

SQUALL

n e c e s s i t y b r e e d s i n g e n u i t y

No. 12
Spring '96



Lively up yourself

- Demonising Ecstasy
- Road Wars: Newbury spectacular
- Hunting the hunters
- Romany culture
- Zapatista !



Keith Mann • Exodus • Refugees • New housing bill • Street theatre
Reclaiming the land • Ladakh nomads • DIY deschooling
McLibel • Squatting • The Countryside Movement
Latest News • reviews • Letters



CONTENTS

FEATURES

Recreational Drug Wars

- Alcohol Vs Ecstasy

Jim Carey investigates the battle waged between vested business interests and rave culture - page 18.

Hunting the hunters

Andy Johnson looks at the CJA and its affect on hunt saboteurs - page 26.

Countryside Movement

A new organisation has recently emerged devoted to educating people about the countryside. *Andy Johnson* investigates hidden agendas - page 28.

Compassion behind bars

Serving a longer sentence than most rapists or armed robbers, animal rights activist *Keith Mann* explains his motives and documents his treatment - page 30.

A mother's pride

Three years after the imprisonment of her son, Doreen Mann describes how the experience has affected her life. Interview by *Andy Johnson* - page 32.

Real citizens

Theatre doesn't come more relevant than the Cardboard Citizens. *Sam Beale* discovers a cutting-edge company - page 52.

Radical home education

Is school the best years of our lives or state-driven dependancy? *Emma Jackson* explains what de-schooling is all about - page 54.

INTERNATIONAL SQUALL

Wishes for Zuzana

Sam Beale was recently invited to a Romany christening. She reports on the vibrancy of European Gypsy culture - page 42.

Mending the mirror

Romany history is oral, music and dance-based. *Sam Beale* discovers both myth and legend in the Gypsy story - page 44.

Zapatista !

Vested land interests and an exclusive democracy have forced a Mexican revolution. *Ursula Wills-Jones* reports on the Zapatistas - a new breed of revolutionary - page 46.

Travellers in another place

This issue, *Tim Malyon* reports on his travels to Ladakh and of the impact that the Chinese invasion of Tibet and western contact is having on the indigenous nomadic culture - page 48.

ROAD WARS

If you Newbury like I Newbury

The third battle of Newbury is now well under way. *Neil Goodwin* sends a report from the front line - page 34

M66 and all that

This road project is ripping apart areas of Manchester. *Ally Fogg* finds both the environment and community considered dispensible - page 38

A maul on the mound

Earth First!s superquarry shut-down at Whatley Quarry in December caused quite a stir in Somerset. *Richard Dixon* was there - page 39

SQUALL BEATS

News shorts and other busyness - page 5. **News of the Skews**; Newbury hysteria at the Daily Mail - page 16. **Road News** - pages 37, 40 and 41. **Lofty Tones**; alternative ways of turning on - page 56. **Jewel in the Mud Award**; Charles Clover for his gem on Newbury - page 57. **Book Reviews** - page 58. **Letters** - page 60.

COMPETITION

Win one of 20 Zion Train CDs 'Natural Wonders of the World in Dub' - page 17.

Mailing List

A year's subscription to **SQUALL** - four issues - costs just £10 (including p&p). Individual copies of the present issue of the magazine cost £1.50 plus 70p p&p. This cover price doesn't come near covering all the costs entailed in producing **SQUALL**, so please include an extra donation if you can.

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front cover photo: 'the life of trees' - **Julia Guest**
Inside front cover photo: 'after the hunt' - **Andrew Testa**

Much Respect & Without Whom.....

Rachel (for Jay Say Help), Neil Goodwin, Dinah Murray, Julia Guest, Eileen Kinsman, Paul G, Andi Viz a Ve, Peter Mercer, Yen Chit Chong, The Rusenkos, Zion Train, the 52b'ers, Tash, All Systems posse, Debbie Allen, Nikki Spawls, no. 28 for hot baths & clean threads, Garrik, John O'Sullivan, Andrea, Chris Mc, roving Jenny S, Debbie Shaw, ASS, Ben, Tim Malyon, Jim Paton, Matty & Rosy, The Lutonites, Jamie, Shaun Trevesik, the folk at CHAR, Vanessa, Paul O'Connor & all the SQUALL ambassadors and distributors.

The State it's in

A view from **SQUALL** central

Violence is a symptom...what's the disease? or Is peace a luxury?

For the forty years so far lived, Jim had considered peace and non-violence to be a guiding principle. He'd stuck to it through thick, thin and personal danger. One night, however, his faith in his ability to hold onto this attitude was shattered. He had returned to the home where he, his wife and their two children lived, and realised that the shuffling noise upstairs was a burglar. Creeping up the staircase he reached the room from where the noise was emanating. The window was open and the burglar had gone. What shattered Jim from this experience was the fact that he had intended to kill the intruder. Realising that this possible action lay within him, he said, shuddered his soul.

The last three years has witnessed an upsurge in the level of imaginative non-violent direct action. The rise of such activities has been proportional to a decrease of faith in the UK's political process. According to a recent survey, the majority of UK citizens do not consider that politicians place the concerns of people above that of their own party politics (see page 13) There is plenty of evidence to back up such opinions.

One such scenario is the end of the IRA cease-fire.

For the best and most yearned for opportunity to establish peace in Northern Ireland was a too easily sacrificed piece on the political chess board. To its historical discredit, the Conservative Government's desire to appease unionist MPs, upon whose votes it relies to maintain a slender parliamentary majority, led to the adoption of a farcical position over the issue.

Whilst British media portray the IRA as murderers, many Irish people view the situation in Ulster not in terms of 'terrorists', 'troubles' and 'murders', but in terms of 'soldiers', 'war' and 'casualties'. Through the eyes of the Irish Republican Army, the last 25 years of struggle has simply been 25 years in a longer war.

Viewed in this light, how can anyone expect an active army to hand

over all its weapons before any agreement has been negotiated? Any occupying army which makes this a prerequisite of talks has either won the war already or is not taking the agreed peace seriously.

"They are terrorists and we will not talk with them until they place themselves in a position where they pose no violent threat," ran the monotonous Government line; no different after the cease-fire than it was before. Not surprisingly, the IRA reply: 'What was the point of a cease-fire?'

Seen in this context, the breakdown of peace was precipitated by the British government for party political reasons. What value then, beyond lip service, is placed on peace?

SQUALL's political respect goes out not to the present British Government or the IRA, both of whom need dismantling. Instead it goes to the peace protesters in Northern Ireland. For hardly a day has gone by since the breakdown of the ceasefire without a public demonstration in favour of peace on the streets of Ulster. These protesters have spoken for the people of both nations when they say they are sick of both British Government hypocrisy and IRA violence.

In a speech on the welfare state, delivered in February, chancellor Kenneth Clarke warned his own party of the dangers of dismantling the welfare system too fast: "The recent events in France, riots on the streets of Paris, illustrate the social disruption which social reforms can bring." Clarke is not telling his party to stop the dismantling of the welfare system because it would prove unpopular, but simply to use tactics which will avert a violent reaction. As such, Clarke is an advocator of violence as the only significant form of protest. This is incitement.

In fact, the social security system has already been severely cut, but by deconstructing it a piece at a time, large numbers of people have not been affected all at once as was the case with the Poll Tax. The goal

is the same though the strategy plots its way around the public's attention.

Other people less enthralled with these spin doctored manoeuvres then take on the responsibility of providing the intelligent opposition so missing from the UK's version of democracy.

A rally at Newbury in February attracted over 5,000 people, with the local train station rammed with protesters arriving from far and wide to attend an avowedly non-violent political protest. However, news coverage of the event was scant. In marked contrast, the small scale riot which erupted in Brixton last summer involved hundreds rather than thousands of people. Voluminous press coverage was given to its causes and implications.

The scientific community have recently acknowledged global warming to be a measurable reality (see page 5). They have also reported a doubling in the size of the South Pole's ozone hole over the last year (SQUALL 11). As the ozone layer is at its thinnest over the poles, the increasing size of its hole is indicative of the damage caused by pollutants to the ozone layer over the entire globe. Grounds aplenty, one would think, for some voluminous press coverage devoted to environmental concerns such as those expressed at Newbury.

It is no small irony that coverage of the Newbury rally was depressed by acres of mostly wide-of-the-mark analysis on the bomb that broke the cease-fire. If both politicians and national media choose to pay attention only to riot and violence, whilst at the same time dismissing non-violent activists as single issue troublemakers, what place is afforded to peace?

Right now, the IRA obviously think none. The Newbury road protesters on the other hand see a different way forward.

On the first day of the full-on Battle of Newbury, two protesters sat up a scaffolding pole so pinning 400 security guards into their compound (see page 34). To any observer from outside the UK it was a bizarre stand off. How could two protesters offer up their physical vulnerability to

prevent 400 men, many of whom are employed for their muscle, from carrying out their work?

The fact remains that, despite the pre-occupations of Kenneth Clarke and the media, the UK still offers a unique opportunity to explore the potentials of politically effective non-violence. European political activists constantly point out that the main thing UK activism can teach is the use of imagination, a vital factor in rendering non-violence effective.

The Newbury protests have in fact received a fair amount of back room press coverage. John Vidal at the Guardian, for example, has ensured that his newspaper has done more than the usual, and almost useless, quick splash. The non-violent protesters are indeed winning. For, despite the best efforts of the Criminal Justice Act, Brays Detective Agency, the pro-road business lobby and the DoT, public opinion is changing in an environmental direction. Given that this country is the subject of much European contempt for its political apathy, the 5,000+ people who attended the Newbury rally demonstrate that not everyone in the UK has been swallowed by their armchairs and televisions.

There are a number of factors that create a good opportunity to explore the power of non-violence in this country. Unlike most European countries, the UK police force do not carry guns. Bearing in mind that most UK activists have at some stage experienced the indiscriminate use of weapons that the police already have, the absence of guns is a stop gap on escalation. The introduction of CS gas sprays by police forces is a serious threat to this fine balance (see page 9).

In many countries, the individuals identified as the political mainstays of protests such as Newbury would be done away with. The Security Services Bill currently creeping through parliament will move the UK further towards a covert version of this (see page 11).

Continued on page 56



Australian 'redneck' becomes forestry chief

A BUSINESSMAN who felled virgin forest in Australia and asked for understanding in the use of violence against protesters, has been put in charge of Britain's forestry.

David Bills was appointed director general of the Forestry Commission, the country's biggest landowner, last year. He has been put in charge at a time when the government is asking the commission to earn £20 million a year from selling forests.

Although Mr Bills presents himself as a moderate and "voice of reason" his appointment has been attacked by environmentalists.

David Bellamy, who was imprisoned in Tasmania while protesting against environmental damage in the 80s, called him "one of a ring of rednecks who have put Australia down at the bottom of the conservation ladder by destroying their old growth forests".

Mr Bills' past includes heading a company, North Forest Products Ltd, which cuts down 2.5 million Tasmanian trees a year for making paper; he opposed the protection of Tasmania's rare lemon thyme and eucalyptus forests as world heritage sites and was a chief advocate for building a pulp mill on Tasmania's north west coast which was stopped by the Australian government following massive protests.

Nuclear missiles retargetted

BRITAIN is thought to be targetting nuclear weapons at third world countries following the launch of the second Trident Submarine in December.

The submarine is believed to be carrying single warhead missiles

amongst its armoury to deter third world dictators.

Although the deployment is neither confirmed or denied by the Defence Department, the government has previously said that the submarine, the

Victorious, would be the first to carry the new type of deterrent.

"It makes the likelihood of nuclear weapons being used - perhaps initially as a warning shot - all the greater," said Janet Bloomfield of CND.

Tresspassory assembly

CJA CLAUSES outlawing assemblies of more than 20 people have been effectively destroyed by the quashing on appeal of the first convictions under the act.

His honour judge Maclaren Webster QC found that if people involved in peaceful protest were on public land they could not be guilty of trespass and therefore not guilty of tresspassory assembly.

Judge Webster was hearing the appeal of Dr Margaret Jones, a senior lecturer in literary studies at the University of West England, in Bristol, and Richard Lloyd, a postgraduate student from Bristol, who had been arrested under Clause 70 of the CJA at Stonehenge in June last year.

Section 70 makes it possible to prohibit gatherings of more

than 20 people and was designed specifically to deal with gatherings at the ancient monument in Salisbury. Jones and Lloyd had been arrested after joining a group of people peacefully protesting on the road near Stonehenge.

Salisbury magistrates found both guilty, giving Dr Jones a two year conditional discharge and £100 costs and fining Lloyd £140 and £100 costs. Both appealed and their convictions were overturned.

Judge Webster said: "A right to use the highway for lawful demonstration is just and provided it remains lawful there can be no trespass."

Solicitors Douglas and Partners, acting on behalf of Jones and Lloyd, commented: "If the case stands, it effectively destroys the tresspassory provisions of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act."

The decision is to be appealed.

Future resource water wars

MILLIONS of environmental refugees will be created by global warming within a hundred years, a top government scientist has warned.

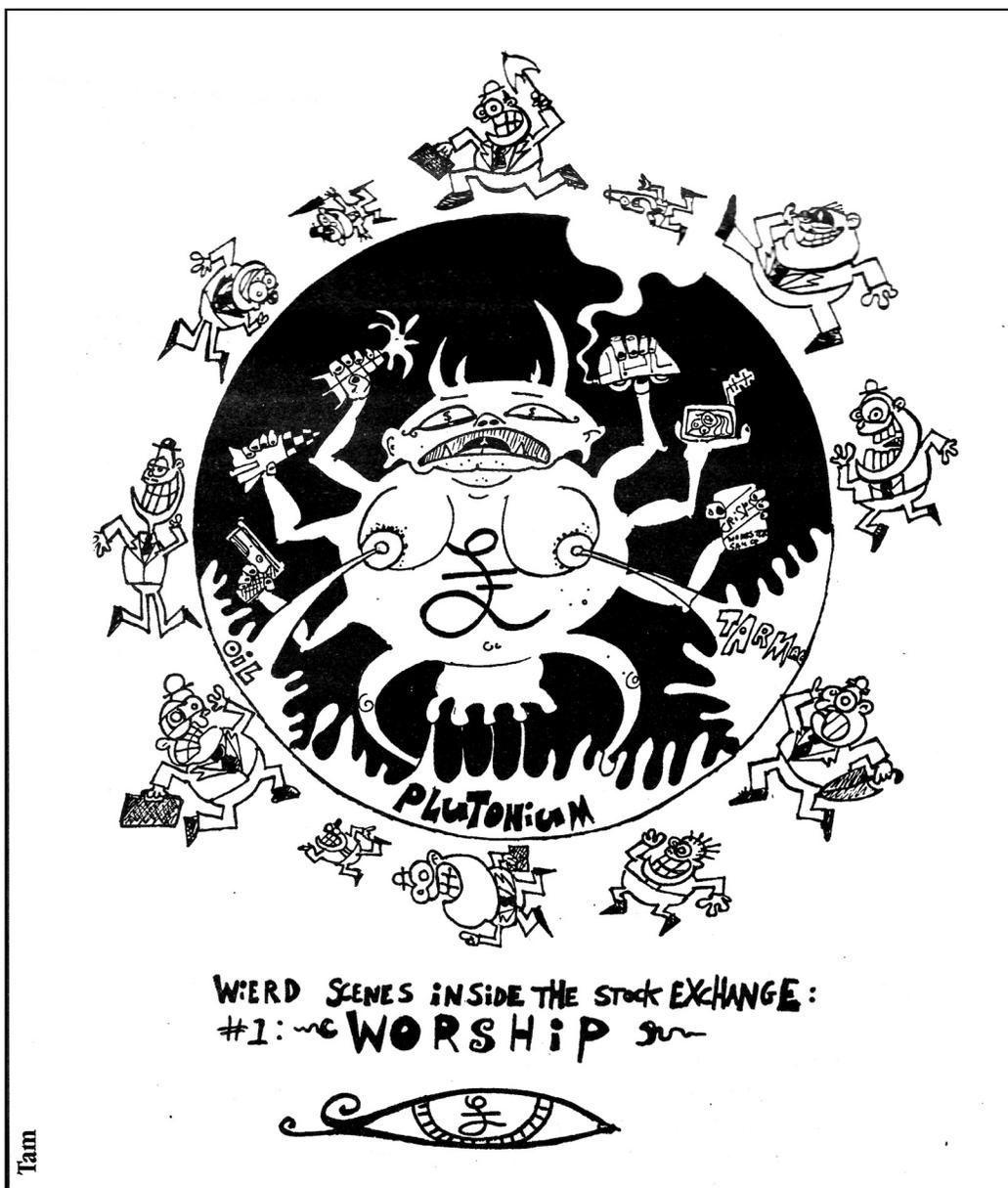
Sir John Houghton, chairman of the Government's Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution, made his stark prediction that some of the world's most densely populated areas will be lost to flooding in a speech to the Royal Society in February.

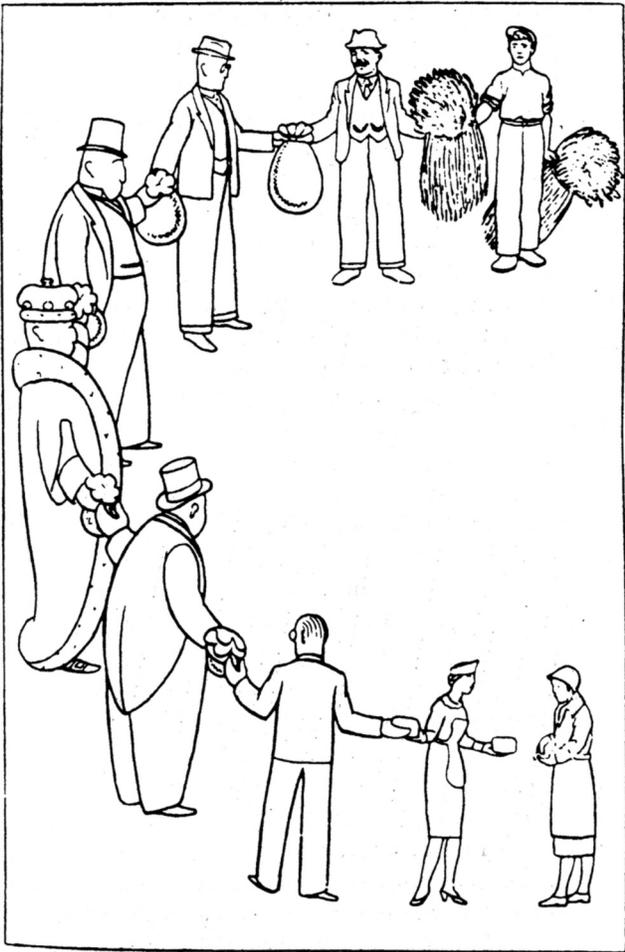
Sir John, who is also an advisor to the prime minister and chairman of the United Nations advisory panel on climate change, told

his audience of leading scientists that Southern China, Bangladesh and Egypt will face massive land loss. Even if the emission of greenhouse gases were stabilised now, he said, sea levels would continue to rise for centuries.

He added that the potential for disaster would be compounded by increased rainfall in areas where there are already heavy downpours and reduced rainfall in dry, drought prone areas.

Sir John also predicted an increase of diseases such as malaria and that water supply would become the main flashpoint in conflicts between nations.





BREAD

Pouys Evans

Knockabout win obscenity trial

KNOCKABOUT COMICS, importers and distributors of Robert Crumb, Gilbert Shelton (Fabulous Furry Freak Brothers) and numerous other underground, rad, fem, drug and anarcho comic book publications, were found not guilty on all four counts of obscenity at Uxbridge Magistrates Court, 30th January.

HM Customs, who appear to have more hands-on legal power than Judge Dredd, seized US imports of Robert Crumb's "My Troubles With Women" objecting to just two single frames. Then, four months later, they seized US imports of the radical women's comic "Twisted Sister", again objecting to just two frames depicting oral sex. Both cases were asked to be tried together.

The facts that the Twisted Sisters graphic novel documents the fall of A young woman into prostitution and is a highly

moral story, and "My Troubles..." is an innovative collaboration between Crumb and his wife catharting about sexuality, was of no consequence. Again it was just two frames of an eighty page book that were isolated and condemned, out of context, as porn. When asked why they had allowed other frames of similar content, from the same collection, through their net, HM Customs were lost for an explanation.

Upon being confronted with gratuitous photo pornography purchased in an Uxbridge newsagent near the court, officials were shocked and, on gaining their repose, wanted to know the whereabouts of the vendor. Next month's Penthouse may well not arrive.

Knockabout's application for costs was granted. Any monies remaining from fund raising efforts will be put into the Comic Legal Defence Fund.

McLibel trial moves to rainforest destruction

THE IMPLICATION of the McDonald's Corporation in the destruction of south and central American tropical forest is the last major subject area to be covered by the mammoth McLibel trial.

The case became the longest civil court case in British legal history last December and moves on to the corporation's involvement in environmental destruction on Feb 22nd.

The large-scale cattle-ranching required to feed the burger giant's huge appetite for beef is implicated in displacing indigenous farmers in countries like Brazil, forcing them to cut down tropical forest to raise their own herds.

Although this is hard to prove in a court of law, McDonald's have to

some extent already implicated themselves. After stating in a 1982 corporate letter that "the only Brazilian beef used by McDonald's is that purchased by the six stores located in Brazil itself," McDonald's executive witnesses were hard pressed to explain an internal company document accidentally disclosed to the McLibel defendants. This document revealed that beef purchased from Brazil had been used in UK burger bars in 1983/4.

Dr Gomez Gonzales, McDonald's International Meat Purchasing Manager, has since admitted in court that Brazilian-reared beef has been imported during the nineties for use in McDonald's Swiss and

Argentinian stores.

Another witness to look forward to during February is Ray Cesca, McDonald's Director of Global Purchasing. He has already revealed in a written statement that McDonald's first Costa Rican store used beef reared on tropical forest land levelled just ten years previously.

If you would like to see how Ray Cesca explains his way out of that one, then go and see him grilled live; the court case is open to the public and due to go on until at least June in room 35, High Court, The Strand, London. For sizable coverage of the extraordinary corporate exposures coming out of the McLibel trial, see SQUALL 11. There's undoubtedly more to come.

Seeds for change

THREE WOMEN peace campaigners disabled an Indonesian bound Hawk military aircraft at a British Aerospace factory in Lancashire on January 29 before waiting to be arrested and charged with criminal damage.

The women, Joanna Wilson, Andrea Needham and Lotta Kronlid took household

hammers to the aircraft - focusing on parts of the plane used for ground attack - in an ongoing campaign of direct disarmament under the Seeds for a Change banner.

After waiting in vain to be arrested they phoned the Press Association who informed BAe of their presence in a

hanger at the Warton military aircraft factory. The plane was the first of 24 bound to Indonesia where BAe and the British Government claim they will be used solely for training pilots. But Seeds for a Change claim the Hawks will be used to target East Timor, invaded by Indonesia in 1975.

A BAe promotional video shows how easily the aircraft can be converted for ground attack. The women are being held on remand for criminal damages estimated at over £3 million.

A fourth woman, Angela Zelter, was arrested a few days later, before an intended action, after making a statement of intent published in a Seeds For a Change document.

Sympathetic actions include cutting holes in the fence around the Warton base, twenty of which are planned for each year of Indonesia's occupation of East Timor. Police seem reluctant to make arrests which would further publicise the campaign.



Asylum Bill cutting benefits to refugees

THE ASYLUM AND IMMIGRATION BILL became law in February. This latest Tory Titanic intends to relieve local authorities of their obligation to house asylum seekers (or even to offer them advice on their housing situation).

It comes hand-in-glove with Peter Lilley's Social Security Amendments which will mean that those people who seek asylum after they have entered the country (rather than at their port of arrival) lost the right to any benefits after February 8.

Currently about 70 per cent of those seeking asylum do so after they have arrived. Lilley's proposals will also affect those whose initial asylum application has been refused, in effect the vast majority of applicants: refusal rates rocketed from 17 per cent in 1990 to 75 per cent in 1994.

The Bill and the Social Security Amendments have sent shudders down the backs of those who work for the welfare of refugees, immigrants and the homeless. Groups including the Refugee Council, the

Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants and Shelter are already working with those who have suffered intense hardship, sometimes torture and who, even with current entitlements, are often forced to live in appalling conditions when they reach this country.

Mark, who works for CHAR, the Campaign for the Single Homeless told Squall: "I find it appalling that these people are allowed to be in the country but they are not allowed to work or to claim benefits. What are they supposed to do? Die quietly on the streets?"

The Social Security Amendments which include the denial of rights to child benefits for asylum seekers have also raised questions as to how local authorities will be able to adhere to the new measures and meet their duties under the Children's Act.

The social security measures were scheduled to become law on January 8 but amendments were made due to huge opposition (not least from Conservative ranks). Lilley announced

that the 13,000 asylum seekers who have lodged asylum claims since October (whom it was initially feared would be made homeless immediately), can continue to claim benefits until their applications for asylum are refused.

In a speech to parliament in January, Lilley said: "These reforms will discourage bogus claimants and protect the taxpayer. They are both fair and necessary". This statement is based on the Government's assumption that the low recognition rate of asylum seekers as refugees by the Home Office is evidence of the extent of bogus claims. As the United Nations High Commission on Refugees (UNHCR) has stated: "these unsound assumptions are... frequently cited as justification for further restrictive measures."

What the combination of these changes will actually mean is landlords refusing to take asylum seekers on as tenants because they will not get housing benefit (under the Asylum Bill) and a consequent rise in the numbers of homeless

families. This is likely to completely seize up the country's already overburdened short-term housing facility as temporary spaces are filled with people who have nowhere to move on to.

Nick Hardwick, Chief Executive of the Refugee Council, believes that: "these measures... will now inevitably result in 2,000 asylum seekers every month losing benefit and facing destitution."

The Asylum and Immigration Bill is due to receive Royal Assent in the summer and will include the tellingly named 'white list' of countries in which Michael Howard believes there is "in general no serious risk of persecution". Despite an established UN resolution to the contrary the Bill will make it a criminal offence to attempt to enter the country illegally. Compelling individual circumstances such as the risk of imprisonment, death or torture will, because of the generalised nature of the legislation, not be taken into account.

The Government has also introduced a new fast-

track decision-making process to deal with 'in-country' applicants. Under the pilot for this scheme 100 per cent of applicants, including people from Nigeria, Uganda and Romania, were refused asylum.

Continuing this Government's impressive record for blatantly ignoring the advice of those who know, Lilley is determined to press ahead with these measures, despite warnings from the Social Security Advisory Committee who, in a report widely recognised as the most critical in its history, predict racial division and the almost guaranteed destitution of those 'in-country' applicants who apply after February 8. The report stated: "These proposals should not proceed." Uniquely, according to the Refugee Council, the committee offered no secondary recommendations. Feebly attempting to justify the measures to the Commons Lilley said: "Other European nations have tightened up their procedures." Of course they have Peter, its called international racism.

Squatters help refugees

A GROUP OF SQUATTING ACTIVISTS have occupied a large building in London, in order to provide shelter for refugees likely to be homeless as a result of recent benefit changes.

The new changes disqualify asylum seekers who do not register at their port of entry. Estimates suggest that as many as 2,500 refugees a month may be homeless as a direct result of the changes. The Autonomous Refugee Centre Hackney (ARCH) was set up on 5 Feb, the same day the benefit rules were changed.

In combination with the upcoming Immigration and Asylum Bill, the new

benefit restrictions have received widespread condemnation from a multitude of organisations, though no provision has yet been made for the victims.

In lieu of any concrete initiatives, the ARCH collective have squatted an Old Magistrates Court next door to a Kurdish community centre in Stoke Newington, Hackney. The group say their intention is to run the previously dormant building as a temporary shelter and to draw attention to the plight of refugees. The collective has already received messages of support from the Medical

Foundation for Victims of Torture, as well as from Kurdish community groups in the area.

According to Samantha Bold, one of the

occupying group: "None of the agencies that have opposed the welfare changes have actually done anything about the situation and as activists

we see squatting as a viable and immediate solution."

ARCH need offers of support, blankets and food. Contact 0171 226 8938.

hon member



Housing Bill

papering over the housing problem

THE HOUSING BILL - the latest government onslaught on cheap housing, the homeless, and the vulnerable - is currently wending its way through parliament.

Despite 15,000 housing organisations advising the government that the bill does not address the country's chronic housing shortage, and that it makes neither economic nor social sense, it is expected to become law by June.

The bill is likely to ignore the problem of homelessness by pretending the homeless do not exist. It is likely to drive up rents, and further ghettoise the poor and homeless.

The new legislation will remove a local council's obligation to provide permanent housing for the homeless.

Instead they will only have to provide temporary accommodation for 12 months; that means B&Bs. After 12 months a family will have to move to another B&B, causing untold stress and difficulties for schooling and work.

Even though a family

will be homeless, they will not be classified as homeless.

Mick Sweeney, chief executive of one of the country's biggest housing associations, the Community Housing Association based in North London, says: "The government will be able to say that there isn't a homelessness problem."

The legislation will also attack housing associations, once called the "third arm" of the housing sector.

Sandwiched between private houses and council

housing, they sprang up during the chronic housing shortage of the sixties in order to provide cheap and decent accommodation.

Until five years ago they were heavily subsidised by the government - to the tune of 90 per cent of the money they needed to build new homes.

Because they had very little outlay, housing associations could charge very little rent. Three

quarters of those living in housing associations receive housing benefit, so the government's own benefits bill was kept down.

Five years ago the government cut the grant to only fifty per cent. In order to build new houses the HAs had to borrow money from

housing stock through the "right to buy scheme". According to Mr Sweeney, most sold were those in most demand - three and four bedroomed family homes with gardens.

HAs will, unlike councils, be able to re-invest the money in housing stock.

But they will only be able to afford replacement houses in poor, run down areas - so ghettoising social housing.

The bill will allow construction firms such as Barrett and Wimpey, to compete for HA

grants, along with new housing companies which will take over council house provision.

The "right to buy" will be given to housing association tenants, along with a £16,000 sweetener to help with the mortgage.

In practice this will deplete a HAs stock, and they will have little money to replenish it.

Local councils lost twenty per cent of their

grants, along with new housing companies which will take over council house provision.

"The housing bill does not address the real issues of the housing problems," says Mr Sweeney, "which is sheer shortage."

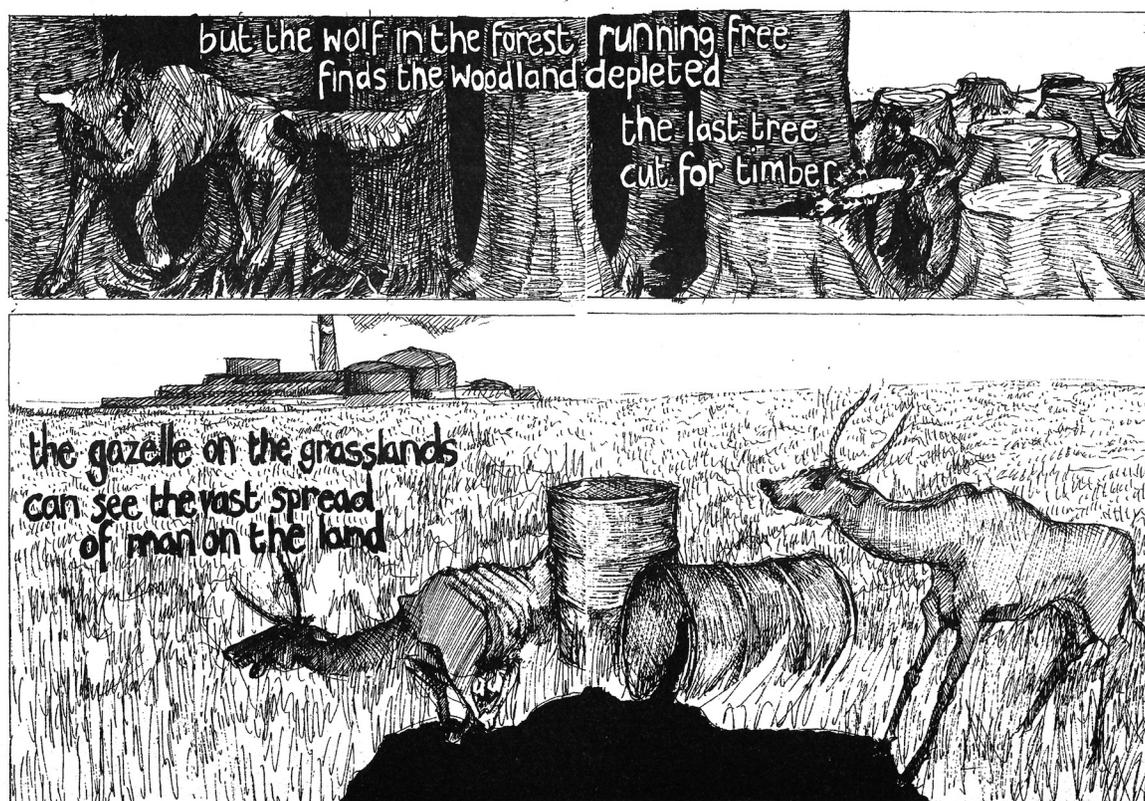
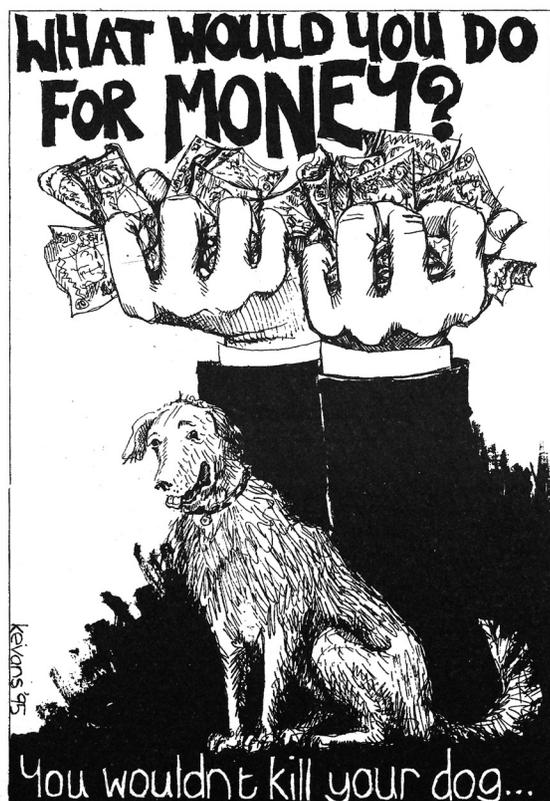
In Camden, where the CHA is based, the population is about 140,000. In 1994 2,339 homeless families asked the council for

accommodation. Almost 7000 people were on the waiting list. Eight thousand people live in overcrowded conditions. Yet out of a stock of 25,000 homes only 2000 became available.

"Putting people into B&Bs is less economic than building new houses," says Mr Sweeney. "The government is paying out huge sums in housing benefit because landlords can charge what they want. The country needs 100,000 new affordable homes each year. Only 40,000 are built. There is too much demand and not enough supply. It would make more sense to keep housing benefit down and our grants up. Half a million construction workers are unemployed. For every £1.00 spent on social housing the treasury would get back 50p in paying less dole and housing benefit."

"There is no economic sense for this legislation. 15,000 housing organisations have told the government so on the issue of homelessness alone. There is no credibility in the consultation process. The bill is being driven by ideology."

The country needs 100,000 affordable homes each year. Only 40,000 are built.



Police masons criticise Complaints Authority

POLICE ATTITUDES made an unusual change last December, one which despite the magnitude of its implications, received scant media coverage.

The matter concerns the Police Complaints Authority, the in-house investigation unit for police malpractice and corruption. Long has it been said that the PCA's ability to investigate police corruption is diminished by the fact that the investigators themselves are police officers.

However, despite a history of smothered allegations and poor accountability, the Home Office and

the Police themselves have always upheld the PCA to be beyond any bias towards their own kind, and perfectly suitable as impartial investigators.

Such official attitudes changed dramatically last December, when the PCA chairman, Sir Leonard Peach told a House of Commons home affairs committee that police officers should publically declare their membership of masonic lodges. Sir Leonard told the committee that there was much public concern over the implications of Freemasonry, saying: "It would

clearly be an advantage if those investigating complaints declared their membership."

As a result the Police Federation, one of the force's largest representative bodies, suddenly claimed the PCA did not have the confidence of the rank and file. Meanwhile, the Police Superintendent's Association told the Home Affairs Committee that: "Over the past two years our confidence in the impartiality of the PCA has been shaken. Many of our members no longer see the PCA as being truly independent."

STATE PENSION EUTHANASIA

The Government has launched a £750,000 television advertisement telling young people that they should not expect much to be left of state pension schemes by the time they retire.

The advert is designed as an encouragement for young people to get involved in private pension plans, thus facilitating the dismantling state pensions altogether. Those who cannot afford such private pension plans will, as they say, have to suffer. The advert is currently running on Central TV and, if considered successful, may go national.

MP PAY RISE

Two hundred and thirty MPs have signed a cross party motion asking for more pay. Apparently £33,000 a year, plus expenses, perks and outside consultancy jobs is not enough to live on. Poor dears.

MPs in favour of the pay rise claim that suitable candidates will be deterred from standing for parliament on financial grounds. We here at SQUALL are not the only ones to consider that anyone standing for parliament for financial reasons should not be considered a "suitable candidate" in the first place.

Police To use CS gas despite concerns

SIXTEEN POLICE forces in England and Wales will begin using CS gas canisters at the beginning of March as part of a six month trial, despite concerns about their safety.

If the trial proves "successful" the canisters, the size of a tube of solid glue, could become a regular part of the constabulary's armament.

Two weeks before the trials were due to begin it emerged that the Home Office scientist, Dr Jill

Tan, who gave the canisters the green light, suffered blistering to her face after being sprayed with the gas.

It has also emerged that a Northamptonshire policeman - one of the country's top self-defence experts - will not be training officers in the new weapon because his chief constable is worried about being sued by injured members of the public.

Chief Constable Ted Crew said: "I am advised

that were there to be a civil claim resulting from the use of CS spray, I might find that because we had trained the officers using it, I have some liability. It didn't seem much sense taking the risk when Northamptonshire police officers are getting no direct benefits from its use."

Despite these concerns the Association of Chief Police Officers insist that the hand held sprays are safe.

POLICE IGNORE RACIAL ATTACKS

Police brutality in Britain is a "serious human rights concern" according to an organisation based in New York.

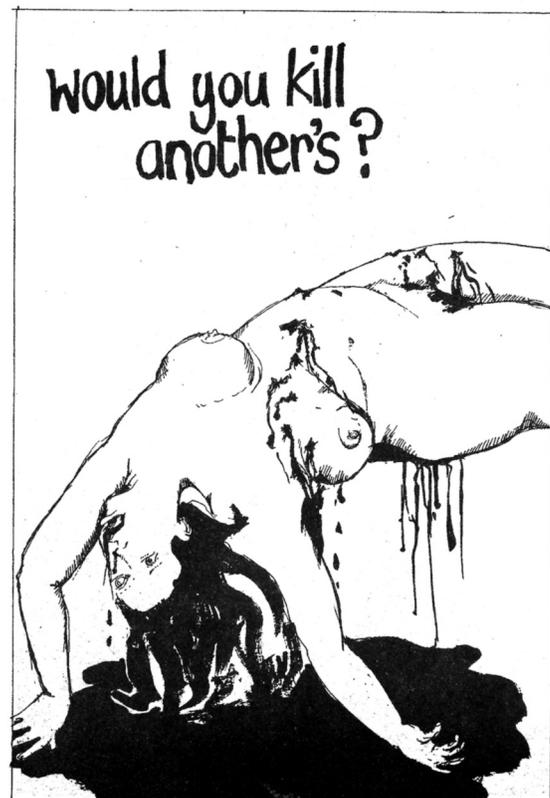
Human Rights Watch said it had found "numerous incidents of police brutality" in Britain together with an unwillingness to tackle racial violence.

The organisation - which is influential in America - states that racial violence has increased by 200 per cent since 1989, but "victims and community groups reported that police were unable or unwilling to respond" to racial incidents.

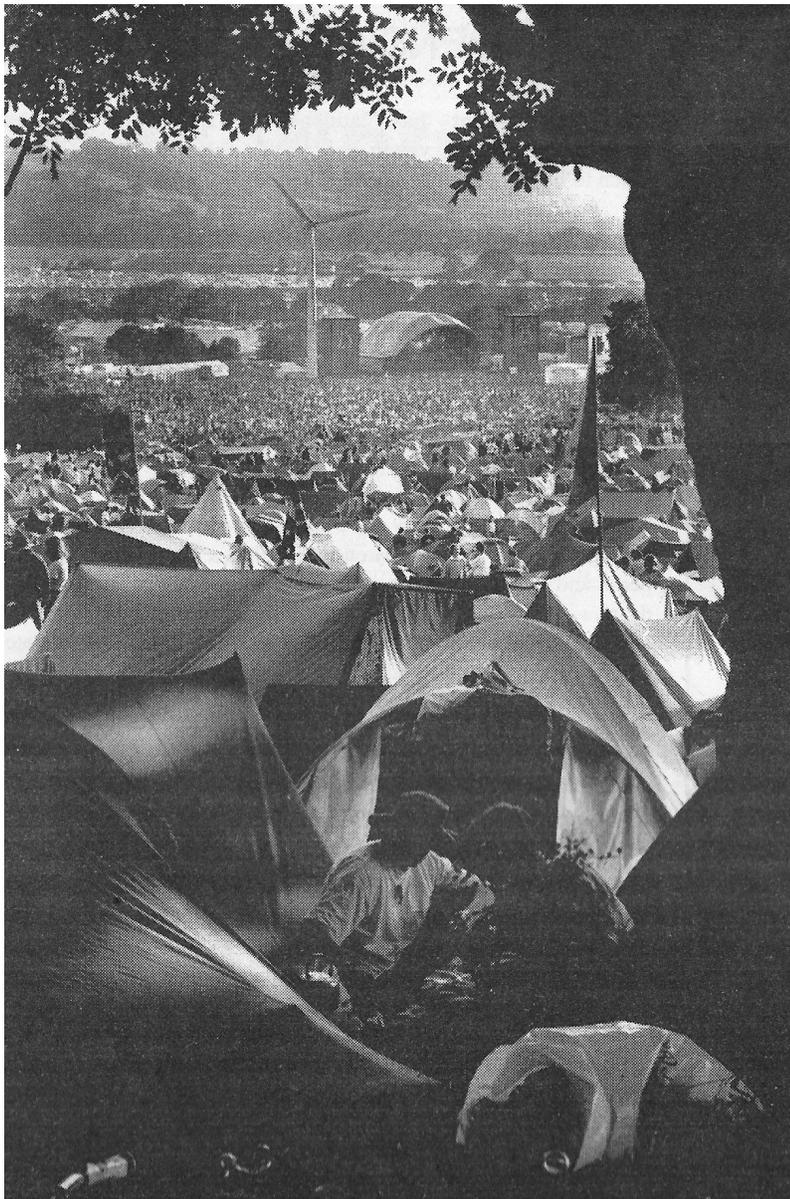
'MAD JUDGE DISEASE'

Rising crime levels were blamed on "liberal, socialist minded judges and magistrates" by a Tory MP who called for the return of national service and the birch.

David Evans, MP for Welwyn and Hatfield, complained about "mad judge disease" during a crime debate in December.



Commercial promoters profit from Glastonbury cancellation



Nick Cobbing

THE CANCELLATION OF THIS YEAR'S GLASTONBURY FESTIVAL is an obvious blow to an already sparse festival circuit.

Michael Eavis, on whose land the festival is held, says his organic dairy farm needs a year off from the stamp of two hundred

thousand feet. With the likes of Fordham Park and Forest Fair also cancelled it seems likely that the freedom fighters amongst the alternative festival people may be heading for Stonehenge. Meanwhile the Mean Fiddler Organisation is increasing the size of its

circuit remains under maximum attack from legislation, police levies and local authority obstacles.

The organisers of the Forest Fair say that the local council have injuncted their land, rendering it legally unusable for anything other than

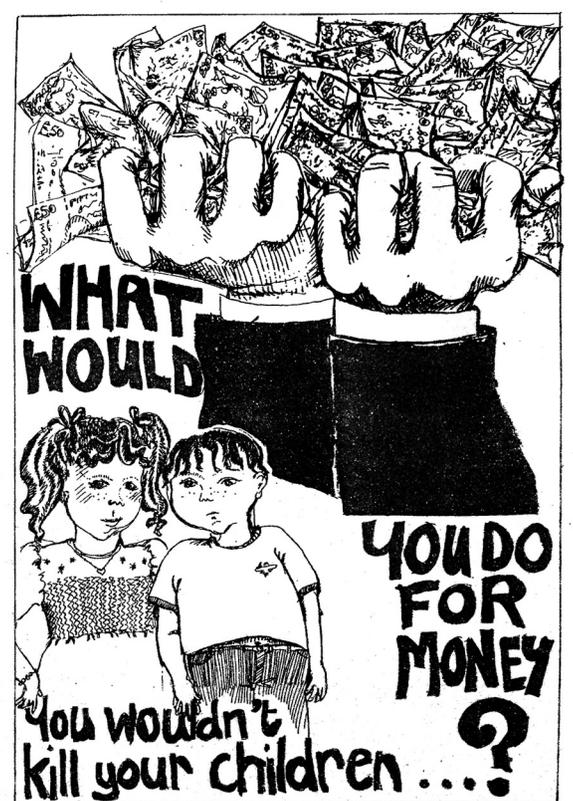
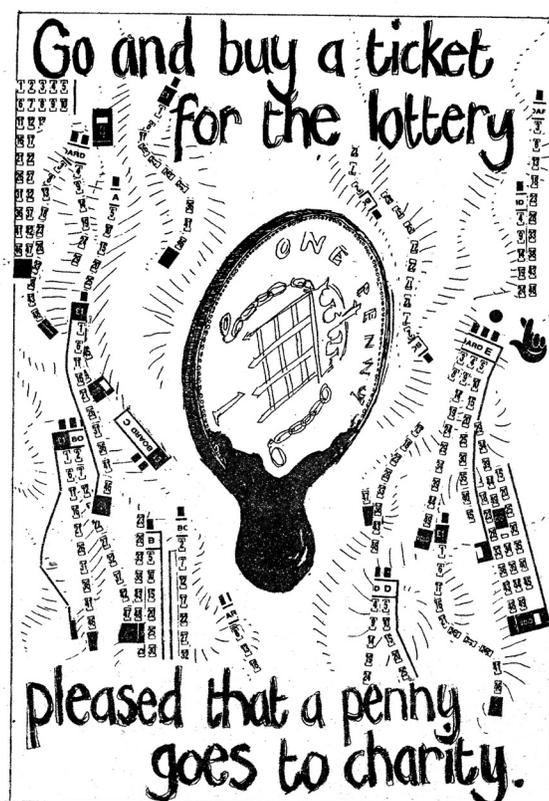
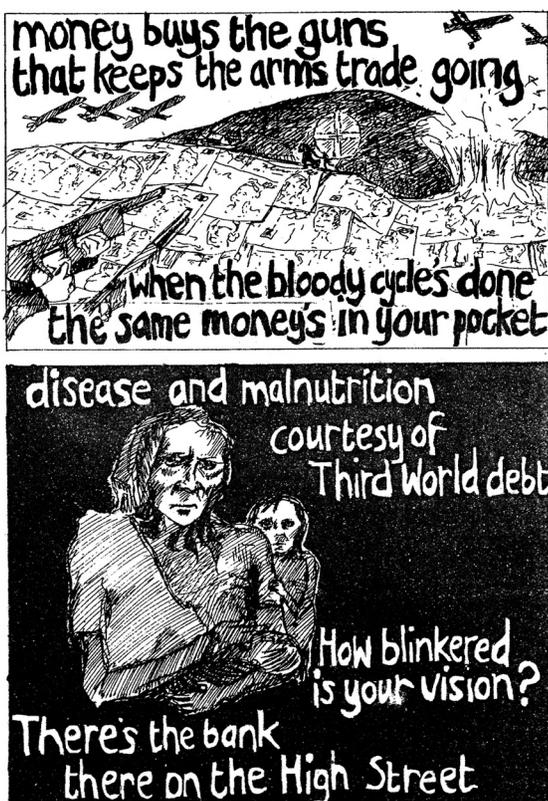
Phoenix Festival and Tribal Gathering in expectation of the reflected glory and extra punters undoubtedly coming its way in the Glastonbury vacuum.

Helping such promoters all the way is the fact that the free and low cost festival

agriculture. Having given birth to and fostering the growth of the UK's open air festival culture, the alternative festival scene is under severe pressure, with big event promoters now cashing in and throttling the creation (See 'Culture Cash In on Raves and Festivals' SQUALL Issue 10). Their designs are being facilitated by local authorities, police and politicians, all of whom in some way or another, stand to gain large amounts of money from big commercial festivals. The Somerset Police for instance make a cool £250,000 from policing Glastonbury, just one of the many pay offs Michael Eavis is forced to make in order to ensure the commercial jackals don't eat the Festival.

When Eavis was diagnosed with colonic cancer last year, big promoters were swarming like vultures to a limping buffalo, in attempts to take over the running of the festival. Fortunately, Eavis recovered and, in a question and answer session held in a tent in the Green Field last year, said he had every intention of running the festival until the day he dies.

Many festival goers say Glastonbury Festival becomes more commercial each year. However, whilst there is much by way of evidence for their observations, Glastonbury still retains a relatively high element of alternative culture and will be sorely missed as a meeting point this summer.



MI5 muscle in on animal rights activism

THE SECURITY SERVICES BILL, currently working its way through parliament, aims to "give the Security Service the function of acting in support of the prevention and detection of serious crime, and for connected purposes".

With the end of the cold war MI5 agents have been finding themselves with less to do. As a result, the present head of MI5, Stella Rimmington, has negotiated a new role for her organisation in domestic,

serious crime detection.

Under the new Bill, the phrase "serious crime" includes "conduct by a large number of persons in pursuit of a common purpose". Among a list of expressed interests is the direct action activities of animal liberation groups. Groups such as the Animal Liberation Front have long been classified as 'terrorists' by the authorities, with anyone convicted of involvement receiving long prison sentences. However, the level at which these

animal liberation groups operate is hardly grounds for the involvement a security service. MI5 have a multitude of special powers of operation well beyond public scrutiny. Their paperwork is protected from the usual rules of court disclosure, their operations are all secret and any member of the service speaking publicly about official malpractice is liable to special punishment under the Official Secrets Act.

The second clause of

the Security Services Bill concerns the issuing of "property warrants", an application procedure allowing MI5 agents to break into houses and vehicles in order to place eavesdropping devices. These applications will be approved or disapproved by Michael Howard.

The complaints procedure against MI5 agents and officers is also presently controlled by Michael Howard and monitored by the Security Service tribunal

set up in 1989. Of the 187 complaints dealt with by the tribunal since it was set up, every one has been dismissed.

Effectively anyone suspected of having anything to do with the animal liberation cause will become a legitimate target for MI5 surveillance. Naturally the implications of this situation for environmental protesters is alarming to say the least. Indeed, with the definition of "serious crime" as loose as it is, the implications of these new powers extend to every level of domestic protest or political campaigning.

The Security Services Bill consists of two clauses written on one page of paper. The ramifications could fill volumes.

Best and worst Landowner of The Year award

THE DUKE OF WESTMINSTER has just been elected as the worst landowner in Britain in a new annual awards ceremony co-ordinated by the Land is Ours Campaign.

According to the judges - John Vidal (Guardian Environment Editor), Charles Secrett (Director, Friends of the Earth) and Jan Clark (Green Party) - the Duke comes out on top of a large number of nominations for "his failure to exercise the

positive responsibilities for reform incumbent upon the owner of such huge and well financed estates". Quite!

Runner up in the prestigious awards ceremony is Tim Jones, a recent contender who might well clinch the first prize next year. Jones runs a company called Elitestone in Swansea and despite having no planning permission is determined to evict a well established community of chalet dwellers at Holtsfield

in Wales.

Winner of the best landowner award goes to Daphne Buxton, who bought three acres of meadows on the edge of Rushall village in Norfolk and then created what is believed to be the first new piece of 'common' land established this century.

The Land is Ours Campaign are planning a major land occupation of an urban site on May 5th. Ears to the underground or ring 01865 725 537.

New forum for dance information

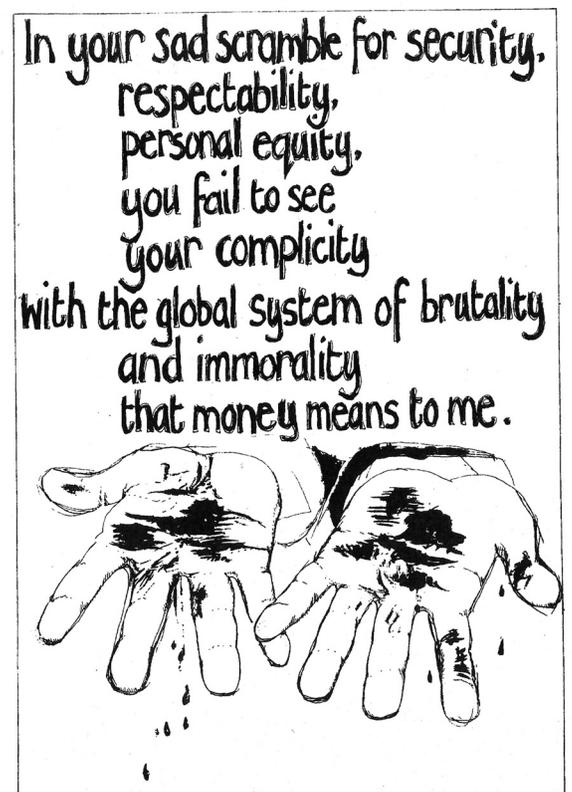
A NEW ORGANISATION has been set up to provide a forum for organisations committed to the welfare of those attending dance clubs, events and free parties.

The Dance Information Network held its launch meeting in February in central London. Guest speakers present included the Metropolitan Police, the Association of London Government, Lifeline and the Exodus Collective, and it was attended by a wide variety

of organisations including club managers and drug outreach workers.

The Dance Information Network says its aim is to place the welfare of the dancer first, providing a "forum that recognises the positive side of dance culture" with "an important role in promoting a more accurate and optimistic picture which reflects the confidence, creativity and vibrancy of young people attending these events".

Here's to that.



Copex "not an arms fair" libel

AN ARMS EXHIBITOR has issued writs for libel against a number of peace campaigners and magazines who suggested the company displayed torture equipment.

The actions, against the Campaign Against the Arms Trade, Peace News, GreenLine and several individuals, follow a Channel Four Dispatches programme last year, called The Torture Trail, which claimed British Aerospace had a role in the export of electro-shock batons.

The government has since admitted that in 1993 it issued licences for electro-shock batons to be traded between different countries through Britain. Amnesty International have described the batons as "the universal tool of the torturer". They are illegal in the UK.

The programme questioned the role of a company called COPEX - Covert and Operational Procurement Exhibitions - who organise exhibitions at which weapons are displayed.

Exhibitors at COPEX have included Conjay Firearms and Ammunitions Ltd and Hiatts of Birmingham who exhibit handcuffs and other ironware. Hiatts have been implicated in the sale and export of 'jumbo' cuffs

which importing countries allegedly adapt to leg irons.

Exhibitors in COPEX's 1995 catalogue included manufacturers of sniper rifles, explosive detectors, tactical batons, armour shields, surveillance systems, wall and door breaching canons and CS gas dispersers, small arms, submachine guns and assault rifles.

Visitors to their exhibitions include representatives from the governments of China, Columbia, Iran, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Algeria and Saudi Arabia. All have questionable human rights records.

The Campaign Against the Arms Trade suggested in its April '95 newsletter that supporters write to the manager of Sandown Racecourse, where a COPEX exhibition was due to be held in November '95, to protest. The newsletter alleged that the exhibition was a "market place for electro-shock batons and other torture equipment".

A number of individuals who took up the suggestion are being sued for libel by COPEX, as are CAAT. The individuals include a 78-year old Quaker and an A-Level student.

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The Esher Times, Sandown's local paper, and the National Peace Council settled with COPEX out of court after running the story. They both apologised to COPEX and paid damages. The National Peace Council paid £3,000 damages and is now appealing for donations.

Action against the Sporting Life, which also took up the story because Sandown is a race course, was later dropped by COPEX, after the Sporting Life requested documents from Copex pertaining to the case.

Peace News, based in North London, and GreenLine, based in Cornwall, have been issued with writs after reporting on the libel actions against CAAT and the National Peace Council.

CAAT and GreenLine were unable to comment on the case when SQUALL approached them, although CAAT confirmed they would be fighting the action. Peace News, a pacifist paper launched in 1936 also said they would be fighting the action.

No action has been taken by COPEX against Channel Four because the Dispatches programme did not make any specific allegations concerning the sale of torture equipment.

Carl Meadows, a spokesman for COPEX, told Squall the action had been taken to protect the right to protest as well as the integrity of the company.

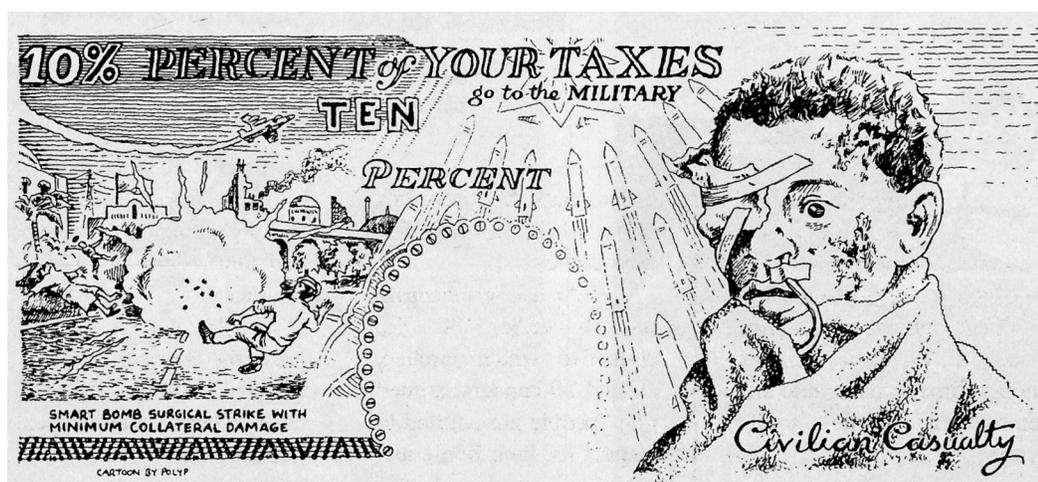
He said that the company did not exhibit anything itself but merely organised exhibitions, at

which there are weapons, but denied any torture equipment was displayed.

"There are weapons at the exhibition, but of the total amount of exhibition space weapons amount to four per cent. Items such as shock batons have never been exhibited," he said.

Mr Meadows added: "I'm a great believer in protest. But it relies on people getting the truth. If I were a member of CAAT I would expect CAAT to tell me the correct information. A letter writing campaign is a very valuable thing. But you have some responsibility."

If successful the libel actions have obvious ramifications for protesters and pressure groups. A libel action is enough to sink a local newspaper, never mind a small organisation on a small budget. Action against individuals involved in letter writing campaigns could also remove one of the most powerful tools in any peace campaigner's arsenal.



Anne stands outside bricked-up squats on Cedars Rd. Picture by Vanessa Jones.



University evicts long-term community

THE UNIVERSITY OF EAST LONDON recently evicted a community of squatters after a saga described by the Empty Homes Agency as :”a tangled tale of official bungling.”

A squat community had existed on Cedars Road for 25 years until the bailiffs arrived for the last time in January this year. Cedars Road was home to up to 60 squatters and had evolved into a co-operative including a cafe and communal gardens. As one visitor commented : “You’d make a cup of tea in one house and end up drinking it three houses down the street.”

The “tangled tale” highlighted by the EHA centred on a series of deals between the University and Newham Borough Council in which the Cedars Road houses were traded back

and forth in an absurd game of virtual Monopoly.

The University claimed ownership of the even numbered properties only to lose them through a legal loophole. Then a dispute over their rates bill ended in the Council handing over the odd numbered houses as compensation. The tale took another twist when the University tried to evict a toilet in a bid to make the houses uninhabitable.

The EHA criticised both the University and Newham Council for being unable to work together on Cedars Road - a direct contrast with the collective action and co-operation shown by the community they were so keen to evict.

CATHODE RAY NIPPLE

Children’s speech is being damaged by too much television, a leading speech therapist has claimed.

Dr Sally Ward, the country’s leading authority on speech development, found after a ten year study that television was a very important factor in delaying a child’s speech development.

Ms Ward says that while children watch television their parent or guardian are not talking to them, and they do not understand the noise coming from the TV.

BRITAIN’S NO CONFIDENCE IN POLITICS

Britons are apathetic about party politics, according to an annual survey of British Social Attitudes published last year.

The survey says that less than a quarter of voters believe any party in government puts the national interest above its own.

YOU CAN’T EAT THE LOTTERY

An estimated £2.5 billion will be spent on the national lottery this year, according to a report published in December.

The report, published by the Henley Centre, a research organisation, predicts that increased spending on the lottery will mean less spending on food and entertainment to the tune of £655 million.

Mother Festival charges dropped - Black Moon fight on

MOST OF THE CHARGES brought against individuals involved in last July’s Mother Festival have finally been dropped.

The Crown prosecution Service now says there is insufficient evidence to press charges of “conspiracy to cause a public nuisance” - Criminal Law Act.1977.

However, the Section 63 CJA charges brought against Black Moon Sound System are still being pressed, with Police still having most of Black Moon’s music equipment confiscated on the day. Some of the equipment belonging to a third party not

present on the actual day, has subsequently been returned in poor condition. According to the owner, the lighting rig recently released from the police impound “looks like they’ve been stored in a garden shed”.

The individuals consequently charged with “public nuisance” after the Mother, had left the Corby site after being ordered to do so under the powers of the Criminal Justice Act. As such they could not be charged with any of the Act’s clauses. Instead they were targeted with public nuisance prosecution.

The Black Moon Sound System, on the other hand, were unable to dismantle their rig on time and were even told by some members of the police force that they “might not have to move” (see SQUALL 11). Some tape recordings of police advice are being used to aid their evidence. Black Moon’s defence solicitors are also challenging the charges on the basis of the “reasonable time” required to be given when Section 63 is invoked by police. They claim that one hour was not enough time to dismantle and remove a whole sound system.

Kings Hill Collective tackle planning law

A COLLECTIVE living in benders in the Mendip Hills appealed against eviction to the Environment Department at the end of November.

The Kings Hill collective, based near Glastonbury, have fallen foul of planning regulations which do not differentiate between low impact dwellings and full urbanisation.

At a court hearing on November 30 the collective, which numbers around 20 benders, argued that “people are entitled to respect for their home and

family life” under article 8 of the European Convention of Human Rights.

They also argued that personal circumstances in such cases was becoming more and more relevant in English law, quoting two recent cases where the eviction of travellers was overturned because personal circumstances, such as the schooling of children, had not been taken into account.

As Squall goes to press the Kingshill collective are awaiting a decision as to whether their appeal has been granted.

Recipe for prison riots

BEDFORD Prison authorities have decided to suspend prisoners' 'free association' period. The reason given to inmates for this dramatic change in their prison life was that, whilst the number of prisoners within the jail is rising, the number of prison officers is being cut back. As a consequence they say they can no longer police the two and-a-half hour evening recreational period.

Meanwhile, a whole series of measures introduced by Home Secretary Michael Howard has led to a record 52,000 inmates in UK prisons, a figure that penal system organisations say is likely to spiral further. Add to this the dramatic increases in the severity of prison regimes and sentencing, and a recipe for riot is fermenting.

According to John Boddington, chairman of the Prison Officers' Association: "It is prison staff who will have to bear the brunt of an increasingly violent prisoner population that are packed in like sardines, who have nothing to do and nothing to lose. The Home Secretary is sacrificing the long term effectiveness of the prison system for political ends."

Another alarming manoeuvre within UK prisons is Michael Howard's insistence that drug tests are carried out more regularly. All 133 of British prisons are expected to be operating these tests by the end of March. Prisoners at Bedford Prison were told in January that there will be no tests for a 30-day amnesty period,



after which random testing will occur on a daily basis.

The most immediate ramification of this move will be the increase in heroin use within prisons. Heroin is undetectable to drug testing equipment only a couple of days after use, cannabis on the other hand takes around 28 days to clear.

George Evatt, chairman of the Dartmoor Board of Visitors was quoted: "Who is worried about cannabis? It keeps things quiet after all and is the least damaging of the drugs. You are going to get people coming into prison for the first time who end up addicted to the hard stuff when they come out."

Everyone with an inside knowledge of prison life knows that cannabis use is quite prevalent. Indeed some prison officers have recommended it to prisoners. Without it the recipe for riot will be even more explosive. Remember the name Michael Howard when it all goes off.

STUCK IN THE RED

A record number of home-owners are languishing in negative equity, according to a Nationwide Building Society report published in January this year.

Up to 1.7 million people, representing one in four homeowners, now have a property that, contrary to their expectations, is worth less than they bought it for. Such a situation potentially chains them to an increasing mortgage debt, with accruing interest greater than their regular installments or ability to pay. Some therefore face an increasing debt they are unlikely to pay off for the rest of their lives. The Council of Mortgage Lenders says that the number of houses repossessed each year in the UK currently stands at 50,000.

SAFE SEAT SCRAMBLE

Transport Secretary Sir George Young has been given the safe seat of Hampshire North West - through which passeth the Newbury bypass - to fight, two days after giving the road scheme the go-ahead.

Sir George, one of many Tories scrabbling for safe seats in view of impending electoral defeat, has deserted his current marginal seat of East Acton.

The Newbury bypass, eight and a half miles of which will run through his new constituency, was the only major road scheme to be given the go-ahead for 1996/7.

NUCLEAR PROGRAMME ABANDONED

Plans to build new nuclear power plants have been abandoned, signalling the end of the British nuclear power industry.

British Energy, soon to be privatised, made the decision in December not to go ahead with Sizewell C in Suffolk or Hinkley C in Somerset because the new stations would not be commercially viable.

Workfare by stealth

A WORKFARE scheme, under which the unemployed have to work to receive benefits, is to be launched in Britain.

A £12 million pilot project in which the unemployed would lose benefit if they did not take part, was revealed by the Government in November.

In two trial areas, covering 6,000 people,

those aged between 18 and 50 and unemployed for more than two years, will be told to report for the "Project Work" programme.

For the first 13 weeks they will be given advice on how to get back into the labour market with some claimants receiving training and others "work trials".

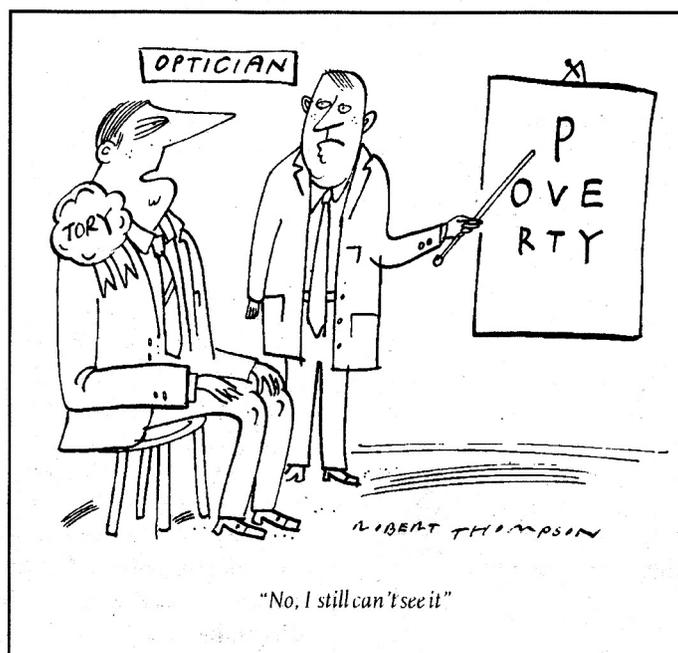
After this they will be expected to take work experience placements with charities, voluntary organisations or private industry.

"Refusal to attend the mandatory work experience programme will lead to loss of benefit," the Department of Education and Employment has said.

Benefit loss is similar to that under the impending Job Seekers Allowance - two weeks without benefit for a first offence and four weeks for a second offence.

Although the government has denied that this is a "workfare programme" Paul Convery of the Unemployment Unit said: "This is a decisive and clear step towards a comprehensive workfare system."

He added that the only difference between this scheme and workfare was that most of the work would be for voluntary organisations.



Hackney community under threat

A COMMUNITY of artists in East London have created plans for an "urban village" to counter proposals for an industrial park in their area which would see them evicted and houses demolished.

London Fields, in Hackney, is made up of blocks of Victorian terraces home to hundreds of artists, musicians, sculptors and photographers. But despite several hundred letters of protest, Hackney Council is expected to approve a scheme to turn the area into industrial units.

A Hackney official, Kevin Surgrue, argued that most of the artists were squatters and short-term

tenants who would object to any plans that deprived them of "free accommodation". But The London Fields Renewal Partnership, a local pressure group, have hit back with alternative plans for an "urban village" of shared workshops and "live and work units".

"If Hackney councillors let this scheme go ahead, they'll be driving out a huge creative resource and running totally counter to the council's own plans for cultural regeneration of the area," said Peter Snell, the Partnership's secretary.

Some residents have also vowed to resist the bulldozers if demolition of the area is given the go ahead.

Brent Spar campaign vindicated by public

ALMOST 74 per cent of the general public aware of the Brent Spar controversy believe Greenpeace should continue its campaign against the dumping of oil platforms, according to an opinion poll conducted by Opinion Leader Research.

The poll, conducted in January over the telephone and involving 1,000 members of the public, helps demonstrate that Shell's best efforts to regain the PR ground over the affair have failed.

When Greenpeace publicly apologised over its miscalculation of the amount of radioactive sludge actually on Brent Spar, right wing media, egged on by Shell's PR team, reported the news as if Greenpeace had apologised for the entire campaign. Fifty seven per cent of those questioned in the poll thought that the Brent Spar platform should not have been dumped, with only 32 per cent in favour.

League against cruel sports chief resigns

THE HEAD of the League Against Cruel Sports resigned in December following a dispute over remarks he made in a hunting magazine.

James Barrington claims he was forced out of the organisation after giving two interviews in the Field Magazine, in

which he said a compromise could be found between the two sides.

He said that if huntmen stopped using terrier men the League "would feel less antagonistic towards hunting".

But this outraged the League's 40,000 members who want a total ban.



QUEENIE is not often honoured with a place in the packed pages of SQUALL. However, the picture above captures the moment when the British Monarch presented the high commissioner of South Africa with the keys to a south London squat!

The incident occurred last November when queenie visited Deptford, a well known hot bed of squat culture. As far as the assembled dignitaries were concerned, the presentation was to have involved the keys to a truck load of educational aid destined for South Africa. When the ceremonial climax approached, however, no-one could find the right keys. Instead, a quick thinking squatter, part of a Deptford event-organisation posse, fished out her front door keys and slapped them on the silver tray.

Never one to see a good bit of carpet go to waste, she then took the specially bought red carpet home to her squat after the event.

"It'll probably do for the staircase," she told SQUALL. Oh, and she did get her keys back.

Housing Bill increases homelessness

GOVERNMENT aims to eradicate street homelessness over the next ten years will be undermined by the new Housing Bill, a homeless charity has claimed.

CHAR, the campaign for single homeless people, says the bill does nothing for street homelessness, despite a stated intention by the government to "ensure that there is no necessity for people to sleep rough" under the

Department of the Environment's Rough Sleepers Initiative.

CHAR says that the bill "demonstrates an absence of care or compassion for the most vulnerable homeless people" and predicts "increased misery for single homeless people and a reversal in progress made under the Rough Sleepers Initiative."

Restrictions in the payment of housing benefit under the new legislation

will, says CHAR, push the single homeless into insecure temporary accommodation. And, under the Bill, homeless people living in hostels and bed and breakfasts will not qualify as homeless and so not qualify for permanent housing.

"At worst these proposals would mean that hostels will become silted up resulting in more homeless people ending up on the streets," said Jon Fitzmaurice, Director of CHAR.

Self-help schemes undermined by DSS

POVERTY is the root cause of many problems on Britain's run down housing estates and self-help schemes are being undermined by social security and tax rules, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation claimed in December.

Unemployed people wanting to lift their communities out of poverty and bad education do not get involved in case the Inland Revenue and Benefits Agencies start asking questions about what they do with their time, the report claims.

Amongst the measures prescribed by the report's author, Marilyn Taylor, for a twenty year programme to help Britain's 2,000 run-down estates are more credit unions, skills exchanges and local exchange trading schemes.

NEWS OF THE SKEWS

This issue's look at national media skew-whiffery examines the Daily Mail's hysterical view of Newbury.

The Daily Mail - the paper that brought your grandparents the rousing headline "Hoorah for the Blackshirts" (yes, seriously) in support of Fascism in the thirties - can always be relied on for the most accurate portrayal of events.

The edition of the Saturday Mail on January 13 excelled itself, thanks to the bravery of two intrepid reporters who fearlessly entered the nether world of the Newbury protest camps.

Beneath the strapline: "Drink and drugs aplenty, and a cause worth sponging for" ran the headline: 'A Day in the Life of an Eco Warrior.'
Greg Swift, the 'journalist'

who penned the piece is obviously a man of great imagination and originality. He also seems to be a voracious hunter for the truth.

Mr Swift introduces the piece using his great descriptive powers to conjure the atmosphere of the camp at Snelsmore Common at night.

"The still of the night is pierced by strange, animal like noises," he writes, commenting on the unusual sounds to be heard in the middle of the countryside. Ah, but he is referring to the protesters who use "high pitched yelps as a sort of primeval language".

The scene set, Mr Swift introduces us to these savages. They are unfriendly at first but the group

of "dishevelled, filthy protesters" are soon put at their ease by "the gift of eight cans of beer".

Mr Swift is unfortunately unable to elicit much information out of the protesters. Due to the "profusion of drugs - predominantly cannabis, speed and ecstasy, though occasionally heroin, much of the conversation is rambling nonsense."

Mr Swift, is obviously shocked and disturbed by his experience. "Looking around," he writes, "it is astonishing to see how prepared they are to let their bodies suffer. Many are infested with head lice, and the longer serving members have blackened teeth and hair.

"Occasionally supportive locals invite protesters into their homes for a bath or shower," he continues. "But it is frowned upon by the tree dwellers to use soap".

Mr Swift reserves most of his righteous and understandable anger for "the young single mothers who drag their children through the mud and undergrowth to confront the bulldozers".

One such child, aged only three, had a shoe missing and his "face screwed up in a mixture of fear and bewilderment." The child, comments the incisive Mr Swift, had already suffered enough abuses of power: "maternal rather than official".

But, alas, Mr Swift is disappointed that despite their "manic, staring eyes" the protesters are not as tough as they would have us believe. After dicing with danger and dodging chainsaws, when they were arrested many started to cry and "begged the police to keep the details from their parents".

Steven Morris, another Daily Mail correspondent of great esteem and stature, added a few hundred words concerning dole cheques to Mr Swift's accurate, balanced and thoroughly well-researched version of events.

Mr Morris has great sympathy with the postmen who "battle through mud and litter" to deliver dole cheques to the fearfully named Nutty Oak and Squirrel's

Den. These are sent after protesters nip home every two weeks for a "wash and brush up - and to sign on the dotted line". No doubt the redoubtable Mr Swift must have had a strong word about personal hygiene in order for the protesters to change their washing habits so rapidly.

"The vast majority freely admit that they have no intention of doing an honest day's work," Mr Morris comments - in the course of his honest, and deservedly well remunerated, day's work at Newbury.

He then states that

at least half the protesters are on benefits, but some only on Income Support because "they have never worked at all". Obviously they must have tendered out the contract for building tree houses and tunnels to the lowest private bidder while they made merry on the munificence of their government allowance.

But not to fear. We are reassured that come October the scandal of "the dole scroungers" will come to an end with the introduction of the Job Seeker's Allowance.

All in all, a worthy piece. The only things Messrs Swift and Morris failed to notice was the long red tails sported by many of the protesters and the mark of the beast on each of their foreheads.

"Drink and drugs aplenty, and a cause worth sponging for"

A few weeks later, on February 12, the day after 5,000 people demonstrated against the by-pass, the Mail wheeled out "top writer", Dr Anthony Daniels, who appears to be a psychologist.

Under the headline "To Protest is Fine, But Why the Squalor?" Dr Daniels could appreciate popular concern about more ring-roads and asphalt, but is puzzled by the motivation of the resident protesters whose conditions are "profoundly harsh and uncomfortable".

No doubt after putting a reasonable sample size of protesters on his couch, he comes up with a few answers.

Would you believe that many members of this "outcast society", who reject "the values of mainstream society", find comfort from joining a "community of like-minded people"?

Not only this, it seems the resident protester has a profound fear of failure. Dr Daniels concludes that the protesters "dream wildly of success and hope they have the talent to achieve it."

But their dreams of "power, fame, wealth and glory" are doomed through lack of talent and commitment. So the bitter protesters don't even bother to try, and instead look for immortality in the woods of Newbury.

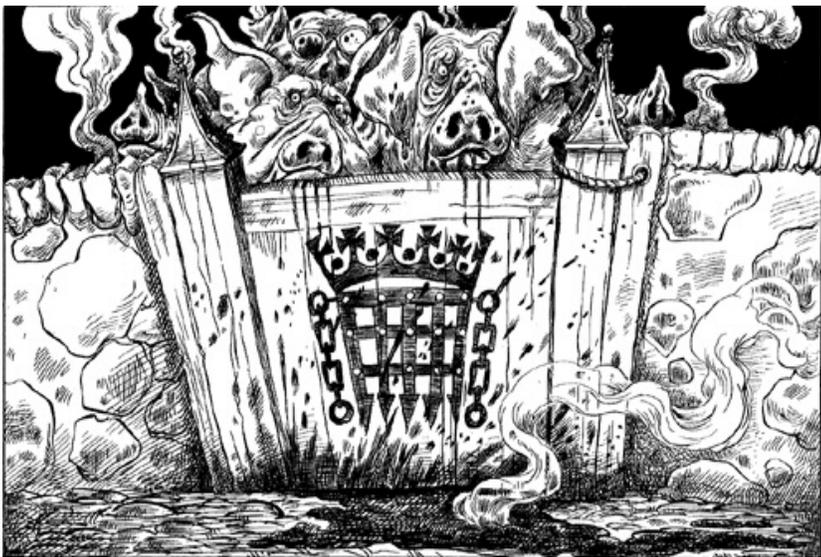
This aim, says Dr Daniels, is secondary to concerns about traffic congestion and dead dormice. Concerns which the good doctor admits are perfectly well-founded.

So all hail to the legendary er, so and so, of Newbury

sq



Nick Cobbing



Actors of Parliament

This issue's look at parliamentary
gobble-de-gook

John Carlisle (Con MP Luton North) has made regular appearances in the pages of *SQUALL* with various selections from his collected works of hysterical bluff and bluster. It was he who was taken to court by the Commission for Racial Equality after publicly expressing his desire to see "all gypsies banished into the wilderness".

The latest nonsense, however, concerns his highly selective campaign for and against drugs. Carlisle has always been a vehement critic of drugs and their implications for a healthy society. But when a Liberal Democrat MP recently introduced a private members bill designed to put curbs on those who profit from the UK's most deadly recreational drug, Carlisle stongly opposed the measure.

Indeed, he was the only MP to get to his feet in the House of Commons and verbally slate the Tobacco (Protection of Children and Restriction of Promotion) Bill when it was presented in January.

As the author of the bill, Simon Hughes (Lib Dem MP Bermondsey and Southwark), had pointed out to the House that the tobacco industry spends a staggering £100 million pounds a year on advertising. The need for curbs on their techniques of increasing sales were a matter of the utmost medical urgency argued Hughes.

Carlisle, on the other hand, described the bill as

"unnecessary.... stupid and illogical" because the "existing system [of controls] works". What he didn't address is the fact that five out every six regular smokers begin smoking by the age of 15.

Instead, he launched a pathetic attempt to rubbish Simon Hughes's opinion, by suggesting that, as the Liberal Democrat Party Conference had voted in favour of a more sensible political debate on cannabis use, all its MPs' views on drugs should be considered with contempt. He further accuses Hughes of promoting a "nanny state", saying his bill "is based on pure emotion rather than pure fact." Here are some facts.

Tobacco is the directly attributable cause of 100,000 deaths a year in the UK. This compares with 25,000 deaths attributable to alcohol, ten attributable to Ecstasy and none attributed to Cannabis. "Illogical"? "Stupid"? Words certainly befitting for John Carlisle's epitaph.

Having been a backbencher since his election in 1979 and looking likely to remain there, Carlisle is considered to be a bit of a political buffoon; not safe to promote. The prime reason for his lack of promotion prospects however, is his inability to hide what the rest of his party are better at masking - that despite all their hysterical rhetoric on drugs, they are quite happy to say the opposite when there are profits to be made from doing so. (SQ)

The **SQUALL** 'Music is for people not record companies' competition.

Win one of twenty Zion Train "Natural Wonders of the World in Dub" CDs. All you have to do is answer the following three questions and then suggest a humorous caption for Andrew Testa's corking photograph taken at Newbury (printed on P. 34).

1. A member of which band said: "I couldn't give a fuck about the M11, maybe I'll get to London quicker"?
 - a) Take That
 - b) The Prodigy
 - c) The Proclaimers
 - d) Zion Train
2. Which band is playing its heart out in Andrew Testa's photograph (page 34)?
 - a) The Prodigy
 - b) Michael Jackson
 - c) Tragik
 - d) Zion Train
3. Which radio station broadcasts live from the woods of Newbury?
 - a) Radio One
 - b) BBC World Service
 - c) Radio Berkshire
 - d) Tree FM 87.7

Answers on the most unusual postcard you can find, with your suggestions for the photo caption. Send to 'Music for people not record companies' competition, **SQUALL**, PO Box 8959, London N19 5HW. All entries in by May 1st 1996.

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ONE LOVE



Jim Carey investigates the battle being waged between vested business interests and rave culture. Pictures by **Nick Cobbing**.

The Recreational Alcohol



When Kenneth Clarke ran through his November budget last year he did so with a glass of whisky sitting on the table in front of him. It is his preferred drug. At the opportune moment of announcing a 26p decrease in the price of his favourite tippie, he took up the tumbler, sluiced his mouth and returned to addressing the televised House of Commons with a smirk.

For the distilling industry it was a cracking piece of product placement. For the medical profession, however, Clarke's public display was another in a long line of drug-induced contradictions.

Last December, Stephen Dorrell, Secretary of State for Health, raised the recommended limits of weekly alcohol consumption by 33 per cent. In the awkward television interviews that followed, Dorrell was hard pressed to find reasons why the government had decided to fly in the face of warnings from almost the entire medical profession.

After all, in a report published last summer, The Royal College of Physicians, the Royal College of General Practitioners and the Royal College of Psychiatrists all advised against raising recommended limits. In a separate report entitled 'Alcohol; Guidelines on Sensible Drinking', the British Medical Association (BMA) also argued that the present recommended limits should not be raised.

The BMA had previously published a report on alcohol and violence in 1989, pointing out that alcohol implicated in 60-70 per cent of homicides, 75 per cent of stabbings and 50 per cent of domestic assaults. When, despite this evidence and advice, the Government raised limits and dropped prices, Dr Sandy Macara, chairman of the British Medical Association council, criticised the government as "irresponsible".

So how did Dorrell explain the government's flagrant disregard for established medical advice?

The answer, drawn out of

the Secretary of State's almost untenable position, is one with interesting connotations:

"Alcohol consumption will always be a major public health issue and it is important for the Government to present a balanced view which recognises the risks but also offers soundly based and credible advice on which people can base their own choices."

And here we find one of the more obvious symptoms of government schizophrenia.

For whilst alcohol is the directly attributed cause of 25,000 deaths a year, Ecstasy is implicated in only 54 deaths in five years, with cannabis - the cause of nil deaths ever - occupying an exemplary bottom position in the league table of drug mortality.

In view of these facts, and given the strict government stance on the latter two drugs, "The presentation of a balanced view which recognises the risks and offers soundly based and credible advice" fails to be convincing as an accurate portrayal of government intention.

Indeed, Dorrell's statement would have been welcomed with open arms by drug education experts were it not so inconsistent with the reality of the government's overall approach to the drugs issue.

However, such selective use of rhetoric is now revealed to be symptomatic of far more than a stagnancy of political debate.

Following Dorrell's announcement, Dr Maristella Monteiro, medical officer for the World Health Organisation's programme on substance abuse, accused the government of "being in the pocket of the drinks industry". Her assertion clearly refers to the lobbying of politicians on behalf of the drinks industry, and its huge economic power gained through profits from recreational drug use.

Indeed, the only group to support the government's raising of alcohol limits was the Portman Group. This campaigning body claims that its aim is to promote sensible drinking. They welcomed

the recommended limit rise and then suggested in January this year that children should be encouraged to drink alcohol at an earlier age so that they would know how to handle it when they were adults. Little surprise is it to learn that the Portman Group is funded by the seven major UK brewing and distilling companies including Whitbread, Bass, Guinness and Seagram UK.

Nowhere is the war for recreational market control more amply illustrated at present than in the almighty battle going on between the drinks industry and rave culture.

Chapter One: The Manufacture of Cultural Preference

"Advertising is the science of influencing public opinion," observed an advertising executive on television recently. Indeed you don't have to look far for evidence of the accuracy of his succinct definition. The TV advertisement for Holsten Pils, broadcast over the Christmas period, provides grounds aplenty.

An actor, clutching a bottle of lager, strolls through a fantastically coloured computer-simulated landscape. In the closing shot a smiley-faced yellow tablet comes zooming out of the sky and, in idiotic voice tones, advises the actor to "Get wired man". The actor, replying "Get a life sucker", then pulls a string which deflates the tablet like a spent balloon.

The scenery, the language, the tablet and the colour schemes are all obvious appeals to youth culture and its prevalent drug-related fashions. The intended message is clear; with alcohol you have a life, with Ecstasy you don't.

So why a war? The answer lies in the economic ramifications of a recent change in youth recreational drug preference. With the upsurge in rave culture came a corresponding decrease in off-licence sales and pub attendance. The effects of the drug Ecstasy are

Continued



Drugs War Versus Ecstasy

SLORTED.



JUST ONE SHERRY did this
to MICHAEL HOWARD...

Tam

McE

NUGGETS OF KNOWLEDGE ON ECSTASY

1. Many people argue that Ecstasy should be a name given solely to a chemical called MDMA. Increasingly, however, Ecstasy tablets may contain three possible chemicals: MDMA, MDA or MDEA. This family of compounds are mainly derived from the oils of natural substances such as nutmeg, saffron, dill, calamus, crocus, parsley and saffron.

2. MDA was first synthesised in 1910 by two German chemists, although little interest was shown in its potential at the time. In the early 1940s US pharmaceutical manufacturer Smith, Kline and French dropped plans to market the drug as an appetite suppressant because of side-effects not related to their designs for its use. In 1968 MDA appeared on the streets of West Coast America as a recreational drug and within two years was controlled under US drug law.

3. MDMA appeared as a recreational drug in 1972, having been first synthesised in 1914. It was used by some therapists for its capacity to encourage empathy between users, particularly as an aid to the solution of marital problems. In 1977 MDMA was made a class A illegal substance under British Law, joining the ranks of drugs like heroin. Possession of the drug is thus liable to a penalty of up to seven years in prison and an unlimited fine. Dealing the drug is an offence with a possible penalty of life imprisonment and an unlimited fine.

4. The class A prohibition of Ecstasy has meant that its distribution is largely controlled by money-making gangsters. As a result the number of contaminants found in so-called Ecstasy tablets has been steadily increasing. These contaminants, used to 'pad out the tablet', have included Ketamine, Procaine and Ephedrine. In Holland, the Dutch government's more socially aware drugs policy has allowed tablet-testers in clubs to test ravers' Ecstasy tablets before ingestion. With the complete prohibition and official condemnation, this has not yet been possible in the UK.

reduced, rather than enhanced, by the drug alcohol. So the corresponding fashions arising from rave culture were contrary to the previously prevalent culture of socialising in the pub.

The economic implications of this change were highlighted in a quarterly publication called 'Leisure Futures'. This magazine retails at a staggering £374 an issue, leaving little doubt that its target market is big business. In 1993, the Henley Centre, a market prediction think-tank and publisher of *Leisure Futures*, conducted a major study on youth markets and rave culture. Working with an estimate that a million people a week attend licensed raves, the group calculated that £1.8 billion was being spent each year by ravers. This figure was arrived at by adding average expenditure on entry fees, cigarettes, water and drugs (cannabis, LSD, Ecstasy and Speed), amounting to an average £35 a night for each raver.

The report further points out that pub attendance fell by 11 per cent between 1987 and 1992, the years of the initial rave culture boom, and will have dropped by an estimated 20 per cent by 1997. The report concludes:

"This of course poses a significant threat to spending for such sectors as licensed drinks retailers and drinks companies; firstly some young people are turning away from alcohol to other stimulants (estimates suggest the percentage of 16-24s taking any illegal drug doubled to nearly 30 per cent between 1989 and 1992); secondly raves are extremely time consuming and displace much of the time and energy which might have been expended on other leisure activities like pubs or drinking at home."

Much press coverage has

been given to the successful entry of alcoholic lemonades onto the drinks market. There seems little doubt that these new brands of drink are partly an attempt by brewing companies to tap into the £6.2 billion-a-year soft drinks market. It is also one of the more successful marketing attempts aimed at re-establishing alcohol as a youthful drug. Certainly it seems to be the in-season for such attempts, with a spate of recent advertising pitches aimed at modernising the public's impression of drink culture. Gordon's Gin is presently advertised on television with bubbles, fizz and muscular models, a clear attempt to redefine gin and tonic as other than a stereotypical, older person's tippie. In a recent market research exercise for a potential new whisky and apple drink, Bell's PR team were keen to discover, from their selected general public, which advertising images and labelling might attract club goers.

Similarly, House of Seagram have blitzed youth-culture magazines with fashionable art images designed to sell the in vogue Absolut Vodka. Indeed, Absolut Vodka now has its very own bar in the high profile and newly refurbished Ministry of Sound Club in south London.

The money involved in these cultural foists is phenomenal, with Whitbread alone spending £20 million on advertising each year. Losing markets is obviously something these companies take very seriously. The *Leisure Futures* report, however, was not the first sign of the subsequent war for recreational drug control. Evidence has now come to light suggesting that pay offs and behind the scenes bargaining helped facilitate political involvement in the war for market control.

Chapter Two: Sleaz E Partnerships

In 1990, an Act of Parliament was passed introducing massive fines for the culpable organisers of unlicensed raves. The Act was delivered to parliament as a private members bill, a form of legislation initiated not by government but by individual MPs. In this case the author was Graham Bright (Con MP Luton South)

The Entertainments (Increased Penalties) Act was one of a minority of private members bills to actually reach the statute books. When it did, it had a dramatic effect on the possibility of organising impromptu parties at a time when such events were an exploding part of youth culture.

Although authoring a previous private members bill on Video Recording in 1984, Bright is occasionally identified as the MP contributing least to parliamentary debates. In fact he has spoken for only 16 parliamentary minutes in the last three years. As such the attention he directed to the subject of rave culture is a matter of some interest. Certainly, Bright's ability to see a private members bill through to the statute books would undoubtedly have been eased by his position at the time as parliamentary private secretary to the prime minister John Major.

For his entire career as an MP, Bright has represented constituencies in Luton. Firstly as MP for Luton East in the years between 1979-83 and then for Luton South since 1983.

Luton is also the home ground for another political force with a clear interest in the rise (or demise) of rave culture.

The headquarters of Whitbread plc, one of Britain's

largest beer companies, is situated in Capability Green, Luton. Head of the company is Samuel Whitbread, a previous chairman of the mid-Bedfordshire Conservative Association prior to his appointment as director of Whitbread plc in 1972; a position he still holds. Mr Whitbread is also Lord Lieutenant of Bedfordshire, the county in which Luton is situated. The powers bestowed upon a Lord Lieutenant primarily involve the chairmanship of local county advisory committees, responsible for putting names forward to the Lord Chancellor for selection as Justices of the Peace for the area. Besides the chairman and secretary, membership of these advisory committees is kept secret.

Justices of the Peace preside over magistrate's courts, and include among their list of responsibilities the granting of licences to local pubs. It is a matter of some concern that Samuel Whitbread occupies such an influential position, given the obvious potential for a conflict of interests.

As one of the UK's largest brewers and pub franchisers, Whitbread has every reason to keep a concerned eye on cultural trends threatening to its economic stronghold, though they hardly required the Henley Centre to tell them about rave culture. For as one of Bedfordshire's major economic influences, Samuel Whitbread et al have had their own more immediate demonstration of the new youth preference for raves. Evidence now suggests that both they and Graham Bright MP have done more than just sit back and get annoyed.

Chapter Three: Corporate Desperation

Readers of SQUALL will undoubtedly be aware of the existence of the Exodus Collective, a politically innovative and radical dance movement operating in Bedfordshire.

Their regular unlicensed parties, held in and around the Luton/Dunstable area, attract an average of around 3000 people, with numbers occasionally swelling to as much as 10,000. The success of their activities, which include community events and projects other than raves, has earned them a loyalty and respect amongst local youth. It has also induced a recognisable shift in local culture.

According to Chief Inspector Mick Brown, then deputy divisional commander of nearby Dunstable, Exodus' raves made a noticeable difference to Luton's night life: "Licensed premises were receiving a fair amount of loss of trade, loss of customers..... Some licences were starting to get into

real financial trouble. As a consequence there was a lessening of alcohol-related offences, gratuitous assaults, bottle throwing; the random public disorder that generally goes with town centres and drink."

In 1993, four members of the Collective were brought before the courts, charged with organising several unlicensed raves. Under Graham Bright's Entertainments (Increased Penalties) Act, they each faced a potential fine of £20,000 per event. The stipendary

about how the authorities should deal with Exodus.

When freelance journalist Tim Malyon interviewed him in 1993, the Chief Inspector went on record to say: "I heard a number of Members of Parliament had written to the Chief Constable saying this should stop, that the police ought to get on the case.....there were some Members of Parliament advocating drastic measures."

Who were the MPs to whom Chief Inspector Brown was referring and what was their

"Young people are turning away from alcohol to other stimulants."

magistrates, however, decided that the community motivation and free entrance policy operated by Exodus was a mitigating factor in the severity of their punishment under the law. As a consequence, they were each fined £100 for the events they were involved in. This court case was just one of many brought against members of the Collective over the last three and half years, as part of an onslaught of manoeuvres designed to put an end to their activities. Such attempts include eight named police operations, several police raids, violent evictions by riot squad and a drugs plant thrown out of court by the jury. Indeed, Chief Inspector Mick Brown was himself involved in undercover operations against the Collective, although his earnest investigations led him to become an unusually overt advocate of the Collective's efforts. At the same time, Brown noted that high level interference was overriding the recommendations he was making

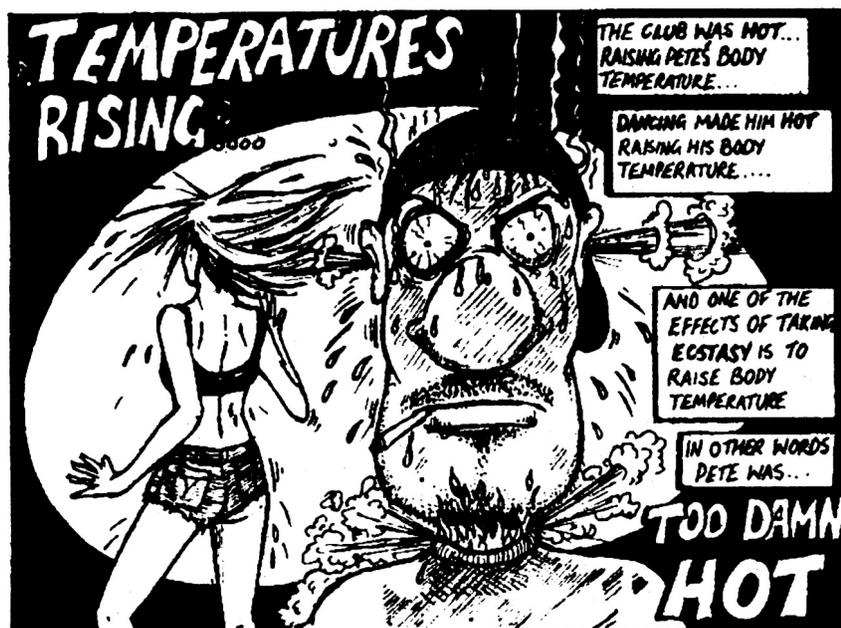
interest in curtailing the activities of the Exodus Collective?

Strong evidence now suggests that one of the MPs concerned was John Carlisle (Con MP Luton North), who cited Exodus in the House of Commons as an example of the kind of group the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act would sort out with its legislative sanctions against raves.

Claiming to be "fully in support of every provision" of the Act, Carlisle mentioned Exodus by name during one of his pro-CJA speeches, telling the House of Commons: "The House must understand that raves are dangerous, and worrying for parents who have little idea where their children are going when they set off in their various groups, over which they have little control." (Hansard 1/4/93, Col 537-542.)

Chief Inspector Mick Brown had, under the sanction of his immediate superior Superintendent John Glenn, investigated the possibility that

Continued



NUGGETS OF KNOWLEDGE ON ECSTASY (cont)

5. A group of US psychotherapists made an attempt to have MDMA redefined as an 'entactogen', instead of an outlawed drug, because of its potential for inducing patients to "make contact" with their own and others' feelings. MDMA is still used today by marital therapists in Switzerland.

7. The explosion in rave culture and its preferred recreational drug, MDMA, occurred in the UK at the end of the eighties. As a result of a government crackdown on MDMA, Ecstasy tablets began to contain more MDA. As the parent drug of MDMA, MDA is less time-consuming to produce. However, MDA has a higher neurotoxicity than MDMA and, according to users, is not as communally ecstatic.

8. Research on rats has shown that the intoxicating effects of Ecstasy are greater when a number of rats take the drug collectively, even though the individual doses were kept the same. The mechanism by which this empathatic process takes place is not known by scientists.

9. There was a decrease in football hooliganism on the terraces at the end of the eighties as Ecstasy made some inroads into the alcohol-preference previously favoured by football fans.

10. Organisers of large public events at the end of the eighties say that Police tended to populate Rock festivals with heavy alcohol use far more than rave gatherings due to ecstasy's reputation for relatively low violence levels.

11. Ecstasy acts on nerve cells in the body, stimulating the release of a natural body chemical called serotonin. This chemical is naturally associated with positivity, empathy and pleasant feelings. However, it is not known for certain that this is the sole mechanism by which Ecstasy induces euphoria.

12. It has been generally estimated that 54 people have died in circumstances related to the ingestion of Ecstasy since 1990. Despite the prevalence of its recreational use, no

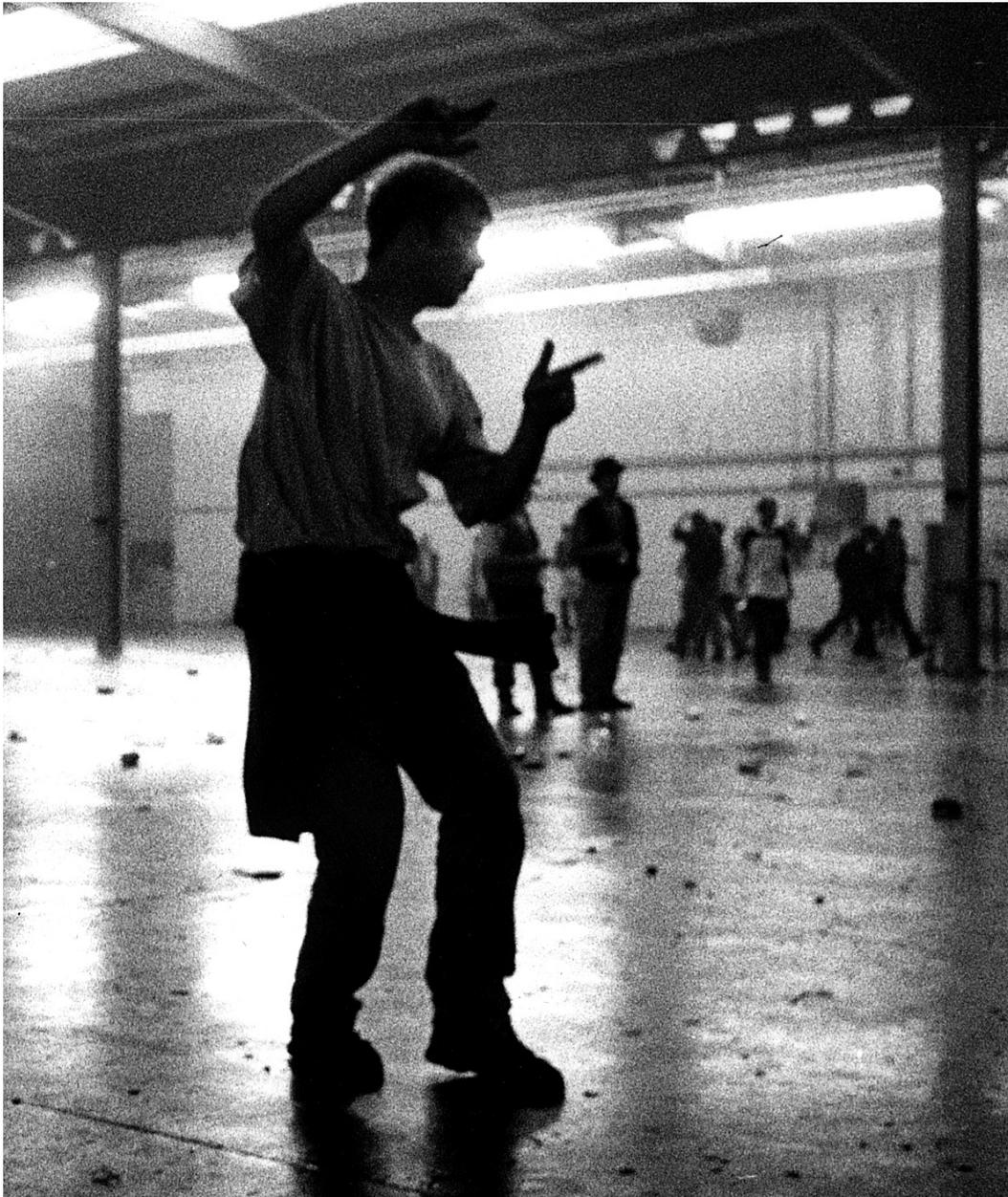
NUGGETS OF KNOWLEDGE ON ECSTASY (cont)

centralised monitoring of research and social analysis has been established. As a result, bits of information are held by various groups such as the Institute for the Study of Drug Dependency, Lifeline, National Poisons Unit as well as individual scientists and investigators. Some effort was made by Guys Hospital to keep abreast of developments associated with the drug but this was discontinued due to a lack of funding.

13. 54 deaths in 5 years is considered by scientists to be a low mortality-rate for any drug ingested on such a scale. Mortal allergic reactions occur in humans to a wide variety of ingestibles from peanuts to paracetamol. These allergic reactions are called anaphylaxis, although their nature is not yet fully understood. The development of these sudden allergic reactions seems to depend on a combination of specific circumstances relating to the physiology of the person and their environment. A small minority of deaths from Ecstasy have been connected to such anaphylactic reactions, although once again this is much in dispute.

14. Unlike Europe, the United States has hardly any incidence of Ecstasy-related mortality. The connection between Ecstasy and mortality seems to be solely linked to its use as a dance culture drug. In the US, MDMA is used more as a personal recreational drug than in a collective dance context.

15. The majority of people who have died in Ecstasy-related circumstances have overheated and dehydrated (about 46 of the estimated 54 deaths). Ecstasy raises body temperature, and in combination with dancing in hot clubs and forgetting to drink, a lethal core temperature, or a lethal level of water deprivation may occur. A large number of commercial clubs were switching off cold water taps to maximise water sales at the bar, and packing dance floors to maximise door profits, with little thought for the physiological well-being of its customers. However, as these profiteering techniques began to be reported alongside the latest death from dehydration, commercial clubs



Exodus were dealing Ecstasy at their events. After extensive undercover operations, Brown had reported back that there was no evidence to suggest that the

collective were involved in dealing E.

However, in a letter sent to one his Luton constituents dated March 12th, John Carlisle wrote:

“The popular conception is that drugs are being sold and the profits used to finance the organisation, and unless you can give me the absolute categorical assurance that this is not the case under any circumstances I fail to see why I should be asked to support what must be an illegal enterprise.”

Were it not for the fact that Carlisle’s letter was written on House of Commons’ paper, the phrase “what must be an illegal enterprise” would have been grounds for a libel suit. Carlisle repeated similar aspersions, though not in such libellous language, to the local press as well as to the House of Commons.

When documentary makers Spectacle Productions asked Carlisle to appear on a recent programme on Exodus filmed for Channel Four, he replied: “I am sorry to send a disappointing reply but regret that I do not feel able to participate in such a project.” No explanation, no excuses given, despite claiming with satirical irony in a letter to the Collective dated August 8th 1994: “I have always shown great sympathy to your cause.”

Chief Inspector Mick Brown also stated that “there was a fairly widely held belief that Exodus and all its works wore horns and pointed tails.”

POINTERS ON ECSTASY USE

If you are dancing and sweating on Ecstasy make sure you drink small amounts of water regularly. Around a litre an hour is about right for someone who’s seriously giving it some on the dance floor. A pint an hour if you’re not sweating that much.

Leah Bett’s brain became lethally swollen because her body-tissues did not absorb the water in her blood (see ‘Nuggets of Knowledge’ point 16). Taking salt with your water helps absorption. Isotonic sports drinks are good for this, although if these are unavailable, eating salty crisps or peanuts with your water will help. Again, don’t eat twenty packets. One packet has plenty of salt.

Ecstasy raises body temperature and so does dancing. In order to minimise the potential harm of this situation, make sure you chill out from the full-on dance every now and again. Although this may not naturally occur to you whilst on one with the dance, remind yourself that ultimately it will allow you to dance longer and more safely.

It seems that there is a possibility of irreversible serotonin depletion with heavy Ecstasy use, as well as potential nerve cell and liver damage. In order to minimise these very debilitating ailments, try not to big up your Ecstasy use by taking many tablets in one go.

Without any doubt, local newspapers acted as a conduit by which such "widely held beliefs" were engineered.

The Luton Herald is a free newspaper which, like most newspapers, relies heavily on advertising revenue. Indeed, it is sometimes distributed completely encased in a colour advert for Whitbread's beers.

In 1993 the Herald ran an unusual headline that read: "Young Shun Raves For Pubs." The article trumpeted how Luton had seen a recent 40 per cent increase in pub attendance during 1993, bucking the national trend. The newspaper cited the Henley Centre Leisure Futures' report on the rise of rave culture and its usurping affect on pub attendance, suggesting that Bedfordshire was pioneering a U-turn in youth drug preference. It is unlikely that the Luton Herald itself regularly receives copies of Leisure Futures and more likely that the information was handed to them. It is also no mere irony that the period of time during which there was an identifiable swing back to pub attendance in Luton was after the Exodus Collective became the subject of a series of police raids which led to the temporary suspension of their local raves.

The other local MP implicated in "advocating drastic measures" is the previously mentioned Graham Bright, MP for Carlisle's neighbouring Luton constituency. He was quoted in the local Luton News saying he hoped members of the Exodus Collective "would be prosecuted to the maximum". Evidence now suggests he did more than hope.

When allegations of national political sleaze reached their height at the end of 1994, interesting information leaked out from a programme made by Central TV's Cook Report team about parliamentary lobbyists, Ian Greer Associates. In the programme, made but never broadcast, Ian Greer boasts of a close relationship with Graham Bright.

There are no documents presently available to show if Graham Bright received any formal advances from Whitbread during the passage of his private members bill against rave culture. Bright himself claims that documents pertaining to such matters have long since been destroyed. However, Whitbread happen to be a major client of Ian Greer Associates, using the parliamentary lobbying organisation in order to 'put their case' to MPs and ministers.

When members of the Exodus Collective finally obtained an appointment to see Graham Bright, a fiery meeting resulted. In a letter sent to Bright after the meeting, Exodus wrote:

"To bang the table and order us to leave as you did raises



questions. We asked to be told whether or not you had been lobbied, directly or indirectly, by any breweries during the formulation of your bill....We await your speedy reply to this letter, and as our local MP, as well as the architect of this legislation, we hope for a more reasonable treatment than we received today."

In his reply, Bright neither refutes nor comments upon any brewery involvement, ignoring the questions on lobbying completely.

But what of Graham Bright's involvement in the advocacy of "drastic measures" against the Collective.

"Raves displace much of the time and energy which might have been expended on other leisure activities like pubs or drinking at home."

In the local Luton Herald, Bright was quoted: "There's no question of me directing the police, I cannot do that". Chief Superintendent Alan Marlow - divisional commander of Luton Police at the time - also claims in the same newspaper: "There has been no pressure from Mr Bright - the pressure has come from the public". However, these statements sit incongruously with John Carlisle's speech to the House of Commons saying: "We have had to ask local forces to be on standby so that police can stop a rave before it takes place or go in and break it up." Who is "We"?

Chief Inspector Mick Brown's supportive comments about Exodus are obviously central to piecing this local jigsaw together. Not surprisingly, other members of the police force were unimpressed by Brown's vocalised honesty. Michael O'Byrne, Deputy

Chief Constable at the time, though since promoted to Chief Constable, described the article quoting Brown's comments as "selective... unbalanced and unrepresentative".

Author of the article, Tim Malyon consequently wrote to O'Byrne asking him which parts of the article warranted such criticism. He also specifically asked which MPs had advocated the "drastic measures" referred to by Mick Brown and what those measures were. Finally, the then Chief Constable Alan Dyer, agreed to a face to face interview with Malyon. However, after receiving a list of intended questions, the

Chief Constable cancelled the interview on the very morning it was due to take place. He did not regrant it before retiring from his position as Chief Constable at the end of 1995.

Chief Inspector Mick Brown, on the other hand, was transferred from Dunstable in 1994 and given an office job at Bedfordshire Police headquarters in Kempston and barred from speaking to the press. He has now retired early, reputedly to Scotland, although Bedfordshire Police refuse to facilitate any contact with him, simply saying they will pass on any letters.

Shortly afterwards, Superintendent John Glenn - divisional commander of Dunstable Police station - was also removed from his position and transferred to a post of relative anonymity in Luton.

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NUGGETS OF KNOWLEDGE ON ECSTASY (cont)

eased up for the sake of their licenses. Due to the dehydration phenomenon, a general rule was circulated that people should make sure they drink enough water during their dancing session.

16. The Ecstasy tablet ingested by Leah Betts was, unusually for the mid nineties, found to contain 100 per cent MDMA. However, Leah actually died from drinking too much water. She had taken the tablet at her 18th birthday party held in her family home and was not dancing or sweating. When she began feeling nauseous, a not uncommon occurrence as the drug starts to have affect, she began drinking water, apparently under the illusion that drinking water would dissipate the effects of the Ecstasy. Whilst alcohol stimulates urination, Ecstasy temporarily inhibits it. If an Ecstasy user is not losing water through sweating, then it is not necessary to drink large amounts of water. Water is not an antidote to the chemical effects of Ecstasy. Helen Cousins collapsed into a coma one and a half months after Leah's death. Apparently under the illusion that water would take away the effects of ecstasy, she had drunk seven litres. Fortunately she recovered.

17. Andreas Bouzidis collapsed and later died after taking Ecstasy in a night-club in January 1996. It is thought that his congenital heart condition was the root cause of his death. As Ecstasy is a stimulant, it does raise blood pressure and excitement levels. Thus, as with any other stimulating experience including sex, people with heart problems should be careful.

18. Medical research on the drug Ecstasy has been thin on the ground in the UK as the majority of chemical research conducted in this country is done by pharmaceutical companies whose research concerns itself with substances of commercial interest. As a consequence, most research has come from the US. Experiments on monkeys published in America in 1988 did show an anatomical change in nerve cells carrying serotonin. However, these monkeys were injected with MDMA twice a day for

As Brown's immediate superior, Superintendent Glenn had supported his Chief Inspector's investigation into the Exodus Collective, as well as the subsequent, honestly expressed, findings.

Graham Bright, on the other hand, was whisked from his position as parliamentary private secretary to the Prime Minister just as the media-controversy over corporate lobbying of politicians was at its height, with Bright named and implicated in some of the associated press coverage. Following this, he was given a knighthood and sidelined to a politically benign position as one of three vice chairmen of the Conservative Party, a post he still occupies.

However, whilst Sir Graham Bright may have been politically 'backwatered', the national war for which he was an active soldier rages on.

Chapter Four: Riding on the Back of Tragedy

The cyclone of hysterical anti-rave commentary following the recent death of Leah Betts was certainly not instigated by the breweries, but without a doubt it was an event ridden upon by their corporate designs.

It was Paul Betts, an ex-policeman and Leah's father, who contacted the media as his daughter lay hospitalised in a coma. With such a willing and understandably emotive interview subject, the media rioted with the topic.

As the nearest person the UK has to a scientific expert on Ecstasy, Dr John Henry, scientific advisor to the National Poison's Unit, was interviewed by just about every national newspaper. His quotes were subsequently used as scientific weight to back up journalists' rash conclusions. However, according to an unimpressed Dr Henry: "There was an over-reaction to her death. An awful lot was made of it that I don't think was very scientific at all because the press were jumping on every word. I had things served up to me by journalists."

But having obtained their scientific soundbites, the media showed little interest in the more balanced analysis offered by an unedited Dr Henry. When asked what Leah Bett's death teaches us, Dr Henry says: "It teaches us that if you take a lot of fluid suddenly when you've got no reason to do so, it's dangerous."

Indeed the relatively ignored autopsy report published two months after her death, showed that Leah Betts had died from drinking too much water.

"It's typical - the media

didn't like that result because it wasn't what they wanted to be saying - it wasn't sensational," observes Chris Hughes, a drug outreach worker in Hillingdon, Middlesex. Indeed, after these revelations, the previously rampant media bandwagon temporarily ran off-road and into a ditch, fuelled as it had been by the sensational simplicity of portraying Ecstasy as pure poison.

One media campaign proving more resilient than the rest, however, was a Leah Betts/anti-Ecstasy poster campaign, organised by members of the advertising industry.

A total of 1,500 billboard posters were put up in cities round the country, telling the general public that "Just one Ecstasy tablet took Leah Betts". The campaign was run immediately after Leah Betts' funeral in the run up to Christmas and the new year; a period of prime time recreational drug use.

The poster sites for the campaign were negotiated by media marketeers, Booth, Lockett and Makin Ltd, whilst the advert itself was designed by advertising agency Knight, Leech and Delaney. The 'street credible' wording of the advert was provided by youth marketing specialists, For Further Information Ltd; whose client marketing portfolio includes the Mean Fiddler Organisation and its annual commercial rave, the 'Tribal Gathering'.

Each company involved in the organisation and design of the 'Sorted' poster campaign gave their time and work for free; an unusual occurrence in a commercial advertising industry that would normally have netted £1million in consultancy, design and poster site fees for such a campaign. In fact the campaign actually cost money, with Booth, Lockett and Makin splitting the costs of printing with Knight, Leech and Delaney.

There are many possible motives for this campaign, including prestige, creative design freedom and the personally held beliefs of some of the advertising executive's involved. However, one contributing factor which precludes any of the altruistic intent portrayed by the companies themselves can be found by examining their client portfolios. For whilst Booth, Lockett and Makin have Lowenbrau as a major client, both Knight Leech and Delaney and For Further Information Ltd are deeply involved in the media promotion of Red Bull, a new 'energy' drink sold to rave clubs and pitched as an energy-giving replacement for Ecstasy. Red Bull are the joint, most lucrative client on Knight, Leech and Delaney's books, providing £5 million worth of

business. The 'Sorted' poster campaign presented obvious commercial benefits to their clients' product, and therefore also to the advertising company's reputation as successful marketeers.

Mike Mathieson of For Further Information Ltd told SQUALL that the advertising companies involved had assumed that three million people take Ecstasy each week in the UK, although he did not know the source of the information. Given the fact that such a significant number of people might be using the drug, is not accurate education better than fear and hysteria?

Paul Delaney, the creative designer of the advert, claims that the physiologically complicated circumstances of Leah's death could not be translated onto a simple poster. He rejected accusations levelled at the campaign by drug education groups, who accused the campaign of dishing up one more dose of unhelpful hysteria.

But if the real cause of Leah Betts' death had been more widely known, would Helen Cousins have drunk the seven litres of water (an estimated four litres more than Leah Betts) that induced a life-threatening coma just a month and a half after Leah's death? Once again the resulting media deluge was primarily targeted on the death drug Ecstasy, though Helen fortunately recovered.

However, the relationship between these tragic circumstances and their media representation, has now been shown to be the target of corporate manipulation. The sale of a few more cans of Red Bull, a few more shots of Absolut Vodka and a few more bottles of Holsten or Whitbread is a major factor in the accuracy of information presented to the public about Ecstasy and rave culture. And if more people go to pubs out of a manipulated fear of raves, then the threat posed by E to the drinks industry will have been lifted. Instead we will be faced with a situation where corporate interests have forced themselves into the driving seat of popular culture.

What is more, the products pushed by these corporate interests, with the support of government, are considered by the medical profession to be more socially harmful than many of the outlawed recreational drugs.

Whilst Kenneth Clark may smirk, others wince at the ramifications of big business influence on government decrees. It is little wonder therefore, that the credibility of official advice on drugs is the subject of so much youthful contempt.

NUGGETS OF KNOWLEDGE ON ECSTASY (cont)

two weeks. The researchers themselves pointed out that the significance for human recreational Ecstasy users is unclear.

19. Other scientific research has shown anatomical changes in nerve cells as a result of the ingestion of Ecstasy. The same is true of alcohol. Research has also suggested that large scale Ecstasy use leads to liver damage. The same is true of alcohol. The greatest reservations expressed by scientists over the use of Ecstasy, is that no one knows what its effects on humans actually are, especially over the long term. As such they view it as a dangerously uncontrolled social experiment.

20. Some doctors have noted what they call post-Ecstasy depression. Possible reasons for this phenomenon include the fact that the stimulation of serotonin by Ecstasy temporarily exhausts the body's supply. As serotonin is a chemical associated with day-to-day feelings of positivity and happiness, there may be an ensuing period where the body and mind do not have enough left to naturally feel good; so producing a depressed period whilst the body's own reservoirs of serotonin recover. Whether there is any long-term, irreplaceable loss of serotonin and, therefore, rise in depression is not known, as the drug has not been around long enough to determine long-term effects. Some studies, again on animals have shown that there may be a depletion of serotonin in the spinal fluid, the extent of which is dependant on the amount and regularity of use. Once again the implications of these studies for human users is unclear, although it can be said that taking several Ecstasy tablets on a night and doing it regularly might well lead to long-term depression and nerve cell dysfunction.

For their help in compiling these nuggets of available knowledge: Thanks to - The Institute for the Study of Drug Dependency, a multitude of ravers, John Ramsey (Toxicologist - St George's Hospital Tooting), Dr John Henry (Guys Hospital and National Poisons Unit) and Lifeline Manchester.



Exodus Collective Under Attack (again!)



Nick Cobbing

Since the last issue of SQUALL, high profile members of the Exodus Collective have once again been targeted in further attempts to halt their activities.

The latest additions to the list includes four injunction court hearings, a constructed murder charge and a fire bomb attack on their community farm. Whilst the injunction cases will be dealt with in future articles, the charge of murder and the associated arson attack demand an immediate telling.

In October last year, James McNeilly walked into the Globe public house in Dunstable. Owned by the mother of Exodus spokesperson Glenn Jenkins, the pub is usually full to the brim of local people, the majority of which know every Bob Marley lyric on the juke box. McNeilly on the other hand was not a regular and, according to witnesses in the pub, was already drunk, having been on a drinking binge since the morning.

Once inside, he became involved in a fight with a 16 year old which was split up. A further argument then ensued outside the premises, at which point, Paul Taylor - known to all as Biggs - made an attempt to break up the argument. As a result, an incident took place between McNeilly and Biggs, before McNeilly ran off down the road. Closed Circuit Television shows McNeilly running into a nearby park and just catches Biggs, twenty seconds behind him, giving up the chase. CCTV then shows Biggs and some Exodus colleagues exchanging words with some of

McNeilly's associates, before they all turn round and head back towards the pub.

The following morning, after a particularly cold night, McNeilly was found dead inside a council yard situated in the park. It appears he had tried to climb the fence, injuring himself on fence spikes before crawling into the yard. His blood was found on the fence spikes. The following day, local radio reported that "Police have ruled out foul play". The pathologist gave the cause of death as hypothermia accentuated by blood loss and alcohol.

Upon hearing of McNeilly's death, Biggs voluntarily presented himself at Dunstable Police Station in order to relate the events of the night before. Subsequently he was charged with murder. As readers of SQUALL may remember, Biggs was the subject of an Ecstasy plant carried out by Bedfordshire Police at Exodus's Community Farm in 1993. As a result, he was forced to wait for a year before the court case was heard, with the jury dismissing the prosecution's case on the basis of inconsistent police evidence and the exposure of some major police blunders in their covert operation. As such it was a matter of some fearlessness that Biggs willingly presented himself in order to help police with their inquiries. Exodus also cancelled a rave planned for the following night, out of respect for McNeilly's death, which, despite its associated trouble, is still described by them as a "community tragedy".

Following the consequential murder charge, Biggs was placed on

The escalation in the freedom battle of Bedfordshire has continued with yet more dramatic developments.

remand. At his first bail application, he was represented by Michael Mansfield QC who argued before the judge that, contrary to the prosecution's assertions, the case against Biggs was thin. Unusually for a murder charge, Biggs was consequently bailed, moving to an address in Devon. These conditions were renegotiated, however, allowing him back to Bedfordshire on condition that he stayed outside the Luton Town border and did not go to his home on the community farm. At this bail hearing, Bedfordshire Police claimed to have received intelligence about an intention to fire bomb the farm. Thus he was not allowed to go there "for his own safety".

However, Biggs drove down there one day in January in defiance of the bail conditions. Local police tailed him all the way, consequently taking him back into custody and placing him once again on remand in Bedford prison.

In early February, after explaining to the judge his reasons for returning to his home, he was granted bail once more. The conditions this time were stricter, requiring him to stay at one address in Bedfordshire and to sign in at Dunstable Police Station every day. The property given as his address was an empty house, and some of his Exodus colleagues worked to make it inhabitable. On Thursday 1st February, Bedfordshire police officers came round to inspect the house and okayed it. However, the following day they informed Biggs' solicitor that the bail restriction preventing him from living at the farm was now lifted, and that the local crown prosecution service had written to the judge to inform him of this change. Given the vehemence with which Beds Police had fought Biggs' right to bail and then insisted on specific conditions, this was a genuinely puzzling manoeuvre.

Nevertheless, happy to be able to live at home, Biggs moved back to the Community farm on Friday 2nd February.

At 1pm on Sunday 4th February, the farm house was firebombed. Most of the back windows were smashed and the doors left open to facilitate the blaze. One witness driving past saw four or five men leaving the farm house with smoke billowing from the roof. Meanwhile, the one detective constable assigned to conduct the investigation immediately went on holiday for Monday and Tuesday, vital early days in any investigation.

These are the basic factual bones of an uncompleted story. There are other events and evidence which certainly warrant the readers' consideration but which are not possible to relate at this time for reasons of subjudicey and in order not to expose avenues of possible investigation. They will certainly be discussed in future issues of SQUALL.

Meanwhile, the farmhouse has a severely damaged roof, with several of its rooms burnt out.

One of the few heart warming elements to point out from this story is that after word of the attack got round, the Collective were inundated with phone calls from plumbers and carpenters, offering help to reconstruct the building. It certainly seems that the kind of people who want their activities stopped, are a diminishing minority in the area. Meanwhile the investigations continue.

"We know that this firebomb is due to malicious police activity," commented Exodus spokesperson, Glenn Jenkins. "Whether it was by their hand directly or as a result of a falsely constructed charge suggesting that Paul Taylor is a murderer. These things are yet to be found out, but find out we will." SQ

EXODUS.. MOVEMENT OF JAH PEOPLE
A powerful documentary made by independent production company Spectacle, and shown on Channel 4 last November. Now available on video. Twenty six minutes. Price: £8 for individuals. £20 institutions/groups. From: Spectacle Productions, TV Centre, Thackerey Rd. London SW8 3TW. Cheques payable to Spectacle Productions Ltd.

The aggravated trespass clauses of the Criminal Justice Act were primarily designed to tackle hunt saboteurs. Actual implementation of the new laws, however, is proving difficult. **Andy Johnson** taps into the Hunt Saboteurs Association and joins a hunt in Essex. Picture by **Andrew Testa**.



Hunting the Hur

In April 1993 Thomas Worby was walking down a farm yard track in Cambridge after a day out hunt sabbing. He was being followed by a huntsman in a hound van who was unhappy with the speed at which Thomas and his fellow sabs were ambling. The huntsman revved the engine and then put his foot down. The sabs jumped out of the way, but Thomas was caught on the wing mirror and dragged up the road. When he fell free he landed beneath the back wheels of the van.

Other sabs ran up the road to borrow a mobile phone from the hunt supporters and call an ambulance. Instead of acquiescing, the hunt supporters attacked the sabs and laughed. This made no difference to Thomas, however, he was dead. No charges were brought against the driver. Thomas was fifteen.

Just over a year later, in

November '94, the CJA was introduced. Since then over 200 sabs have been arrested under its clauses.

According to Paul Gammon, of the Hunt Saboteurs Association (HSA), the number of huntsmen and supporters prosecuted for acts of violence is "negligible". Most prosecutions against huntsmen have been brought privately by sabs.

But although the CJA, taken to its logical conclusion, outlaws huntsabbing, it is proving much more ineffective than the hunting, shooting, and fishing lobby had hoped. And although violence is often a common feature of a Saturday afternoon in the country it is not having the deterring effect originally intended.

Protesters everywhere have the HSA's decision to sab grouse shoots to thank for the aggravated trespass clauses of the CJA. Representatives of the anti-blood

sports lobby were invited to the Home Office and told they had taken on one of the most powerful lobbies in Parliament - the gun lobby. They were also told that the government were worried about fatalities. Sabbing tactics on shoots include placing yourself in the line of fire.

The pressure from the gun lobby pushed through the aggravated trespass clauses, which make it an offence punishable by three months in prison and/or a £2,500 fine to intimidate persons engaging in a lawful activity, obstruct that activity, or disrupt that activity. These clauses also come in very handy for anti-road protesters.

However, sabs soon realised that police forces up and down the country simply do not have the numbers to implement the CJA effectively. They also realised that the law can be played at its own game.

"When the CJA was first mooted we were crapping it," Paul Gammon, who has been sabbing for 12 years, told Squall. "But in practice, as hunt sabs, we deal with reality. We said it would go the same way as the 1986 public order act, which makes it illegal to cause distress or alarm. We were never going to win with the police on the day. So we'd take them through the courts. We sued the police for unlawful arrests, unlawful detentions, all the illegalities they were getting up to. Between 1986 and '89 we won £200,000 in damages and over a third of a million in costs. They very quickly stopped nicking us."

The police reverted to nicking sabs for breach of the peace, and holding them for the duration the breach was likely to occur. Last year, in Cheshire, the CJA wasn't used. Instead 126 sabs were arrested



nters

provoke the hunt to such an extent that they have to make arrests - such as blowing a hunting horn in a huntsman's face.

"Our advice to sabs is if they can't catch you, they can't arrest you," says Gammon. "A lot of protesters allow themselves to be arrested by acting passively. We would make it more difficult, by running. Are they going to run across fields for every arrest? They don't want to get their uniforms dirty. The CJA may look fine on the statute books, but we're just laughing."

These observations were borne out when Squall observed a hunt sabotaging exercise in Essex.

The nine sabs were initially warned by police that they had a right to protest peacefully, but would be arrested if they interfered with the hunt. The police then attempted to follow the sabs, who were following the hunt, in vans. When they did successfully interfere with the hunt, it was in a copse and the police were out of sight.

The huntmaster informed the leading officer, who then threatened to arrest the sabs unless they left the estate, even though they were on a public bridle way. The officer carried a card with the relevant section of the CJA written on it, which did indeed testify that for the purposes of the act, private land can include bridleways and footpaths.

After some argument no arrests were made, but anymore trespasses would result in everyone being carted off to the local police station. More trespasses did take place, but as sabs hobbled over fields with several pounds of clay attached to each foot, the police followed from a distance on the other side of the field in a van, but did not give chase.

Hunt sabbing can be an exhilarating and fulfilling experience. But it is marred by violence, in most cases initiated by huntsmen or their supporters. There are documented cases of terrier men, the hunt "workers" who send trained Jack Russell terriers after foxes that have gone to ground, attacking sabs with shovels, and hurling bricks through the windows of moving sab vans. Nor is it unusual for a sab to be whipped, or for them to be charged at, and run over, with horses.

According to Paul Gammon, violence has got worse over the last twelve years, but peaked about four years ago, just before the CJA was mooted. It has since levelled out.

"There was a massive explosion five years ago," he says, "when the hunts were hiring security guards. We felt they were trying to aggravate the situation so the government would have to act."

In the first three months of 1993, for example, 75 sabs were the victims of violent assault, 13 of whom needed hospital treatment.

One example is an attack at the Hursley and Hambledon hunt in 1993. A hunt supporter drove into a group of sabs and knocked one down. The supporter drove off, and left hunt sabs to take their injured colleague to hospital. Later that day, after the hunt, a group of thirty hunt supporters surrounded a van containing nine sabs. They wrecked the van, smashing every window, with staves and fence posts. They then smashed open the rear and front doors, and kicked and punched everyone inside. One sab was treated in hospital for two cracked ribs and head injuries.

Little Known Beagle Facts

- Beagles do not hunt foxes naturally, they have to be trained. This is done pre-season, from August to November. Known as the cubbing season, young hounds are taken to a wood known to be inhabited by young foxes. They are left to roam the woods until they kill a cub, whereupon they are over-praised by their trainers.
- If a hound doesn't make the grade, or constantly loses the scent, it is shot.
- A typical pack consists of about 35 hounds that have to hunt as one. There are 400 hunts in the country, making a total of 14,000 hounds.
- A fifth of these are shot each year. More hounds are killed every year than foxes.
- When hounds pick up a scent they bay, making a disturbing wailing sound. They are trained to go to this signal individually, giving sabs their most effective weapon, the Gizmo. The Gizmo is a tape recording of baying hounds played through a loud speaker, often from a distance. Its effect is said to be "devastating".

Another example is an incident at the Four Burrow hunt in March 1994. A huntsmen began an attack on sabs by trampling a saboteur, John Prescott, several times with his horse. This caused massive internal injuries and three fractured ribs. A fracas developed and all the sabs were arrested, including John Prescott. He spent several hours in a police cell before being taken to hospital, where he remained for five days.

The HSA has also documented violent criminals and soldiers being drafted in as security guards. One such example resulted in a rare prosecution against a hunt supporter.

In February 1993 Richard Cheshire was employed as a steward at the Bicester and Whaddon chase hunt, although he had a criminal record for violent attacks. He pushed a sab in front of a moving quad bike which was being driven by a terrier man, Michael Smith. Smith swerved to maximise the impact. The incident was captured on video and both men were later jailed for two months for their "reckless disregard for life".

Despite this it is the sabs who

are more likely to be charged; and it is they who have the reputation for being violent. Sabs have been hospitalised on many occasions. And on many occasions the police have arrested the sab at the hospital.

There is also a catalogue of assaults and attacks against women. These include a woman being beaten unconscious in December '92 in Cheshire; and a woman being subjected to a sexual assault - under the pretext of a search - by four stewards at a grouse shoot in Yorkshire in August '92. The woman was pinned to the floor and her body groped, with hands thrust inside her clothing.

"If you are badly assaulted by a hunter the police say it's common assault," says Gammon. "You have to go to the police station to report it. Their view point is that if we weren't there then there wouldn't be any trouble."

Video cameras are now common tools on both sides, which is one of the reasons violence has levelled out. Another reason, according to Gammon, is that sabs are "more resolute" now.

As an example he sites the notorious Horsham and Crawley hunt which used to pride itself on being sab-free for four seasons.

"They put a load of sabs in hospital four or five years ago and afterwards were left alone," says Gammon. "So we went down there a couple of weeks before the CJA came in in 1994. We had a Channel Four film crew with us, and a journalist and photographer from the NME who were writing an article on the CJA. We went into a wood and got set upon by all these blokes. They set about the film crew, ripped the film out of the camera, and threw the photographer over a hedge.

"We've done them four or five times this year, in numbers of sixty or seventy. The message has now got through that we view them as any other hunt. We have enough numbers now to say that we're not going to be frightened off."

Gammon is sceptical of the much heralded outlawing of hunting, even though hunters themselves give hunting a maximum life span of five years.

"I have no faith in the political parties," he says. "The CJA actually brought us more interest than ever before because young people saw parliament for what it is. They have no stake in the parliamentary process. The only option they can take is direct action."

The fact that hunt sabs have encountered, and resisted, legal and physical assaults week in, week out, year upon year, is testament to their commitment and principle.

"At the end of the day," Gammon says, "when you see a sab blow a horn and get the hounds off a fox, and the fox gets away, nobody is going to stop you sabbing."



Countryside Movement

In typical PR fashion, many landowner and business pressure groups adopt names which suggest they have the rural idyll at heart. The recently established Countryside Movement clearly demonstrate that their real agendas lie elsewhere.

Andy Johnson investigates.

IN November last year a number of full page advertisements began appearing in national newspapers for a new organisation called the Countryside Movement.

Its main principle is to address a perceived lack of understanding between people living in towns and the countryside. For a more harmonious relationship, the Movement wants to correct this misunderstanding through education.

One of the advertisements, which were the work of the country's top advertising agency, Bartle Bogle Hegarty, featured a large photograph of a slaughterman. Beneath ran the caption: "George Roberts, Head slaughterman and animal lover."

The blurb reads: "The process by which a pig goes trotting around the farm, to being freshly wrapped as a pound of sausages is not one that overly concerns us. It does however concern George Roberts. His concern is that the animals brought to him for slaughter are

despatched with as little stress as possible. In doing so he could be rightly described as someone promoting animal welfare."

George is apparently one of the five million people living and working in the countryside whose primary concern is of ensuring the countryside's overall welfare: "from ensuring that footpaths remain accessible, to preserving hedges and woodland specifically for wildlife."

Other advertisements featured a picture of a chicken and egg, with the caption: "Never mind which came first, many children can't even see the connection." Another has a picture of a field with a signpost in the foreground marked 'Footpath',

with the caption: "It goes right across Farmer Stockdale's land, no-one's defending your right to use it more than him."

In 1990 Andrew Tyler, currently head of the animal rights group Animal Aid, wrote an article for the Independent which detailed his visit to an abattoir. He was then a freelance journalist. Within the "stress free" process of "despatching" pigs he noted how bored slaughtermen would often throw a live pig into a vat of boiling water - intended to remove the animal's skin once it had been "despatched".

This difference between the two accounts of pig slaughter illuminates what the real objectives of the Countryside Movement could be.

"The undeniable logic of the animal rights movement was the inevitable and disturbingly powerful image of empty fields."

SQUALL has obtained minutes, marked "strictly private and confidential" of the first two meetings of the embryonic Movement. These seem to suggest that, far from having the laudable aim of educating children about the countryside at heart, the real reason for the Movement's formation was to counter the increasingly effective animal rights lobby, particularly in relation to blood sports.

Sir David Steel, the former leader of the Liberal Democrats, is Executive Chairman of the group. The backgrounds of the other members are also interesting (see table opposite).

The first meeting was held at

the offices of the Duchy of Cornwall (Prince Charles) at Buckingham Gate in London. The heir to the throne had allowed the Countryside Movement use of his offices free of charge.

During the first meeting, media pundit Max Hastings stressed that the "Countryside Movement should be classless and not perceived as being run by 'toffs'," a point minuted as being "understood fully by all present".

The Earl Peel, who opened the meeting said that its "goal would be to influence public opinion and thus to influence politicians".

The Movement has not been set up as a membership organisation. Instead it will build up a database of supporters, who would not be asked for a membership fee.

Because the Movement is not a membership organisation no joining fee is required. So where, then, does it get its money? (£3.5 million for the initial advertising blitz.) The public manifesto for the Movement states that "the initial financial support to launch the Countryside Movement and to underwrite its early

development is being provided by a number of private and commercial donors."

The largest of these, as the minutes of the first meeting reveal, is the Countryside Business Group (CBG). Mr Van Cutsem, the head of this group, told the meeting that the CBG had already raised £170,000 and "hoped to raise £1 million by September (95)". He is reported as saying: "The CBG's most important task was to raise money to fund the creation of the Countryside Movement."

The second meeting of the Countryside Movement, on August 2, was attended by Chris Rodgers of accountants KPMG - the accountants

for the Countryside Movement and the Countryside Business Group. He said that the CBG "proposed to raise money through a national levy on countryside business". It was hoped that the major cartridge and gun manufacturers would be committed to the concept of the levy.

He added that the scheme could generate £5 million a year, and it had committed itself to providing start up money for the Countryside Movement until the Movement became self-financing.

Ken Ball then said that "he believed the angling trades were open to approaches for money".

There was then talk of the concern about the "confidentiality" of the Countryside Movement's fundraising activities. It was felt that the CBG was "hampered in that it could not effectively achieve funding for the Countryside movement if it were unable to discuss it".

The second meeting also discussed bringing in someone from the Jockey club or Horse Racing Board (suggested by David Steel). It was noted that should the CBG be unable to deliver the necessary funds the "Countryside Movement could launch and continue, but perhaps at a slower pace".

Labour's Charter for Angling was also mentioned. The Charter, published by the Labour Party last year, is designed to reassure anglers that a Labour government would protect their interests.

Sir David Steel said that he "has been sounding out some senior members of the Labour Party". He noted in particular that they were well aware of the dangers of entryism and of IFAW's (International Fund for Animal Welfare) sponsorship of Elliot Morley (Labour MP for Glanford and Scunthorpe with strong wildlife and environmental concerns).

All this seems to suggest that the founders of the Countryside



Private security firm 'Country Watch' protect a hunt from saboteurs.
Picture by Andrew Testa.

Movement are quite concerned with country issues that pertain to blood sports. There is more.

At the first meeting Max Hastings, on the subject of money, said that the Movement would have to "think big" because the "challenge was formidable".

"Given the enormous wealth in some parts of the countryside", he had always believed that it was "extraordinary that countryside organisations were not better funded". This was "in stark contrast to the enormous funds available to the animal rights movement".

Michael Sissons outlined "the threat of the animal rights movement to many of the traditional activities of the countryside" and emphasised "the seamless nature of the animal rights philosophy".

Sir David Naish voiced "some concern about any perception that the database might be used simply to promote hunting interests", and suggested that "these and other sensitivities had to be most carefully addressed in the manifesto". Earl Peel said that the Movement would of course need to identify the type of issues on which it would campaign, but that he personally thought that helping the defence of hunting would be among them.

To this Max Hastings remarked that "it is dangerous to compromise on any issue. One part of the countryside could not be bought off without the possibility of a 'domino effect'. The undeniable logic of the animal rights movement was the inevitable and disturbingly

powerful image of empty fields".

Ken Ball said that "the angling bodies would live very easily with the Countryside Movement. Hunting, shooting and fishing would always be linked."

This seems to suggest that the animal rights movement is one of the key threats to the "misunderstanding" of the countryside that the Countryside Movement intends to counter.

When discussing the way the Countryside Movement is to be presented to the public, there are suggestions that public opinion should be manipulated.

Max Hastings, media pundit, stressed that there was a "fundamental need to generate images which would work on television and which would create a sympathetic reaction from the public." He also "considered that alliances with environmental groups should be sought".

John Rennie expressed concern that the Movement "could become confrontational". So Max Hastings suggested that "the Movement might also campaign on some non-controversial issues which would receive the widest support".

The Duke of Westminster suggested real rural problems - such as unemployment, crime, infrastructure and housing. "Everything else would flow from this".

Bearing all this in mind, the Countryside Movement's assertion in its launch press release that "the countryside is inadequately

understood by the majority of the population" and that "the Countryside Movement seeks to build greater awareness and understanding through a sustained programme of campaigning and education" and that it "will strive to represent countryside interests

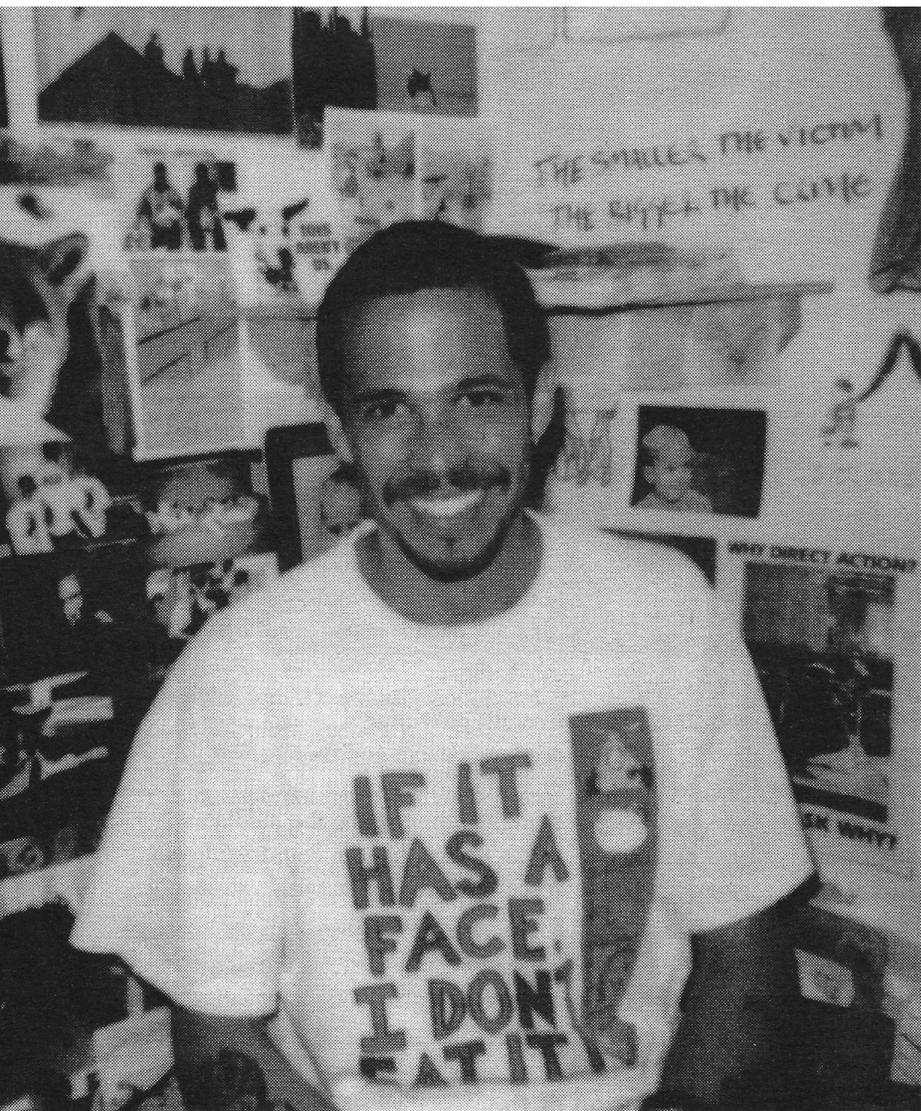
overall, providing a more comprehensive and more powerful voice in Government and demonstrating to the the media and to the public that the countryside is a force to be reckoned with", suddenly seems a lot clearer.

Ⓢ

Those involved in the formation of the Countryside Movement include:

- **Ken Ball**, President of the National Federation of Anglers. (There will be an attempt to oust him at April's AGM because of his support of the Countryside Movement. Apparently, Anglers do not want to be connected with the hunting lobby.
- **Hugh van Cutsem**, head of the Countryside Business Group - a principle financial sponsor of the movement. The CBG used to be called the Country Sports Business Group. Van Cutsem is a shoot owner, a friend of Prince Charles and described as a "top class gun" ie a good shot.
- **Max Hastings**, editor of the Evening Standard and former editor of the Daily Telegraph.
- **Alan Kilkenny**, PR consultant working the country's top PR firm Lobell Communications.
- **Sir David Naish**, Head of National Farmers Union.
- **John Rennie**, Former head of MI6 (apparently, he wasn't very good).
- **Michael Sissons**, Journalist noted for pro-hunting views.
- **The Earl of Peel**, Sits in the House of Lords; Chairman of the North of England Grouse Research Project; Chairman of the Game Conservancy Research Planning Committee; President of the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust.
- **The Duke of Westminster**, Britain's biggest landowner; sits in the House of Lords, President of the Game Conservancy Trust and the Country Trust; lists his hobbies as shooting and fishing.

Compassion Behind Bars



Serving a longer sentence than most armed robbers or rapists, animal rights activist, Keith Mann, has never physically harmed anybody.

In his own words, Keith, initially sentenced to 14 years as a category 'A' prisoner, explains his motives and documents his treatment.

It all came to me after I left school. I don't know about 'the best years of my life', mine started the day I left. I couldn't wait to get away. I could never fathom out what good logarithms were going to be to me and now believe that certain things are meant to happen in our lives; that it's ordained; fate, call it what you like.

I wasn't consciously aware that I had something important to do when I was sent into the big wide world with my modest set of qualifications. My subconscious told me there was no point getting too wrapped up in schooling, I really couldn't be bothered. Funny thing is, I've since been labelled as "well-educated" by various witnesses to my character, usually by the patronising political police. I put that down to education the animal liberation movement gave me.

I stopped eating meat after being made aware - taught by someone unqualified as a teacher - of

something desperately important, something about life and the cheap price of it, contrary to all my schooling. Religious Education never impressed me, now I knew why - there's something hypocritical and distasteful about religious teachings that call for, and encourage, the sort of carnage people wreak on God's weaker children. There's all this fine talk about love and respect and God's creation, while at the same time conveniently ignoring the immense suffering wrought upon the animal kingdom.

I knew there was nothing else I wanted to do with my life once the truth about animal abuse hit home. It bothered me that it had all been hidden from me for all those years. How could something so important be lied about by so many people. Apparently a lot of those people weren't themselves aware of the scale of this abuse, and still aren't, but there's a lot more awareness now.

Politicians, I remember, used to go on about how civilized we were

compared to other countries - still do. Some people, including my dad, assured me it was a phase I was going through and that I'd grow out of it; like we all did when we grew up and accepted that's the way of the world. On the contrary, as I 'grew up' and learnt more (like that even the daily pinta was wrecking the lives of cows) I became all the more determined to change the world.

I wrote more letters than I care to remember to companies and individuals who could do something about the way animals were being treated, but they didn't do anything to stop it. I gave up eating all animal products and bought only non animal tested toiletries. This was as much for the benefit of those who doubted my conviction; who reckoned it wasn't possible to survive without terrorising lesser mortals.

My friends just changed. Those who weren't going to help the fight for animal liberation went their way and I joined the ranks of those who were on the demos, street stalls and hunt sabs. That's what I should have been taught at school: how to sabotage hunts. Now I was learning about people, the Establishment, the police, the law, the countryside,

veganism, and how to call a pack of hounds off it's quarry. Nothing was more right than to stop a pack of hounds from killing a wild animal and to then see that animal go on its way to live another day. Nothing was more wrong than an officer of the law doing his utmost to ensure a kill.

On two separate occasions in my early days of sabbing, I was alone with the pack and one or two mounted police. There were no hunt members in the vicinity to see the kills, and it wouldn't have mattered one iota to anyone else if the pack had been stopped and the hares (the quarry of this hunt) allowed to carry on living. But these two individuals wanted to see blood and used all their might to ensure there was some, under the pretext of protecting the rights of people to engage in a lawful activity. It was one thing to be attacked and abused by the blood junkies on horseback - something to be expected - but something else when an officer of the law took the side of the hunt.

The ALF was formed in the early seventies by saboteurs who encountered exactly the same in the field, so resorted to attacks on hunt property. These tactics were clearly effective and were extended to other

forms of animal abuse. The important commodity here was cash; while it was being spent on repairs and security it wasn't being spent on killing animals. And so be it. The logic of breaking animals out of labs rather than asking for their release was impossible to ignore. It's okay people arguing you can't break the law under any circumstances, but were talking about the lives of others.

Animal torment affects the sensibilities of many people and there's an awareness that the only hope those animals have is you; the law doesn't come into it.

I was sentenced to 14 years for a series of relatively minor offences, the only thing I actually did was cause £6,000 worth of damage to 3 lorries at a slaughterhouse. I attempted to burn 10 others at an intensive poultry unit (though caused no damage thanks to a police ambush), attempted to incite others to act likewise; possession of explosive substances (weedkiller being the closest to explosive) and escaping from custody. The explosives charge was considered the serious one, it got me my category A status and the "Animal Lib Bomber" label, and just three years. I'm doing four for damaging the lorries! And I pleaded guilty.

However you look at it, except from the police's point of view - they want me to stay in for as long as possible, 14 years is a tad excessive. In actual fact I'm only doing 11 now after three were taken off at appeal. It's no more or less than I expected and I'm coping fine. I once enjoyed playing football, but missed out when I went sabbing hunts on a Saturday instead. In here I play for the prison and wing teams, so I'm making the most of that because I won't get the chance again; I won't be coming back in here.

I have an incredible amount of support and I'm always being told of how people have become aware and given up eating meat or drinking milk because of my imprisonment and or the publicity surrounding it. That's just what I've fought for - the animals to be left alone - and it pleases me.

I'm lucky, I could just as easily been Mike Hill, Tom Worby or Jill Phipps, all killed by animal abusers in recent years while fighting for animal liberation. I'm also in a far better position than many people and most animals - not that I'm necessarily impressed by that observation. And I've got a platform to air my views; people come to me for my opinion. I'd have had to become a politician to find myself in such a position otherwise. Instead I just got caught breaking the law and was sent to jail for 14 years. The daft thing is, for all my attempts to encourage economic sabotage and animal rescue, it's the political

police that have done the most to give me credibility.

Prison is an experience that, given the choice, I'd rather miss but there's no point pretending I'm not here. I didn't have to come to prison in order to know it doesn't work in reducing crime, but now I can speak from experience and it occurs to me prison best serves to encourage offending behaviour. There are, as it's often pointed out, lessons in crime to be learnt in prison. Locking lots of criminals away together makes that inevitable. What needs addressing is rehabilitation and the



Alex Smith

general un-caring attitude of prison officers. They breed disrespect, property gets stolen, lost, mislaid and broken. Applications have a habit of meeting a similar fate and little problems become big ones. I've had more of my property stolen by screws than by inmates in the three years I've so far done.

The preparation of my defence was made as difficult as possible with the regular moves I was subjected to, the different rules at each establishment and the different

I don't make any bones about the offences I was convicted of, but I do have a problem with the appointment of a huntsman as my judge. He's not just a hunter, he breeds sheep too, and quite clearly hates the likes of me. Attaching this kind of person to such trials happens too often and would be strangely akin to putting an ancient male judge, with a fetish for children, in front of a paedophile or rapist. He'd likely demonstrate his sympathy by giving a reduced sentence. What a terrible thought eh? And the reality is even worse.

Another sinister aspect is the information judges are fed from behind the scenes from the police and prosecution. During the progress of my case through court the judge was shown material that apparently "shocked" him. What did?

There is apparently no way of losing a judge who doesn't fit the bill. I was left with no option but to refuse to appear in court while he was presiding. He was provided with all our objections and asked to stand down because of his vested interest

"I don't make any bones about the offences I was convicted of, but I do have a problem with the appointment of a huntsman as my judge."

interpretations of those rules. Another little trick is to refuse access to things like a clothes iron prior to a court hearing. Instead, without batting an eyelid, they'll happily pull your crumpled clothes out of a carrier bag and hand them to you. All this behaviour is only personal, in my experience, in so far as I'm a prisoner and some screws are programmed to treat prisoners with contempt, which breeds contempt, hatred and offending behaviour. Job creation? Who knows?

in animal abuse and bloodsports and because of comments he'd passed in other courts about me. He refused. As part of the 'deal' done with the prosecution he was replaced for sentencing. Unfortunately it was a friend of his who replaced him: Same lodge? Same ring? They certainly piss in the same pot. The first judge even sent along one of his clerks to sentencing to relay the news first hand. I was called all sorts by the new one: "fanatic....."

dangerous..... ruthless..... full-time," in one order or another. Yet I was being done for committing one act of damage to property, attempting two others, thinking about a fourth and escaping from the nonsense of prison to work in an animal sanctuary.

Eleven Months later, three Appeal Court judges concluded that I was not all those things any longer and therefore safe for release, though not just yet. So, after talking about how "manifestly excessive" my sentencing was, they took just three years off..... Er.....!

Some of the papers reporting on my appeal said my sentence was reduced because I denounced unlawful activity. I never did. I can't afford and don't intend to incite unlawful activity, I already went to jail for doing just that. However, I fail to see what's changed. What actions are people left to take against animal abuse? Do politicians do what the people want them to do all of a sudden? I think not. And until they do it'll be a fact of life that for some people the higher moral law, which protects the weak and the innocent, will take precedent over the 'law of the land' which protects the powerful, cruel and corrupt. No long prison sentences will change that.

After returning from my self-appointed parole - 20 months on remand and 19 moves then 10 months on the run - I was made category A; a special prisoner deserving of extra attention, like all good armed robbers, 'terrorists' and killers.

The most information the Home Office would give about this bizarre decision was that I was either a threat to the police, the public or the state. Answers on a postcard. They have, as you'll probably be aware, very few answers to questions. Nineteen months later - Cat B me - not dangerous any more. Marvellous. Some transformation that: call me names, lock me away, deny me visits with my friends and girlfriend, confiscate my property, lie to me, refuse me cruelty-free toiletries, treat me like a dangerous criminal, grieve my mum, and then say they're rehabilitating me! It loses me.

I've got some catching up to do when I eventually get out: sex, drinking, walking the dogs, meeting people and continuing with the application I've made to live in a civilized, vegan society alongside the many people who have supported me during my time in here. Can't wait.

**Keith Mann,
ALF POW No. EE3588,
HMP Experimental Unit
Full Sutton,
York
YO4 IPS.**



A Mother's



Nick Cobbing

Like all mums, Doreen Mann is proud of her son - even though he's serving an eleven year jail sentence for, amongst other things, possession of explosives. If Keith Mann lived 600 years ago some musically minded scribe would no doubt have penned a ballad or two in his honour by now. When distilled the saga of Keith Mann does indeed read like romantic folklore.

From humble beginnings using his mum's pasting table to distribute animal rights literature; to hunt sabbing; graduating to "economic sabotage"; becoming the target of an orchestrated

police campaign; captured red-handed planting incendiary devices; a subsequent escape and ten months on the run as Britain's most wanted felon; recapture and initial 14 year prison sentence; while the Sherrifs of Mammon smugly smile at finally bagging their man.

Reality, though, is always more prosaic than legend. Keith was a committed animal rights activist with a raging thirst for justice, but he was never the ALF quartermaster or "major catch" the police would have him be. And he is now himself the victim of a gross misjustice.

For his mum, however, the juxtaposition of her fifth born child's quest for justice, and the

justice he found, has been a journey in itself.

"I knew he was involved in animal rights," she told Squall. "But I was innocent old mum. I knew they went out hunt sabbing on Boxing Day and as far as I was concerned that's what it was all about."

Doreen first heard of her son's arrest after he had spent two weeks in prison. Realising that he wasn't going to be bailed, Keith finally wrote to her.

"Believe me, it came as a shock," she says. "I was gutted. But I thought he'd be alright. They'd realise they'd made some sort of mistake. I thought the law was there to protect us and judges were there to punish. I realise now that it doesn't work that way."

In 1990 Keith caused £6,000 worth of damage to 13 lorries belonging to Striven's abattoir in Oldham. A year later he was caught red-handed planting incendiary devices, with an accomplice, at a battery farm. The police had had him under surveillance for months.

Keith was following the animal rights path of "economic sabotage" and only attacked property. He never put anyone's life in danger. He was well-known to the constabulary and seen as a prime mover in the amorphous ALF - which has no leaders.

Doreen first learnt "how bent and twisted the system was" while Keith was on remand. She says that during the 19 months he was held he was moved 20 times, not allowing him time to prepare for his trial.

While at Walton jail Keith passed something to a friend and was taken to Streatham police station for further questioning. The police turned their backs and Keith was off.

"The coppers came to see me everyday," says Doreen. "They were polite but like a toothache. They wouldn't go away. And I began to learn about other coppers, how bent they are, and what a twisted law we live and abide by. It's frightening."

"I first saw him at Strangeways," she continues. "I'd never been to a prison before. Most of the screws should have been inmates. And the fact that you weren't treated as people. I do realise now how cattle feel, and it's very unfair. I didn't have any respect for them. Sometimes you'd phone up to arrange a visit and when you got there they'd say, 'I'm sorry he's been moved,' to the other end of the country! And this went on and on." She also says that in some prisons Keith was denied a vegan diet, and forced to wear leather boots.

Keith spent 10 months on the run and settled for a while with his girlfriend at an animal sanctuary in East Sussex. He was one of the

Pride

Three years after the imprisonment of her son, Keith, Doreen Mann describes how the experience has affected her own beliefs and priorities.

Interview by **Andy Johnson**. Picture by **Nick Cobbing**.

country's most wanted men and when the police finally caught up with him they arrested everybody who lived there. Keith was charged with criminal damage, attempted arson, incitement (writing a direct action manual), conspiracy, escaping custody and possessing explosives.

The last charge related to several household items found in different places around the sanctuary: weedkiller, sugar, whitespirit, batteries, firelighters, and fire-works. The police contested that taken together these could have been used to make explosives.

On the advice of his lawyers Keith pleaded guilty - so as not to incriminate the others arrested with him and expecting a third off his sentence for doing so. He was given 14 years - more than a rapist could expect. He was also classified a category A prisoner - the most dangerous with severe restrictions on visitors.

In the past most ALF activists have received sentences of between six and seven years. But the police were convinced Keith was an ALF ring leader. They tracked him as he travelled up and down the country. They searched his home, finding leaflets and pamphlets he'd written advocating direct action.

Keith's mum is understandably protective towards her son. She speaks of him in glowing terms, and is intensely proud of

him. But when she says the police specifically targeted Keith it is "wised up old mum" rather than "innocent old mum" talking.

"Because they realised that this young man was not going to go away they really put the pressure on him," she says. "They followed him all over the country. Keith is a determined person. He'd found out something that he didn't like. He'd found out there was an injustice and he tried to put things right. He then realised that the police were onto him. They were turning over his home and his girlfriend's home. They were arresting him for nothing. They arrested him a lot of times.

"But he hasn't hurt anybody. He's hurt the pockets and that's what they got him for. He's a very gentle person. The judge, a huntsman and sheep farmer, realised it was going to be a long and costly trial. So he offered Keith a deal - plead guilty to explosives and I'll drop the conspiracy

charge. Keith said no, you don't have anything on this. What I will plead guilty to is that I lived in a home where you found certain items. But he just wanted it out of the way, and he should have got a third off his trial, but he didn't. They stitched him up good and proper."

Doreen says that it isn't just the legal system her son has, in a roundabout way, educated her in. She has also become aware of the cause Keith was fighting for.

"I was one of the ignorant people who didn't think," she says. "I came from a great meat eating family. I always fed Keith with meat. Then he said he didn't eat meat, and started to tell me why. I think I was ashamed immediately. Why didn't I think? He said you can't go away and pretend you haven't seen what you've seen. He didn't blow the lorries up, he damaged them, saying maybe we can't save many chickens, but we can save some.

"I'm a vegan now, but only because Keith taught me how. I used to cook meat for my husband, but I'd give mine to the dog. Then I thought, this is stupid. I gave it some thought and it was quite ridiculous. My son's in prison for a belief and I'm sat here with a steak. I gave it up overnight."

Keith lodged an appeal against the severity of his sentence. His supporters, and the Justice for Keith Mann Campaign, were informed of the date of his

appeal, November last year, two days before it took place. It succeeded in shaving three years off his sentence.

As far as Doreen is concerned, this is just the start. The next fight, she says, is to take another two years off his sentence.

His initial fourteen years were made up of different sentences for the different charges. When he was caught planting incendiary devices at a battery farm his accomplice had already served a four year sentence for a similar offence. She was tried while Keith was on the run and sentenced to six years because, according to the judge, she had not learned her lesson. But for this charge Keith was given six years for a first offence. At his appeal this was the only sentence not to be reduced.

Doreen also wants her son declared a prisoner of conscience. "The next stage hasn't

started yet," she says.

A couple of weeks after his appeal Keith was re-classified a category B prisoner following a successful letter writing campaign by JFKM. As a Cat A the only person able to visit him was his mum. Potential visitors had to be vetted by the Home Office to see if they were "suitable" for such a dangerous inmate, undergoing rigorous reform, to mix with. Of course, none of Keith's friends were deemed suitable.

So a letter writing campaign was orchestrated asking the Prime Minister, the Home Office, and the prison governors at Full Sutton jail, where Keith is being held, to change his status.

Just before Christmas Doreen received a phone call from the Home Office, a tale she relates with relish:

"A secretary phoned, asking if there was anything we can do to have the mail stopped. 'The Prime Minister has asked us to call you,'" Doreen mimicks the voice. "'The secretaries can't get on with any work. And we have conceded, he isn't category A any more'.

"Why didn't I tape that call? We have conceded. And I said, I'm sorry, there's nothing we can do. She said there were letters coming in from all over the world and could I do anything to stop it. I said no, you made him a category A. I thought it was so funny."

The phone call was followed a couple of days later by one from the governor of Full Sutton prison:

"Then the governor rang up asking me to stop the letters. I said, then let him out, and he said 'we don't think he should be in here either, he's a right nice lad, but we have a job to do'. So it does have an effect."

As far as Keith's long-term, post-prison, future is concerned, Doreen is protective, although when pushed she says that if he felt he had to return to direct action, she would support him. "But he isn't going to have to do it," she says. "He'll fight from behind a desk now. He will always fight for animals. But he has done his share of direct action now. He can prove a real threat from behind a desk. They've made a martyr out of this guy they wanted to put away and throw away the key. They don't know how to handle it."

Following her calls from the Home Office and Full Sutton prison, Doreen is well aware of how powerful the pen can be.

"If I told you the depth of my pride for him my head would burst," Doreen says. "If he'd killed someone I'd stand by him, he's my son. But I'd be ashamed. But I walk around with my head held high and tell people how proud I am and I tell them what he's done. It's all been done in the name of compassion. It's life he cares about.

"Doesn't it open your eyes when you think how much you have to hate now? I hate the system, what they've done to Keith. I have a lot of hate inside me now, and I think it's a good thing. It accesses things in you that you didn't know were there."

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If you Newbury like I Newbury...

**'It seems just now to be happening so very fast;
That it isn't going to last,
And that will be England gone;
The shadows, the meadows, the lanes,
And all that remains for us;
Will be concrete and tyres.'**

PHILIP LARKIN 'England Gone' (1972)

After months of build-up the Third Battle of Newbury finally began on January 9. Four hundred fresh-faced Reliance security guards were driven up from London to face the assembled elite of Britain's anti-roads movement. Veterans from four years of nationwide road protests (Twyford Down, the M11 Link, Solsbury Hill, Thanet Way, Stanworth Valley and the M77 in Glasgow) had drawn their line in the Berkshire mud.

The first day of clearance work was thwarted when campaigners staked out the security guards' damp and dismal accommodation, waited for their seven coaches to arrive at its one and only access road, and blocked them in with two twenty-five foot tripods. The hordes of press that flocked to the area complete with satellite dishes and radio cars did the rest. "It just wasn't the police's day," said the voice-over on the national news, as viewers saw film of a police "Evidence Gatherer" videoing the surreal scene with the lens cap still on.

One-nil to the campaign, with dozens of activists arriving by the hour, and a fax from the Ogoni people of Nigeria pledging solidarity. The visitors camp set up to accommodate the newcomers contained a caravan - a veteran from the women's peace camp at nearby Greenham Common.

"I bet it's bugged," said one man as he boiled a kettle inside. "MI5 must be well confused. Years of anti-nuclear stuff coming through, then years of silence, and now the tape recorder's going all weird about roads."

Outside, in the communal kitchen area, a national newspaper journalist had arrived with two bottles of whisky, and got so stoned on home-grown she forgot how to write. "This one's

on Lord Rothermere [the paper's proprietor]," she announced, handing the whisky around at the start of what turned out to be just one of many long sessions around the camp fire.

Back at the security compound the party was going with less of a swing "Strictly No Alcohol" and, even more perversely, "No Smoking". Fearing insecurity from the security, phoning home was also banned. Four hundred miserable, and soon to be very muddy, security guards, with two cold showers between them and two cases of suspected food poisoning didn't make for a very effective army at the beginning of this battle for Newbury. By the second day, the first mutineers among their ranks had already packed their bags and gone home.

Day Two began with people locking themselves onto vehicles and buildings outside the Reading coach station contracted out to Reliance. Faced with the prospect of hundreds of children not being able to arrive for PE or double maths that morning, the company backed down. Site clearance work did take place, though, in fits and starts, over the next few days aided by the Criminal Justice Act.

The DoT still have to contend with 14 highly organised and well defended "sky villages". Underground lengthy tunnels have been dug "Viet Cong" style, while above, some tree houses, like the "Mother Ship" at Kennet camp, are large enough to sleep as many as fifteen people, complete with woodburners for warmth. One man is occupying a 120 foot high Canadian Pine with a thirty foot extension ladder lashed to the top. Needless to say, climbing harnesses have become as essential as good boots.

In Newbury passions are running high. With three Sites of Special Scientific Interest, rare heathland, ancient bogs, wildflower meadows and the River Kennet, one of England's most beautiful and unpolluted rivers, due to be

A wide cross section
of environmental
activists have
gathered to fight the
mighty third battle
of Newbury.
Neil Goodwin
reports back from
the trenches and
treehouses.

bulldozed, even the DoT's own Landscape Advisory Committee has admitted that the bypass would be "massively destructive of a largely intimate landscape unable to absorb the impact of a major highway".

"It would be in the nature of a desecration to build a road through a site of such profound significance in our national history," says the actor and battlefield historian, Robert Hardy, referring to the two Civil War battlefields that cross its path.

"I am appalled by the way English Heritage are rewriting history, claiming the battles were skirmishes in two isolated fields which will only be slightly disturbed," says Mark McCraig, a Newbury local. "We know that the armies of Charles I and parliament, fifteen thousand aside, fought a desperate battle. Casualties were anything between four and eight thousand. It was a turning point in English history. The front line of fighting would have covered over two miles, much of the landscape and hedgerows have remained unchanged." His sentiments are shared by the "Sealed Knot", the local historical re-enactment society, which regularly relives the 1643 battle in period costume.

Twelve archaeological sites will be destroyed; of these only a Mesolithic flint carving settlement directly linked to the temple at Avebury is to be properly excavated. A Roman villa, beneath the protesters camp next to the

Continued



River Kennet and Avon Canal will be lost without record. Most noticeably the serenity of the proud and ancient setting of Donnington Castle will be lost forever as traffic pours past within a few hundred yards.

Newbury's traffic problems reflect a global dilemma. Like countless other towns and villages its narrow streets have reached saturation point, choked by a continual flow of thunderous fume-belching traffic. Beleaguered citizens scurry along the pavements, nervously negotiating hazardous junctions. The tranquillity of this market town, now just a distant memory in the minds of elderly residents, has been torn apart.

Newbury's first by-pass, built in the 1960s, encouraged the town to sprawl out, which in turn generated more traffic. Sainsbury's recently built a superstore on one of its many roundabouts, cancelling out what little remained of the relief road's effectiveness in easing congestion. Planning permission has already been sought for the building of five thousand new homes along the route of the new by-pass, a development which could introduce a further eight thousand cars into the local area. Far from solving the town's traffic problems the new road will actually make matters worse.

"This road is about the financial and political gain that politicians, developers and landowners can make from it," says Andrew Wood, from Newbury Friends of the Earth.

"Arguments for the road simply cloak those vested interests. Those that support the by-pass are into portraying the opposition as outsiders, trouble-makers and dole scroungers rather than arguing and debating the facts."

There is a strong suspicion amongst campaigners that the scheme's final go-ahead had more to do with internal wrangling amidst the Conservative Party than the interest of Newbury residents. A third of the route

crosses the Hampshire Northwest constituency of Sir David Mitchell MP, who gave unexpected support to John Major in last July's leadership elections. The next day he posed a parliamentary question in support of the by-pass. In his final act as Transport Secretary, Brian Mawhinney cancelled the year-long review of the scheme he had initiated the previous December and lit the blue touch-paper of protest.

At one stage David Rendel MP, who won a landslide victory for the Liberal Democrats in 1993's Newbury by-election, arrived at the protest site and bore the brunt of local anger to the Western route. It has since been revealed by the Sunday Telegraph that Rendel encouraged local business leaders to orchestrate a letter writing campaign in favour of the by-pass to counter opponents which had dominated his post-bag by a margin of eight to one. A recent questionnaire sent out to five hundred local businesses by the Newbury Business Club revealed a majority of those replying opposed the road.

"It's absolutely crazy for Mr Rendel to say that most business people support the Western

route," says Keith Berry, managing director of an electronics company. "Something has to be done about the traffic - perhaps by putting the A34 into a tunnel - but the cost of destroying nearly nine miles of such beautiful countryside is too high a price to pay."

Preliminary clearance work has now, as Squall goes to press, entered its sixth week. A mile long swathe has already been cut through Penn Wood at the Southern tip of the route. Reliance has exhausted £150,000 of its £500,000 budget. The Criminal Justice Act has claimed over 250 arrests (including a pantomime cow called Buttercup), and the policing bill already exceeds £1 million.

It has emerged that Thames Valley Police have been forced to ask the Home Office for extra funding, having been misled over the starting date for construction work. Charles Pollard, the Chief Constable, said that when his force was planning this year's budget, the government announced that the bypass would not be going ahead "in the immediate foreseeable future" and therefore no provision was made for the current joint operation with Hampshire police, which is expected to cost more than £12 million.

Under the headline "Newbury bypass may be scrapped" a recent front page article in the trade journal *Construction News* has given the clearest indication yet that soaring costs and growing opposition are undermining the

confidence of contractors in bidding for the scheme.

One of six potential bidders has warned: "I'm not sure local people are keen on the scheme and I get a feeling of a change in its political worth. Put that with the possibility of a high tender price (£20 million more than when it was originally tendered in 1994), and I'm not sure it will go ahead." Another bidder is reported as saying: "There's a risk factor, due to the protesters. Some subbies have already pulled out after seeing the protests in

the newspapers."

"We've raised the financial and political stakes of this road," said Rebecca Lush, from Road Alert. "Some have said that this is the last stand of the road protesters. That is rubbish! It's the last stand of the desperate road lobby and their polluting, alienating car culture."

On February 11, Friends of the Earth and Greenpeace co-ordinated Britain's largest ever anti-roads gathering. Six thousand people, including TV celebrities and distinguished locals, turned out to walk the proposed route. At one stage, Fred Gibson, a 72 year-old former private in the Essex Regiment, gave his war medals to a tree-dweller as "a mark of respect", recalling how two of his friends had died in the Second World War "fighting for this green and pleasant land".

The rally was followed by a national day of action which saw demonstrations at the offices of Tarmac, one of the potential bidders for the scheme; Brays, the private detective agency; Mott-McDonalds, the design engineers; and Blue Arrow, the agency responsible for security recruitment. Clearance work had earlier been

called off when most of the vehicles used to ferry the guards, experienced "mysterious defects".

At the culmination of four years of "No compromise in defence of Mother Earth", The Third Battle of Newbury looks set to dominate Britain's environmental protest movement in 1996. And with the promise of an impassioned defence of every copse, hedgerow and meadow along the route, if you knew Bury like I knew Bury you'd also get down here and get your arse up a tree.

HANDY TIPS FOR THE WOULD-BE ECO-WARRIOR

In response to the wanton destruction that is now taking place on a daily basis, the "Third Battle" office is urging people to make their way to the protest site immediately, rather than wait around for the inevitable camp eviction. Here are some handy tips to bear in mind should you decide to take part:

1. This is a rural gig, so bring what you expect to find: tarp, rope, bow-saws, local A-Z, water containers, pots, pans, kettles & plates, torches, push bikes, food, mobile phones etc.
2. Find the Third Battle offices in town and sound out the most suitable camp to populate. The visitor's camp is a good place to find your feet and get into the buzz (and mud), but try to establish yourself on route as soon as possible.
3. Sleep deprivation may be the cheapest trip on the market, but it makes for burnt-out ineffective protesters. Avoid getting voided-out by getting your head down on a regular basis.
4. No guilt tripping the office bods. There's no offence intended but they don't want to know about your lost dog, the £2.50 you need to get to Swindon or so-and-so's tat pile; in the same way you don't want to know about The Guardian's fax number when you're half way up a tree.
5. Contractors have been colour coded for our convenience. WHITE YELLOW and RED hats are security. Orange hats are either tree surgeons or surveyors. GREEN hats could also be surveyors, though the ones carrying cameras are from Brays Detective Agency. Don't forget: CARELESS TALKS COSTS TREES.
6. If you are arrested, call out your name to the nearest legal observer. In the nick, beyond giving your name and address, exercise your fundamental right to silence. Phone a solicitor, and ask for a pen and paper to write down the details of your arrest. Carry a good book around (preferably not Eco-Defence!) to read in the cells. So far the majority of arrests have been for Aggravated Trespass (Section 68), usually for pushing against the security lines. At the time of writing, Thames Valley police seem to be operating a voluntary system of issuing warnings first. Two arrests under Section 68 seem to result in bail conditions banning access to within 1km of the arrest site.
7. Above all, keep it peaceful. The gutter press would love to trash us. The State wants us to get all balaclava'd-up so that we alienate potential support. Peace, dignity, determination and humour are our strongest weapons. We have already become more possible than they can powerfully imagine. See you there.

Contact:

The Third Battle of Newbury
01635 550552 (24hr recorded info line) or
01635 45544 / 45545



Fred Gibson, a 72 year-old former private in the Essex Regiment, gave his war medals to a tree-dweller as "a mark of respect".

Pedal power in Edinburgh

CYCLISTS in Edinburgh are up in arms over the City Council's recent decision to introduce on-the-spot £20 fines for cycling misdemeanours. According to Duncan Forbes, one of the co-ordinators of Edinburgh's Critical Mass cyclists' campaign: "It shows a deep complicity with car culture that cyclists should be fined on the spot when people who park cars in cycle lanes get away with it."

Cyclists also claim the council are ignoring the fact that most accidents are caused by motorists - "the real pirates of the road". In 1994

five cyclists died in Scotland and 1,379 were injured in accidents mostly caused by cars.

In January, 70 Critical Mass cyclists defied council apathy and repainted some of Edinburgh's cycle lanes. The following month they placed protest fines on vehicles parked in these cycle lanes. Although previously operating an information telephone line, they claim to have faced harassment from police and now just advertise their Critical Mass meeting point at The Mound on the last Friday of each month at 5.30pm.

SSSIs still under threat

OVER 50 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in England are still under threat from new road construction, despite the abandonment of much of the Government's road building programme last year.

In a written answer to Graham Allen (Labour MP for Nottingham) in January, Laurie Haynes, head of the Highways Agency, listed the SSSIs which will be permanently or indirectly damaged by trunk and motorway schemes for which routes had already been announced.

Thirty five SSSIs, including three at Newbury, will suffer permanent damage or complete destruction; a further 17 will be damaged indirectly although roads would not run over them; and five sites would be indirectly affected but the particular road schemes are under review.

The SSSIs include marshes, woodland, heathland and rivers which will be affected by schemes as far apart as Newbury, Birmingham, Wales and Dorset.

Cold shoulder for mercenary climbers

MOUNTAINEERS helping to evict Newbury by-pass protesters have been condemned by their peers in the British Mountaineering Council.

National officers of the council described the protesters as "courageous defenders of the environment" and their colleagues employed to evict them as

"shameful".

"If we do not disown and ostracise these mercenaries and renegades we are undermining the very reason for our existence and helping accelerate the destruction of the very places we hold dear," said Jim Perrin at the first British Mountain Climbing Festival at Llandudno in February.

Why Monkey Wrench? Why Ask Why?

The bumper "Apocalypse, Recuperation and Resistance" issue of *Do or Die* is the fifth magazine to come from the uncompromising *Earth First!* One hundred and twenty A5 pages of articles, news and views from eco-activists with attitude makes for seriously recommended reading. As well as the extensive regional round-up of roads, anti-corporate, and animal rights issues there are also in-depth and well-researched articles on biodiversity, the little-known Bougainville and the (crap) Berlin Climate Conference. The expansive and wide-ranging international section puts the British scene into a global context in such a way that will inspire the novice yet keep the most ardent ego-warrior aware of how much isn't being done. All in all, a massive read that will aggravate, inspire, amuse and (hopefully) motivate.

Get a copy before they run out:
**Dead Trees EF!, Box 25, 82 Colston Street,
Bristol BS1 5BB.**
enclosing £1.70 (incl p&p).

M66 and all that

Ally Fogg takes a walk along the proposed route of the M66 expansion near Manchester; and finds both the environment and the local community considered dispensible.



Justin Cooke

There was a time when campaigns against motorways appeared simple. The symbols were trees and wildlife and the rhetoric was of environmental destruction and pollution; the definitive single issue campaign.

Over the last couple of years roads have come to represent much wider ills in our society, and the remit of protesters has changed accordingly. The key moment may have been in February 1994 when the M11 campaign shifted focus away from Wanstonia, where the destruction of 350 houses was overshadowed by a 250 year-old Sweet Chestnut tree, onto Claremont Road, a colourful explosion of modern city life, where issues of homelessness, housing and urban community became as important as pollution.

Since then the campaign against the M77 in Pollock has raised unprecedented local working-class support and highlighted fundamental questions about the very ownership of our cities and our country. This year, Reclaim The Streets parties, an offshoot of the anti-roads movement, have been rearing their gorgeous heads up and

down the land to demand the slaying of the sacred cow itself, the motor car, for reasons as much social as environmental.

Recently I joined members of the No M66 Campaign in Greater Manchester for a Sunday stroll between Denton and Droylsden, a three mile stretch of what is to become the final stage of the Manchester Outer Ring Road. By the end I was wondering whether the route had been planned not by a civil engineer but by a political satirist. If ever the extent of the problems of modern Britain can be caught in a snapshot, it is here.

The starting point for our walk was Audenshaw Reservoir, lying empty while road building is in progress. This is a service reservoir (where water goes after use and treatment) not a source reservoir (where water supplies come from), so sadly we can't blame drought orders on the M66, but the vast gaping space is a monument to the frightening array of resources sacrificed to motorway construction.

Further along we are treated to a stretch of the Manchester Canal, a horse pulls a barge full of smiling kids past us in a spookily tranquil moment, considering the

reason for our visit. Dave, our guide for the day and an active member of the campaign, confesses: "I've lived here for years and I've never seen anything like that before." We leave the canal and climb past a field that was accepted by the local council as a traveller's site. Before it was opened, the Highways Agency decided to put the motorway across the only access road. Before an alternative site was found, the 1968 Caravan Sites Act was abolished by the CJA and another site is now not on the agenda. A Showman's Guild site nearby is also to be closed without replacement.

As we climb a little higher we find a perfect view of the junction where the M66 will meet the other two main roads in the area, the A635 and the A662. The real reason for the motorway is immediately obvious; giant superstores are appearing. A massive new B & Q blots the landscape and the other familiar symbols of capitalism are spreading across every plot of land that is, or can be made, available. These supermarkets and fast food chains claim to bring jobs to the area, but they are largely part-time and low-paid, the kind which are good for keeping unemployment figures down but do nothing to ease local poverty or help communities.

A little further and we find the most brutal illustration of the heartlessness of the road industry.

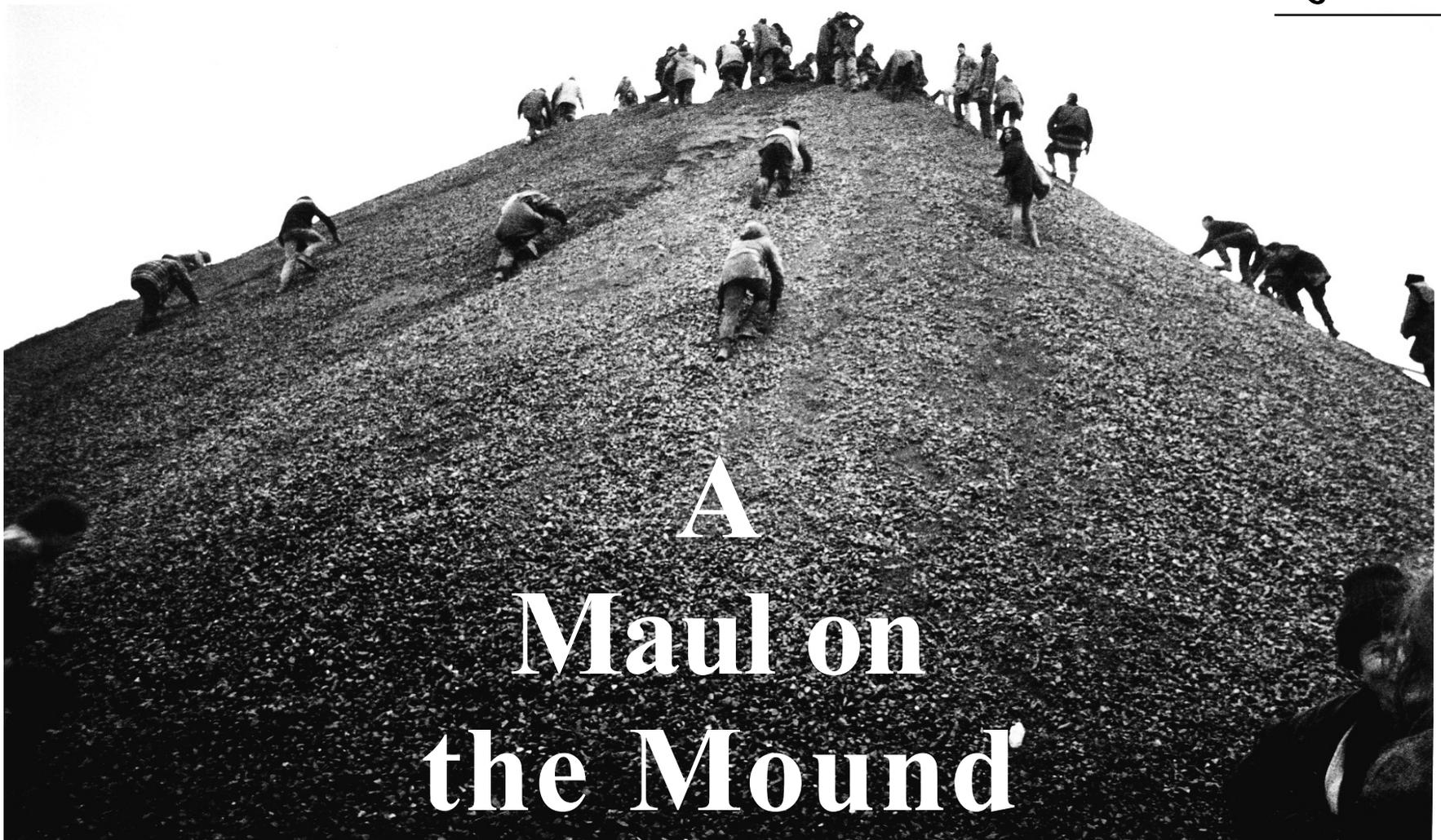
Oakdale (Special Needs) Primary School is a small building which means a lot to its pupils. Later this year it will be closed and the kids farmed out to other schools in the area. It will be flattened and turned into a few yards of the M66. Government priorities are laid bare. Education, particularly for those with special needs, a dispensible luxury in comparison to the great god tarmac.

Stop Press

The protest camp at Daisy Nook was evicted on February 21st. Around 60 activists took to the treehouses and walkways to greet the combined forces of police, bailiffs and scab climbers. Under the direction of 'one-man-apocalypse', Under Sheriff, Andrew Wilson. The destruction was ruthless, climbers and bailiffs wrestling activists into a cherry-picker as chainsaws and bulldozers wreaked mayhem.

One lower walkway was cut leaving protesters dangling from their hands and harnesses. Three arrests were made including one local man whose house had been compulsory purchased. He had asked which one was Andrew Wilson, calmly walked through the police cordon up to AW and thumped him one. Who says there are no more heroes anymore? The campaign will regroup at a new location soon and the fight goes on.





Nick Cobbing

A Maul on the Mound

Is the county of Somerset losing its reputation for tranquillity and calm? You bet it is. **Richard Dixon** joined Earth First!'s super quarry shut down at Whatley Quarry.

Whatley Quarry in Somerset recently hosted the culmination of a long-running feud between environmental activists and the road-building and quarrying conglomerate, Hanson plc. On the 4th December 1995, over 50 arrests were made as protesters closed down the quarry.

Whatley roadstone quarry is already one of the largest in Europe; a mile long, 290 acres and 100 metres deep. Yet Arc/Hanson wish to substantially expand it, eroding the important Mendip Hills aquifer and even, it is said, threaten the thermal springs at Bath, some 10 miles distant. The product of this destruction is very cheap roadstone. Quarry rates of £2 to £3 per tonne make a very ready fuel for ambitious roadbuilding schemes. The balance of output goes to the reinforced concrete industry - that other unsustainable blot-all bane of contemporary urban life.

A pre-dawn raid by some 400-450 allegedly pre-briefed December campers saw the 5 million tonne per annum destruction machine at Whatley grind to a shuddering halt. Local wildlife sites, rural residents, stunning landscape and not inconsiderable heritage features gained an unexpected four day reprieve from the shot drilling, blasting, rock crushing and 14,000

tonnes per day road and rail cartage.

Whatley is more than just about a damn great hole blown out of a precious countryside. It is about government policy towards countryside, roadbuilding and the whole urban environment.

As dawn broke, the occupation of Whatley Quarry was revealed to the massed media. A banner hung from a large crane proclaimed: "Under New Management!" Absailers tended its ripples and crisply provided soundbites to bellowing, urgent and stiff-necked journalists below. The two quarry gates were picketed and to underline the fact that Whatley quarry was (albeit temporarily) closed, a manned scaffolding tripod straddled the sole but very significant rail line out of the quarry.

The blockade was complete. The occupation had commenced. The bagpipes that had been a bit blowy and squeaky at the time of the rush at the gates now had more melody and leisure with flute and drums accompaniment. It was carnival at the countryside dismemberment camp.

Of many key battles and skirmishes during the war of Whatley, the 'convergence on the conveyors' ensured that crushed stone was not moved around site. A number of spectacular arial arrests were made as protesters risked life

and limb clambering on the black, shiny and enormously tall stone conveyor belts. As the action progressed protesters grouped at the top of a stock-pile of stone and proved, for a time, resolutely immovable. It was at this 'maul on the mound' where the majority of arrests occurred.

Protesters who wanted to "check up on the paperwork" were frustratingly denied access to the offices by truncheon-wielding blue coats. Sit-downs and lock-ons largely prevented vehicles moving.

The heavy security applied against the occupation was justified by the company on grounds of protecting demonstrators from injuring themselves in the quarry. In the end, the only injury reported occurred when a police vehicle ran over a young man's legs, mercifully not breaking them. This unlucky event, not surprisingly, caused a very substantial change in ARC/Hanson's press statements and, for a time, company management assured TV viewers that they were sure that "had the demonstrators read the company planning application, the environmental activists would be supporting the proposed quarry expansion," which, even in TV media land, stretched credibility to hitherto unknown elastic heights.

Bath City Council, Mendip District Council, local parish

councils and most of the nation's major environmental groups (having read the quarry expansion planning proposal) have formally objected to Hanson's plans and are calling on Secretary of State for the Environment, John Gummer, to hold a public inquiry in to the need and/or effects of production at Whatley rising from 5 million tonnes a year to 10 million, giving it eight times the annual output of ARC's next largest UK quarry.

In the meantime it may be assumed that environmental activists and quarry managers alike may be concentrating on the benefits and drawbacks of the closure of Whatley quarry and both parties may assume that as 50 plus CJA victims proceed through the judicial bureaucracy towards potential environmental martyrdom, the bagpipes, flutes and drums may be heard in 'tranquil' Somerset again.

Stop Press

Environment secretary John Gummer announced in February he would not hold a public inquiry into the expansion of Whatley Quarry. He said: "It is right in about all cases that initial decisions should be taken by the local authority." Somerset Council have indicated they are minded to grant permission subject to detailed conditions. 

Stringers Common and a hidden agenda

MISINFORMATION, hidden agendas and cover-ups, this time from Surrey County Council over its proposed Woking Road (A320) 'Improvement' Scheme.

Currently in the proposal stage, the road scheme, if it goes ahead, will cut through the beautiful woodland and open spaces of Stringers Common, as well as parts of Whitmoor Common, a Site of Special Scientific Interest. More than 200 mature trees are to be ripped up, a pond is to be relocated and many species of wildlife will lose their habitats.

The scheme will also mean the creation of two new roundabouts and the enlargement of two existing ones. Changes to access roads has lead the Council to make eleven Compulsory Purchase Orders against the will of the present landowners. The scheme is estimated to cost over £2.5 million.

Victoria, who lives locally and is a founder of the Campaign for Stringers Common, believes that the road has been kept deliberately quiet by the Council.

"I only found out about the plans in September '95 when I saw CPOs and Side Order notices whilst walking my dogs in the wood."

The Campaign for Stringers Common began by collecting signatures for a petition against the road. They found that the majority of local people had not heard of the Council's proposals or the Public Enquiry planned for Jan 30 '96.

The Council's reasons for wanting to 'improve' the road are to reduce traffic congestion and accidents but, as Victoria argues: "It seems ridiculous that the Council is putting across these reasons when latest research such as the SACTRA Report states that more roads simply attract more traffic."

Since the campaign against the road got under way further plans have been found for a waste incinerator at the nearby Slyfield Industrial Estate. When sifting through Surrey Council's impact report on waste management, campaigners found written statements regarding a new, planned incinerator and that this "large scale waste incinerator would operate anywhere of up to 300 movements daily on the surrounding road network".

A large scale waste incinerator would not make waste disappear, but reduce it to ash and atmospheric emissions. Usually, about 90% of such ash is toxic, containing dioxins and furans, as well as various dangerous heavy metals such as lead and cadmium. There have been reports lately of high cancer rates clustered around incinerator sites. This particular incinerator is planned to be built near houses and a local primary school.

In the interests of democracy and debate, Victoria and other anti-road campaigners tried to attend a meeting about the road scheme held by the Jacobs Well Residents Association (a village that will be affected by the scheme). Victoria and the other campaigners who live close to the proposed route were turned away at the door by police who told them they were not residents of Jacobs Well.

One campaigner, who got into the meeting, was not given a chance to air her views as Tory Councillor, Harry Pickup, took to the platform and dominated the meeting with his views as to why the scheme was a good idea whilst denying any link between the road and the incinerator. The meeting ended up voting in favour of the road.

At the end of the meeting Pickup stated, "Isn't it wonderful that we have democracy," and then thanked the police for attending.

Road Shorts

A608 Annesley Relief Road, Notts.

Local resistance to this county council road widening scheme continues. Constant protests delayed tree-felling but unfortunately there are now no more trees. The fight against the road and all the associated industrial development, however, continues.

Contact: 01623 751974 / 756426.

A30 Honiton-Exeter, Devon.

Fortification of the camps continues, although eviction dates are not yet known. Meanwhile the campaign is developing as a regional networking base. Contact: 01404 815729.

A299 Thanet Way, Kent.

The Flat Oak Society continue oppose this road but have now extended to building up an action network for the South East. Contact 01227 463368.

International day of anti-road action.

Groups all over Europe will be organising local actions against the trans European network of roads on March 30th. To take part or to kick off your own contact: ASEED, PO Box 92066, 1090 AB, Amsterdam, Netherlands.

Tel: +31 206 682 236.

E-mail: <aseedeur@antenna.nl>



Legislation endorses superquarrys

HUNDREDS of disused quarries could be brought back into use because emergency planning permission granted in 1947 is still in force.

The Interim Development Orders (IDOs) were granted at the end of the second world war to aid reconstruction of the country.

In 1991 the Government announced that these permissions had to be re-registered before March 1992 or they would become defunct.

Current planning legislation means that many of the original permissions would be rejected if applied for today. But as a result many owners of the quarries, some of which had never been worked, came up with new schemes to develop them.

Estimates from the Wildlife Trust put the number of such schemes in England and Wales at 652 - 87 of which are on areas of outstanding natural beauty and many others on Sites of Special Scientific Interest.

One example is a quarry in Newhey which closed in 1980 and is now to be massively extended. The quarry was worked for 120 years, but permission for its extension was granted in 1947 under an IDO. Since its closure the quarry, in the green belt around Rochdale, has returned to vegetation.

An application to build a hotel on the site was refused by a Department of the Environment inspector because it was an inappropriate development on green belt land.

The inspector said that should the Government overturn this decision, clauses should be put in the permission ensuring that mineral extraction should not resume.

But, thanks to the 1947 IDO, of which the Government has reminded everybody, an application is now going through to turn the old quarry into a super-quarry which would remove the hillside it is on and dig well below the water table.

Car travel cheaper than public transport

TRAVELLING by car in London became cheaper in January than using public transport, according to the Capital Transport Campaign (CAPITAL).

CAPITAL were responding to the latest fare hike for rail, tube and bus users in London which came into effect on January 7.

Their research found that although petrol prices had also risen, the gap between the cost of public transport and cars had widened further.

It is, they say, £17.00 cheaper to drive to London from Brighton and back than use the train, £4.20 cheaper to make a return journey from London to Guilford, and almost £30.00 cheaper to make a return journey from London to Peterborough by car.

"Far from easing traffic on our clogged up roads, these latest fare rises will simply provide drivers with further disincentives to switch modes," said Andy Burns, spokesman for the public transport pressure group.

"Without a radical change in policy the UK will continue to have one of the lowest levels in public transport use," he added.

CAPITAL believes that the Government should have a strategic approach to transport, rather than considering the cost of motoring and public transport separately.



The Brighton Reclaim the Streets action held on Valentine's Day, saw 300 protesters usurp the coughing car culture on the lanes of central Brighton. Photo by Julia Guest.

Stonehenge Campaign
99 Torriano Av
London NW5 2RX

(VE Day
8 May
1995)

dice george

Datelist 1996

March

Wed 6 8pm Stonehenge Campaign Meeting, 99 TorriAv kentishTn

Sat 16 Stg Benefit Gig at GlastAssRms

Sun 17 2pm STgMeet, GlastAssRooms

Wed 20 6am Equinox sunrise East

Wed 27 Euro Birdnesting begins

April 1996

Wed 3 8pm Stg Meet 99TorriAv

Thu 4 Eclipse???

May 1996

Wed 1 8pm Stg Meet 99TorriAv

Sun 5 LandisOurs Urban Action

June 1996

Sat 1 1pm Battersea Pagoda Stonehenge Walkers' Picnic (with musical jam)

3pm Walkers leave park...

8pm Free meal at campsite

Fri 21 Sun rises over HeleStone

Sept

Sun 22 Sept Equinox sunrise

1997

Westminster Hung Parliament

Stonehenge VE Day Book... [see SQUALL HotLinks??](http://www.phreak.co.uk/squall/)

wanted: words, pics, vids etc to add to a WWW Multimedia project (from the book we started in the Stones)

alleged e-mail dice.george@martian.demon.co.uk (or c/o 99 TorrianoAv, or to RareliaBus NPA - no phone!)

Wishes for Zuzana

Following her article on Romany Gypsies in the last issue of SQUALL, **Sam Beale** was invited over to the Czech Republic to witness a Romany christening and to experience first hand the vibrancy of European Gypsy culture.

Sam Beale

On the day before Zuzana's christening, women and children filled the kitchen in Rusenko's small Prague apartment and began preparing vast quantities of food. One year old Zuzana, blissfully ignorant of all the fuss, was to celebrate her initiation into the rites of the Catholic Church as the newest member of the Romany community. Whilst the furor of activity swirled around her, Zuzana crawled around the floor, inquisitive with her big beautiful Roma eyes, shoving into her mouth anything she was handed, edible or otherwise.

Miraculously to English eyes, the other children, apparently without question or prompting, worked alongside their sisters, mothers and aunts. They refused categorically to allow visitors to help. Guests must sit and be served refreshments at regular ten minute intervals; food, strong coffee, cigarettes, vodka and smiles.

Zuzana's grandfather, Jan, was the subject of much concerned conversation. He lay in hospital recovering from a heart attack and wouldn't be making it to the Christening. For ten years he has led a traditional Roma ensemble - Perumos (thunder/lightening in Romani) - a musical troupe

involving most of his family. They work all over Europe performing Gypsy songs, dances and music-based stories in stunning traditional costume.

"We sing traditional arrangements of old songs which were sung by my grandmother and great grandmother" explained Jan's sister, Margita, a primary singer with the ensemble.

Margita is spellbinding. Her smile is broad and wise, her manner both powerful and tender. She shouted across the kitchen to the other women as they worked; joking, teasing and laughing. With the Perumos troupe, she sings lamenting, ecstatic Gypsy songs in a strong, deep voice, irresistibly gravelly with tobacco and vodka. She is also a writer, an artist and a collector of Gypsy fairy tales.

"They say I am a Romany writer. I don't know how; someone 'dictates', I just write it down," she explains. "Writers can sometimes see better, see further on. They can see a problem and express it." With her visions and writing abilities, Margita edits a Romany magazine called Gendalos (Romani for 'mirror'). She speaks candidly of censorship, threats and, without paranoia, of the facts of life for politically radical Roma in a country shaking off the remains of a long

Communist history.

She and her brother are longtime civil rights activists for Roms and are both well-known and well-respected within the international Gypsy community. The long list of Margita's creative talents also includes poetry, with two of her poems appearing in school textbooks as examples of world literature: "I hope that when the children read them, their teachers will let them know they have been written by a Rom and our children will be proud."

Jarmila, known to all as Jarka, is Jan's wife. She is a non-gypsy woman and a mother of four children: Hana, Marketa, Jiri and Redana. Although Redana is Zuzana's mother, she was conspicuously absent from the preparations for the christening. Stunningly beautiful in old photographs of the Perumos, Redana was mentioned rarely, at least in the presence of visitors. It seems that when very young, she fell in love and ran away with a man the family strongly disapproved of. When she returned, her father made her cut off all her hair (a Gypsy woman's 'crowning glory'); a traditional punishment for Roma women who are considered to have behaved 'shamefully'. However, she did not stay long, running away

again to be with Zuzana's father, reluctantly leaving her baby with the family. Her relationship with them, particularly her father, is strained and she doesn't visit often. Some video footage of the ensemble performing after she had returned, shows her with cropped hair, dancing and singing alongside her father. That particular performance poignantly acted out an intensely compelling story very similar to her own tale of forbidden love.

The preparation of food for the Christening took 24 hours. A constant stream of visitors the day before brought deliveries and went on errands for meat, bread, cakes and drinks. Meanwhile the women and the girls worked; with the amazing Jarka (whose severe facial expression masks her emotional and gentle nature) working harder than anyone. The women in this family are the home; nothing happens without them and they know it. Their roles are clear; traditionally and pragmatically concerned with



family, food and practicalities. On the eve of such an important family occasion the men were quiet in comparison. They seemed less sure of themselves.

In between pampering visitors, preparing dishes for the next day's guests and cooking regular family meals, Jarka made a special soup with fresh pasta for her husband and took it to him in the hospital. This was your stereotypical, no-frills Communist institution. Nothing gleamed white and chrome, and you couldn't see your reflection in any of the floors. There didn't appear to be a shortage of medical care or hygiene just a slow pace, a lack of money and the distinct absence of NHS Trust managers. Everything, accept the ludicrously young orderlies, appeared old.

Rusenko had just been taken out of intensive care which, he said, could not have been less intensive. He had been sandwiched between two old women who groaned, cried,

chattered and snored until, desperate for peace, he demanded a bed on his own. The family, blatantly ignoring visiting hours and restrictions on numbers, popped in to see him at all hours. The man at the door, fag hanging from his sad-faced clown mouth, appeared miserably resigned

his incarceration but was still able to issue instructions for Zuzana's big day. Even from his hospital bed he was determined to be the head of the family. He asked how the preparations were going, who was coming and what the little girl would look like.

The children winced as they downed the strong Czech spirit. Little Margeta, tipping rather a lot on the grave, was chided by a tearful Margita: "Not so much! You'll get him drunk!"

to just about everything, making only minor, disinterested attempts to complain.

With his family around him Jan Rusenko, a proud Rom with soulful eyes and a thick, greying beard, looked tired and depressed by

A teenage orderly in short uniform and ankle socks skipped in with Jan's drugs for the night, flashing a seductive smile at everyone but not noticing the two strictly forbidden cigarettes Jan's wife had left at his bidding. He hung

out of the window smoking one, raising his hand in farewell as his family made their way back home to start work again.

The Christening itself was a relatively quiet affair. It was held on the outskirts of Prague in the Rusenko family church, a small, classically Eastern European building, stunningly beautiful inside with its incense, candles and suffering saints. The smiling priest, robed in purple and gold Christening garb, looked puzzled but pleased that English Gypsy Peter Mercer, Zuzana's godfather, needed to have the ceremony translated into English by the child's Godmother, Hana. Despite being a Czech gadje (non-Gypsy), Hana is a long-time family friend who studies Romani language, loves Roms and Romani culture and today was being ritually welcomed into the family. Fortunately for both myself and Peter Mercer, she is also an interpreter.

Continued
→→→

Wishes for Zuzana (cont.)

After the rites were completed, Margita slipped out for a smoke and to perform some rites of her own. As the rest of the congregation emerged from the church, they found her weeping by the grave of her brother who had died of a heart attack a year before aged only 40. Two lighted cigarettes were placed on the grave, "for him" explained Hana. Margita then produced a bottle of vodka and a glass and everyone in turn was poured a shot. Reverently, they each tipped a few drops onto the dead man's grave before knocking back the rest. The children winced as they downed the strong Czech spirit. Little Margeta, tipping rather a lot on the grave, was chided by a tearful Margita: "Not so much! You'll get him drunk!". Everyone laughed and moved on to repeat the ritual at another grave, that of the second of Margita's brothers to die young from a heart condition. His grave was decorated with beautiful engravings

of horses and a picture of the handsome Rom himself. With tears in her eyes, Margita explained that this brother had been a great horseman and that horses loved him. At his funeral, she recalled, his coffin had been borne by a horse which had wept real tears. Everyone nodded. They had seen it.

Next stop was another hospital visit to present Jan Rusenko with his grandchild. Confused, vaguely interested patients and staff watched as the godparents handed Zuzana to him saying, in Romani: "We took from you a baby; we bring to you a baptised child." He smiled and nodded approval. Zuzana giggled, her bonnet and Christening gown glowing white, as Jarka rearranged the purple, green and white sash, a gift from godfather Peter Mercer (given to him, bizarrely enough, by English Gypsy-champion David Essex). Jan's children kissed him, his youngest son Jiri, clinging to him. As he stood in his pyjamas

waiting for the antiquated lift to take them all away from him, he was gently smiling, bidding Peter to drink his share of whisky.

Back at the house yet more vodka-drinking rituals. Zuzana, resplendent in Christening robes and gold earrings (another gift from Peter), was held high whilst each member of the family in turn toasted her with vodka; wishing her health, wealth, love, beauty, long life and a strong heart.

The guests trickled in with warm smiles and yelps of delight; drinking proper began. The Perumos's accordian player began to play, feet tapped and the women began to sing. Tears welled up in the dark eyes of even the most apparently gruff old men with Jarka, her niece Natasa and the other children darting in and out with food and bottles. Meanwhile, Zuzana was being fussed over, with her great-grandmother proudly posing with her for photographs.

Children ran about everywhere, dragging the youngest behind them as the music got wilder, the laughter louder and the dancing began. Margita bossily re-filled half-full glasses, teasing the most

unlikely characters to their feet. At one point the women, arms raised high and with wicked grins on their faces, engaged in a sort of dancing combat to win the man they wanted, barging each other violently out of the way in mock anger. The men loved it.

After lunch Jarka passed round a silver tray and each guest threw notes into it "for the child". Everyone wept, Jarka most of all. Tears for the generosity of her guests, for the high emotion of the Christening and the hope it symbolised were all mingled with sorrow that her husband and their daughter - Zuzana's mother - were absent from the celebrations. The music played on and, as always with these people for whom extreme emotions seem constantly interchangeable, the tears turned once more to laughter and singing. Everybody sang, with solos demanded and generously applauded. Margita sang till she lost her voice completely, the children stayed up far too late and Jarka didn't sit down all day. Drunk beyond belief, the accordian player was the last to leave. 

Mending the Mirror

Belonging to a race which has no written history is both liberating and frustrating. Romany history, barring academic studies, is oral, musical, and dance-based. Every mystery, myth and legend, religious or folkloric could involve Gypsy people.

Sam Beale investigates the myth.

The theory of Gypsy origins most widely accepted by experts and Gypsies themselves is that their journey began in North Western India over a thousand years ago. Through studying the Romani language experts have, they say, ascertained which countries Roms travelled through and how long they stayed. Linguistic evidence suggests they arrived in Eastern Europe early in the 14th century.

During a long and heated discussion around the Rusenkos' kitchen table about the ancestry and movement of Gypsies, whilst women and children prepared food, versions of stories were swapped.

Like the one which says that Roms were given the gift of fortune telling as a reward for hiding Mary and Jesus from Herod's baby-slaughtering soldiers. (Margita believes that "during the time Roms are fulfilling themselves with negative things, material things, this gift has disappeared".) A hundred questions, presumably pondered by enquiring Gypsy minds many times before, were asked: "Are we, as some say, the lost 13th tribe of Israel?" "How much of the Old Testament was rewritten for use as an instrument of power?" (Was something of the history of Roms lost in this expediency?) "Was Ghengis Khan a Rom?"

Whatever the 'facts' the subject obsessed the Rusenkos/Rusenkovas and everyone had a theory to posit. Finally, shifting the mood in the kitchen from the realms of frustrated realism and highly questionable guesswork to simple folklore, Margita Reiznerova told a story. Not an ancient one, but her own. It speaks plainly for itself. It is called Romano Gendalos, Romany Mirror, and sipping her vodka and chainsmoking, this is how she told it:

This happened a long, long time ago when Roms lived in their own country. At that time they had a

good life because they had a good king. He loved them as much as he would his own children. He taught them everything that his parents and grandparents had taught him. But, as it usually is, a time came when the king was supposed to die and go to heaven. So he called all the Roms and he started to talk to them: "Listen Roms, I'm not going to be here anymore. I'm going to die. So remember the words I am saying now. After I die you won't stay here. You will spread around all the corners of the world. What I have taught you you are going to teach the other people you meet wherever you go. Wherever you go you will bring joy, peace, fortune telling.



Sam Beale

Your songs and dances will please the hearts of people. I will give you a very old mirror to take with you. Look after it. Don't break it. And keep together. Always stay together. The mirror is going to show you the way. When you look in it you will know who you are, where you are from and where you are going. And you will know what is going to happen. If you break the mirror you will forget everything you knew. You will forget who you are, where you are from and where you are going.

So, they buried him and just as he said, it happened. Wherever they went they were welcome. And they travelled through a big part of the world and they came to one country where the people were as dark as Roms and they stayed for a long time. But then one of the families wanted to keep going, to travel on, and so who will keep the mirror? That family wanted the mirror and those who were staying wanted it as well. And then it started. They began to fight because of the mirror. As they fought they started to pull it this way and that and finally the mirror fell and broke into thousands and thousands of little pieces. And when the Roms saw what they had done they stopped fighting and each of them took a little piece of the mirror. The ones who kept a piece of the mirror had better luck, those who didn't have any of the mirror just had their eyes for tears.

After that wherever they went nobody wanted them, everyone just

wanted rid of them, they were humiliated because they had forgotten who they were, where they were from and where they were going.

But today Roms want to know who they are, where they are from and where they are going. So now they are asking all the people, whoever has got a little piece, or who knows who has got a piece

bring it, to put the mirror together so we know again who we are, where we are from and where we are going. So people! Bring the pieces, the sooner the better.

Later, talking about the problems faced by European Roms, Margita remembered a Gypsy Conference in Budapest. She noted that she hadn't wanted to speak publicly about the difficulties of Czech Roms: "I didn't want to talk because of the horrible things happening to Roms in Yugoslavia and elsewhere... I found my problems ridiculous next to theirs.

We don't suffer that much anymore." To an extent this is true. These Roms are not living in the abject poverty faced by many elsewhere in Europe. But this family is far from well-off. They are fortunate that their work is still in demand; unlike many Gypsies whose traditional skills have long since been superseded or forgotten, performing folk songs still appeals.

“They had forgotten who they were, where they were from and where they were going.”

This is an acceptable part of Romany culture which authorities and often hostile gadjes can stomach.

There is grotesque hypocrisy in this acceptance of the colourful, smiling, somehow 'other' nature of Gypsy song and dance when coupled with rejection, demonisation and blind hatred of the people who produce it if they are not singing and dancing but starving or looking for jobs. As a tourist attraction Gypsies are appealing; as a race, a longtime part of a community in need of work, housing, education and tolerance they are 'the Gypsy problem'.

Assessing the fate of European Roms from a distance there is little hope: racism - institutionalised, random and sometimes violent - is on the increase. The descendents of those forced to settle because their freedom of movement was perceived as a threat are, now that their nomadic heritage is all but lost, treated with the same hackneyed suspicions and still do not 'belong'. Now it is their blackness and the tight, closed caution that intolerance and exclusion have effectively forced upon them which make Gypsy communities suspect.

However, welcomed into a creative, radical and politically aware Rom home, pampered and included, showered with the most intense hospitality and good feeling imaginable the mirror starts to look less shattered. Most of all, the Rusenkos would be happy to know there was hope from their children, who revealed a grace, a self-reliance and a perception of the needs of those around them that they have learnt young from living in a large family who have little and are permanently up against it. Romany traditions are complex and sometimes hard for outsiders to swallow. But the quiet, instinctive, day-to-day tolerance and respect this family practise is something from which those in the West, who would reject the dog-eat-rabid-dog values of the system the Czech Republic is now embracing, could learn much. SQ

Subcomandante Marcos poses in battle-dress. Pic - unknown.



ZAP

December 31st, 1993.
The frost was inches thick on the ground. We'd gone to Avebury, just me and a friend. There was nobody else there. We walked round the stones. It was very quiet. Approaching the stones, hundreds of faces loomed out of them at us. Our footsteps made black marks on the white, rigid grass. In the morning, we watched the sun come up over the stones. It was still freezing. Somebody else was awake that night, though I didn't know it at the time. Apparently it was freezing that night in San Cristobal de Las Casas, too. Mexico is six hours behind our time, so the city must have fallen at just about the time we watched the

“Antonio dreams that the earth he works belongs to him. He dreams that his sweat is paid with justice and truth. He dreams there is a school to cure ignorance, and medicine to frighten away death. He dreams that his land is free and that reason governs his people and his people govern by reason. He dreams that he must struggle to have this dream, he dreams that there must be death to have life. Antonio dreams and he wakes...

A wind rises up. Something tells him that his desire is the desire of many and he goes to find them.

The viceroy dreams that his earth moves from a terrible wind. He dreams that that which he robbed is taken from him. He orders murders, imprisonment, the building of more jails.

In this country everyone dreams. Now the time has come to awaken...”

From ‘Two Winds, a storm and a Prophecy’ by Subcomandante Marcos.

ZAPATISTA !

When vested land interests and exclusive democracy became too entrenched in Mexico the peasants and freedom fighters took exception. **Ursula Wills-Jones** reports on the people's revolution.

sunrise. They just arrived, unannounced, out of the mist, out of the mountains, out of 500 years of obscurity, and by the time the world woke up on New Year's Day, San Cristobal, a modern tourist city with 100,000 inhabitants, had, along with five other towns, been seized by masked Mayan rebels.

I didn't know this at the time, of course. It was that evening when I turned on the radio that I heard that an insurgent army, unknown and unheard of, had emerged in the State of Chiapas, Southern Mexico, demanding freedom for the indigenous people, the repeal of the North American Free Trade Treaty, bread, land and democracy. If history had ever ended, it had just started again. I couldn't remember the last time I laughed so much.

If I was surprised, I wasn't the only one. Almost all the news reports carried the phrase "a previously-unknown group calling itself the EZLN". For ten years in the mountains an indigenous army had been growing, and almost no-one had known. But if Central America was a familiar hotbed of Communist revolution in the 1980's, this one was very different.

The Zapatista National Liberation Army didn't invoke the names of Marx, Lenin, or Mao. Instead they looked to Mexico's revolutionary folk heroes, naming themselves after Emilio Zapata, the peasant hero of Mexico's unfinished revolution, which had taken place in 1910. They weren't interested in taking power, they claimed, demanding instead a transitional government to bring

democracy and end the seventy-year dictatorship of Mexico's ruling party, the PRI.

One of their main demands was the redistribution of land. Although Chiapas is a productive and fertile state, huge tracts are owned by large landowners, usually of European descent, while the indigenous Mayan poor scratch out a living on inadequate mountain slopes. Adult malnutrition in Chiapas was as high as 80 per cent. The Zapatistas control of much of the state, or simply their example, did provoke a certain amount of land redistribution to take place, and by the end of 1994 more than 100,000 acres of land had been occupied by peasant land invasions.

The Zapatistas internal dynamics also marked them out from earlier armed movements. While their military commander and non-indigenous spokesman, Subcomandante Marcos, became their most obvious figurehead, the actual leadership of the army remained in the hands of an elected committee, the Indigenous Revolutionary Clandestine Committee, made up solely of indigenous people from Zapatista communities. They were also refreshingly free from traditional Marxist dogma: Marcos was lambasted by the government press after he joked to an American newspaper that he had once been sacked from a job for being gay. Many people saw them as a product of Catholic Liberation theory, but some of their habits would certainly have appalled the Pope. A third of the insurgent force was made up of women, and female Zapatista leaders cheerfully admitted that they encouraged

them to take the pill. Marcos confirmed that it was the EZLN's policy to ensure that safe abortions were available for any female guerrilla who needed or wanted it.

One of the Zapatistas other assets was that un-Communist characteristic, a sense of humour. Marcos' communiqués, written on a laptop computer somewhere in the jungle and faxed out to the press, were alternately poetic, self-deprecating and witty. Not only that, but they handled the press with a skill that would have most professional spin-doctors weeping with envy. The New York Times dubbed them 'post-modern revolutionaries'. In fact, the media was probably their main weapon, and rather more effective than the ancient, single shot rifles that most of the guerrillas carried.

The Zapatistas honeymoon period didn't last. In Dec '94 the Mexican economy crashed, and the government lost their patience. They sent in as many as 20,000 well-armed federal army troops into Zapatista controlled areas, and issued arrest warrants for the leaders. The Zapatistas didn't try to fight it out: they just retreated into the mountains, taking much of the local populations with them.

The government also attempted to deflate Marcos' huge popularity by 'unmasking' him, revealing him to be Rafael Guillen Vicente, a former university lecturer. Unfortunately for them, Guillen's biography showed nothing more sinister than the fact that he was educated, intelligent, principled, and had given up a comfortable middle-class lifestyle to live in poverty. As hi-tech

planes bombed indigenous villages, demonstrations filled Mexico City, chanting 'we are all Marcos'. Marcos' response to his 'unmasking' was to quip "Is this new Marcos handsome? Recently they've been trying to make out I'm ugly, and it's ruining my female fan mail." After a week, the offensive was called off, but large tracts of land which had previously been EZLN territory were now controlled by the army. The long grind of peace talks began again.

One thing is certain, however. Mexican politics has never been the same since the uprising, nor is it likely to be so again. The Zapatistas claimed that they wanted to tear off the first world mask which the country had put on; in that, they could hardly have been more successful.

"Ever since January we live in a new Mexico," wrote Elena Poniatkova, a Mexico city journalist. "Before, we scarcely spoke of misery in our country, and the poor were easily ignored. The poverty of 'the others' became part of daily life - it was our landscape." In the summer of '95, a survey showed that 82 per cent of Mexicans believed that the basic demands of the Zapatistas were the basic demands of the Mexican people.

It's also possible that the uprising will have repercussions beyond the boundaries of Mexico. As the first organised revolt against the New World Order, The Zapatistas proved that despite the death of Communism, resistance to the oppressive hand of market forces is by no means over - in fact, it is probably just beginning.



support cultivation. Camps consisting of several families are moved and satellite camps established so pasture land is not exhausted. Animals, wool, dairy products including yak butter, and salt are traded in Summer for peas and barley, grown in villages perched on the edge of the plateau.

Tashi Lhamo is 44, a refugee Tibetan nomad. In 1959, the same year as the Dalai Lama, she fled Tibet with her family - the Changtang Plateau straddles the border between India and Chinese occupied Tibet. The western, Indian part of Changtang is occupied by Ladakhi nomads, Tibetan by culture, politically Indian. The introduction of a commune system by the Chinese, so nomads no longer controlled their own flocks, as well as suppression of religion, forced abortions and forced 'contraception' (for contraception read sterilisation) caused many Tibetan nomads to flee their native land. They took their chances on the Indian, Ladakhi edge of the plateau, as well as going south. Many died.

"Tibet has big pastures, so there was no difficulty with grazing," Tashi Lhamo told me. "But on the Indian Changtang there is a problem, because too many people came from Tibet." The animal population almost doubled, putting severe strain on the ecology of the area.

There's another problem with the western, Indian Changtang plateau. Snowfall there is more than east of the border. When the snow comes and blocks the high passes, many camps are utterly isolated. In 1990 Tashi Lhamo's

One of the harshest places to live on this planet is the Changtang plateau - fifteen to sixteen thousand feet high, the same as Mont Blanc, vast expanses of flatland interrupted only by lakes and snow mountains. Wild asses, yak, sheep and goats graze the meagre grass.

Rare birds like the Black Neck Crane lay their eggs in Summer around lakes like Tso Kar, 'The White Lake,' so-called because of its salinity. Much of the

plateau lies in the shadow of the Greater Himalaya range whose sharp white outline is visible on a clear day far to the south. To the North are more mountains, then the Taklaman and Gobi deserts. Rain and snowfall is relatively low. But the Changtang is cold, and huge winds howl uninterrupted across its emptiness. During long winters - the big freeze starts in September and continues through to May - the temperature regularly drops to minus 40C.

Aside from a few small villages, often surrounding an old

Buddhist monastery, the people are nomads living in drafty, black yak hair tents. They burn dried dung for cooking - yak dung is said to be the best - there are no trees. Tibetans or of Tibetan culture, they are entirely dependent on their animals - yak, sheep, goats and horses. Powerful Tibetan mastiffs guard the flocks at night from wolf packs and snow leopards.

This way of life, nomadic pastoralism, is the only sustainable existence on the Changtang. Crops don't grow because the season is too short and the soil too meagre to

Travellers In Another Place: The Himalayas

The Nomads of Ladakh live a hard life on the vast expanses of the Changtang plateau. The Chinese invasion and western tourism have both taken their toll. Words and pictures by **Tim Malyon**

husband died of lung disease. And her infant daughter, Tsering Choedon, rolled into the fire, badly burning one side of her face. No medical help was available.

Too much snow also starves animals no longer able to graze the meagre grass buried beneath. In 1992 Tashi Lhamo lost her last pony. Unable to transport her heavy yak hair tent any longer, she traded it for a lightweight, cold, canvas tent. Then in the winter of 1993-1994 she lost sixty sheep and goats from her herd of one hundred, barely on the edge of subsistence. The nomad community with which she lived usually moves four times during the prolonged winter period to find new pastures. With only forty sheep and goats she could no longer sustain herself. So, in October 1994, Tashi finally realised she would not make it through the next winter and moved with her two daughters to the Tibetan refugee camp of Choglamsar, near Leh, the capital of Ladakh. She arrived on 31st October, Halloween.

Her room is still arranged like a nomad tent, woollen saddlebags lining the walls. She refers wistfully to the Tibet she left behind as "the place where many flowers grow". She wants to return, "when there is independence and the Chinese have gone". Her son, Dhondul Jigmet's education was sponsored by an English family. When he heard that his mother had been forced off the Changtang, he had four months left at university before graduating. He wrote an agonised letter to Choglamsar camp. "I really feel I should quit university and come home to look after my family." He was

persuaded not to, graduated, and is now teaching in the Choglamsar Tibetan Children's Village school.

Changtang's most precious product is Cashmere wool. The fine, soft, inner goat wool is combed out in June. There are few places in the world, principally the Himalayas and Mongolia, cold enough to produce such wool. Historically the raw 'pashmina' from western Changtang nomads was bought by Kashmiri merchants and then processed in Kashmir - dehaired, carded, spun and woven. With the violence in Kashmir, and Ladakh's increasing political autonomy, the trade has opened up. Now nomads receive a much better price for their wool.

And the military has opened a road across the Indian Changtang, passable between June and October. It's the world's second highest motorable road after the nearby 'highway in the sky' across the Ladakh Mountains to the Nubra Valley. The Changtang road affords nomads easier trading opportunities.

When Kashmiri merchants came to buy wool, they often bartered other goods at inflated prices to the nomads, for whom a journey to the nearest town was a major undertaking lasting several weeks, or even months. Now the journey to Leh, Ladakh's capital, once a major staging post on the old 'silk route' to China, is a matter of days.

The road has also opened up the area to western tourists. Tourism - jeep and trekking groups - sometimes brings cash through hire of horses, sale of dairy products, work as guides, cooks, ponymen. (Although such is the greed of the tourist industry that Tibetan and Ladakhi ponymen have often not been paid for months of work.)

During the Summer little tea stalls, often run by Tibetan refugees, spring up along the road, anywhere there's water. Buses, trucks and jeeps stop. But then tourism and the attractions of a 'modern' lifestyle draw some nomads away from their traditional culture, just like education does, especially when it lends no value to traditional beliefs and skills, or teaches nuclear physics not animal husbandry. If too many young people migrate, the culture becomes unviable. If they go away, learn, and return with appropriate skills and value for their own culture, like Tashi Lhamo's son, then it can grow and develop healthily. Nothing remains the same, even here. Change is the only constant. And change can sometimes be guided.

On the Ladakhi Changtang, appropriate skills often means appropriate technology skills. A project designing appropriate fuel-efficient smokeless stoves for nomads' tents has involved close collaboration between Tibetan refugee metal workers in Choglamsar Camp, the nomads on

the Changtang, and westerners. Cynthia Hunt is the co-ordinator in Ladakh for Appropriate Technology for Tibetans, a London-based charity which funded much of the project.

"We spent a lot of time out in the Changtang, with John Nightingale, who owns a stove refurbishment business back in Devon, and Dorje Namgyal, who is in charge of the metal workshop in Choglamsar refugee camp where we make the stoves. We went from tent to tent, interviewing people and asking them their impressions of the stoves they already used and what needed changing. Then we designed several prototypes and sent them out last winter to the Changtang. People all sent back their monitoring reports. We've had to make some slight adjustments to the prototypes, but basically by designing the stove according to their expressed needs, we came up with a model that fitted."

The stoves have eliminated smoke within the tent, are designed to take the size of cookpots used by nomads, give out great heat for very little fuel, and crucially, are light and strong enough to be carried on a yak's back. Full-scale production is now under way.

Lighting also: nomads can no longer afford to burn clarified butter to light their tents - the traditional method. Some nomads buy and transport kerosene to their

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camps, but it is expensive and smoky. Cheap diesel, purchased from truck drivers on the road is one solution, but in confined tents the smoke from open wick lanterns is suffocating and laden with particulates so it's hard sometimes to see the other side of the tent. Lung and eye diseases are taking an increasing toll.

Due to its position in the rain shadow of the Greater Himalaya Range and high annual rate of sunshine, Ladakh, especially the Ladakhi Changtang, is an ideal location for solar power. The local electric company is state-run and has invested heavily in appropriate modes of power generation, especially for remote areas. It is just embarking on a programme of supplying solar-powered lighting to the Changtang nomads. Equipment - lights and solar boards - is supplied free of charge. And the company is investing heavily in training so that nomads can repair their own lights.

Everyone who receives a light pays a one-off fee of Rupees 200 (£4) or Rupees 5 (10p) per month to cover payment for the maintenance person. Wangchuk Kalon, from the Social Work and Research Centre, Leh, has been contracted to run the training programme: "Our own gut feeling and experience told us that this

scheme would only be workable and sustainable if it is controlled by the community. The person who maintains the lights must be within easy reach, selected by the community and paid by the community, so he or she is under their control." A special type of solar lantern, less fragile than other solar lights, has been developed for the nomads.

Some change involve promoting ancient skills. Tibetan medicine is an effective amalgamation of Indian Ayurvedic medicine, Chinese medicine, ancient local medical knowledge and indigenous psychiatry, often involving meditation and guidance on lifestyle. It's widely respected throughout Ladakh. A local development agency, Leh Nutrition Project, with finance from Save the Children, is training young Ladakhis from Changtang and other remote areas in basic Tibetan medicine and preventative care so that the most common ailments can be avoided or treated before they become too serious. Tashi Lhamo's husband might have lived if he'd received help in time. The aim is to train sufficient health workers so all communities have access to indigenous health care. It's a sustainable community programme, the brainchild of a local Tibetan doctor, Tsewang Smanla, and

developed with local communities who choose a health worker to train from amongst their own.

Once trained, communities support the health worker in whatever way they can, as in the traditional system, where training usually passed down from father to son. Doctors never charged for their services and in return received community help with ploughing and harvesting - an indigenous National Health Service. A similar system operates within the nomadic community where one doctor, or 'amchi,' might serve four or five communities. Each community will look after a number of animals, herding them with the rest. They'd be the amchi's animals, from which he would receive income or produce - wool, various dairy products, meat, skins. Whenever the amchi visited the village, he'd be fed. Whenever he came to the area to collect local medicinal herbs, he'd be fed. In return, medical care for all, free of charge at the point of delivery.

The Changtang nomads live together in families, but also come together in camps as communities. Community is a crucial concept, to them, to the Tibetans in Choglamsar refugee camp, to most Ladakhis, including Jigmet Namgyal, head of the state electric company.

Somehow it's hard to imagine privatised UK electric companies supplying all travellers in their area with solar lighting and training sufficient numbers to maintain them. But then community coherence has long been crucial for survival within Ladakh, especially the Changtang. People also naturally understand that co-operating with nomads to maintain good health and a sustainable lifestyle is better and cheaper in the long run than them being forced off the land with all the attendant problems of extreme poverty, homelessness and urban ghettoisation. We need to redevelop a similar attitude in so-called 'developed' nations, to travellers of all description, and to all cultures which promote co-operative self-help. Because the Changtang nomads are definitely DIY.

**Appropriate Technology for Tibetans (ApTibeT)
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Tim Malyon recently presented two programmes for BBC Radio 4, 'We Do It Differently Here', on appropriate technology and development in Ladakh and Kenya.



China continues nuclear testing

CHINA has decided to ignore a nuclear test ban agreement reached by Russia, the US, Britain and, finally, France.

It is considered that at least some of the reason why China continues to let off nuclear bombs is to keep the frighteners on Taiwan. Rumours abound that China intends to launch a missile attack on Taiwan in an attempt to disrupt the democratic elections taking place on the island in March. China is thought to consider that the elections will help establish Taiwan's independence in the eyes of the world. China's prime minister, Li Peng, told a rally in Tiannenmen Square recently: "There is only one China in the world and Taiwan is an

inalienable part of it." China's previous attempts to bring Taiwan to its knees has occasionally reached farcical proportions. At one stage, China set up a huge sound system on the beach facing Taiwan, blasting incessant propaganda at the island. By way of an arms escalation, Taiwan then did the same, resulting in a bizarre DJ sound clash across a hundred miles of ocean. If only the war would remain on this level everything would be fine, but with China flexing its nuclear muscle and making itself accountable to no-one, the implications of its nuclear capability are sending shudders throughout the world.

Tibetan Panchen Lama still missing

THE WHEREABOUTS of the boy chosen by the Dalai Lama as the reincarnation of the Panchen Lama is the subject of increasing concern.

The Panchen Lama is a spiritual position second only to the Dalai in the Tibetan Buddhist hierarchy. The boy was selected by the Dalai Lama last May, using oracles and divination processes integral to Tibetan Buddhist spirituality.

However, the Dalai Lama's announcement of his selection sparked a six month campaign by the Chinese designed to discredit the decision. Going one step further, the Chinese then enforced its own candidate in a secret investiture held in Lhasa on November 28th (televised after the event) and a public enthronement ten days later.

Meanwhile, neither the boy chosen by the Dalai Lama nor his Tibetan nomad family has been seen since. "When asked about his whereabouts, the Chinese say the boy is just one Chinese citizen amongst many and they don't know everyone's address," says Robbie Barnett, from the independent monitoring organisation, the Tibet Information Group.

A vigil in support of Tibetan religious and cultural freedom occurs every Wednesday outside the Chinese Embassy, 49 Portland Place, London at 6pm.

Contact: Tibet Support Group,
43 New Oxford Street,
London WC1A 1BH.
Tel: 0171 359 7573.

Saro-Wiwa execution defended in US

ADVERTS defending the execution of Nigerian human rights activist Ken Saro-Wiwa, placed by the families of those he allegedly killed, are being paid for by the Nigerian Government, Nigerian opposition groups have claimed.

The adverts, placed in the New York Times, stated: "Thousands of Ogoni people

believe that justice prevailed." They were paid for by a foundation based in Philadelphia, formed by the eldest sons of each of the four victims of the murders for which Saro-Wiwa was hanged.

The editor of a Nigerian Opposition newspaper said that the foundation was a front for the Nigerian military rulers.

Brussels squatters take on city

TOURIST BROCHURES drone on about the beautiful Golden guild houses of Grand place in Brussels, meanwhile the rest of the city is falling apart due to massive development projects.

Entire blocks of architecturally superb buildings are being evicted and left idle as speculators buy up half the central city to invest in office blocks. The result is that streets upon streets are filled with buildings, built in the 1880s, are being left to rot leaving the city to degenerate.

One particular block on Rue Auguste which once included a Hotel, cinema, apartments and cafes now stands derelict since an Antwerp investment company landmaster bought it and closed it in 1987. Sitting opposite the stock exchange it is prime space for the suits and ties of the financial world. Strangely enough the two remaining premises left operating are a small cafe and a two storey McDonald's. The cafe owner has been given constant harassment to leave while the Big Mac people are firmly rooted.

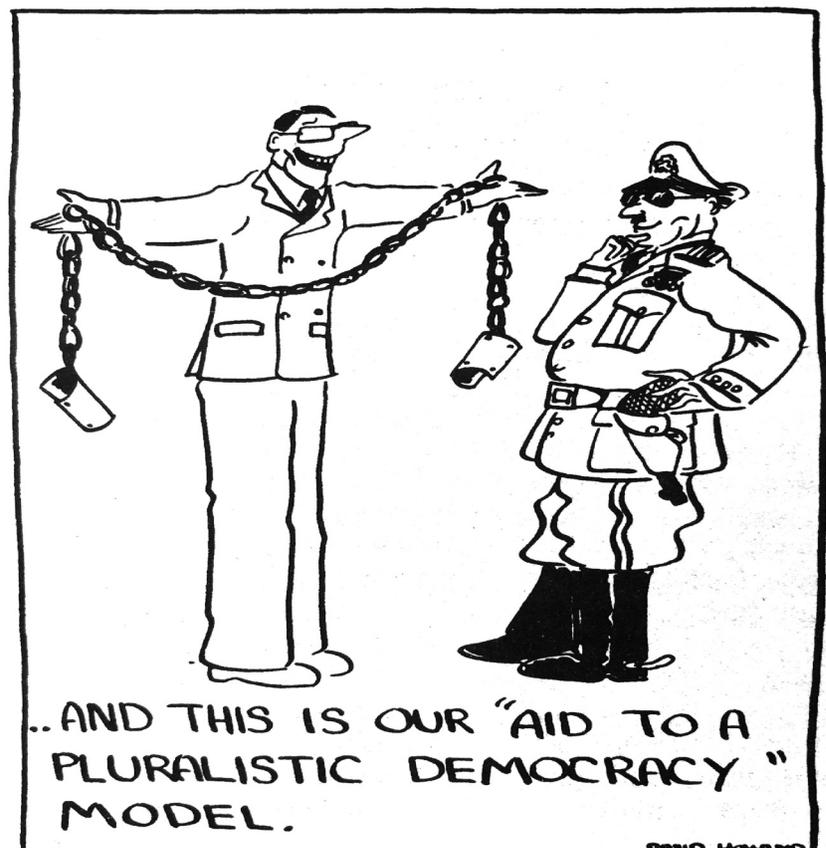
In January 1995 activists occupied the abandoned Hotel and opened it back up to the people, running a vegetarian cafe didn't go down too well with McD and the resulting positive media coverage embarrassed the council. The last words of the activists as they left were "do something or we will be back".

It took a year, but on January 12, 1996, activists once again squatted the block, this time going for the apartments. As police blocked off the entrance the squat crew of

architectural students and social activists worked throughout the night, completely renovating one apartment as a show piece. As banners dropped the next morning the local media went wild with coverage and once again embarrassed the council and investors. As one activist, Zoe De Smedt, said: "Belgium does not have a tradition of residential Squatting like the Netherlands or England but as a symbolic occupation it is a very powerful tool. People want to live and party in the city and keep it alive. Office blocks will make Brussels cold and unwelcoming."

The Police left when their estimate that only four activists were inside turned out to be severely inaccurate: fifty squatters streamed out onto the balconies. The media were herded into the renovated apartment, TV cameras were pointed in the right places and journos scribbled with delight. Unfortunately, not so much media attention went to the homeless people who squatted a disused chateau on the far side of the city. Two weeks before Christmas ten people occupied the building and are happily living there escaping the cold winds of the city. As for the architectural squatters, they left after a few days promising to return if nothing changes.

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Theatre doesn't come more socially relevant than Cardboard Citizens. **Sam Beale** strays far from the West End to find a cutting-edge theatre troupe dangerously close to the heart of real theatre. Picture by **Nick Cobbing**.

Cardboard Citizens was formed in 1991 in conjunction with the London Bubble Theatre Company following a project with homeless people in Central London. "The qualification to perform in the company is to have experienced homelessness," explains Adrian Jackson, Artistic Director of the company. To reflect different kinds of homelessness the company tries to "maintain a balance of experience". It would probably be easier to have a company made up of people predominantly involved in squatting because they are, broadly speaking, more organised. But we really try to avoid that option" says Adrian. This range of experience is important "because we almost always devise our material and when you devise you rely on plundering people's lives."

Last year Sandra Barefoot, a performer who works with Cardboard Citizens, lived in a London hostel for four months with her two year old son Ben: "It was pretty horrendous living in a single room with a child." Sandra believes this experience was useful in the devising process for Cardboard Citizens: "My situation is specific so I found out loads from other people in the company about suicide, violence, all the other issues for homeless people, especially women. I've always been on people's floors without a base but it's different when you're on the line, especially with a child."

The company's last tour was a Forum Theatre production, 'A Woman of No Importance?' It is the story of Lisa, a girl of 16 living with her seriously over-worked mother, her long-term unemployed stepfather and their two younger children. Family relations are strained. Lisa and her step father don't get on, he beats her and her mother doesn't have the time to notice how unhappy she is and doesn't want to create friction with her old man. One night Lisa is caught sneaking out by her step-dad and he beats her up. So, she plans to leave home. None of her friends can put her up. She doesn't accept a clumsy though well-meaning attempt at help from



Real

a teacher who notices her bruises, and she finds herself homeless.

The audience then sees her options: sleep on the streets with a bunch of friendly, though clearly alcoholic, street-sleepers, stay a few nights in a hostel where some creep goes into her room in the middle of the night, or go back home. She attempts to get benefits but (because she is only 16) is just passed around from queue to queue. She also gets bought dinner in a cafe by a man who wants to have sex with her.

The Forum Theatre style is ideal for theatre dealing with social/political issues. It was developed by Brazilian playwright and director Augusto Boal as part of his 'Theatre of the Oppressed' and seeks to change an audience's role from passive onlooker to collaborator and active participant. During a performance the audience is encouraged to replace the actors and take on their roles, changing the course of the action. Adrian explains: "We use Forum Theatre because it seems like a very real way of engaging people. It does seem like the quality of the experience that people get out of actually being

involved in The Forum is significantly better than just watching something. Doing, living for a moment is a better learning experience than just seeing." Sandra agrees: "Forum allows the play to be turned on its head and allows people to make it theatre just for that day for them."

Most of the company's eight national tours have been of hostels, drop-in-centres, day centres, and occasionally theatres. Issues covered include resettlement, family breakdowns and male prostitution. Their current tour is the first dedicated schools tour where the majority of the audience have not had direct experience of homelessness. Sandra explains: "It is about empowering. Boal has always said when you do Forum you should do it for the audience you are doing it for, for those who are at that point. But there is also wider education, wider awareness. It's the same with any movement: you start at grassroots and move out. Things have to grow and in order to grow you have to open up."

At the Arbor Centre in Tower Hamlets, Cardboard Citizens performed 'A Woman of No Importance?', as they had devised it, first



Citizens

explaining to the audience that they were going to perform it a second time giving audience members the chance to stop the action and intervene at any point by replacing a certain character and doing whatever they thought they could do to alter the course of events.

The style is very informal. The actors were all visible before the performance started, wandering around setting props and chatting. The show was fronted by Sandra and Bee Russell, the 'Jokers': kind of MCs, who field suggestions from the audience and move the action along, dealing with whatever comes up and taking on a variety of roles throughout. The other performers remain visible and do not act when they are not actually on stage. Their refreshingly straightforward and highly competent performances complemented the style.

The fact that they are all people who are or have been homeless, and they are all involved in devising each production, gives this company's work a hard edge; all sentimentalism is shunned. Reality is the name of the game and there is nothing 'worthy' about it. Adrian notes that "it's

very important to us that there is not a message we are selling: that the company's not preaching. Any learning that comes out of it comes out of that particular room at that particular time. With this show it would be very easy to become an arm of the state and go round stopping people leaving home, we wish to avoid that. When they were foraging at their best they were saying leave, but leave as well protected as you possibly can be."

It is not easy, as an audience member, to get up and participate. "To recognise that everyone has a view on things and that everyone might have an idea may not sound that radical but in a way it still is for theatre," says Adrian. "I know actor-luvvies go on about risk all the time but there is actually a real risk. You do not know what is going to happen. That keeps you on your mettle."

Sandra values the fact that "you're there with your audience's agenda and no-one else's. Forum works solely on other peoples' agenda. That's the best part. This play was predominantly for women aged 14-16. They were in your face all the time with stuff about where they wanted to

be with their parents. Homelessness sometimes wasn't addressed because it felt too removed from them. Often young women would really get hooked on the part of the play about family tensions because it was so strong for them: that's where they're at."

At the Arbor Centre performance one man shouted "stop" after Lisa had been beaten up by her step-father, and leapt up to take on her character. His solution was to call the police. The other performers (who, according to the rules behave as their character would "on a bad day"), ready for just about anything, took on other roles and this part of the story was worked through to its conclusion: a discussion between Lisa, her mother and a social worker. One woman who angrily criticised the way Lisa was responding was forced onto the stage, by shouts of "you do it then" from the audience, to say what she wanted Lisa to say. A few audience members made very dodgy statements like "she got what she deserved, she shouldn't have been sneaking out" and "she should have obeyed her father". Everything is taken on board, no suggestions are ignored, including completely useless ones like the request from a cheery teenager who shouted "Commit suicide. Why don't you just kill yourself?" Even that was considered as an option, although everyone agreed not a very productive one.

Someone wanted to see what would happen if Lisa joined the street-sleepers so the show went down that avenue for a while. By the end of the night people were on their feet, talking to each other, arguing with each other, shouting out ideas, expressing outrage and laughing loudly and they left the theatre still engaged in animated debate with total strangers.

Unfortunately, such successes do not guarantee financial support and Cardboard Citizens is currently facing a funding crisis. Their funding, as for all small-scale theatre companies, is always project-based and, says Adrian: "We've had a run of bad luck. We need to raise money quickly and most funding bodies work on a very long time-scale." It is essential that the company maintains a core staff, particularly an administrator and a fund-raiser, and it is a point of principle that they pay their actors full equity rates. "There is a respect when you're being paid," says Sandra, "you do feel, yes, you value me. You value me here and you're helping me out."

The funding situation looks bleak for the next project, a co-production with London Bubble, the 'Citz' first non-forum production: "It's an exciting project but if we don't get the dosh, we don't do it," explains Adrian. "We need £10-15,000 fast. We will hit the horizon in February." The company have unsuccessfully applied for funding from various charity bodies but, "we just didn't win the lottery," he says of the company's bid for lottery money.

"You get shit from funders", says Sandra. She believes they want certain material. They don't want the really hardcore stuff: they want it kind of nice". "Any community-based work is seen as low status. The attitude: is forget it, love. But I would do that work again and again. Give me issue-based work every time." It makes her angry that 'straight' theatre has so much more support: I would rather this company survived than say the Royal Court. It's a very political theatre company. Forum is a political tool. Brazilian playwright Boal is now using it in legislative work and for policy making. Everyday I remembered that I was doing this for a reason rather than just acting in a play and thinking why the fuck am I doing this? I believe a lot of women were empowered by it. They won't forget it."

Ⓚ

Radical



Nick Cobbing

they are fairly benign places, with well-meaning teachers, which children on the whole quite enjoy going to and where, generally, these children learn enough about the world to do what they want to as adults, then what I have just written will seem extreme. But even though some people have positive experiences, I believe this is despite, rather than because of, the school system. Whether we do 'well' or 'badly' in school terms, we are all ultimately judged by school, on their terms, and this scars most people for the rest of their lives.

So here we are, in the caring sharing nineties, protesting about road-building, quarrying, animal rights and discrimination, while millions of children spend large portions of their lives in a place where they learn to be the consumers, polluters and capitalists of the future. Surprisingly, many people aren't aware that there is an alternative, ie taking children out of school and 'teaching' them at home.

Home education is both legal and practised by many adults and children throughout the world. The ways in which people practically care for and 'educate' themselves/their children are incredibly varied, from a very structured 'school at home' with curriculum and timetables, to an unstructured life which often focuses on more practical skills, self-reliance at an early age, and living life within communities.

This last approach is the one that I feel gives children most opportunity for personal growth and self-direction, most opportunity for learning skills of flexibility and co-operation. Despite the odd "workbook" when I'm feeling the weight of my schooling breaking through, this is what I want for my children.

The biggest problem with home education is that only a small number of people do it. Inevitably children see less of other children than they would do if they were at school, but this is often compensated

Control, coercion, obedience, discrimination, conformity..... welcome to the world of a nineties school child.

School as an institution is crucial to maintain our current consumerist, anti-environmental, anti-community society. If you want to learn self-reliance, co-operation, community activism, direct action, don't go to school, because these things are completely alien in a place that teaches people dependency, competition and discrimination.

School is where we are taught to conform, to carry out actions that government and powerful influential

groups want us to carry out. It is also the place that yearly fails nearly 40 per cent of its users, even in its own

bits of paper for 'success' but they often have an internalised sense of failure that prevents them seeing that

If we can't pass on our visions
and realities to our children, then
what we do is just fashion and
ultimately meaningless.

terms. And it fails them doubly, not only do those 40 per cent who fail qualifications not have the necessary

it is the school system that has failed and not them.

If your view of schools is that

Home Education

School; The Best Years of Our Lives or State-Driven Dependency? **Emma Jackson**, who lives in a community dedicated to home education, explains what de-schooling is all about..

by the quality of relationships out of school, and also by cross-generational relationships.

As home education grows, hopefully this problem will decrease, but another way around is through the concept of flexi-schooling, which is likely to grow in the future. Flexi-schooling is a pick-and-mix attitude to schooling, ie. adults/children decide how much and what type of education they want, and negotiate this with a particular school, usually coming up with some form of part-time attendance.

This is a step towards the community resource system of learning, as proposed by many writers, and is a definite move towards reducing the autocracy of the school. Flexi-schooling is happening, but only where individual school heads are into the idea. So, if you like the concept, go and have a chat, you may be pleasantly surprised!

Another way of overcoming isolation is getting together with other home educators. I know of at least one co-housing group which sees this as a main reason for living more co-operatively. And on a smaller scale, many people living in a small housing co-op, as I do, share child care and work co-operatively (Brambles). Home education inevitably raises issues of child care and support. In a typical nuclear family, it is often the woman who home educates, the man being the traditional bread-winner. Yet with the slow breakdown of full-time work, and an increasing awareness that nuclear families and traditional gender splits are not working, more and more people are opting for part-time work, or are working and living co-operatively, giving more time to their children and less time to formal work arrangements.

Life with home education can be difficult and frustrating, but then life with children generally can be hard, especially if you have little money and support. Within DIY culture (squatting, direct action, travelling communities, co-ops, low-

impact living) caring for children can come into direct conflict with what others in your immediate community want to do. An inability to be 'politically active' because of day-to-day responsibilities for child care can be frustrating. Also frustrating can be other people's lack of awareness of children and children's needs.

Creating alternative lifestyles is about learning to rely on ourselves and our communities, yet many groups show little of this, especially when it comes to children. I have been to many places where it is still the women who do the domestic work and caring for children, taking full responsibility while men get on with the 'real work' of direct action and 'saving the planet'.

Ultimately, the success or failure of the lives we are trying to create stands or falls by how we treat our children. And, as we get older, there will be more and more children in our lives. It will not help our children experience co-operation, self-reliance, direct action, and living in harmony with the planet if they grow up surrounded by traditional gender splits, dependence on schools and discrimination against people responsible for children.

Caring for children is best done in a supportive environment, where they are seen as integral to the community, a positive binding together rather than a problem to be left to individual people. Some people think that if they don't have children they have no obligation to look after other people's children (most people I've met in this category

are men). This is denying reality for most people and denying the potential of community between people working for a better future. If we can't pass on our visions and realities to our children, then what we do is just fashion, and ultimately meaningless.

De-schooling ourselves is about learning to be more self-reliant, getting out there and facing our fears, learning to work co-operatively, and with our ethics rather than suspending them to earn money in the capitalist system. De-schooling our children is about fighting for a better life than we had, about starting with ideas of self-reliance and co-operation, and liberating our children so that they become adults with a good sense of who they are, what they want to do, and who they want to be. Take the plunge, take them out of school!

INFORMATION:

Education otherwise, SAE to PO Box 7420, London N9 9SG. Tel: 0891 518303

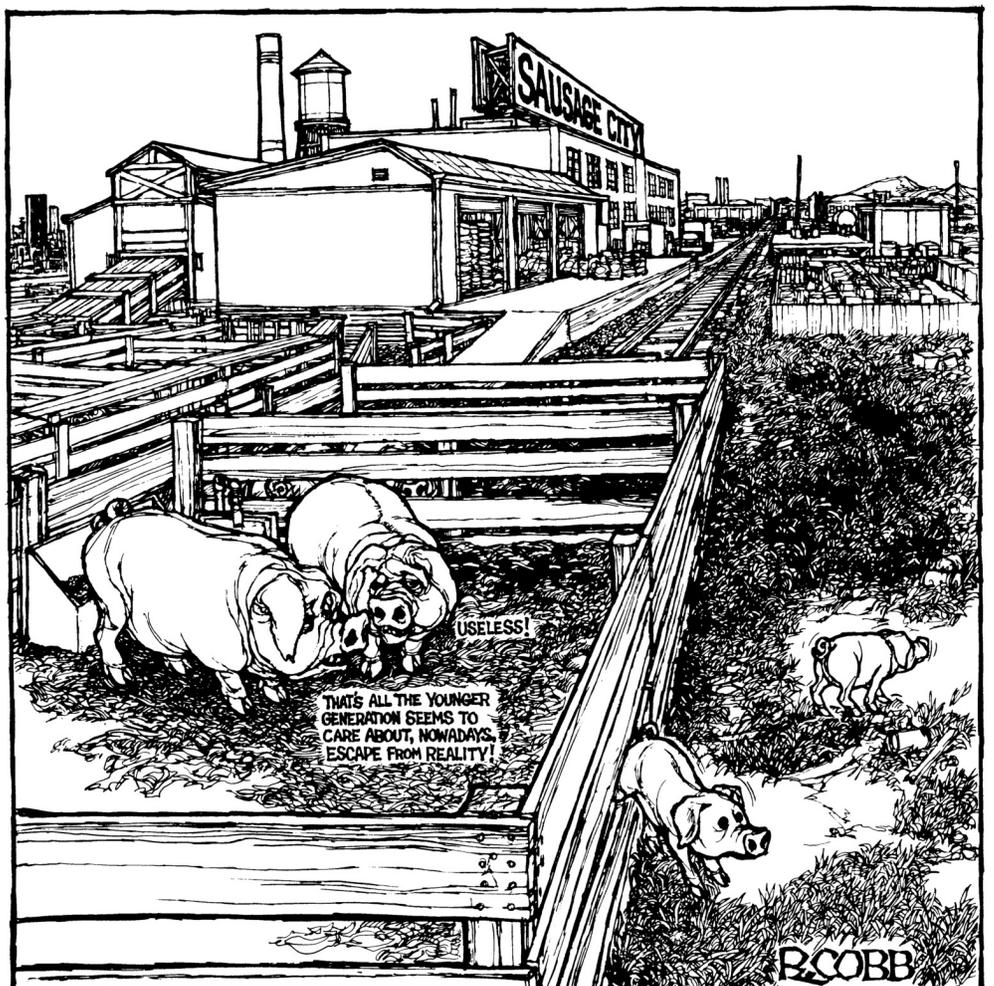
Human Scale Education, 96 Carlingcott, Nr Bath BA2 8AW. Tel: 01761 433733

Lib Ed magazine, 170 Wells Rd, Bristol BS4 2AG.

Education Now and Educational Heretics Press, 113 Arundel Drive, Bramcote Hills, Nottingham NG9 3FQ. **Centre for Children's Counselling and Educational Support (Home Education Forum)**, CCCES, Centre House, 14 Basil Avenue, Armthorpe, Doncaster, South Yorkshire DN3 2AT. Tel: 01302 833596

Underground Power, c/o 161 Hamilton Rd, Manchester. Tel: 0161 248 9224 (empowering young people).

Brambles Resource Centre, for info and events on radical home education, and resource library, 82 Andover St, Burngreave, Sheffield S3 9EH. Tel: 0114 279 7164



LOFTY TONES

Tony Allen - with some alternative ways of Turning On!

Reasons to be mildly optimistic: the decision by General Motors to finally pack up smoking and start mass production of the electric car. So, too, the news that, as from January '96, all lighthouses in UK waters now operate on solar power. It's not quite the revolution, but it's the sort of information that gets me quite perky and starts my brain whirring. It's just as well that energy can be stored in batteries (often car batteries) because even during daylight, solar panels are not always going to be fully operational. But there's always some weather doing something.

Dawlish beach, Devon. Midnight, Mid-Winter. I'm decidedly timid about walking any further down the breakwater. I just stop and stare. The drizzle's turning squally - a storm's brewing. Big fuck-off Atlantic waves are crashing all around me. I even have to lean on the wind. This is exciting. This is dangerous, I could turn into a cheap provincial news item. I carefully make my way back to my mates sheltering under the rail viaduct where Dawlish Water, the town's river, is roaring through a culvert and torrenting onto the beach and into the Ocean. It's powerful stuff. Yet twinkling through the downpour, red and yellow and orange and blue, are battered little festoons of sea front fairylights... plugged into the National Grid.

It clearly can't be an original idea to use an alternative, local energy source to power such a modest rig, it's got to be cheaper, and there's so

many possible energy sources - the wind, the sea, the river... Thinking about it, a self similar situation probably exists in coastal resorts literally all around the country. What an opportunity to politicise both residents and tourists. The promise of cheaper council tax must surely turn some of them into raving eco-warriors, or at least advocates of alternative energy. Although traditional energy is maybe a better phrase - the monks of Adleborough monastery on the East Anglian coast apparently have a system of trapping the high tide and using the head of water to power their flour mill. It dates back to the fourteenth century.

The more you think about these ideas the wackier they get. Well that's how it is with me anyway. Pieso electric strip carpeting the dual carriageways (see Squall 10); armies of adolescents peddling away on Rinky dink style cycle power machines (see Squall 11); in fact anywhere there's movement, theoretically, energy can be harnessed. Something as simple as a regularly used farm gate can be utilised to gently trickle-charge a twelve volt battery; and as for the possibilities in a children's playground. Gain on the swings and gain on the roundabouts.

But the image that lingers longest with me is all the seaside illuminations of our little off-shore island being successfully powered by low-tech Heath Robinson kinetic sculpture. It's playful and it's got the common touch, Johnny and Joanne punter will take to it like a duct to..... Stop me someone! I feel a millenium project coming on. SQ



The State it's in Violence is a symptom what's the disease?

or

Is peace a luxury?

(continued from page 4)

SQUALL views itself as a peace initiative. Words and pictures can be confrontational but they are not physically violent. In some countries, SQUALL's editorial team would be dead or rotting in prison by now. However, whilst non-violence remains a political potential, we will continue to publish the magazine in an attempt to provide some sorely missing intelligent opposition. COPEX's current libel actions are an attempt to covertly kill such dissenting voices (see Page 12). The McLibel team are presently fighting successfully on this frontier (see Page 6 and SQUALL 11).

When 4,000 demonstrators surrounded Luton Police Station in 1993, demanding the release of twenty members of the Exodus Collective, the Collective's peace stewards made sure the demonstration was disciplined and non-violent. Indeed such impressive forms of confrontation gave the police more than their usual cause for concern and less of their usual excuses for rubbishing the intent of the whole protest. Indeed, local newspapers reported afterwards that one of the few demonstrators arrested for actually causing a violent disturbance was an undercover policeman (see Letters page 62). Agent provocateurs look to promote disturbance in order to provide the excuse for tighter and more draconian social control.

Both the suppression of the public enquiry into illegal operations levelled against Exodus and the recent fire bombing of their community farm are attempts to nullify their non-violent community stance (see page 25 and previous SQUALLs to issue 8).

We cannot know yet which eventuality will prevail. The agent provocateurs look to steer it by way of violence, politician's are choosing to listen only to violence, whilst national media largely ignores the non-violent voice. The situation as it stands is incitement.

However, even if public violence does produce short term change, such as happened with the poll tax, it also facilitates long term tightening of social control mechanisms. This in turn increases the likelihood and sometimes even the necessity for yet more violence.

Non-violence, on the other hand, is a revolution out of this vicious circle; trumping the agent provocateur and bypassing the politician.

And yet finally balanced it is. Will the urgency of our situation push human concern to the levels which Jim went to with his golf club and his justifiable emotion?

If non-violence can triumph through the effective way it changes public attitudes, it will create a unique precedent. The UK will have thus succeeded where it is increasingly failing - to set a healthy example to the world.

If not, then same old shit. SQ

IT'S THE JEWEL IN THE MUD AWARD

This issue's selected gem from the muddy media waters was written by Charles Clover, editor of the Daily Telegraph, and published in the Spectator at the end of last year. Charles, it seems, is an ardent supporter of Newbury's eco-activists.

Last week I walked nine miles of England which will soon be altered forever. Tree-felling could begin any day on the Newbury bypass, the most contentious road scheme in Britain. I went there, on a clear September morning, to form a first-hand view of the road, prepared if necessary to take the side of the residents of Newbury, smothering in traffic fumes and driven mad by a claimed 50,000 vehicles a day, against the young protesters already sleeping in tree houses on Snelsmore common. I went prepared to be dispassionate, balanced, analytical, and I came back appalled.

One has to walk the proposed route for the significance of the forth-coming battle - and there will be a battle, no doubt of that - to sink in. For the saga of the Newbury bypass is about more than just a road. It is not just about transport policy - whether to drive or not to drive, which is contentious enough. It raises questions about whether we place sufficient value on our country's human and natural history, which is all that distinguishes these islands from anywhere else.....

It is where the route charges on raised embankments 200 metres wide across the Kennet and Avon canal, the River Kennet, its minor channels and water meadows that any misgivings one might have suppressed until then turn to outright dismay. The Kennet and its tributary the Lambourn are among the most beautiful,

unpolluted, unspoiled rivers in England. English Nature is in the process of designating them as sites of special scientific interest (SSSIs) for the fine coarse fish, brown trout, rare waterweeds and mayflies they contain. Neither of these designations existed at the time of the 1988 public inquiry. In any case being an SSSI is no protection of the landscape, which will now be filled with the howl of vehicles at over 70 mph. Sadly, only anglers get to see this lovely section of the river which is owned by Sir Richard Sutton. We trespassed on an anglers' path. Sutton Estate which objected to the road at the public inquiry is now turning loss into profit by winning permission to quarry gravel for the road from under the meadows. They have also lodged an application to build 1,200 -1,500 houses on land cut off by the bypass.....

What the Newbury bypass will trash is more extensive than at Twyford Down, the green hill outside Winchester sliced in half by the M3..... Many people, including myself, misjudged the battle of Twyford Down. The road-builders were confronted by an alliance of ordinary people - from colonels to new-age travellers - who hadn't followed the legal niceties but who felt that this road would destroy a part of England they would rather not lose. Road-building has the ability to bring out a love of land in the strangest people.

The same thing is now happening at Newbury..... There are two camps of educated

young people, mostly in their twenties, around Newbury, one on Snelsmore Common where the protesters' camp 70ft up in ash and oak trees. they cook food and socialise in 'benders', gypsy shelters made of tarpaulins stretched across bent hazel branches. There is a man digging a tunnel which will cave in killing him and anyone else foolhardy enough to use it if heavy machinery moves on to the common. People are ready to die for this land.

How did this route get approved in the first place? The answer is that, under the rules that prevailed in 1988 it stood no chance of being turned down. At the time of the public inquiry no Department of Transport inspector had ever turned down a road scheme on the grounds that it was likely to be environmentally damaging. The Department was then, as the Highways Agency still is, a great unanswerable conspiracy for spending our money on roads, based on the dodgy assumption that because people buy cars that entitles the Department to build roads over other people's land.

In the case of the Newbury bypass an inadequate environmental assessment was carried out (the subject of a complaint pending with the EU). The statutory conservation bodies knew better than to challenge the Department which had carried all before it for 30 years. Having overlooked bat roosts and dormice colonies in the path of the road - species supposed to enjoy protection under EU law - English Nature actually helped the contractors, Mott-Macdonald, to move the dormice and to identify the trees where the bats lived - the best mature trees - so they could be cut down.....

What riles people is the degree of deceit, humbug and vote-buying on an 18th century scale that has gone into justifying this road..... Local Tories, Liberal Democrats and Labour are locked into a mantra which forces them to support the bypass..... And what was Dr Brian Mawhinney doing, giving the bypass his blessing as the final act as Transport Secretary on the very afternoon of the July reshuffle in which he became Tory chairman?

If this road is built it will be the death of all I grew up to believe was England; fairness, its sense of landscape, history and nature. If he is the man I think he is, the bicycling Transport Secretary Sir George Young will simply let the Newbury bypass fall off the list in the autumn spending cuts. But if he builds the road I will have no hesitation in standing on Snelsmore Common in front of the bulldozers myself. And there will be plenty of Sir George Young's former fellow-members of Friends of the Earth beside me. It will be a memorable fight.

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**Wake up you suckers
the millenium approaches**

Vizicom Ltd.

Book Reviews

The Response

Sir James Goldsmith
Macmillan, £5.99

SIR James Goldsmith is the kind of person who may reasonably be termed a “dodgy geezer”. As a former international financier he made an estimated \$2 billion playing the money markets. He has homes in Paris and Mexico.

Last year he was elected to the European parliament - for a French constituency - on an anti-European Union ticket. In the next British general election he intends to field a candidate for his Referendum Party (against Europe) in every constituency.

In 1994 he published a book called “The Trap” - a damning critique of GATT, the Global Agreement of Tarrifs and Trade, which brings the philosophy of unrestricted free trade to the entire globe. GATT has become an unquestioned economic creed.

“I believe that Gatt.....will impoverish and destabilise the industrialised world while at the same time cruelly ravaging the third world,” he writes.

The Trap argues that by removing trade restrictions multi-national corporations will have instant access to 4 billion low paid, nonunionised, labour in countries that have no environmental legislation.

“Gatt.... will impoverish and destabilise the industrialised world while at the same time cruelly ravaging the third world.”

This will give them “an inexhaustible supply of cheap labour”. For the same cost of employing one worker in France, for example, a company could employ 47 workers in Vietnam or the Phillipines.

In the “Third World” consequential rapid industrialisation will, he argues, destroy systems of agriculture and culture, driving labourers off the land and into overcrowded cities. There have already been demonstrations of up to a million people against GATT in India.

The Trap quotes Vanana

Shiva, an eminent Indian philosopher and physicist:

“In India”, she says, “global free trade will mean a further destruction of our communities, uprooting of millions of small peasants from their land, and their migration into the slums of overcrowded cities. GATT destroys the cultural diversity and social stability of our nation..... GATT, for us, implies recolonisation.”

“GATT,” says Goldsmith, “must be rejected. The damage it will inflict on the communities of both the developed world and the third world will be intolerable.”

Unsurprisingly, Western economic gurus, for whom GATT is the only forward economic path, lambasted Sir James for his heresy. He was dismissed as an eccentric vanity publisher. The Response is, well, his response to that criticism.

Don't be put off by the seemingly heavy economic subject matter. In simple, articulate language, and using easy to follow diagrams, Goldsmith takes each criticism and demolishes it. It includes the relevant chapter from The Trap, together with a 15 point list and everyday comparisons which takes you through the argument.

For all this, Goldsmith is no less dodgy. He is still a capitalist - although he prefers to keep trade on a more local footing.

But for anyone who is beginning to realise, or who already believes, that many of the evils in the world can be traced back to an unrestrained quest for profit, it is an essential book to understand the complexities of a new global system that is likely to wreak even more havoc. Information is a weapon.

Andy Johnson



Bury Me Standing, The Gypsies and Their Journey

Isabel Fonseca, Chatto & Windus,
£18.99

Isabel Fonseca's book about her stays with Central and Eastern European Gypsies is delicately and intelligently written. It is a very personal account and that is its strength. She tackles the major issues concerning Gypsies: race, nomadism, poverty, sexual politics, crime and so on, and does so from an outsider's perspective, from notes she made whilst staying with Gypsy families during the six years following the collapse of the Berlin Wall.

Her accounts are raw and honest. She is not frightened of the taboos of this complex, marginalised and greatly misunderstood people and thus her insights offer a contribution to greater understanding of Roma rather than a romantic gloss-over.

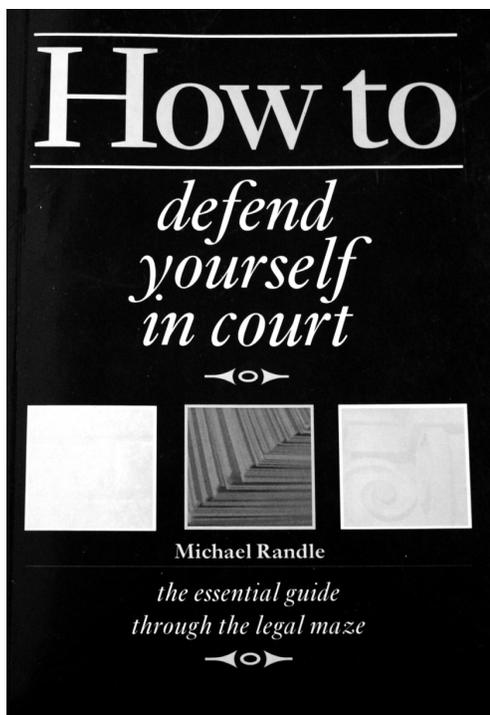
The book becomes extraordinary when Fonseca is directly involved in the story she is telling. Particularly

moving were her accounts of visiting a village in Romania shortly after a racist attack and of her attempts to help one family cross the Polish border into Germany. As well as recounting the story of the Gypsies' journey Bury Me Standing is the story of her own journey through intense cultural differences and unlikely relationships. Ranging from intimate studies of the lives of some of Europe's poorest people to fascinating, often disturbing, historical information (including the shamefully forgotten details of the treatment of Gypsy people by the Nazis) and the current rise in racist attacks and political developments within the international Gypsy community, this book is an impressive achievement. It's expensive and still in hardback but the library should have a copy by now.

Sam Beale

The Art of Self-Defence How to Defend yourself in Court Michael Randle

(£4.99 + 50p p&p from the Civil Liberties Trust, 21
Tabard Street, London SE1 4LA



be present in such discussions. (Strangely, though, there is nothing on grounds for objecting to questions in court.) How to prepare yourself for the ordeal, when it is permissible to ask leading questions, explanations of a Newton hearing, a McKenzie friend and a hostile witness - it's all here.

Well - it's fine me writing all this - but more valuable insights might come from someone who has the sort of experience this book aims to prepare you for: Frances Vigay is one of a group of women from Greenham Common who have defended themselves against charges of criminal damage and criminal trespass. In two cases the charges were dropped, and two current cases have gone to appeal. Frances felt that this book would

certainly help the self-defendant prepare for the unfamiliar experience of the courtroom, give them confidence and increase their resistance to the pressures of the occasion... "But," she went on, "the author is over-cautious about trials beyond the magistrates court, often almost dissuading the reader from going it alone. Certainly, the risks are greater, but other factors are largely the same and a political defence is often best carried out without representation.

"A more serious criticism concerns the selection of sample cases. In the largest and most sustained resistance to nuclear weapons in this country, hundreds of women have represented themselves in court, yet not one Greenham trial is mentioned. The Jean Hutchinson and Georgina Smith case in particular was a landmark, going through four courts over three years, and resulting in a victory in the House of Lords which reversed the law on trespass under military byelaws. Hutchinson represented herself throughout.

"These reservations apart, however, I think the book would be very valuable for someone about to defend themselves for the first time."

Finally, I should rectify an oversight: in my review in Squall 10 I neglected to give a mail order address for Lucas and Murdie's *Defending Your Freedom* (another useful guide to the criminal justice system), so here it is: LRC Services, PO Box 2764, London E9 7EJ. Send £5 to receive your copy.

Sean MacSweeney

The McDonalization of Society George Ritzer, Pine Forge Press, Revised Edition 1996 (12.50 pb, 19.95 hb)

Mcdonaldization is, according to Ritzer, the process by which all aspects of society, not just fast food chains, have become standardised and rationalised. Ritzer sees this process as having affected our lives from birth, education, health care and travel to leisure, politics, family, even funerals.

This book is not an anti-McDonald's rant. Ritzer is not making overtly political statements. He is a social scientist. Thus he presents the efficiency, reliability, and wide availability of McDonald's as positive whilst accepting the negative consequences spawned in terms of environmental damage and dehumanisation for workers and consumers. He is most interested in the trends for the rest of society which McDonald's represent. Nonetheless he urges battling against the process, and is hugely concerned about its effects on the creativity and development of

there are 100 types of walkman, 3,000 kinds of Seiko watch and 800 models of Phillips colour televisions? He sees this as the future of McDonaldization.

The arguments are extended to cover birth and the practices of sex-selection using amniocentesis and genetic defect testing taken to its 'designer baby' conclusion. Then of course there is pre-death healthcare: the emphasis on the weeks, days, hours and minutes a very sick person can be kept alive, rather than a focus on the quality of that person's life during that 'extra time'; and the loss of control we have even over death as 'conveyor-belt' funerals become virtually unavoidable. He notes that similar to fast-food signs asking customers to leave after twenty minutes, the City of London Crematorium sports a sign compassionately requesting the grieving to: "Please restrict service to 15 minutes".

Elderly people have formed breakfast clubs which spend hours in McDonald's.... completely subverting McDonald's 'eat and then piss off' policy.

the human race and as such he is opposed to it.

His thinking is based on the work about the processes of rationalisation and bureaucratisation by the turn-of-the-century sociologist, Max Weber. Weber's 'worst fears' about these processes were, says Ritzer, realised in the Nazi Holocaust which had all the necessary attributes of a rationalised system. Quite simply the end product of this system was mass extermination.

In analysing McDonaldized systems Ritzer looks at what they have in common: efficiency, dehumanisation, calculability (eg the 'Big' food syndrome: big food is good food even when it's crap food), which also applies to education where the products are students whose grades are more important than the quality of their learning, TV where ratings not quality determine success; and politics where soundbites have reduced the quality of political speeches. Other aspects of McDonaldization include predictability: a Big Mac is the same wherever on earth you eat one, which extends to package tours, assembly lines and 'little boxes' housing policies.

"Sneakerisation" is the name Ritzer gives to the diversity of product lines to the point where we can now buy a different pair of trainers for every conceivable activity carried out on our feet. Did you know

He shares Weber's concern about the ultimate irrationality of rationality and this is where the book is at its most radical. He gives examples of objections to McDonaldization, and non-rationalised alternatives and how people manage to personalise and take control of their lives even when they are largely rationalised.

His guide to surviving the "iron cage" of McDonaldization includes the suggestion that for starters American readers could leave the US. There is even a very American list of things individuals can do to avoid/take action against the McDonaldization of their lives. The list includes never going to see "movies that have Roman numerals after their names" and suggestions that people who eat at McDonald's should try and get to know the counter-staff, thus shafting the dehumanised nature of a job in McDonald's. He notes that in the US elderly people have formed breakfast clubs who meet and spend hours in McDonald's, undoubtedly annoying the management and completely subverting McDonald's 'eat and then piss off' policy. Ultimately he accepts the inevitability of McDonaldization but sees the process of resisting as essentially non-rationalised and individual and thus positive. Overall a top 'big-picture' read with serious academic credentials.

Sam Beale



The Post Bag

Letters to SQUALL

If you have any comments on the content of the magazine or wish to add a few of your own write to: **SQUALL**, PO Box 8959, London. N19 5HW

A Green Anorakist Writes

Dear Squall,

It seems that Ally Fogg (The Mother, The Bill and the Bookshops in Squall 11 pp 22-23) has rushed in where angels fear to tread. As far as we're concerned, his article could have done with a bit more research than scanning the national press and then ringing Frontline and a police press officer.

Police reaction to the Mother is hardly unprecedented - where was Ally when the free festival circuit was being suppressed in the 1980's? -

but Hampshire cops are right to insist their harassment of Green Anarchist (GA) had nothing to do with that of the Mother.

The Met arrested ALF press officer (no "alleged" about it!) Robin Webb in late 1994 after planting a sawn-off shotgun in the boot of his car. This attempt to silence him, probably for making public statements about the Justice Department, failed when he was not remanded, no doubt because the court found the Met's set-up too transparent. Hampshire Constabulary then had their crack, arguing that passing on a Poultry Liberation Organisation press release to the media made Robin party to a battery egg contamination conspiracy. On this technicality, Robin was remanded but still not silenced, as his

contributions to the ALF Supporters Group Newsletter and Arkangel demonstrate.

Hampshire's raids on GA have to be seen in this context. They maintain copies of the ALF DIY manual "Into the 1990s With The ALF" were found when they invaded Robin's home and that he and GA are linked by some sinister conspiracy theory to distribute it. This was probably just an excuse to harass and gather information on GA, unpopular with them because we said Robin was being framed and because we still carry listings of ALF actions and news on militant eco-defence groups like Earth Liberation Front too. Harassment was certainly significant, possibly amounting to an attempt to shut GA down - all our records and

equipment was taken "as evidence", banks holding our money were urged to close accounts used by us "terrorists", and even some poor sod who'd ordered something from us by mail order was raided *pour discourager les autres!*

ALF listings aren't carried in SG and Arkangel after police jailed their then editors for 'inciting criminal damage' by publishing them. After some 25 raids against alleged animal libbers and green anarchists - the first four months before the Mother festival - six of us were arrested for 'conspiracy to produce materials inciting criminal damage by fire' and only one of us has been released from police bail as they'd obviously got the wrong man in his case. Hampshire tell the press the specific instance justifying their Gestapo tactics was a Justice Department arson wave on the Isle of Wight, but this is bullshit.

Liberator's editors have been subjected to repeated stop 'n' searches and are now on the same indefinite police bail as us green anarchists for possession of a sinister chocolate cake - nothing to do with the Isle of Wight, but their zine carries ALF listings like GA, something Hampshire evidently sees as a licence

to harass.

Because Ally obviously lives in a nice fluffy world where he and his mates aren't yet subject to the sort of tactics illustrated above (they will be - currently they're just raking through your bins on the quiet...), he thinks secret state intervention in the protest culture is all "rumours" and "paranoia".

The Scotland Yard centred national database, the Animal Rights National Index (ARNI), has been going since 1984. In 1993, Hampshire Special Branch were key in getting eco-warriors (aren't you embarrassed calling yourselves that?) added to ARNI as legitimate targets of surveillance, mainly because of their working relationship with Brays Detective Agency and the Home Office during Twyford.

It was argued there was a significant cross-over between ALF and ELF in terms of personnel, tactics and ideology but this was around the time MI5 took over anti-Irish operations on the UK mainland from the Branch, so there's an element of job creation in this too. Much 'spookier' stuff was going on with MI5 at the time, asserts Tim Hepple and Stuart McCulloch both trying to present themselves as ELF-

Old MacDonald



ALBERT

linked in classic provocateur style, but we don't see inter-agency rivalry as too relevant to the Robin Webb situation beyond Special Branch wanting to be seen as 'getting results'.

By early 1995, ARNI ceased to be just a database. It became a national police squad and busily set about briefing journalists about the "Environmental Liberation Front" (sic) and its supposed atrocities. Maybe Ally should try talking to us and not them in future if he wants an idea of what's really going on.

To clear up a few 'incidentals':

- Frontline were raided because Scumbusters are listed as our anti-fascist/anti-racist editors. ARNI were working their way through our listed columns but try as they might, they never got them, or our sexual politix editor either. Frontline was last raided over GA in 1990 when we printed a DIY shotgun article. We came out a lot worse from that than they did: while Frontline doubled sales of GA, we got Tim Hepple on our case.

- The Guardian's David Ward covered the Frontline raid because he says a friend of his was in the bookshop when it happened. He didn't hesitate to pass information given in confidence on to the Observer's Mike Durham for the 'damage limitation' story the latter published the weekend after. This story was so poor that the Observer had to print (edited) apologies two weeks following, and Durham's role as an outfall of State disinformation via Special Branch and his colleague David Rose is now established. New arrivals to the protest movement are shockingly naive about the media's links to the secret state.

We know of someone in London's Freedom Network that refused to review Larry O'Hara's "Turning up the Heat: MI5 After the Cold War" - which lists guilty journalists - without even reading it, on the word of their colleagues who predictably enough insisted O'Hara's allegations were unfounded!

- Robin Webb is no

longer "currently on remand in Winchester Prison". The PLO contamination conspiracy case against Gillian Peachey collapsed so Robin was left as a 'conspiracy of one' to have passed on a press release, too ridiculous to justify his continuing imprisonment without trial. Because this charge represented Hampshire Special Branch's interest in Robin, that interest has now ended and so have the raids in connection with it.

In conclusion, I'd note that currently Special Branch have no great interest in the festie scene - MI5 have, but that's another story. Ally makes oblique reference to Operation Slingshot (*surely Operation Snapshot - ed*) national anti-traveller surveillance and databasing, but that's an offshoot of CountryWatch, uniform stuff. A more interesting case is the Ministry of Defence's police raid on Greenpeace HQ in retaliation for the AWE action. Their membership discs seized and returned a week later - you reckon ARNI haven't got copies? How much were the raids on GA used as a lever to justify the raid on Greenpeace? When ARNI first formed in late 1984, they used the arrest of a few sabs on spurious but spectacular charges to raid BUAV, returning their membership list a week later. Half a dozen names don't make work like thousands. You're probably down as an enemy of the State right now - so start acting like one!

Yours for people's power and personal autonomy,

Arthur Mix
Editor
Green Anarchist

Ally Fogg Replies:

Thanks for the info. I'm very aware of the sickening police state tactics used against the likes of GA and the ALF, but I was investigating similar tactics being used against everyone from party organisers to radical bookshops. I set out to write a piece about harassment of bookshops and the role of Hampshire police. Hampshire cops started to crop up in some unusual places, notably at the Mother arrests. I still

haven't found a satisfactory answer to my central question: "Why Hampshire?"

And where was I during the '80s festivals? In school you old git!

Fat, Proud & Angry

Dear Squall

I read your paper because, unlike most publications, you present news in such a way that is relevant to my life. However, I was dismayed by a couple of things in the Autumn '95 edition, and I'm writing to encourage you to sort out your heads.

Firstly, in the story "Britain Gets Fatter" (p11), I was disappointed to read the same old journalistic scare stories about "an explosion in obesity". Writing about a government paper tempered to appease the profits-at-any-cost food industry is one thing, but pinning it on people's fears and prejudices about fat people is quite another.

Let's start at the beginning: fat people are part of the glorious diversity of the spectrum of human body shapes. Fatness is ordinary. Our bodies have less to do with greed and lack of exercise than a genetic predisposition towards fatness. Different cultures also have varying standards of body size acceptability. Because almost all fat people in Western cultures, especially women, live in a society which loathes our bodies, there is a lot of pressure on us to lose weight. Many of us are constantly on diets, some experience eating disorders, and some of us are considering weight-loss surgery, such as stomach stapling. In recent years medical research, but more significantly grass-roots organisations, have shown that a prolonged history of dieting, and the stress of living in a fat-phobic culture, are the signifiers of ill-health in fat people, not fatness itself.

People who are fat often grow up with low self-esteem. My mum put me on

my first diet when I was seven, it taught me that I was unacceptable. Mum felt the same way and in my teens we dieted together, a fucked-up mother/daughter alliance. As adults we have to contend with a lot of stuff that is invisible to thinner people, for example it is not unusual for people to shout at me in public, and the reason I look daggy is that your cool clothes stop at size 14. Fat people are getting really angry about this sort of treatment, and we are beginning to organise. You might like to contact The Fat Women's Newsgroup at the WHEEL, 4 Wild Court, London WC2B 5AU, who produce an excellent newsletter, Fat News. In the States there is a lot more going on, particularly through zine culture and the Internet. Check out the excellent Fat Girl, a zine for fat dykes and the women who want them at 2215-R Market St. 193, San Francisco, CA 94114, USA. (email: airborn@sirius.com).

Having to educate people about fat politics is a real drag, especially those in the counter-culture who should know better. There are Squall stories throughout this issue. Perhaps you'd like to commission something about how the Health of Nations task force for eradicating obesity (whose members include prominent weight-loss proponents who are often representatives of commercial dieting corporations) have affected fat people. How we are afraid that healthcare may be withheld from us unless we lose weight (but then again this already happens). Or you could mention that dieting industries in Britain are big business, and are motivated more by profit than by the good health of their clients, or that some of the artificial sweeteners in low calorie foods available in Britain have been banned in other countries or appear with warnings because they are thought to be carcinogenic? Work it out for yourselves.

Secondly, being portrayed as ugly and lazy is one thing, but if I see another satirical cartoon which depicts fat people as evil, rich, scheming, greedy capitalists I'm going to scream. Uh oh, I've just turned to page 45. AAAAAH! Oh look,

there's another one on page 70 AAAAAAAAARGH! Cut it out right now. Fat people are amongst the poorest socio-economic demographic, the fattest social group in Britain being older black women. Go to a rich area of town and count how many fat people you see, then hang round Archway, or Stratford where I live, and compare your findings. Rich scumbags and rip-off McBastards spend their lunch hours working out at expensive exercise clubs. The body of corporate greed these days is aerobicised and liposuctioned. Stop misrepresenting people like me.

Charlotte Cooper
Stratford
London E15

Road Alert Correction

Dear Squall,

Thanks for No. 11. As usual, great.

There were a few things which need correction:

1. With regard to the Newbury article: I don't think Costain donate to the Tory Party; The EC never sent notice to the UK Govt. re breaches of environment law. In fact they dropped the whole case. It is currently being referred to the EC Ombudsman (great!); Mott MacDonald's are not the contractors - they are the civil engineers; The local MP is a Liberal Democrat (bastard!).

2. Please make it clear that people will not be able to receive our weekly bulletins by sending us an SAE. We fax out the bulletins and use e-mail but we very rarely post them - only to arranged network centres. We just cannot do it - too busy and not enough dosh. Keep in touch,

Becca
Road Alert!
Newbury

To Rave or to Riot

Dear Squall,

Congratulations on another excellent issue (#11). However, there were two things about it that bothered me. The first was the short news piece, "Travellers' Tax Relief", which stated that "Environmentalists are concerned that the Government's keenness to save classic car owners the £156, will also lead to people driving clapped out, exhaust billowing cars." Any "Environmentalist" worth their salt knows that the greatest pollution arising from cars comes from their production and disposal, not their use - the emissions from "clapped out, exhaust billowing cars". In this sense, the production of new cars is far more worrying than the use of old ones. (Check the report by the Heidelberg Environment and Forecasting Institute - Guardian 30/7/93 - if you don't believe me.) The need to reuse, rather than recycle, applies to this commodity as much as any other. Why do you think the car manufacturers are so keen on promoting the "recyclability" of the new generation of cars? It might ultimately enable them to kill off the used car market, meaning that they could carry on producing new ones with less competition, instead of milking every last drop of use for the old ones (see Simon Fairlie's 'Long Distance, Short Life: Why Big Business Favours Recycling' - The Ecologist November 1992.)

Second, the long article on Luton's Exodus Collective, "To Rave or To Riot?". While I have a lot of time for Exodus and their achievements, I also have serious reservations about the kind of views expressed in this article. Not long after reading SQUALL #11, I came across the following snippet, which casts an ironic light on the tone of "To Rave or To Riot":

"Musical Truck Plays For Riots' - A South African company is selling an anti-riot vehicle that plays disco music through a loudspeaker to soothe the nerves of would be troublemakers. The vehicle already bought by one black nation, which the company did not identify, also carries a water cannon and tear gas." (Associated Press 23/9/86.) Ring any bells? This is exactly Exodus' function, as described by you - basically acting as unpaid auxiliaries to police crowd control methods - and this fact is celebrated (!) by your article.

Jim Carey is described as having discovered "how the Lutonites danced off the disturbance" - the implication being that the dancing was more 'positive' and constructive than the seeming senseless nihilism of the "disturbance". What it seems to boil down to is the same old tired pleas for more youth facilities (youth clubs, sports grounds, raves, whatever) ritually voiced by all shades of the political spectrum after such incidents. "Boredom is at the root of it all," they cry. "If only they had some nice healthy outlets - like sport, or dancing (or even the illusion of their own independence to turn their energies to..." I was disappointed to hear SQUALL joining in this chorus. Don't you get it? Boredom - and the marketing of distractions from that boredom - is endemic to this society. What happens after the dancing? Is the social war over? The Collective say a dance was intended to "alleviate the tension". Is that tension not prevalent day in day out, riot or no riot? Where does it come from? Shall we dance all the time too, to try and ward off the tension?

This issue of SQUALL, as with every other, is replete with examples of ways in which working within the system does not work. Exodus should know this better than most - as exhaustively documented in past SQUALLs, they have been subjected to more persecution, and had more absurd obstacles thrown in

their path, than perhaps any other similar group in the UK. And yet still they insist on being "Massive but Passive". Look at the McLibel trial account, the trouble Tinker's Bubble face, Holtsfield, Wally Hope (eventually killed for his efforts) - all featured in this SQUALL, all examples of huge injustice. The conclusion seems pretty clear to me; social change - a final end to such injustices - cannot be obtained within this system. At best, only diluted change is allowed - that which does not threaten the system's fundamental terms of reference. To attain the level of change necessary to deliver us from the crisis we find ourselves in, the system must be overturned, not accommodated to. It seems inevitable that this will involve violence - but that is not to say that I think the Luton "disturbances" are necessarily a good example, nor that I think Exodus are worthless. There is a burning need to build up positive alternatives/sensibilities (a la Exodus), the new within the shell of the old - but there is also a burning (excuse the pun) need for disturbances. If we are to extricate ourselves from the hell of the late 20th century, the two must go hand in hand - not one going hand in hand with their persecutors, the police.

After the recent Bradford riots, concerns were expressed over the perceived gap between the older and younger generations in the Asian community. Whether or not this is the case is to extent beside the point - these concerns were raised in part because the police found themselves with no one to talk to. They are accustomed to approaching "community leaders" for help in defusing the situation. As "To Rave or To Riot", makes pretty clear, Exodus fill this gap in Luton (and if only the police 'were sensible' about it, it would all work out very comfortably). Exodus are, or could be, mediators between the police and an otherwise worryingly, uncontrollable younger population. Why do you think the police always ask who your spokesperson/leader is on demos? They want

someone, as Thatcher said of Gorbachev, who they can "do business with". Yours sincerely, Emile Henry

Jim Carey replies:

SQUALL received a lot of valid feedback from people who thought that stopping a riot was a bad idea. But the power of Exodus' initiative that Saturday night has to be viewed in the context of both the riots and Exodus' history in Bedfordshire.

Firstly, the looting of off-licences led to an increase in the number of pissed angry people rather than just angry people. Consequently the riot deteriorated into the indiscriminate burning of local schools and community centres. This is the point at which many local residents began losing sympathy with the rioters.

The media concentrated almost exclusively on these developments, avoiding the lessons and presenting a justification for the heavy-handed police response. The police tactics undoubtedly played a big part in firing up the violence; pouring petrol on a small fire. The article was in some ways an attempt to redress these wide of the mark conclusions.

If Exodus had thrown a party simply to diffuse the riot, it would have been less remarkable. However, Exodus organise parties with political purpose, where the celebration of freedom on a Saturday night is not a forgotten battle on Monday morning. Their ability to redirect social frustration into constructive community initiatives is proven by their incredible track record.

When I interviewed Luton Borough Council's head of PR after the riots, I persisted with attempts to get him to address Exodus's initiatives, as they seemed to be providing solutions to the problems he himself identified. His interest was solely in talking up Luton Council's initiatives to provide the "sports facilities" etc. to which you refer in your letter.

When Luton Borough Council tried to organise

their own rave, 15 people showed up. They just aren't 'avin' it. It seemed to me that part of the local council's reluctance to acknowledge Exodus is based on their desire to keep control.

If there's any regrets I have about the article, it concerns the sub headline. Given the opportunity to write it again, I would prefer "Jim Carey discovers how the Lutonites redirected the disturbance through dance" rather than just "danced it off".

Dancing is tribal, powerful, energising, communal and celebratory. As such it is a modern form of freedom politics. In 1993, twenty core Exodus rave organisers were banged up in Luton Police station on the night of a dance. In a remarkable non-violent protest, 4000 people surrounded the police station, refusing to move until the release of prisoners and equipment had been negotiated.

It scared police to the max and it is interesting to note that one of the few demonstrators arrested for instigating trouble turned out to be an undercover cop from a neighbouring constabulary. What was the point of his activities other than to engineer an excuse for his riot police colleagues to come wading in with truncheons? Extraordinary discipline displayed by the demonstrators sent shock waves throughout local officialdom and increased local and national respect for Exodus' stance. As a result of this and other stand offs, the plotting powers of official control are losing their previously assured grip on local politics; as such the voice of the community is at last emerging from the smother of vested political interests.

All power then to these freedom fighters, the effectiveness of their non-violent but confrontational stance, and the political changes they have brought about in ways that throwing a molotoff cocktail are unlikely to achieve. I support them with my pen, because my eyes witness their success.

CONTACTS

Most of the groups listed below are run by volunteers on non-existent budgets.

If you want information, or any of the publications mentioned, make sure you send the required money, a SAE plus as much as you can afford as donation.

Give more, get more.

Advisory Service for Squatters (ASS) - Gurus of the squatting world. Open for advice, practical and legal at 2 St. Pauls Rd, London N1 2QN from 2-6pm every day. Tel: 0171 359 8814.

Exodus Collective - 'A movement of Jah People'. Seriously active collective creating community, housing and seriously kicking parties. Bringing life back to Luton. Long Meadow Community Farm, Chalton Cross, Sundown Rd, Luton Beds. Tel: 01582 508 936.

Advance Party - "The Right to Party?" Representing ravers, party-goers, festies and organisers. Campaigning against the CJA. Information, actions, party info, meetings. networked all over UK call for a group near you. Advance Party, PO Box 3290, London NW2 3UJ. Tel: 0181 450 6929. e-mail: fimone@sypite.co.uk

United Systems - "The International Free Party Network" Offshoot from the Advance Party seeking to bring party awareness on a more international footing hoping to incorporate international politics, global awareness and responsibility into the underground scene. Information, contacts, resources. Tel: 0181 959 7525 or 0181 889 5214 or 0171 652 4602. Express Party Line: 0891 517147.

Homeless Information Project - HIP. Southwark's information service for squatters. Practical and legal advice, CJA, information, meetings. Mon - Fri 4-7pm at 612 Old Kent Rd, London SE15. Tel: 0171 277 7639.

No M11 Link Road Campaign - NVDA against the M11 extension. C/O Wanstead Environmental Centre, The High Street, London E11. Tel: 0181 518 8222.

Road Alert - Co-ordinating anti-roads protests across the country. Direct action arm of Alarm UK. Seriously excellent newsletter, seriously active NVDA organisation. Opposition to CJA, information, latest news, actions, networking - get involved. PO Box 5544, Newbury RG14 5FB. Tel: 01635 521770.

Alarm UK - Networking over 100 community anti-roads groups nationwide. Information, opposing CJA, lobbying and media. Alarm UK, 13 Stockwell Rd, London SW9 9AU. Tel: 0171 737 6641.

Friends, Families and Traveller's Support Group - FFTSG "All citizens of a free society should have the right to travel and the right to stop without fear of persecution

because of their lifestyle." Monitoring CJA, legal observation, advice and information. SAE and money to this very deserving group: 7 Benedict Street, Glastonbury, Somerset BA6 9NE. Tel: 01458 832371.

Labour Campaign for Traveller's Rights - Fighting for traveller's rights and particular emphasis on right to sites, wider definitions of travellers, grants and release of unused Govt land. 84 Bankside Street, Leeds LS8 5AD. Tel: Jenny Smith 01275 838 910. Paul Winter 01132 486746.

Institute of Race Relations (IRR) - Educational charity. Collects and disseminates information about racism throughout the world and publish the European Race Audit quarterly: 2-6 Leake Street, Kings Cross Road, London WC1 9HS. Tel: 0171 837 0041.

Refugee Council - Helps refugees and asylum seekers : 3 Bondway, Bondway House, London SW8 1SJ. Tel: 0171 582 6922.

Gypsy Council for Education, Culture, Welfare and Civil Rights : 8, Hall Road, Averley, Essex. Tel: 01708 868986.

Justice? - Anti-CJA networking group and producers of 'Schnews', wikid weekly newsheet. c/o On The Fiddle, PO Box 2600, Brighton, E. Sussex. Tel: 01273 685913. e-mail: Justice@intermedia.co.uk

Reclaim The Streets - Highway hold-ups 90s-style. RTS, Battlebridge Centre, Battlebridge Road, Kings Cross, NW1. Tel: 0171 713 5874

Earth First! - "No Compromise in Defence of Mother Earth." Autonomous direct action eco collectives. Seriously committed. Growing numbers of groups appearing all over the country. £4 gets you their magazine "Action Update" contains information on actions and local groups. Also produce "Do or Die" packed full of excellent reading - well worth investigating. Dept. 29, 1 Newton Street, Piccadilly, Manchester M1 1HW.

Hunt Saboteurs Association - National umbrella for local groups. Very active on all fronts, hunt sabs have suffered largest number of arrests under CJA so far. Along with road protests represents most painful NVDA thorn in establishment's side, esp considering public support to ban hunting. Action and information - get involved. For info on local group near you: HSA, PO Box 1, Carlton PDO, Nottingham. Tel: 01159 590 357.

SQUASH, Squatters Action for Secure Homes - Voluntary group opposing squatting aspects of CJA. Actions, lobbying, meetings. SQUASH, 2 St. Pauls Rd, London N1 2QN. Tel: 0171 226 8938.

Liberty - National Council for Civil Liberties. Campaigning against Criminal Justice Act. Taking HM Govt. to Euro Court? Mainly media, lobbying but recently set up CJA abuses monitoring project. Liberty, 21 Tabard Street, London SE1 4LA. Tel: 0171 403 3888.

CoolTan - In the process of moving...

121 Centre - Cafe, bookshop, meeting place, advice for all those interested in squatting, women's issues, unemployment and the state of the nation. Run by squatters at 121 Railton Rd, Brixton, London SE24. Tel: 0171 274 6655.

The 56A Info Shop - News action and meeting place, books, teashop, records, comics. Squatting, counter culture and lots of small press stuff and all of it behind a wonderful community wholefood store - check it out. Open Mon, Thurs, Fri 3-7pm. 56 Crampton Street, London SE17.

Freedom Network - Dishes out info on NVDA actions and events. Main tel: 0171 582 3474. Action line: 0171 793 7343

Rainbow Centre - Networking point for tribal issues, squatting, travellers, Agenda 21, Dongas, anti-roads eco & CJA. Arts space, workshops, meetings, information, events. The Olde Church, 23 Highgate Rd, Kentish Town NW5. Tel: 0171 267 0828.

75A Collective - Good, cheap vegan cafe open Wed-Sun 7pm onwards. Squat centre. Kids day, video nights, Spanish lessons, women's group, workshops. Ideas and cooks welcome: 75A, Mildmay Park, London N1.

The Land is Ours - Campaign for land rights and free access: Box E, 111 Magdalen Road, Oxford OX4 1RQ. Tel: 01865 722016.

Failte - 'welcome'. Internet world wide web site of Scottish Free Festival and Environmental Network. Info on festies, raves, anti-CJA, environmental news. Contact the URL (uniform resource locator): <http://www.gold.net/users/as27//index.html>

Campaign Against The Arms Trade (CAAT) - Publishes information and co-ordinates vigils and demonstrations against arms

sales and the secrecy of who's buying: 11, Goodwin Street, London N4 3HQ. Tel: 0171 281 0297.

Faslane Peace Camp - Permanent peace camp outside Clyde submarine base that is the home of Trident submarines. Produce newsheet Faslane Focus, land rights, actions and anti-nuclear information. Donation to: Faslane Peace Camp, Shandon, Helensburgh, Dunbartonshire, Scotland. Tel: 01436 820901.

Green Line - 'Aiming to empower people to take more control of their lives'. Superb eco-info/action magazine by Catalyst Collective. Produced monthly, 20 A4 pages of news, environment, actions, campaigns, animal rights, roads, corporate watch, reviews, diary and more. Well worth £1 to: PO Box 5, Lostwithiel, Cornwall, PL22 0YT. Tel: 01726 850500.

Endangered Species - Socially and environmentally active group in Mid Wales. Anti-CJA, pro justice. Meetings, networking, raising local awareness. 14 Great Oak Street, Llanidloes, Powys, Mid Wales.

Monolith News - Magazine for travellers of the new age and all interested. No. 19, modern Arthurian theories, Watt Tyler & what do the Masons have to do with Stonehenge? To find out send donation and A5 SAE to Monolith Publications, PO Box 4, Syston, Leicester LE7 4RD.

Stonehenge Campaign - "Stonehenge belongs to you and me." Regular newsletters, festies, information, listings and meetings. Donation and SAE to Stonehenge Campaign, 99 Torriano Avenue, London NW5 2RX.

McLibel Support Campaign - Supports one of the stances of the century. Information dispersal to the wider jury. c/o London Greenpeace, 5, Caledonian Road, London N1 9DX. Tel: 0171 713 1269.

Small World - "Just Do It." Non-profit organisation committed to supporting campaign groups working on environmental and social justice issues. Produce 'Undercurrents', quarterly alternative video magazine. Features CJA, direct action, anti-roads, campaigns, topical eco-issues. Videos available from Small World Media, 1A Waterlow Rd, London N19 5NJ. Tel: 0171 727 5255.

Conscious Cinema - Monthly video round-up of protests and related social justice campaigns. PO Box 2679, Brighton BN2 1UJ. E-mail: Cinema@Phreak.Intermedia.Co.UK.

Camcorder Action Group - see Small World

Festival Eye - An excellent mag that keeps on running. The latest issue contains Beanfield revisited, Road Protests, festie listings, life at the Rainbow, McDonalds, Stonehenge, Beltane, lots of good pics, letters and comment. A must at £1.50 (plus A4 SAE) from: BCM Box 2002, London WC1N 3XX.

Conviction - Campaigning group, support and help for prisoners falsely accused/imprisoned. Produce newsletter, free for prisoners - 75p to all else, stuffed full with injustice, prison reform, Criminal Cases Review Commission. Very worthy cause in need of support. PO Box 522, Sheffield S1 3FF.

Contraflow - Part of the European Counter Culture Network. Radical mag about justice, campaigns, occasional articles on squatting, CJA, travellers. Available from the 56A Info Shop (address above).

FIN - Free Information Network. Local activists, motivators and information gatherers. Newsheets published as and when containing up to date information, festival and party news, events, meetings, campaigns etc. SAE and donation to your local branch.

AberdeenFIN - 36 Buchan Rd, Torry, Aberdeen AB1 3SW.
EFFIN - c/o York, The Coffee Bar Grassroots, 58 Charles Street, Cardiff.
GuilFIN - PO Box 217, Guildford, Surrey.
MaidstoneFIN - PO Box 263, Maidstone, Kent.
ManFIN - Dept. 53, 1 Newton Street, Piccadilly, Manchester M1.
MerseyFIN - PO Box 110, Liverpool L69 6AU.
MotherClan - 29 Silvertown Crescent, Moseley, Birmingham B13 9NH.
NeverNeverFIN - 8 Campbell Rd, Southsea, Hants.
NottFIN - c/o The Rainbow Centre, 180 Mansfield Rd, Nottingham.
Oxford - Box a, 111 Magdalen Rd, Oxford.
RatFIN - c/o RSI, 30 Silver Street, Reading.
SheffFIN - The Ecology Co, 199 Crookes Valley Rd, Sheffield.
SouthWestFIN - c/o Wild Pear Court, Combe Martin, North Devon.
WalsallFIN - c/o 17 Newhall House, Newhall Street, Cladmore, Walsall WS1 3DY.

THAMES VALLEY POLICE

CHARGE FORM

"You are charged with the offence(s) shown below. You do not have to say anything. But it may harm your defence if you do not mention now something which you later rely on in court. Anything you do say may be given in evidence."

CHARGES

On Tuesday 23rd January 1996 at Highclere in the County of Hampshire having trespassed on land in the open air, namely site of the Newbury By Pass, and in relation to a lawful activity, namely site clearance which persons were engaged in on that land, did an act, namely dressed as a pantomime cow broke through security cordon towards contractors which you intended to have the effect of disrupting that activity

Contrary to Section 68(1) and (3) of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994.