

WAKE UP! NO SERIOUSLY JUST WAKE UP TO THE...

SchNEWS

www.schnews.org.uk

Friday 9th February 2007

Free/Donation

Issue 575

THE TIDE IS NIGH

AS CLIMATE CHAOS LOOMS AND ACTION IS NEEDED, WHO YOU GONNA CALL?

So how seriously is the mainstream world taking certain climate change? The big news last week was that a consensus of boffins reported to the UN International Panel on Climate Change (motto: ponderous maximus) that if we're 'lucky' we will only face turning rainforests into deserts, kill all coral reefs, suffering massive droughts and floods. And even worse if we do nothing or are not 'lucky' - literally threatening our very survival. And yet, with minimal public outcry, three oil giants (Shell, Exxon Mobil and BP) could report record breaking profits for 2006.

Exxon alone bagged £20,000,000,000 last year, none too worried despite coming under the microscope of the Union Of Concerned Scientists (www.ucsusa.org) who accuse them of spending \$16 million between 1998 and 2005 in 'disinformation tactics' (the classic tobacco company technique) to undermine climate change science. Anyone for the Union Of Frankly Petrified Citizens?

The non-question of 'is this a consensus yet?' on the reality of climate change continues to rattle around the mass media as though it's still worth debating, and the full gory details of climate change in the newspapers are sandwiched between executive car, cheap flights and exotic holiday spreads... 'news' is just more media eye-candy. We're not about to start dragging out another mind boggling statistic about how bad it's gonna get - see the last 200 SchNEWS issues for all that - and we don't need another 'expert' to confirm it, it's clear the mainstream is nowhere near the mark (they're still telling us we can buy our way to salvation) - so the question is what can people do for themselves about it?

Planes, Strains & Automobiles

This year is set to see more actions, protest camps and efforts to bring the real agenda of slashing energy use, pollution, consumption, goods transportation etc etc further into mainstream debate. There are planned airport expansions up and down the country, with regional campaigns only just taking off (groan) - but with the potential to go super-sonic as the focus goes on to the aviation industry (See SchNEWS 553-554). There are also several road and anti-development protest camps still going on, protests against the proposed gas pipeline across Wales, and the recently announced Camp For Climate Action for the coming summer. Here's yer latest pic'n'mix SchNEWS round up of recent actions and forthcoming events...

* Protests are building up as work has commenced on the widening of the M1

Motorway near Sheffield. The M1 is due to be widened from Leicester to Leeds, and around the M25 near Luton in a project costing £3.74 billion - which is expected to rise considerably. Sections of the M1 get 160,000 vehicles a day. Since the campaign was started a year ago, there have been banner drops over the M1, as well as the picketing of exhibitions by the Highways Agency promoting it. For more see www.nowideningm1.org.uk

* On the path of the controversial 120 mile National Grid gas pipeline across Wales - from Milford Haven to Tirley in Gloucestershire (See SchNEWS 569) - five protestors were arrested on January 31st when they walked on a public footpath between Trebanos and Pontardawe in the Swansea Valley, which has been illegally closed off by the Neath Port Talbot CBC. The pipeline caters for increased gas use, but yet the Stern report says that gas accounts for a huge proportion of our emissions already. See www.safehavenpembs.co.uk

* On January 27th the Bristol Alliance Against Urban 4x4 issued 1,000 mock parking tickets to 4x4s in central Bristol. The slap-on-the-wrist tickets were headed 'Poor Vehicle Choice', pointing out the stupidity. To download the ticket for printing see www.stopurban4x4s.org.uk/shop.htm#parking

* The irony that Shell have been sponsoring the Wildlife Photographer of the Year competition was not lost on the 20 or so protesters causing havoc at the Natural History Museum last weekend. Oily black paint was splattered across photos to remind people about the taint of Big Oil; a spoof banner was unfurled and leaflets distributed drawing attention to the hypocrisy behind the exhibition. Despite the occasional scuffle, no one was nicked. More at: www.shelloiledwildlife.org.uk

* Camp for Climate Action activists were busy in Glasgow protesting at a local Shell garage against the company's activities in Nigeria. Over in Edinburgh, wannabe PM David Milliband received a good pieing as the fictional company, 'Greenwash & Co.' parodied a talk by the environment minister and unfurled a banner saying "GREENWASH: polluting reality with rhetoric". Reeling from the vegan short-crust pastry, lobbed by one Colonel Crust, he appeared displeased at the effect on his immaculately kept hairdo, shouting, "for fck's sake!"

* On the same day activists from Plane Stupid visited travel agents across London, spray-painting green and red footprints along

FREE handset and 3 months PLUS FREE line rental for every new subscriber!

Message from NETWORK PROVIDER

Due to circumstances beyond our control, service will be suspended due to the end of civilisation. You will receive a 50% discount on your monthly bill until service is resumed in approximately one thousand years.

BACK REPLY

outrage the future's bleak, the future's orange. And wet.

CRAP ARREST OF THE WEEK

For not being able to stomach pate...
Five protestors from Southsea Animal Action and The Southern Animal Rights Coalition were recently arrested under section 42 of CIPA, which covers carrying out a home demonstration - despite the fact they were at the time, er, at a lawful protest outside a restaurant selling foie gras - a product made from the livers of force-fed ducks. For more email info@sarconline.co.uk

their way to draw attention to the effect that flying is having on our carbon footprint. 2007 looks set to be the year for upping the plane protests - see www.planestupid.com

* Last Saturday Manchester city centre was host to street performance and samba music from Rhythms of Resistance in an climate change awareness raising event. Today (9th) in Manchester there is also a protest against ESSO meeting outside Manchester University Students Union at 5pm.

* Protests against Shell's plan to despoil Rossport, County Mayo, Ireland with a gas pipeline and refinery continue (See SchNEWS 564). A day of support is being held on the 16th February by Shell to Sea at the Bellanaboy site. The aim is for people from around the country to show their support and solidarity with local actions. There is also a rally on 24th Feb in central Dublin, meet 2pm, Parnell St. See www.corribsos.com for more.

* April 5th-11th is Spring Into Action - a week of climate change events, workshops, at different venues in Nottingham. If you want to help, give a workshop, or get involved call 07765 217118, email info@eastsideclimateaction.org.uk or see www.eastsideclimateaction.org.uk There is a planning meeting at the Sumac Centre, Gladstone St on Feb 15th at 7pm, as well as public meetings at 7.30pm on Feb 5th in Leicester at the Friends Meeting House, Queens Rd, and at 7.30pm on Feb 8th in Nottingham at the International Community Centre, Mansfield Rd.

* Following on from the Drax camp last summer (See SchNEWS 558), another Camp for Climate Action is being planned for 14th- 21st August. Last weekend more than 70 gathered from around the country in Leeds and decided to do another camp, this year the targetting aviation, coal or oil industries - with a location due to be announced. At the moment all organisational aspects of the camp are being put into place, and if you're up for being involved there will another national planning meeting in Leeds at the Common Place social centre on February 17-18th, and then Bristol on March 17-18th - see www.climatecamp.org.uk for details.

* See also <http://risingtide.org.uk>

2012 DOWN TO EARTH

They're not awarding themselves any medals just yet, but well done to locals fighting to save the Manor Garden allotments in Hackney from the 2012 Olympic developers (See SchNEWS 574). This week, following a well-attended planning meeting where campaigners and locals passionately argued their case, Waltham Forest Council rejected London Development Agencies (LDA) bid to compulsorily acquire the common land, to the relief and cheering of all (except the LDA). While this scuppers them for now, and may set a handy precedent for other forthcoming developments designed to 'disney-fie' swathes of East London in time for 2012, the LDA are now expected to appeal and the resistance will need to be maintained. Report and pics at www.indymedia.org.uk/en/2007/02/361776.html

INTO THE VORTEX

The demise of the Square Social Centre in London (incorrectly listed as still open in SchNEWS 573!) does not mean activists have been idle on the capital's streets.

A new squatted social centre, The Vortex, has been operating since being occupied on 6th January. Offering a daily cafe, plus radical cinema, club nights, talks, workshops and meeting space, the club has been proving popular. Perhaps more so than the plans to redevelop the site with the (oh yes of course) obligatory luxury flats and Starbucks.

With the support of locals, they managed to repel an eviction attempt by private goons on Jan 26th (photos and video at www.indymedia.org.uk/en/2007/01/360806.html) but following a subsequent high court ruling they are now facing another eviction attempt at any time.

Why not get down and show your support, lend a hand, and demonstrate your resistance to the latte of the law. The Vortex is at Church St, Stoke Newington, London and aims to be open to the public daily from 12am to 11pm.

PARTY & PROTEST

FEBRUARY: 10 - Don't Flirt with the Occupation! Mass Demonstration Against Carmel-Agrexco at their HQ, Swallowfield Way, Hayes UB3 1DQ at 1pm. Israel's largest exporter of fresh agricultural produce, 50% owned by the warmongering state - see www.bigcampaign.org for details of lifts from London & more. **** 13 - Public meeting 'From Brighton to Beirut: EDO-MBM and the war in Lebanon'** 7.30pm, at the Brightelm Centre, North Road, Brighton. Calomhe Butterly, an Irish Peace Activist who was in Lebanon during the bombing will talk about the devastation caused and the need to take direct action, plus speakers from the Smash EDO campaign. See www.smashedo.org.uk **** 17 - Join the march on Worthing Police Station to protest against police intimidation of supporters of the Titnore Woods eco-protest camp** in Worthing, West Sussex. 2pm at Montague Place, Worthing. See www.southcoal.indymedia.org.uk **** 19 - The Refugee Council** are planning a mass sleepout in **Parliament Square** to highlight the desperate plight of refused asylum seekers made destitute by government policy. So if you're the hardy sleep-under-the-stars kinda campaigner, or merely willing to pull a short shift to give 'em some support or a flask of tea, email justfair@refugeecouncil.org.uk for details. **** 24 - No Trident / Troops Out of Iraq - National Demonstration.** Assemble 12 noon - central London (exact location to be announced later). Rally in Trafalgar Square. Come and demonstrate against government plans to replace the Trident nuclear weapons system with a new generation of weapons of mass destruction. Organised by CND and the Stop the War Coalition. For more see www.cnduk.org

*** For full Party & Protest listings updated weekly see www.schnews.org.uk/pap**

COURT IN THE CROSSFIRE

SchNEWS International:
US BOMBS FALL ON SOMALIA

In case you missed it because of Celebrity Big Brother blanket coverage, war broke out in Somalia as we feared in November (see SchNEWS 567). The country's Union of Islamic Courts (UIC) had become a popular force after years of clan fighting left the country in tatters. A government which hacks off the limbs of thieves quickly became an enemy of the US, but not because of its excessive stance on law and order. Instead it's the usual suspects - al Qaeda baddies lurking in sophisticated cave networks busily training to bring down Western civilisation were hard at work. And they must be bombed to somewhere further back in time than the stone age.

The UIC had succeeded in bringing an end to 16 years of warlordism in Mogadishu, winning broad popular support from a population suspicious of their headline religious beliefs, but thankful for a city no longer plagued with brutal violence from petty warlord fiefdoms. The latest round of tragedy for the country began with the drafting of UN resolution 1725. Although it did not actually grant 'permission' for an Ethiopian occupation, it did effectively state that the UIC would never be recognised as the legitimate government and the US read it as a green light to start a proxy war anyway.

Having previously promised that they would defend the capital to the last, the UIC withdrew saying that a conflict in the city would kill and injure too many innocent civilians. Strange talk indeed from a government that the USA repeatedly accuses of links to al Qaeda, an organisation not known for its concern about civilian casualties. Just when it seemed that life in Somalia couldn't get any worse, on the 9th of January the US began bombing - their airstrikes aimed at targeting 'Al Qaeda operatives' destroyed several coastal villages and massacred a group of shepherds. The reported death toll from these airstrikes was over 100. Some days later the US admitted that their billion dollar hardware had missed all their intended targets.

US Special Forces and CIA paramilitary teams are now directly embedded with Ethiopian forces in Somali and is a part of a new US strategy of using bases around the world as 'Lily Pads' from which Special Forces can 'hop off' to strike at the enemies

INSIDE SchNEWS

*** The American freelance journalist Josh Wolf** (See SchNEWS 555), jailed for refusing to hand over video footage of 'anti-G8 activists to a US federal grand jury (or 'anarchist witch-hunt' as Josh puts it), has now been in prison for over 170 days, making him the longest ever imprisoned-for-failing-to-reveal-sources journalist in US history. A recent judicial ruling seems to indicate they don't intend letting him out any time soon. Josh publishes blogs from inside, and letters are a key means of support for him. To find out how to help, see www.freejosh.pbwiki.com

* Meanwhile in a vaguely similar case back in Blighty, slightly better news for one animal rights campaigner as Oxford University's animal lab lost its contempt of court action against co-founder of Speak, **Robert Cogswell**, over his refusal to produce an email list of subscribers. Speak had allegedly broken the court injunction protecting the animal experimentors (see SchNEWS 473) when the details of a contractor were mentioned in an email. The favourable ruling was, however, not because the law is more respecting of freedom of expression here of course - the judge was 'wholly sympathetic' to the lab's case. Ironically, the case collapsed because Speak have their data, including email records, stored and registered to an address in the er, liberty-loving US - beyond the high court's power to force disclosure. More online at www.speakcampaigns.org

of White House Inc. In reality this means that the US of A has given itself carte blanche to bomb any poor brown nation unable to defend itself.

The problem for the Somalis is not so much the Ethiopian troops as the Transitional Federal Government. Since its inception in 2004 this 'government' had never exerted any power anywhere outside of one town, Baidoa, and is in reality nothing more than a collection of warlords fighting amongst themselves for power. These new warlord-ministers arrived alongside the Ethiopian army, and as soon as the Islamists left the checkpoints Mogadishu was divided once again into rival fiefdoms. In fact, the situation is worse now as they compete to fill the power vacuum left by the retreating Islamists and the streets of the capital are more dangerous than ever. Shortly after the various ministers arrived in Mogadishu (many for the first time) a gun battle erupted between two ministerial entourages, apparently over a parking space.

The UIC has been defeated, with seemingly little chance of regaining power any time soon. They have however, threatened to begin an Iraq-style insurgency. There have already been several attacks on Ethiopian troops inside Somalia.

The Somali community in the UK has been devastated by events back home. After the UIC victory, many refugees had begun to return home. After their fall, the community here is in a state of shock, as one refugee said 'We tried our best. We built a system by ourselves.' For all its faults it was an indigenous Somali solution to their problems, an attempt to use Islam (the religion of 99% of the population), but as we all know the US is never happy with any country that displays genuinely independent tendencies. And, as a self-declared radical Islamic movement, it was all too easy to justify the continued expansion of the costly War On TerrorTM

*** A funeral procession** to remember those killed by US bombs in Somalia will be held in Brighton on the 21st of February at the home of Brighton's infamous bomb-makers, EDO-MBM, at the bottom of Home Farm Road at 4pm. The planes that launched the bombing use EDO's parts..
For more see www.smashedo.org.uk

...and finally...

One man's drink is another man's poison:

As China quickly attempts to sweep its problems under the bamboo mat before the Olympic corporate and media juggernaut rolls into town later this year, things are not looking good for those on Beijing's drug scene.

The police have announced plans to remove 'undesirable' types from view by forcing the city's drug users into year-long rehabilitation programmes. Things are already pretty draconian for Chinese hedonists as first-time offenders are recorded on a police "blacklist", and if caught using again are forcibly placed in government-sponsored rehabilitation centres for three to six months.

Repression leading up to the Olympics is nothing new of course, with reports of the homeless, drug addicts, refugees, asylum seekers and the mentally ill being rounded up and incarcerated before Athens 2004 and aboriginals, homeless and anti-corporate amongst those targeted in Sydney 2000 (See SchNEWS 271).

The real irony is that, meanwhile, state-sponsored 'coaches' and 'fitness trainers' will be stuffing a generation of young Chinese athletes full of steroids and performance-enhancing drugs in their PR motivated gold-at-all-costs drive to sweep the world before them at the ridiculous sporting circus. Well that's the true Olympic spirit...

Disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all readers - denial only ever makes things worse. Honest!

Subscribe! Get SchNEWS free every week by email in pdf or text file - visit our site, or send us stamps and we'll post it to you. Copy and distribute! Keep SchNEWS free with donations (via website or cheques payable to Justice?). Posted free to all prisoners. SchNEWS, c/o Community Base, 113 Queens Rd, Brighton, BN1 3XG. Tel +44 (0)1273 685913 Email schnews@brighton.co.uk Web www.schnews.org.uk