cause, like the displaced Irish, and more recently with a new generation of travellers seeking to find less insane, more ecological ways to live than under the corporate boot.

The Tories started a new era of repression with the 1994 Criminal Justice Bill. This repealed councils' obligation to provide land for travellers, and said that even if they owned their land, as many now do, they had to apply for planning permission in order to have any habitable structures on it. So, the unhappy campers applied for planning and naturally virtually all requests were refused. Neo Labour have taken up the baton where the Tories left off. There have been increased court actions and evictions, sites have been closed down and not living on a site is criminalised. Do the math. The government are effectively saying join our corporate system, move to a different country or get locked up (and they secure some nice real estate for luxury flat development in the process). No wonder this

looks a little like a home-grown bit of ethnic cleansing... because it is. Perhaps it is not so racially motivated as ideologically motivated – the upsurge of interest in alternative lifestyles in the 1990s and the surge in traveller numbers was the real threat that had to be stamped out.

Meanwhile, back in self-styled "God's County", Basildon big-wigs are determined to push ahead, drawing up a confidential blue-print for the eviction, with the help of Constant & Co., a firm which likes to specialise in "gypsy and squatter clearance" – and always charming no doubt. Two nearby yards have already been cleared, though Constant succeeded only in moving caravans a small distance.

Residents are bracing themselves for a Constant barrage, but have always been up for non-confrontational ways out of the blatantly impossible position they've been forced into. The Farm's Sheridan clan are now sending representatives to the newly-created European Roma and Travellers Forum, meeting in Strasbourg on 16 December.

They will meet delegates from Europe's ten million other Roma, from 40 countries, and hope to make links with travellers threatened with eviction elsewhere. They want Roma Nation Day on 8 April 2006 to be marked all across the continent by demonstrations against ethnic-cleansing.

"We're making this stand against all the odds," says spokesman Richard Sheridan, "Not for ourselves alone but for Travellers everywhere"

* Background reading **Roma: Europe's Gypsies** (Minority Press) by Grattan Puxon, a campaigner and writer and source for some of the info in this article.

* More about previous **Constant & Co** traveller community site evictions, at Meadowlands in Essex (SchNEWS 439) where the residents were evicted, then had homes torched by arsonists, and at Bulkington near Coventry (SchNEWS 437) which ended in a victory.

* see also www.gypsy-traveller.org

SchNEWS IN BRIEF

People from **County Mayo** who are involved in the fight to stop **Shell** from building a gas pipeline in their area (see SchNEWS 506) are doing a speaking tour in the UK. They will be appearing at a benefit gig with films, discussion and music on Sat, Nov 12th, 7pm 'til 3am, at **RampARTs social centre**, 17 Rampart St, London E1 2LA, (Whitechapel tube) www.rampart.co.nr For other dates on the tour see our **Party & Protest guide** at www.schnews.org.uk/pap ** Also at RampART this Saturday (5th) **The Wobblies Are Back!** London IWW is celebrating a centenary of **The Industrial Workers Of The World** with films, talks, benefit gig, drink and vegan food. 7pm onwards. ** **Dungavel** - monster of the Glen. World premier of film about the Scottish detention centre for asylum seekers. Saturday (5th) **12 Rose St, Glasgow 2pm** www.camcord.org.uk ** **Lothian and Borders** police are looking for people who took part in disturbances in Edinburgh during the **G8 summit**, check out the wanted mugshots www.lbp.police.uk/Appeals/G8 ** **The Bigoted Neanderthal Party** (BNP) cancelled their planned rally this Saturday after the Home Secretary signed a banning order. The counter demonstration has also been called off 020 7833 4916 www.uaf.org.uk ** Almost 2000 cyclists ignored the threat of arrest by the Met Police last Friday and joined a **Halloween themed Critical Mass** mobile party. Next one is one 25th November. www.critical-mass.org ** **A letter to the Prime Minister: Jo Wilding's Diary from Iraq** is a film about Jo's time in a children's circus travelling through Iraq and into Falluja during the US led invasion. It will be shown with talk at an **Indymedia film night** at East Oxford Community Centre, Cowley Rd, Oxford, on Sunday (6th) at 7:30pm £3/2 and again at another Indymedia night on Sunday (13th) at The Dancehouse, 10 Oxford Rd, Manchester, free/donation, 7pm. www.alett.ertotheprimeminister.co.uk With talk from Iraqi Humanitarian Aid worker about current situation in besieged cities around Iraq including Falluja. Also with films - 'Caught in the Crossfire' about the second seige of Falluja and its aftermath by Mark Manning, plus film & speaker about **ID Cards** www.defy-id.org.uk

MILKING A BAD JOKE

On Tuesday five protesters were found guilty of aggravated trespass for blocking a Sainsbury's depot in Bristol which distributed milk from cows fed on GM crops. Four of those convicted had no previous criminal record but were given 50 hours community service, the fifth got 65 hours. The judge agreed that the protestors had conducted their actions in the belief that they were protecting the public. However, he also judged that they had planned to harm Sainsbury's shareholders through their actions (shock-horror, kill the tree-huggers!) and so he had considered giving them curfews and Anti-Social Behaviour Orders for their troubles.

...and finally...

THOSE CRAZY BOSSES

A trade union in the USA has been accused of voodoo. Harborside Healthcare has had to withdraw charges that the SEIU union had turned to voodoo to intimidate workers in its Massachusetts nursing home. Bosses seemed convinced that the only way workers could possibly have voted 2:1 in favour of unionization was if they were under some magic spell! This is the second known case where a company has turned to the state for protection against voodoo. Both involved Haitian staff, who managers claimed used magic to win union rights. Why they didn't use these powers to win a 100% pay rise or a four hour day is not explained!

Disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all readers... if you didn't like Iraq'n'Roll, you're gonna hate Iran Maiden. Honest!

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