

WAKE UP!! IT'S YER MUGSHOT IN THE ARM...



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A LIBERAL HELPING?

AS SchNEWS MARKS THE GUARDIAN'S SPOTTER CARD...

Here in the SchNEWS bunker we've been somewhat overwhelmed by the sudden interest of the mainstream media in the police state in recent months. OK, maybe it's just jealousy that the professional hacks of *Panorama* and the *Guardian* find it so easy to reach the masses (while we humbly labour in the trenches of citizen journalism talking to the same few grizzled poll tax riot veterans and weirdbeards with crop-circle fixations) – but there's definitely something a bit whiffy about the *Guardian* ex-pose and the sudden outburst of liberal ire.

Leaving aside the thorny question of how ethical it is to splash people's mugshots across the front page under headlines about domestic extremism (and then take a leaf out of the *Daily Mail* and appeal for the public to write in and identify them), should we be grateful they have taken our message to the multitudes? After all, it's got people talking about police repression in a way our preaching in the wilderness has never managed to. But is it our message?

In the *Guardian*'s world there are two kinds of protesters, with a clear division between nice, fluffy though occasionally mischievous people who just want to make their point of view heard... and nasty anarchist thugs whose violence merits nothing less than a full blown state crack-down.

Missing from the picture is the idea of a wealthy corporate elite, pulling the strings and doing whatever it takes to maintain their privileged position. The National Extremism Tactical Co-ordinating Unit (NETCU) openly admit to being a pro-business section of the police.

The angle echoed throughout the paper this week has been outrage that powers originally developed for 'tackling criminals involved in animal rights groups' have been used against a 'group of kids, clowns and campers'. The division between 'good' and 'bad' protesters might as well come directly from NETCU themselves (the paper even drags up the desecration of Gladys Hammonds grave as if it was a typical AR action). The *Guardian*'s sister paper, the *Observer*, last November carried a virtual NETCU press release entitled "Police warn of growing threat from eco-terrorists" - clearly helping them broaden their remit (See SchNEWS 655).

NETCU grew out of earlier bodies such as ARNI (Animal Rights National Index) and utilise tactics pioneered against the AR movement - like injunctions under the Protection from Harassment Act (See SchNEWS 581).

The injunctions, which effectively created zones of PFI martial law around corporate establishments, received virtually no mainstream

coverage when they were used against AR people, a tiny amount when they were used against anti-arms trade campaigners in Brighton before being splashed all over the front pages when BAA had the effrontery to use them against climate campaigners at Heathrow.

At the moment the SOCPA legislation against interfering with the contractual relations of a corporation - which was used to put Sean Kirtley away for 16 months (See SchNEWS 695), only applies to 'animal research organisations'. But,



within the act is the provision for the Secretary of State to change that without returning to Parliament – How long before it is applied to 'defence of the realm' or 'national energy security'?

NETCU's intention with the persecution of the Sequani campaign was to imprison and give life-time ASBOs to people who had done little more than stand outside a laboratory and conduct the kind of demonstration that the *Guardian* considers "an essential part of the democratic process".

But is there really that much difference between the AR movement and the the more recent arrivals on the scene - the climate campaigners?

Continued overleaf...

COAL: IT'S THE PITS SHIPLEY

After last week's 'Great Climate Swoop' at Ratcliffe-on-Soar power station in Nottingham (See SchNEWS 696), campaigns against the environmental disaster that is the coal industry continue to build momentum. This week saw actions targeting coal fired power and opencast coal mining across the country with digger-diving, chimney scaling and lock ons all round...

DIDCOT

Last Monday (26th) activists scaled the chimney and shut down the coal supply at NPower's flagship power station in Didcot, Oxfordshire. The protesters forced the power station to switch from burning coal to gas – a far less harmful fuel – for the duration of the action.

The activists reached the power station at 4:30 am. One team locked on to the coal conveyor belt that feeds the plant's boilers, while the others climbed up the inside of the 200-metre high chimney until they reached the top. The group initially planned a two-week stint at the top of the chimney but came down after two days when conditions became too hot.

Police arrested the coal crew in the first 24 hours before nicking the nine chimney sweeps. Through the use of punitive pre-charge bail conditions, the police have slapped the protesters with various restrictions before they have even been charged with a crime - including barring two Oxford University students from Oxfordshire.

Before descending, one of the protesters said, "I'm a qualified builder and will be 52 in a week's time. I never thought in my life I would do anything like this. It's amazing how working with committed people can empower you to confront these massive companies and help force real change in the world."

Another said, "If we wait around for our government to tackle climate change without any real intentions, we will not have any hope for our future. This is about acting now, and further action must be taken." See www.earthfirst.org.uk

Earth First! activists brought work at the open-cast coal mine near Shipley, Derbyshire, grinding to a halt on Monday (26th) by occupying six site vehicles.

Around 20 protesters entered the site in the morning before locking on to diggers. The action ended at around 1.30pm when the 11 remaining protesters were arrested for aggravated trespass. The 11 have been charged and will appear at Southern Derbyshire Magistrates' Court next month.

EF! activist Andrew Kirkman said, "As local people can attest, the handful of jobs that open-cast coal mining provides hardly compensate for the noise, traffic and pollution that we have to suffer. Local people fought long and hard against this mine, not just for our sakes but also for that of our children." See <http://earthfirst.org.uk/actionreports/node/23282>

MAINSHILL

Those tireless campaigners at Mainshill had a busy week, shutting down the site in two days of relentless action.

Things kicked off on Monday (26th) morning when the site access road used by loggers and contractors was blocked by two large barricades and two people locking on. They successfully blockaded access to the site for seven hours.

With no thought of wussy luxuries like sleep, the action continued through the night. Protesters forced machinery off site when loggers showed up for a bit of midnight tree-felling, dangerously close to tree-houses, tunnels and other defences.

With bleary eyed Mainshill contractors asking themselves 'what are these people on and where can we get some?' activists were at it again first thing in the morning when two people locked on to harvesting machinery trying to enter Mainshill wood. See <http://coalactionscotland.noflag.org.uk>

PARTY & PROTEST

For events listings updated weekly see
www.schnews.org.uk/pap

INFORMATION FOR ACTION

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A LIBERAL HELPING?

Continued...

How much difference is there between the mass pulling down of fences at Ratcliffe-on-Soar last week (SchNEWS 696) and actions at Hillgrove Cat Farm (SchNEWS 196)? Both could be argued to be violent, and both were definitely illegal. An artificial division has been drawn between AR and anarchist groups and 'environmental campaigners and anti-war protesters' – who are in many cases the same people. The real division between protest groups and how much state attention they receive is not how violent they are but how effective – start to challenge the status quo and the mask of democracy inevitably slips away.

KICK IN THE GHOULIES

Wednesday's (28th) Halloween Zombie Horror themed EDO demo 'The Night of the Living War Dead' turned out to be the longest noise demo yet. It was the annual halloween special, with zombies lurching outside the factory from 4pm. By 6pm, the police and workers inside the factory were checking their watches, asking each other 'Isn't this thing meant to finish at 6pm?' However the 40 or so war undead continued their spooking. They were angry their lives had been cut short by bombing, and wanted to make sure the arms dealers got the message. By 6.30pm, workers kept looking out the window, hoping the demo was over so they could make a dash for it. Soon after, the cops apparently had better things to do, and left. After that the gates were rattled tirelessly by the war victims and the last few workers got the fright of their lives as their cars were chased by around fifteen bloody victims.

* See www.smashedo.org.uk

Other Halloween Actions on October 31st:

* **Anti-war protest** - Called by Bristol EDO Decommissioners to highlight ongoing deaths in Afghanistan, Iraq, Gaza, Pakistan etc, and the role of arms companies in this, as well as giving solidarity to the EDO Decommissioners. Meet 2pm, by fountains opposite Hippodrome in Bristol city centre <http://decommissioners.co.uk>

* **National demo at Novartis**, who use vivisection lab HLS. Meet 12 noon at Horsham Park, behind the leisure centre, Horsham, West Sussex, marching through Horsham to Novartis. 0845 458 0630 www.shac.net

* Protest against the ghoulish vivisection industry at the **Sequani Labs**, Bromyard Rd, Ledbury, Hereford, where they do pharmaceutical tests on animals. 3pm to late – dress for halloween. <http://sequani.wordpress.com>

SchNEWS In Brief

* Sat 24th London Stop the War March. About 10-15,000, well-meaning souls joined the jamboree from across the UK with placards such as 'Silence is Shame' and 'The People want Peace'. Hardcore. 'Orators' Gallowtaw, Mr Benn and some theatre types shared their wisdom on bringing peace to all on earth. No arrests were reported, not even for noise pollution.

* New issue of the **Hereford Heckler** is out with news of a demo on the 13th November about a local development, plus tales of blood-thirsty Hooray Henry fox hunters and job-slashing Bulmers. See <http://herefordheckler.wordpress.com>

* After a resounding defeat the week before in **Swansea** (See SchNEWS 696), the Welsh chapter of the far-right English Defence League - the WDL - failed to show up last Saturday (24th) in Newport. A multi-ethnic crowd of around 350 anti-fascists were there anyway, ready and willing to take them on. See www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=135997729165

IRAQ AND BACK

It took the murder of 147 people earlier this week to remind the British media that just because our troops have slunk out of Iraq with their tail between their legs, it doesn't mean they left behind a shining beacon of democracy, or even a safe place to live. That Iraq is still a warzone is something the British immigration authorities refuse to recognise and Iraqi refugees continue to be deported.

On October 15th around 40 Iraqis were deported on a specially chartered flight to Baghdad. When they arrived, the Iraqi authorities only accepted eight of the deportees, putting the rest straight back on a plane to Blighty. A rather embarrassed Home Office said they will "iron out" the difficulties and "expect to carry out another flight."

Many of the deportees reported being violently assaulted by security guards on the flight, one told the Coalition to Stop Deportation, "they got my head in a headlock, beat it, put a blanket over it, pushed me down to the floor then dragged me around". He added, "They were worse than Saddam Hussein's men."

On their return the double deportees were banged up at Brook House detention centre at Gatwick airport. Since then a number of them, along with refugees from Afghanistan, Algeria, Nigeria and Jamaica, have gone on hunger strike in protest at their treatment at the hands of the immigration authorities.

A statement released by the hunger strikers said, "Most of us are being removed to countries like Afghanistan and Iraq, which are clearly war zones. Most of us have families in the UK. What are we supposed to do? Leave them behind or take them with us right into the middle of a war zone to be killed?"

In Iraq meanwhile, the run up to January's elections is seeing an escalating campaign of violence, with thousands killed and maimed in the last few months alone. Iraq eh? Hell of a war, glad that one's over.

* On Monday (26th) around 50 demonstrated at the Home Office in London demanding the release of the Iraqis who are back in detention in Britain.

* See stopdeportation.net

CALLING THYME

SchNEWS' ears on the ground have heard rumblings of a storm in the herbal tea cup. Herbalists fear that the practice of herbalism in this country is coming under serious threat.

The herbal lobby have been working with the Government for over ten years towards the statutory regulation of herbal medicine, in light of forthcoming EU legislation on the supply of herbs. The latter which is now called 'The Herbal Medicinal Products Directive', has been processed and will come into effect in 2011. It will mean herbs will be available only to statutorily regulated practitioners. This is designed to ensure that the health of the public is safeguarded against bogus practitioners and most people are in consensus that this is a good step.

However, herbalists are facing the very real possibility that they may now be denied the statutory regulation at the last minute and so will be unable to legally gain access to these herbs after next year.

The Department of Health has put out a consultation in order to gather the views of the public on the proposed 'Statutory Regulation of Herbalists' (it closes on November 2nd - see www.dh.gov.uk/en/Consultations/Liveconsultations/DH_103567) which may help swing their final decision.

If you are amongst the 50% of the population that uses herbal medicine or want more info, see the National Institute of Medical Herbalists (www.nimh.org.uk) and act now else you might have to kiss that Siberian Ginseng goodbye...

IN A HOT CLIMATE

In Australia they are part-way through a series of four Camps For Climate Action across the country - to read the full article see www.schnews.org.uk/archive/news697.php

AN OUTBREAK OF THE TROTS

Over 500 people came out to protest against the BNP's Question Time debut last week, at a mostly SWP/UAF organised demo. And, with racism's allegedly respectable but still very ugly face - Nick Griffin - trying to get to the gig of his career, the crowd outside weren't in any mood for compromise.

Police totally underestimated the size of the crowd, who managed to break through a police line, smash down barriers and scale walls to get into the BBC studios. Some 25 people actually managed to get inside the studio, disrupting TV schedules (but providing great news footage) as they were dragged away by security.

Strangely for us anarchists - used to the Trots organising stage managed a-b demos where the only aggression sanctioned is against 'fellow' protesters trying to confront authority - there were plenty of SWPers on the front lines. Apparently even SWP leader Martin Smith got nicked - massively upping his Red-cred. SchNEWS spoke to one Swappy who explained "Yeah, there was a lot of Comrades at the front. We saw the difference between the big stage-managed Iraq war demos and the angry crowds outside the Israeli embassy last winter. Sometimes we just need to be more confrontational."

There's been some criticism of the tactic of making the BNP's showing on Question Time an even bigger show by calling a demo outside but, as the event was such a media circus, having a mid-week riot to greet fascism's appeal to the mainstream showed the watching masses just how much fascism is hated in this country.

The 'No Platform' strategy (ie. Denying fascists mainstream press coverage) is falling apart, with the uncensorable saturation coverage that the internet now provides, so winning the battle against the fash on the streets is more important than ever. Come on Anarchists, let's make sure that next time it's the Trots wishing they were at an Antifa action.

...and finally...

Late SchMEWS: They may have got the cream but the fat cats at Goldman Sachs aren't leaving everyone purring.

After clawing back bumper profits - partly thanks to the gargantuan tax-payer bailouts propping up the system they'd brought within a whisker of collapse - they are now at last being hauled over the coals and mauled for... er, being mean to a bunch of homeless kittens.

After 5 loveable little moggies were discovered on the construction site of their new \$1.6bn swanky HQ (subsidised in part with 'Liberty' tax-free bonds handed out following 9/11), they generously agreed to cough up vets and care bills for the down'n'out felines. Well they didn't want to look heartless, did they?

But it seems that with their eyes too fixed on their \$23bn bonus pot, they've strayed from their PR promises and failed to pick up the tab(by) - leading to a local paper rubbing their nose in it, and denouncing their corrupt greedy Wall St ways.

A clear case of 'Pay up, reform the global economy or the kitten gets it...'

Disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all readers, don't stand out from the herd, be a lesser-spotted anarchist. Honest.

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