



IT'S A HUNG PARLIAMENT!

# COUNTER STRIKE

## AS REPRESSION INC ARRIVES IN LONDON TO PEDDLE ITS WARES....

Roll up, roll up, one and all for the 'Counter Terror' Expo 2010. Kicking off at London's Kensington Olympia on April 14th, the two day event will showcase the surveillance and 'security' technologies of 250 companies hoping for a slice of the paranoia dollar. Also on the Big Brother bandwagon are NATO, the MoD and other representative associations from the police, military and private security industry. There are several good reasons to show up at 12pm, Wednesday 14th April (at Olympia Way W14) and counter the terror expo.

The event is being organised by DSEi's party planner Clarion, several arms companies are getting involved, including big names with existing counter campaigns such as BAE, Lockheed Martin and General Dynamics, jumping at the chance to talk a lot about keeping everybody safe, whilst generating vast profits from maiming and killing in Afghanistan, Iraq, Palestine and elsewhere.

### Countering Corporate Control

The security companies involved in this industry are pushing hard to normalise the idea that not only is literally nowhere safe, public spaces are now in fact inherently dangerous, and can only be rescued with the application of hardcore security technologies. Everywhere must be fortified with security apparatus, and, naturally, as the number of fortified places increase, the more vulnerable the regular spaces become to everything we're supposed to be hysterically afraid of.

Much of the marketing produced by these companies pushes the line that once the hospital has a cutting edge retinal scanning entry system, the shopping centre with its bog standard CCTV would be foolish not to keep up. The security companies exhibiting at Counter Terror 2010 are unashamedly milking this 'logic', offering the sort of fully integrated biometric and surveillance systems previously available only to high security prisons and top secret military installations, to schools, hospitals, shops and university halls of residence.

It's an interesting time for invasive and downright bizarre 'security' inventions. Now being 'secure under the watchful eyes' isn't just morally and legally mandatory; it's cool, glamorous even. Now that security systems are, as phrased by G4S "no longer a choice... but a necessity", the industry is becoming fully competitively commercialised, and there are so many shiny oppression machines to choose from. Mostly, these are designed to be appealing to buyers as either exclusive luxury items, or very cool pieces of military grade hardware.

Biometric technologies are definitely the next big thing for the repression industry. Indeed many

companies appear to be treating biometrics as the tools with which to conquer the final frontier of complete control; once the passwords and pin codes are in the body itself, that's it, job done.

With big money being pumped in to R&D, there are a lot of deeply unsettling technological advances that will be put on show at the Olympia for potential buyers.

These include; scanners to measure hand size and cross reference that with iris scans, entrance systems using key cards that match up to data from retinal scans, a scanner that recognises the vein pattern in your fingertip (because finger prints just aren't foolproof enough any more), as well as exciting ideas for where the industry might go next, including entrance ways that recognise your unique body odour. Seriously.

The companies responsible for the repackaging of this invasive oppression are grimly excited by the idea of everyone bumbling around in these Minority Report like future worlds, with G4S even claiming to be able to "in some cases pre-empt crime".

It's perhaps worth noting the extent to which these technologies are entering the private marketplace. Sure, there's big business at stake for the companies that get the government contracts, but in fact the marketing is overwhelmingly targeted at potential private commercial buyers. In the wake of highly unsuccessful government attempts to introduce mandatory ID cards, the big security corporations are introducing an even more repressive set of systems via the private sector.

Government initiatives might be, in theory, subject to at least some legal and human rights regulation, have to be conscious of losing votes, but if your office wants to take your iris scan to let you go to work, well, that's treated as their business. Whether we get state ID cards or not might be irrelevant if we end up living in a patchwork of corporatised spaces, each one demanding some new biological data of us whenever we want to come in or out.

### Countering Corporate Profit

With over 200 hundred exhibitors, there's a lot going on, but particular highlights from the world of private security include G4S, L3 and Human Recognition Systems.

Truly a bastion of injustice profiteering, G4S (formerly Group 4) is worth opposing wherever it goes; amongst many, many other things, the company manages private prisons in the US, runs security at UK police custody centres, does pre-deployment training for the US army and is responsible for innumerable incidences of abuse against migrants in privately run migra-

tion prisons in the UK, including Yarl's Wood and Tinsley House (See Schnews 709 and passim). The company also owns 70% of an Israeli security firm called Hashmira; a company profiting heavily from the body scanners and other security technologies it is supplying for Israel's apartheid wall (see SchNEWS 566)

On top of this, Hashmira also "violates its employees' rights on a regular basis", as stated by the attorney representing Israeli workers' rights association KavLaOved. Despite being sued almost annually since 2005 for legal infringements such as sexual discrimination, non-payment of pensions and breach of labour laws, the company has had its operating license continually renewed in government, and last year settled a contract to supply private security at Israeli prisons and custody centres, to the tune of £1.14 million.

L3 shot to fame last year with its unbelievable \$165million contract to sell full body airport security scanners to the US government. It's also a huge arms company.

Human Recognition Systems is a UK company that advertises itself as being a member of "global consortia" to develop national ID programmes. Involved in an ever growing number of governmental and privately commissioned projects internationally, the company has also got involved in the London 2012 Olympics, cataloguing the hand and iris measurements of 8,000 workers at one construction site. Chief executive of HRS, Neil Norman, thinks that this system is ideal "for the typical worker", (but presumably not for him).

HRS is also heading the drive to turn every university into an ever more elitist, dissent free, business school. Partnered with something called the Capital Values Group, HRS is engaged in a far flung mission to transform university halls across the world into high-tech fortresses, converting disused buildings into swish student residences with 24 hour security staff and surveillance, and, of course, biometric entry systems. Considering the fact that in the UK, and elsewhere, students and faculty are practically at war with management over cuts in courses, pay, resources and basic protest rights, HRS is looking at a substantial market for security systems created specifically for universities.

So, whether it's to protest increased state surveillance and corporate control, highlight the not-so-nice activities of arms companies proclaiming to keep us all safe, or to demonstrate against the vast profits that are being reaped off endless government and media manipulation of fear, come to Kensington on April 14th and show that we're watching them, watching us.

\* See [www.dsei.org](http://www.dsei.org), [www.corporatewatch.org](http://www.corporatewatch.org) or go to [www.counterterrorexpo.com](http://www.counterterrorexpo.com) for a full exhibitor listing straight from the horse's mouth.

## STAN BY YOUR MAN

### Recipe for disorder:

Step 1. Take a corrupt politician with U.S. support (in this case President Kurmanbek Bakiyev)  
Step 2. Throw in an increase on tariffs of fuel, water and gas alongside human rights controversy  
Step 3. Finish off with a pinch of vexed protesters and voilà... you've got yourself an 11.2 on the Ruckter Scale uprising!

The government in Kyrgyzstan was overthrown by protesting opposition forces following violent revolts in which more than 40 demonstrators died as they clashed with police.

Kyrgyzstan is a former Soviet republic, which became independent when the USSR collapsed. This pint sized central Asian resident is home to a major US airbase, Manas, which supplies Afghanistan and seems to be a growing thorn of contention between Moscow and Washington. Bakiyev had pledged to shut the air base down last year. But then the Bakiyev regime began fraternising with the US and surprisingly decided to retract the decision after being promised higher rent cheques.

Tension had built in Kyrgyzstan over human rights issues (like the persecution of opposition leaders and independent journalists through a series of arrests and physical assaults by government agents). Despite the escalating repressive nature of Bakiyev's policies however, the catalyst for the uprising was the imposed punitive increases on the price of utilities.

Unrest began in rural areas on Tuesday (6th); by Wednesday the fires of revolution had spread nationwide - demonstrators had looted weapons, stolen an armoured personnel carrier and were in control of several principal government buildings including the parliament and television station. An failed attempt was made on the national security's service HQ. At least they managed to set the prosecutors office on fire... By the afternoon, gunfire and explosions reverberated around the capital city, Bishkek. The city witnessed a wave of public disorder as protesters stormed into the centre, igniting police cars and blockading roads. Police responded with tear gas, grenades and live bullets.

Bakiyev fled the capital yesterday, his current whereabouts are unknown. Unfortunately former foreign minister, Rosa Otunbayeva, has reared an ugly head as a transitional government leader. This government has now stated the previous parliament has been dissolved and they will hold power for six months before staging a constitutional assembly. They also made sure to point out the American air base's supply line to Afghanistan wouldn't be interrupted.

US national security puppet, Mike Hammer (Time), spewed forth, "We are monitoring the situation closely. We are concerned about reports of violence and looting and call on all parties to refrain from violence and exercise restraint." Another case of do as we say, not as we do then.

The Kremlin, who have been keen to assert their influence recently, has also called for restraint while denying that it had its grubby hand behind the affair.

As with all insurrections, the question remains what happens next. In Kyrgyzstan's case the future seems bleak, what with US attention and a transitional government already in place. Next time lets hope for a plan of action for after the destruction.

### PARTY & PROTEST

For events listings updated weekly see  
[www.schnews.org.uk/pap](http://www.schnews.org.uk/pap)

## CALLOO, CALAIS

After a quiet Easter weekend, the CRS in Calais has resumed their assault on migrant camps and squats. Early on Tuesday morning (5th), police raided the Africa House squat. As three vans of filth rolled up, No Borders activists who had been on the scene all night were able to warn migrants, allowing a few to slip away. Eight police then scaled the outside wall and began rounding up activists before removing the barricade to allow their the main force to enter the compound. Around 25 police poured in and started arresting migrants and escorting activists off the premises.

When CRS vans left the back wall unattended, activists and a photo journalist mounted a pallet to monitor the CRS loading up arrest buses inside the compound. The police didn't take kindly to being watched going about their dirty work and attacked the group, beating the photographer with a baton and punching an activist who was clinging onto the wall. They then launched a bizarre anarcho-style assault, hurling shoes, rocks and a plastic road block section.

Later on in the day, No Borders activists spied police on their way to the Hazara camp. The activists slipped into the camp to warn the migrants before hiding in the bushes and yelling "Police!" as the CRS approached. The dozy coppers then followed the calls of the activists, allowing the migrants to escape arrest.

\* See [www.calaismigrantsolidarity.wordpress.com](http://www.calaismigrantsolidarity.wordpress.com)

## COLOMBIA: CRUDE BOYS

Colombia solidarity activists are stepping up their campaign against the human rights disaster that is oil giant BP. They are calling out for activists to picket BP's annual shareholders general meeting next Thursday (15th).

Following the meeting, BP are set to respond the demands of the Colombian oilworkers union USO and the community movement Movimiento de Dignidad por el Casanare, who are calling for a resolution to the crisis at Tauramena Central Processing Facility in Casanare.

After Colombian "anti-mutiny" police violently broke up a month old strike by workers at the facility last month (see SchNEWS 711), hospitalising three workers, BP finally met with union and community representatives - but not before trying (and failing) to run a group of scab workers through the picket line.

An agreement was struck to set up negotiating commissions to deal with labour problems, social investment, goods and services, environment and human rights. However, the process soon broke down and on March 7th the local community staged a mass protest against the company's failure to address their concerns. On March 23rd, negotiators presented their demands to BP and are now waiting for a response.

The USO is the first union to operate in the paramilitary dominated area and their successes have come at a price. On March 27th, in the nearby city of Villavicencio, two gunmen on a motorbike attacked USO officials, killing their bodyguard.

The BP AGM kicks off at 10.30am at the Excel Conference Centre in London on April 15th.

\* see [www.info@colombiasolidarity.org.uk](mailto:www.info@colombiasolidarity.org.uk)  
[www.sussexcolombiasolidarity.wordpress.com](http://www.sussexcolombiasolidarity.wordpress.com)

## CEMENTING FRIENDSHIP

A coalition of Palestine solidarity campaigns, including the Free Gaza Movement (see SchNEWS 716, will launch their flotilla of eight blockade busting aid ships on May 3rd. Heading to besieged Gaza will be 500 passengers and over 5,000 tons of cargo including building materials, medical supplies and equipment, educational material and more.

\* See [www.freegaza.org](http://www.freegaza.org)

## SchNEWS IN BRIEF

**Scottish Palestine Solidarity Campaign** activists on charges of "racially aggravated conduct" were literally laughed out of court on Thursday as Sheriff James Scott ruled that continuing the "prosecution [was] not necessary or proportionate". The five stood accused of racist conduct in conjunction with a demo against the Israeli government sponsored Jerusalem Quartet in 2008. [www.scottishpsc.org.uk](http://www.scottishpsc.org.uk)

**Black Wood Protest Camp** (see SchNEWS 715) has ended after ten days on April 2nd. They only intended a short-term camp, and a visit by the National Eviction Team indicated that an eviction was imminent. <http://blackwood.noflag.org.uk>

**Protest as Israeli Ambassador** Ron Prosor delivers a "keynote speech" at Cardiff University Debating Society on April 14th. No Palestinian rights supporter has been invited to debate. To attend email [cardiff-debate@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:cardiff-debate@hotmail.co.uk) giving a name and DOB by Monday morning (limited places). Local anti-war, human rights and Palestine campaigners are holding a demo at 5.30pm, outside Main Building, Cardiff University, Park Place, Cardiff.

**Hostile Reconnaissance** - The London Photographers' Branch of the NUJ is announcing a pre-election rally on terror laws, civil liberties, police surveillance and press freedom, plus talks from journalists affected by these issues. 7pm, April 13th at Friends Meeting House in Euston, NW1 2BJ, free entry. <http://londonphotographers.org/2010/04/hostile-reconnaissance>

## GOING BALLISTIC

The European Day of Action to ban nuclear weapons on April 3rd saw protests at nuclear weapon bases and command centres in Germany, Holland, France, Italy, Turkey, Belgium and Britain. (see <http://www.vredesactie.be/campaign.php?id=12>).

As UK elections loom, activists hit Faslane Naval Base to send a message to politicians that nuclear weapons remain high on 'the agenda'. Hopeful that the budget cuts will impact on the Trident beast - the worst possible waste of revenue - the peaceful blockaders brought activity at Faslane to a standstill twice in three days. There were a number of notable arrests - for tearing down signs and spray-painting messages and for blocking the gateway with lock-ons.

\* See [www.tridentploughshares.org](http://www.tridentploughshares.org)

## ...and finally...

Piss-up in a brewery anyone? Carlsberg brewery workers have gone on strike this week in protest at the restriction of beer drinking to lunch times.

Previously, lucky workers at Carlsberg were able to get tanked up all day with even drivers allowed to neck two bottles a shift. Presumably doubtful of the productivity gains achieved by a workforce labouring under the curse of the sauce, management brew-tality intervened, removing all the bottled beer from the refrigerators without asking the workers first. (Obviously the whole warehouse is full of lager anyway which might render the ban a moot point)

Workers at the Frederica facility weren't taking this standing up and staged a mass stagger-out. The next morning, workers at Carlsberg's Terminal East took a stand against the tee-totalitarian policy and, leaning slightly to the left, also walked out.

SchNEWS would like to be the first to extend the hand of solidarity to our well oiled comrades in Copenhagen and suggest an immediate factory occupation. Altogether now - "Probably the best strike in the world." Lets hope they don't lose their bottle and get the bosses over the barrel...

### Disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all readers, a revolution is brewing in Denmark. Honest.

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