



WAKE UP! IT'S YER NOT-SO-FAIRWEATHER...

# SchNEWS

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21st Century Riddles:

HOW MANY MEDIA ARTICLES DOES IT TAKE TO CHANGE TO AN ENERGY SAVING LIGHTBULB?



## READY? CHARGE!

### SURVIVING THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW

The double-whammy of peak oil and climate change have recently become much more mainstream, but the (if you'll pardon the expression) 'roadmap' to a sustainable future is still very sketchy. Of course our governments are still too focussed on unsustainable growth of an oil-based economy to do anything much about either issue. But there's little point in waiting for them to sort it out, when there's so many positive ideas and capacity for real change to be found at the community and grassroots level.

As well as dismantling the political structures which have been built around the free market economy's addiction to oil, if we are to deal with the challenges of the

21st Century without a massive die-off of our species (and every other), individuals and groups need to change en-masse to other ways of generating and using energy. Carbon emissions will have to be reduced by 60-90% to prevent further damage to global weather systems, and even if we did this tomorrow we'd still be heading towards some climate chaos.

The only way out is a combination of massive scaling back of usage, and a sharp turn towards renewables... in other words a drastic change in the way we eat, travel and house ourselves. Our ability to influence geo-politics might be limited but we can make changes right now on a local level.

### CRAP REQUEST OF THE WEEK

As ever we're broke and need help to meet our monthly bills. Why not help keep SchNEWS free by donating just a small amount to us regularly by standing order? (And one-off donations still gratefully received of course) Massive thanks to all of you who have/do support us - without you we might not still be here... To donate contact the office or visit [www.schnews.org.uk/extras/help.htm](http://www.schnews.org.uk/extras/help.htm)

### The Camp For Climate Action

It's happening now at a site in Megawatt Valley, near Leeds, home of the Drax power station, the largest single emitter of carbon dioxide in the UK. This ten day camp goes on until September 4th and features 150 workshops discussing and planning actions around climate change.

See [www.climatecamp.org.uk](http://www.climatecamp.org.uk)

### POWER POLITICS

Although we don't want oil-based market capitalism to simply jump onto the renewables bandwagon and maintain the consumption-led status quo, there are viable zero-emission, renewable power options.

You can cross nuclear off the list straight away (See SchNEWS 522). Apart from the danger of reactors, and waste deadly for thousands of years, estimates of global uranium deposits suggest we'd get less than a decade of power before we started running out - 'peak uranium'!

Solar energy is the most abundant renewable source on earth. A recent report claims that every year, "each square kilometre of desert receives solar energy equivalent to 1.5 million barrels of oil. Multiplying by the area of deserts world-wide, this is nearly a thousand times the entire current energy consumption of the world."\* It suggests the use of Concentrated Solar Panels (CSPs), which focus heat on solar arrays using mirrors, driving conventional steam powered generators. This has been used in California since the 1980s and costs half the amount per unit than oil energy.

(\* For more see [www.trec-uk.org.uk](http://www.trec-uk.org.uk))

While all-year sunshine isn't something we're blessed with, the British Isles are estimated to have enough wind power using current turbine technology to meet our power usage three times over. And when it comes to the wave power, it would be economically viable to meet 25% of our current demand.

That our government isn't pursuing these options with any real intent shows how clearly it is in the pocket of the oil companies. As any good anarchist will tell you, power needs to be decentralised down to the grassroots level...

### GET OFF THE GRID

A wide range of actions are needed, both in terms of shutting down the causes of climate change, and building a sustainable future, globally and in your own community. Here is just a few areas to get involved in if you want to do something about it...

• **Air Travel** is the fastest growing cause of greenhouse emissions - yet Britain has a programme for massive **Airport Expansion**. For contacts to campaigns across the country fighting individual airport expansion plans see SchNEWS 553-554.

• **Avoid flying** - calculate the amount of carbon created for each seat on a plane, per mile, at [www.climatecare.org/calculators/flights\\_calc.cfm](http://www.climatecare.org/calculators/flights_calc.cfm)

• **Road Building**: In 2005 the UK Govt laid out a programme of road building with over 200 approved schemes. To get involved in local campaigns see [www.roadalert.org.uk](http://www.roadalert.org.uk)

• In Glasgow, plans have been approved for the **M74 Northern Extension**, which would put a 6-lane elevated motorway through the southern suburbs of Glasgow. To join the campaign to stop it going ahead see [www.jam74.org](http://www.jam74.org)

• **Protect Forests Worldwide**. Over the past 150 years, deforestation has contributed an estimated 30 percent of the build-up of CO2; likewise climate change will have a devastating effect on the remaining forests. For an international roundup see [www.ran.org](http://www.ran.org)

• **Ride a bike, don't drive a car** and get involved in campaigning to make cities more bike friendly. **Critical Mass** events are held all round the world for cyclists to reclaim roads - to see if there's one in your area visit [www.urban75.com/Action/critical.html](http://www.urban75.com/Action/critical.html) See also **Sustrans** - a charity which designs and builds routes for cyclists

and walkers. [www.sustrans.org.uk](http://www.sustrans.org.uk)

• **Food Production**: Buy local food, go vegan and/or grow your own. Get your own **allotment** - for advice see [www.allotments-uk.com](http://www.allotments-uk.com) The transportation of food on a large scale gives rise to 'food miles' and is directly related to oil consumption and climate change. For more see [www.sustainweb.org](http://www.sustainweb.org) **Permaculture** is a theory and practice for sustainable, localised food production, as well as having other applications - for more see [www.permaculture.org.uk](http://www.permaculture.org.uk) To find out how **supermarkets** are stitching up the food market see [www.tescopoly.org](http://www.tescopoly.org)

• **Generate Your Own Energy**: While the start-up costs can be expensive, it is possible to set up a 12 volt system in your house using batteries charged by wind turbines, photovoltaic panels - or pedal power with a bike generator. Normal domestic appliances can be powered using an inverter. While **photovoltaic panels** are expensive and resource-intensive to create, it is not too expensive to build your own **wind turbine** (if you've got the room). For info on building small scale turbines see [www.scoraigwind.com](http://www.scoraigwind.com) To build a **bike generator** see [www.stewardwood.org/resources/DIYcyclepower.htm](http://www.stewardwood.org/resources/DIYcyclepower.htm)

• For advice on **making your home more energy efficient**, and grants for those on low income to get better insulation see [www.est.org.uk](http://www.est.org.uk)

• For info on **Bio-Diesel**, and how to use it see [www.schnews.org.uk/diyguide/how-to-make-biodiesel.htm](http://www.schnews.org.uk/diyguide/how-to-make-biodiesel.htm) however while using waste oil for fuel is good, this could lead to large scale intensive fuel crop farming.

• For info about **Peak Oil** and other large scale energy issues see [www.energybulletin.net](http://www.energybulletin.net)

• And most of all, bite the bullet(point) and **CONSUME LESS!**

## GM MOTORS ON

The genetically modified food giant Monsanto continued their buy up of the seed industry this week with the announcement of their takeover of the world's leading cotton seed company Delta & Pine Land Company (D&PL). Once the merger is complete Monsanto will control over 57% of the US cotton seed market and will hold power over millions of cotton producers over the world. Farmers have always been at the forefront of the fight against GM, with the storming of a biotech plant in Brazil in 2001 (SchNEWS 292) and the trashing of a research centre in India in 2003 (SchNEWS 425), just two examples of local resistance. But will they be able to resist the ever expanding Monsanto? And what are they so worried about anyway?

Delta & Pine Land ([www.deltaandpine.com](http://www.deltaandpine.com) for the corporate website) is notorious for its early development, with the US Department of Agriculture, of Terminator technology - plants that are genetically modified to produce sterile seeds at harvest. With 75% of the world's farmers saving their seed, there's some serious cash to be made. With the risk of cross contamination so high, a farmer whose crop becomes contaminated by a neighbour's GM variety will find their own harvest infertile, and despite having sewn seed saved from previous years' crops for generations will be forced to buy "new improved" seed, from their chisel-jawed Monsanto sales rep, who says, "I'll be back" every year for ever more.

Monsanto originally responded to the worldwide outrage against the commercialisation of Terminator technology by pledging in 2005, "not to commercialize sterile-seed technologies in food crops." Sounds good, however, the pledge went on to say, "Monsanto people constantly re-evaluate this stance as technology develops." So even if they don't "re-evaluate" their position, what about non-food crops, like cotton? Cotton production already uses more than 25% of all the insecticides and 10% of all pesticides used in world agriculture, causing untold damage.

If Terminator and other GM technologies are allowed to spread around the world this can only get worse. The whole point of herbicide resistant strains is to allow the use of yet more herbicide, and according to the D&PL website, new varieties allow the use of insecticides "from crop emergence until one week prior to harvest". Get th' face masks and gloves out, Marg'ret, it's sprayin' time! For more chemical free resistance see [www.etcgroup.org](http://www.etcgroup.org)

\* It looks like GM crops might be grown in Britain again soon. The government is considering allowing BASF to conduct two field trials of GM potatoes modified to resist blight.

## COURTING PUBLICITY

The trial begins in Bristol next week for **Margaret Jones and Paul Milling**, who are charged with conspiracy to commit criminal damage to military equipment at RAF Fairford in March 2003. They used hammers and bolt cutters to disable several dozen vehicles used to fuel and load cluster bombs onto US B52 bombers at the base during the initial invasion of Iraq. They acted accountably, putting warning notices on the trucks and notifying police.

After three years and nine court appearances, the maximum sentence is ten years if convicted. There will be a **Peace Vigil** outside Bristol Crown Court, Small St, on the first day of the trial, September the 4th at 9am. The trial is expected to last two weeks, with witnesses being called for the defendants to prove they were acting to stop war crimes including Jo Wilding, and other British and Iraqis who were in Iraq as 'Shock And Awe' devastated the country. Anti-war protesters will maintain a presence each day of the trial. For more info email [nabataat@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:nabataat@yahoo.co.uk) or see <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/bristolsocialforum>

## YOU CAN F.O.

Earlier this week (Monday 21st) Anti-war activists managed to blockade the Foreign Office in central London for two hours in a protest against the UK's warmongering in the Middle East. Unfurling a giant banner reading 'Foreign Offensive: Blood on Your Desks', around 50 protesters blocked vehicle access at the King Charles Road entrance to the FO from 8am. An hour later, truckloads of barricades arrived. Workmen constructed a small fenced area near to the activists, who, wishing to avoid getting penned in, collectively and calmly shifted to the opposite side of the road. Busily building more barricades didn't work, as these were frequently re-opened by the demonstrators, who eventually decided to just move round to the main entrance, where they linked arms and effectively blocked all access for another hour.

A samba-band attempted to liven up the bored bureaucrats with their funky drumming, and some serious clowning around occurred, with dramatised scenes of war, death, and destruction on the street until cops nicked a bunch of clowns for spilling drops of fake blood. Although easily removable with a spot of water, the police claimed that they had caused 'criminal damage'. The police became increasingly frustrated and resulted in some odd and aggressive behaviour including rough shoving, elbowing, and the occasional inappropriate grope. They then decided to prevent the group from leaving and nicked someone for sitting on the pavement. Email [bringthewarhome2006@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:bringthewarhome2006@yahoo.co.uk) for more info. For report and pics see [www.indymedia.org.uk/en/2006/08/348828.html](http://www.indymedia.org.uk/en/2006/08/348828.html)

## HIGH MORAL GROUND

Following the successful recent lock-on protest (See SchNEWS 552), two Brighton SMASH EDO activists occupied the roof of local arms dealers EDO MBM on Wednesday (23rd). The pair unfurled a banner saying, "16 dead children in Qana, Lebanon - EDO profits from murder." Peering down from on high, they were supported by a day-long noisy demonstration in front of the factory.

One protester said, 'We know for a fact that parts for the Hellfire missile are made by EDO MBM in Brighton. They are, as far as we are concerned, as complicit in murder as the generals who ordered these killings and the fighter pilots who carried out the bombings. They are a link in the same sorry chain.' Sarah Johnson, press spokeswoman for Smash EDO, added, 'Over a thousand civilians have died as a result of Israel's bombing of Lebanon. Israel continues to kill civilians in the West Bank and Gaza with weaponry armed with components made in Brighton. EDO MBM are profiting from murder, and we will not tolerate their presence in Brighton.'

As soon as news of the protest was published by news agencies, by strange coincidence EDO MBM's parent company, US arms giant EDO Corp took a 50 cent hit in their ever decreasing share price (easy to follow at [www.finance.google.com/finance?q=edo](http://www.finance.google.com/finance?q=edo)). Smash EDO demonstrate every Wednesday at EDO MBM, Home Farm Road, Brighton. [www.smashedo.org.uk](http://www.smashedo.org.uk)



## Party & Protest

**AUGUST 25th - 29th One Life Free Festival** back for its 4th year in a secret countryside location not too far from London. A very non-commercial event for campers to enjoy anarchist bands, soundsystems, alternative therapies and more. For details call 07922 103690 or 07922 103693 \*\* **26th - Fur protests** at shops selling real fur in London including Harrods in Knightsbridge and branches of fashion chain Joseph Ltd. From 11am til late afternoon. For Harrods, exit at Knightsbridge tube and meet at Harrods' Brompton Rd entrance. Call 07899 775493. For more animal rights actions see [www.veggies.org.uk/arc.php](http://www.veggies.org.uk/arc.php) \*\* **SEPTEMBER 2nd - BASS Community Fayre**, free one-day festival at The Level, Brighton, 11am till 7.30pm. Web [www.bass23.org](http://www.bass23.org) We'll be there! \*\* **2-3rd Soil Association Organic Food Festival** - the fast growing food festival with 150,000 visitors and over 200 exhibitors. Bristol Harbourside, [www.organicfoodfairs.co.uk](http://www.organicfoodfairs.co.uk) \*\* **4-9th - Week of action against vivisection at Oxford University**. Part of the campaign by SPEAK to prevent the building of a new animal 'research' lab, culminating in demo and leafleting on Sat 9th, 12pm outside The Church of St. Michael, Cornmarket Street, Oxford, OX1 3EY. For more see [www.speakcampaigns.org.uk](http://www.speakcampaigns.org.uk)

## SAVE THE WALES

On Wednesday protesters blockaded the entrance to Hafod Quarry - part of which is an SSSI home to great crested newts - in Johnstown near Wrexham, which is to become a landfill site for Liverpool's rubbish. The campaign, led by local Johnstown residents, have fought the planned landfill site for years through legal channels, but this week the dump trucks arrived at Hafod Quarry, so they took direct action to stop it, and are calling for more support (nearest station Ruabon). They blocked the entrance for several hours before police removed them, and are calling out for more support from Wrexham and Merseyside for subsequent actions. Mersey Waste Holdings are dumping in Wales because of a legal loophole which allows landfill in Wales without penalty. For more see [www.indymedia.org.uk/en/2006/08/348841.html](http://www.indymedia.org.uk/en/2006/08/348841.html)

## ...and finally...

In the home of overreaction and paranoid fear, three men of "Middle-Eastern descent" were arrested on suspicion of plotting a terrorist act after buying a large number of mobile phones from a WalMart store in Michigan, USA.

An eagle-eyed cashier alerted the cops after the men purchased eighty \$20 phones, which is in violation of the store's policy restricting the number of phones to three per customer.

Stopping the men's van, cops found a cache of nearly 1000 mobiles. When questioned the men said they were going to sell the phones on at \$38 dollars each to a merchant in Texas. Just yer pure naked capitalism in action (American Dream™) - but the police accused the men of plotting to use the phones as detonators to blow up a local landmark, the five mile long Mackinac Bridge. The plod knew that this was the target as they found pictures of it on a camera owned by one of the men. Must have seemed odd that, photos of a local attraction on the camera of a man visiting the area for the first time... No shi'ite Sherlock.

Despite the FBI saying that there was no evidence to link any of the men with terrorist organisations or activities, local police and prosecutors are pushing ahead with the case - salivating at the chance to get fifteen minutes of fame in their very own high profile "terror" trial.

## Disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all readers if you've got a Drax to grind, be blunt about it... Honest!

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