

WAKE UP !! WAKE UP!! IT'S YER CAGE FIGHTING...

# SchNEWS

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## CAGE THE RAGE

**INTERMENT IS NEW TACTIC TO DEAL WITH ANIMAL RIGHTS MOVEMENT**

**“This is just the latest example of the state attempting to decapitate the animal rights movement – but we’re not going away”**

- *SPEAK* campaigner.

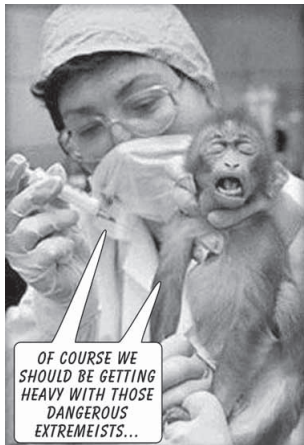
**“What people outside the animal rights movement don’t seem to appreciate is that once these moves have been practised on us, they are expanded to everyone expressing dissent – just look at how PHA injunctions attacked first us, then the peace movement, then the environmentalists and finally the climate camp”**- *an Animal Rights Legal Advisor*

The screws have been tightened on the animal rights (AR) movement yet again. In this country, and in the US, there has been a serious state attempt to deal with the strength of the animal rights movement by using an extra-legal form of internment. Currently the three most prominent activists from the Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty (SHAC) campaign - Greg Avery, Natasha Avery and Heather Nicholson - are all on remand, after high profile arrests back on May 1st (see SchNEWS 585). They are charged with ‘conspiracy to blackmail’. Now the same applies to the main spokesman for the SPEAK campaign, Mel Broughton.

Mel was arrested in his home at 5.30am on December 12th – and he’s been held on remand ever since on charges of arson and ‘conspiracy to blackmail’. Meanwhile campaigners against the Sequani animal labs in Ledbury are on trial for conspiracy to breach Sections 145 and 146 of the SOCPA – laws especially introduced to protect ‘animal research’ facilities. SPEAK ([www.speakcampaigns.org](http://www.speakcampaigns.org)) are fighting against the new Oxford University primate laboratory, referred to as being of ‘national importance’ by Lord Sainsbury, unelected science minister and aggressive lobbyist for GM crops amongst other profitable er, sorry, progressive issues. Back in June, SchNEWS reported how a senior Thames Valley police officer, Inspector Shead, was caught on tape promising to ‘wage a dirty war’ against the SPEAK campaign (see SchNEWS 590) and ‘persecute’ spokesman Mel Broughton - indeed ‘to prosecute the sh\*t out of him’. Now the meaning of that has become clear - the shattering of the AR movement by any means necessary. A SPEAK campaigner told us, “We know they’ve been gunning for Mel for a long time – but this isn’t a one man campaign. It is basically internment

– everything about this campaign is peaceful and legal. The big picture is that the police want to smash SPEAK and SHAC.”

Aspects of the raids, taken in context with other repression around the country, demonstrate that the police’s main strategy is disruption. During Operation Achilles – the raids which netted the SHAC organisers - huge quantities of leaflets, cash etc was seized as ‘evidence’, obviously damaging the ability of the campaign to continue. One campaigner arrested during the initial sweep told SchNEWS how the police pressured them to try and secure their Pretty Good Privacy (PGP) key to their computers. In November, police wrote letters demanding that the passwords for encrypted files on seized computers be released under threat of legal action. Campaigners refused to back down and as yet no legal action has been taken.



OF COURSE WE SHOULD BE GETTING HEAVY WITH THOSE DANGEROUS EXTREMISTS...

### LOVE SHAC

The reason the state is using conspiracy charges is they like their all encompassing vagueness. Rather than having to prove specific criminal activities, a huge quantity of evidence can be produced from which ‘inferences’ can be drawn. In the SHAC case over 15,000 pages of documents have been produced, including transcripts from bugs placed in hire cars and

into the wall of, what the prosecution are referring to as, ‘the SHAC house’.

Also included are transcripts of conversations made by one of the accused from prison. However there is not one shred of evidence that points to direct engagement in criminal activities (beyond such trivia as trespass). According to one source, the evidence is bizarre - “it includes family photos – loads of stuff that hasn’t got anything to do with animal rights or demos or anything...”

The trial is expected to last six months - so even if the three are acquitted they will have spent the best part of two years unable to take part in any effective campaigning. If they are convicted it will pave the way to repeat the tactics with other campaign groups - except those couched in the vaguest non-threatening terms - and especially those that are actually effective.

“The danger of this sort of accusation is that simply running a campaign could be described as blackmail. Obviously a black-

## CRAP ARREST OF THE WEEK

**For watching a demonstration...**

Living in Parliament Square as he does, Brian Haw has little say on who pops round to hang out in his back garden, so to speak. Last weekend SOCPA-fighting activists and civil liberty campaigners took part in a national day of action (which saw protests in Milton Keynes, Cambridge, Liverpool, Oxford, Aberystwyth and the Aldermaston Atomic Weapons Establishment - for more details see [www.indymedia.org.uk/en/2008/01/389354.html](http://www.indymedia.org.uk/en/2008/01/389354.html)), ending up with a demo outside Parliament. As an interested onlooker, Brian decided to video the event.

Bully boy cops were obviously upset at this clear breach of their freedom to illegally repress and attack protesters without fear of being filmed in the act. One officer bashed Brian’s camera so hard it gashed open his cheek Brian barely had time to cry out an expletive in anguish before he was arrested for threatening words and/or behaviour, and dragged him off to a police van where he was assaulted by a number of London’s finest, getting punched in the testicles for good measure.

After being later bailed for a month on unspecified charges, Brian said “I wouldn’t call it an arrest, I’d call it a kidnap.” Currently nursing his wounds, cut, bruises and a swollen wrist injury, he plans to make an official complaint against his treatment.

He might not be the only one – his friend, Steve Jago, who attempted to intervene was also arrested and assaulted. The heavy-handed approach was also extended to the demonstrators as a 61-year-old woman was thrown roughly to the ground and an elderly man knocked off his bicycle. Up to seven others were arrested for the violent, state-threatening action of lying down on the pavement.

The consultation on reforming SOCPA has now closed (see SchNEWS 612) so expect the bill to soon be ‘harmonised’ and treatment like this to rolled out all over the country...

\* See: [www.parliament-square.org.uk](http://www.parliament-square.org.uk) and [www.repeal-socpa.info](http://www.repeal-socpa.info)

mailer’s threats do not have to be illegal, simply the suggestion that if you don’t do X we will do Y could be construed as blackmail” (*AR legal advisor*) - i.e. the very act of organising demos could become a very serious criminal offence, punishable by years inside. So once more we see laws drafted to protect individuals being used (or twisted) to protect corporations. SHAC has to be the legally most watertight campaign in the UK. Everything they publish is checked by a barrister beforehand. As our source told us, “They’ve got masses of evidence of demos being organised of course but most of them are organised with the police! Every campaign has a target – even Greenpeace send out action e-mail alerts! How can what we do be described as blackmail?”

The case of the Sequani Six is now entering its second week in Birmingham Crown Court. Sequani are a vivisection laboratory based in Ledbury, Hertfordshire and are the latest beneficiaries of a law specifically targeted at those who campaign for animal rights. Six protesters, including one 80-year-old woman are charged with conspiracy to “interfere with contractual relationships so as to harm animal research organisation” under section 145 of SOCPA.

*Continued over...*

**INFORMATION FOR ACTION**

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To add insult to injury the judge in the trial has admitted that he regularly enjoys hunting – but we're sure he won't let that unduly prejudice him.

It has been suggested by top cop Anton Setchell (ACPO National Coordinator for Domestic Extremism) that the SOCPA laws, which effectively prohibit demos outside establishments connected with animal research, were not drafted widely enough. He wants them expanded to cover any groups that engage in sustained campaigning. The National Extremism Tactical Co-ordinating Unit's website ([www.netcu.org.uk](http://www.netcu.org.uk)) says, "The term 'domestic extremism' applies to unlawful action that is part of a protest or campaign. It is most often associated with 'single-issue' protests, such as animal rights, anti-war, anti-globalisation and anti-GM (genetically modified) crops." Alarmingly section 149 of SOCPA allows the secretary of state to declare any business to be the equivalent of an animal research establishment without going back to Parliament.

Despite the full agencies of the state being bent on the movement's destruction, with widespread abuse of public order law and the shutting down of animal rights info stalls – they're not going away! Demos continue despite police intimidation. Vivisectionists and those who deal with them are still firmly in the movement's sights and a glance at the websites demonstrate the extent to which this struggle is still gaining in strength, and going global. As a SHAC activist told us "They think that by taking out a few key people they can stop our movement but for every two they take away there will be four to take their place. The public support has been amazing..."

- \* SPEAK [www.speakcampaigns.org](http://www.speakcampaigns.org)
- \* SHAC [www.shac.net](http://www.shac.net)
- \* STOPSequani [www.stopsequani.co.uk](http://www.stopsequani.co.uk)

## STOP BLUBBERING!

**Illegal Japanese whaling activity** has been brought to the world's attention this week with the kidnapping on Tuesday night (15th) of two activists from the **Sea Shepherd** anti-whaling vessel the *Steve Irwin*. Benjamin Potts and Giles Lane boarded a Japanese whaling ship to protest against the cruel and illegal activity and quickly found themselves in captivity.

They were there to deliver a letter reminding the whalers that they were in violation of international conservation law by targeting endangered species in an established whale sanctuary. No doubt embarrassed by the impending bad publicity - like the 50-strong protest outside the London embassy on Wednesday - the Japanese government quickly agreed to ensure that the activists were handed back, even as they condemned the action saying that the hunting ship *Yushin Maru* had done nothing wrong. Despite this they did release the two into the care of an Australian Customs ship on Thursday. Ben and Giles now plan to return to the *Steve Irwin* and continue the fight as soon as possible.

According to the Oxford English dictionary, a hostage is "a person seized or held in order to induce others to comply with a demand or condition" - something that's generally accepted as being against the law. Shortly after Benjamin and Giles boarded the *Yushin*, the euphemistically entitled Institute of Cetacean Research contacted the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society (who run the *Steve Irwin*) demanding they stop all protest activity – if they agreed, then they could have their activists back. "They are acting like a terrorist organization," said *Steve Irwin's* 1st Officer Peter Brown. "Here they are taking hostages and making demands. Our policy is that we don't

respond to terrorist demands."

Instead they continue to disrupt the hunt for endangered whales in the Southern Oceans Whale Sanctuary, where their presence, and that of Greenpeace, has ensured no whales have been killed since January 11th.

This is not helping the Japanese with their plan to kill 935 minke whales and 50 fin whales in the Southern Ocean this summer for er, 'scientific research.' (*All 985? Really?!*) The artful description is to get round international law as the moratorium on commercial whaling does not cover slaughter for scientific reasons. But in truth, it's a flagrant two-fingers up to the world by the Japanese government, who know that everyone else is too gutless to make a meal of it – unlike them as nearly all of their research killings end up inside the belly of a Japanese diner.

And it's no painless party for the endangered whales before they end up as lunch either - in a foreword to a recent Whalewatch report, Sir David Attenborough says that, "there is no humane way to kill a whale at sea." Whalewatch found that in 60% of cases Japanese whalers did not kill their prey outright and it sometimes took up to two hours for the animals to die.

The United Nations World Charter for Nature gives authority to individuals to act on behalf of and enforce international conservation laws. You can find out more about the campaign to stop whaling at [www.whalewatch.org](http://www.whalewatch.org) and keep apace with the actions against it at [www.seashepherd.org](http://www.seashepherd.org)

## ...and finally...

Scoop! Evening Standard (ES) journals have been busy trawling the web and have found out that Class War activists want to disrupt a police march! The demo, planned for 23rd January (see SchNEWS 615) expects to attract up to 15,000 coppers dismayed that their 2.5% pay increase won't be backdated a few months. ES reckons that riot police will have to be deployed, fearing that anarchists plan to 'hijack the march'. Quite how our mohicanned friends plan to blend in with the thin blue picket line isn't revealed - perhaps by griping about paperwork, canteen food and 'the chief super'. SchNEWS is looking forward to estimates from the Met of numbers attending – possibly a little more upbeat of than their usual claim of a couple of dozen and a clown.

Regardless of whether the pay offer is decent or not more resources than ever are pouring into the police force despite an alleged 40% reduction in crime. Local police forces get a fifth of all the council tax paid in the UK, up 7% from 1997. Neo Labour spent £1 billion on the police in 2003/04 – three times more than they did on you Dole scum! Priorities, priorities...

And tax payers are not the only ones coughing up the cash for coppers. Figures recently revealed show that the Proceeds From Crime Act 2003 - an incentive scheme whereby police and recovery agencies get to keep half of whatever they can seize from 'criminals' – is also raking it in. £15 million is due to be shared out amongst various law enforcers for assets seized between July and September last year. Still, we're sure that impartial, lawful evidence gathering and fair trials won't be affected merely because police, CPS prosecutors, customs and the like are all on the performance-payroll!

As a police spokesman declared, the idea is to send out a clear "message to criminals that crime does not pay." He didn't, however, comment on whether being a policeman pays...

### Disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all readers - you'll just have to wait for your interment like everyone else...Honest!

## CHIP OFF THE OLD CELLBLOCK

The Ministry of Justice (sic) has started the new year with plans to place tiny microchips under the skin of thousands of offenders in an attempt to free up more prison places. As Neo Labour continues to lock up more and more people, not even the new super prisons that will expand capacity beyond 100,000 (see SchNEWS 614) are going to be enough - so more ex-prisoners and people the government would otherwise want safely out of the way are going to have to spend their time banged up at their own, rather than Her Majesty's, pleasure.

Electronic tagging of offenders is nothing new, but these proposals will help a booming prisons industry monitor and track people anywhere in the world using satellite tracking technology. The same sort of RFID chips (see SchNEWS 415) used for pets and livestock are proposed – well, if its good enough for cattle, its good enough for the socially undesirable... The move was originally proposed by President of the Association of Chief Police Officers, Ken Jones, and is now getting government backing. A 'senior Ministry official' said, "We have looked at it, and gone back to it, and worried about the practicalities and the ethics...but [we thought hey, screw all that! -] when you look at the challenges facing the criminal justice system, it's time has come."

Those challenges he referred to are the problem of locking up so many more people, faster than they can build more prisons (privatised, preferably of course). This supply and demand problem meant that the number of prisoners held in police cells rose astonishingly last year - police stations held offenders more than 60,000 times in 2007 - up from a mere 4,617 in 2006!

17,000 people – including those on bail, could be micro chipped under the plans, although not

all parts of the incarceration machine think it's such a great idea.

Harry Fletcher, assistant general secretary of the National Association of Probation Officers, said the proposal would not help but merely degrade their 'clients'. He added, "...tagging people in the same way we tag our pets cannot be the way ahead. Treating people like pieces of meat does not seem to represent an improvement in the system to me."

But it all sounds like such a nice little earner for some RFID company or other (and for any non-exec MPs/lobbyists it pays, too!) One such company is already planning to develop implants that could transmit electronic shocks, broadcast messages and even act as a microphone, listening in on conversations. "Some folks might foolishly discount all of these downsides and futuristic nightmares since the tagging is proposed for criminals like rapists and murderers," says privacy expert Liz McIntyre, "But the rest of us could be next..."

## FREEDOM TO PROTEST!

Assemble at 12pm at  
Churchill Square, Brighton

## SchNEWS Sunday Lunch

17th Feb, from 2pm at the Cowley  
CLub, 12 London Rd, Brighton  
Come and get fed with lasagne & chips & salad for under a fiver - and from 6 (ish!) see screenings of new TAKE THREE SchMOVIES and REEL NEWS...

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