

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. 14
Autumn '96



All fired up

- festival special
- graffiti in prison
- political theatre
- reclaim the streets
- ecstasy media

brazilian squatters • mclibel • media markets • exodus • traveller futures
gay consumerism • guns • bougainville • fairmile • ploughshares • zapatista
surviving the jsa • special branch • free parties • pirate radio • bender living
road rave • monastery occupation • sports news • tunes • books • letters





CONTENTS

FEATURES

Paint the town

Simon Sunderland was recently given a five year prison sentence for the crime of painting colours on the walls of Sheffield. **Sally Chesworth** interviews an artist banged up. *page 18*

Gaining a foothold

If you want to live in a bender, caravan or tent on your own land, you'll need to know a bit about planning. **Simon Fairlie** puts it simply. *page 46*

Raising the Banner

For over twenty years Banner Theatre have been scripting grass roots political infotainment. **Sam Beale** went to talk to them about their history and their latest hilarious satire on the Criminal Justice Act. *page 48*

Killing without question

A succession of governments and corporations have used the people of Bougainville as profit fodder. **Neil Goodwin** reports on the battered history of a Pacific Island and the involvement of British mining company RTZ. *page 58*

Surviving the JSA

The new Job Seekers Allowance scheme is the strictest benefit system ever and designed to knock people off welfare. **Andy Johnson** lists a few ways to avoid the hatchet. *page 24*

There's no such thing as a free festival

Sam Beale talks to some modern day festival organisers about how to sow the festie-vibe in the harsh nineties. *page 36*

Where now?

Rachel Kano talks to fellow Travellers about surviving the CJA. *page 40*

A criminal culture?

From the Battle of the Beanfield 1985 to the Criminal Justice Act 1994 - **Jim Carey** reviews the 10 year strategy designed to eradicate Travellers and festivals. *page 30*

The Masher

A new magazine for Travellers launches itself in this issue. *page 42*

Disarming women

The four ploughshares women recently acquitted for breaking the nose-cone of a Hawk jet fighter were but the tip of a growing movement. **Neil Goodwin** reviews its history and the implications of the acquittal. *page 20*

Police come down on RTS

Sally Chesworth reports on how the success of Reclaim the Streets has induced a recent rash of police attention. *page 16*

News of the skews special

Steve Platt describes the manoeuvres behind his ousting as editor of the New Statesman *page 28*

Organise, Invade, Produce!

Tired of having no land, no food and no rights, community activists in Brazil have turned to squatting. **Simon Lewis** visited their cultivated occupations to speak with them. *page 60*

Monkey business

Squatters in the monastery. **Ally Fogg** investigates Manchester's architectural activists. *page 22*

Festival of resistance

In celebration of the Reclaim the Streets occupation of the M41. Pictures by **Nick Cobbing**. *page 26*

Fight for Fairmile

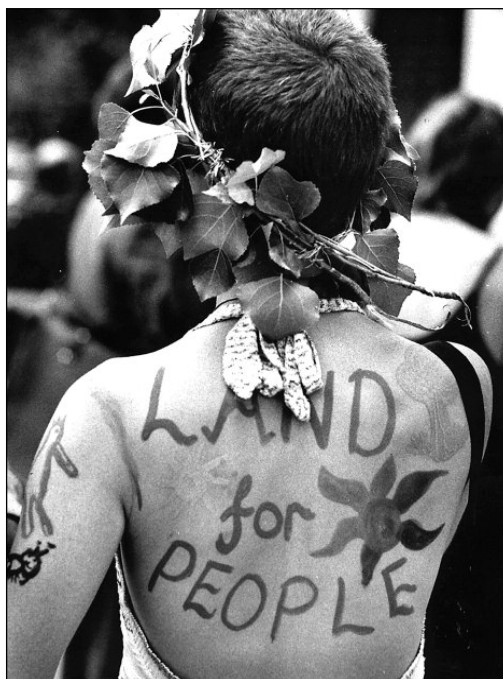
Jason Royce with words and pics from the next big road protest stand-off. *page 52*

REGULARS

News and other busyness - *page 5*. **News of the Skews**: Nicholas Saunders, author of E for Ecstasy, replies to recent media mis-info on E - *page 14*. **Actors of Parliament**: Guns, MPs and pre-agenda gobble-de-gook - *page 15*. **The voice of treason**: Observational wit from lyric-master Mark Kelly - *page 51*. **Road Rage** - *page 54*. **International** - *page 57*. **Roundabout** - *page 45*. **Squotes** - *page 23*. **Lofty Tones**: Tony Allen discusses incendiary devices - *page 62*. **Netrogressive**: SQUALL surfs the net - *page 63*. **Jewel in the Mud Award** - *page 64*. **Free party tunes** - *page 51*. **Lycra shorts** (sports news) - *page 62*. **Reviews**: books, music & artz - *page 66*. **Letters** - *page 69*.

COMPETITION

caption required for pukka prize - page 15.



*SPECIAL NOTICE
to readers on
page 12*

Subscriptions

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. **SQUALL** is non-profit making and run entirely by volunteers.

SQUALL

PO Box 8959

London

N19 5HW

tel: 0171 561 1204

fax: 0171 272 9243

e-mail: squall@dircon.co.uk
<http://www.phreak.co.uk/squall/>

Front cover photo:
Firing the Dragon at Harvest Fayre - **Nick Cobbing**
Inset front cover photo:
Henge dancer - **Simon Chapman**
Inside front cover photo:
Raising the scaff at Brynhellys - **Simon Chapman**
Back cover photo:
Farnborough arms fair demo - **Adrian Short**

Much Respect & Without Whom.....

Debbie Young, Tim Nun, Dave Van, Stevie, Tash, Tim Malyon, Suzie, Ursula, Rachel Cunningham, Nikki Spawls, Rosie, Debbie Allen, Matty, Jamie, Andrea, Dice George, Sab Tim, Milo, No 28 for clean threads, 52bers, Dinah Murray, AJH, Johnny O Sullivan, Chris Tof, Mike, Stevie K, ASS, Ben, Sylvia, and all those whose efforts & donations have helped the magazine survive.

open copyright for non-profit making use only

The State it's in

A view from **SQUALL** central

With media, politics and advertising merging ever more concentrically, there is no longer any border control between PR, news-spin and truth.

Whether or not we acknowledge the authority of Julius Caesar or Pope Gregory XIII, we live by the calendar they created. At the end of the decade the Julian/Gregorian calendar moves into the year 2000 with a significance far greater than a mere number change. Indeed the Millenium is a phenomenon with major social consequences.

In the run up to the year 2000, our collective social psyche will be bombarded with histories and future possibilities, as we assess the past and project the future. The vigour with which we make and absorb these assessments will be unique.

The battle to impose interpretations and selective answers on this fluxial period of self-assessment is already well underway. It is no coincidence that the subject most strictly controlled by the national curriculum is history.

It is often quoted that journalism is the first draft of history.

But for most eye witnesses, subsequent national media coverage begs questions of whether the journalist was present at the same event. We shrug and say well that's the media for you, the event bent to fit the formula. But then six months later an academic seeks to describe a social pattern and trawls the press cuttings for the factual accuracies. The consequence? A history.

Although journalism can never fully divorce itself from an author's subjectivity, the written report can be substantially reflective of the event. Its ability to achieve this, however, takes conscious investigative effort.

If, for instance, the editor's stipulations are based on courting advertisers, fulfilling two way information deals with spin doctors, or pushing a publisher's ideology in every story, the results are inevitable. A history of media supersedes a history of event, with a mask of confident objectivity inducing a false sense of authority.

So who are the filtrating commentators who author the historical first draft? For the most part they tread similar to the political theatre and its cast of politicians. The majority were educated in public schools, many graduating from Oxbridge.

If you believe this sort of education provides an unassailable degree of learned objectivity you might rest assured that the news filtration process is in safe hands. However, this is not the case. For the Tony Blairs (Oxford) and Michael Portillos (Cambridge), the Alan Rusbridgers (Guardian editor - Cambridge) and Charles Moores (Daily Telegraph editor - Cambridge) of this world, dominate both politics and comment. In essence, however, they present

similar backgrounds, perpetuate the incessant filtration of a narrow field of view.

Perhaps this is one reason why newspaper sales are generally in decline. And yet a new diverse representation is a necessity if our thinking minds are not to atrophy into fodder for clever spin doctors. For the most part the cross on a voting form has already gone this way.

As much we may try to ignore the media, we cannot avoid absorbing the incessant messages successfully designed to reverberate throughout the social psyche. With media, politics and advertising merging ever more concentrically, there is no longer any border control between PR, news-spin and truth.

'Truth? What is that but a

A new diverse representation
is needed if our thinking minds
are not to atrophy into fodder
for clever spin doctors.

slightly differing shades of the same frame of reference.

Despite such attempts to homogenise culture, society is multi-angular and therefore deserving of multi-representation. The majority of people in Britain were not educated either in public school or an Oxbridge college. And yet the right to rule and the right to commentate are the preserve of yet one more exclusive and unrepresentative club. For all intents and purposes, this is the establishment reflected throughout politics, television, print journalism and radio.

Whilst it is true the odd representative feature results from 'inviting a non-staff journalist to dinner', repetition of angles molds public opinion, not one-offs. Meanwhile, politicians, editors and staff-journos, drawn largely from

successfully imposed interpretation,' argues the spin doctor.

By way of an answer, the truth may refer to such questions as whether or not the single bullet which killed WPC Yvonne Fletcher outside the Libyan embassy was fired from an adjacent building rented by MI5. Whether or not Government ministers were aware of British arms sales to Iraq. Whether or not an MI5 infiltrator was used to undermine Arthur Scargill and the National Union of Miners.

And whether the many unconsidered questions such as these, indicates that the great democracy we lay claim to is a gross pretence. For democracy and manipulation are mutually destructive.

The \$1.4 billion spent annually on McDonald's advertising

ensures a dictatorship on modern imagery best exemplified by a recent worldwide survey suggesting more people recognise McDonalds' golden arch logo than they do the Christian cross. Meanwhile, the sponsorship relationship between McDonald's and The Times ensures regular sycophantic articles and occasional McDonald's supplements. And to cap the unholy trinity, Michael Portillo is more than willing to don a McDonald's baseball cap for a photo-shoot (see page 11). Media, politics and advertising, mutually interchangeable and loyal only to the highest bidder.

It was in many ways laughable when the BBC and Channel Four recently apologised for being seduced by Greenpeace's media output over the Brent Spar episode. With professional lobby groups like Ian Greer Associates having carefully calculated access to minister's ears, could it not equally be argued that multi-national organisations like Shell have a large and undemocratic influence on national politics. The day the BBC and Channel Four apologise for being seduced by the 10,000 government press releases published annually, is a day we may say that a sense of democratic balance has returned.

Ironically, as we approach the end of the millenium, only adverts reflect society's multi-facets on a national level, acknowledging that consumers are not homogeneous. However, such representation is not designed in any way to inform, or indeed represent. It is designed to sell and ultimately to become the author of market requirement and thus of culture itself.

The prevailing ideology over the past 17 years of British politics has ensured the enthronement of the market as the ultimate criterion of social worth.

In such ways the market has become systemic both practically and philosophically, with the importance of every social facet argued down to its immediate

MASONIC JUDGE CALLED IN FOR EXODUS CASE

A RETIRED high court judge and top ranking member of the Royal Arch Masonic lodge was called in to reside over a case involving a member of Luton's Exodus Collective.

Paul Taylor, known to many as 'Biggs', was facing charges of murder after a man whom he helped eject from a pub was later found dead in a Luton park. (see SQUALL 12).

His court case was to have been heard next March but was suddenly brought forward to September. As a result Taylor's barrister Michael Mansfield QC was unable to appear on his behalf and a replacement had to be found. Without explanation Sir Maurice Drake was then brought out of retirement to hear the case.

Fortunately, the

Freemasons published a publicly available version of their previously private *Masonic Yearbook* last August. As a result it became public knowledge that Drake was a leading member of the Royal Arch lodge. So when he was brought out of retirement to hear the case, Exodus' suspicions were aroused. They have a long history of slanging matches with Masons, who they believe have been involved in manoeuvres designed to stop their community initiatives.

When the court case began, Taylor's defence successfully argued that Drake should stand down. In what represents an unusual incident in the history of the British courts, Drake agreed. *For the results of Biggs' trial see page 7.*

Cannabis writer released

MICK MARLOW, who was imprisoned in March for writing a book about cannabis cultivation (see SQUALL 13) was released on September 13th.

Whilst in prison he prepared a draft policy document entitled *Cannabis: Burying the myths - Resurrecting the Reality*. The paper contains a nine-point plan for the way ahead should cannabis be legalised.

In addition Mick is involved with the formation of MARCUS - Medicinal and Recreational Cannabis Users Symposium. This group aims to take the current cannabis debate up a few notches, and hold regular meetings to discuss positive ways to broaden out the argument, encourage intelligent research and dispel public ignorance about the plant and its uses.

MARCUS is calling for comments on the paper, ideas, subscriptions and help of all sorts. This is a beginning and Mick stresses the need for other

groups and individuals to get involved and work towards sensible policies for the medicinal and recreational uses of cannabis.

For a copy of the policy paper send a blank postal order for £3.00 to: (no name) PO BOX 24, Newnham, Glos, GL14 1YA. *Tricameral Sinsemilla* by Maria Warner is now available from: Jorg Jenetzky, Post Fach 101589-33515, Bielefeld, Germany.



A 'Reclaim the Valleys' protestor on a tripod at Brynhelllys open-cast mining site in the Swansea Valley, South Wales. Photo by Simon Chapman

SQUATTING IN ULSTER

A RECENT spate of forced evictions in Northern Ireland has led to an increase in squatting in the province.

Since the breakdown of the ceasefire this year, sectarian intimidation has led to a number of families being forced out of their homes by

constant harassment, including firebomb and brick attacks.

The majority of such attacks have been targeted on Catholic families and designed to scare them out of Protestant areas, although Protestant and mixed sectarian families have also

been targeted.

Some of these families have resorted to squatting as an immediate route out of the violent intimidation; providing a roof over their head whilst they await rehousing by Northern Ireland's Housing Executive.

JAIL TENSIONS RISE

TENSIONS in one of Britain's most secure prisons are rising to a "desperate" level, 46 prisoners warned in August.

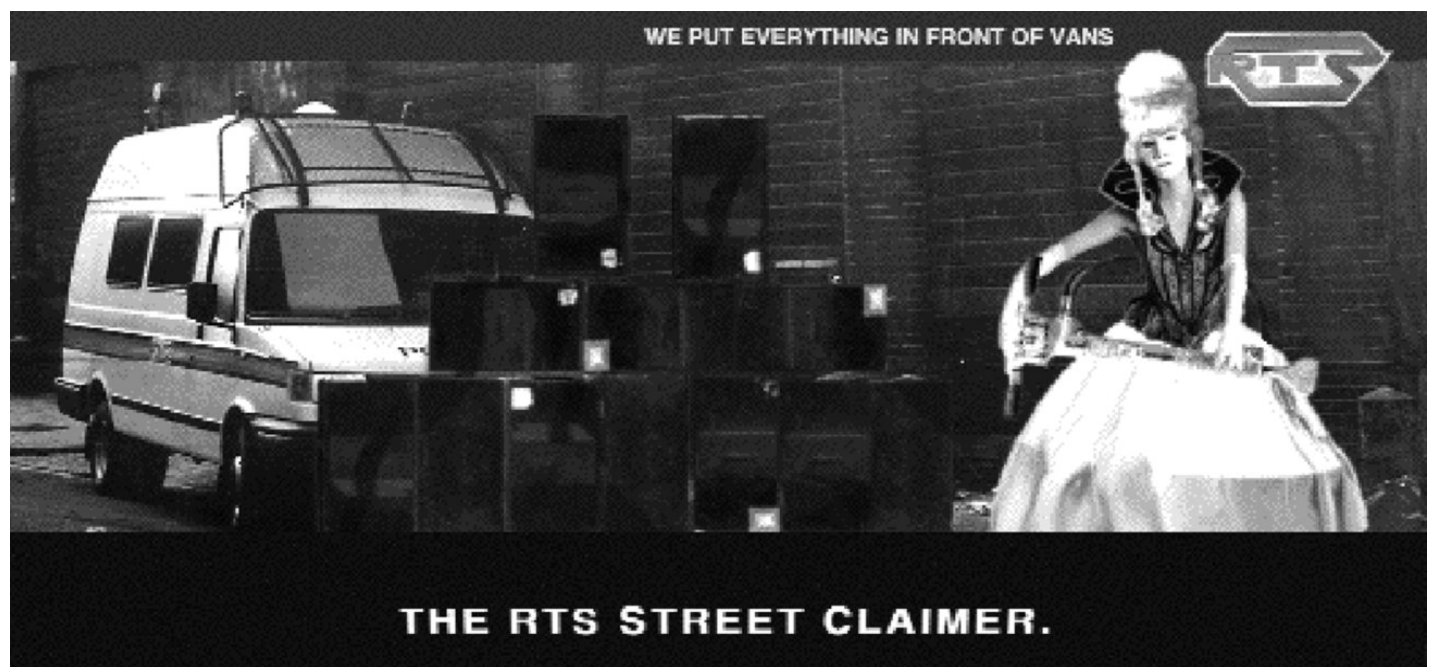
The prisoners, in Belmarsh Prison, in Woolwich, South London, some of whom were on remand, said new security

regimes were driving them "to despair".

In a letter to a national newspaper they said they were locked up for 22 and a half hours a day, denied access to the library and chapel, visits from relatives and lawyers were obstructed, and they were in a building with no

natural light.

"Millions of pounds has been spent on security gadgets and measures, yet security is still needed to oppress us and justify the abuse of our rights," the prisoners said. "We're bogged down trying to survive this inhuman treatment."



BRITAIN'S BOOT CAMPS

BRITAIN'S first "Boot Camp" regime for young offenders began in July.

Inmates of Thorn Cross young offenders institution will be subjected to a "militaristic" approach involving drills, parades and inspections.

"Militaristic methods merely produce tougher, fitter offenders better able to run away from the scene of a crime," said Paul Cavadino of the Penal Affairs Consortium. "They are a headline-hitting gimmick with no serious contribution to reducing crime."

BREACH OF THE PEACE

TWO PEACE campaigners boarded a nuclear submarine and made a phone call before being arrested by the Ministry of Defence in July.

The protesters entered the Clyde Nuclear Submarine base using scuba gear, and climbed the gang plank of Hunter Killer sub HMS Sceptre.

The two women were released after being charged with a breach of the peace.

DISABLED CAMPAIGNER FINED

A DISABLED campaigner was given a two year conditional discharge and fined £500 in July for throwing blood-coloured water at a Department of Health building in Whitehall.

Barry Shaufler was one of 50 campaigners from Incapacity Action demonstrating against the first year of Incapacity Benefit outside Richmond House.

Incapacity Benefit introduced more stringent tests to judge if disabled people were capable of work or not.

FREEBIRDS

SIXTEEN rare red kites were released into the Midlands by the RSPB in July.

This is the second year of a five year re-introduction programme. The birds were donated by Spanish conservationists and join 11 birds released last year.

Formerly a common sight across Britain, red kites were hunted to extinction in England and Scotland by the turn of the century. Since 1989 the RSPB has released 186 birds into southern

ARMS EXHIBITOR DROPS LIBEL ACTION

LIBEL actions brought by an arms exhibitor against two peace campaigns were struck out of court in July.

It is likely the actions brought by COPEX - Covert and Operational Procurement Exhibitions - against a number of individuals will meet the same fate.

But the Campaign Against Arms Trade and *Peace News* could be left with a bill of £20,000.

According to Tim Wallis of *Peace News*, COPEX have gone to ground and their solicitors successfully applied to cease representing them. "They owe us thousands of pounds," said Wallis.

This year's arms exhibition will still go ahead, but under the auspices of Osprey Exhibitions - a group with the same address and directors as COPEX.

COPEX issued libel suits against CAAT and *Peace News* following allegations that they displayed electro-shock batons last year. (See Squall 12).

The allegations following a Channel Four Dispatches documentary last year, *The Torture Trail*, and claimed British Aerospace had a role in the export of electro-shock batons. The programme questioned the role of COPEX in these transactions.

CAAT were sued for alleging the exhibitions were a "market place for electro-shock

batons and other torture equipment".

Peace News was sued for reporting the action. A writ was also served on the Cornwall based magazine *Greenline* for the same reason.

But, following months of delay, COPEX failed to show up in the High Court when CAAT and *Peace News* applied for the suits to be struck out. COPEX had not been responding to correspondence from the groups' solicitors.

The cases against five individuals, who took up a CAAT suggestion to write in protest to the manager of Sandown Racecourse, where a COPEX exhibition was held in November last year, were held over pending the result of the CAAT and *Peace News* suits.

A CAAT spokeswoman told SQUALL: "Because it was a success for us it is likely to be a success for them."

No action was brought against the makers of the Dispatches programme. The National Peace Council, and the *Esher Times*, Sandown's local paper, were also issued with writs after running the story and settled out of court. They both apologised and the National Peace Council paid £3,000 damages.

Action against the *Sporting Life*, which also took up the story, was dropped after it requested documents from COPEX pertaining to the case.

GREENHAM CANCER

AN INQUIRY into abnormally high incidence of leukaemia around Greenham Common air base is to be re-opened following revelations of covered-up nuclear accidents.

There have been at least eight cases of leukaemia along a one-mile stretch of road near the former US nuclear air base in Newbury over the last five years.

Closed in 1989, the inquiry is to be re-opened following the release of confidential Ministry of Defence documents detailing a nuclear accident at the base in 1958. At the time of the original inquiry, it was assumed that any radiation must have come from the nearby atomic research plant at Aldermaston.

The report, uncovered

by CND, suggests radioactivity was released after an American B-47 bomber jettisoned its fuel tanks because of engine trouble.

Uranium and plutonium were released when the tanks landed behind a stationary B-47, armed with a nuclear weapon, which burst into flames.

The report, not made available to the original inquiry, is one of several uncovered by CND which suggest a spate of nuclear accidents in the '50s.

The Ministry of Defence has always denied that any nuclear accidents have ever occurred in Britain.

Newbury District Council, which is about to buy the base from the MoD, has launched its own investigation.

WATCHDOG SLAMS SHELL'S LIES

ADVERTISING watchdogs reprimanded oil giants Shell in July for making false claims about its role in Nigeria following the execution of activist Ken Saro-Wiwa.

The Advertising Standards Authority criticised the multinational for using quotes from Saro Wiwa's daughter out of context.

The quotes were used in adverts published shortly after the Ogoni leader's execution.

They backed up Shell's claims that the military government responded badly to threats and diplomacy was the best hope of saving Saro Wiwa's life.

Shell were further

reprimanded for failing to prove claims that the Ogoni people had sabotaged pipelines, leading to pollution; and that the Ogoni people had denied access to the company to sort out problems.

Shell were heavily criticised earlier this year for doing nothing when Saro Wiwa, a renowned writer and leader of the Ogoni people, was hanged with nine other activists by the Nigerian military regime.

Saro Wiwa had strongly opposed Shell's involvement in oil extraction from Ogoniland and the company's relationship with Nigeria's military rulers.

BAE PROTESTORS RELUCTANTLY JAILED

TWO "particularly nice people" were jailed for a month each in August after raiding a British Aerospace base in support of four women who smashed up Hawks bound for Indonesia.

Richard Smith and David Durham were immediately released after lodging an appeal. The sentence was reluctantly handed down by North Yorkshire magistrate Neville White who described them as "nice people" and pleaded with them to accept an order binding them over to keep the peace.

They were jailed for contempt of court after refusing to accept the order.

The men cut holes in a security fence surrounding BAE's Brough Plant on the Humber Estuary, in support of the four Ploughshare's women who were cleared by a Liverpool court.

Three accomplices, Jen Parker, Tracy Hart and John Lynes - a 68 year old Quaker - were fined £200 and given conditional discharges.

Smith and Durham were found guilty of breaching the peace for trying to break in to the plant.

Magistrate White said: "I have some sympathy for your position. The last thing I want to do is send people like you to jail."

BRITISH FIRMS EQUIP INDONESIAN POLICE

BRITISH-supplied riot control vehicles and electronic batons were used to quell riots in the Indonesian capital of Jakarta in August.

The vehicles, including water canon, were supplied by a company called Glover Webb, of Hamble, part of a larger company - GKN Defence.

Indonesian police also used electro-shock batons made by a South African company which is an associate of British firm SDMS Security Products.

But criticism levelled at multinational companies who invest in Indonesia is shrugged off. An ICI spokesman is reported as saying:

"This happens everywhere. There is unrest anywhere. You get a lot of questions at first, but people stop asking when it dies down. That's life for a multinational company."

The riots in Indonesia died down after protestors were ordered to be shot.

BOOKSHOP LIBEL

TWO RADICAL BOOKSHOPS threatened with a libel action for stocking the anti-fascist magazine *Searchlight* launched a campaign to defend themselves in June.

Housemans and Bookmarks, both based in London, are victims of current libel legislation which allows booksellers, as well as editors, writers and publishers, to be sued.

Libel actions are notoriously expensive to defend. Even if successful, the defendant has no guarantee of seeing their costs paid if the person who brought the action is penniless.

Housemans and Bookmarks are being sued by two people mentioned in *Searchlight* - Alexander Baron and Mark Taha - along with the writers and editors of the magazine.

A third bookshop - Centreprise, in Hackney, East London - which didn't even stock the magazine issue in question, settled out of court - a cheaper option.

Albert Beale, of Housemans, told SQUALL: "If I am a shop and sell a magazine which contains a

critical statement that is libellous, then I am guilty of libel. You can't expect bookshops to read through 5,000 publications in stock."

Housemans and Bookmarks are confident of successful defences. Mr Beale said they currently have enough money - four figures - to see the case up to the "court door". If the case comes to trial they will need ten times as much money.

"It's a bit of a bluff," he said. "In the past these cases have had to be settled before they've come to court by bookshops." He added that a threatened writ against a fourth bookshop hadn't materialised after the bookshop made its intention of defending the case clear.

"It does seem that calling their bluff has been working," he said.

Mr Beale has been campaigning to have the libel laws altered through parliament. An amendment to the new Defamation Bill prepared by Mr Beale failed but the new bill will enhance the defence of "innocent dissemination".

Bookshop libel fund, c/o Housemans Bookshop, 5 Caledonian Road, King's Cross, London. N1 9DX

EUROPEAN COURT BLOW FOR TRAVELLERS

JUNE BUCKLEY, a 32-year old Gypsy and single mother, has lost the case she brought to the European Court, over her rights to live in a caravan on her own land.

Mrs Buckley acquired a piece of land at Willingham in Cambridgeshire in 1988 and sited three caravans on the plot. One for herself, one for her children and one for her mother. Willingham District Council refused to grant her planning permission saying the caravans were an eyesore, visually intrusive and detracted from the rural quality of the area.

Solicitor Luke Clements took her case to Europe, citing Article 8 of the Human Rights Convention on the right to respect for private and family life and home.

The European Court of Human Rights met on September 25th in Strasbourg and passed a verdict saying the District Council were justified in their planning refusal in the interests of "public safety, the economic well-being of the country, the protection of health and the protection of the rights of others".

They also said: "By reason of their direct and continuous contact with the

vital forces of their countries, the national authorities are in principle better placed than an international court to evaluate local needs and conditions." The court considered that the investigations made by planning inspectors in assessing Mrs Buckley's application were adequate.

Willingham District Council claim that Mrs Buckley refused to apply for a plot on an authorised council Gypsy site and therefore was being choosy about where she wanted to live. Mrs Buckley argued that she did not want to bring up her children on an official site because of trouble there. The court ruled that "Article 8 does not necessarily go so far as to allow individuals' preferences as to their place of residence to override the general interest".

Mrs Buckley had already been refused by the Secretary of State for the Environment when she appealed against the planning refusal in 1995.

During the run-up to the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act, the Department of Environment recommended that favourable planning consideration be given to Gypsies settling on

their own land in the light of the abolition of the Caravan Sites Act (statutory provision for Travellers) contained within the CJA.

Groups representing Travellers say this has now proven to be empty rhetoric, designed to placate welfare concerns at the time. The Secretary of State has continually refused to grant appeals against planning refusals on Travellers.

Eli Frankham from the Romani Rights Association estimates that between 300-400 families are in a similar position to Mrs Buckley.

"This is a very big blow for us," said Mr Frankham. "I feel very sorry for the Buckley family. I am particularly concerned for the children.

"We were very much hoping that the court would find in our favour. A lot of councils have been treading water waiting for this decision. Now I think they will move all over the place. I foresee some awful evictions."

Kathleen Crandall, South Cambridgeshire District Council's legal director, described the European Court's decision as "wonderful".

EXODUS DREAD CLEARED OF ALL CHARGES

ONE of the core luminaries of the Exodus Collective has been cleared of all charges after originally facing prosecution for murder. Paul Taylor was charged at the end of last year after, James McNeilly, the man he helped eject from a Luton pub, was later found dead in a local park (see SQUALL 12).

Up until a couple of days before the trial held at Luton Crown Court in September this year, the prosecution was to press murder charges. This was then dramatically reduced to three counts of GBH with intent, ABH and GBH, after the prosecution considered its case too weak to press for murder.

The police prosecution case was immediately further weakened when one of their witnesses, brought in to

describe the fight between Taylor and McNeilly, told the court how police suggested he should not mention that his girlfriend was with him on the night. The girl in question refused to back up her boyfriend's statement that Taylor had deliberately hit James McNeilly with a bottle. When another policeman was asked in court whether this direction to a witness was unlawful, he replied it was.

The trial lasted less time than expected and after just over a week, the jury found Taylor not-guilty on all counts.

The Exodus Collective cite the murder charges as one more malicious police prosecution in a long line of such manoeuvres.

Paul Taylor had previously been prosecuted

for the possession and distribution of Ecstasy after police raided his home a couple of years ago (see SQUALL 8). After waiting with these charges hanging over his head for more than a year, the jury threw the case out without Taylor even appearing in the witness box. Glaring inconsistencies and contradictions in the police account of how they found the alleged Ecstasy tablets was sufficient to persuade the jury that the prosecution was malicious. Bedfordshire County Council subsequently voted for a full scale public inquiry into police operations against the Exodus Collective, although the Home Office have denied the funding necessary to conduct the inquiry.

GIANT CRISPBREAD EATS FAMOUS LANDMARK?

A BUSINESS plan commissioned by the Department of the Environment has suggested that some of London's most famous landmarks could be redesigned as product advertisements.

The preliminary arrangements so far negotiated by the design company Brand Encounters include turning Tower Bridge into a large Ryvita crispbread which would be regularly snapped to allow shipping to pass through. Ryvita Biscuits have

suggested they would be willing to pay £20 million for the deal. The report also acknowledges an interest shown by Nestle in painting a Kit Kat logo on Big Ben and by Pepsi in turning the bottom of Nelson's Column into a Cola can. The business plan undertaken by Brand Encounters has been paid for with public money and claims that under such proposals £1 billion could be raised for the Treasury coffers within a decade.



BENEFIT GRASS UP LINE

A FREE telephone line for people to inform on any neighbours suspected of benefit fraud opened for business in August.

The Government expects 2,000 callers a day to use its "Beat a Cheat" line. The line attracted 12,000 callers in its first week.

SMART CARD TRICKS

CARDS containing computer chips to store personal information could be introduced for benefit claimants.

A consultation paper due to be published this autumn by the Government's new information technology unit will contain detailed plans for "smart cards".

Smart cards are said to be one of the Government's top priorities. They are used extensively across Europe for identification purposes.

EUROPEAN GROUSE

SCOTTISH grouse shooting estates are losing £10 million a year due to the decline in grouse numbers - so are calling for a cash injection from Europe.

But the European Federation Against Hunting - a body of 19 anti-hunting organisations - are to campaign against the move.

LOSING THE PLOTTERY

EIGHTEEN MILLION one pound lottery scratch cards are sold a week to two thirds of the adult population, according to figures from the Office of the National Lottery and National Opinion Polls. "The information we have does not suggest a problem with excessive participation," said Peter Davis, Director General of the National Lottery.

ANIMAL RIGHTS UNITED

THREE LEADING animal rights organisations joined forces to fight hunting in July.

The International Fund for Animal Welfare, RSPCA and League Against Cruel Sports issued a joint statement saying that using dogs to hunt animals was "fundamentally cruel".

The "Campaign for the Protection of Hunted Animals" calls for hunting with dogs to be "abolished".

BENEFIT HELPLINE CUT

FREE telephone advice for benefit claimants ended in July. The free inquiry line, used by three million people a year, was cut by Social Security Secretary Peter Lilley, in an attempt to slice £3.25 billion from his department's budget.

In another move, family credit for 15,000 low income families was cut, "saving" £8 million.

BENEFIT FRAUD

BRITAIN'S biggest benefit fraud - the sale of social security offices at knock down prices - is likely to be perpetrated by friends of the Conservative Government.

Interested parties are said to include John Beckwith, chairman of a wealthy business group that secures dinners with John Major for £100,000; along with 23 other companies and investment banks. Beckwith, chairman of the Premier Club, has secured \$1 billion from a US insurance company to buy up all the social security offices in England and Wales.

Beckwith also expressed interest in buying 58,000 Ministry of Defence homes.

Millionaire developer John Ritblat, a member of the Millenium Club, which raises funds for the Tory Party, is also interested. Ritblat owns the property company British Land worth £1.5 billion. Members of the Millenium Club pay £25,000 a year for access to ministers.

The planned sale of Britain's benefit offices, which will raise at least £750 million, is due to go ahead by April next year - before a

general election. High street locations could be converted into lucrative offices or shops. It is feared four out of ten of the 700 offices earmarked for sale could be closed as a result. The remaining offices will then be rented back to the DSS.

The sale would include local offices in every town and city in Britain, along with large administrative offices at Blackpool, Newcastle and Leeds.

A Japanese Bank has also been asked to bid and the offices have been put up for sale in Frankfurt, Atlanta and New York. Civil servants flew to Honk Kong to put the deal to millionaire Li Ka-Shing who owns Felixstowe Docks and the Orange mobile phone company. The National Westminster Bank has also been approached.

The Government, however, is having a hard time stimulating interest from some investment groups according to minutes of meetings between government ministers.

The sale of 58,000 MoD homes was completed in August, raising £2 billion for the Government.

STIFFER SENTENCES FOR DEALERS

DRUG DEALERS found guilty of a second offence will be automatically given a minimum seven year jail sentence if new government proposals published in July are made law.

Michael Howard's white consultation paper, Protecting the Public, does not differentiate between big time traffickers and small time users.

The proposals will also scrap parole and early release for prisoners, as well as introducing mandatory life sentences for second violent or sexual

offences.

According to prison watchdogs, the Penal Affairs Consortium, a group of 31 prison related organisations, the proposals are "riddled with injustice".

The Consortium point out that automatic life sentences would lead to wrongful acquittals if individual circumstances were not taken into consideration.

They also expressed fears about seven year sentences for repeat drug dealers.

McDONALD'S AT STONEHENGE?

WILL McDONALD'S be funding a new visitor's centre at Stonehenge and opening a burger bar next to the monument?

If it sounds far fetched then perhaps it's time to acknowledge that satire is becoming reality faster than the comics can keep up.

English Heritage have put forward proposals to attract private finance for the construction of a new visitors complex and amongst those approached to put in a bid are the McDonald's fast food corporation.

BENEFITS TO BE PRIVATISED

A GOVERNMENT plot to privatise the benefits system was heralded in July with the announcement that the administration of Child Benefit is to be sold to private industry.

The announcement coincided with a plan to invite private companies to help dole out benefits in three regions - Yorkshire, the West Country and East London, and Anglia - for a 12 month period.

The chiefs of ten leading insurance companies have also been secretly discussing how they could take over the welfare state.

The "Welfare Reform Group", chaired by Peter Davis of Prudential, was due to hand its findings to the

Government in August.

Such a scheme would probably mean people having to buy their own insurance cover - an extension of the private pension principle.

Sally Withcer, of the Child Poverty Action Group, warned that such a proposal would leave "high risk groups" without cover.

"The greater the risk you are, the less likely you are to get cover and the more expensive policies become," she said.

Duncan Hopper, Managing Director of Legal and General, said: "Could we provide cover for education fees? Yes, we are doing that now. If there is a market we will go after it."

JSA STAFF FEAR FOR SAFETY

BENEFITS AGENCY staff held a two day walk out in July over worries about safety under the Job Seekers' Allowance.

The Civil and Public Services Association believe the JSA will be an "un-

popular" benefit that will increase violent attacks on agency staff.

According to the CPSA, assaults on staff have increased "alarmingly" since protective screens were removed in 1989.

NFU condemn Countryside Movement

A LEADING member of the National Farmer's Union condemned the Countryside Movement of "inertia selling" at a county NFU meeting.

Jeremy Walker, vice chairman of the Somerset NFU, was annoyed after receiving a mailshot from Countryside Movement executive Sir David Steele, telling him if he didn't reply he would be considered a member.

The Countryside Movement is designed to protect the interests of hunters, shooters and land-owners, but masquerades under an environmental and educational image.

In January, the Crawley and Horsham Hunt sent a circular to members and supporters urging them to join the Countryside Movement.

Hunt chairman Lesley Weller said they had agreed to find 2,500 supporters.



SPECIAL BRANCH HELP McDONALD'S

ACCORDING to Sid Nicholson, Vice President of McDonald's UK, Special Branch agents freely offered information about protestors attending anti-McDonald's demonstrations.

When asked in court who had given McDonald's the names of those involved in the London Greenpeace anti-McDonald's campaign, Nicholson said: "I was told them by Special Branch officers from ARNI [Animal Rights National Index]. They telephoned me to ask me if I was aware that there was going to be a demonstration outside of our offices and then they indicated that they were interested in the organisation [London Greenpeace] and did I have a perch they could use, and a perch is police parlance for an observation post. I told them I was interested and.....[allowed them to] make use of any facilities they wished."

Although this is a highly improper collaboration, Nicholson admitted in court that "all the security department [McDonald's] have many, many contacts in the police service" because "they are all ex-policemen".

Indeed Nicholson himself was a member of the police force for 31 years, serving firstly in South Africa and then with the Metropolitan Police; reaching the rank of Chief Superintendent in charge of Brixton police station before leaving the force. As well as occupying the position as McDonald's Vice President, Sid Nicholson was also executive Head of Security. His second in command as non-executive Head of Security is Terry Carrol, another ex-policeman who served under Nicholson in Brixton before becoming Chief Superintendent at Carter Street Police Station in London. Nicholson told the court the only collaboration with Special Branch he was aware of occurred in 1989 but evidence suggests the liaison has continued since.

A relatively recent memo from Terry Carrol dated September 22nd 1994 was also read out in court: "I

had a meeting with ARNI from Scotland Yard today who gave me the enclosed literature. Some of it we have, other bits are new."

Nicholson stated in court that he had "quite a lot of experience with Special Branch officers", but that his first contact with them in relation to London Greenpeace had taken place at a meeting at McDonald's HQ in September 1989.

One month later McDonald's employed two separate Private Investigation Agencies to infiltrate London Greenpeace and gather intelligence. Nicholson approached both Bishops Investigation Bureau and Kings Investigative Agency but did not tell either of them that they had employed two agencies at once.

Thus each agency sent operatives to London Greenpeace meetings from October 1989 to at least January 1991, knowing nothing about each other's activities. During this time these spies opened and replied to letters, helped distribute campaign leaflets, and made themselves familiar to London Greenpeace campaigners. One female spy, ex-policewoman Michelle Hooker from Kings Agency, also formed a relationship with one of the London Greenpeace campaigners. Nicholson also admitted in court that some of the operatives stole letters from London Greenpeace.

Whilst Kings employed between four and five investigators on the case, Bishops employed between two and three. As the attendance at London Greenpeace meetings at this time averaged less than ten, it is more than feasible that on a number of occasions half of those attending the meeting were undercover spies.

McDonald's called four of these undercover operatives to testify on its behalf in the trial. However, one of the operatives working for Kings Investigation Bureau, Frances Tiller, decided to appear on behalf of the McLibel defendants at the end of June. In her written court statement Tiller states she

"felt very uncomfortable doing that particular job....I believe people are entitled to their views." In her testimony she identified another undercover operative, Michelle Hooker, caught on film distributing anti-McDonald's leaflets to the public. The two London Greenpeace co-defendants, Helen Steel and Dave Morris, have formally submitted that if agents employed by McDonald's were involved in distributing anti-McDonald's leaflets, then the Corporation are implicated in the very activity over which they are suing.

Meanwhile collaboration between Special Branch and multinational corporations undoubtedly continue, with seriously dire consequences for democratic voice in a world increasingly dominated by such huge commercial leviathans.



Nick Cobbing

McLIBEL TRIAL LATEST

TWELVE court days after the McLibel trial returned from its summer recess on October 7th, the case became the longest British court battle in history.

According to the *Guinness Book of Records*, the previous record set in the 1870s was the Tichborne personation case (we know not - so) which registered 291 days in court. When the McLibel trial recessed for summer, the number of days in court stood at 280, meaning the trial will easily become a record-breaker.

The trial evidence was completed before the recess and all that remains to be heard are the sum-up speeches from each party, for which a maximum of three weeks each has been set. Bearing in mind that the co-defendants, Dave Morris and Helen Steel are considered to be separate parties, the maximum sum up period is nine weeks. Whether or not Richard Rampton QC, McDonald's huffing legal representative, will take three weeks to sum up the burger

giant's case is a matter of some doubt, but the McLibel team are expecting some last minute legal manoeuvres from McDonald's. Under British libel law the suing party can alter its statement of claim all the way up to the moment the judge retires to consider his verdict. The sum up period and further legal argument will take the trial up to the Christmas period.

It is thus thought unlikely that the judge's verdict will come before the end of this year and is in fact expected around January/February.

When delivered, however, the verdict is unlikely to be clear cut. McDonald's have cited 16 specific subject areas over which the 'What's wrong with McDonald's' factsheet is allegedly libellous and the Judge will issue verdict on each one of these. He will also be required to make judgement on the McLibel defendants' counter claim, issued after a McDonald's leaflet described the accusations levelled against them as 'lies'. All in all then

the judge will make 32 judgements - 16 on whether the allegedly libellous factsheet has been proved true and 16 on whether the factsheet has been proved lies!

As a result the verdict is likely to be various in which party it favours, although the McLibel team consider that, with British libel law as it stands, McDonald's will probably get the majority of favourable decisions. However, it is undoubtedly the case that more factsheets have been distributed, more world-wide campaigners activated against McDonald's, more public knowledge of their techniques of market control and more adverse media coverage has resulted from their surely regretted decision to sue in the first place.

The McLibel Support Campaign are initiating an 'adopt a store' scheme for leaflet distribution.

McLibel Support Team:

0171 713 1269

McSpotlight:

<http://www.mcspotlight.org>

POLICE EXPO ON SECURITY HARDWARE

EVERY YEAR police forces invest in new toys. CS gas sprays, side-handled batons, flashing blue badges, quick-cuffs, new computers, new software, new body armour, new forensic equipment, new cars, new uniforms, flat caps, CCTV and more and more guns.

Several years ahead of the game are the people who develop and make these gadgets, the ever-

growing security hardware industry. Once they've invented something they've got to market it, using all the

advertising ingenuity they can muster. Some of their creations don't have too much of a market in Britain, such as assault rifles, jumbo handcuffs, or grenade launchers. No problem. We'll invite some foreign governments with appalling human rights records to come across and buy them instead.

Welcome to the inaugural Police and Security Expo, July 2-4 in Manchester's G-Mex, brought to you in conjunction with the Association of Chief Police Officers and sadly not open to the public.

The police forces were the main customers at the Expo, but also prominent exhibitors. Thames Valley Police were plugging Countrywatch, their mass surveillance operation of ravers and Travellers. Could it by any chance be a money-spinner? Other forces were showing off their proudest achievements, from computer programs to Virtual Reality firing ranges, each scrambling for a few extra pennies from another force's budget. One company offered 'a complete range of Masonic Regalia and Leatherware'.

The exhibitors which caught the most attention however were the out and out arms dealers. The exhibition gave floor space to companies wishing to sell

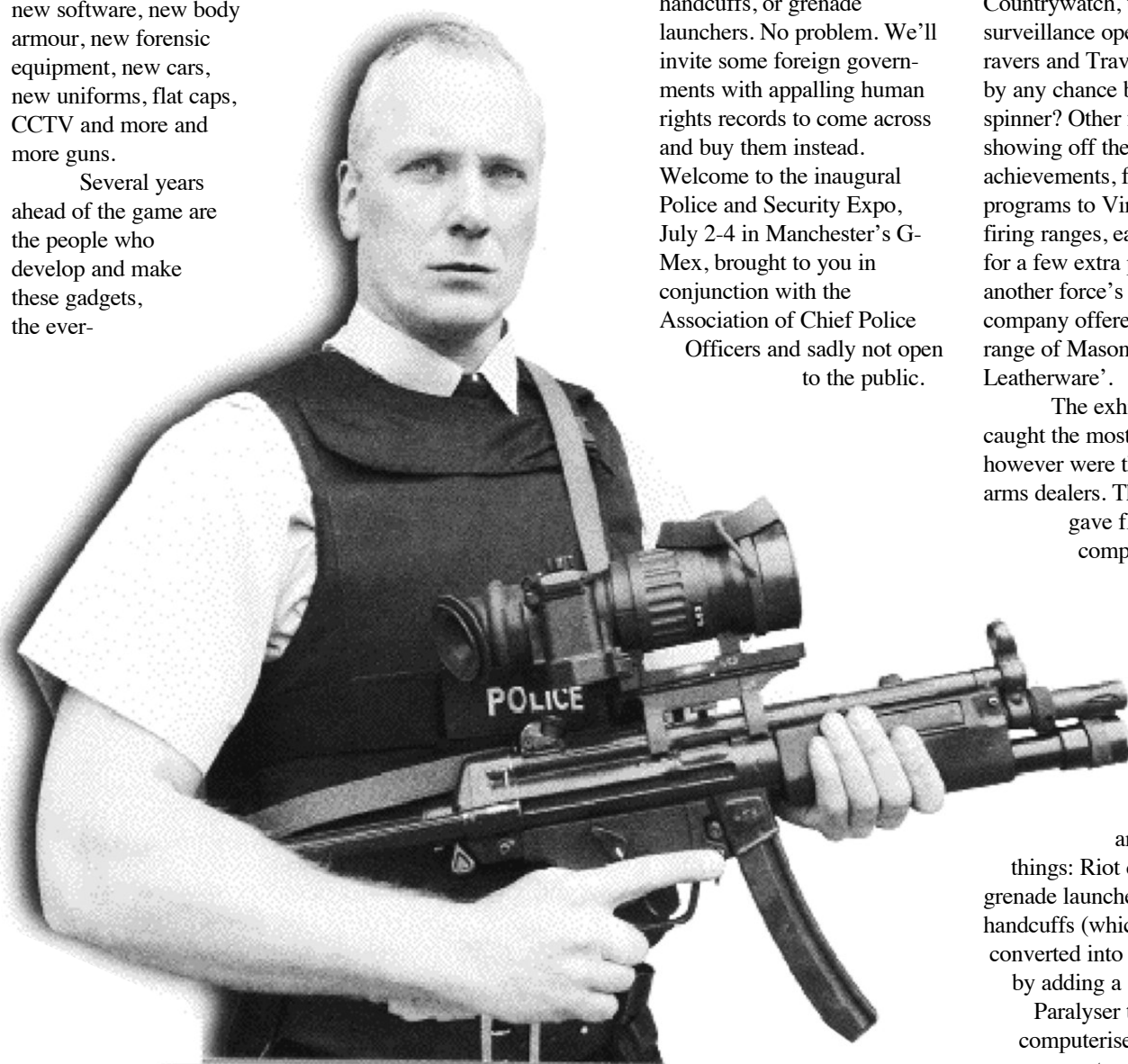
armoured vehicles; and pump-action shotguns capable of firing grenades, gas or shells.

The day before the Expo, Manchester Campaign Against Arms Trade learned that one of the exhibitors would be Heckler and Koch, a notorious German subsidiary of British Aerospace, whose client list includes the governments of Indonesia and Thailand. They are currently believed to be negotiating the sale of 350,000 assault rifles to Turkey.

As the conference prepared to welcome a delegation from Turkey a small group of protestors gathered outside with some placards and leaflets, before being moved twenty yards onto the pavement. Later, one of the activists gained entrance with a reporter from local radio. He was quickly recognised from the morning demo by the security manager who told him, "If I wasn't on duty I'd kick your fucking head in," before throwing the activist and the reporter out of the building.

The demonstrators considered themselves pretty lucky to have been moved on by some grumpy British Bobbies and security guards. Had they been in Turkey, they may well have been moved on by Heckler and Koch assault rifles.

amongst other things: Riot control grenade launchers; jumbo handcuffs (which can be converted into leg manacles by adding a short chain); Paralyser tear gas; computerised battle management systems;



SPECIAL BRANCH ATTEMPT TO INFILTRATE PLOUGHSHARES

A FORMER police-woman has revealed she was offered £200 a month plus expenses by Special Branch if she would agree to inform on friends in the Ploughshares movement. Janet Lovelace, a 39-year old mother of three and formerly a constable in Hampshire for five years, was approached by two detectives:

"The detectives told me 'once a copper, always a copper'. But I'd left the force because of that type of attitude.

"They came to my house and said they wanted me to be a spy for them, to infiltrate the Ploughshares movement and report back on people's names. They said they were simply concerned about public

order. They offered me £200 a month, plus expenses and a bonus, if I came up with good information. They wanted names and anyone who is doing the organising. They said any domestic worries you have, any bills you have, don't worry, we will sort them out for you. If I got arrested they would sort that out for me.

"The £200 was for the first three months, then it might be upgraded. They also offered a mobile telephone, petrol and child-minding fees. All of it was to be paid in cash and the taxman need never know about it. They said no one need ever know about it." Lovelace refused and went to the newspapers with the story

PRISON EXERCISE ABOLISHED

A PRISONER'S right to one hour's exercise a day was abolished in July - breaking European rules on prisons according to prison campaigners.

Guidelines given to prison staff said only half an hour a day was needed for health requirements. How much time a prisoner is allowed in the open air is now to be left to the discretion of prison

governors.

The decision to abolish prison rule 27 was made without debate by MPs under special government rules.

"It is ironic the Prison Service should choose one of the hottest days of the year to implement a restriction on prisoner's access to open air," said Stephen Shaw, Director of the Prison

Reform Trust. "The new rules breach one of the European prison rules."

The new instructions to governors state that an hour in the open is ideal, but no longer a legal requirement. They add that health advice is that "normally prisoners must be able to spend at least half an hour in the open each day".

MORE PRISON WORKS

AN EMERGENCY building programme costing £200 million to accommodate the burgeoning prison population was announced in July.

Just under half the money, £90 million, will come from cutting compensation to crime victims.

The programme will include an extra 3,500 prison

places over two years. Two thousand places will be supplied by building extra blocks in existing prisons.

Five Victorian wings in Liverpool, Leeds, Preston and Wandsworth are also to be refurbished.

Since Michael Howard adopted his "prison works" policy (see SQUALL 12) the number of prisoners

has expanded to an all time high of 55,851. It is expected to reach 60,000 by next autumn.

One in five people found guilty are being sent straight to jail - the highest figure for 16 years.

The first two private prisons for 12 to 14 year olds are to be built by Group 4 and Tarmac.

EXODUS IN ZURICH

EXODUS, movement of Jah people. Sixty of them in fact, plus sound system, crammed into a small convoy headed for Zurich, Switzerland in September. Hosts of the one-week event were arts and cultural centre Rote Fabrik, a large red brick complex located on the banks of Lake Zurich.

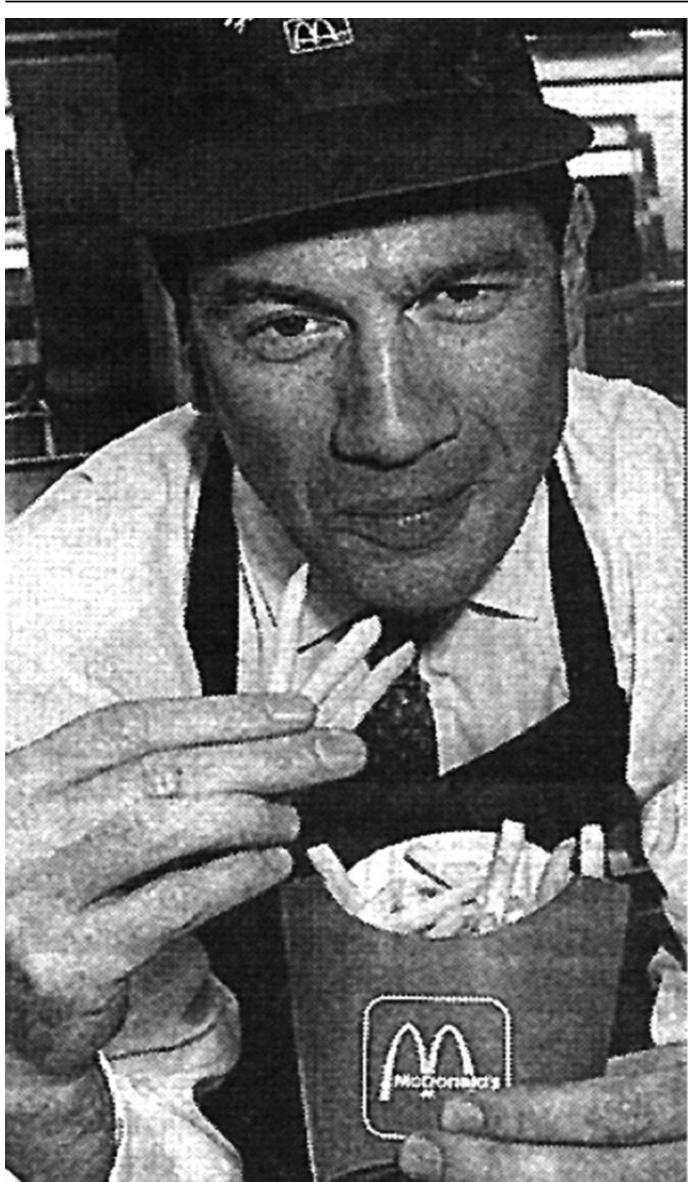
Rote Fabrik began life as a squatted derelict factory in the 1980s until the Government decided to fund its renovation to the tune of £8 million and the promise of a hefty annual subsidy. Rote Fabrik organisers had visited the Exodus Collective in Luton and invited them over to Switzerland in recognition of their unique contribution to the debate on land rights, civil liberties, and lifestyle.

During the week Exodus broadcast on independent Radio Lora; hosted a screening of Mark Saunders' film *Exodus Movement of Jah People*; appeared on Swiss TV; and featured in numerous publications.

By the end of the

week few people could have escaped the knowledge that Exodus were in town and the resulting free party was packed out with enthusiastic Swiss still dancing when the sun rose majestically over the lake the following morning.

'Exodus are not about the freedom to party but the freedom to live'. This freedom can only exist with financial independence and Exodus recognised that Rote Fabrik lost its autonomy the day it accepted state funding. Exodus plan to be entirely self-sufficient and are a long way towards fulfilling that aim. As a result they have suffered repeated persecution from 'the authorities'. Just before they left Zurich news came through on the telephone that once again they were on the receiving end of what appears to be a persistent campaign. This time 60 Police Officers had raided their farm and removed a bag of sugar and a bag of coffee whitener for analysis.



NO PROSECUTION FOR POLICE ASSUALT

NO PROSECUTIONS are to be brought against Manchester Police for an incident in which an Asian student lost an eye, according to a report leaked to the *Manchester Evening News*.

It is believed the report, compiled by the Merseyside Police for the Police Complaints Authority, found no evidence of assault.

The report has been passed to the Crown Prosecution Service who will make the final decision.

Amer Rafiq, 21, was arrested at the Eid festival in February following an

argument about parking. He was taken to hospital later that night with a shattered right eye socket.

Manchester police say Rafiq hit a piece of equipment in the van during a struggle. The PCA report says that forensic evidence supports this claim.

Amer's family said they were disappointed but not surprised by the news. They have not been allowed to see the report or kept informed of its progress. Their solicitor served a writ on the police beginning civil proceedings.

The officers involved in the arrest of Amer have

been taken off street duties. No action has been taken against them.

The announcement coincided with news that no action would be taken in connection with the deaths in police custody of Wayne Douglas and Shiji Lapite.

In 1995/96 the Police Complaints Authority investigated 397 complaints of racially discriminatory behaviour. Only four resulted in disciplinary charges. In recent years only one incident in which a black person has died in custody has resulted in the prosecution of officers involved. They were acquitted.

CS GIVEN GO AHEAD DESPITE CONCERNS

TWO police forces are refusing to use CS spray because of safety fears despite the Home Office go ahead for the spray given in August. Experts have warned that CS spray could cause long term health problems, including cancer.

Over 40 forces are expected to carry the spray by the New Year. Home Secretary Michael Howard announced it was "effective and safe" in August and approved its use after a six month trial with 16 police forces.

During the trial Ibrahim Sey, 29, a Gambian asylum seeker, died in police custody after being handcuffed and sprayed. Twenty people sprayed while in a coach

while returning from a Liverpool nightclub are taking civil actions; and three police officers are planning legal actions after being injured by the spray during the trial. One received 50 per cent burns to his eyes.

Researchers for Surrey police, so concerned they have ordered their own tests, say that solvents in the current sprays are inflammable and cause cancer.

Dr Mike Coleman, a poisons expert at Aston University, said current evidence pointed to the spray being unsafe. "If you've got a dodgy heart or asthma, or if the spray is used in a confined space, it could be fateful," he was reported as saying.

He added that exposure to CS spray could increase the risk of cancer or cause birth defects in unborn babies.

"If you squirt CS spray at someone smoking a cigarette they'll go up in flames," he said.

Human rights group Liberty have called for the spray to be banned. They say the spray can cause second degree burns, blistering and permanent lung damage and is particularly harmful against sufferers of asthma.

They claim that guidelines for the police trial were breached and are concerned about a "drift towards policing by coercion rather than consent".

BIG MIKE & FRIES

SQUALL readers might remember the photograph of gorgeous Sir Bernard Ingham - Thatcher's ex-press secretary and now non-executive Director of McDonald's - stuffing his face with a big mac (see SQUALL 11). Michael Portillo, Secretary of State for Defence, recently followed the same party line by guzzling a portion of McDonald's fries in front of the cameras.

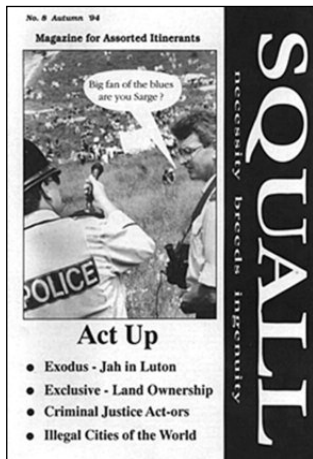
Residents of Winchmore Hill in Portillo's constituency of Enfield Southgate are presently up in arms over the sale of the local Conservative Association's Century House to McDonald's. According to the chairman of the local Conservative Association, Lionel Zetter, McDonald's have offered £100,000 more than anyone else for the building.

Five hundred local

residents packed into a Winchmore Hill Residents' Association meeting in June to express their protest against the proposed 50 seater burger bar and drive thru.

Portillo, who doesn't live in the constituency he supposedly represents, was asked at an Enfield Preservation Society event what he thought of the sale and replied: "It has nothing to do with me."

AVAILABLE SQUALL BACK ISSUES



ISSUE 8: ACT UP (56pp A4) - A Major investigative introduction to the Exodus Collective/Full report on the Westminster Council scandal/Criminal Justice Act/Tinkers Bubble/Land ownership/Housing quangoes/International squatters/Road Wars/News of the skews/letters, regulars and more.

ISSUE 9: FOLK-A-SING (48pp tabloid) Critical Mass/Agenda 21/Claremont Road

special/Female protestors/Pedalling across the Atlantic/Mental health and human rights/Criminal Justice Act/Grass roots housing/Exodus Collective public enquiry/Hyde Park CJA demonstration/Underground houses/Land ownership/Road Wars/International SQUALL/shuffles in shadow housing/Actors of Parliament/letters, regulars and more.

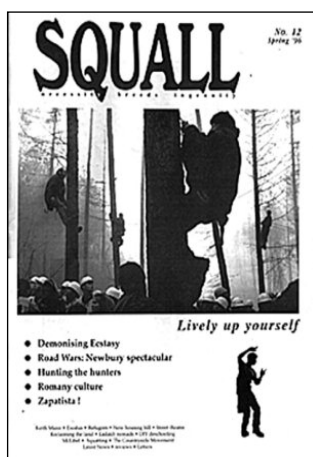
ISSUE 10: SOWING THE SEEDS (52pp tabloid) Job Seekers Allowance/ Amsterdam squatters/ Travellers special/Hulme Estate/The culture cash-in on raves and festivals/Riot Police violence against road protestors/ Internet itinerants/Squatters at the Grange/Housing Bill/ Exodus/Sustainable Development/Agenda 21/Reclaim the Streets/ Stanworth Valley/ Childbirth on the road/ Land Occupation@Wisley Airfield/ letters, regulars and more.



ISSUE 11: STOKE IT UP (88pp tabloid) A major McLibel special/ To rave or riot?/Female DJs/Job Seekers Allowance/Tinker's Bubble/UN Sound system/Wally Hope/Tan Hill Fayre/Reclaim the streets/European Romani/Beggars/Mumia Abu-Jamal/Exodus/Holtsfield/Opencast mining/Kenyan nomads/Artillery Mansions and MacNaughton House/Cool Tan/Jack Straw as parrot/squatting/letters, regulars and more.

ISSUE 12: LIVELY UP YOURSELF (64pp tabloid) Demonising Ecstasy/Hunt Saboteurs/Keith Mann/Countryside Movement/Romany Gypsy

special/Radical home education/Newbury/M66 protest/Whatley Quarry shutdown/Zapatista/Ladakhi nomads/ Street theatre/book reviews/letters, regulars and more.



ISSUE 13: OUT AFTER CURFEW (68 PP tabloid) Raving in Bosnia/MI5 and environmental activism/Pirate Radio/Infiltrating the RSPCA/All Systems Go sound system/McDonald's and Rainforests/The Environment Agency/Noise

Bill/Ploughshares/Licencing Parties/Alternative Technology/Mick Marlow - Cannabis cultivator/Refugee Squatters/CS Gas/Newbury road protest/Tibet/Howard's prison regime/Music reviews/Mark Kelly/Lofty Tones/letter, regulars and more.

Each back issue costs £2 + 43p p&p. and are available from Back Issues, SQUALL, Box 8959, London N19 5HW.

The state we're in

A NOTICE TO READERS

SQUALL is taking a two issue break. And you, the reader/ subscriber, will probably want to know why.

So here it is inna nutshell.....

Over the last four years SQUALL has been a burgeoning project. Run entirely on a voluntary basis, the magazine has gone from an A5 wobbly photocopy called issue one, to the 72-page tabloid printed publication you are reading now.

It has been of primary concern to SQUALL that, despite being a voluntary 'underground' magazine with very limited resources, the accuracy of its research should combine with a quality of writing, observation and presentation second to none.

The ability to fulfil this aspiration has taken two scantily available resources - money and effort.

It may come as a surprise to many that SQUALL magazine is published by a posse of core grafters numbering just five.

It may also come as a surprise that all five are volunteers. And that the magazine sells out on every issue, prints a thousand more each time, just about breaks even but is almost permanently in a state of debt; both financial and oxygen.

It may also come as some surprise that on top of producing four magazines a year, SQUALL manages to find (or pay back) the in excess of £16,000 sum it takes to run and produce SQUALL for a year.

The effort behind the magazine - not just from the core grafters, but from a myriad of peripheral helpers - is immense.

The feedback we receive puts a persuasive case that the magazine has become a cultural necessity as well as a good read. The fact that the magazine sells out, even though we have so little time or money to spend on 'marketing' or 'advertising', lets us know it has a place and that its potential is greater than we have yet fulfilled.

However, five core-grafters cannot fill anymore than they have already. SQUALL magazine now deserves attention.

It has thus been decided that in a six month break, two processes will

be followed through.

Firstly, a full volunteer staff is to be assembled to run the magazine. Each with only a small number of defined roles, rather than the multi-storey car park of duties currently taken on by each of the SQUALL posse.

Secondly, a series of benefit events, fundraising initiatives and yes, SQUALL merchandising onna conscious t-shirt tip, will take place over this six month period. This will build up a head of money with which to fire SQUALL into its new form.

Next May, SQUALL will be relaunched with a bang, a party, a sorted staff and money to run with. It will be carrying advertising, although rest assured not for multinationals or culture hijackers. It will be even more culturally connected than it is at present with a wider team of writers, photographers and designers. Less entrenched in its struggle to exist, the quality and accessibility of the contents and presentation will provide a more entertaining read whilst still maintaining its substance.

We certainly welcome any comments you have in the meantime on what the magazine has meant to you so far and how you'd like to see it improved.

Meanwhile, for updates on news and events in the interim, keep checking our website. The SQUALL telephone, e-mail, address and office will remain open throughout this period. All subscriptions will be honoured.

Respect to the readers -
The metamorphosing SQUALL posse.

P.S. There are a number of publications which SQUALL recommends by way of keeping up with the news: Frontline, Festival Eye, Advance Party 'Sound Advice', McLibel Trial News, Undercurrents, schNEWS, Earth First Journal (International), Earth First Action Update, Earth First - Do or Die, Greenline, HHH Video Mag, Friends & Families of Travellers newsletter, The Land Is Ours Newsletter, FIN, Conviction, Peace News, The Law - (produced by radical law students), Wildlife Guardian, The Prisoner - (Dance culture/Politics), Dream Creation - (Dance culture/Politics). See contacts.

The State it's in

continued from page 4.

economic worth. Those facets at the bottom of the subsequent league table are casually relegated into a division of social inconsequence or even criminalised.

If money is the ultimate criteria of value then all fine and dandy. If not we face crisis. And it is thus argued that both British politics and national media are in this state.

The other multi-representative media phenomenon of recent times is the internet and world wide web. At present this information source remains uncensored and still largely untainted by the market myopia infecting every other communications arena. But, as anyone who subscribes to a service provider will know, the web is a deluge of information, the source, integrity and substantial basis of which is uncertain. The only way through this http tidal wave will be the development of source reputation, which presently depends once again on media.

The necessity for investigative information sources prepared to delve beyond market PR or establishment hegemony, increases in proportion to the complete lack of it; democracy and accurate information being mutual prerequisites.

As McDonald's UK Marketing Manager said recently: "It is our objective to dominate the communications area...we are competing for a share of the customer's mind."

In the Millenium mind flux, which history will triumph - truth or market spin?

At best, Journalism can play a significant part in providing some of the intelligent opposition necessary to check the prevailing excesses of market induced political corruption and selective historical interpretation. It is a sorely missing ingredient from the media/politic/marketing soup worryingly referred to as the mother of all democracies.

EXODUS DEFEND COMMUNITY FARM

The levels to which the authorities will go to put a stop to the activities of the Exodus Collective are symbolically unjust. For nowhere has the depths to which our society has sunk been more specifically illustrated than it has in the history of the derelict farm, rebuilt by Exodus.

Just prior to their recent visit to Switzerland, on invitation to organise a dance in Zurich, the Collective received notice from the Highways Agency ordering them to quit the farm they have lived on for four years. The Long Meadow Community Farm was squatted by Exodus in July 1992. They set about rebuilding it from the derelict state into which it had deteriorated, after originally being compulsorily purchased by the Department of Transport for a long abandoned M1 expansion scheme.

By October 1993, the Collective had gained a licence to occupy the farm, renewable every six months. Using recycled pallets to rebuild the barns, Exodus stocked the stables with a variety of animals and began inviting the local community to visit. On a number of occasions they transported the farm animals, some of which are now third generation, to local estate family fun days.

Whilst most of the Collective were in Zurich in September, the farm was raided by over 60 police, who arrived armed with a warrant to search the property for stolen car parts and drugs. They left the premises with one bag of sugar, one bag of coffee whitener and an old car bonnet.

Whilst this might sound farcical, it is not the first time police have raided the farm. In January 1993, police claimed to have found 30 tablets of Ecstasy in Exodus' farmhouse. As a result, they charged Paul Taylor, a resident at the property, with the possession and distribution of Ecstasy. A year later the jury threw the case out of court after police evidence contradicted itself. Following this incident and other operations, Bedfordshire County Council voted for a full-scale public inquiry into the activities of police and others against the Exodus Collective. However, the Home Office refused their request for funding and the inquiry is now stalled in bureaucratic limbo.

At the end of 1995, police once again targeted Paul Taylor, this time with a murder charge, after a man he helped eject from a Luton pub was later found dead in a nearby park. As a result of the local heat surrounding the charge, the farmhouse was fire bombed twice (see SQUALL 12). At the time, Paul Taylor, still a resident of the farm, was on remand for murder. As you can read on pages 5&7 of this issue, he was finally fully acquitted after another year with a serious charge hanging over his head. Bedfordshire Police were once again proven to have been involved in malicious evidence manufacture, after it transpired on the first day of the court case that they had manipulated a prosecution witness to give false testimony.

When it became apparent that the Highways Agency were

intending to sell Long Meadow Community Farm, Exodus put in a £70,000 bid, aiming to borrow the money from the Ecology Building Society. They were told by Department of Transport officials they had a good chance of having their offer accepted. The farm is restricted for agricultural use and has problems with ground methane seepage after being used as a rubbish dump during its years of previous dereliction.

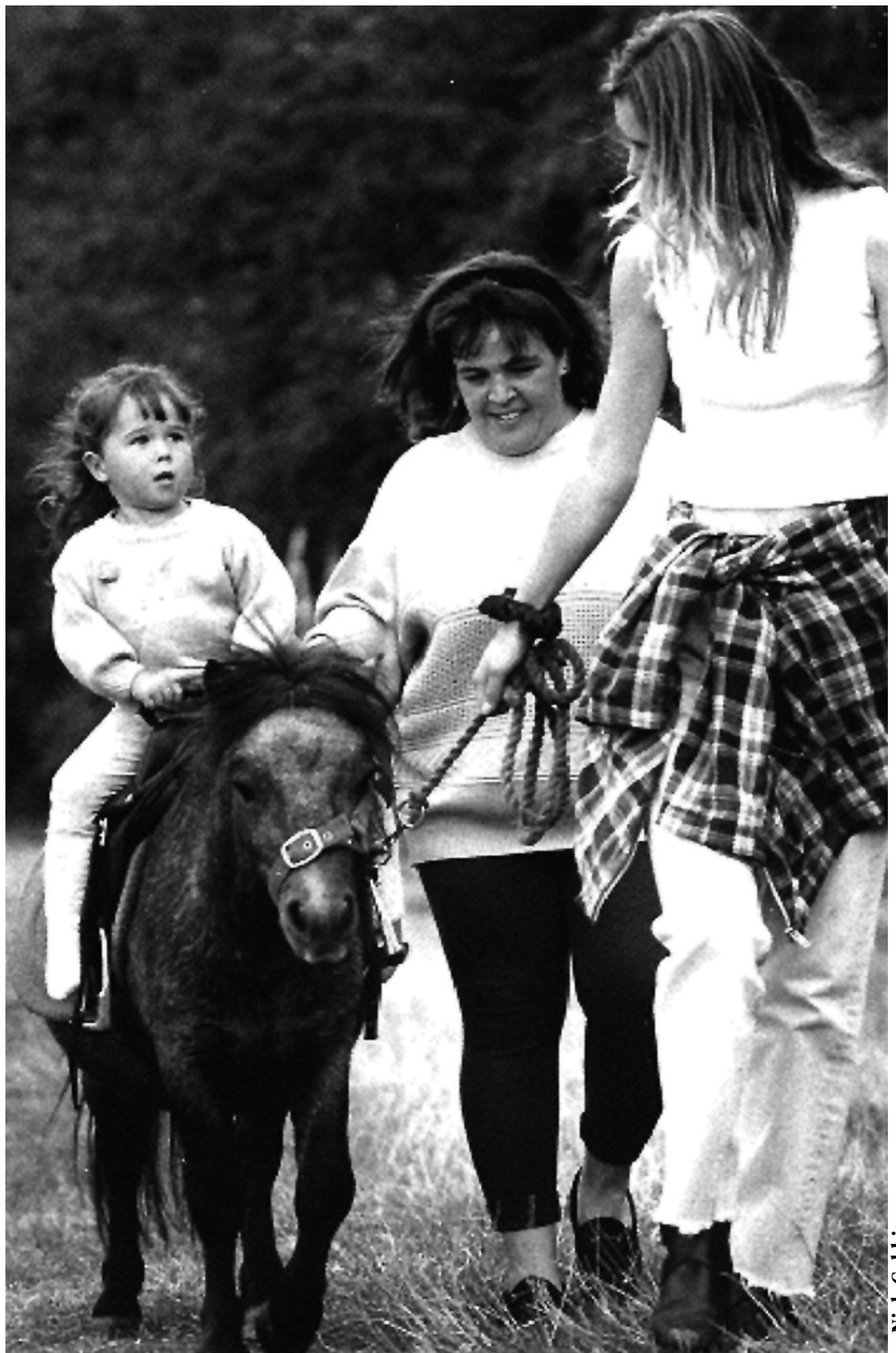
However, without being informed that any other offer had been made, Exodus were suddenly told to vacate the premises in September. Understandably they are refusing.

So what now? Exodus, as is their way, are exploring official avenues for saving a project they have worked, defended and proudly presented for nearly four years. Representations are being made to the Secretary of State for Transport, Sir George Young, and to the Highways Agency. However, it is hardly any surprise to hear Exodus are not holding their breath for official recognition.

Ditches have been dug and fences raised as preparation should their appeals for justice be ignored once again.

To keep in touch with developments, stay tuned to SQUALL's web-site or keep your ear to the ground.

To help defend the farm against eviction register your name on the Exodus help tree by ringing SQUALL on 0171 561 1204 and leaving your contact number.



Nick Cobbing



This issue's look at
national media
skew-whiffery.

Nicholas Saunders is often accused by
the media of promoting Ecstasy and of
distorting the facts so as to make it
appear less dangerous than it really is.
He argues those who live in glass
houses shouldn't throw stones!

CHINESE WHISPERS AND THE MEDIA

On April 7th this year, *The Sunday Telegraph* ran a prominent story claiming new research had established that Ecstasy causes "permanent brain injury", based on an interview by their reporter Rachel Sylvester with the Californian researcher, Charles Grob. The article said that Dr Grob had found brain damage by using high-tech brain scans on long term users. Two weeks later the paper published Dr Grob's letter in which he denounced the article as: "a gross distortion and misrepresentation of our research..."

On May 12th *The Sunday Times* ran a major feature by Olga Craig called 'E is for Agony', subtitled: "How many young people are clubbing themselves to death on Ecstasy?" and illustrated by photos of teenagers captioned: "Killed by the Drug Culture". The centre of the page displayed a quote in large type: "Experiments detected

profound effects on the brain, which were confirmed by brain scans in long-term users".

The text revealed this was based on Dr Charles Grob's work on volunteers! The same article said that Mary Hartnoll (the senior Scottish social worker widely condemned by the media for saying the dangers of Ecstasy had been exaggerated) "has now backtracked, now saying she believes the drug is 'very risky'". I wrote to Ms Hartnoll to ask whether she had changed her mind and if so why, and she replied: "I have not changed my mind and restricted myself to clarifying what I had said".

On June 14th, *The Independent* ran a feature by Glenda Cooper headed: "Ecstasy users risking long term brain damage". In it she states that "a study in the US, carried out for the Food and Drug Administration, found 'profound' and 'permanent' effects on the brain which were confirmed by brain

scans on long term users". Her source was *The Sunday Telegraph*, she told me, and blamed their cutting system rather than herself.

As it turns out, I had a pretty good idea what was coming. Rachel Sylvester rang me a few days before the article appeared and said she wanted to paint a more positive picture of Ecstasy, and got me chatting about Dr Grob's research in which I took part as a 'guinea pig'. (Perhaps talking to me was her evidence for Ecstasy causing brain damage to long term users!). In spite of her friendly come on, my suspicions were aroused when I only heard the clatter of her keyboard when I mentioned something which might be construed as negative.

Well, every profession has a few bad apples like Rachel Sylvester. But they not only get away with it, what they say is repeated by other journalists like Olga Craig and Glenda Cooper until the lie becomes 'fact'. This may not matter in the rubbish press, but people do believe what they say in the papers mentioned - in fact, I have heard several people, including Mr Betts (Leah Betts' father) and social workers repeating the new 'evidence' on the BBC. I would like to see such journalists blacklisted, unable to get work on any respectable newspaper ever again.

More recently (June 15th), the *British Medical Journal* published an editorial entitled: "Ecstasy and Neurodegeneration", which argued that Ecstasy was probably more dangerous than generally realised. Although the article impressively cited no less than 12 papers, the research results referred to were all published well over a year ago; it contained nothing new. However, it provided a dramatic example of the dangers of illicit drugs by describing how a contaminated batch of a [different] street drug had caused devastating symptoms similar to Parkinson's disease.

BBC news and nearly every newspaper reported the BMJ as publishing "new evidence" about the dangers of Ecstasy. *The Guardian's* medical correspondent warned that long term users may suffer from a kind of Parkinson's disease! And on the highest authority; who would doubt the word of the BMJ?

What was not reported anywhere in the media was that the drug Fenfluramine has recently been approved for long term daily use in the USA. This is significant because the main researchers claiming that Ecstasy may cause long term brain damage (on whose research the BMJ article was based), believe that Fenfluramine causes identical damage. Other researchers believe that neither MDMA nor Fenfluramine cause neurodegeneration, and the US Food and Drug Administration expert committee took their view in

approving Fenfluramine. In short, an overview of informed opinion could only conclude that Ecstasy is probably less dangerous than previously realised.

Nicholas Saunders is the author of 'E for Ecstasy'.

YET ANOTHER SQUATTING OUTRAGE?

A media typhoon resulted following *The Daily Express's* recent front page outrage against the squatters who sold the house they'd occupied for 19 years. Under 'adverse possession' rules, occupying a property for 12 years or more qualifies the occupants as owners. Shame and outrage screamed *The Express*.

There was no acknowledgement, as pointed out by Jim Paton from the Advisory Service for Squatters, that all land and property ownership originated in such a way. Or that any property owner who has completely forgotten about a property he owns is a testament to a debauchery of ownership.

Instead the self-perpetuating media agenda whizzed into action. On the day *The Express* ran its piece, the Advisory Service for Squatters was rung up by Radio 2's *Jimmy Young Show*, Carlton TV, Sky Television, the *Evening Standard*, *The Observer*, BBC Television, the *Sunday Mirror* and Talk Radio. *The Sunday Times* even went so far as to dredge up the original owner who had completely forgotten about the building but was gutted to be told he had missed out on £100,000.

SQUALL was similarly inundated with media calls that day, the funniest of which came from *The Daily Telegraph*. They were intending to follow up the story with a feature on "middle class squatters" and wanted us to find them some examples. When asked what 'middle class squatters' meant, they replied: "People who earn a high wage and squat for fun." SQUALL told them that we might be able to find a refugee, a woman escaping domestic violence or a single parent who squatted but had never heard of a high wage earner who squatted for fun. *The Daily Telegraph* feature writer then replied that "unfortunately, you know how it is, but this isn't what *Telegraph* readers want to read about". She then asked whether we might instead be able to find a squatter who "earned a wage, was articulate and preferably good-looking". At this point SQUALL simply had to point out that whilst we did indeed know many squatters who were articulate and looked great, none of them were likely to offer their lives as fodder for a phoney agenda. The feature never ran.



Actors of Parliament

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

Not even *The Sun*, that most virulent of right wing tabloids, could believe six Tory MPs would fail to support the electorally lucrative idea of banning handguns.

But, despite the Home Office's own research concluding that gun ownership and violent crime are linked, that's exactly what happened.

The Select Committee of 11 MPs set up following the shootings in Dunblane, reported their findings on gun ownership to the Government in August. They were widely expected to recommend a complete handgun ban.

But six of the eleven, a majority, and all Tories, rejected the idea. Their position was especially surprising in view of the Government's own unusually firm pronouncement that it would support such a ban. What could make these six fly in the face of common sense and the expected loyalty of Tory MPs to their government?

Perhaps a clue can be found in the attitude of a further 32 Tory members who told the Government they would vote against any ban. Each of these 32 list shooting amongst their recreations in the Parliamentary handbook, Dod's.

And, what's more, one of them - a certain Warren Hawksley - also sat on the Select Committee. Of course, we at SQUALL feel sure he would have declared his interest. Not.

Another five Tory MPs are said to be partial to "country pursuits". But with such an emotive issue, surely not even these 37 wise and noble statesmen could sway the august body of Parliament?

After Dunblane, the gun lobby went into overdrive, hiring top PR consultants to fend off any potential curtailment of their enjoyment.

The British Shooting Sports Council began urging members not to use human looking targets or wear para-military uniforms. The Shooter Rights Association warned of higher taxes (!) should handguns be banned. An umbrella group of gun ownership organisations has been established asking for £25 a head fighting fund.

But surely the gun lobby couldn't nobble a parliamentary committee? Not even one with Warren

Hawkesley on it?

Sir Patrick Lawrence is the vice chairman of the National Union of Conservative and Unionist Associations - the voluntary wing of the Tory party. By an amazing coincidence he is the very same Sir Patrick Lawrence who chairs the British Shooting Sports Council - the organisation which co-ordinated the gun lobby's evidence to the Dunblane inquiry.

Peter Atkinson is a Tory MP. The very same Peter Atkinson MP who is the parliamentary and public consultant to the British Fields Sports Society.

John Kendall PR Limited is the name of a top PR company which represents the British Shooting Sports Council. Amongst its directors is one Sir Peter Temple-Morris, - a Tory MP.

It is, of course, wholly unlikely that the six Tory MPs on the Select Committee - Sir Ivan Lawrence, David Ashby, Walter Sweeney, John Greenway, Dame Jill Knight and Warren Hawksley - took the rap for the decision the government really wanted to make.

AND on the subject of shooting, agriculture minister Douglas Hogg outed himself and his "ministerial colleagues" as lovers of blood sports during a Game Fair in July.

"My ministerial colleagues and I are passionate defenders of field sports. I shoot and I fish. I do not hunt - at least not yet - but I resolutely champion the rights of those who do," he said.

The Eton-educated minister added that his government had "done a great deal to protect people from the disgraceful violent protests one finds at many hunts".

Speaking at the Fair in Lincolnshire, Mr Hogg, who has been criticised for making a pig's ear of the BSE crisis, added that the sports gave "pleasure to millions".

"They are a traditional and significant part of country life," he said. "People have an absolute right to go about their lawful business and I utterly condemn those who seek to frustrate them."

He added that field sports injected £2.7 billion into the countryside economy.

Yer SQUALL Competition innit

We ran not one but two competitions in the last SQUALL and were deluged with a trickle of entries. Indeed the caption competition for our three diuretic policeman at Newbury photo induced a bladder full of knob gags. What did we expect?



After careful consideration the competition panel elected the winner as Chris in Reading with "Don't forget the dodgy handshake when you've finished lads". He wins a copy of George McKay's 'Senseless Acts of Beauty', a copy of Zion Train's 'Seven Wonders of the World in Dub' CD and a copy of the Tofu Love Frog's 'Rentamob CD'.

Second prize for topicality goes to Anthony Wilson in Gloucestershire with "Rare snail...tree snake...butterfly". He scores himself a Zion Train and Tofu Love Frogs CD.

The other runners up are Mark in Bradford with "How about this for a side-handled baton?" Paul from London with "Always the same. Never one when you want one and then three come at once." And Andy in Leeds with "The thin yellow line." For the most pleasing postcard, Martin from Holtsfield near Swansea. Each wins a Zion Train CD.

But what happened to the girls? Not one female entry! Maybe they didn't find three male coppers having a piss very inspiring and, lets face it, who can blame them.

There was only one correct answer in the Desert Storm competition sent in from Chris in Reading - RDV in Desert Storm speak means Rapid Deployment Vehicle. He scores himself a Desert Storm on vinyl EP.

This issue's competition requires a tickling caption for Simon Chapman's photograph on page 5. First prize is the newly released one and a half hour Jazz Jungle mix tape put out by SQUALL's music reviewer DJ Seed plus a year's subscription to SQUALL. Second prize is a year's subscription to SQUALL.

Answers please on the most unusual postcard you can find to 'Competition (isn't always good for you)'
SQUALL, PO Box 8959, London N19 5HW

JUXTA-POSING

Daily Mail April 27th 1996

Headline: "£60,000 FOR EACH STITCH!"

"Fury at staggering £302,000 payout to man with minor head cut after row with police... three times what a victim of crime would get for losing both legs.... Police were outraged" etc

and

Independent April 27th 1996

Headline: "RECORD PAYOUT FOR POLICE VICTIM"

"A man truncheoned over the head while handcuffed yesterday received the highest damages award yet made against the police force..... The Metropolitan Police said it would be taking no action against the officers involved."



Police Clampdown on RTS

Several RTS activists have recently been arrested in a series of raids. But police action fails to intimidate Reclaim the Streets. Words by Sally Chesworth and Andy Johnson. Photos: top and bottom Alan Lodge, centre Sheila Freeman.



A national police clampdown on the activities of Reclaim the Streets has followed July's successful street party on the M41 in London (see page 26).

RTS organisers have been arrested before, during and after events - suggesting the police are making use of the surveillance to which RTS groups have been subject for many months.

A London activist was arrested in August, shortly after July's M41 party, following two police raids in which documents were seized.

A Birmingham activist was also arrested, following a raid, shortly after a successful street party in Birmingham in August.

In Brighton 80 people were arrested as they attempted to hold a "beach party" in the streets in August; and in Cambridge in September, riot police ensured a peaceful party in Mill Street ended with arrests and trouble.

In Brighton there were reports of police from outside the area picking out known organisers for the local constabulary to "take out" on the day of the action, including legal observers. In Cambridge organisers were also isolated and arrested on the day of the party.

In London police seized computers and papers during searches of the group's north London office and an activist's home on August 3rd. The raids began with the arrival of five police officers at the RTS base at about 8am. Another four turned up at the activist's door shortly after. He was told he was being arrested in connection with damage to the motorway and held for eight hours at Hammersmith Police Station. His diary and various documents were confiscated.

At the office the police were allowed in by other occupants of the building who were shown a form (a warrant card) which they took to be a search warrant. The team had spent 15 minutes taking photographs using digital cameras (which put images straight onto floppy disc) before anyone from RTS knew they were there.

When confronted by an RTS organiser, who told them their presence was illegal, one officer replied, "but they let us in". She told them to leave. One officer was recognised as from the Forward Intelligence Team, which had been monitoring RTS' movements in the run-up to the street party, and the other four were thought to be from the CID.

A woman who witnessed events complained to the officers that for all the occupants' knew, they could be terrorists planting a bomb on the premises, to which the officer retorted: "I think we're the ones looking

at the terrorists."

The five returned in the early afternoon with a warrant and several uniformed officers. Jacklin, of RTS, refused them entry. "They kept knocking for half an hour and said they were going to break the door down. Eventually they let themselves in," she said.

Three computers were removed but the group say the police will not find much information of use. The files did not contain street party plans and the database is protected with Pretty Good Privacy which is more difficult to crack than a single pass word. The police are likely to keep the computers for two to three months and there are concerns about what state the material will be in when it is handed back.

RTS say they expected there would be a response to such a bold and well-attended action which the police had tried so hard to stop. The group's activities were under close scrutiny in the days before the street party, with the office being watched from a house opposite and members being followed as they went about the final preparations.

"It was quite a performance," recalled one member. "As we cycled down the side streets near the office we would go past them sitting in cars with mountain bikes in the back talking on their radios. They looked really embarrassed. It was a wasted effort because we had planned for all that."

The arrested activist, Paul M, is bailed until October 28th when he will learn whether any charges will be brought. A second person is wanted for questioning.

In Birmingham an activist was arrested by eight uniformed officers on charges of conspiracy to cause criminal damage, ie digging up a public highway. RTS Birmingham believe he was held in order that his flat could be searched.

RTS London said that as laws were there to maintain the status quo, it was necessary to challenge some of them to bring about radical change. Therefore they expected police harassment.

"Seven thousand people committed the offence of obstruction of the highway - the police chose to arrest eight on the day for public order [offences] and one after the event," an activist told SQUALL. "Their historic tactic of isolating individuals from the mass only works in the context of top-down organisations. For us it confirms the importance of attempts to organise in a non-hierarchical way. Moments like this show the true nature of the judicial system - promotion of planet-destroying industries and activities is encouraged, the way smoothed. Those opposing this destruction are arrested and intimidated."

Ingham vs The Travellers

Thatcher's ex-press secretary spits more of his infamous vitriol on Yorkshire Travellers. Report by **Sally Chesworth**.

Photographs by **Richard Heys**.

IN RECENT WEEKS Maggie's former media guard dog has been baring his teeth at a Travellers' camp which he's accused of being parasites "terrorising" his old Yorkshire home town of Hebden Bridge. Sir Bernard, now of Purley, launched his offensive from his column in the mill town's weekly rag, *The Hebden Bridge Times*, where he began his career.

The encampment of around 100 Travellers has been shocked and incensed by his toxic tirades against their lifestyle and by allegations which have followed in the local press that they have been responsible for numerous misdemeanours which its readers might be forgiven for concluding were destroying the social fabric of the nation.

Sir Bernard began his public spleen-venting in May, a couple of months after the site started on a quarter-of-a-mile belt of derelict, tree-screened land running along the Rochdale Canal, below the trunk road in from Halifax.

When the 'Britain in Bloom' judges surveyed the town and bestowed only faint praise, Sir Bernard was quick to spot a culprit. His first diatribe described the site as resembling a "refugee camp" which was putting off tourists, populated by "slum dwellers, flotsam and those who think we owe them a living". The itinerant visitors were, he said, "opportunists" who were languishing in "unemployment and deprivation (usually self-imposed)" and creating an eyesore.

He claimed that Travellers were never wanted and that permanent sites were a blight that gave towns "rubbish dump status" with attendant sanitation problems and health risks. "Travellers can turn a paradise into a tip almost overnight", he opined. *The Daily Express* sent a reporter to sniff around - he reached a similar conclusion.

Angered by such venom the Travellers sought their right of reply and one of their

number, Alexi, made the front page with his retaliatory strike. *The Hebden Bridge Times* aired his view that forcing Travellers to move on was ethnic cleansing and that comparisons with refugees missed the point that Travellers wanted the life they lived. Sir Bernard, he said, was an "old busy body" who had no right to give Travellers a bad name just because he disagreed with their creed.

"If people are willing to take the piss out of us then we have to answer back," he told *SQUALL*. "After the article went in, there were letters printed agreeing with us. One person who wrote said he would rather have us as neighbours than Bernard Ingham."

But was it just a verbal snarling? It seems to the Travellers that when Sir Bernard barks, the local establishment bites. They believe that his comments have hastened their enforced departure. They understand that the landowner was content to leave them be until Sir Bernard's complaints put them in the headlines and calls for their eviction ensued. The county court has ordered them to quit the site and by the time *SQUALL* 14 appears the community will have disbanded.

The granting of the eviction order prompted a second savaging with sharpened claws. Ingham's column in early August lashed out that the Travellers were "yobs" who were "shamelessly exploitative", "grossly anti-social", guilty of "assorted intimidations" and kept by tax payers "in their booze, fags, idleness and provocation".

But in this latest attack Sir Bernard worried some new and unexpected prey. He growled that the "Traveller crisis" had been a "disgraceful episode" in the history of Hebden Bridge for which several parties must bear blame - the townsfolk should not have acquiesced to the "occupation"; the landowner should not have waited six months before going to court;



"wet, flabby" liberals in the town should not have supported the Travellers in the face of criticism; and the borough council and the police should not have sat back and watched it all happen.

In recent weeks Travellers have been accused in the press of assaulting a cyclist on the canal tow path, marauding fully clothed in a public paddling pool, smashing bottles and stirring up bother by taking refuge in a mini-market from, according to the Travellers, a gang of drink-steaming locals who'd been haranguing them in a pub. Some of the group concede

that the behaviour of a few new arrivals has fuelled the tension.

Sitting out on a sunny afternoon, camp members licked their wounds:

"Since these articles, we've become good scape-goats for everything that goes wrong here. The coverage has definitely stirred up local feeling and made it worse for us. The police helicopter is always flying over now. But not everyone in the town feels hostile towards us. It's actually more tolerant than most places. At the train station and in some of the shops they've been great with us and the people on the barges feel more secure with us

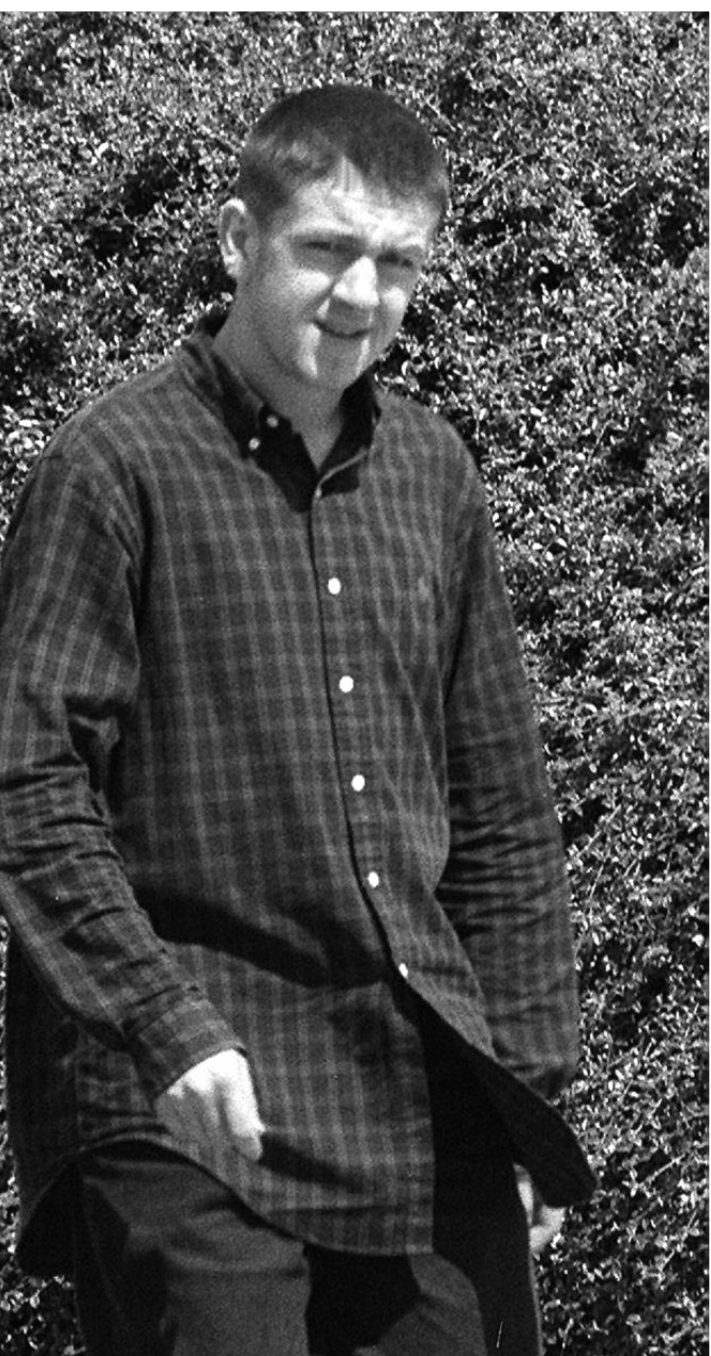
nearby because it stops them getting their windows smashed.

"He should get a life if he's got nothing better to do than slag off people who live their life in a different way. It's just a power trip".

"He goes on about who pays for us but many of us have worked for years. And who pays for people when they're in politics anyway? That's all public money and we're the public."

And if Sir Bernard popped round to pass on his views jowl-to-face? "We'd cover him in jam and let the ferrets out." SQ





Simon Sunderland was arrested just prior to starting an art school course. His crime? Painting colourful graffiti tags four years earlier. His punishment? A five year prison sentence. **Sally Chesworth** interviews an artist behind bars.

Paint

It cost £7,000 to remove the efforts of a teenage graffiti artist from the sites of urban decay he was trying to enliven. It now costs £22,969 to keep him in one of Her Majesty's hotels, where he's serving five years for practising his craft, known to the authorities as criminal damage. In these times when the country's jails are creaking with overcrowding, there are many people whose accounts of their incarceration leave you rolling your eyes in disbelief. But this young man's story has to be among the most bemusing.

Simon Sunderland, now 23, was sentenced in March for painting graffiti around Sheffield in the early 1990s. His tag/signature - 'FISTO' or 'FISTA' - identified it as his. Much of his work decorated abandoned buildings or remote places like a sewerage plant and a bridge on the M1, hardly describable as examples of civic pride.

For Simon, the ludicrousness of his situation only heightens his pangs of injustice. He was never caught in the act of painting - the police came for him early one morning. Before his arrest he was expected to start a college art course with thoughts of doing a degree. He'd been developing his drawing skills and presented his portfolio at court but says the judge didn't look at it. The Probation Service recommended that Simon be given a non-custodial sentence because it would not serve the public interest for him to be locked up any longer than the five and a half months he had spent on remand. In meting out a five year sentence, the judge said the term was a deterrent, which Simon finds hard to reconcile with having been out of trouble for three and a half years. He and his supporters see it as an aberrant decision which they hope will be overruled next month.

"If there is to be any aesthetic doing and seeing, one physiological condition is indispensable: frenzy. Frenzy must first have

enhanced the excitability of the whole machine, else there is no art."

Neitzsche

"You ask yourself: where is the vandalism, in the graffiti art or in the concrete that serves as its background?"

German museum director

These are extracts from some of the reading matter that has inspired and encouraged Simon during his months inside. Below, Simon describes the motivations behind his graffiti, what this and his current work means to him, and his reactions to being criminalised for his art.

"Graffiti art is to me a pure form of art - no money, no rules in the style and content, it's visible and it still seems vibrant, and the fact that it is a self-taught medium and has no written history, so no borders or rules can be made or heeded to.

"The graffiti I did wasn't done to offend nor harm anyone. I had no financial motivations, on the contrary, I wanted to share it with people, or at least those that liked it. My motives were sincere. I believe I owe a great deal to my graffiti art past. I work in a working class area, it's not really a positive place for someone interested in art or anything else for that matter. Neither was art at school which I found boring. Graffiti seemed exciting, no one telling you what to do. It was rightly or wrongly a way of getting some kind of recognition. It was also the sheer love of trying to do something positive in an atmosphere and area of the complete opposite. I've now progressed, matured, and although I don't do graffiti, I will never stop doing art - it's part of me, something I love, something I've created, developed and learned myself. It's taught me many things about life in general and not just art. I was trying to further myself more than I've done already, though somebody decided they would try to ruin my life. A year or two ago, a London graffiti artist was given 18 months probation for a



the town

lot more damage on tubes and walls.

“For all its bad sides, graffiti has more balls than half of this art in galleries. Imagine you’re scared, freezing. It’s two in the morning. You’ve a few colours so you don’t have too much paint to carry and when you get to the place you’re going to paint there is a barbed wire fence and four live electric rails, and then you’ve to paint in virtual darkness, shitting yourself to create something creative.

“For many kids in northern working class areas, art isn’t encouraged. Art is seen as the ‘property’ of the middle and upper classes. Northern working class kids are meant to work in industry, as in my area where steel and mining were the main sources of employment. Now that these industries are in decline or extinct, the newer industries of unemployment, drugs, booze and crime have taken over. To me these options aren’t very inspiring. So with all the grief that graffiti has caused me, it was this that gave me the impetus to develop my art in other directions.

“Graffiti isn’t conventional, but I think it is sad when it is dismissed and misunderstood. So many kids, once they’ve finished doing graffiti, tend never to do art again. I believe that if they were encouraged, if local authorities took a more positive approach, they could help kids develop their skills and both could benefit from it.

“I know that in the society I live in, on the whole, graffiti is viewed as illegal, so I knew somebody wanted blood. I was expecting a punishment of some sort. But nothing like the sentence I was given. I feel that I was harshly treated because even the prosecution barrister had argued for a maximum sentence of between 12 and 18 months.

“I thought the sentence was unreal - logic I feel had little if any part to play when my sentence was passed. I’ve coped with prison I guess. Maybe I can answer this better when I’m out and am able to look back at it. I guess I’ve learned from it, not ‘cos of my “crimes” but the whole experience and I see what a pathetic

system it is. The screws have been relatively OK. Most who’ve mentioned it can’t believe my sentence but there’s always the odd sad bastard who I feel doesn’t like the publicity my campaign and case have received. But they’re their own problem. Maybe it would be different if I was at a Cat A or Cat B (more secure) prison. But prison isn’t a holiday camp where you get a roof over your head and three meals a day, that’s a load of bollocks. Spending your time in such a small area with so many people, many who aren’t the friendliest of people, 24 hours a day, every day, isn’t my idea of a holiday.

“As for my chances in the art world. Well, it would be good for that to happen, but if it’s not so then that’s that. I’m not going to get stressed whichever way. I find it funny, if not strange that I can make cash out of something I love doing for a larf! It would be a bonus, but I’d never get taken in by it. I mean the enjoyment/expression is most important to me, if you don’t get/achieve that you’re more or less fucked! Getting a nice little ego and a knack for disappearing up your rectum seems boring and sad, and fame and money (too much) don’t seem so over important.”

The backbone of his growing campaign is his Mum, Angela, and her two sisters who have tirelessly pushed for his release. Appalled by the stance taken by the city council they feel Simon has been used as a scapegoat for all manner of social ills.

“There’s been a climate of suggestion that Simon cost Sheffield vast amounts of money,” says Angela. “The council has claimed that graffiti was responsible for businesses refusing to invest in Sheffield and for the poor health of some of its residents. The media has attempted to pin the blame for all this onto Simon. To blame Sheffield’s social and economic problems on artwork that’s colourful and exciting is ridiculous. What is ignored by all the publicity is the effect



on Simon’s life now, his future and his hopes for the rest of his life. Imprisonment and the massive costs of keeping him there are doing no good for him or for society. Simon’s art did no one any harm and it brightened up some grim spots. Is that worth sending him to prison for longer than most rapists?”

Simon Sunderland’s appeal was heard in the High Court on October 3rd. The judges decided that a five year sentence was “out of kilter” with his conviction. They ruled that two years was a more appropriate sentence. Having served a year already he was released the following week.

Ⓢ

Above: A computer design drawn by Simon Sunderland in prison, and signed with his prison number: “It’s a reflection of how some people are shaped by the system, their actions and attitudes towards people. Greed, ignorance, selfishness.”

Lead picture and portrait of Simon courtesy of Roff Parry Picture Agency.

DISARMING



In January three women disarmed a Hawk fighter with household hammers. Six months later, a Liverpool jury stunned the legal profession by acquitting them of causing £1.5 million of criminal damage. **Neil Goodwin** reports on their victory and the history of the Ploughshares movement.

In the aftermath, puzzled judges called for an urgent investigation into the way juries think, while hard-nosed hacks no doubt filed the case away under: 'PERVERSE VERDICT - NOT TO BE OPENED UNTIL THE NEXT BASKET-CASE JURY UPSETS THE JUDICIAL APPLE CART'. But to those family and supporters who had packed the courtroom daily it was the culmination of one of the bravest acts of conscience in recent years.

For a jury to uphold the womens' defence that they had used "reasonable force to prevent a crime" was as much a tribute to the groups' skill and determination in taking the legal system on, as it was a ringing indictment of British arms manufacturers who bolster genocidal regimes.

The Hawk was part of £500 million contract to supply 24 planes to Indonesia, whose brutal occupation of neighbouring East Timor has resulted in 200,000 deaths since 1975. Despite government assurances that the Hawk is just a trainer, there have been numerous eyewitness accounts of Hawks from a previous deal being used to bomb defenceless villagers.

"I'd heard about a Hawk attack on a small village in East Timor when 30 women and children were killed," explains Jo Wilson. "There were no survivors. I wrote letters and attended vigils and demonstrations, and yet nothing was changing."

"By early last year it became increasingly obvious that the sale would proceed," says Andrea Needham. "We knew that once the planes left Britain there'd be little more we could do, so the obvious thing seemed to be to stop them leaving by disarming them."

The court heard how Andrea, Jo and Lotta Kronlid had converged on British Aerospace's factory at Warton, Lancashire. Concealed amongst a group of plane-spotters, they identified the Indonesia-bound Hawks from serial numbers listed in military magazines.

"Before we went into the base we stood in a ditch and had a minute's silence for the people of East Timor," Andrea recalls. "We thought about why we were doing the action and tried to keep that feeling with us throughout."

They waited for a security patrol to pass-by, crept over to the hangar from which they had seen Hawk ZH 955 emerge days before, and prised open the doors with a crowbar.

"For a long time I thought about the moment when we'd actually get there and see the plane in front of us," says Andrea. "It had seemed almost impossible. But when we opened up the door and there it was right in front of us it was a pretty amazing feeling."

Wielding a selection of ordinary household hammers, some decorated with slogans such as "All life is sacred", the women set about hammering the nose cone and

cockpit. Sophisticated radar and targeting systems were rendered inoperable in a matter of seconds.

"There was no hesitation because we just assumed we would be caught almost immediately," Andrea continues. "It was inconceivable that we could get through all this British Aerospace security and nobody would notice that we were there, so we felt that we had to go for it immediately."

As with the previous 57 Ploughshares "conversions" that have taken place since September 1980, when eight people disarmed two nuclear warheads in Pennsylvania, the women were prepared to take full personal responsibility for their actions, and welcomed the opportunity to explain their reasons in public.

The Ploughshares Movement takes its inspiration from the prophet Isaiah: "They shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks". In the last 16 years, activists throughout the world have caused over £4 million worth of damage to such weapons as Trident submarines, B 52 bombers and F-111's, and served a collective total of 156 years in prison. For their action, the East Timor Ploughshares (Seeds of Hope) group had anticipated anything up to ten years imprisonment.

The Warton action was Britain's third disarmament. In March 1990, Stephen Hancock and Mike Hutchinson, wearing Mickey Mouse ears and tabards emblazoned

with the words: "Mickey Mouse Fan Club - Peace Section", broke into USAF Upper Heyford and caused £200,000 damage to an F-111.

Three years later, Chris Cole was arrested at BAe's Stevenage site for causing £90,000 damage to a Hawk, a Tornado and the (then called) European Fighter Aircraft (see SQUALL 10).

In the first of two trials, Chris contested his right to use "reasonable force in the prevention of a crime", as enshrined in the Criminal Law Act 1967. The judge, Stephen Sedgley, instructed the jury to use their "conscience, common sense and common humanity" in reaching a verdict and added: "If what Mr Cole says is happening in East Timor, it may amount to genocide which is a crime under British and International Law". There was a hung jury. For a while a moral chink appeared in BAe's armour, but Chris Cole eventually received eight months imprisonment for criminal damage.

The biggest concern for Ploughshares activists has always been whether or not the judge will recognise their defence. In one famous case in 1988, Katya Komisaruk was denied the opportunity to even mention the nature of her target, let alone cite international laws or explain her motives.

The previous year Katya had entered California's Vandenberg Airforce Base through an open and unguarded gate. Having left flowers, a packet of biscuits and a note for a

WOMEN

guard which read: "I have no gun, you must have lots. Let's not be hasty, no cheap shots. Have a cookie and a nice day", she broke into the NAVSTAR complex, home to America's nuclear 'Global Positioning System'.

Using a hammer, crowbar and boltcutters, Katya's two hours of undetected disarmament resulted in \$0.5 million worth of damage. She smashed the mainframe computer, squirted it with a fire extinguisher and danced on the circuit boards, before climbing onto the roof to hammer the satellite dish responsible for initiating America's "First Strike" capability. Eventually she hitchhiked home and calmly announced her actions at a press conference the following day.

During her trial in Los Angeles, the jury was prevented from seeing photographic evidence of sprayed messages concerning the Geneva Convention and the Nuremberg Principles. Deprived of a context, her act of disarmament was reduced to the level of mindless vandalism and she was sentenced to five years

Andrea, Lotta and Joanna were eventually taken to Lytham St Annes police station. A fourth woman, Angie Zelta who was working on the outside was later arrested on a conspiracy charge having publicly stated her intention to continue the work. Each served six months on remand at Risley prison.

"The other prisoners were tremendously supportive," Andrea recalls. "They'd say, Well of course it was right. It was going to kill people and you stopped it", explaining why we waited around afterwards was more difficult. But I think people could understand that. They'd say: 'You knew it wasn't a crime so you didn't run away'".

Throughout the trial, friends and supporters gathered outside the bombed-out ruins of Liverpool's St Lukes church to remember East Timor's dead. Around their necks cardboard pendants carried the stark details of individual tragedies: 'Domingos, 10 years - Killed...Bernardino Mendes (Age 22) - Wounded...Lourenco - Missing, feared dead.'

Liverpool's Christian community flocked to the court daily. Dozens of white crosses were fixed to the barriers outside the main entrance where Buddhist nuns and Catholic priests knelt before makeshift shrines praying for justice. Merseyside church leaders even wrote a letter to John Major calling for a halt to the Hawk deal.



"This parish has always reflected on justice issues," said Father Fitzgerald who hung a banner outside his church saying: 'Ground the Hawks. Set free the doves of peace.' "The womens' unashamed action for life has been embraced by the people of Liverpool. This trial has been a festival of light and truth."

Inside the packed courtroom, Vera Baird, barrister for Joanna Wilson, opened the case for the defence. The women, she said, had

consultant to film the documentary *Death of a Nation*. "I have reported from war zones like Cambodia and Vietnam, but I have never seen anything like East Timor," he told the court. "The country was like a vast cemetery, covered in crosses with the names of entire families marked on them."

Also giving evidence was Jose Ramos Horta, East Timor's exiled Foreign Minister, whose family had been murdered by the

capability," he said. "It can carry up to eight cluster-bombs, which rain down shrapnel like razor blades."

Hundreds of Liverpoolians descended on the court for the verdict. Housewives, nuns and peace-camp veterans crowded round the entrance to court four. Chain smoking pensioners paced the corridor like expectant grandparents.

"I tend to be a bit pessimistic," Andrea admits. "When the foreman stood up I was thinking: Well, I've prepared myself for several years in jail and here it comes. And that's okay because what we did was right. When he said "not guilty" there was this huge gasp around the courtroom. We didn't dare breathe until he'd read out each of the seven verdicts. And then the whole courtroom erupted."

In the corridor pensioners whooped for joy and banged on the windows. Nuns raced for the lifts leaving bewildered security guards in their wake. Outside, hundreds of locals danced in the courtyard singing: "Give peace a chance."

"We were overwhelmed by the courage of the jury in accepting what had been said," says Joe. "That verdict was an indictment of British Government policy and British Aerospace's actions in selling weapons to Indonesia. It was a day for justice and a day for East Timor."

The women now intend to bring out a private prosecution against BAe for contravening the Genocide Act.

"When he said 'not guilty' there was this huge gasp around the courtroom. We didn't dare breathe until he'd read out each of the seven verdicts. And then the whole courtroom erupted."

"lawful" excuse to disarm Hawk ZH 955 because they were using "reasonable force to prevent a crime". "Slashing a tyre is criminal damage," she explained to the jury. "But if it was on a car carrying a bomb to Manchester, then slashing it could be seen as a lawful excuse."

Remarkably, Judge "Wicked" Wickham allowed the screening of video evidence containing shocking footage of 1991's Santa Cruz massacre when Indonesian troops opened fire on a peaceful protest, killing 271.

Defence witnesses included John Pilger, who had entered East Timor in 1993 posing as a travel

Indonesian military. Andrea, who like Angie and Lotta, defended herself, asked Horta what would happen to someone who tried to disarm a Hawk in East Timor. "They would be shot," he said. "Someone was recently given four years hard labour just for sending a fax to Amnesty International."

Prof Paul Rogers from Bradford University's School of Peace Studies, told the court that Hawk ZH 955 had been due to join Indonesia's Bandung squadron for tackling insurgents."

He rejected BAe's claim that the Hawk is "merely a trainer". "The Hawk has a significant ground-attack

Monkey Business

When a prime piece of architecture was being allowed to deteriorate, squatting activists moved in.

Ally Fogg reports on Manchester's Monastery Campaign. Photo by Gordon Connell.



Wherever you are sitting as you read this, chances are you could throw a stone and hit an empty building. In fact for many of Britain's youth this is a popular hobby. Soon after the stones have hit the windows, the 'tat' merchants move in to liberate anything worth a quid or two. If this hasn't happened in your street yet, it will soon. When it hits domestic housing, the effect is to reduce the numbers of homes available for immediate habitation and exacerbate the housing crisis. When it happens to some of the most beautiful, historical or plain old useful buildings in the country it is little short of a national scandal. Politicians say the answer is to lock up the kids who throw the stones. Sensible people say the answer is simply to stop the buildings from lying empty at all.

Empty buildings don't come much more beautiful, historical or useful than St Francis Friary in Gorton, Manchester. They don't come much bigger either. One hundred and thirty years old and designed by Edward Pugin, son of the architect of the Palace of Westminster, it has lain empty for six years. The building was officially built and run by Franciscan monks until 1990 but the history is one of community involvement. Begun in 1863, in 1871 the monastery was still an unfinished project so the monks staged the largest bazaar Manchester had ever seen to raise

the cash for its completion. Fund-raising continued, with the odd break, until 1980 when the roof and structure was repaired, the exterior was sand-blasted and the whole shebang was flogged off for £75K to be developed into luxury flats. Not surprisingly locals felt robbed of their church, but worse was to come. The would-be developers, Zodeco, went bankrupt in 1994 without ever commencing the conversion. Liquidators Grant Thornton have been the owners ever since and the monastery was left to become another victim of stoning and 'tattooing'. And tat merchants come in all shapes and sizes. Twelve statues from the Friary were spotted in a Sotheby's catalogue and, after a wrangle, bought back by the council for £23K. They had been professionally removed shortly before Zodeco went bust and stood for a year in the yard of a downmarket antique hypermarket nearby. They now stand in the Manchester Town Hall. No charges were ever brought for their illegal removal.

In this manner the monastery slowly crumbled. Lead, slate, marble, altars, cherubs and even stained glass windows were pinched from the building over the years. Empty Listed buildings lose value quickly until treasures become liabilities. More than a few cynics had noticed that should the building become a hazard to health and safety its Listed Building status would be affected. The land is almost certainly easier to develop into profit than the building. Many

people began thinking that the best thing that could happen would be to knock it down before it fell down. Or they did until July 5th 1996 when a small group of activists decided to move in, put up their Section sixes and restore it themselves.

Cae was at school next door to the monastery in the late seventies. He remembers the fund-raising well: "They always used to have this giant thermometer outside at between one and two hundred thousand. That was quite near the bottom. They got four or five in the end." Now in his late twenties and with a bigger beard, he was one of the first campaigners to move into the Friary in July. When I first visited shortly after they had taken residence, he showed me around and talked brightly about their plans. The whole building includes hundreds of rooms, all damaged but few irreparable; bedrooms, meeting rooms, offices, kitchens, a walled garden and acres of surrounding land all just crying out for some skilled hard labour. This alone could be a wonderful resource but it pales beside the great gothic church hall, or Nave. An extravagant, magnificent hall with an intricate towering altar flanked by stained glass windows, it remains breathtaking despite years of pillaging. One can only imagine its beauty before 1990. While I was there we disturbed some blokes hammering away behind the altar. Cae calmly informed them that the church was to be restored and they might like to leave now. Before they left they offered us 'fifty quid

for the stained glass window if you can get it out'.

The Monastery Campaign hoped to build up quietly, do some basic cleaning and sort out living accommodation, meet the neighbours and establish themselves in their new home before drawing too much attention to themselves. The police didn't see it that way and on July 17th conducted their own eviction. Cae recalls: "We were actually securing the building against burglars when they arrived, they asked us what we were doing and we said 'boarding up the windows' and they said, 'Oh no you're not, get out'. We showed them our Section sixes and they thought we were joking. They threw us out, we phoned our solicitor who phoned the local nick and explained the housing law and we were back in by late afternoon. They hadn't even changed the lock."

The police have since relented, but the owners Grant Thornton have not. After ignoring the building for two years, they sprang into action. On Friday 26th July the monastery's new occupants received word of eviction proceedings, the next sixteen hours ran as follows:

26/6/96 3.30pm Notice of eviction hearing posted on Monastery Wall, the court case is to be held four miles away in 30 minutes time.

26/6/96 4pm Judge dismisses defence's claim that they did not have time to prepare a case and orders eviction from the monastery and its grounds.

27/6/96 7.30am Under Sheriff Andrew Wilson, architect of evictions at the M65, M66, Selar and countless other protests, arrives with bailiffs, police and a representative of Grant Thornton. The activists are evicted from the building but are then left with their possessions in the car park. Undeterred, they stick up a tent and settle down until further notice.

By Monday the monastery is receiving extensive local and some national media coverage. The local councillor backs the campaign and the Council Planning Department promises to protect the building from deliberate damage. The activists are no longer inside but they are doing more to protect the monastery than ever. The campaign is now in full view of the neighbours, and without exception they support the activists with words or physical help.

Grant Thornton justify the eviction by saying they would be liable for injuries sustained by anyone on their premises. They say they cannot protect the church from vandals without hiring 24 hour security. They do not mention that they have already hired 24 hour security to protect the church from the people who want to make it safe and habitable.

A week later, August 5th, I return to find the camp in relaxed mood. Untroubled by police, and with the local papers now running 'Save the Monastery' style headlines, the campaign is now entering into discussions with Grant Thornton about the future for the building, and are optimistic about their chances of being allowed access again. A brainstorming session with local people threw up 20 or so suggestions ranging from OAP dances and theatre performances to an organic vegetable distribution point. The greatest wish is that it should become whatever the local people want it to be. It was the local community who helped build the church and it was the same community who kept it repaired for over a century. Now they are claiming what is rightfully theirs.

This campaign is different to many DIY activist squats. The modest name for their group, 'The Monastery Campaign' says it all. Cae insists that in all their plans, the ultimate goal is to be positive. "There's nothing personal here, we're not interested in blaming Grant Thornton or the Monks or anybody else for what's happened here, it's history. What we've got to do now is persuade the owners that it is in their long term interests to let us in on a permanent lease or a 100 year mortgage or whatever it takes. The only thing that matters is the monastery. This building should be here for a long time yet, because that's the way it was built.

"What it needs is respect and not neglect, and I think the people on this campaign and their supporters are the only people showing the monastery any respect. Any work we do on the monastery is to preserve it, improve it and protect it. If we take five years to do this up and then the local people decide they don't like it, I'm quite prepared to spend another five years doing it again, I just want to show that it can be done. I'm just sick of feeling useless in a city full of useful things."

It is tempting to conclude that there is nothing to stop them but their imaginations. If only this were so. The story of the monastery has always been one of money, and this will not change. Consider this: the eviction notices delivered to the campaign were delivered by a solicitor working as an agent for another solicitor working for an accountancy and liquidation firm working for a bank. Somebody is making money here. The Monastery Campaign has no money to speak of, only skills, time, energy and determination. But for the receivers, stuck with a rapidly devaluing liability, this might just be the best offer they get.

The Monastery Campaign can be contacted on (0161) 907 3123.

E-Mail: Cae Gest@xhtml.u-net.com

WWW pages at

<http://www.manchester.com/organisations/monastery/>



SQUOTES

"The allegation that multinationals are exploiting the third world is often misguided. Usually, the "exploitation" consists of letting developing countries make use of what economists would call sources of comparative advantage - cheap labour, say, or a greater tolerance of pollution. That is how poor countries grow less poor."

The Economist editorial 20/7/96

"What has really annoyed me is not the idea of anti-geriatric treatment - in the end I'm all for it - but the thought that the people that are going to get it are people like Thatcher and Reagan. At least death is still the great leveller. No matter how much you despise these people, at least the fuckers are going to die eventually. I'm still looking forward to pissing on Thatcher's grave. It's my one remaining serious ambition. She'll probably get cremated and get a wee urn. But there'll be a monument somewhere and I'll be there with a full bladder and a glint in my eye."

Author Iain Banks interviewed by D-Tour Magazine

"How much does budget influence creativity? Recently we were able to work on a press campaign for a small client of ours. The overall budget was very small, I think it was £400,000 including media."

Art Director Gary Marshall in Ad International Magazine

"Dear (Newspaper editor):

On Sept 26, McDonald's will make an important announcement that just may have adults across America singing and dancing. What, you ask, could McDonald's say that will make you sing and dance? The answer is the nationwide simultaneous launch of 3 new "Deluxe" sandwiches.

Not singing and dancing yet? You will. Be the first to see the hot, new dance craze soon to hit the streets, clubs and parties of America - the Deluxe Line Dance.

It's not the Macarena or the Electric Slide. It's McDonald's own contemporary fandango, to get people grooving to the new Deluxe line Menu at McDonald's.

The Deluxe Line Dance will be performed by a chorus of San Diego Charger Girls, Mesa College Dancers, and of course Ronald McDonald to a new "living" jingle as memorable as the famed "Two all beef patties, special... (Don't look now but you're probably singing)."

McDonald's Press Release

"THE INFIDEL IS RISING AGAIN IN MOTHER RUSSIA - After centuries, the tide of Islam is reversing the gains of Western 'civilisation' in Central Asia."

The Sunday Telegraph gets nostalgic for the Crusades and loses its muslim readers 29/9/96.

"I can't stand these current political adverts - I can't believe they work. There's a wonderful person who writes cynical comments on adverts on a hoarding in Vauxhall, but I wonder what has happened to them recently - please come back."

Clare Short MP.

"SHIRLEY, CHAMPION OF THE HEART OF BRITAIN - She was not gerrymandering, she was trying to keep London civilised."

Alfred Sherman (former advisor to Thatcher) defends Dame Porter in The Spectator, 25/05/96.

Surviving the JSA

Andy Johnson examines ways around the Government's latest welfare statistics fiddle.

Re-write the script. There are loopholes in the JSA which, used with a bit of intelligence, may fend off the worst. Here at SQUALL we have waded through some of the most boring literature known to humanity to pick a few out. But first: General Advice

1) Know your rights, know the rules. (See the minutiae below).
2) Consider signing off. Obviously what the Government wants and easier said than done. Some will find such a suggestion tantamount to capitulation. Fair enough. But by use of LETS schemes, strong community bases and alternative economics some resourceful types may be able to survive outside the system. This is an equally potent stance.

One point to bear in mind: employment service staff may have targets for "helping people back to work" (!). Signing off may release the pressure on less resourceful people.
3) Join a local unemployed centre, claimants action group or other body opposing the JSA. Groundswell are very much on the case. Phone 01865 723750 for local contact.

Minutiae

JSA is the new benefit for the unemployed. Unemployed people on income

support will have to claim JSA. But others on Income Support who do not have to be available for work - lone parents and carers - can continue to claim IS.

Job Seeker's Agreement

Those claiming JSA will have to sign a Job Seeker's Agreement outlining what they are going to do to find work; the type of work sought and hours willing to work. It has to be signed by the "Job Seeker" and the claimant advisor (hereafter known as Clement).

Drive a hard bargain. You do not have to accept work, or follow a "Job Seeker's Direction" if it does not match the conditions in your Job Seeker's Agreement. But don't ask for ridiculous conditions or else Clement won't sign and you won't get dole. Clement has to be convinced you have "reasonable" prospects of finding work. You only have 13 weeks to find your preferred type of work.

If you think the restrictions you place on your availability for work are reasonable, and Clement refuses to sign, you have the right of appeal.

Skills, qualifications and experience are relevant in the type of work you are looking for.

To qualify for JSA you have to be ready and willing to work 40 hours a week. But you

can refuse to accept work that offers less than 24 hours a week.

If you have been allowed to restrict your hours to less than 24 (because of disability, caring responsibilities) you can refuse work of less than 16 hours a week.

Caring responsibilities primarily refer to looking after a child or elderly relative or friend.

Restrictions on the type of work, wage level, location or other conditions you are willing to accept (as opposed to what you are looking for) may disqualify you from JSA unless you can show you still have reasonable prospects of finding work; or you have a disability or you have a "sincerely held religious belief or conscientious objection".

This last clause is important. It is the same reason you can refuse to accept a job or a direction. It is obviously open to interpretation but guidelines given to benefits agency on the type of objections include:

- *an objection to work concerned with the supply of alcohol*
- *an objection to work with material which may be used for the destruction of life*
- *an objection to being, or not being, a member of a trade union or similar association where membership or non-membership is a condition of the employment*

Britain. 1996. You thought it couldn't get worse. But you were wrong.....

Conservative Party Central Office is proud to present -

JSA

(or last of the mohicans)

With a unsupported cast of thousands this epic production will beggar belief
Watch with horror as the low wage economy eats people alive
Be aghast as Poverty makes a triumphant return to our streets
Scream with disbelief

"Perverse at it's very core," - Baroness Hollis of Heigham

"Remarkably close to forced Labour," - Earl Russell, Lib Dem Peer

"Helps create and feed an underclass," - Church Action on Poverty

"All they need is a good slap and a wash." - Tory Git

A Lilley-Portillo-Shepherd production

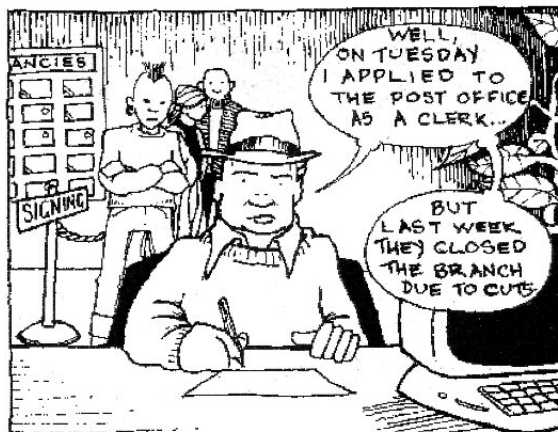
Filmed in Narrowvision™

Directed by Market Forces and Vindictiveness
Starring Benefit Sanction and Harsh Regime
Special guest appearance by Clement Advisor
Special guest star Job Seeker
And introducing: Job Seeker's Direction

(Programme includes short film "They Came from Outer Space")
Soundtrack includes smash hit - Billy get yer hair cut - by Take That!

Coming to a Job Centre near you. Nationwide Release Monday October 7. There is no escape.
OR IS THERE?

ACTIVE SIGNING IN A DE-ACTIVATING JOB MARKET...



Try and incorporate these latter two in the Job Seeker's Agreement. (You will still have to prove your employment prospects are reasonable).

You will have to prove you are "actively seeking work". Drawing up CVs, researching employers can be proof of this. If you throw an interview, or your "behaviour actively militates against you finding work" JSA may be suspended. But, you can argue your behaviour (eg, poor interview performance) was simply bad "job seeking" skills/lack of confidence, ie you did not do it on purpose.

Be careful when filling in the new claim form *Helping You Back to Work*. Although the Job Seeker's Agreement decides if you get JSA or not answers on the HYBW form may also be used.

Sanctions

Under threat of sanction (JSA withheld for two weeks or four weeks) Clement Advisor can instruct you to follow up vacancies, attend interviews and other things to make you employable.

If you refuse to take a job, JSA can only be stopped if the job was offered to you by Clement. "Good Cause" for refusing a job includes:

- being able to show the job would "cause significant harm to your health or subject you to excessive physical or mental strain".

- you had sincerely held religious or conscientious objections.
- you had caring responsibilities which made it unreasonable.
- travelling time or work based expenses (tools, clothes etc) were excessive.

And if the job does not conform to the restrictions you have placed on the days and hours you are available for work.

You do not have to accept a job that pays commission only or if the travel involved in the job is more than an hour each way.

These get out clauses are pretty much the same for refusing to carry out a "Job Seeker's Direction".

If you cannot show good cause benefit will be suspended for two weeks for a first offence, four weeks for further offences within a 12 month period.

No hardship payments are payable for the first two weeks of any sanction. After two weeks you can apply (and have to apply - it will no longer be automatically payable) for hardship payments. But you will have to show you are suffering hardship! (see below for definitions of hardship).

Some people will be able to claim for the first two weeks (see below).

If you give up your job, are sacked, refuse to accept a job offered by the ES or "neglect to avail yourself of a reasonable opportunity of employment" JSA can be suspended for up to 26 weeks. Again, during the

first two weeks claimants cannot apply for hardship payments.

But, if you have been unemployed for more than 13 weeks you can use Employment on Trial. There will be no sanction if you leave between the beginning of the fifth week and end of the twelfth week of employment.

Definitons of hardship

- You or your partner is pregnant.
- you or your partner are caring for a child or young person.
- you or your partner have other caring responsibilities.
- you or your partner suffer from a chronic medical condition.

Falling into these categories does not automatically qualify you for hardship payments. You must show that unless a payment is made there is a "substantial risk" that you will go without the essentials such as food, clothing, shelter, heating.

This is by no means an exhaustive account of the fiddly bits of the JSA.

An excellent resource book (from which much of the above is taken) is the *Unemployment and Training Rights Handbook* by Dann Finn, Iain Murray and Clara Donnelly. It's published by the Unemployment Unit, 322 St John Street, London, EC1V 4NT (0171 833 1222) and costs £12. SQ

MANCHESTER PANSIES SIEZE JOB CENTRE

Unemployed activists from the central Manchester campaign against the Job Seekers Allowance, recently took over Cheetham Hill Job Centre.

For two hours business at the Job Centre was disrupted, while two dozen marauding PANSIES (Political Activists Not-Seeking Employment Satisfactorily) circled the employment exchange, inciting Cheetham Hill claimants, heckling management and urging staff to black the implementation of the Job

Seekers' Allowance.

This Job Centre pantomime followed reports in the last issue of *Freedom* about the activities of manageress, Ms Joan Bainbridge. Ms Bainbridge has been accused of hectoring claimants and boasting that she had "put more people off benefits than any other manager in the North West". Since the report Ms Bainbridge is said to have taken early retirement.

Mr Geoffrey Davis is the new zoo-

keeper of what looks like becoming a Cheetham Hill bear-garden bequeathed to him by Ms Bainbridge. Conversations with claimants at the Cheetham Hill Job Centre seem to confirm the view that it was in danger of becoming a hell-hole. Since the beginning of April, this Job Centre has been one of several used by the Government to inflict pilot schemes for the JSA on unsuspecting claimants, and for this reason it is now being targeted by the local PANSIES. SQ

Festival of 1



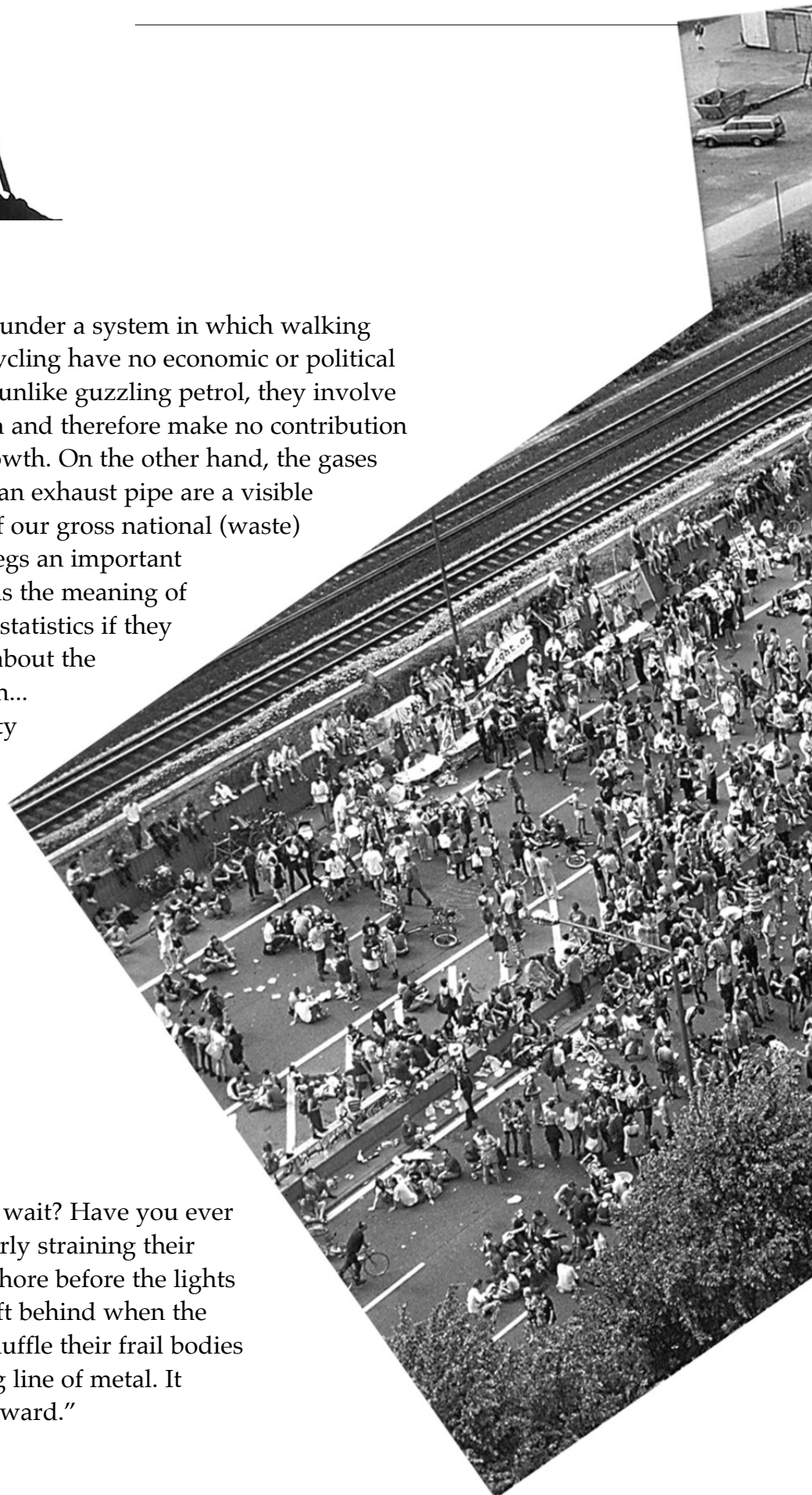
Reclaim the Streets' biggest event this summer saw 10,000 people dancing on the M41. Pictures by **Nick Cobbing**. Lyrics by **RTS**.



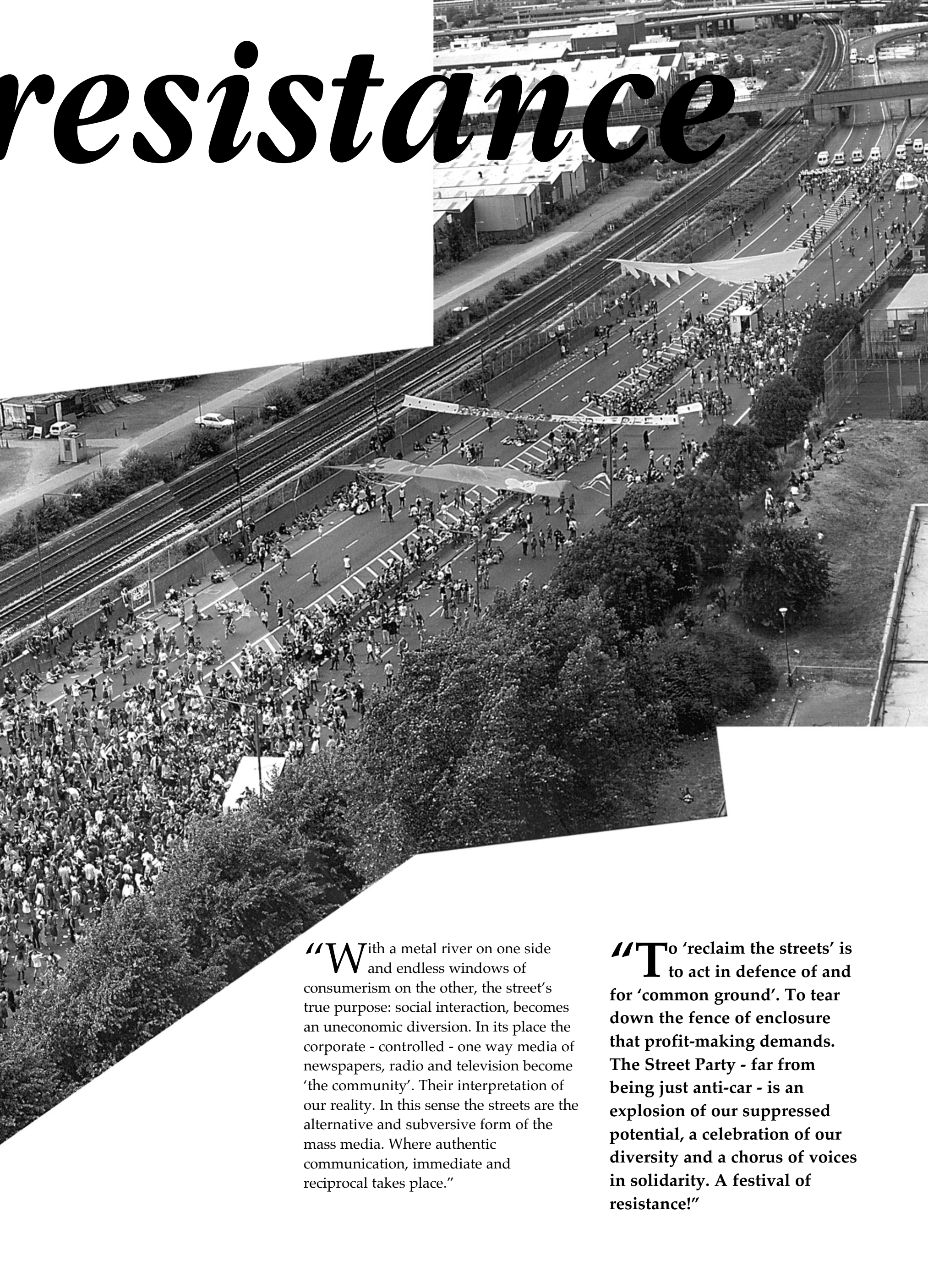
“We live under a system in which walking and cycling have no economic or political value, because, unlike guzzling petrol, they involve no consumption and therefore make no contribution to economic growth. On the other hand, the gases belching out of an exhaust pipe are a visible manifestation of our gross national (waste) product. This begs an important question: what is the meaning of these economic statistics if they tell us nothing about the state of the earth... about our quality of life?”

“Have you ever watched the movements of bodies on the street? Ever seen someone breaking into a run halfway across a zebra crossing, one small human, embarrassed or uncomfortable about

making a big car wait? Have you ever watched the elderly straining their bodies to get to shore before the lights change? Often left behind when the beeps go, they shuffle their frail bodies past the growling line of metal. It inches slowly forward.”



resistance



“With a metal river on one side and endless windows of consumerism on the other, the street’s true purpose: social interaction, becomes an uneconomic diversion. In its place the corporate - controlled - one way media of newspapers, radio and television become ‘the community’. Their interpretation of our reality. In this sense the streets are the alternative and subversive form of the mass media. Where authentic communication, immediate and reciprocal takes place.”

“To ‘reclaim the streets’ is to act in defence of and for ‘common ground’. To tear down the fence of enclosure that profit-making demands. The Street Party - far from being just anti-car - is an explosion of our suppressed potential, a celebration of our diversity and a chorus of voices in solidarity. A festival of resistance!”

NEWS OF THE SKEWS

(special)

After five years at the New Statesman, Steve Platt describes the political manoeuvres behind his ousting from the editor's chair.

The rally I'd been chairing in Westminster Central Hall had just been brought to a premature end by someone setting off a firework rocket.

It had singed the dreadlocks of the man playing a trumpet on the balcony, shot over the heads of the 2,000 or so people in the main auditorium and crashed into the huge organ pipes above the speakers' platform.

The smoke from the rocket triggered the fire alarm which in turn cut off the loudspeaker system, prompting an early and unscheduled evacuation of the building. Billy Bragg, who'd just managed to finish a version of *The World Turned Upside Down* in the face of raucous heckling from a group of people who wanted to turn it upside down there and then, was the first to take his chance and join the exodus, fearful that I might hold him to his promise to "come back and do some more songs later".

Outside the police had decided to prove that you can't pass a Criminal Justice Bill without breaking a few heads. A raggle-taggle army of protestors, most of whom had come to the House of Commons for the first time in their lives in a last ditch attempt to persuade their MPs not to pass the bill, were being forced to run a gauntlet of snapping police dogs, riot shields and truncheons. A number of them, together with an MP who'd got caught up in a police charge to drive some of the demonstrators across Westminster Bridge, were now on their way to hospital.

It was at this point that I

bumped into Robin Cook, Labour MP for Livingston and shadow foreign secretary in Tony Blair's new leadership team, who a few months earlier I and others on the Labour left had been urging to stand against Tony Blair in the party's leadership contest.

"We got a good result tonight, didn't we?" he said as an Asian taxi-driver nearby told a television interviewer how he had seen police clubbing a young woman to the ground for no reason other than that she'd been there.

Now Robin Cook is one of Labour's most able and intelligent MPs, an instinctive libertarian and a longstanding left-winger. What did he mean, "we got a good result tonight"? Had the House of Commons suddenly seen sense and voted down the Government's bill? Had some liberal Tory backbencher moved an amendment to mollify its most oppressive provisions?

Unfortunately it was nothing of the sort. On the night that one of the most illiberal measures to be introduced in a democracy since the second world war got its second reading in the Mother of Parliaments, Robin Cook's reference to a "good result" concerned his performance in the shadow cabinet elections that had taken place that afternoon, when he topped the poll.

The incident was symptomatic of the attitude of most Labour politicians to the Criminal Justice Bill. Even those — like Robin himself — who didn't support the bill didn't pay it much attention. In common with most people involved in the orthodox political scene, including most of the traditional left, they failed to recognise just how oppressive and far reaching its

provisions were. And when the series of protests during the summer of 1994 finally brought it to public attention, they were shocked by the level of opposition it succeeded in uniting from such a wide variety of different sources.

As editor of the *New Statesman* at the time, I took an early decision that the bill amounted to such an onslaught on civil liberties, that simply writing about it — and editorialising against it — was not enough. I threw myself and the *New Statesman* into active campaigning.

The *New Statesman* espoused other views that were not entirely to the liking of the new Labour leadership, not least in giving space to critics of some aspects of new Labour policies or Tony Blair's leadership style. But this opposition to the CJB — and support for protest and DIY politics — probably did more to drive a wedge between the magazine under my editorship and Labour's "modernisers" than anything else.

A whispering campaign started which said that we had become "extreme", gone "outside the mainstream", were now "marginal" to British politics. When, as one of the organisers of the mass trespass protests against the CJB at Chequers and Windsor Castle, I was arrested, the fact was pointed out by a leading labour figure to the then majority shareholder in the *New Statesman*. Was "someone who gets arrested on demonstrations" really the sort of person that should be editing the magazine, it was asked.

The majority shareholder — my boss — thought I was. Others, very close to the Labour leadership, didn't. Their line of reasoning, then

and now, doesn't hold out much hope that Labour would make substantial changes to the Criminal Justice Act if it wins power at the next election.

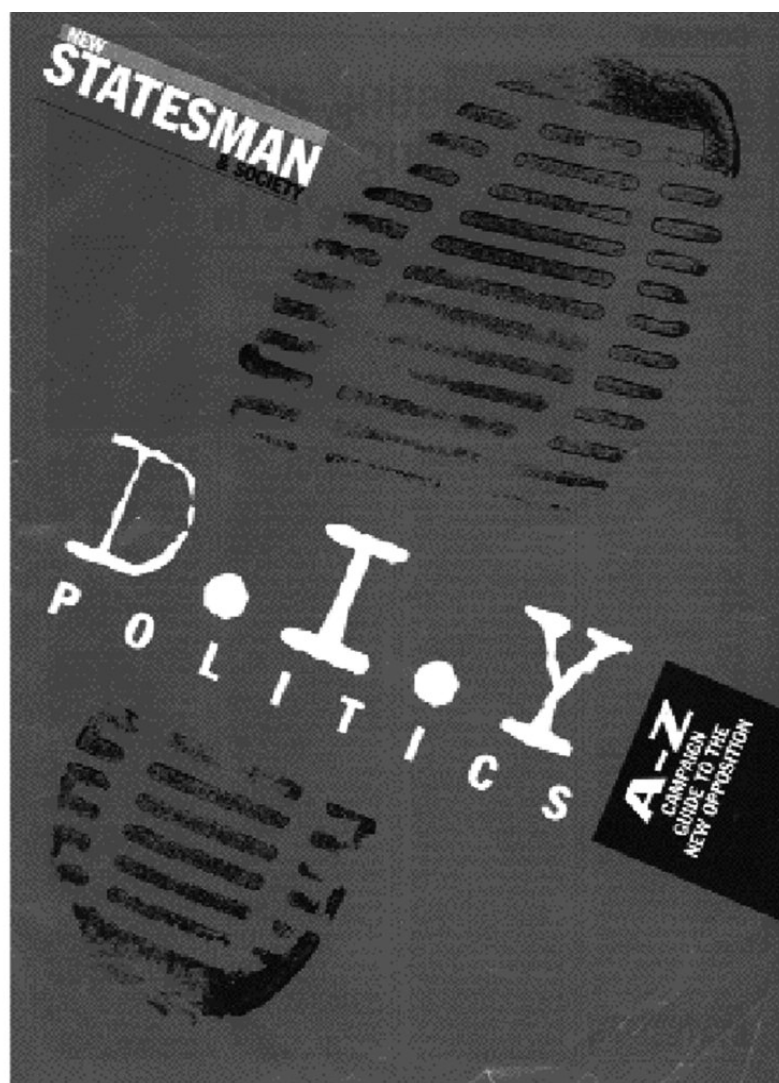
In an interview with Tony Blair just before he became Labour leader I asked him about the criticism that parliamentary opposition to the CJB had been partial and ineffective. He said that "the idea that we simply sat there quietly and did nothing is absurd". Labour had opposed the abolition of the right to silence, the new laws on trespass, the way juvenile offenders would be dealt with and so on.

"But you never satisfy people," he went on. "People don't want the half inch. What they want is a yard, and then when you've gone that yard they want five yards as well. I do not believe that Labour's policy should be determined by lobby groups of whatever sort."

The dismissal of the opposition to the Criminal Justice Act as being merely the work of "lobby groups" is telling. Labour's policy will not be determined by lobby groups. Lobby groups are the people who want the act abolished. Therefore the act will not be abolished.

I'll still be working hard for a Tory defeat at the next election: I still happen to think that there is enough of a difference between the parties for it to matter a lot. But if I bump into Robin Cook again on polling day and he says we got a "good result", I expect I'll feel the same as I did the day the Criminal Justice Bill got its second reading in the House of Commons.

Steve Platt was editor of the *New Statesman* from 1990 to 1996.



SQUALL

special



festivals

raves

travellers

& the law

Photographs: Treworgy '89, Travellers with goat & Police helicopter buzzes Castlemorton by Alan Lodge. Drummers in Trafalgar Square by Nick Cobbing. Page 44 - Kids at Hebden Bridge by Richard Heys

A Criminal Culture?

Jim Carey reviews the recent political history of Travellers, city kids, raves and festivals, and reveals the multi-tactic approach used in attempts to annihilate an emerging culture.



“**Y**ou have to realise that the events at Stonehenge polluted the reputation of festival goers in the eyes of Wiltshire Police”. I looked around the tent to see how Inspector Hunt’s words would be received by those attending the question and answer session. There was not a flicker of dissent. Two minutes later the assemblage gave police a round of applause after being told how Wiltshire constabulary had ‘generously’ reduced their asking price for festival policing from £32,000 to £10,000.

This was the Big Green Gathering 1995, with no sound systems, no music licence, no bars; entirely powered by sun and wind. The one minor skirmish over the entire long weekend brought nine riot police on site.

“We were totally pissed off,” a festival security guard told SQUALL. “It was nothing but one bloke who’d had one too many cans of beer, we could have dealt with it no problem but the riot police insisted on coming on.”

The organisers paid the £10,000. They also paid for a marquee from which the police earned their easy overtime money by searching people coming in.

“Basically it’s a protection racket,” said festival co-organiser Jean Viddler. “The police are saying: ‘If you don’t pay us, your event won’t happen’.”

It was all very much a far cry from the 10th consecutive Stonehenge Free Festival that had taken place in the same county eleven years earlier. By 1984, the Stonehenge Solstice celebration had become the apex of a burgeoning festival scene, attracting an estimated 30,000 people, with many more visiting the site during its month long celebration. Entirely unlicensed, unpoliced and free from the profit





motivation that drives modern day commercial festivals, it was one of the great people-led social experiments of modern times. The festival existed in sharp contrast to the vacuous modern political rhetoric about 'community', for despite its many foibles, it was a genuine example of people working through the realities of the word.

The authorities, however, hated it with a vengeance and the following year inaugurated a new era of intolerance with blood.

The Battle of the Beanfield

It is difficult to convey the extent and affect of the berserk circumstances that occurred on June 1st 1985, but its socio-political ramifications were immense.

A convoy of Travellers' vehicles left an impromptu park-up site in Savernake Forest to head towards Stonehenge. Seven miles from the Stones, and still some way out of the newly imposed four and half mile High Court exclusion order, police blocked the convoy with three lorry loads of gravel. After a short stand-off, the acting Deputy Chief Constable of Wiltshire, Lionel

Grundy, gave orders for his men to begin attacking the vehicles and arresting drivers. When word swept through the convoy that police were smashing windscreens at the front and the back of the line of vehicles, Travellers pulled their vehicles off the A303 and into an adjacent grass field. At this stage, many Travellers were keen to return to the Savernake Forest site, but were told by Wiltshire Police that those wishing to leave the scene could only do so without their vehicles (homes).

After a tense wait, the pressure cooker finally exploded with over 1,000 police drawn from five constabularies charging into the field wielding truncheons.

In an effort to escape, the convoy drove from the grass field into the adjacent Beanfield looking for a way out. The huge numbers of by now hysterical policemen charged in behind them to commit their now infamous carnage.

Public knowledge of the events of that day are still limited by the fact that only a small number of journalists were present in the Beanfield at the time. Most, including the BBC television crew, had obeyed the police directive to stay behind police lines at the bottom of the hill "for their own safety".

One of the few journalists to ignore police advice and attend the scene was Nick Davies, Home Affairs correspondent for *The Observer*. He wrote: "There was glass breaking, people screaming, black smoke towering out of burning caravans and everywhere there seemed to be people being bashed and flattened and pulled by the hair....men, women and children were led away, shivering, swearing, crying, bleeding, leaving their homes in pieces.....Over the years I had seen all kinds of horrible and frightening things and always managed to grin and write it. But as I left the Beanfield, for the first time, I felt sick enough to cry."

The only national television camera crew in the Beanfield was from ITN. Reporter Kim Sabido spoke to camera: "What we - the ITN camera crew and myself as a reporter - have seen in the last 30 minutes here in this field has been some of the most brutal police treatment of people that I've witnessed in my entire career as a journalist. The number of people who have been hit by policemen, who have been clubbed whilst holding babies in their arms in coaches around this field, is yet to be counted...There must surely be an enquiry."

However, when the item was nationally broadcast on ITN news later that day, Sabido's voice-over had been removed and replaced with a dispassionate narrator. The worst film footage was also edited out. When approached for the footage not shown on the news, ITN claimed it was missing. "When I got back to ITN during the following week and I went to the library to look at all the rushes, most of what I'd thought we'd shot was no longer there," recalls Sabido. "From what I've seen of what ITN has provided since, it just disappeared, particularly some of the nastier shots."

Some but not all of the missing footage has since surfaced on bootleg tapes and was incorporated into the *Operation Solstice* documentary shown on Channel Four in 1991.

Photographic evidence is also scant. Ben Gibson, a freelance photographer working for *The Observer* that day, was arrested in the Beanfield after photographing riot police smashing their way into a Traveller's coach. He was later

Photographs: Above - beanfield massacre 1985 by Ben Gibson.
Left - Stonehenge festival 1983.

Continued



acquitted of charges of obstruction although the intention behind his arrest had been served by removing him from the scene. Most of the negatives from the film he managed to shoot disappeared from *The Observer*'s archives during an office move.

Fellow photographer Tim Malyon narrowly avoided the same fate:

"Whilst attempting to take pictures of one group of officers beating people with their truncheons, a policeman shouted out to 'get him' and I was chased. I ran and was not arrested." Tim Malyon's negatives have also been lost with only a few prints surviving.

One unusual eye-witness to the Beanfield nightmare was the Earl of Cardigan, secretary of the Marlborough Conservative Association and manager of Savernake Forest (on behalf of his father the Marquis of Ailesbury). He had travelled along with the convoy on his motorbike accompanied by fellow Conservative Association member John Moore. As the Travellers had left from land managed by Cardigan, the pair thought "it would be interesting to follow the events personally". Wearing crash helmets to disguise their identity, they witnessed what Cardigan described to SQUALL as "unspeakable" police violence.

Cardigan subsequently provided eye-witness testimonies of police behaviour during prosecutions brought against Wiltshire Police.

These included descriptions

of a heavily pregnant woman with "a silhouette like a zeppelin" being "clubbed with a truncheon" and riot police showering a woman and child with glass. "I had just recently had a baby daughter myself so when I saw babies showered with glass by riot police smashing windows, I thought of my own baby lying in her cradle 25 miles away in Marlborough," recalls Cardigan.

After the Beanfield, Wiltshire Police approached Lord Cardigan to gain his consent for an immediate eviction of the Travellers remaining on his Savernake Forest site.

"They said they wanted to go

testimony held unusual sway, presenting unforeseen difficulties for those seeking to cover up and re-interpret the events at the Beanfield.

In an effort to counter the impact of his testimony, several national newspapers began painting him as a 'loony lord', questioning his suitability as an eye-witness and drawing farcical conclusions from the fact that his great-great grandfather had led the charge of the light brigade. *The Times* editorial on June 3rd claimed that being "barking mad was probably hereditary".

As a consequence, Lord Cardigan successfully sued *The*

as a serious spanner in the plotted works:

"On the face of it they had the ultimate establishment creature - land-owning, peer of the realm, card-carrying member of the Conservative Party - slagging off police and therefore by implication befriending those who they call the powers of darkness," says Cardigan. "I hadn't realised that anybody that appeared to be supporting elements that stood against the establishment would be savaged by establishment newspapers. Now one thinks about it, nothing could be more natural.

I hadn't realised that I would be considered a class traitor; if I see a policeman truncheoning a woman I feel I'm entitled to say that it is not a good thing you should be doing. I went along, saw an episode in British history and reported what I saw."

Largely as a result of his testimony, police charges against members of the convoy were dismissed in the local magistrates' courts. However, there was no public inquiry. Of the 440 Travellers taken into custody that day, 24 went through the gruelling five year process of taking Wiltshire Police to court for wrongful arrest, assault and criminal damage. They finally won a four month court case at Winchester Crown Court in 1991, but their compensation was entirely swallowed by the legal costs incurred in the process. As Lord Gifford QC, the Travellers' legal representative, put it: "It left a very sour taste in the mouth".

"I hadn't realised that I would be considered a class traitor; if I see a policeman truncheoning a woman I feel I'm entitled to say that it is not a good thing..."

Lord Cardigan

into the campsite 'suitably equipped' and 'finish unfinished business'. Make of that phrase what you will," says Cardigan. "I said to them that if it was my permission they were after, they did not have it. I did not want a repeat of the grotesque events that I'd seen the day before."

Instead, the site was evicted using court possession proceedings, allowing the Travellers a few days recuperative grace.

As a prominent local aristocrat and Tory, Cardigan's

Times, *The Telegraph*, the *Daily Mail*, the *Daily Express* and the *Daily Mirror* for claiming that his allegations against the police were false and for suggesting that he was making a home for hippies. He received what he describes as "a pleasing cheque and a written apology" from all of them. His treatment by the press was ample indication of the united front held between the prevailing political intention and media backup, with Lord Cardigan's eye-witness account

To some of those at the blunt end of the truncheon charge it left a devastating legacy.

Alan Lodge, a veteran of many free festivals was one of the 24 Travellers who 'successfully' took Wiltshire Police to court following the Beanfield incident:

"There was one guy who I trusted my children with in the early '80s - he was a potter. After the Beanfield I wouldn't let him anywhere near them. I saw him, a man of substance, at the end of all that nonsense wobbled to the point of illness and evil. It turned all of us and I'm sure that applies to the whole travelling community. There were plenty of people who had got something very positive together who came out of the Beanfield with a world view of 'fuck everyone'."

The berserk nature of the police violence drew obvious comparisons with the coercive police tactics employed on the miners' strike the year before. Many observers claimed the two events provided strong evidence that government directives were paramilitarising police responses to crowd control. Indeed, the confidential Wiltshire Police Operation Solstice Report released to plaintiffs during the resulting Crown Court case, states: "Counsel's opinion regarding the police tactics used in the miners' strike to prevent a breach of the peace was considered relevant."

The news section of *Police Review*, published seven days after the Beanfield, stated: "The Police operation had been planned for several months and lessons in rapid deployment learned from the miners' strike were implemented."

The manufactured reasoning behind such heavy-handed tactics was best summed up in a laughable passage from the confidential police report on the Beanfield:

"There is known to be a hierarchy within the convoy; a small nucleus of leaders making the final decisions on all matters of importance relating to the convoy's activities. A second group who are known as the 'lieutenants' or 'warriors' carry out the wishes of the convoy leader, intimidating other groups on site."

If the coercive policing used during the miners strike was a violent introduction to Thatcher's mal-intention towards union activity, the Battle of the Beanfield was a similarly severe introduction to a new era of intolerance of Travellers.

Manufacturing a case for public order law

At the 1995 Big Green Gathering SQUALL approached Inspector Hunt, a member of Wiltshire Police force for 20 years, and asked: "Is there any acknowledgement in your constabulary that the events of the Battle of the Beanfield seriously

polluted the reputation of Wiltshire Police in the eyes of festival goers."

Persistence finally drew a reluctant answer: "Look, Stonehenge Festival grew too large and out of control, the Battle of the Beanfield was just the beginning of the process of dealing with it. The laws that came after were even more effective."

Indeed the following year, saw the imposition of the Public Order Act 1986, a new law giving police powers to break up any gathering of 12 vehicles or over. This new legislation had serious implications for both festivals and Traveller sites all over the country; the multi-tactic war to eradicate Travellers and an emerging alternative economy had truly begun.

On June 3rd that year Douglas Hurd, then Home Secretary, described the Travellers as "nothing more than a band of medieval brigands who have no respect for the law or the rights of others."

On June 5th, Margaret Thatcher told the nation that her government was "only too delighted to do anything we can to make life difficult for such things as hippy convoys". On the same day, a cabinet committee was formed to discuss new legislation to deal with Travellers and festivals. Chaired by Home Secretary, Douglas Hurd, it comprised of the Secretaries of State for Transport, Environment, Health and Social Security, and Agriculture. Meanwhile, the convoy assembling to celebrate that year's Solstice was chased around several counties by both police and right wing media outrage, before finally finding some temporary recuperative respite on a site at Stoney Cross in the New Forest.

Four days later, Hampshire Police mounted the 4am 'Operation Daybreak' to clear the Stoney Cross site. Sixty four convoy members were arrested and 129 vehicles impounded after police came on site armed with DoT files on every vehicle. The police also came armed

"Towards the end of the '80s things were getting bad on the festival circuit. Then raves revitalised the scene and I got my faith back."

with care orders for the Travellers' children, though a tip off had reached the camp beforehand and the children had been removed.

The Battle of the Beanfield and the increasingly hostile political climate that followed, had a dramatic affect on the travelling community, frightening away many of the families integral to the community balance of the festival circuit. In 1987, people stood on the tarmac beside Stonehenge having walked



the eight mile distance from an impromptu site at Cholderton. As clouds smothered the Solstice sunrise, those who had walked the distance were kept on the road, separated from the Stones by rows of riot police and bales of razor wire. The anger mounted and scuffles broke out. The following year the anger was tangibly increased and once again at Solstice dawn there

Festival Eye - finally received a £10,000 out of court settlement from Wiltshire Police this year for a truncheon wound to the head received after he tripped and fell at Stonehenge in 1988. In the years following the event, he was diagnosed as suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome. "I'd had recurrent dreams about the episode and after eight years of raking over it, I needed to put the event behind me."

The numbers of people prepared to travel to Stonehenge and face this treatment naturally dwindled, resulting in a concentration of those who were prepared for confrontation in defence of what was considered as a right to celebrate solstice at Stonehenge. Successive huge police operations backed by the Public Order Act 1986, have become stricter and stricter in attempts to stop anyone from reaching the Stone circle at Solstice. There are still a few however, who hug hedgerows and dart between the beams of police helicopters in order to be in view of the Solstice sunrise at Stonehenge.

Continued

Photographs: Above - massacre at the beanfield by Ben Gibson. Left - after the beanfield.



Destroying the alternative economy

Up until 1985, the free festival circuit had provided the economic backbone of all year round itinerancy. Traditionally the three cardinal points in the festival circuit were the May bank holiday, the Solstice and the August bank holiday. Without the need for advertising, festival goers knew to look out for these dates knowing a festival would be taking place somewhere. The employment of two bank holidays as specific festival times was designed to allow workers the opportunity of attending a festival without the inevitable bleary Monday back at work. The number of festivals in-between these cardinal points also blossomed, giving rise to the possibility of travelling from one to the other (with choice) over the entire long summer. By selling crafts, services, performance busking, tat and assorted gear, Travellers provided themselves with an alternative economy lending financial viability to an itinerant culture.

Evidence suggests that the political campaign to eradicate festivals was aimed at breaking this economy.

Indeed, a working party set up by the Department of Health and Social Security published a report on Itinerant Claimants in March 1986 stating: "Local offices of the DHSS have experienced increasing problems in dealing with claims from large groups of nomadic claimants over the past two or three years. Matters came to a head during the summer of 1985 when several large groups converged on Stonehenge for a festival that had been banned by the authorities. The resulting well publicised confrontation with the police was said to have disrupted the normal festival economy and large numbers

of claims to Supplementary Benefit were made."

"As soon as they scared away the punters it destroyed the means of exchange," recalls Alan Lodge. "Norman Tebbit went on about getting on your bike and finding employment whilst at the same time being part of the political force that kicked the bike from under us."

In the years that followed, the right-wing press made much of dole-scrounging Travellers, with no acknowledgement that the engineered break-up of the festival economy was largely responsible.

Another ramification of this tactic was even more insidious and ugly.

At the entrance gate to the 1984 Stonehenge Free Festival a burnt out car bore testament to the levels of self-policing emerging from the social-experiment. The sign protruding from the wreckage proclaimed: "This was a smack dealer's car".

Dispossessed of their once thriving economy and facing incessant and increasing harassment and eviction, the break down of community left Travellers prone to a destructive force potentially more devastating than anything directly forced by the authorities.

"At one time smack wasn't tolerated on the road at all," recalls mother of six, Decker Lynn. "Certainly on festival sites, if anybody was selling or even using it they were just put off site full stop."

Heroin, the great escape to oblivion, found the younger elements of a fractured community prone to its clutches and its use spread like myxomatosis. Once again Traveller families were forced to vacate sites that became 'dirty', further imbalancing the battered communities and creating a split between 'clean' and 'dirty' sites.

"I don't park on big sites anymore," says Lynn who still lives

in her double-decker bus. "Heroin is something that breaks up a community because people become so self-centred they don't give a damn about their neighbours."

Many Travellers report incidents of blatant heroin dealing going untouched by police, whilst other Travellers on the same site were prosecuted for small amounts of hashish. The implication of their claims were that the authorities recognised that if heroin took hold of the travelling community, their designs on its destruction would take care of itself.

"So many times people got away with it and there were very few busts for smack," recalls Lynn. "They must know smack is the quickest way to divide a community; united we stand and divided we don't."

The other manifestation of community disruption was the emergence of the so called 'brew crew'. These were mainly angry young Travellers feeding themselves on a diet of special brew and developing a penchant for nihilism, blagging and neighbourly disrespect. Whilst festival culture was healthy, the travelling community could cope, once broken up however, the community had problems dealing with the exodus.

"To start with it was contained," says Decker Lynn. "Every family had its problems but the brew crew was a very small element around 1986, and very much contained by the families that were around. But there was a large number of angry young people pouring out of the cities with brew and smack and the travelling community couldn't cope with the numbers."

The so called 'brew crew' caused constant disruption for the festivals still surviving on the decimated circuit and provided an obvious target for slander-hungry

politicians and right-wing media, with the entire scene regularly painted with the inevitable all inclusive black brush.

Raves and the new blood

Towards the end of the 80s a cultural phenomenon began to emerge around the country resulting in an injection of new blood and economy to the festival scene. Rave parties were similar to free festivals in that they were unlicensed events in locations kept secret until the last possible moment. Such events offered similar opportunities for adventure and began attracting huge numbers of young people from the cities. This scene grew dramatically. Where some of these parties differed from the free festivals was that they were organised by groups such as Sunrise who would charge an entry fee and consequently make large amounts of money in the process. Not all such rave parties were of this nature however, and the free festival scene began to merge with the rave party scene producing a hybrid with new dynamism

Not everyone on the free festival scene was pleased with the consequences of this festi-rave fusion however.

"One of the main things I liked about festivals was going around fires and trucks listening to accordions and talking to people," recalls Alan Lodge. "When the ravers arrived, I couldn't hear anything other than the beat. A mass influx of young ravers who were not clued up as to country life did attract a lot of unwelcome attention to Travellers, but without them the festival scene would have finished in '91 and no-one these days would know what we were talking about."

Others, found renewed enthusiasm in the cultural mutation. Having attended free festivals since 1984 and lived on the road intermittently during that period Steve Redshaw welcomed the new blood: "Towards the end of the '80s things were getting bad on the festival circuit. Then raves revitalised the scene and I got my faith back."

Once again, political attention was now targeted against these new impromptu rave events, resulting in the Entertainment (Increased Penalties) Act 1990. Introduced by John Major's Personal Private Secretary, Graham Bright, this private member's bill brought in massive fines of up to £20,000 for the organisers of unlicensed events. Once again this legislation had a dramatic affect on the free festival/rave scene, pushing event organisation into the hands of large commercial promoters with the necessary sums required to pay for licences and policing.

"By 1993 the laws were having their effect on the free rave scene," observes Steve Redshaw. "Dance music then moved into clubs

and became more exclusive.”

The nature of festival promotion consequently swung away from a community-based orientation, as businessmen and commercial club owners cashed in on the existing public desire for adventurous festival/parties in the countryside. According to Tony Hollingsworth, ex-events promoter for the GLC and now part of the multi-million pound commercial festival outfit Tribute: “The motivation behind these festivals is no longer passion, it is commerce.” Relative to the people-led festivals, the commercial festival scene offers little more than another shopping experience, where an attendant wallet is valued and encouraged far more than participation.

Castlemorton Common

By 1992 leaked documents from Avon and Somerset Constabulary demonstrated the existence of Operation Nomad. Force Operational Order 36/92 marked ‘In Confidence’, revealed: “With effect from Monday 27th April 1992, dedicated resources will be used to gather intelligence in respect of the movement of itinerants and travellers and deal with minor acts of trespass.” An intelligence unit set up by Avon and Somerset produced regular Operation Nomad bulletins, listing personal details on Travellers and regular festival goers unrelated to any criminal conviction. A Force Operational Order issued by the Chief Constable also stated: “Resources will be greatly enhanced for the period Thursday 21st May to Sunday 24th May inclusive in relation to the anticipated gathering of Travellers in the Chipping Sodbury area.”

This item referred to the annual Avon Free Festival which had been occurring in the area around the May bank holiday for several years, albeit in different locations. However, 1992 was the year Avon and Somerset Police intended to put a full stop to it. As a result the thousands of people travelling to the area for the expected Festival were shunted into neighbouring counties by Avon and Somerset’s Operation Nomad police manoeuvres.

The end result was the impromptu Castlemorton Common Festival, another pivotal event in the recent history of festival culture.

West Mercia Police claim they had no idea that an event might happen in their district, the truth of which relies on the unlikely situation that Avon and Somerset Police did not inform their neighbouring constabulary of Operation Nomad.

In the event, a staggering 30,000 Travellers, ravers and festival goers gathered almost overnight on Castlemorton Common to hold a free festival that flew in the face of the Public Order Act 1986 and the Entertainment (Increased Penalties)

Act 1990. It was a massive celebration and the biggest of its kind since the bountiful days of the Stonehenge Free Festival. West Mercia Police claimed that due to the speed with which it coalesced, they were powerless to stop it.

However, the authorities used Castlemorton in a way that led people to suggest it had been at least partly engineered. After all, a large number of people had been shunted into the area by Operation Nomad, was it really likely that West Mercia police were unaware of this? The right-wing press published acres of crazed and damning coverage of the event, including the classic front page *Daily Telegraph* headline: “Hippies fire flares at Police”. The following morning’s *Daily Telegraph* editorial read: “New Age, New Laws” and within two months, Sir George Young, then Minister for Housing, confirmed that new laws against Travellers were imminent “in reaction to the increasing level of public dismay and alarm about the behaviour of some of these groups.”

Indeed, the outcry following Castlemorton provided the basis for the most draconian law yet levelled against alternative British culture. Just as the Public Order Act 1986 followed the events at Stonehenge in 1985, so the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 began its journey in 1992, pumped with the manufactured outrage following Castlemorton. By the time it reached statute two years later, it included criminal sanctions against assembly, outdoor unlicensed music events, unauthorised camping, and ‘aggravated trespass’. The law also reduced the number of vehicles which could gather together from twelve (as stipulated in the Public Order Act 1986) to six.

The news-manufacture used to prepare the public palate for the coming law was incessant, with media descriptions of Travellers including “hordes of marauding locusts” (*Daily Telegraph*), and “These foul pests must be controlled” (*Daily Mail*).

Police Surveillance and Benefit Clampdowns

The year after Castlemorton Common, the police set up Operation Snapshot, an intelligence-gathering exercise on raves and Travellers, designed to establish a database of personal details, registration numbers, Traveller sites and movements. This information was used as a backbone for an ongoing intelligence operation begun by the Southern Central Intelligence Unit (SCIU), operated from Devizes in Wiltshire and initially co-ordinated by PC Malcolm Keene. The SCIU held regular meetings with representatives of all the constabularies of Britain.

Leaked documents revealed that Operation Snapshot had estimated there to be around 2,000

Traveller’s vehicles and 8,000 Travellers in the UK. In the minutes of a meeting held at Devizes on March 30th 1993, the objectives of the operation included the development of “a system whereby intelligence could be taken into the control room, and the most up-to-date intelligence was to hand”..... “capable of high-speed input and retrieval and dissemination of information”. The meeting was attended by constabulary representatives from Bedfordshire, Avon and Somerset, Devon and Cornwall, Dorset, Gloucestershire, Dyfed-Powys, Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire, Kent, Norfolk, Northamptonshire, South Wales, Gwent, Staffordshire, Thames Valley, Warwickshire, Surrey, Suffolk, West Mercia, West Midlands, Ministry of Defence and the National Criminal Intelligence Service (Hampshire and Essex sent apologies).

They were all asked and all agreed to provide the Southern Central Intelligence Unit with “any information, no matter how small on New Age Travellers or the Rave scene”. The leaked minutes revealed the database was designed to hold one million items of information.

After a short period the Northern New Age Traveller Co-ordination Unit, designed to cover the north of Britain, was established and operated from Penrith in Cumbria.

Further monitoring information was gathered via social security offices. The working party report on Itinerant Claimants prepared for the DHSS in 1986 advised that “in the interests of advance warning and the safety of staff, we recommend better liaison with the police.”

A 1993 internal Benefits Agency bulletin (issue 24/93) headed ‘New Age Travellers’ and marked “not to be released into the public domain”, stated: “Offices will be aware of the adverse reaction from the media following the treatment of claims from this client group last summer [Castlemorton]. Ministers are concerned that the Benefits Agency and Employment Services take all necessary steps to ensure that claims from this group are scrutinised carefully.”

The bulletin reports that a National Task Force has been set up to “monitor the movements of such groups of Travellers” and to “inform relevant District managers of their approach and numbers”. In the back of the bulletin is a list of telephone numbers for all the regional police contacts in both the Northern New Age Traveller Co-ordination Unit and the Southern Central Intelligence Unit. Every constabulary in the country, including the Ministry of Defence police, had at least one but usually several, such co-ordinators.

Also included in the bulletin was a possible itinerary of festivals for summer 1993.

In 1995, the Benefit Agency conducted a census of New Age Traveller benefit claimants including their personal details. A leaked copy of the results suggested there to be 2,000 such claimants. In July 1996, more leaked documents revealed that the Agency was once again asking regional offices to carry out a census, the results of which are as yet unavailable. After October 7th 1996, when the Job Seekers Allowance scheme began, benefit may be halted if “appearance” or “attitude” “actively militates against getting a job”. The implications for the further selective targeting of the Traveller community are obvious.

The mutating aftermath

The extraordinary lengths taken by the authorities to annihilate the new Traveller population in the UK are a testament to the treatment meted out to cultural minorities outside the acceptable hegemony.

The use of legislation, intelligence, targeted harassment, benefit clampdowns and news-manufacture have been employed as a multi-tactic approach stretched across a ten year period.

Such strategies are often achieved without public knowledge; with the length of time over which they are employed, diffusing recognition of their mechanism and ultimate intention. What is clear, however, is that rather than seek to democratically accommodate an expanding community culture, Margaret Thatcher’s government and those who replaced her, sought instead to annihilate it. The social consequences are immense.

The festival circuit, once an evolving people-led celebration and community co-operation, now lies largely in the hands of profit-motivated commercial promoters. Meanwhile, the travelling community, fractionalised by an annihilation strategy, now displays symptoms reminiscent of the inner cities from which many had fled.

Many Travellers steered away from the iron-fist climate by moving abroad to countries like Spain, Ireland, Portugal and France. Many could not or would not flee.

However, despite the worst excesses of the cultural clampdown, Travellers remain secreted all over the country. Many are now in smaller groups, inconspicuous and unregistered if not drawing benefit.

“I don’t think anything should be static,” says Decker Lynn. “We’ve got to grow and we’ve got to move and flow with whatever’s necessary. I’ve got this strong feeling that whatever rules they make there’s always a way round it.”

Indeed for sorted itinerants, necessity breeds ingenious evolution.



Top left: Castlemorton Common
1992 by Alan Lodge

There's no such thing as a

Organising festivals in the '90s presents unique hurdles. **Sam Beale** talks to the modern day champions of a vital community celebration.

At the Tribal Gathering I stood in the Planet Phunk tent, temporarily danced out, wondering where a punter might find a brandy coffee and a fire to sip it by. I turned and walked out of the marquee where everyone was, undoubtedly, having a good night, and took in the night air. Wandering aimlessly around the main arena it was suddenly obvious that there were no brandy coffees and no fires. There were no little cafes to stumble upon in the darkness either, just the one massive corporate bar, £2.70 for a pint of shitty lager. I went and sat in the car and smoked a fag.

Presumably, nobody went to the Tribal Gathering expecting to have a full-on festival experience. That's not what it's for. It's a club in a field. That's what the punters pay for and that's what they get. Me, I like to be surprised and I wasn't, except perhaps by the price of fags (£3.70 a pack) and chocolate (£1 a bar).

If this is the sort of event you want to organise all you need is a massive corporation behind you and a nationwide publicity machine. It also helps if you are sponsored up to the bouncy castle by large companies, preferably multinationals.

But what of the smaller promoter? What of the festival organiser for whom huge name acts, spoon-fed entertainment with no room for diversity, and vast profits are not the priorities?

The recent experience of festival organisers suggests that putting on a festival in 1996, be it a free or paying event, is a process of "jumping through hoops and spending a fortune". So says Jeff Hill, long-time provider of stages and tents for festivals, who now runs three big tops at summer events.

Festival organisers face, from the outset, strict legislation and licence regulations for outdoor events, including standards for environmental health and public safety (incorporated in the 1994 Pop Code); as well as a media-fed monster of cultural assumptions with

a history stretching back to Windsor, Stonehenge and the Beanfield.

With such pressure why not organise an illegal free festival on squatted land? Why go to the trouble? Mel, one of the organisers of the Brighton Festival of Freedom - a free one-day event in August - is quite clear that for her and the other Brighton festival organisers, the dream is to create an event that will become part of Brighton's calendar in the same way as Strawberry Fayre has become part of the Cambridge calendar over the past two decades. "If we don't liaise with the council this festival could not happen. That's the score. The only way you can put on a festival now is if you co-operate with the authorities," she says.

Jeff Hill believes "small hit and run events in the woods for two or three hundred people" are still possible but "in the present political climate the authorities can't be seen to let something big happen". Many who have taken on board the huge task of dealing with the bureaucracy which now surrounds legal festival organisation, agree.

Safety Bill, a safety consultant for the Social Services Department of a London borough council offers licencing advice to festival organisers. He suggests smaller events are more feasible: "People try and go for big numbers which becomes an organisational nightmare and costs spiral." Sybil Watt, sound engineer and technical co-ordinator for a number of festivals including the Big Chill this year, adds that if you don't want a festival which is, effectively, "one big advert, you've got to keep it small and manageable within the community. Small is beautiful".

"You've got to begin with the attitude that no-one can stop you, that it's your natural, unassailable right to organise a festival", says Chris Meikan, one of the organisers of Hackney Homeless Peoples' Festivals in 1993 and '94, and an advisor to countless festival organisers over the last six years.

Julian Rudd, a key organiser of the Deptford Urban Free Festival from 1990-1993 believes that once organisers have "a plan", they should "try and gain a good relationship with the relevant authorities including the police force and the licencing department of the council. Introduce yourself to the area, make contact with local residents and businesses, test the

ground without doing anything too controversial."

Chris agrees: "A festival that goes on without involving the local people at all is really inappropriate. It's always a different atmosphere if the local people are involved." The gap between organisers and locals can, says Chris, be bridged by "just telling them what's happening, offering them the chance to be involved. Offer local charities stalls, get local schools in, put up posters in local community centres, call meetings."

If there are objections "protestors make a lot of fuss but unless they've actually got some reason other than that they don't want it to happen, they are totally ignored at a licence hearing," says Safety Bill. "Objections can only come down to health and safety, fire risk and law and order. What council's actually want to see is that you've thought about health and safety. So the more sussed you can be about it at the planning stage the easier time they will give you."

"The actual nuts and bolts of



free festival



licencing are quite easy," says Chris. The key seems to be not being intimidated by the authorities and communicating with them. "Be as honest as possible with the council and the police. They're not necessarily going to do you over. They ask a lot from you but they can help as well," says Mel.

"I think there's a huge gap between the sort of people who go to festivals and the authorities that have to police them. There isn't an onus on either side to communicate and I'd say that onus is just as much on our side as it is on the authorities'," says Julian. "When you've worked to put on a festival you know how incompetent the authorities are. They are actually very faceless. There isn't some huge ogre behind the local council trying to stop you. It's a general feeling of apathy and cynicism towards the sort of community you come from. Most people look at a local authority and it just seems impenetrable, some yeti-like monster. But it's not. It's this huge institution that isn't particularly focussed and you have

the ability to be incredibly focussed." Mel believes that "for us to deal with the council and them to deal with us is a really positive thing. It bridges a gap."

Licencing is a minefield but, organisers of legal events generally agree, licences can contain sensible and helpful regulations. Julian: "I do believe in the safety and security of a crowd and being licensed forces you to think about those issues." Negotiating with councils over licence conditions is obviously much easier in a city or an area where the licencing authority is used to outdoor events.

Safety Bill advises organisers to "give councils as much warning as possible. They like about nine months." Once the process is underway it is a case of "satisfying the council, the police and the fire brigade that you're a responsible person and you're going to hold a responsible event. They can't just say no. They have to treat a festival in the same way they treat a supermarket or anybody else who wants to build something."

Mel, who spent seven months working on this year's Brighton Festival and a week and half afterwards picking up festival goers' excrement and rubbish, feels strongly that "if people don't contribute, festivals will stop happening." She believes that people who go to festivals need a better understanding of the amount of work involved in putting on an event for thousands of people, of the time it takes to build up good relationships with councils, and of the affects of breaching licencing conditions: "For some reason people think we're making loads of money. They say 'but you must be getting paid'." Liaising with authorities is, says Mel, "seen as selling out. People have been on the phone saying 'why can't I bring my sound system? What are you fucking about? Are you a free festival or some bloody council day?' We'd love to say just come along, do you're own thing. But who's going to pay for it? Who's going to pay for the toilets? You can't trust people to bury their own shit so you've got to have toilets. The toilets at Brighton

cost £5,000."

Brig Oubridge, a member of the Big Green Gathering steering committee, confirms there has never really been such a thing as a free festival: "In the old days of free festivals: Windsor, Stonehenge and so on, the local authorities picked up a huge tab because they provided skips and bin lorries. The local St John's would turn out for free. They are under a lot more financial pressure nowadays. They have to charge the Big Green Gathering £2,000 to provide ambulances, medics etc."

The Big Green Gathering has also paid policing costs, facing in its first year in 1994, Thames Valley Police and, for the past two years, Wiltshire Police who "thought the only way they could stop it turning into a Castlemorton and our security being overwhelmed by convoys and

Continued

Photographs: Top - firing a dragon sculpture at the Harvest Fayre by Nick Cobbing. Left - Henge dancer by Simon Chapman.



ravers was to have a police operation". This year the Big Green Gathering has so far paid the police half of a £10,000 policing bill. Now Brig believes, after two years on the same site, the festival has gained enough support within the local community and council "to say we don't believe your policing is justified. The farmer has come to the end of providing you with a

searching facility on his land because he doesn't see why people coming onto his land should be harassed in this way when in two years you've not charged anyone with possession of anything and you've only found 30 people to rap on the knuckles." With this in mind the gathering perhaps faces a more difficult run in with the Wiltshire authorities next year.

What they say about corporate events...

"I despise the approach of the Mean Fiddler to organising a festival. It's cold, it's corporate. It's about getting as many people and as much money in as possible." Julian

"The Mean Fiddler couldn't hijack a vibe if it came in and smacked them in the teeth but they're quite good at jumping on a bandwagon." Julian

"Every commercial festival I've been to completely lacks a vibe. They don't know how to organise one. It must come down to the fact that they don't actually know anyone who's on that vibe because they've all got their heads too far up their wallets." Chris

"They're just not giving enough thought to the on the ground vibe. They're so

completely obsessed with the word 'production'. They're absolutely dedicated to putting on really big acts without giving any thought to how it is to actually be there." Chris

"Large events like Phoenix are just like fucking great live MTV basically." Chris

"Unfortunately a lot of young people going to festivals these days think that's what a festival is: festival-u-like, buy it off the rack." Jeff

"They wouldn't be complaining about noise if you had a 50k PA and the London Symphony Orchestra playing at Leeds Castle. It's cultural assumptions all the way along." Chris

Nonetheless other organisers see paying for policing as a dangerous precedent. Safety Bill notes that it is now illegal for paying police to be made a licence condition, and although it helps (ie if you refuse they may find other ways to shaft your event), you don't have to. Some councils already charge for policing licences and, more worryingly fees for applying for a licence are high and often non-returnable (even if your application is refused).

Licensing for dance events is currently being reviewed with conflicting approaches by two Home Office committees. One is drawing up new licensing guidelines for local authorities (including suggestions of introducing CCTV and searches at all dance events). Bizarrely (or typically), the other is looking at the possibility of abolishing licences entirely, as part of the Government's march towards deregulation in the name of commercial 'freedom'.

There seems to be an over-riding acceptance amongst organisers that the future of festival organisation is about accepting that we live in the late 1990s, that there is no such thing as a free festival and there never really has been. Everything ultimately costs somebody something. Money to pay for free events comes from benefits, bucketting and, very rarely, sponsorship. As Brig points out: "Festivals rely on lots of volunteer energy otherwise they would cost millions of pounds to put on."

The cost of festival infrastructure, from plumbing and toilets to fire extinguishers, generators and electrics, is astonishing.

Without sponsorship or funding, main sources of revenue after ticket sales are festival bars and stallholders. At a free event these are clearly the only source of revenue. Illegal bars though, like illegal sound systems, often highly popular with punters, are thus plagues of festival organisers. As Mel observes: "You've sold your bar concession for £5,000 and you've got your barman saying 'I've just paid you £5,000 so why are there ten illegal bars on site?'" Mel recognises small bars and cafes as part of a good festival vibe: "I don't mind what people do to make a bit of money but they don't have to be in your face with it. At Brighton this year they were putting up huge signs, even asking for vehicle passes to get off site and get more alcohol. None of them made a donation to the festival afterwards."

As licencees, festival organisers are liable to be prosecuted for any breaches of their licence, including sound systems exceeding noise limits or failing to switch off at the specified time. Councils do pursue breaches through the courts and fines are often enough to be the death of a festival. Mel: "We had 12 stages at Brighton which was

excessive anyway and then people say 'it's a free festival: I'll bring my 15k rig and set it up wherever I want'. No! Go and organise your own festival."

Safety Bill thinks "sound systems should do a bit more negotiating with festival organisers. What they don't realise or care about is that they're the people who face prosecution. Mind you the music from the sound system in the car park at Harvest Fayre made my weekend."

Mel and the rest of the Brighton committee, if they choose to put on their festival next year, face a £5,000 debt and the job of rebuilding a relationship with council and police. Car parking was a nightmare for them, their security were useless (and violent) and they lost most of their environmental deposit because two trees were ripped up and some fenced-off rare orchids were trampled.

Festival security and stewarding are the only way festival organisers can avoid heavy police presence on festival sites. Good security crews who understand what the festival is about and are not out for a fight, are hard to find. Bill sums up a common feeling: "I get really sick of this macho, arsehole mentality of putting a load of yobbo hell's angels or ex-criminals on the gate who just stand there screaming at Travellers."

Zo, who has worked on the gates of festivals including Forest Fayre, Harvest Fayre, Glastonbury and the Big Green Gathering for years, believes the key to a good security team is "being able to resolve a situation before it becomes too much, rather than resolve it with violence. You need a bit of tact. We try and keep it nice and sweet on the gate. If you've got a chilled gate you've basically got a chilled site." Zo believes in a mixed security crew, "not just meatheads out for a fight. On our gate crew we've got a nurse, a councillor and bouncers."

Bill maintains the main job of a security team should be to catch thieves. Sybil agrees: "I've had to sleep on top of equipment so many times to stop it getting nicked." The Big Chill this year had no fence and says Bill "preferred to have security catching tent thieves rather than standing around trying to stop people getting in."

Several newspaper articles following the Harvest Fayre blamed that ubiquitous media catch all "New Age Travellers" for all the festival's problems. There is clearly a problem of definition here: "A load of people coming out of London in a £50 transit van are considered Travellers

Photographs: Above - shopping trolley at the Phoenix Festival 1996 by Chris Smith. Right - hippy amnesty at 'Soap Dodgers' stage, Brighton Festival of Freedom 1996 by Nick Cobbing.

DO YOU WANT TO PUT ON A LEGAL (LICENSED) RAVE/FREE PARTY - BUT CAN'T AFFORD THE LEGAL FEES?

If so, politically
committed Barrister can
provide free advice and
representaion.
Tel: 0171 xxx xxxx (eves)

by half the police force," says Safety Bill.

Harvest Fayre allowed some living vehicles onto the site by prior arrangement. Nonetheless many others turned up on the gate. Such situations immediately create problems for gate security, particularly if no provisions have been made for living vehicles, ie there is no space. 'No living vehicles' or unrealistically strict specified distances between them are also frequently licence conditions for camping areas.

Safety Bill: "A lot of it comes down to unrealistic festival organisers who don't think that Travellers will turn up and yet are quite happy to tap into Travellers who work the festival circuit and provide very good services at a very reasonable cost. You can't put on a festival that taps into the Traveller culture and then blame them for turning up."

The problem of definition of Travellers here extends to a festival site itself. Many festival organisers

recall dealing with, to say the least, 'unsociable' troublemakers who care little for a festival vibe. They are a minority in a majority of Travellers who work the festival circuit as site crew or technicians, or run their own set-ups and contribute to the atmosphere that it so lacking at corporate events. But they are a highly visible and often unreasonable minority who have little or no respect for the aims of a festival, let alone for licence conditions. Bill observes Travellers could be asked to help with policing a site where some are creating problems: "It's a lot easier to get Travellers to sort themselves out if you get a reasonable Traveller to talk to them." There are no easy answers. There are idiots in all communities. Refusing people entry is often easier said than done, particularly when police are pressurising gate crews to get large vehicles off the highway and deal with them on site.

Chris Meikan believes that free festivals still exist "but they've changed cultural shape so people don't recognise them anymore. I think environmental protests are good places to do events and the festival vibe exists in these places. You'll have a few acoustic bands and 600 people having a laugh." Jay from Road Alert recalls "the Earth First! gathering in Snowdonia this year became a festival. For many activists the only safe way to communicate now is face to face which means we start organising festivals. They are a unique place to meet people and talk." The Reclaim the Streets 'Festival of Resistance' on the M41 in July was an extraordinary one-day free festival; sound systems, stalls, acoustic bands and all. The five-day Flim-Flam festival at Newbury at the end of

Some top tips from festival organisers: yer basic dos and don'ts from those who know...

Do have a plan.
Do start small.
Do find a suitable site: be realistic about where it is possible to hold your event.
Do network with other festival organisers.
Do get stalls and contractors lists from other festivals.
Do your utmost to get the local people on board.
Do get security that is responsive and understands the vibe you're trying to create.
Do get on top of the media. Set the agenda, rather than always having to react to what they throw at you.
Do attempt to keep the police sweet. Then you can say you have their support.
Do know how incompetent the authorities really are.
Do get uncopiable vehicle passes.
Do take out bad weather insurance if you can.
Do get the licence as right as you can in the first place.

Do get your punters to clean up the festival (eg by handing out binliners). (If it's a three day festival) **Do** get some sleep on Thursday...

Don't organise it from your bedroom.
Don't expect to make any money.
Don't imagine you can do it on your own: there are no one-man armies.
Don't give a stage to someone who isn't going to be involved in either the admin or fund-raising for it.
Don't put up someone who has a criminal record (particularly for drugs) as a licensee.
Don't accept licence conditions you know you can't comply with just to get a licence. Negotiate.
Don't try to save money on toilets.
Don't spend the ticket money before the event: it will be the death of festivals if people think they might not get paid.

These tips have been compiled from the heads and experiences of Chris, Julian, Mel, Jeff, Bill and Sybil.

August was billed as 'a Protest Party'. As Warren from *Schnews* in Brighton says: "It's about having to stay underground and pop up in the least expected places. It's a party and a protest, a guerilla festival." Perhaps we should begin to see protest sites and 'blat in, blat out' free parties as the '96 versions of the old free events. Larger events, with a number of stages and an infrastructure to deal with thousands of people staying in one place for a few days, have a long history and as such have developed to such a point that they are now legislated for (or against). The best way to ensure their survival is realistic acceptance that regulations exist and informed respect for the enormous task festival organisers take on and the risks they face. Even after intense planning and co-operation with councils and police mistakes are made, disasters happen, there are no guarantees.

The alternative risk is organising an illegal festival. Contrary to the opinion of many, Safety Bill believes as long as you organise an illegal event safely, get a big crowd, ensure self-regulation on site and clean up afterwards: "The police won't do anything until after the event has happened by which time it is very difficult to find the organisers." Illegal events will always happen in some ingenious shape or form but you won't find toilets, safety-checked structures or a welfare tent at them.

Experienced organisers are keen to offer advice and facilitate other events. There are plans to re-vamp the Fayres and Festivals Federation and form a support group to help would-be organisers through the licencing process, offer training and advice on fund-raising. Template licence applications are available, solicitors are willing to

offer advice and thousands of people up and down the country offer a clear mandate so...

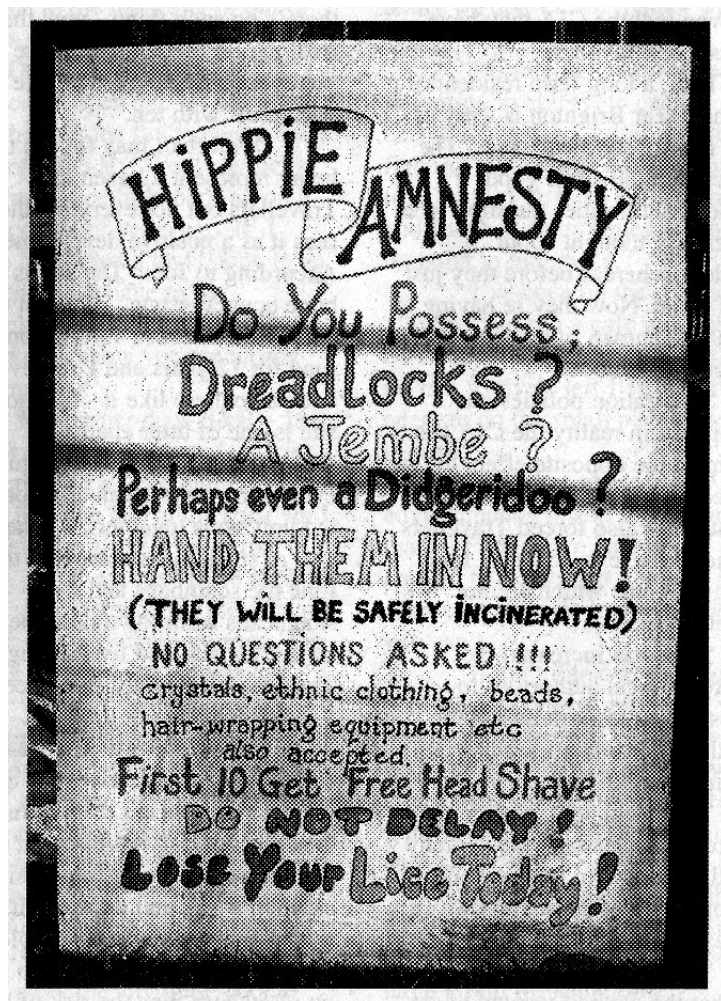
"Get organising. Do it. Do it yourselves. Blag, benefit, network. If you miss a festival, fucking organise one yourself and face the enormously complex task with some bollocks. You can do it. There really isn't anyone stopping you," says Chris.

The last word goes to Julian: "We're in a situation where we could be initiating a new generation of festival that isn't based on the '60s and '70s, Glastonbury or Reading but on whatever the individual organisers want those events to be. The thing to shout from the rooftops now is let's get on with it. If we are an organised, serious, committed, focussed force in British society then we're just here and we've got to be dealt with." SQ

Why do it at all?

"They're incredibly positive things, positive forces in peoples' lives. There's a community that exists in Deptford that will be there for as long as anyone that was involved in that festival or anyone who remembers it. That community exists and is empowered and strong and at any point if someone has an idea and they want to make something happen in the area, they remember Fordham Park and remember that it was possible. I think that's a very positive vote for progress in a free society: that ordinary people can get involved in something that affects them in an immediate way and affects their long-term environment." Julian

"For me there's no bigger learning experience that I've ever had. Fuck college. That's nothing. Festivals you learn, you really do." Mel





Where now?

Way back when the CJA was just a twinkle in the Home Secretary's eye, the proposed legislation provoked a torrent of words. With few notable exceptions little was heard from Travellers. Some evidently took a "wait and see" attitude, others dismissed the Bill as more of the same from a hostile regime. As it gained publicity Travellers acquired the grim glamour of an oppressed minority, well-intentioned sympathy, media scamulation and ghetto groupies with their boot laces fashionably undone, naturally followed.

Two years since the Bill became law it is clear that if the CJA was designed as a noose to hang us by, then the knot is coming undone.

Judicial review of the Crowborough eviction illustrated the Government's essential error in using half-baked, ill-conceived legislation to score political points.

The review concluded that the CJA sections relating to Travellers contravene existing legislation ie. the Children's Act.

And it also established the legal precedent by which local authorities are required to take into account the circumstances of individuals affected before they may legally evict.

Justice Sedley may have pissed on M. Howard's bonfire but it would obviously be naive to assume the battle is won. The CJA was only ever a part of the Tory's final assault on Travellers. Festivals have been under attack for more than a decade and we now have the Job Seekers Allowance to look forward to.

There is a pattern in all this. The Tories see society as a business run to make money. Anything that doesn't return a fat profit is ruthlessly cut away.

These are the economics of control. By prohibiting festivals, keeping us permanently on the run or trapped on ghetto sites unable to make a living or claim benefits, they hope to put us collectively out of business. At which point, they reason, we will simply disappear.

So where does that leave all those unwilling to leave the country and or unable to give up on their home? Despite all the obvious

reasons for pessimism there are some who feel the CJA may have done us a few favours.

Paul, a long-term resident of Waterhall near Brighton is wary of how it might sound but says: "The CJA actually did some good, it made local authorities question what they actually thought about Travellers, whereas before they just moved us on. Now they're having to think about human rights and what they actually believe.

"Toleration policies are developing, in reality the CJA has had almost the opposite effect to that intended. I'll be vilified for saying this but it has also forced Travellers who didn't leave the country into finding park-ups which are not privately owned.

"This has increased the pressure on local authorities to address the issue, certainly in the south there are toleration policies springing up all over.

"Unfortunately, councils don't really understand the anarchy of it all, they like to see Travellers as a homogenised group and we're obviously not.

"The problem in Brighton has been that the council wanted to set

up a site for 'local' Travellers - but there's no such thing - now they're freaking out because there are 100 vehicles on their tolerated site that started off with ten."

Waterhall may for the time being represent a haven for Travellers but not everyone there sees it as a positive development. According to Joe: "The site is like a huge council estate - you get there and you're stuck. I've been on the road for 12 years and I've never been anywhere like it - the mood on site is one of utter apathy.

"If you're moving regularly everything stays clean and good - the unit stays together..... When you're stuck in one place all the time the scumbags and the skagheads from town drag their £10 trailers on site and live amongst us. The site deteriorates, the place looks like hell and it is."

There is evidence that the local council may have willingly abetted this process. One witness described seeing trailers with no tow hitches being dragged up to site on council trucks and dumped. It is also a fact that where there is a tolerated site anyone who choosing to park-up elsewhere runs the risk of being



Hebden Bridge site - Richard Heys

Rachel Kano talks to some fellow Travellers about the state of things in '96

forced on to the main site or out of the area.

Decker Lynn has chosen not to live on an open site for some time. She sees the fundamental issue as one of attitude: "We were lucky in finding a nice little park-up on a farm a couple of years ago. If I want to be accepted and happy in an area I know I'll have to be extremely friendly to the locals - you can only show you are alright by example.

"My farmer does B&B - last year I was going down and cooking the evening meal - the punters don't know I live in a bus in the back yard but it helps him and it helps me. "We go out of our way to be useful; putting up a marquee for the village fete, driving the school minibus, this is our contribution to the whole.

"Whether we like it or not we are still part of wider society. It starts with the family unit, goes on to site - but there is the village beyond that. We have to deal with society so we might as well be part of it. No-one has room to be a total individual.

"I don't accept the idea that society owes me anything, people talk about the right to this or that but

really we don't have rights - we simply are.

"I firmly believe from each according to ability, to each according to need. I don't want to be fighting all the time but if it comes to it I will. I've been on the frontline and I've had shitty times but there is no point in bitterness.

"I've been on the road about 12 years and run a cafe most of that time, but because there are virtually no free festivals left I've had to adapt to do the small pay festivals instead.

"That puts us under environmental health regulations many of which are daft when applied to a cafe in a field but it's an achievement to do it when they say you can't.

"I don't think we should concentrate on what has been, we should be looking at what we are going to do next year and the year after. There are huge possibilities - look at what is needed and go out and do it."

Pete is parked up at Selby in Yorkshire. He has been travelling as part of a fluctuating but relatively large group for some time.

"We went from Derbyshire to

Lincolnshire and on into Scotland for the festivals. At one stage there were about 100 vehicles though the number now at Selby has reduced as people have gone off to do other things. There is definitely a great deal of antagonism towards us from the authorities - I was talking to a fairly high ranking officer at a roadblock at Otterbourne three years ago and he told me John Major had written to all the Chief Constables in the country telling them that in seven years there would be no more Travellers. Maybe he was winding me up - after all the police are notorious liars....

"I see a certain amount of apathy but also a great deal of positivity - doing what you want may take more ingenuity than in the past but it is still possible.

"Free parties have almost stepped in to replace festivals - at least for 12 hours you can all get together. I still believe this is a better way of living, low impact if you like, even the scuzziest, dirtiest site can be cleaned up - you can't say that about a housing estate.

"The way society has developed, you work all your life, buy a house and die there, end of

story. This has to be a healthier way of living."

A not inconsiderable number of years ago John Major pledged to eradicate Travellers: "New age travellers - not in this age, not in any age." And yet now he's the one tottering on the brink of (political) extinction, having failed to deliver the goods. Governments come and go but Travellers, and the reasons they take to the road remain.

The problems we suffer are all too obvious and it's easy to forget the positives. Enough money has been made by those who borrow from travelling culture, little of it filtering back to the community.

Positive, practical solutions can only come from within - as Decker Lynn says - we can't afford expectations we can only depend on ourselves. Travellers have inherited the unsolved ills of wider society - surely it is futile to sit in our trailers waiting for society to sort them out.

The opinions given here are personal ones, no-one makes any claim to speak for "Travellers" as a group. We would like to hear other stories and opinions.

With thanks to FFT.

sq

THE MASHER

The Masher is a new magazine for Travellers launched in this issue of **SQUALL** and due to exist independently for its future issues.

With thanks to the good people of SQUALL for the space and respect to Perkins, Gardner, Bedford, AEC, Albion, Bristol, Austin and Morris and the rest. We bring you The Masher - (mainly) for people who live in and love their vehicles.

We aim to provide a news, contacts and practical information service but we need feedback to make it work.

If you have something to trade, a contact to find, useful information, peculiar vehicle problems or something to say write to The Masher c/o SQUALL PO Box 8959, London, N19 5HW.

Johnny Potatoes (Ed)

NEWS - It's nice to live in a bubble but probably not advisable given the current state of affairs, and it's a sad day when the Snapshot lot can find our friends easier than we can. To provide accurate information we need to be regularly and reliably informed. If information is a weapon then see this as ammunition.

THE BLAGGER'S GUIDE - Some people have known all this and more for years. Consequently they've sorted more vehicles for other people than they've had hot dinners. This section is dedicated to those who are at least prepared to try sorting themselves out.

MAIN DRAG - We would like to start a classifieds section which will actually work for people with restricted access to the wonders of modern telecommunications. We'll take ads for vehicles, parts, tools, services and assorted tat etc. We'd also like to put people who've lost contact back in touch with each other. If there's someone you haven't seen for ages and want to find send your message into The Masher.

ANORAK SPECIAL - highly technical but vital and often impossible to find numbers, ie timing marks, valve settings etc. We've started with Bedford but requests and additions for the list are very welcome - Haynes eat your heart out.

"YOU'LL NEVER GET ONE OF THOSE..." - Certain motor trade types take particular pleasure in condemning vehicles to the scrap yard due to lack of some vital but obscure part. The Masher has access to a range of contacts and a substantial library. Pass your queries on to us and we'll try to find a solution to the problem. Good ones get printed.

SKOOL BUS SEEKS WINTER PARK-UP

The Travellers' School Charity is looking for largish sites where the skool bus can set up over the winter.

The bus will be at Brechfa, Wales, until early October when Ross who has been teaching on sites through the summer, hands over to TSC's new teacher, Howard.

From then on they want sites with a reasonable number of kids to teach over the winter, anyone interested should contact TSC via the address or pager given below.

Ross is looking to continue teaching on a freelance basis. Obviously he needs to be paid but the cost per child per day, is ludicrously low. He can also be contacted via TSC.

Stocks of the new TSC workbooks are already running down but they are still free to Travellers and there will be photocopy versions available when the originals sell out.

They are set at four different educational levels and

cover the requirements of the national curriculum. Each workbook actually costs £10 to produce so settled home educators are asked to donate as much as they can afford up to the full amount.

The books can be ordered from the TSC PO Box address or bought from the Friends and Families of Travellers Shop, Nomad, in Glastonbury.

A much needed injection of cash from the National Lottery Charity Board has secured the future of the Skool bus until the end of 1998.

The £45,000 grant will cover the less than £100 per week wages of a teacher and an organiser each year and provide £5,000 per year for resources. Money for fuel and other essentials still has to be found from elsewhere.

TSC can be contacted at PO Box 36, Grantham, NG31 6EW. Pager 0839 479224.

CRUSTY GIRL
Now new ultra **Crustytan** offers me complete UV protection!

In a handy self-applying formula, it's twin components **Mud** and **Engineoil** combine to visibly reduce the appearance of fine lines and ageing.

Why bother taking two bottles into the shower? I just go.

Diesel engines are very simple and reliable but they need a good clean supply of fuel to work. If you run your vehicle with too little fuel in the tank air gets into the fuel lines and the engine will die. A leaking fuel line, dirt causing a blockage or changing a filter all let air into the lines. To start the engine again you will need to bleed the air out of the system completely.

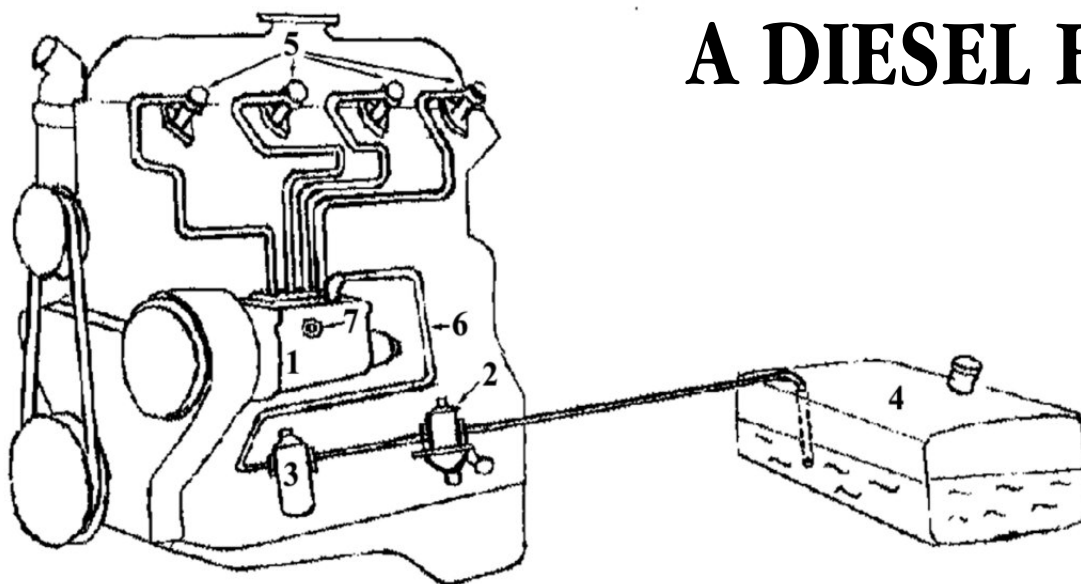
The first thing to do if you think there's air in the system is to stop trying to start your vehicle with the starter motor. Save the batteries for later - you will need them. If you've run out of fuel put at least a couple of gallons at least in the tank. Then find the injector pump (1), fuel lift pump (2) and filter (3) on the engine body. The fuel lift pump has a small lever on the side by which you can hand pump fuel through the system and drive the air out.

The fuel pipe goes from the tank (4) to the lift pump, to the filter into the injector pump then splits into four (or six for a six cylinder) to take fuel to each injector (5).

To begin bleeding the air out slightly loosen the fuel line (6) on the injector pump side of the filter body. Pump the lever on the lift pump regularly (every 2-3 seconds)

until fuel starts to leak from the loosened connection. If after 2-3 minutes nothing comes out turn the engine a 1/2 turn and try again. When you get a reasonable spurt of fuel with out any air bubbles on each down stroke of the pump tighten the connector.

Next find the bleed valve (7)



on the body of the injector pump - it will probably be a nut going into a bolt on the side of the casing. Again loosen it slightly and pump the lever on the lift pump until a good spurt of bubble free fuel leaks out on every down stroke - tighten the bleed valve. Finally loosen the fuel pipe connectors to all your injectors by a half turn, turn the engine over with the starter motor

BLAGGERS GUIDE TO BLEEDING AIR FROM A DIESEL ENGINE.

connections you have undone. All the connections in fuel systems are brass - very soft and easy to misthread. Take great care not to over tighten or they will break.

If you get air in the system every time you drive the vehicle

for about five seconds. All of the loosened pipes should have leaked fuel. If not repeat the procedure of bleeding the injector pump and try again.

When you see fuel leak from all the pipes gently tighten the connections and if all else is well your vehicle will start. Run the engine until warm and check for fuel leakage from any of the

and you know there is sufficient fuel in the tank then there must be a leaking connection between the fuel tank and the lift pump. Plumbers' gas fitting tape is the cheapest and easiest way to mend leaking connectors. Wrap 2 or 3 turns around the male side of a connection when you refit the fuel pipe.

ANORAK SPECIAL:

BEDFORD 214 cc PETROL ENGINE - Valve clearances: Inlet 0.010 ins Exhaust 0.013 ins. Valve timing: Inlet valve No.1 cylinder max opening point 106 degrees ATDC. Ignition timing: 5 degrees BTDC Cylinder head nuts torque: 93lbft.

BEDFORD 220 cc DIESEL ENGINE - Valve clearances: Inlet 0.013 ins Exhaust (hot) 0.013 ins. Valve timing: Inlet valve No.1 cylinder max opening point 106 degrees ATDC. Injector timing: Simms Pump - at TDC on compression stroke of No.1 cylinder scribed marks on injector pump and coupling should align. Cylinder head nuts torque: 152lbft.

BEDFORD 300cc PETROL ENGINE - Valve clearances : Inlet (hot) 0.010 ins Exhaust (hot) 0.010 ins. Valve timing: Inlet valve No.1 cylinder max opening point 108 degrees ATDC. Ignition timing: 10 degrees BTDC. Cylinder head

nuts torque 100lbft.

BEDFORD 330cc DIESEL ENGINE - Valve clearances: Inlet 0.013 ins Exhaust 0.013 ins. Valve timing: Inlet valve on No.1 cylinder max opening 108 degrees ATDC. Injector timing: CAV pump, at TDC on compression stroke of No.1 cylinder, remove inspection cover from pump body. timing mark B should align with square end of circlip. Cylinder head nuts torque: 152 lbft.

BEDFORD 466cc DIESEL ENGINE - Valve clearnces: Inlet 0.013 ins Exhaust (hot) 0.013ins. Valve timing: Inlet valve on No.1 cylinder max opening point 108 degrees ATDC. Injector timing: CAV pump, at TDC on compression stroke of No.1 cylinder remove inspection cover from pump body. timing mark D should align with the square end of circlip. Cylinder head nuts torque: 105 lbft.

EDUCATED?

Cambridge University students were warned to avoid becoming "involved with travellers and the like" and to "avoid pubs frequented by travellers" during the Strawberry Fair this year.

In a letter circulated to undergraduates the Bursar of Jesus College said: "You are advised to be particularly safety and security conscious from 4th June to 14th June."

The letter goes on: "Be vigilant. Do not attend the fair alone. Do not go out at night alone. Travel, where possible, in pairs or as a group - be watchful. Try not to get involved with travellers and the like. When not in your room/house, close and lock your windows and doors. Do not leave your valuables,

including bicycles, unsecured.

Try to avoid pubs requested by travellers and the like."

The bursar - one JNH Lacey - explained his particular concern for the safety of his precious young charges saying: "Strawberry Fair will be held on Midsummer common on Saturday 8 June 1996. In previous years the Glastonbury Fair has followed immediately afterwards.

"However, there will not be a fair at Glastonbury this year, and therefore it must be assumed that many of the travellers attending Strawberry fair will arrive early and remain in the vicinity for several days afterwards."

So much for university life broadening the mind...



ROUNDABOUT

Snippets of informed gossip, intrigue and odd occurrences!

SQUALL EJECTED FROM PILGER LECTURE

A remarkable and laughable event occurred at the large and well-publicised Marxism '96 conference held in London in July, when a SQUALL journo attended a lecture given by the respected freelance journalist John Pilger.

The packed auditorium at the Institute of Education heard Pilger diagnose the dire state of the British media, describing many examples of the suffocation of truth resulting from the grip of the big western media moguls.

He called on all young journalists to avoid the press release, ignore the D notice and get on with some sorely needed, record-straightening, investigative journalism. The SQUALL journalist naturally thought the 20 SQUALL magazines he had in his bag might be a welcome example of just such an attempt, and so resolved to sell them outside the lecture theatre.

However, hardly had five minutes elapsed before he was approached by two Socialist Worker Party stewards and told to leave the building. Showing not the least interest in the contents or origin of the magazine, they insisted that the rules laid down were that only their newspaper - the Socialist Worker - was to be sold on the premises. They were flummoxed for about five seconds, when the SQUALL journo ventured that their Murdoch-like grip on information dispersal was the very antithesis of what had been heard coming from John Pilger's mouth. However, recovering their legendary powers of debate, the SWP steward replied that their rules were the rules and would the SQUALL journalist leave the building and take 'his' magazines with him.

The disease goes deeper than Murdoch it seems.

IRATE PROPERTY OWNER SEES LIGHT

A bizarre meeting between a squatter and the owner of the property he was occupying produced unexpected results.

The squatter wandered into the Advisory Service for Squatters office in June, asking for advice on how to negotiate with property owners. He told the ASS crew that he had attempted to speak with the owner of his London squat but had been rebuffed and told to vacate the property immediately.

As he explained his situat-

ion, who should walk into the ASS office with steam coming out of his ears but the owner himself. The squatter once again asked the owner to let him stay until the building was to be renovated, offering to look after the building until then. However, the owner once again refused, and instead issued threats to illegally evict the squatter without a court order.

The increasingly heated exchange resulted in the owner asking the ASS bods whether their office had ever been bombed, before storming out of the office. The squatter left at the same time.

However, a happy ending resulted when the two former adversaries hit it off on the way home, with the owner finally acknowledging that allowing the squatter to stay in the property until building work started was in fact a mutually beneficial arrangement. Sweet as.

MCBELLY DANCING

Word reaches SQUALL that Capt. Dan, mainstay of the McLibel Support Campaign was seen Egyptian belly dancing at WOMAD festival.

Dan, once a corporate lawyer with Lovell, White and Durrant hasn't looked back since leaving the shipping litigation department to help the McLibel Two expose McDonald's.

Dan now sleeps on the floor of the McLibel Support Campaign office with what he describes as the "most minimal of belongings".

A year's subscription to SQUALL for any photographs of the Captain in his "most minimal" Egyptian bikini, banging it to the bazouki.

PRISON PLEASE

Dimitri, an Eastern European asylum seeker, living in Hackney Council's hostel for homeless refugees and asylum seekers, was arrested for shoplifting a bottle of vodka.

Appearing at a local Magistrates' court, Dimitri begged the magistrate to send him to prison. He informed the court that the cell he had been held in was far preferable to "that awful Council hostel" and implored the judge not to make him go back there.

The magistrate was less than impressed. He fined Dimitri despite the fact that as an asylum seeker on no benefits he could obviously not pay.

MR FLOWER'S TOWER OF POWER

I was standing outside the North London house of a certain highly unpopular cabinet minister protesting against... well him really, when a motorcyclist pulled over.

"Are you protesting against Mr Flower?" he asked. "Yes," I replied, "would you like one of our interesting fliers?" "No, I don't need a flier," he said, "but I thought you might like to know that a friend of mine, a male prostitute, has visited this house on a number of occasions. Good evening."

HARDCORE CONGA

The society function of the quarter had to be the Exodus wedding up at HAZ manor in Luton this summer.

During the Agadoo period of the party (we kid you not - bridegroom and Exodus spokesperson Glenn Jenkins, along with bestman and rated techno-jungle DJ Hazad, sang all the words to Agadoo and a disturbing array of other pap classics including Stars on 45 and the Birdy Song), I overheard a natter between two old ladies wearing hats, gloves, the lot. One of them was tapping her foot as the conga line passed

her for the third time. She turned to her friend and said: "Well, these raves aren't so bad after all are they?"

TRIBAL BUTLINS

Tribal Butlins. Phoenix Schmoenix. Did you see how long the queue for the cloakroom marquee (yes I did say cloakroom) at the Blathering was?

At the Phoenix my mate who was working at the event, a stilt-walker in a nine-foot alien costume, was stopped by Vincens' boys every time she went in or out of the main arena. She had to bend right over so the big, bad bouncers could reach to check that her wristband was securely fixed. Top security doing their job. Well, it could have been an elaborate ruse so she got in to see the Sex Swindlers for free.

You do get what you pay for though: they'd laid on a beautiful almost-full moon at the Blathering. I blagged my way nicely into the VIP Redbull tent: lots of beautiful people jittering and talking very fast. Free shots of any spirit you like with Redbull: "Four Jack Daniels please. Hold the Redbull. Oh and five vodka and oranges. Hold the Redbull." Well, you'd be up all night if you drank that shit wouldn't you?

UNIVERSAL EGG RECORDS

In a World where freedom of expression is stifled and mankind is bent on self destruction; one of our few truly personal choices is music.

Contact us at - P.O.Box 5059, London W12 7ZT
e-mail - ziontrain@onelove.demon.co.uk Fax - 0181 802 3100
Or S.R.D. - 0181 802 3000

ONE LOVE



Nick Cobbing

Is the rural planning system a conspiracy by developers, industrial farmers and the conservation lobby to keep ordinary people out of the countryside?

In one sense, yes. Rural Britain is divided up into two parts: the ever expanding development zones around towns and villages where various kinds of high impact, high profit development take place; and the open countryside, where, in theory, no one is allowed to build except farmers. Plebs cannot build within the development zone because land prices are too high; and they cannot build in the open countryside unless they are netting around £12,000 per year as a farmer. People who want to live a simple low income rural existence and build low impact dwellings respectful of the local environment are not allowed to do so.

Or so it seems. For the planning game is complex but in some ways surprisingly flexible.

Based on negotiation and compromise it is arguably one of the more open procedures in the country. Someone once said that the English planning system is Newtonian: for every policy guidance in one direction there is an equal and opposite guidance in the other. For every rebuff there is recourse.

With this in mind, here are some suggestions for people considering lodging an application for low impact dwellings on land in the open countryside.

What are you up against?

Basically, Planning Policy Guidance 7 (PPG7 from HMSO bookshops) which says that the building of isolated rural dwellings and other forms of development should be "strictly controlled" in accordance with the development plan (ie. they should be within the allocated development zone). The only common exception is for agricultural and forestry dwellings; and these have to pass a "functional test" (do you really need to live there? couldn't you commute?) and a

Even planners joke about how boring planning is. But if you want to live on a piece of land for more than 28 days, you'll need to know something about it. Simon Fairlie puts it simply.

"financial test" (are you going to make loads of dosh?)

What's on your side?

A number of things: firstly PPG7 is not a law, it is a policy guidance. Exceptions are allowed and it is up to you to find sufficient reasons why your proposal should be regarded as a warranted exception.

Building without planning permission is not an offence. But before this point, you are quite at liberty to move onto your land and start living there or building straight away without applying for planning permission. It is up to the planners to stop you or get you off. If you are confident about your ability to get planning permission, if you have influential friends and letters after your name, then it might be sensible before you move on. If you have dreadlocks, a 1973 Bedford van and a lurcher, it's probably better to move on first and talk from a stronger position.

Even if you lose and an enforcement notice to remove you comes into effect, the planners are not obliged to carry it out. I know of a small house in the woods which the planners ordered to be demolished several years ago. It is still there and inhabited. The local planning authority has no interest in blundering through the woods with a bulldozer or risking a punch up between their bailiffs and local people who support the woodsman.

How to go about it.

(1) You've got access to land. Before you move onto it, prepare your case. Acquire a thorough understanding of the planning process - it's not that difficult. Read Appendix E of PPG7, the first few pages of PPG 13 (on transport), the General Permitted Development Order and the local plan (and DoE Circular 1/94 if you are or have been a traveller). Get hold of appeal decisions relating to developments that are similar to yours, especially successful ones - these are the best way of understanding how planners think.

Find a friendly planning solicitor or other expert if you can.

Check out whether you are in a Site of Special Scientific Interest, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or some other specially designated area.

When you understand the issues, prepare a management plan for your settlement, showing how it will benefit the local environment and the local economy. Outline, for example, how you will improve the ecology by planting trees and hedges, restoring meadows, converting to organic agriculture or permaculture, improving soils and encouraging wildlife and biodiversity.

Describe any plans you have for autonomous technologies (reedbeds, compost loos, on-site water provision) or renewable energy. Show how you plan to support yourself and how to produce from your land and how the work you can perform in the immediate area will contribute to the rural economy.

Show that commuting to your land from a house in a village will involve more transport than living on the land and that you have access to facilities such as shops, schools etc. without being dependent upon a car.

Get letters of support from influential bodies like the local Wildlife Trusts, and the Permaculture Association. Show how your project is a constructive experiment in sustainability, in line with Agenda 21, that couldn't conceivably be carried out within the development zone.

(2) Now you are ready to move on. If at all possible, select a site for your dwelling that is sheltered by trees or otherwise invisible from public rights of way. If this is impossible then plant trees around the dwelling as soon as you can.

Unless you're going for a reed bed system or a "tree-bog", dig compost loos six foot deep if possible and well away from any watercourse. Make friends with your neighbours, local walkers and the animals that live there. Then wait for the planners to arrive. If they don't discover you for 10 years (4 years if you are in an existing shed or barn), then at the end of that period you

Gaining a foothold

can claim lawful use of the land. But they probably will.

(3) When the planners come round, don't panic. You will be asked to put in a planning application costing about £160. Fill in the form and deliver it. At the same time tell them that you have a management plan for the property.

Request interviews with the chief planning officer for your area, with the environmental department, and the environmental coordinator (the person on the council responsible for implementing Agenda 21). Tell them you are carrying out an experiment in sustainable living that couldn't conceivably be carried out within the development zone, show them your management plan and invite them to make suggestions as to how it could be improved.

(4) Your case will probably come up within six weeks. The planning authority will make a recommendation to the planning committee (composed of elected councillors) which will make the decision. The most likely outcome is that the planning authority will recommend that your application should be rejected (because it does not conform to the development plan). But you never know. If you do get given planning permission, it will almost certainly be for a trial period of two to five years.

(5) If you get refused, the council will place an enforcement order on you. At this point you may be able to try a second slightly altered planning application.

Or you can go to appeal. If you can get the appeal process heard at a public inquiry, then this is likely to take at least a year, during which time the enforcement order will be suspended. You then have the time to prepare a good case, to make friends with local people and to show that you are bringing life and diversity to the local community.

(6) At this point (if not before) you should be reminding the planners of the tools they have at their disposal for ensuring your low-impact development does not metamorphose

into a high impact one.

For example Planning Conditions can regulate the size, range or appearance of your buildings, the number of people that live there, the amount of mess you make, the number of trees you plant or the number of vehicles you operate.

Section 106 Agreements are legally binding agreements on the effects a development may have on the wider community. Such an agreement might seek to ensure that an area of woodland remained accessible to the public in perpetuity.

There is no reason why you should not, at any time, propose conditions or agreements which you are happy to accept to the planning authority, and these will be taken into account when your case is considered.

If you have dreadlocks, a 1973 Bedford van and a lurcher, it's probably better to move on first and talk from a stronger position.

(7) If you present your case well, you might win at appeal. But if you lose, the enforcement notice will come into effect after a period of say six months or a year. But you still have a number of options: you can delay enforcement once again by taking your case to High Court; you can then put in another slightly different planning application; you can try and negotiate a compromise with the planners; or you can lie low and hope that the planners won't carry out any enforcement.

How can the planners throw you off?

If the planners do try to throw you off your land and you refuse to move, they have a number of choices. Most likely they will take you to a magistrates court where you could be fined quite heavily; but if you are on a low income, you will be required to pay it off in installments

There was a case in Kent recently when the planners,

impatient with mobile home owners paying a weekly fine that was considerably cheaper than rent, moved in and demolished the mobile homes. But I have yet to hear of planners demolishing a bender.

It is also possible for the planners to apply for a High Court injunction to keep you off your land. However injunctions are not automatic - a sympathetic judge might accept that the absence of alternative accommodation and no visible damage to the environment were grounds for not granting an injunction.

But just because planners can throw you off, it doesn't mean that they have to. Even after an enforcement notice comes into effect they are at liberty to negotiate a compromise and grant you planning permission. Moreover, preventing

determined and inconspicuous low impact dwellers from returning to their land is an enforcement officer's nightmare. Because you are allowed to reside on your land for 28 days in the year and you are allowed to perform "non-residential" activities such as gardening or charcoal burning, the council would have to maintain a measure of round-the-clock and round-the-year surveillance to prove that you were living there full-time.

In fact there are relatively few cases where planning authorities have gone in with bailiffs and bulldozers and in at least some of these cases there seems to have been a lack of communication and an obstinacy on both sides that developed into a futile feud.

The classic case was the one where Albert Dryden shot Consett planner Harry Collinson in June 1991. Dryden was an awkward, volatile geezer just looking for somewhere, anywhere, to carry out his line of business - sawing

firewood, keeping animals and so on. He wasn't allowed to do it within the development zone (it annoyed the neighbours), so he bought an acre of land in the countryside and he wasn't allowed to do it there either (it was offensive to tourists). In his efforts to accommodate the planners he planted trees and made a hopelessly ill informed attempt to construct an earth-sheltered dwelling.

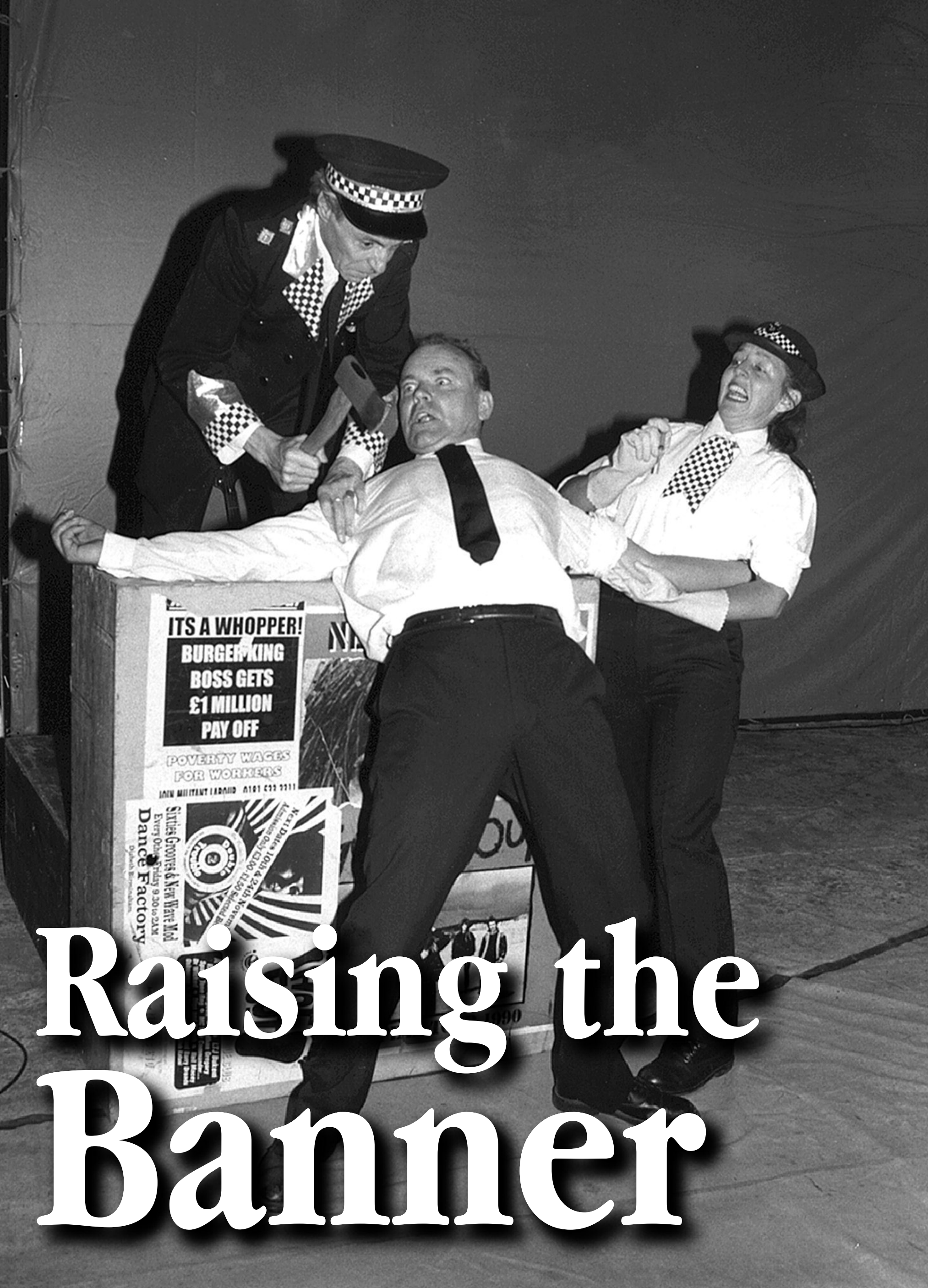
Derwentside District Council responded ineptly and stubbornly and failed to come up with compromises. Dryden issued not very veiled threats about how he would resist eviction with force: the council carried on with the remorseless steamroller of enforcement. This bureaucratic parody of a Greek tragedy ended with Harry Collinson walking, incredibly bravely, in the vanguard of the bulldozers, to his death (dulce et decorum est pro local authority mori); and Albert Dryden going to jail, one of the least reviled murderers of the decade.

It doesn't normally end like this and any local planning authority that presses ruthlessly ahead with eviction or demolition is bound to have the lessons of the Dryden affair at the back of their mind. If applicants for low impact developments can establish a constructive relationship with planners; and demonstrate their settlement makes a contribution to the local community and to local Agenda 21, then there is a prospect that the project may eventually be permitted to proceed.

At the end of the day, when it comes to enforcement, planners don't have to kowtow to central government policy, they have a measure of choice. Those of us who want to build alternatives should take advantage of this fact and learn how to build bridges.

For more detailed information on planning matters, see Simon Fairlie's book *Low Impact Development: Planning and People in a Sustainable Countryside*, published by Jon Carpenter, 1996; available in bookshops, or send £10 payable to Low Impact, 20 St Michael's Road, Yeovil, Somerset. See *Squall* book reviews.





Raising the Banner

Birmingham-based Banner Theatre's show, *Criminal Justice*, is the story of Leon Albright, an ordinary geezer who finds himself standing over the body of a policeman who has an asthma attack whilst beating him up. The copper, one Inspector CJ Adams, dies and, there being no-one else about, Leon hits on the idea of putting on his uniform and assuming his identity.

Once in the force, Leon (Banner's Dave Dale) is thrown in at the deep end when Inspector Adams is asked to conduct a nationwide lecture tour on the implementation possibilities of the CJA. He becomes "Mr Public Order himself" and is outrageously successful at rabble-rousing groups of police officers to "earn as you nick"; encouraging them to be more efficient, get promoted, and showing them how to use the CJA with gradually more and more ludicrous arrests.

Each stop on the tour is also a site of protest or action: starting in Luton with Exodus, Banner work their way around the country's hotspots stopping off at Claremont Road, Newbury, Coventry, Brightlingsea, and joining a convoy chasing the ill-fated Mother festival.

At every opportunity Leon speaks confidentially to the audience, translating his cop-speak explanations of the contents of the Act into activist-friendly common sense: "A word of advice: don't try and turn your convictions into actions 'cos the CJA will turn your actions into convictions... bloody long ones as well."

Finally his plan reaches its zenith as we witness the CJA backfire beyond all our wildest dreams. Every copper in the land has become hysterical with Competitive Cop Psychosis. The entire British Army and the whole Stock Exchange have been nicked, and the police are even using it to nick themselves. Football stadiums are being used as prisons, the rank and file of the unions have called a general strike, the royal family have been nicked for squatting ("...well, they don't pay any rent" as one Inspector explains to a superior), the pound has plummeted and anarchy is breaking out nationwide as Major considers Clintons' offer of sending in American troops.

The show is a mixture of music, theatre and comedy, audio recordings of the voices of activists, Travellers and Gypsies, and slide projections which combine to tell the stories of the various campaigns against the CJA. Documentary-style explanations of the section of the Act relevant to each group are given a comic spin at each stop on Inspector CJ's tour.

The heart of the show is in its music, witty, inspiring, sometimes gutting original lyrics and an impressive mix of musical styles. The cast (Dave Rogers, Dave Dale and Paula Boulton) are first and foremost musicians with a talent for relaxed, direct communication with their audiences. There is no preciousness about their performances, their aim is to communicate ideas and let their characters tell their own stories. The result is theatre totally lacking in pretension. They sing about the unsung heroes and heroines of current protests and of those who, as Dave Rogers puts it, "are prepared to stand up and say 'no, you're not going to kick us around'." This is instant folk; the creation of modern myths.

Banner Theatre developed from the folk-song revival of the late '60s and early '70s. Founder member Dave Rogers described the beginnings: "The first thing we did was open a folk club in the late '60s. It was different to others because there was political content every evening."

Within a few years the company was touring major productions and throughout the '70s Banner pioneered theatre for and about audiences in working class communities.

Working for nothing, they toured mining communities, supported strikes, performed at demonstrations and sang on trade union platforms.

Unlike current lottery-dependent theatre funding, small theatre groups were quite well funded from the late '70s to the mid-'80s. During this period Banner toured with professional productions as well as animating amateur groups and involves workers in performances.

This "golden period," as Dave Rogers describes it, peaked with the '84-'85 miners' strike: "We did busking on street corners, performed in miners' welfares and went to miners' support groups. We would be in a situation where someone got beat up on a picket line in the morning, we'd write a song in the afternoon and perform it at a strike social in the evening, so it was a really organic relationship with the strike."

"This was my baptism," says Dave Dale, who joined Banner in 1984 after 12 years of political activism and performance. He played guitar in rock bands until the day of the Saltley Gate mass picket in Saltburn during the '72 miners' strike: "That was the day that got me involved in politics. I was trying to get into town on a bus but couldn't because of this picket so I got off the bus and joined it. That picket helped win the strike."

Banner's role in the '84 miners' strike was "just being able to be there and support it without trying to lecture or point fingers, just listening to people and taking it back to them. It was the most important year of my life without a doubt", says Dave Rogers. "To be able to see how culture could work in a moment of struggle and resistance and really help and empower." Dave is clear about the role of culture and entertainment in political movements: "I think the socials in the miners' strike were fundamentally important. The atmosphere was just explosive. There was a big infusion of people and exchange of ideas."

Despite limited arts board and union funding, the company spend months researching each show, travelling to the communities they are writing for, interviewing people and gathering images and information.

Their trademark is the use of recorded voices: "The tape recorder is the centre of the work. You have to listen to what people say, that's the crucial thing," says Dave Rogers. "I believe the way ordinary working class or any oppressed group express themselves is powerful. There's a load of shit about the deprived speech of the working class but middle class speech is deprived. The real powerful speech comes from the streets, from the bottom."

This is evident in one of the most chilling sections of the show, the extraordinary story of Annette McNulty who was arrested under the Prevention of Terrorism Act and interrogated for four days (on no evidence) in connection with an oil refinery bombing. As Dave Rogers sang about her (his voice in this performance could break your heart) and Paula and Dave Dale re-enacted the nightmare that followed her arrest, Annette's voice tells her own story: "By the second day this guy had me convinced I was in the IRA... I was thinking... did I do it? Did I really do it?"

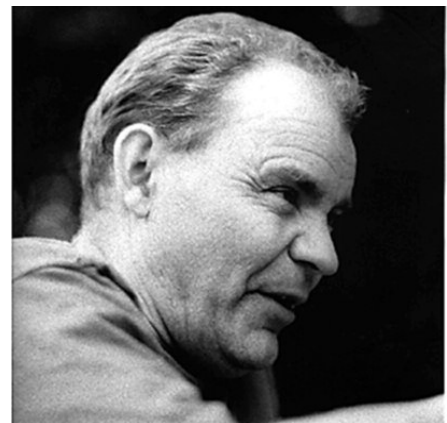
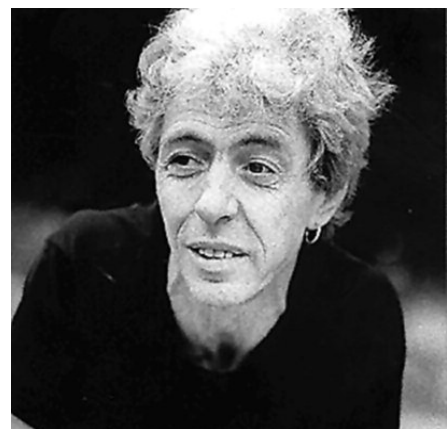
This section of the show, and another about the repeal of the 1968 Caravan Sites' Act, and the continuing decimation of Gypsy communities, have received a mixed response in performance. Banner welcomes this as they believe it challenges audiences. "The show might not change opinions overnight but it makes people think," says Dave Rogers.

At a British Legion gig, one particularly vociferous audience member tried to sabotage the performance by turning on the house lights and

Combining satire and song, Banner Theatre have crossed the divide between entertainment and politics for over 25 years.

Their latest show about the Criminal Justice Act explores the new political energy of DIY dynamism. Sam Beale caught up with them at a recent performance.

Lead photo by Vanessa Jones, portraits by Tim Malyon.



Continued
➡

the PA. Banner carried on regardless to cheers from the audience as the saboteur “went bananas, ran through to the bar full of ex-paras, and shouted ‘they’re all fucking IRA in there’,” recalls Dave Dale.

Banner’s interest in single-issue politics emerged as the real ‘Mr Public Order himself’ pushed his Criminal Justice Bill through its final parliamentary stages in 1994. Prior to that, says Dave Rogers, “the demos of the late ’80s had been the same old SWP banners: bedraggled and rather sad affairs. Deadly boring lefty, lefty, lefty crap. And I’m a lefty myself! Suddenly something new was happening.” He went to the the October ’94 CJB demo in London: “I thought it was bloody amazing. There were all these people on the top of bus shelters pogoing up and down. They just took over the street. It was so exciting to see all these young people involved and a new energy around. I thought this has got to be significant, we’ve got to do a show about this.”

Paula, who trained and worked as a Baroque violinist, joined the company in 1994. She describes herself as a “Pagan Communist”, a perspective she puts down to her family’s Communist history and her own involvement in the peace movement of the ’80s. She took part in a peace march to Moscow ’82-’83 and worked in political theatre in Holland before joining Banner. For her, Banner is the cross-over of two worlds: “It’s about finding a common language. I’ll play either role. When we’re up in Eccles or in the Working Men’s Club in Salford then that part of me is to the fore and I can talk that language. But I love this play because there’s so much of the other part of me in it.”

Evident in Banner’s work is the expansion of their own political visions and their own education in the success of activism quite outside their experience or that of their traditional trade-union audiences.

Dave Rogers, a Saltburn lad of 52 and first in his school to go to university, admits his initial scepticism about some of the groups he interviewed for *Criminal Justice*: “I was very ambiguous, quite dismissive about those kind of politics. I think I’ve moved on a bit since then.” Paula notes that she told Dave to go and interview the animal rights protestors and “he told me to do the footballers”.

As he sings in the show, “having hid me leather jacket in the boot so it wouldn’t offend,” Dave did interview animal rights protestors: “I found those people in a lot of ways the most politically sophisticated, in terms of understanding how the state works. They’ve got a much better analysis than a lot of people on the left in the trade union movement.”

Prior to going to Newbury he thought that “it sounded a bit weird, getting in trees. I thought what’s that going to do? But seeing them up trees marking the whole route: it’s a fantastic demonstration.”

Paula knows the power of the politics of direct action from her days as peace campaigner: “The main difference is quite clearly energy. Those single-issue, direct-action groups are based around empowerment. The great killer is apathy, so do your bit, do what you can do. That’s what I learned at Greenham.”

Banner believe that there are links to be made between the traditional left and the politics of direct action. Dave: “A lot of people in those movements think that trade unions are a waste of time, they can’t see the relevance. And the other way round it’s perceived as weirdos who wear rings in their noses and funny clothes climbing trees. It feels like there’s a basis for the cross-over but it’s not there yet.”

The company knows this only too well. *Criminal Justice* was hard to sell to trade union

venues who could not see its relevance to their audiences; one reason why the show was grossly underfunded.

Paula believes: “There are key unions who are sussed, the Fire Brigades’ Union sponsored placards for one of the CJB demos”. She also stresses the strengths in trade union politics that are not evident in the loose anarchy of direct action groups: “Where is that other feeling, that mass solidarity? That’s a different energy again.” This solidarity is based in the shared experience of work and community. Paula believes: “It doesn’t occur to postal workers on strike in my home town, Corby, that they would not go out on strike or that they would ever cross a picket line. That’s how they protest. It’s internal, in the psyche. It’s the rules.”

She believes that most young people don’t understand workers’ mentality and that respect is hard to foster: “How do you get it if you have a youth culture who don’t understand jobs, who’ve not had jobs because of mass unemployment. If you’re never going to get a job you’ll never understand the community and solidarity of working with the same bunch of people year in, year out.”

However the limitations of job-bound lifestyles in terms of seeing connections with other political movements are clear: “There’s fabulous things happening in factory culture. They’re really close-knit communities,” says Paula, “but try to talk to them about these other issues and you might think that you were talking to people who don’t understand activism. It’s a lifestyle that’s orientated around having a job.”

She has witnessed changes in consciousness and recalls the miners’ strike: “One miner said that from being on strike he’d realised what it was to be in the sun...afterwards he didn’t want to go back down the pit.” Paula believes: “Once you move away from that trapped lifestyle you start pulling the wool from your eyes and see a lot of the other ways in which we are trapped. Take away the structures that have kept people trapped and they find out what real freedom is.” Dave Rogers recalls the transformation in the lives of the McNulty family: “Suddenly the bubble bursts and they get a view of reality. A

clarification happens about the sort of society we live in. I’m sure that’s happening to the people down at Newbury and to animal rights protestors. These are going to be significant people for the future because they want to change society and make it genuinely representative of people’s aspirations.”

Banner’s ongoing struggle with the ironies of the common ground that lies uncultivated, and the even more common ignorance and lack of respect for other lifestyles, are evident in their work and their conversation.

Their approach is hugely refreshing in its attempt to bridge the gap between traditional left wing politics and DIY activism. Crucially for an ‘alternative’ audience it highlights the ways in which climbing trees, veganism and ‘funny haircuts’ are far removed from the experience of many working people; for trade union audiences it presents those with funny haircuts as participants in a valid political battle, fundamentally the same battle. Banner’s work provides a forum where this chasm of misunderstanding and lack of shared experience can at least be seen for what it is. Inspired by performances of *Criminal Justice*, heated after-show debates between those fighting to protect their jobs and the ardent jobless, have allowed trade unionists and the likes of road protestors to debate the issues which separate them, to hear about each other’s strengths and victories and have the potential to dispel a little of the fear and ignorance which are the enemies of political change.

“There’s got to be some sort of synthesis,” says Dave Rogers: “We haven’t got the sort of class consciousness that can organise 10,000 people immediately anymore. The left has to find new ways of doing things and we’ve got to listen to these groups.”

Banner have recently received lottery funding and are now researching their next show, *Redemption Song*, which will explore racism. They welcome applicants to audition. For audio recordings, bookings or more information contact: Banner Theatre, The Friends’ Institute, 220 Moseley Road, Highgate, Birmingham B12 0DG. Tel: 0121 440 0460.



Mayhem

would like to say thanks to everyone
(you know who you are) for all your help,
support and enthusiasm with the Mayhem
cause (you know what that is!). The big event
will be very soon, so watch out!

top ten free party tunes

DJ Peter Pan from BABBLE sound system onna deep house/gliding techno tip.

- 1. Faze Action - Turn the Point (Nuphonic)
- 2. Primitive - Primitive Urges (Primitive)
- 3. The Joint - Heavy Sounds (Emocian)
- 4. Housey Doingz - Piano EP (Housey Doingz)
- 5. Loophole - Falkland (Touche)
- 6. Darren Brandon & Tony Perkins - Sounds of the Big Stink (Mind Food)
- 7. Mathew Bushwacka - 3 Inkey (Eye 4 Suni)
- 8. Bruce 'Toyman' Rogers - Sounds of the Big Stink (Mind Food)
- 9. The Wise Caucasian - Night Fever EP (Mosaic)
- 10. DJ Lil John - The Far Ouche EP (Chacago Style)

DJ Gizelle from MIZBEHAVIOUR and IMMERSION sound system onna trance uplifting techno tip.

- 1. Kaylyn - Your Wildest Dreams [CJ Bolland Remix] (Global Ambition)
- 2. Les Diaboliques - Cubit (Lunatec)
- 3. Roger Devlin - Scorpion/Hot Stuff (DMD FFM)
- 4. Kektex - Quasar (Routemaster)
- 5. Andy Trex - Pulse Fiction (Noom)
- 6. Lochi - London Acid City (Routemaster)
- 7. Fixation - Alienation (Choci's Chewns)
- 8. Phonetic - Hypocast (Tesseract)
- 9. All 'Stay Up Forever' releases
- 10. Cyrus - Sensitivity Control (Tetsuo)

DJ Juice from the Exodus Collective sound system onna drum'n'bass tip

- 1. Maldini - Kosmo/Def Roll (Phalibax)
- 2. Dillinja/Trinity - Gangster [remix] (Philly Blunt)
- 3. Skool of Hard Knocks - Kan U Feel It (Grand Larceny)
- 4. Concept 2 - Soon Come (Liftin' Spirit)
- 5. Dem 2 Ruff - Nice Tune [remix] (White)
- 6. Asend - Cna't Play Bass [remix] (Second Movement)
- 7. Apollo 13 - Wobble (Back 2 Basics)
- 8. DJ Die - Nasty (Full Cycle)
- 9. Asend & Ultravibe - Inner Soul (Back 2 Basics)
- 10. IQ Collective - Rebound (Trouble on Vinyl)

DJ Super Stevie - freelance free party jock onna drum'n'bass tip

- 1. Bassline - This Side of Cool (K.U.S)
 - 2. Aphrodite - Style from the Darkside (Aphrodite)
 - 3. unknown - Everyday (Makka)
 - 4. Dr Octagon - Blue Flowers [Hype remix] (Mo' Wax)
 - 5. DJ Pulse - Street Player (Al's Records)
 - 6. MA 3 - Those DJ's [remixes] (Formation)
 - 7. Sureshot - Mindstorm [remix] (Nine Bar)
 - 8. Gang Related - Dictation (Dope Dragon)
 - 9. Pressure - Sub Zero (Sm:)e)
 - 10. Hot Steppers - Volume 5 (Hot Steppers)
-

THE VOICE OF TREASON

these, then, are the verdicts:

the chancellor of the exchequer to sit quietly until he knows
the value of everything and the price of nothing.

the minister for housing to be eaten by the homeless.

the minister for health's vital organs, (expected to include
neither heart nor brain) to be removed in enthusiastic amateur
operations conducted by patient people on a special waiting list.

the minister of agriculture to admit that he is shit and then
to be used as fertiliser for a magnificent marijuana crop.

the minister of education to write "i must not abuse
the child within" fifty million times...

the foreign secretary to be sent abroad
and never allowed to return.

the home secretary to be sent home
and never allowed to come out.

the minister for northern ireland
to live in northern ireland.

the minister for transport to be run over by juggernaut
and left in the middle of the road as a roundabout.

the defence secretary to plead no defence and be melted
down as a deterrent.

the minister without portfolio to be crushed
by a giant portfolio.

the lord privy seal to be sealed inside a privy.

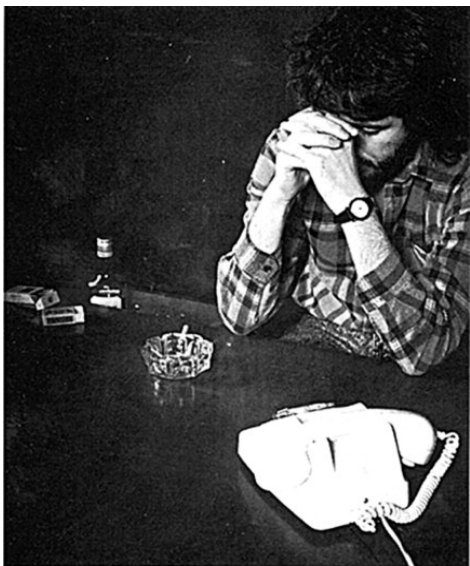
the prime minister to be poisoned
by the deputy prime minister.

the deputy prime minister to be poisoned
by his own mind.

and the chairman of the party
to make all the above events

look like a triumph,
a popular mandate for another five years...

(from 'No Future in Nostalgia')



MARK KELLY
"dates still available"

**Mark Kelly's books of
poetry: 'No to Negativity'
and 'No Future in
Nostalgia' can be obtained
for £2 each + 36p P&P by
writing to Mark Kelly, c/o
SQUALL, PO Box 8959,
London N19 5HW.**

John Prescott

john prescott.
what a lot
of principles he's got.
not.

tony says i'm the master -
do the masterplan.
john shakes his head
and says - o.k. we can.
john prescott :
the yes man's yes man.

it's yes to the murdoch press
it's yes to the i.m.f.
it's yes to the city, it's bollocks to hull
it's yes sir, yes sir, three bags full.

so is he now middle class?
john's got a little joke
written by a little bloke.
john tells it. everyone laughs.
phew - class is an issue of the past.

tony says money talks -
why not let it shout?
john puts in a lot of thought
then says precisely nowt.
john prescott :
the sell-out's sell out.

it's sell out the oxford halls
it's sell out the charity balls
it's sell out each and every strike
it's sell out, sell out, i'm alright.

so is he still a socialist?
john's got a little pissed.
his eye's got a little mist.
john wipes it. everyone claps.
aah - socialism's now a thing of the past.

tony says stand up.
tony says sit down.
tony says put your hands in the air.
tony says you're under arrest,
you fat northern working class fuckwit!

john wakes up.
it was just a dream
and real life goes on
in one long scream....



Fight

Jason Royce lived at the Fairmile road protest camp for two months. On his way back to defend the camp from eviction he dropped us some words and pictures.

It's been nearly two years since four people made their homes in some trees off the A30 in Devon. The trees are in the path of what is intended to be Britain's first privately funded road.

This small camp quickly evolved into Fairmile: the first of three protest camps set up along the route. With treehouses, 'twigloos', aerial walkways, an extensive underground tunnel system and a moat encircling the entire camp, it was soon dubbed the university of road protesting.

Trolheim sprang up across the river in the carnage left by a demolition crew at the edge of a wood. Looking something like a scene from a fantasy novel, it is a wooden fort complete with drawbridges and lookout towers, all built from felled pines by full-time activists, visitors and local people. The third camp, Allercombe, is a few miles down the route.

The road - the A30 bypass - running from Exeter to Honiton, is part of a Euroroute planned to stretch from Folkestone to Penzance. It is being funded through Design, Build, Finance and Operate (DBFO), a scheme whereby a

private company finances and builds a road and is subsequently paid a shadow toll in following years, whilst the taxpayer foots the bill for the road's maintenance. Bail conditions prevent many Fairmile protestors from returning to the site, so help is needed to continue the battle against the bypass. Get down there!

Contact the A30 Action! office on: 01404 815 729

PHOTOGRAPHS

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| Top left: | Ruth building a trapeze from the oak at Fairmile. |
| Top middle: | Alice and Jay winterproofing their bender at Trollheim. |
| Top right: | Becky making herself busy whilst waiting for buckets to be filled. |
| Bottom: | Busker Paul and a weekend visitor show signs of trench fever at Fairmile. |

for Fairmile



TWYFORD COMPENSATION

H A M P S H I R E POLICE have agreed to pay a total of £17,000 damages to two women who were wrongly arrested while demonstrating at the Twyford Down road protest.

The awards are the latest in a long line to result from policing errors at a demonstration on Bailey Bridge above the A33 bypass at Winchester on May 22nd 1993.

Brenda Puech and Kathryn Tulip were arrested and held for 12 and nine hours respectively for obstructing a police officer but the charges were withdrawn. They argued that the police acted unlawfully because there is no power of arrest for that offence without a warrant and that they were not wilfully obstructing officers.

Tulip said she brought the civil action because she wanted to show Hampshire Police that they could not breach the law and the way to make them think twice was to get back at them through the pocket.

"They were trying to get us off the bridge and it was expedient to them to remove us for the evening. What they did was against the law and they knew it. During the operation there was much communication between the police and the site managers and there seemed to be a lot of co-operation which I found offensive. The police are meant to be impartial but it

seemed they saw it as their job to clear the site not to keep the peace between the contractor and the protestors. The way they went about policing was very incorrect," she said.

Puech said the police's public apology had vindicated their actions and she hoped the case would inspire other people to fight for their rights and not let the police get away with behaving unlawfully. "I hope this gives others courage to protest without fear of the consequences."

The next raft of Twyford Down damages cases are likely to come to trial in the late autumn and will involve eight protestors who were arrested at the cutting on March 27th 1993.

Protestors had been moved back to allow trucks to pass and despite complying with police requests to leave, some of the demonstrators were arrested. The jury will be shown police video footage of events in support of the protestors' cases.

Civil rights solicitor John Davis, who has been handling many of the Twyford cases as well as police misconduct matters arising out of other roads protests, said this type of legal action is difficult to bring.

"To get legal aid was almost a battle in itself because the Legal Aid Board was reluctant to regard the cases as deserving or valid in law so

there was a psychological and political rift to contend with and a certain amount of hostility. The attitude seemed to be that here were people putting themselves in front of the establishment, of legitimate power, and if that's how they want to run their lives then that's up to them," said Davis, of Irwin Mitchell solicitors' Sheffield office.

He said that once legal aid had been granted the next hurdle was the police. "Hampshire Police were never going to take this lying down," he said.

Davis is concerned that partial media coverage of the Twyford Down protest may be another problem to contend with. An important aim for him in the run-up to the next batch of cases is to try to ensure that the public, from whom the jury will be drawn, receives fair accounts of the campaign.

He said unlawful arrest was one of the very few matters still heard before a jury and it was vital to inform people about the cases so that they could form a balanced view.

"There is a danger that people are being fed a diet of one-sided journalism and it is in the interests of everyone that the people who will decide on the facts are people who are not coming to the case from a stand-point of a prejudiced notion of what went on at Twyford Down," Davis said.



HIGHWAYS AGENCY YOBBO

RED-FACED bosses of the Government's road-building Highways Agency are still apologising for the "insulting" letter-writing of one of their petty officials on the controversial M11 Link Road in East London in response to questions about the scheme.

A series of letters of regret have been trickling out from the Highways Agency offices in London and Birmingham for months now. At one time, the Agency's £100,000-a-year boss, Lawrie Haynes, even expressed his own reservations about the letter-writing style of Mr RO (Bob) Brazier, Link Road 'liaison engineer' at Wanstead.

But to residents' surprise, Brazier - an early retiree from Hackney Council where he ran the borough's sewers - keeps his job. More surprisingly, so far he has offered no apology of his own to residents upset by his in-your-face style for dealing with persistent questioners. Nor, apparently, do his bosses expect him to.

Yet, 20 years ago, Brazier was leading the fight against the M11 Link Road when a now-discarded early route threatened to destroy the part of Wanstead in which he has lived in semi-

detached splendour for more than 30 years.

But today, he has a five-year contract to promote the road he fought - through another part of Wanstead. For this, he is said to get at least £20,000 a year, plus a secretary, a company car, and expenses.

Residents can't understand why he hasn't been sacked. Three senior Agency officials have all apologised in writing for his "insults", which included unsupported political smears and an outrageous allegation that one Link-sceptical resident suffered "warped perceptions" about the very road Brazier once so fiercely opposed.

Residents are also outraged about the cost of Braziers's operations on the Link Road. His direct employers, the WS Atkins engineering firm - "the Tory Party's favourite builders" - have set up two Link Road 'Information Centres' on the 3.5-mile route. They cost, according to a Commons answer to Leyton's Labour MP, Harry Cohen, £200,000 a year!

About six months ago, the Highways Agency had to halt two stages of the £340 million Link Road... because they had run out of money.

ONE HUNDRED YEAR SLAUGHTER

A RALLY held by victims of road traffic accidents marked the centenary of the first fatal car accident in August.

Since the death of Bridget Driscoll, a housewife from Croydon, on August 17 1896, 25 million people have died on the world's roads - more than in any war, plague or famine.

In Britain half a million have died and 30 million have been injured. Ten people die a day and 850 are injured.

Mrs Driscoll met her death while on her way to attend a folk dancing festival at Crystal Palace, London. She was hit by the last of three cars belonging to the Anglo-French Motor Car Company which were giving demonstration rides. The coroner set a precedent by returning a verdict of accidental death.

Brigitte Chaudhri, who helped set up the charity Roadpeace which organised the rally on the spot of Mrs Driscoll's death, said that

"Road danger" is now the biggest threat to children.

"In every other form of transport death there are major investigations," Ms Chaudhri said. "With road deaths the only concern is to get the road cleared as quickly as possible."

A mother who lost her 15-year old son last year when he stepped off a bus, Zoe Stow, said: "The attitude is a number of road deaths each year is the price we pay for mobility. That is offensive."

COW DISCHARGED: BOMBER INNOCENT

A NEW defence of jesting secured a not guilty verdict for a petrol bomber who endangered the lives of a young family at the Newbury Bypass protest last November.

Dickon Whittaker, 22, the son of a local car dealer, claimed his lighting of a petrol bomb beside a bus containing a sleeping family was a "harmless drunken prank".

He told Reading Crown Court in August that the "prank" followed a drunken evening during which he consumed 10 pints.

It was a "mystery" how he had come to make petrol bombs, and he had only intended to throw them in the road to scare people, he told the court.

"I was not really in control," he said. "At the time we thought it was quite amusing."

His friend, Phillip Allen, 22, admitted the charges and was awaiting sentence at the time of the trial.

The bus contained Jeremy Middleton, 34, his pregnant partner Amanda Rothwell and his six year old son Benjamin.

Mr Middleton said he thought the bombs had been thrown at the bus. He saw a man with a balaclava on his head and drove his bus away as fast as possible.

Whittaker was cleared of attempted arson with intent to destroy property and endanger life by a jury after a two day trial.

A Third Battle of Newbury spokesman said: "If we'd done something similar, which obviously we wouldn't, then we'd be looking at three years in prison."

The spokesman added that Whittaker's father is a "prominent member of society" in Newbury and rumours regarding his acquittal are rife.

MEANWHILE a pantomime cow, arrested for aggravated trespass during the height of the direct action campaign against the Newbury bypass, were conditionally discharged in July.

Both halves of the cow had to pay costs of between £50 and £100.

INJUNCTION THREAT TO PROTEST RIGHTS

TEMPORARY injunctions were served on nine Newbury protestors at the High Court in August, preventing them from trespassing on Highway Agency's land or interfering with property.

A tenth injunction prevented one protestor from trespassing. It is believed another 40 applications for injunctions have been lined up by the Highways Agency and Newbury bypass contractors, Costain.

A High Court judge will decide in January whether or not the injunctions will become permanent. The protestors intend to fight the applications and are seeking witnesses of malpractice by contractors or security guards at Newbury to help their case.

Chris Wolffe, one of the ten, told Squall the injunctions will prevent the protestors from entering any Highway Agency land that has any connection with the bypass and not interfere with work on that land. They will also prevent the protestors from interfering with Costain's equipment going to and from that land.

If the injunctions are breached by the protestors they could be imprisoned for

two years.

Scott Tomes, another of the ten, added that the legal documentation was two inches thick and mostly made up of information supplied by Brays Detective Agency. The documentation contains photographs of the protests on site, sworn statements by Brays' Detective Agency staff and copies of all the leaflets produced for the Newbury protest.

"They have nothing on my record to prove I do anything other than peacefully protest," Tomes told SQUALL. "There is nothing to suggest I have acted with violence, threatening behaviour or caused criminal damage. If they succeed they will have stopped my democratic right to peacefully protest."

"Between now and next year we have to get together as many statements as possible to show that the Highway's Agency is not squeaky clean," Wolffe said. Any witness or anybody with any evidence of official malpractice should contact Chris Wolffe at the Third Battle of Newbury campaign. See contacts for details.

HUNGER STRIKER VICTORY

A campaigner who went on hunger strike over a repressive bail condition being used against Newbury bypass battlers has succeeded in getting it varied by the High Court.

Chris Dench starved for 16 days in protest at the stipulation that activists awaiting court hearings must not tread within 1km of the proposed bypass route. Activists subjected to this condition have been issued with a map of the sausage-shaped exclusion zone - the Newbury Sausage.

Dench decided to contest this condition on the grounds that it restricted his

civil rights by preventing him from taking part in any form of protest within the sausage. At court he proposed an alternative set of bail conditions which he would be willing to comply with until his case was resolved but both local magistrate and crown courts refused to accept them.

"This is a typical Tory answer to political opposition - do not answer it, simply get rid of it - and that I feel is an infringement of civil rights and takes away people's right to legitimate protest. So what I offered was not to trespass on Highways Agency land and not to interfere with

lawful activity connected with building the bypass. The High Court saw the logic of my proposition and overruled the other courts," said Dench.

Dench was arrested and charged with aggravated trespass on August 1st. That afternoon he appeared in court and refused to be bound by the exclusion zone bail condition and was remanded in custody and taken to Bullingdon prison in Oxfordshire where he immediately went on hunger strike. He appeared in court a week later where he suggested his alternative bail conditions.

MILITANT ANARCHIST CYCLISTS ARRESTED

NINE "militant anarchist" cyclists were arrested in August after storming the offices of London Underground.

The raid followed an early morning critical mass to coincide with a tube worker's strike.

Four groups of cyclists met in different parts of London and converged on Trafalgar Square at 9.30 am before moving onto Parliament Square.

The action was intended to show support for the Tube workers and to persuade people to cycle to work rather than use their cars.

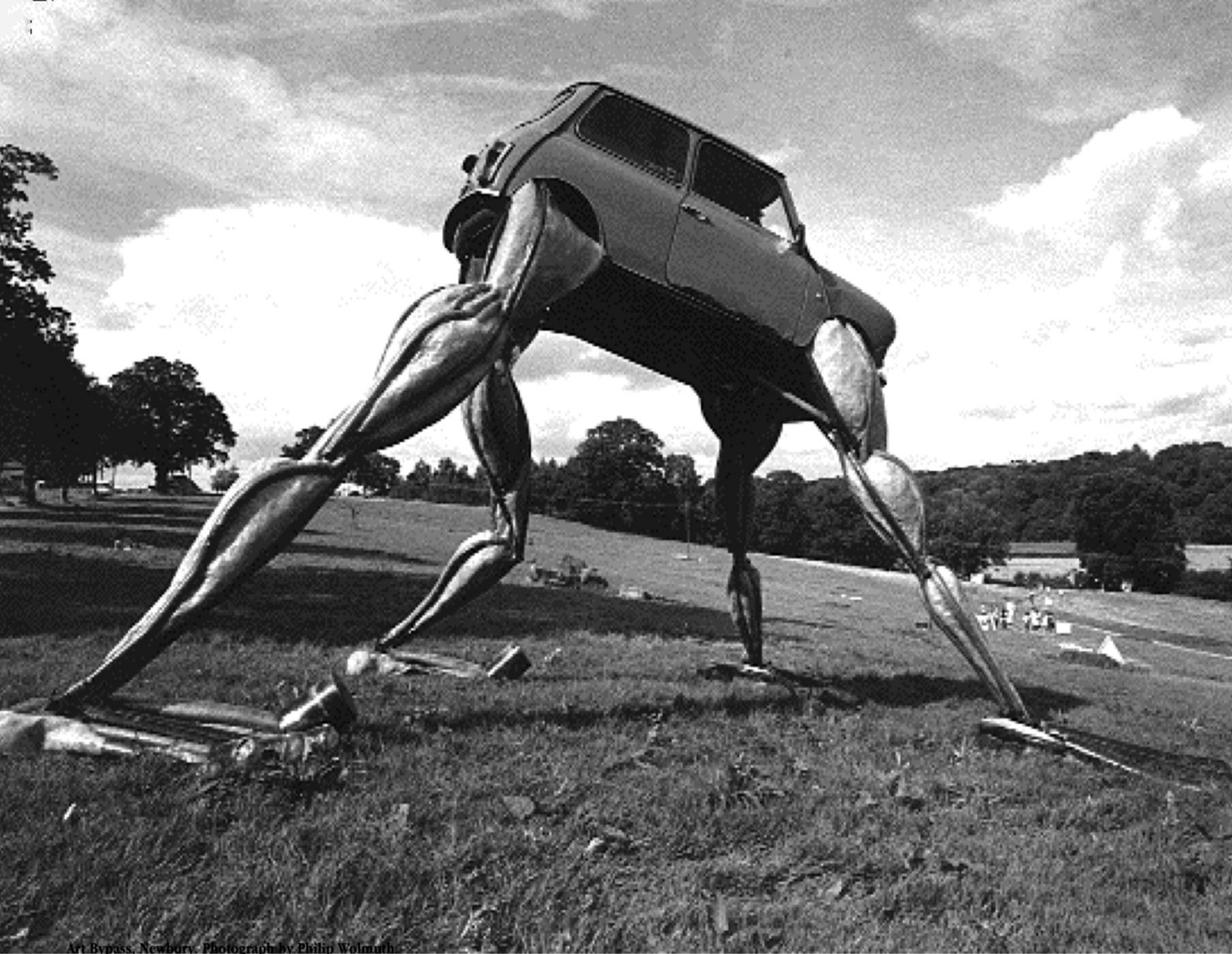
Policing became heavy-handed when the cyclists, numbering over 100, moved back to Trafalgar Square.

Although the cyclists were severely criticised in the press, and accused of being "militant", "anarchists" and "cranky" they were out-congested by cars on the day, adding little to overall disruption. The *Evening Standard*, London's daily paper, even suggested Reclaim the Streets had been infiltrated by anarchists.

Following the action an ad hoc demonstration outside the offices of London Underground, above St James's Underground Station led to nine activists raiding the seventh floor office of LU chairman Peter Ford.

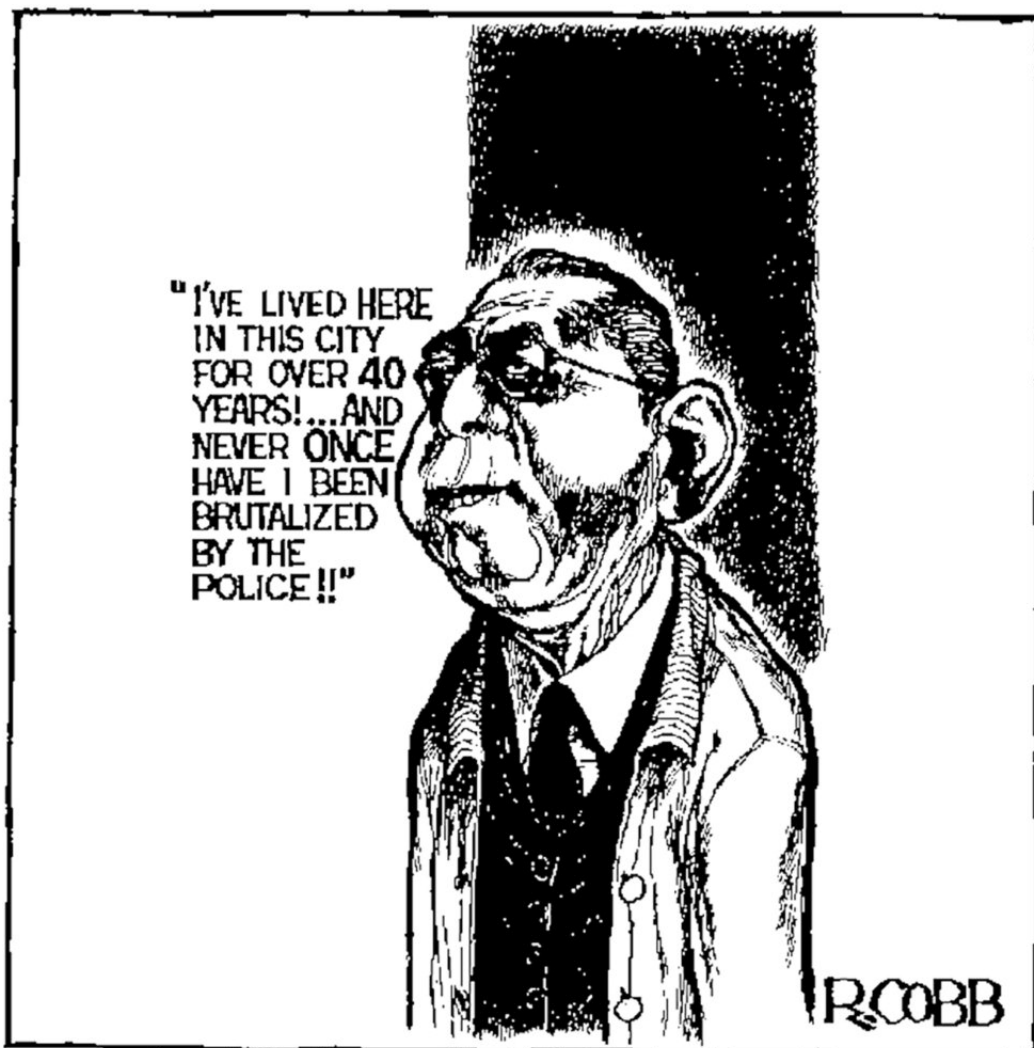
They hung banners out of windows before being arrested and held for the day. Charges included breach of the peace and theft of policeman's helmet.





Art Bypass, Newbury. Photograph by Philip Wolmuth.
Art Bypass, Newbury. Photograph by Philip Wolmuth.

Advertisement



CHAR's Groundswell Project

(promoting and developing self-help initiatives for single homeless people)

CHAR (Housing Campaign for the Single Homeless) has been awarded a three year grant by the National Lottery Charities Board to set up Groundswell.

Groundswell aims to narrow the divide between self-help and street homeless people; synthesising the energy and motivation of the former with the massive human resources of the latter, creating an exciting new direction for tackling the problems of homelessness.

The project aims to set up a network of projects with the vision to take this agenda forward.

If you are involved or have contacts with projects which could be broadly described as
1) self-help 2) involving homeless people or
3) campaigning around homelessness issues:

Contact the Groundswell team at
CHAR, 5-15 Cromer Street, London WC1H 8LS.
Tel: 0171 833 2071

ZAPATISTA!

Two and a half years after the Zapatista uprising in Mexico, resistance movements, both armed and unarmed, continue to challenge the establishment. Talks between Zapatista rebels in Chiapas and the Government continue, while security forces in Guerrero comb the mountains for a new guerrilla group, the Popular Revolutionary Army (EPR), which has recently emerged.

The EPR made their first appearance at a memorial service for 17 peasant activists shot dead by security forces on July 28 last year. Around 80 masked fighters, equipped with Kalashnikov rifles, appeared at the service and fired a volley into the air. Rumours of insurgent activity have been rife in the state for several years. Some reports suggest that the EPR may be linked to the OCSS, a peasant land-rights organisation whose members were killed in the massacre.

A guerrilla group called 'the party of the poor' was active in Guerrero in the early 1970s. It was wiped out in a counter-insurgency campaign, but its leaders remain popular heroes.

The EPR has not claimed any links with the EZLN (Zapatistas), nor have the EZLN commented on the emergence of the new group, although their leaders have frequently stated that there were other armed insurgent groups in Mexico. The Guerrero guerrillas, in contrast to the EZLN, appeared well-equipped with matching

uniforms and modern guns. A leak from military intelligence two years ago has suggested that a shipment of thousands of AK-47s was on its way to Guerrero from the US.

Meanwhile, Zapatista rebels hosted an international gathering of activists in the Lacandon forest in the first week of August. Around 3,000 people, including human-rights activists, assorted dissidents, and ex-guerrilla fighters braved the rainy season in the forest to discuss ways of establishing a global network of resistance. The Zapatistas say they aim to create a 'new world'.

Two Mexican journalists, Jorge Elorriaga and Sebastian Entzin, have also been released after a court overturned their convictions for terrorism, rebellion, and conspiracy. The two journalists, who were making a film about the Zapatistas, were arrested last year and accused of being leaders of the 1994 EZLN uprising. The 13 and six year sentences handed out to the pair led to EZLN negotiators threatening to pull out of talks. Although peace talks continue, the conditions which created the Zapatista uprising have not changed. In fact, economic reforms, including privatisations, introduced in the wake of last year's economic crisis, have created a new strata of super-rich in Mexico, while conditions for both the poor and the middle-classes have become harsher.

Ursula Wills-Jones

PIRATING THE AIRWAVES

For states run by military juntas and dodgy governments, pirates represent a dangerously unchecked voice over the airwaves. For people living under such regimes, the underground media may be their only means of political expression. Pirate radio is proving such people can have a voice against oppressive regimes.

Taiwan

In Taiwan, a number of underground radio stations are run by opposition parties or individuals opposed to the ruling Kuomintang Party (KMT). The KMT control most of Taiwan's electronic media. The pirates are free to criticise the KMT and encourage listeners to call in with their views. Rather than talk in the official Mandarin dialect, they use the Taiwanese dialect: "We have no legitimate voice. The radio stations are the only way people can hear the truth. But every time we broadcast we risk imprisonment." There have already been Government crackdowns on the stations. A Taiwanese Government spokesperson insisted that the "raids were carried out simply to maintain broadcasting standards and protect the rights of legal stations."

Belgrade

A pirate radio station operating in the Serbian capital of Belgrade, Radio B92, which was set up in 1989, has committed itself to complete broadcasting independence and gone to great lengths to offer action and information that run counter to government propaganda. They organised public protests against President Slobadan Milsevic's rule, set up a publishing arm to print pamphlets and books about the war, sent books to Sarajevo's library and organised club nights. All this against a background of UN sanctions which denied them access to tapes, transmitters and

records, which has to be smuggled in. Radio B92 have managed to combine this with a music policy that allows only two hours of mainstream music a week.

Bougainville

In the Solomon Islands, Radio Free Bougainville operators are risking their lives to transmit information about the war there. Bougainville has been consistently subject to exploitative colonisation, and successively 'handed over', first to Australia, and now Papua New Guinea. Its recent bid for independence has resulted in blockades that are denying people medical supplies and facilities, resulting in more than 8,000 deaths since April 1990. Villages have been destroyed, people executed, women raped, concentration camp style 'care centres' set up and schools and hospitals closed.

Freedom of thought and expression has been systematically denied, and the blockade has prevented independent journalists from visiting the island, where only "acceptable" journalists are allowed.

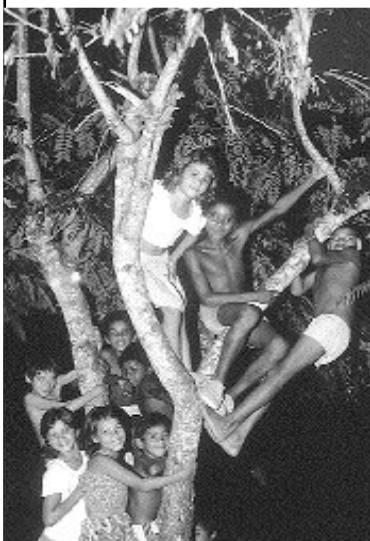
Radio Free Bougainville is fighting against this by broadcasting on its own terms. To power their generator they often have to resort to coconut oil, and it takes the oil of 40 coconuts to provide power for one hour. The risks are enormous and there are reports of four people who were caught harvesting the coconuts by the army and consequently executed.

The fight continues, and internationally the power and potential of pirate radio is being displayed. Not only does it grant people a level of autonomy, it offers them a voice against conditions they might otherwise be denied, and it is an essential channel of information and expression that can ultimately lead to political change.

Cath Parker and Tammi D Wood

Schumacher Lectures 19th October,
Colston Hall, Bristol 10am - 5pm

Food, Land & Living Communities



George Monbiot, grassroots environmental activists and journalist will speak about *The Land is Ours* movement.

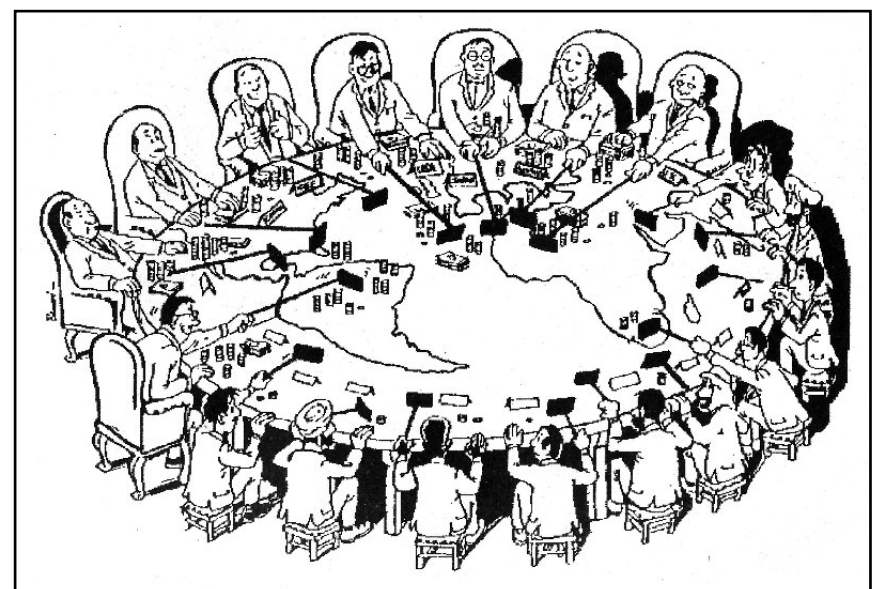
Catherine Sneed from San Francisco will speak about her pioneering work in creating garden projects for prisoners and urban communities.

Prof. Tim Lang will address the challenge of food in the 21st century: how to meet the objective of sufficient supply for all, and how to support models of sustainable agriculture.

Join 'Britain's premier environmental gathering' (*The Guardian*) on 19th October to hear three inspiring speakers, honour this year's Schumacher Award recipient, meet friends, and browse among the many stalls.

Tickets £16 (low-waged £12.50, high-waged £25).
Low rates for student groups & other parties of ten or more.
Tickets and further info from:

**The Schumacher Society, Foxhole, Dartington,
Totnes TQ9 6EB. Tel & Fax 01803 865051**



KILLING WITHOUT

Who cares about the Pacific Island of Bougainville? Certainly not a series of governments and corporations who have successively used its people and resources as profit-fodder. **Neil Goodwin** charts the island's battered history and the involvement of British mining company RTZ.

In November 1988 a handful of villagers broke into the Panguna mine on the tiny Pacific island of Bougainville, stole explosives from the company stores, and blew up one of the largest copper mines in the world.

Eight years on, in what has now become the region's longest war, the islanders continue to defy the superior might of the Papua New Guinea Defence Force (PNGDF); their sling-shots, home-made guns and vehicles run on distilled coconut oil, pitted against Australian-supplied helicopters, patrol boats, mortars and automatic weapons.

In a statement made in 1992, defiant Panguna landowners declared: "We now understand and have seen with our own eyes the destructive effects of the Bougainville copper mine operations on our land, our environment, our society and our culture. The mine will remain closed for the rest of our lives."

Since it was forcibly established by Australian troops in 1969, the mine has grown into a colossal crater half a kilometre deep by seven kilometres wide. Over a billion tonnes of waste have been bulldozed into the Jaba River Valley, poisoning a thirty five kilometre stretch of riverbank with mercury, sulphur and arsenic, and turning one of the island's largest river systems bright blue.

"Our fish, sometimes we would find them floating in the river. Sometimes in the sea," says Marcelline Tunin, whose brother was murdered

by the PNGDF in 1990. "Every time we complained they would say: 'It'll be alright. You will get the money'. But money compared to what we lost is nothing."

In the years prior to the bombing, Panguna had earned its owners Conzinc Rio Tinto (CRA) - an Australian subsidiary of the British mining giant Rio Tinto Zinc (RTZ) - an estimated US\$6 billion. At its peak during the mid-'70s, it generated AUS\$1 million per day, prompting Sir Val Duncan, RTZ's Chairman at the time, to refer to it as 'the jewel in our crown'.

Despite losing traditional fishing rights and 220 hectares of rainforest, displaced locals only received 0.06 per cent of the company's profits in compensation. Promised schools and other facilities never materialised, and Bougainvillean mineworkers were paid only half the wages of migrant workers.

Panguna became the latest outrage in a 200 year history of colonial exploitation. First the Dutch, then the Germans and British, descended on the region and carved it up into spheres of influence without any regard for cultural traditions.

In exchange for British concessions in Somoa, Germany gave Bougainville to the crown in 1899. Britain attached the island to its North Guinea territories and, after World War I, added Germany's New Guinea territories to Australian-controlled Papua to form Papua New Guinea (PNG).



QUESTION

When PNG obtained independence from Australia in 1975, Bougainville's pleas for self-determination went unnoticed. The island continued to be raped and poisoned for a further 13 years; its population exposed to long-term illness and death. By 1988, the islanders had had enough, and what at first began as peaceful protest soon developed into a full-blown ecological revolution.

With 45 per cent of its entire export earnings now under threat, the PNG Government reacted swiftly. Armed riot squads were sent in to quell the unrest, closely followed by a full military presence. By March 1990, against all odds, the newly-formed Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA) managed to force the PNG military from the island.

PNG retaliated by imposing, on Australian military advice, a complete blockade of the island, thereby cutting off all supplies of food, fuel and medicines. PNG troops were ordered to sink all unauthorised vessels.

"Bougainville is a tropical island; a breeding ground for countless diseases," says Martin Miriori from the Bougainville Interim Peace Office. "To deny the people medical supplies is to condemn thousands of civilians to death. The blockade is a form of germ warfare. It is highly illegal and inhumane."

Since the start of the war the islanders have been subjected to an entire catalogue of human rights abuses. Babies as young as three months have been shot, women gang-raped in front of children, men burnt at the stake, tortured and mutilated beyond all recognition. The list of atrocities is endless. According to health workers and church groups the war has now claimed an estimated 10,000 lives (about 8 per cent of the population).

RTZ has maintained a virtual silence throughout. "For four years they kept their mouths shut at Annual General Meetings," says Roger Moody, spokesperson for the anti-RTZ pressure group PARTIZANS. "On one occasion one man was actually punched in the face by another shareholder as soon as he mentioned the word 'Bougainville'. To date, their most revealing statement has come from Leon Davies, CRA's Chief Executive, in which he admitted that 'mistakes had been made regarding indigenous people'."

RTZ also owns a 12 per cent stake in the US-owned Freeport copper and gold mine in West Papua. In circumstances very similar to those on Bougainville, Amungme and Komoro tribespeople are fiercely resisting a 2.5 million hectare expansion within their sacred lands. RTZ are currently investing \$1.8 billion in the expansion, which will involve the relocation of an estimated 2,000 people. This will be backed-up by the Indonesian military, whose brutal 33-year occupation of West Papua has so far cost 43,000 lives.



At present, the mine discharges 110,000 tonnes of highly toxic waste into the Aykwa River every day, with horrific consequences. In 1980, for example, 216 children died from copper poisoning.

Last March, despite RTZ's assurances that 'the great majority of the population accept the mine's presence', serious rioting erupted in three surrounding towns. Six thousand people ransacked Freeport's offices and facilities, forcing a four day suspension of operations. As one Amungme leader put it: 'Freeport is digging out our mother's brain. That is why we are resisting'.

"Both PNG and Indonesia face the real possibility of many 'Bougainvilles' erupting all over the Asia-Pacific," claims Dave Burgess, from the Bougainville Freedom Movement. "The clamour for self-determination has been building up in countries like East Timor, West Papua and Papua New Guinea for decades. By pumping \$32 million of military aid into Bougainville, you could say that Australia has simply added a few more minutes onto a much larger regional time-bomb."

Following on from threats made by Sir Julius Chan, PNG's Prime Minister, last May that Bougainville's "darkest hour had come", intelligence reports revealed that preparations were under way for a major military offensive. PNG embarked on a US\$10 million spending spree in order to re-fit and re-arm 1,100 troops.

'Operation Shoot Up' began in late June. According to intercepted orders, the PNGDF intend to sweep the island in a pincer movement, 'destroy all food - gardens, houses and any shelter' and 'shoot at anyone [they] find in the jungle and to kill and kill'. An estimated 12,000 civilians living within the so-called 'clean-up' zone around the Panguna mine are to be 'forced into care centres'. Those who fail to comply 'must be beaten'.

In a chilling reminder of the My Lai massacre (when 130 Vietnamese women and children were butchered by US marines in 1968), the PNGDF have been instructed that 'any civilians who are suspected of harbouring the BRA must be killed without question'.

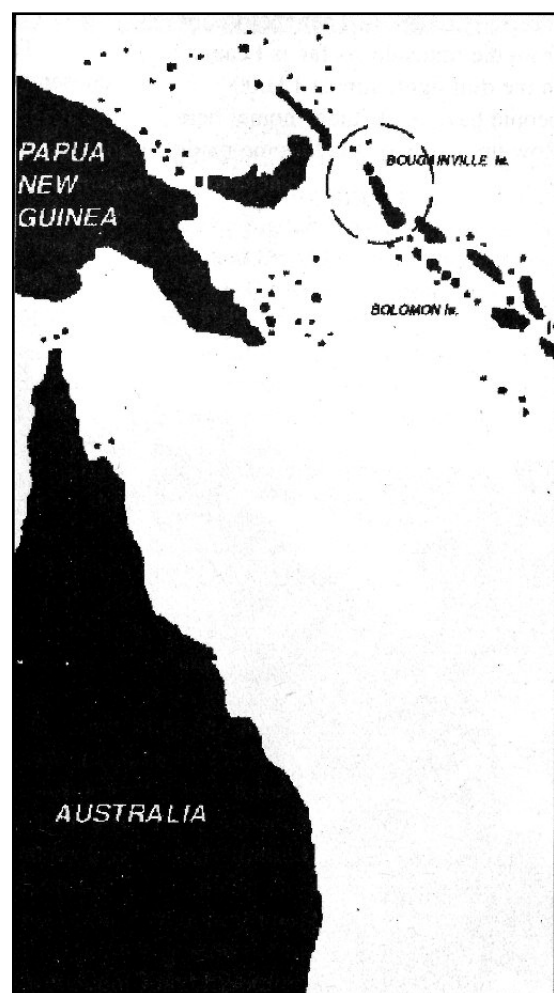
Despite the PNGDF's superior firepower, the BRA's General Commander, Sam Kauona, has welcomed the declaration of an 'all

out war'. "The morale of the BRA is so high, that we are very excited about it," he says. "I hope that this will be the final deciding game."

For further reading on RTZ's history of greasing the palms of practically every human rights violator this century, SQUALL recommends 'PLUNDER'. The author is offering a special offer to SQUALL readers of £4.50 (including p+p), by writing to PARTIZANS, 218 Liverpool Road, London N1 1LE (cheques made payable to PARTIZANS).

ⓈⓀ

Photographs from the Bougainville Freedom Movement, smuggled out through the blockade. Left: Bougainville children find an unexploded phosphorous bomb.



Organise, Invade, Produce!

Brazil's rural poor are fighting back with increasing force. **Simon Lewis** tracks the country's most radical and important social movement. Photographs by **Regina Vileda Gilmar.**

Five hours by train, one by tube, eleven by plane and two sleepless days and nights by bus. It's getting dark, I'm tired and not entirely sure where I am or where I'm going. Certainly not the best time to arrive on the front line of the tense battle for Brazil's rural backlands.

I am about to arrive at the increasingly famous 'Acampamento Giacometi-Marodin'. This is the largest land occupation by the land rights group 'Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem-Terra' ('Movement for Rural Workers Without Land'). They want all Brazil's unproductive farmlands to be appropriated and given, as small plots, to the rural poor. Their basic tactic is to invade and occupy large stretches of unproductive land. They then live there, refusing to leave until they each get the legal title to a small plot of land to live and grow food on. Or, of course, until the military police remove them.

The bus rounds a bend, screeches to a halt. There before me, from the roadside, as far as I can see in the dim light, almost 12,000 people have made their 'home' here. Row upon row of small home-made,

wooden-frame 'houses' draped with black plastic secured by vines or string. Getting off the bus and walking through this city of plastic is a shocking experience. But it's not only extreme poverty that greets you at the camp gate. What is most striking, apart from its sheer size, is the order, cleanliness and even (dare I say) the tranquility of it all.

Three thousand families living in absolute poverty in Brazil conjures distinct images. However, in the southern Brazilian state of Parana it's very cold, it's winter here and you can see your breath. Despite this, sandals and shorts abound. The land is a bizarre mix of monkey puzzle pine and palm trees. It doesn't look especially tropical. There are no piles of rubbish, no stagnant pools of water, no rampant epidemics of disease. The ethnic mix is remarkably diverse. Surprisingly, the majority are of Eastern European descent, immigrants brought in when European and North American companies built the railroads here in the last century.

Talking to those who've chosen to live in this plastic city rapidly becomes repetitive. All say similar things. "A piece of land to

live and farm on. Somewhere I can have a nice house and live with dignity and respect," as Reni Perieras da Silva, 24, an agricultural worker put it.

Before moving to the camp at Giacometi, Reni did the only work available to him. Working in the fields he was paid 'by the sack' that he filled with, say, beans. He claims his monthly pay was below Brazil's official minimum salary, currently US\$100 per month which hardly pays for enough food. Prices here are broadly similar to those in Britain. Reni and the other 3,000 families at Giacometi want 15 hectares each and some credit from a bank to get started. The farm they've invaded covers an area of 83,000 hectares.

There are no sources of income for those living here and it's not possible to plant crops as the farm owners are said to destroy them. Most assistance is of the self-help variety as Ernesto Fiera, 44, explains: "We have no jobs. No social assistance [security], only our families and our friends on the assentamentos." An 'assentamento' is somewhere where they have already won land and are producing food. Some of this food is then given to needy occupiers. Otherwise many get money from their families to get by on a monotonous diet of rice, beans and bread.

The considerable organisation needed to operate the camp efficiently is achieved by an impressive system of direct participatory democracy. Each family belongs to a group with around 30 other families. All group problems are addressed by regular meetings. In addition they each nominate coordinators for various posts such as health and security. The co-ordinators from each of the 92 groups of families meet regularly to discuss camp problems.

Generally life seemed relaxed though there are some strictly enforced rules. Those who spend their time drunk are told to leave, as are drug users and prostitutes. All children are expected to attend the school, which is largely run by

activists. One of the camp's goals is that everyone should learn to read and write. School, as with most other aspects of camp life and culture, is very DIY. Jose Deviar Ramos, 19, is one of the teachers. "I'm here because I want a plot of land, but I did well at school so I volunteered to be a teacher". But even with Jose's and the children's enthusiasm, they face an uphill struggle as things like books and notebooks are a rarity.

On the health front, it's also DIY. There are no doctors, just an 'ambulance' provided by the local council. They have a pharmacy of sorts stocked with a very limited array of 'western' medicines and piles of leaves and roots for herbal remedies. It is staffed by landless volunteers living in the camp. Yet despite all these safeguards twelve children have died of a mix of cold, hunger and disease in the four months the occupation has been running.

This type of land squat is standard practice for Movimento



Brazil's rural squatters



Sem-terra (MST), who since 1984, have been co-ordinating and organising land occupations and helping those who have won land to produce food. The size of that movement is somewhat staggering. This is not a few idealists doing a bit of direct action. Figures from the religious monitoring group *Comissao Pastoral da Terra* show that in 1995 there were 30,500 families engaged in illegal invasions to get land, spread over almost 150 sites throughout Brazil - a 100 per cent increase on 1991. But with no membership or lists of names verified, numbers are hard to come by.

The economist, Joan Pedro Stedile - one of MST's most respected leaders, claims 150,000 families are already settled or illegally occupying land with 5,000 described as militant. Impressive though these figures are, they should be set against the recurring estimate of around 12 million people in Brazil being 'sem terra'. The problem is

enormous, with millions migrating from rural areas to cities or the Amazon forests where they live in the infamous favelas in worse conditions than even the camps.

Recently public support for MST within Brazil has verged on the unbelievable. In an opinion poll in May to obtain 'approval ratings' of various 'public institutions' for Brazil's national newspapers, MST came fifth with 59 per cent approval. Interestingly, only the press, Catholic church, armed forces and public universities got high ratings. National congress (parliament) polled 27 per cent.

The rich and the powerful aren't, of course, standing back and letting those 'vagabonds', as they call them, get their own way. Activists have been intimidated, imprisoned, tortured and murdered. Last year 41 activists were killed in land conflicts with 381,000 people involved in over 500 conflicts according to the monitoring group *Comissao Pastoral da Terra*. This is

in addition to the some 63,000 families on the receiving end of violence against their possessions and property.

It is very difficult to assess if the violence is escalating but one thing is certain - the worst post-dictatorship violence committed against MST activists happened this year. On May 17th, 4.30pm, Brazil's military police charged at a group of about 1,200 MST activists who were protesting by blockading a highway in the Amazonian state of Para. Though virtually unreported in the Western media, the resulting melee left 19 'sem-terra' dead. Close examination revealed that summary execution via a bullet in the head had been the most common cause of death. As the operations commander, Coronel Mario Collares Pantoja said on the day: "Mission complete. Nobody saw anything."

Fortunately he was wrong. The amateur video footage was some of the most horrific seen on TV. Brazilians were genuinely shocked.

Several days later, events took an even nastier twist. It was revealed to the press, anonymously, that the big landowners (*fazendeiros*) had paid the police the equivalent of some £60,000 to carry out the operation. The executions were designed to remove further protests and occupations in that area. The plans seemed to have backfired somewhat with MST redoubling their efforts to secure wholesale land reform.

Despite these appalling murders, the violence is sporadic and fairly confined to certain localities. At 'Acampamento Giacometti' there are no problems with violence. There are just too many people and they are too well organised. The police and landowners rarely pass by. Talking with these people there is a real sense of hope. A hope that maybe soon they won't have to live so hand to mouth: "A piece of land to live and farm on. Somewhere I can have a nice house and live with dignity and respect."



LOFTY TONES

Tony Allen, Global Village Idiot, experiences a mild identity crisis.

What shall I be today? An armchair anarchist or a street shaman? A nuisance caller or an eco-warrior? Spikey or Fluffy?

There was an old geezer used to turn up at Speakers Corner every week wearing a sandwich board proclaiming the legend "THE END IS NIGH". Never missed a week in thirty odd years. I haven't seen him there recently. I do hope nothing's happened to him.

He'd spent half his life prophesying doom and gloom for Western Civilisation. And now, when his message is so pertinent, he's not around. I don't like to think of him missing the fireworks. It's sort of... well, sad.

On a quirky day I've even fancied doing his job. Of course I couldn't be doing with all the bible punching side of the position, but "Get a grip or else bring on the hell fire and damnation" seems a perfectly reasonable message to be laying on both the Godless and the God-fearing. Because to my reckoning, unless there is an immediate and sustained New Age of Enlightenment the species is screwed! Kaput! Up shit creek without so much as a methane gas extractor.

I've never thought of myself as a fluffy anarchist but neither am I yer Spikey 'small minority of troublemakers intent on violence in an otherwise peaceful demonstration' variety of anarchist. No, I've always favoured the tag "Naughty". Twenty five years an anarchist, Naughty Tendency. Twenty five years of smashing metaphorical windows in my Dad's greenhouse and then running away giggling.

But events are on fast forward. Do I really believe we can build the New Jerusalem

simply by being playful and imaginative on the odd demo while religiously recycling our kitchen waste. What does Naughty Tendency suggest we do about multi-national arms manufacture?

Okay, think globally, act locally. So, here's the plot. We get some explosives and blow something up, anything, it doesn't really matter what, so long as its very loud and nobody gets hurt or arrested. But, just before the copper tinsel melts the mackerel paste or whatever it is that sets off an explosion, because understand I know nothing about these things, Jack Shit squared me... your honour. Anyway, just before it blows, we phone Mr Howard's new boy scouts and give 'em the map reference. But most important we give them a code word: an obscure and pertinent word, something they've got to look up - East Timorese for British Aerospace, that line of thinking. Shortly after that we start bomb-scaring our way through the COPEX mailing list. "Hello, Land Mines Are Us Wolverhampton Ltd, we've just buried one of your devices in your executive car park. Tell the old Bill OKINOKI!" Just for a touch of authenticity we could leave some apparent clues behind at the scene of the karma - a few bits of copper tinsel or mackerel paste (not both together obviously) lobbed over the wall of the car park the previous night. Then we sit back and...

No, no! Of late there's a Spikey inside me screaming "Let's do it for real!"

The poet Auden once said, "We must love one another or die," which of course is an essential if very tall order. In my current mood of urgency "kick shit out of the bad guys" has got quite a nice ring to it as well.

Soon.

Lycra Shorts

SQUALL's sports pages

Much respect goes out to Alan Rapley, captain of the British Olympic swimming team, for demonstrating a passion for his art despite the financial desert.

Rapley spent four years preparing for the Centennial Olympics with no financial support other than the £46 a week he received on income support. Yes folks the British swimming captain is on the dole.

Rapley applied for a grant from the Sports Aid Foundation and was turned down three times and so went to Atlanta aided only by a £43.76 from the North-East Counties Amateur Swimming Association. What's more, the patriotically-minded Department of Social Security stopped his benefits whilst he was over in America saying he was unavailable for work during that time.

The American press were stunned into silence by the Cuban baseball team during the Olympics. Despite a US blockade which has forced the Cuban Government to ration food and energy to its people, the Cuban olympic team did remarkably well in the medals table.

However, the coup-de-gras came when the Cuban Baseball team met the Americans and, before a packed American crowd, beat them 10-8. When asked whether the political animosity between the two countries made the victory any sweeter, the Cuban baseball team coach, Jorge Fuentes, replied: "Absolutely".

The Cuban team went on to win gold.

After England's defeat in Euro '96 and Great Britain's poor showing in the olympic medals table, Conservative politicians have been in lament over the missed opportunity for a nationalist feel-good factor.

John Major's photocall with Trevor Brooking and promise of more money for British sport failed to re-ignite any hope. Too little much too late.

Rumours abounded that if England won Euro '96, a general election would have shortly followed. As it turns out the widely predicted polling date (May '97) is now as far as is constitutionally possible from the great British summer of sport '96.

NETROGRESSIVE

What's Up Govt? the Government/Hansard on the Net

Acts of Parliament

There has been considerable pressure on the Tories to stop talking about "open Government" and actually put their money where their mouths are. From April 1st, 1996 all primary Acts of legislation are published on the Net (<http://www.publications.hmso.gov.uk/hmsdo/document/Acts.html>).

Although the Government will "retain copyright", as a House of Lords written answer states (WA column 69-70, 13 March 1996), "no prior permission will be required for the use of the text of legislation".

However, there are no plans to update texts as legislation is amended or to publish secondary legislation (such as statutory instruments or circulars). As secondary legislation compliments primary legislation, it can be impossible to comprehensively track the status of a piece of legislation if only certain parts of it are available on the Net. This of course seriously qualifies the usefulness of the information, leading to accusations that what is on offer, has only been made available to get the electronic access campaigners (including some MPs) off HMSO's back. In the US, all government information is reproduced on the Net.

According to the House of Lords answer: "Public response to this initiative will be gauged before deciding whether and how the project should be extended."

Hansard

The Commons Information Committee report: Electronic Publication of House of Commons Documents (27 March 1996) made several recommendations to the Board of Management of the House of Commons on publishing Hansard on the net.

The report of the Electronic Publishing Group (set up by the Board of Management) concluded that: "Parliament, as well as the public, has a substantial interest in making its papers available in electronic form... Parliament needs to ensure that those subject to its laws have easy access to them and the law-making process, and the group believes that there is a clear and public right to unfettered access to this material." However, it is nearly two years since the Open Government Code of Practice was published (July 1994) and it has taken persistent pressure from campaign groups and concerned MPs, to make any change.

Hansard should be available on the Net after October 23rd: (<http://www.parliament.uk>).

Squall surfs the net and recommends a few beaches to land on.

Festival web archives

Two web sites crammed with archive information on Travellers and festivals now exist on-line courtesy of the ineluctable Tash and Dice George.

Tash's Festival and Travellin' Archive (http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/tash_lodge/) is chock-a. As listed on site, the man's diary of attended events is longer than most people's history of hot dinners. Stretching from Cissbury Ring Festival 1978 through to Reclaim the Streets' party in 1996, Tash and his camera have been to hundreds of festies, raves and demos. The fruits of his avid attendance record can now be found on his web-page.

Summaries of the CJA, and other relevant bits of law affecting community assemblies and parties, sit side by side with his One eye on the road' photographic exhibition, right to party information and the All Systems Go East-Midlands free party posse. The web-site hotlinks list is massive, all adding to the impression that by dialling up Tash's web-page, you're in a cyberspace all of its own.

Dice George is another well known nutter for the festival cause, with the love of his labour focussed specifically on the events surrounding a certain stone circle in Wiltshire. The Stonehenge Campaign site (<http://www.kingsway.ac.uk/kiss/stonehenge/campaign.htm>) is similarly crammed with info, pics, and diaries of occurrences at the Henge. Rewards-a-plenty for anyone remotely interested in the modern day cultural phenomenon of festivities and attempted festivities at the Stones.

New developments will be monitored and reported in Netrogressive: watch this space...

Other top sites

The McSpotlight web site (<http://www.mcspotlight.org/>) must be one of the most on-the-case UK info sites in cyberspace. Regularly updated, it contains information on the mammoth McLibel trial, including weekly trial updates and the plethora of global anti-McDonald's media coverage it has inspired. Stacks of info on the antics of the Burger giant are also to be found, as well as news of the far and wide activist opposition to its plans for global domination.

Master magicians of the street party, Reclaim the Streets' (<http://www.hrc.wmin.ac.uk/campaigns/rts.html>). web-site is also a click-on must. Their site has a new image library, as well as lyrics on the social ideology of the car' and 'Who needs the great car economy?'. There's an RTS UK events diary, a report on the big M41 bash and a section on 'How to make and use a scaffolding tripod'.

Other road protest web-sites include the A30 (Fairmile et al) site (<http://www.inxpress.co.uk/exfoe/a30/a30.htm>) with latest news and a guided tour round the three camps - Trollheim, Allercombe and Fairmile, and the Third Battle of Newbury site (<http://www.gn.apc.org/newbury>) with pics and all the latest.

There's also a web site for the Wandsworth land occupation for its latest news and statements of intent (<http://www.envirolink.org/orgs/tlio/puregen.html>).

The squatters in the monastery - stars of the 'Monkey Business' feature on page 22 - also have their own web-site packed with pics and aims (<http://www.manchester.com/organisations/monastery/>).

For the latest on Ecstasy, including tablet testing, scientific research, media coverage and associated cultural ramifications, click-on one matey to an informative and extensive site edited by author Nicholas Saunders (<http://www.obsolete.com/ecstasy/>).

Surfers Against Sewage, riding the crest of the Cyber-wave with multiple on-site features including news of their environmental surf circuit 1996 (<http://www.sas.org.uk/>).

The Land is Ours' polished web pages on land issues, latest actions and aims (<http://www.envirolink.org/orgs/tlio/puregen.html>).

The enduring schNEWS posse with their own brand of political news and networking (<http://www.cbuzz.co.uk/schNEWS/>).

Adbusters (<http://www.adbusters.org/adbusters/>) is a hard copy magazine published in Canada by 'professional' art terrorists, the Media Foundation. Describing itself as a magazine of the mental environment, it celebrates creative ways of stealing back that environment from corporate image dictators like Ford, McDonald's, Budweiser and Marlboro. For anyone interested in art activism, its web-site is well worth a click on.

"We will uncool their billion dollar images with uncommercials on TV, subvertisements in magazines and anti-ads right next to theirs in the urban landscape," trumpets its media manifesto.

The site, like the mag, is full of well-made advertising spoofs, subverting and cocking snoops at multi-national marketing. "For every fear there is a product" is how they diagnose the mental malaise fostered and fed upon by commercials. Adbusters are the cavalry arriving just in time.

IT'S THE JEWEL IN THE MUD AWARD

This issue's gems from the media mire

THE WESTERN MAIL

'DICTATOR'S PILOTS TRAINED IN WALES' thundered *The Western Mail* - the Welsh national newspaper - on its front page on August 2nd.

Journalists Hannah Cleaver and Andrew Buncombe uncovered evidence that Indonesian pilots were trained in the use of Hawk jets by the RAF in Anglesey last year.

Their story ran three days after the acquittal of four women who disabled a Hawk jet at a British Aerospace base in Preston using hammers:

"A senior RAF source told *The Western Mail* that pilots were trained at (RAF) Valley..... He said the personnel were trained in use of the Hawk, a jet aircraft for which British Aerospace has won two supply contracts from the Indonesian Government over the last 15 years..... Independent witnesses have reported seeing Hawks used to bomb and strafe civilians in East Timor.....

".....the RAF source said: 'We do train people from all sorts of countries and recently we have trained Indonesian military personnel'."

Page five of the same edition carries a further article by Andrew Buncombe, headed "The worst case of genocide of all time", explaining the background to Indonesia's invasion of East Timor:

"Human rights observers believe up to 200,000 people

have been killed since the invasion (of East Timor) more than 20 years ago.....The invasion, which resulted in the immediate deaths of 60,000 Timorese, had the tacit approval of the Australians and the Americans..... Today Dili (capital of East Timor) remains a tense and frightened city.....The Indonesian army is supplied by a range of Western countries including Britain."

DAILY MIRROR

At the height of the BSE scare, on August 21st, Andrew Penman wrote an investigative article in the *Daily Mirror* about the state of factory farming in Britain. It is stunning to find such truth in a tabloid:

Under a picture of a strange looking cow runs the caption: 'Cow that proves we've got mad farming disease.'

"This is what cattle looked like before man packed them into intensive farms, filled them with drugs and played God with their genes..... Unless you stick to organic food you will be eating 40 different pesticide residues everyday..... Modern dairy and beef cattle are man-made creations..... A 'man-made' dairy cow may produce 150 pints of milk a day..... the over stretched udders are prone to infections..... 17 million shots of antibiotics are pumped in cow teats every year..... After five or six years a typical dairy cow is a broken animal."

These facts are compared to the pictured cow - from the only wild herd in Britain. It is a cow that does not need drugs, lives for 16 or 17 years and is healthy.

Penman posits organic farming as a solution. He is honest about the drawbacks. Organic farms need 20 per cent more space and the food is more expensive to produce.

But he also points out that Europe produces a surplus of food; and that organic farms are not heavily subsidised by Europe.

"We could do nothing," Penman writes, "or we could admit that intensive farming has abused nature beyond endurance."

The Guardian

Selected extracts from a *Guardian* Society article by prominent gay rights activist, Peter Tatchell, printed on August 29th.

"All the key aspects of homophobic discrimination that existed in 1971 remain on the statute books in 1996, including the bans on gay marriage and gays in the military, and the lack of legal protection against anti-homosexual discrimination in housing and employment. Queer human rights are, self-evidently, far from won. Yet the dominant mood in the gay community nowadays is complacency and apathy.....

"The last two years have been a turning point in gay history, marked by a fundamental shift in values and attitudes.

"The idealism, solidarity

and activism that was so significant in the first 25 years of the post-Stonewall gay psyche is now being superseded by a new gay zeitgeist of consumerism, hedonism, and lifestyleism. This shallow, vain, frivolous, amoral, self-obsessed, commercialised trend in gay culture is not a pretty sight, and no amount of glamorous beefcake in Calvin Klein underwear can disguise its essential ugliness.....

"Given the institutionalised homophobia, the gay community has every right to expect its press to be crusading and campaigning. Instead, some of the pink papers seem more interested in promoting the latest porn video. This sums up the mind shift that has taken place in recent years. Consumerism is the new gay zeitgeist. Entrepreneurs are exploiting the success of activists in making it easier for queers to come out. This greater visibility of gay people has meant we can be more readily identified and targeted as consumers. Big business is cashing in on coming out.....

"Too bad if you're poor. If you haven't got the lifestyle, you aren't a proper gay. The pink pound is proving to be a pink tyranny, resulting in exclusion and alienation.

"Commercialism calls the shots, not civil rights. The gay community is being hijacked by the gay market. Consumption has become more important than citizenship. The dominant values are no longer an altruistic concern about the collective welfare of gay people, but rampant materialism. This isn't freedom. It is a new form of enslavement compounding legal discrimination with economic exploitation. Where will it end? While it has been possible in the past to unite much of the diverse gay community around our common interest in winning human rights, it is impossible to build any sort of sustainable coalition around consumerism.

"This is likely to lead to the fragmentation and demise of the gay community. That would leave us more or less defenceless. Perhaps that's what some people want - passive, gullible, queer consumers?

"It was bound to happen. After years in the too hard basket, corporations are now scrambling to promote themselves to gay and lesbian consumers - a market estimated to be worth over \$40 billion annually."

Ads International - Summer '96

SIC ADS

Cracking an international market is a goal of most growing corporations. It shouldn't be that hard, yet even the big multi-nationals run into trouble because of language and cultural differences. For example...

Scandinavian vacuum manufacturer **Electrolux** used the following in an American add campaign: "Nothing sucks like an Electrolux."

The name **Coca-Cola** in China was first rendered as Ke-kou-ke-la. Unfortunately, the Coke company did not discover until after thousands of signs had been printed that the phrase means "bite the wax tadpole" or "female horse stuffed with wax" depending on the dialect. Coke then researched 40,000 Chinese characters and found a close phonetic equivalent, "ko-kou-ko-le," which can be loosely translated as "happiness in the mouth."

In Taiwan, the translation of the **Pepsi** slogan "Come alive with the Pepsi Generation" came out as "Pepsi will bring your ancestors back from the dead".

Also in Chinese, the **Kentucky Fried Chicken** slogan "finger-lickin' good" came out as "eat your fingers off".

The American slogan for **Salem** cigarettes, "Salem - Feeling Free," translated in the Japanese market as "When smoking Salem, you feel so refreshed that your mind seems to be free and empty."

When **General Motors** introduced the Chevy Nova in South America, it was apparently unaware that "no va" means "it won't go." After the company figured out why it wasn't selling any cars, it renamed the car in its Spanish markets to the "Caribe".

Ford had a similar problem in Brazil when the Pinto flopped. The company found out that Pinto was Brazilian slang for "tiny male genitals". Ford pried all the nameplates off and substituted Corcel, which means horse.

When **Parker Pen** marketed a ballpoint pen in Mexico, its ads were supposed to say "It won't leak in your pocket and embarrass you". However, the company's mistakenly thought the spanish word "embarazar" meant embarrass. Instead the ads said that "It won't leak in your pocket and make you pregnant".

An American t-shirt maker in Miami printed shirts for the spanish market which promoted the Pope's visit. Instead of the desired "I Saw the Pope" in Spanish, the shirts proclaimed "I Saw the Potato".

Chicken-man **Frank Perdue's** slogan, "It takes a tough man to make a tender chicken," got terribly mangled in another Spanish translation. A photo of Perdue with one of his birds appeared on billboards all over Mexico with a caption that explained "It takes a hard man to make a chicken aroused".

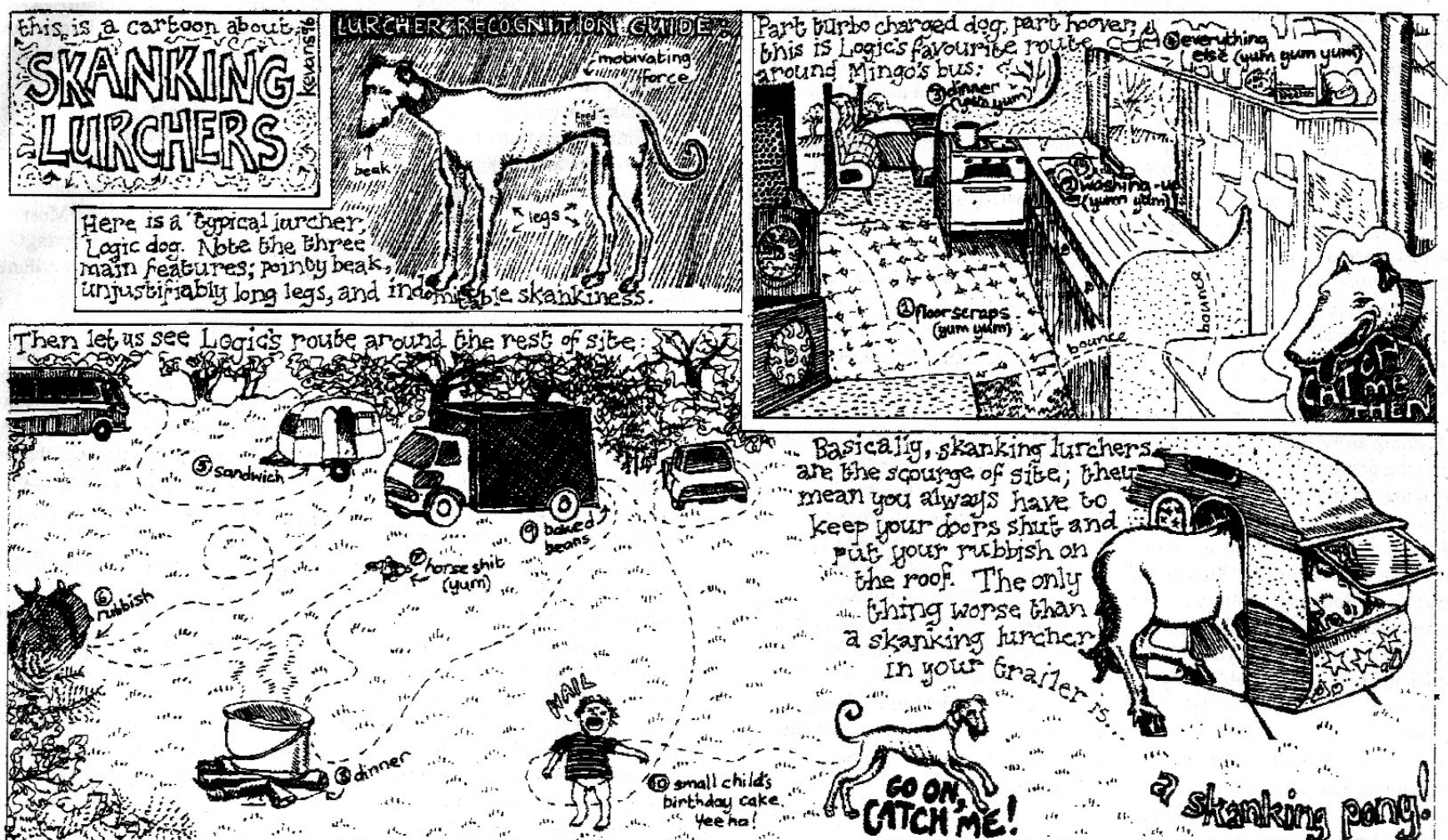
Hunt-Wesson introduced its Big John products in French Canada as Gros Jos before finding out that the phrase, in slang, means "big breasts". In this case, however, the name problem did not have a noticeable effect on sales.

Colgate introduced a toothpaste in France called Cue, the name of a notorious porno mag.

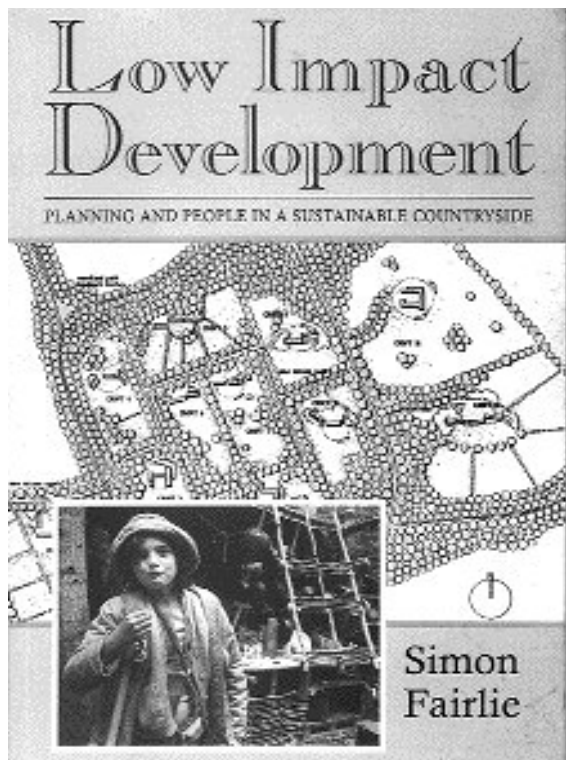
In Italy, a campaign for **Schweppes** Tonic Water translated the name into Schweppes Toilet Water.

Japan's second-largest tourist agency was mystified when it entered English-speaking markets and began receiving requests for unusual sex tours. Upon finding out why, the owners of **Kinki Nippon Tourist Company** changed its name.

Of all the things I've lost, I miss my mind the most...



Reviews



‘Low Impact Development Planning and People in a Sustainable Countryside’

by Simon Fairlie

pub 1996 Jon Carpenter,
The Spendlove Centre, Charlbury, Oxfordshire, OX7 3PG
ISBN 1 897766 25 4 Price £10

You know Simon Fairlie’s on your side from the very first sentence in his book. “Planning is boring”.

There are few people who would relish getting their heads round British planning law and it is perhaps for this very reason why planning has until now been an exclusive preserve. Fairlie comes to the rescue with a book that is so accessible and so fluid, you could read it just for the read.

I actually read half the book whilst stuck on a bus in a traffic jam during a tube strike. I looked up to see all around me fuming at the delays and realised that I’d been sat on the top of the No15 for two hours.

For a start Fairlie’s interest in planning arose from necessity. Having previously lived in a van, making his living as a stonemason and co-editor of the magazine *The Ecologist*, he threw in his lot with the bender settlement at Tinkers Bubble in Somerset. Thus his investigations into British planning law comes delivered to your doorstep by a layman admirably fulfilling a mission to learn and explain.

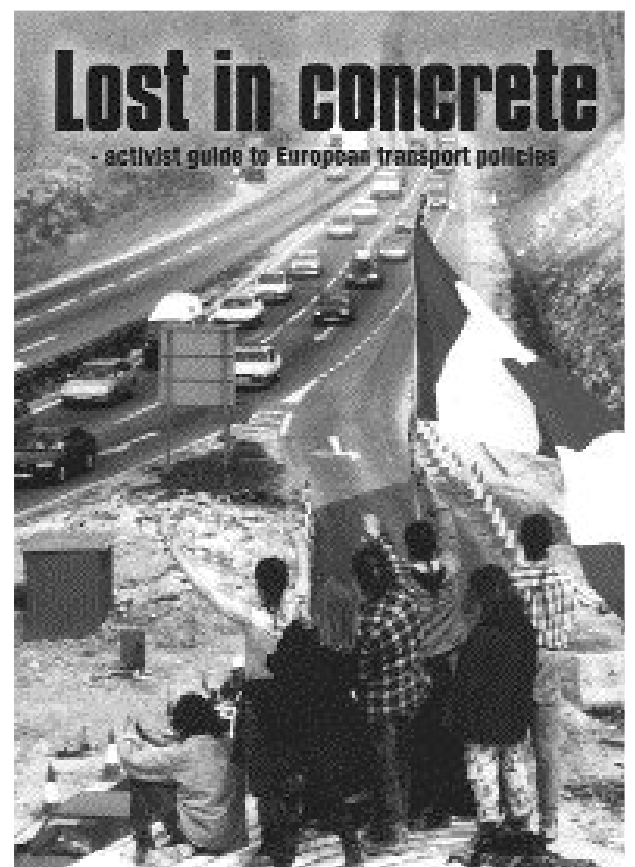
And without a doubt the mission is a needed one. For all the trouble that travelling people have received over the last ten years,

settlement on a piece of land in a bender, tipi, tent, caravan or yurt has become the sought-after prospect for many. It is also a preferred way of living for those wishing to explore permaculture and small scale organic agriculture.

The trouble of course is that even if you own a piece of land, you are not allowed to live on it for more than 28 days without obtaining planning permission. Whilst acknowledging that such planning laws prevent the over-development of the countryside, Fairlie points out that the situation is biased against those on low income, who would relish the opportunity to live close to and respectfully on a piece of land.

Thus Fairlie dives into the planning mire, and comes out the other side with advice on what it all means and how to go about getting it. In the process, he describes examples of modern day settlements like Kingshill, Tir Penrhos Isaf, Hockerton, Tipi Valley, West Harwood, Holtsfield and of course Tinkers Bubble, exploring the practicalities of relations with the locality and taking care of land. Never in the field of explanatory conflict has a book so accessible been written about a subject so potentially boring.

Jim Carey



‘Lost in Concrete - activist guide to European transport policies’

pub ASEED Europe ‘96

A SEED Europe, PO Box 92066, 1090 AB, Amsterdam, The Netherlands.
Tel: 31 20 668 2236. email: aseedeur@antenna.nl

This book scrutinises European Union transport policies and traces how they have collided to produce the nightmare of Trans-European Networks (TENs).

It looks at the effects of TENs in terms of the decimation of communities, increased incidence of pollution and related asthma; the likely contribution of car emissions to climate change; loss of areas of natural beauty etc etc.

Lost in Concrete does not pretend to be objective. It presents an articulate, well-argued case for not building huge trans-European road networks and looks positively to encouraging and funding alternative means of transport and alternative (local) ways of organising economies so as to reduce the amount of traffic on existing roads.

This is not merely an anti-roads rant. It is well-researched, and with contributions from amongst others Hungary, Greece, Denmark, Belgium and France, a plethora of issues and angles are covered including its effects on our use of space and time. The book asks intelligent and as yet unanswered key questions about the philosophy of huge-scale road building and its relationship to the market economy.

In ‘Life on the Edge’ Tim Richardson calls for an urgent assessment of TENs, arguing that for starters we need to know exactly to whom a single market will bring economic benefits. He notes that contrary to its own logic, the TENs programme is recognised (even it

would seem by the European Commission) as highly likely “to drive a wedge between the single market and regional economies”.

‘Bulldozing Jobs’ by Oliver Hoedeman challenges the notion that road building equals job creation and community benefits; and ‘The Culture Killers’ by Ann Doherty examines the ways in which cultural identities in village and farm-based communities throughout Europe are being crushed by the promotion of ‘efficient’ and ‘cheap’ forms of transporting goods.

In ‘Time Pollution’, an excellent chapter on the effects of TENs on our use of space and time, John Whitelegg and Emma Must conclude that rather than saving time TENs will actually “contribute to the modern condition of ‘not having enough time’, the sense of time being squeezed.” Whitelegg and Must also note that whilst access to expensive motors and the price of flights has given the rich wide access to the rest of the country and the world, “the radius of activity ...of many unemployed residents in London or elderly people in Alabama... may be no greater than of urban residents 100 years ago.”

With a really nice A4 layout; loads of black and white pictures and cartoons from all around Europe; positive suggestions for future policy and useful contacts for action and information, this book’ll put you streets ahead of the road-heads.

Sam Beale

‘Scrapheap Services’

by Michael Landy
Chisenhale Gallery 64, Chisenhale Road, E3
19th June to 4th August ‘96.

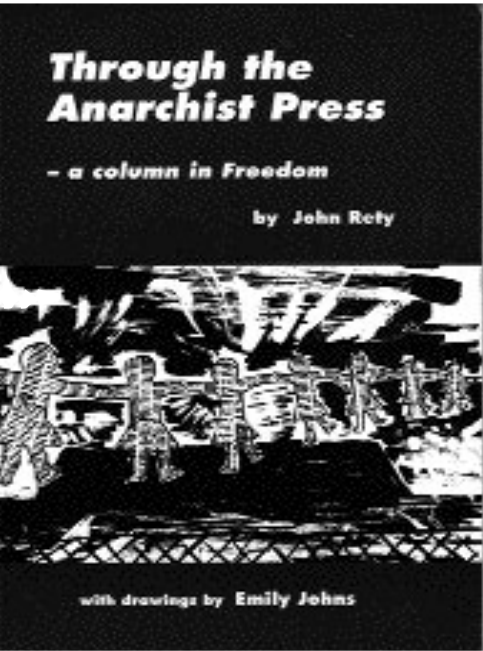
At the Chisenhale Gallery in East London, artist Michael Landy created a chilling and at the same time, disturbingly funny installation, which exposes the sickness of the contemporary corporate ethos in an uncompromisingly direct way. Scrapheap Services is Landy’s cleaning company, a company who aim to rid the land of people who no longer serve a useful purpose to the companies and corporations who run Great Britain PLC. To enter the future envisaged by Scrapheap Services is to enter a future of sterile order and oppressive cleanliness where people are first discarded then disposed of

efficiently and cleanly. Upon entering the gallery through a hospital curtain of heavy duty plastic sheeting, the first thing you notice is the overpowering whiteness and neon brightness of the environment. Landy is using the whiteness of the traditional gallery setting as a metaphor for the sterile future that Scrapheap Services so clinically provide. Once you enter the installation the second thing you notice is the disturbing fact that you are treading on thousands of tiny people. These are the tiny people which Scrapheap Services aim to remove from society. Landy has made these tiny figures out of discarded product packaging, old

take away cartons and empty beer cans. Just as capitalism creates waste packaging it also creates waste people. People are discarded as easily as empty beer cans and who, according to Scrapheap Services, must be efficiently removed. Around the gallery there are a number of Scrapheap Services operatives quietly and efficiently sweeping the tiny people into neat piles ready to be fed into the Vulture. The Scrapheap Services logo is everywhere you look. On the uniforms of the operatives, on the rubbish bags and bins into which the tiny figures are placed, on the corporate video, which sets out the aims and objectives of the company and on the terrifying Vulture itself. Brightly coloured advertising boards clearly outline the benefits of using the company to clean up the waste people from your area and the corporate video which plays on a monitor suspended from the ceiling is a hilarious but deeply troubling

parody of the language and advertising jargon which are all too often employed to give an acceptable public relations front to the unacceptable aspects of our economic system. The centre piece of Landy’s brilliant satire on contemporary corporate excess and the economic cleansing which accompanies such new Right capitalist practices, is the terrifying mechanical people shredder, the Vulture. This huge machine is the final destination of the tiny discarded figures who are fed into the top to emerge cleanly and efficiently shredded. Michael Landy has created a direct yet deceptively complex installation which is funny and at the same time deeply political, without resorting to crude sloganeering. Who says gallery-based art can’t challenge our assumptions and provoke us into new ways of thinking politically. **Martin Denyer.**

Advertisement



‘Through the anarchist press - a column in freedom’

by John Rety
pub Freedom Press - £3.60

While sojourning on a wild Scottish Isle, New Year, 1994, Rety came up with the splendid premise of informing himself only through the Anarchist press, ie through *Freedom*. And so it became his New Year resolution to eschew the “wretched propoganda” of the national press. Rety, who edited the anarchist paper *Freedom* (est 1886) in the sixties, still writes a fortnightly column. And through this, for two years, he kept the paper’s readers up to date with the results of his experiment. Wonderfully illustrated with Emily John’s brooding sketches, the columns, which really turn out to be a diary of Rety’s thoughts and adventures, are collected in this

book (hence the title). Scattered with literary references, quotes, musings, humour, tales and history, the book is at its most interesting when Rety describes contemporary events - Wanstonia, CJB demos, the land occupation at Wisley, nuclear testing on Muroroa etc - and the philosophical trains of thoughts they produce. All, of course, unpolluted by the outpourings of national newspapers. Alternating between optimism, jocularly and outrage, Rety shows a clarity of thought and provides a fine commentary, not just on the last two years of actions, but on the state of the world in general. **Andy Johnson**

Want to contribute to books on Travellers in Europe or Youth Action and the environment?

Alan Dearling is looking for contributions for two books he is compiling. One of his previous books is **A Time to Travel?**: an introduction to Britain’s newer Travellers, which was co-written with Fiona Earle, Helen Whittle, Roddy Glasse and Gubby. The first book of the new projects is provisionally called **No Boundaries**, and it is very much a follow-up to ‘A Time to Travel?’. Alan is collecting material from Travellers who have been travelling in Europe, their stories, pictures, experiences of park-ups, work, dealing with authorities etc. He has already received some accounts from France, Spain and Switzerland but needs much more. He’s keen that the book should be interesting, lively and offer a further nail in the coffin to the media hounds who want to stereotype all Travellers as dole-scrounging crusties. If you have any contributions or experiences to may think relevant please contact Alan at the address below.

The second book is due to be published in May 1997 and called **Youth Action and the Environment**. It is aimed at anyone who works with young people in informal education (youth clubs, workshops etc). Alan and co-writer Howie Armstrong have already assembled a rich variety of material and want to go beyond the ‘plant a tree’, ‘recycle a can’ approach. The book will appeal to young people who want to engage in human rights, animal rights, road protests, alongside more familiar arts projects and conservation work. Road Alert and Earth First! have already supplied interesting material, and extracts from SQUALL and Frontline will be used. If you’ve been involved in anything unusual, innovative or would just like to get a copy of the outline for the book please contact:

Alan Dearling
3 Russell House, Lym Close, Lyme Regis, Dorset DT7 3DE
Tel/Fax: 01297 445024

Reviews

Chunes

Reviews by DJ Seed & the Bridge



From the title 'Sequence Me' you might imagine **The Electric Groove Temple's** new CD was gonna turn out all formula midi-feed and just press go. But from the word off you realise this to be an erroneous assumption.

Instead this seriously recommended skien of funky house, groove and dub is spiced with jazzy overlays in a soundscape of shifting beats that never threatens loop boredom.

Much happiness is it to find that this band sound as good live as they do on their well produced studio album. As seen at various underground parties and caught by meself at this year's Harvest Fayre, this outfit are a largely undiscovered treasure for anyone who likes their dance music to be musically interesting.



Also storming this year's Harvest Fayre were the excellant **Dub Merge**, a West Midland's dub funk'n'rap outfit.

Once again both live act and recorded offering are pukka, with their recent 'Wake Up' album packed full of phat bass lines and

seriously wikid rapping. Whilst too many UK rappers regurgitate US ego rants, Dub Merge take stance with current UK issues onna politically conscious tip. Applying rapid fire funky verbals to their freedom fighter grooves, this band add a much awaited musical cutting edge to the meeting of the diatribes.



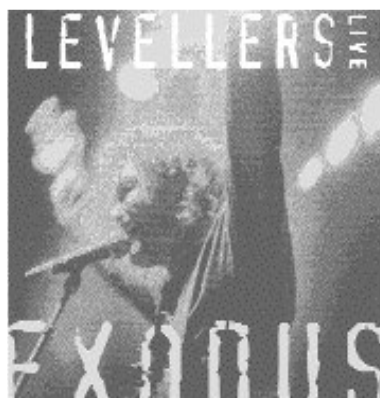
Imaginative dance requirements are also fulfilled by the **Storm from the East** jazz jungle compilation recently released on Moving Shadow records.

Remarkable as it may seem, the East in this case refers to Norfolk, with the entire rosta of junglists featured on this corking drum'n'bass comp hailing from the flatlands of East Anglia. And you'll find few better examples of the emerging possibilities of the British jungle explosion than this album, complete with bass lines phat enough to suck. Come now **E-Z Rollers** and me favourite tune - Walk This Land though there's a few to choose from.



With less beats and more ambience enters 'Emergence' from **Surge**, a new

band on the small Diversity Recordings label. For anyone bulking at the potential wall paper boredom of the term ambience, bear in mind that Surge's music differs with layered imagination, periodically kicking up the soundscape with on yer marks get set go, beat take offs.

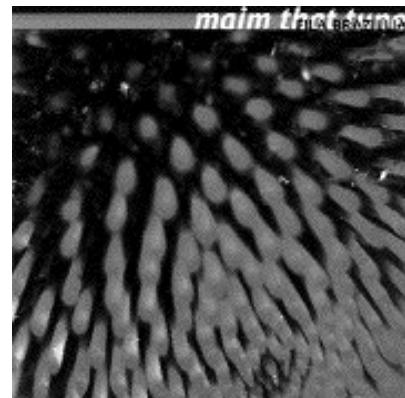


As you can read in the news pages, Luton tribal warriors, the **Exodus Collective**, inaugurated a new era of direct action by boogie boxing **The Levellers** new single in the middle of a full Luton Borough Council meeting over the summer. The single, put out as a four track live EP entitled 'Exodus', runs: "We the Collective with an open heart/We the solution should be respected" and was inspired by the stance of the Lutonite lions.

Originally released as an album track on their 'Zeitgeist' album, me thinks this is the best Leveller's toon yet; with a driving bass line and a lyrical relevancy that puts yer neck hairs on end. For fans of socially relevant lyrics, the fourth track on the CD is also well worth a mention. 'PC Keen' is named after the infamous PC Malcolm-too-Keene-by-half, overlord of the Operation Snapshot traveller surveillance operation.



Also in this issue's review bag on the pukka folk music tip, comes the 'Days of Pure Enjoyment' cassette self-released by a musical duo called **Villan**. This is wicked guitar and fiddle music, a cascade of funky gypsy business and well recommended.



Just time for a quick mention for **Fila Brazilia's** 'Maim that Tune' album recently released on Pork Recordings.

Sampled amidst the album's inventive funk up trip-hop, is a glorious stand-up comedy sketch about the advertising industry. "If any one here is in advertising or marketing then kill yourself - no seriously, if you are then do. You are Satan's spawn filling the world with vile and garbage, you're fucked and you're fucking us. And I know what they're thinking now - they're thinking I'm going for the anti-marketing dollar cos there's a good comedy market there. But I say Stop putting the dollar sign on every godamn fucking thing on this planet." Hear, here, I say, with music being the blood of rebellion; and commerce a chain that ties the tongue.

Dub Merge 'Wake Up' CD from Dubmerge, 'Woofin', PO Box 12, Worcester, WR2 1YQ £10 plus an A5 padded envelope and 50p stamp
Villan 'Days of Pure Enjoyment' Gavin 0181 678 0050

The Electric Groove Temple 'Sequence Me' CD £10 (includes P&P) from Trichone Records, PO Box 2210, Reading RG2 0YY
The Levellers 'Exodus' China Records 111, Frithville Gardens, London W12 7LG

Fila Brazilia 'Maim that Tune' Pork Recordings PO Box 18, Kingston Upon Hull, HU1 3YU

Surge 'Emergence' Diversity Recordings, distributed by 3MV-Vital on 0171 378 8866

Storm from the East - Moving Shadow PO Box 2251, London W1A 1YQ



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

Larry O'Book Plug

Dear SQUALL,

In April 1993, I co-wrote a booklet 'A Lie Too Far', in which I speculated, based on the activities of a self-confessed M15 asset, Tim Hepple, that "as countering militant animal rights activism is seen as an 'anti-terrorist activity', responsibility is held by M15 overall". I followed up this assertion by further research published in *At War With the Truth* covering this aspect (amongst others) of this assets activity and those of his part-controllers, the M15 disinformation-conduit *Searchlight* magazine. I further elaborated on M15's interest in the Green Movement in 'Turning Up the Heat: M15 After the Cold War'. This theme has subsequently been returned to by me in the magazines *Head* (issue 6) and *Frontline* (issue 3). In this last piece I give constructive suggestions to anti-roads activists as to how to counter such malign intervention.

With this background in mind, I (almost) found amusing the two pieces in SQUALL 13 on such matters: the first by Jim Carey even takes the title of my book, and passages of it seemed familiar, very familiar indeed to me. I am well-used, however, to unacknowledged plagiarism of my research. For while part of my message is palatable indeed to the 'radical intelligensia',

the rest of it is very uncomfortable. I refer to the fact that M15 (and Special Branch) intervention in the Green Movement, including the use of agents provocateur is not so much a thing for the future as something that is already happening. Of course tame journalistic collaborators of the secret state, sometimes acting in good faith, will either not know (because they haven't been told!) or not admit such. The logic goes, because the activities of Tim Hepple and Stuart McCullough (to name but two) were thwarted, in part by my own role, then the spectacular court cases that were meant to occur either didn't, or produced the wrong result from the state's point of view (eg. the framing of Nina Wilson in Belfast). Thus what the bourgeois media chooses to regard as 'proof' (court cases or self-admissions by the agencies concerned) has not been forthcoming. That does not excuse, however, the lack of mention of the very heavy conspiracy cases involving animal rights activists and *Green Anarchist* (targeted initially by Hepple & Co) that are still on-going. It really is absurd for Neil Goodwin to merely see American style dirty tricks 'on the horizon'. If he lowers his gaze, he will see such is going on now: if he cares to look in the right places, and ask the right questions of the right people.

Larry O'Hara

Neil Goodwin replies:

If, as O'Hara suggests, I lower my gaze I simply see environmental activists getting on with it rather than getting bogged down in ultimately disempowering conspiracy theories. O'Hara's reference to dirty tricks 'going on now' no doubt includes recent raids on Green Anarchist, a newspaper O'Hara has well-known associations with. As the central purpose of my article was to counter creeping notions of abandoning NVDA in favour of violence by demonstrating the processes by which the State is attempting to shoe-horn the movement into that untenable and alienating position, and how such a shift would serve its purposes and not ours, would it not muddy the water somewhat to cite Green Anarchist as an innocent recipient of big brother's dirty tricks given that paper's flirtation with the fantasy of violent revolution?

Jim Carey replies:

Larry O'Hara must be used to unacknowledged plagiarism if he includes articles like mine in that bracket. For I have never read any of his books.

Watts wrong with noise?

Dear SQUALL,

First, well done on SQUALL 13, the best issue so far of those I've read.

Excellent range of stuff, letters interesting (especially Penny Rimbaud) and generally just really good.

However, "More Criminal Sanctions Against Music and Parties", SQUALL 13, p 46, is an article that I think demands response.

In 1991 my wife and I moved into a terraced house in Luton. We imagined it would be a normal house with few or no problems. It turned out that next door two mentally ill people lived - a mother and her eldest son - and thanks to that wonderful thing 'Care in the Community' the town council was not remotely interested in helping them. So we were subjected to a barrage of noise through the wall, everything from hammering and bludgeoning to unbelievably loud radio, hi-fi and TV noise, not to mention threats of violence, damage to our house and car and of course, indescribable mental stress.

After two and a half years of hell we managed to sell up and move at a loss of £10,250. The two bank loans we were forced to get we are still paying off.

Now I mention all this because I think the article "More Sanctions Against Music and Parties" greatly oversteps the mark when it comes to simple respect for others. Despite the fact that a bunch of fools in the House of Commons are making this new legislation, we have to consider a few facts.

The vast majority of people in Britain do not live

in detached houses. I'd guess most of your readers don't. It is surely simple decency to be reasonably quiet between the hours of eleven and seven. Sound travels with deadly speed through wood and brick. And I am just one of many who can testify to the devastating results of excessive noise.

You ask what sort of democracy we live in. The fact that dance music is the nation's favourite is irrelevant if it is causing distress. The nation's favourite food would seem to be junk food, as typified by McDonald's if present trends are anything to go by, but nobody would complain if there was a crackdown on distress caused by excessive bad food.

What I'd like to hear is more discussion of such facts as it is now being possible to buy a hi-fi system rated at 800 watts for £600.

Catalogues and shops routinely sell stuff rated at not much less. Why? Who the hell needs 800 watts? Or 500? Or 200? This is capitalism gone mad. The sheer power of these bloated systems is causing people who live in flats and terraced housing in particular, mental anguish. We cannot ignore this by caricaturing old ladies out in the cold and rain. They are human too. In 1993 we had to spend one night in a local hotel because the noise was so bad. And that was after the police had been to try and get us a bit of quiet...

So come on, let's

The Post Bag

consider each other. It's not always easy to live in proximity. Sleep deprivation after all is a form of torture.

Parties are cool. Loud music is cool. This is a musician speaking. But there are limits.

**Steve Palmer,
Bedfordshire**

Bash 'em in kids

Dear Squall,

No one should be surprised when our enemies attempt to disguise or distort our history. But what irks us Kids is when our supposed allies do the same, when struggles such as the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa or in Sixties America are censored and edited to become victories for 'Non Violence', with those who (literally) fought for those victories marginalised or forgotten. Dinah Murray's letter (SQUALL 13) suggests they're already trying to do this for the Poll Tax.

Those who pursue this twisted line of argument usually try to pretend the Poll Tax campaign was entirely peaceful until the Trafalgar Square riot. Murray concedes there may have been "minor rioting".

In fact there were widespread protests and clashes right at the start when Councils set the local Poll Tax rate. In Brighton the Council Chamber was occupied for several hours! It's likely these actions gave many the confidence they needed to non-pay. Without such actions the 'direct inaction' of stay-at-home non payment Murray triumphs would have been broken by media lies about low non-payment rates. Still apart, none of us would have been any the wiser.

Murray becomes particularly ludicrous by claiming the Trafalgar Square riot "just gave a good cause a bad name". The media had been rubbishing the campaign all along, claiming everyone was a dupe of the Militant and the like! Of course, after the riot they claimed anyone who continued to non-pay "supported the violence". Opinion polls of the time and continuing high non-payment rates suggested many did. And of course the

'Poll Tax Riot' booklet and other sources show many 'non-political' types joined in the fight-back on the day. Perhaps people have more sense that Murray credits them for.

One other thing, if the Tories hadn't done the dirty on Thatcher and scrapped the Tax there'd have been teams of bailiffs up and down the country trying to nick people's stuff. If that had happened, should we have stood by and let it for the sake of saintly 'non-violence'?

Most insidious of all this is the attempt to portray the debate as between some polarised positions of 'Violence' vs. 'Non-Violence'. The anti-Poll Tax campaign was not split between a pacifist majority and a battle-minded minority (who were all presumably paying the tax, so as not to join a non-violent protest?). neither was it won in one day of rioting, or by one strand of the campaign. People just did whatever worked - and didn't get hamstrung by ideology along the way.

Of course, the Poll tax campaign wasn't perfect. It didn't win an amnesty, it was mostly dominated by Militant etc etc. But Murray's confusion suggests many campaigners today could learn a lot from its lessons...

**Bash Street Kids
Brighton**

Spikey Vs Fluffy

Dear SQUALL

Oh no, not the fluffy/spikey "debate" again!

As someone who was actively involved in the anti-Poll Tax struggle, I find the whole argument about Trafalgar Square/the Poll Tax/"violence" in previous Squalls absurd.

The first question is whether the Poll Tax was really defeated? If you look at how much more tax the poor pay now, how much less we get for it, how much the political and financial autonomy of local government has been crushed, it is hard to see anything that could be called a victory.

But what was a massive

victory was the movement itself, the involvement of millions of people in everything from simply not paying to fighting the cops, supporting those arrested and jailed (despite attempts by the state, media and "leaders" of the movement to marginalise them), going to prison with pride or moving on to avoid the bailiffs, fighting in court and publicising scams, defences....Without all this the Poll Tax would soon have become just another bill to not pay for as long as possible, another individual problem rather than an act of solidarity and strength.

The different battles turned the Poll Tax into a focus of resistance for millions, a symbol of all that was sick about the state. The Battle of Trafalgar did not happen because some people decided that a riot would stop the Poll Tax, but because people had been pushed too far, and were attacked again in a situation where we had the strength to hit back hard. Is it possible to look at the scaffold pole going through the cop car window without thinking of the Battle of the Beanfield when hundreds of cops did the same to travellers' families? Revenge is sweet and solidarity is beautiful.

We spend our lives taking shit and humiliation, holding back the anger, covering up the despair and forgetting our needs because we can't afford them and we have to get up in the morning for another round. Single issues and causes change nothing unless they offer us the strength and opportunity to get back a bit of our lives, dignity, solidarity, and then there's going to be explosions because our needs are more than just to stop the Poll Tax, JSA, CJA, Asylum Bill, nukes....and because we're sick of having to leave our own needs and lives out of our struggles, as well as our daily existence.

We also need more than to dance, to have little corners where we can do our own thing. The Dance has become a desperate attempt to escape, to find Fun in a fun-destroying world, and when the music stops we all return to our seats. The Dance of Trafalgar Square

changed lives, offered hope and showed new possibilities, and we need to find new dances where the joy of life, of ourselves and others, doesn't end with the intrusion of the "real world" - dances that take over the land, computers and machines and use them for our needs and lives instead of as tools to force us to work. There are times when our dances can't take up bricks and bottles because we aren't always strong enough (and sometimes there are better means), but when we can we have to, to break the violence of poverty, misery, oppression and humiliation, to reclaim our bodies and our world which are tired out and constrained by exploitation.

We are beautiful, we are strong and our dance will remake the world in our own image.

No, Trafalgar Square did not defeat the Poll Tax, but it was a step toward our liberation.

**Myk
London**

Suicidal Tendencies

Dear SQUALL,

In response to Neil Goodwin's *Green Terrorism*? I's like to say a couple of things.

When are people going to stop patronising the fuck out of some kind of sub-species called 'little old ladies', cunning disguised as 'elderly ladies' by our Neil? Women just can't stomach any more of this banal slop.

Also, I can explain the 'suicide attacks as a tactic to halt road construction contractss' (leaked by senior Special Branch officers to *Contract*, the construction industry's weekly journal).

Simply, this linguistic trap transfers the onus of blame for any death or injury from a machine operator, or agent of the bailiff, onto the person who gets in the way of any so called legitimate work. Be this up a tree, in front of a digger or, as in the case of Jill Phipps, in front of a live exports lorry.

In the very early days of the A30 road protest I had a tree felled directly on top of me and legged it out of the way just in time.

I tried to bring charges unsuccessfully, with the contractors saying that I'd run into the path of the falling tree obviously an early and unsuccessful attempt at a suicide attack.

Another change in tactics has come from the Highways Agency. They have posted notices around Allercombe, Trollheim and Fairmile, the three A30 sites due for eviction, says something like this:

"This is Highways Agency land. Trespassers have committed illegal and dangerous acts. For your own safety leave immediately."

In this way I believe they hope to, at least legally, clear themselves of any blame for injury or deaths during evictions.

So watch out for getting twatted and then being told you were gagging for it.

Perhaps it takes a woman to see through that one.

In love and sisterhood,

**Angel Koyunti
Somerset**

No battle in the Beanfield

Dear SQUALLists SQUALLEes, and SQUALlettes,

It was at an early Festival that people decided to build Stonehenge.

For the record, when on June 1st 1985 Thatcher's police and 'specials' charged the hippy convoy in a grass field near Stonehenge, many tried to escape through the beanfield. If any one of the hundred-ish convoy drivers had wanted a 'battle' then he/she could've killed cops truncheoning windows-squashed like woodlice between anuverbuses at 40 m.p.h. - but not one of us did - for all our hypocrisystems we were a Peace Convoy.

May 1997 maybe Westminster elections - perhaps they'll Con us again - else a hung parliament, Lib/Lab/Welsh/Scots, Rainbow Alliance, Glenda Jackson PM?, a new age of consensus, justice, trust, compassion...

...and a glorious summer solstice sunrise...

**DiceGeorge@Phreak.inter
media.co.uk**

CONTACTS

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 week day. Tel: 0171 359 8814.

Advance Party - “sound advice” 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: jimone@sypte.co.uk*

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.

A30 Action! - direct action against the A30 bypass in Devon. *POBox 6, Ottery-St-Mary, East Devon, EX11 1YL*. Tel: 01404 815 729.

Camcorder Action Network - centre for alternative media. Help produce the excellent Undercurrents news video. Tel: 01865 203 663.

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.

Campaign for Freedom of Information - upholding the rights of all to freely access information which affects their lives. Working for legislative changes, public accountability and against dodgy official secrecy. *88 Old Street, London EC1 9AX*.. Tel: 0171 253 2445. Fax: 0171608 1279.

Centre for Alternative Technology - “tools and devices which work with nature rather than against it”. Seven acre visitor complex where you can see sustainable technologies and practices in action. *Machynlleth, Powys, Wales SY20 9AZ*. Tel: 01654 702400. Fax: 01654 702782. email: cat@gn.apc.org
http://www.foe.co.uk/CAT

Compassion in World Farming - lobby group for humane farming practises. *Eve Hodson, 23 Dulverton Mansions, Grays Inn Road, London WC1*. Tel: 0171 837 0284.

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.

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. *PO Box 522, Sheffield S1 3FF*.

Do or Die - Earth First! publication packed full of excellent reading - well worth investigating. Available from, *South Downs EF! Prior House, Tilbury Place, Brighton, E. Sussex*.

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. Their

“Action Update” contains information on actions and local groups. *Earth First! PO Box 9656, London N4 4JY*. Tel: 0171 561 9146.

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*.

Exodus Collective - ‘A movement of Jah People’. Seriously active collective creating community, housing and regularly putting on top dos. Bringing life back to Luton. *Long Meadow Community Farm, Chalton Cross, Sundown Rd, Luton Beds*. Tel: 01582 508 936.

Faslane Peace Camp - Permanent peace camp outside Clyde submarine base, 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.

Festival Eye - An excellent mag that keeps on running. The latest issue contains news on travellers, Scottish festivals, road protests, Stonehenge. Lots of good pics, letters and comment and the festival listing. A must at £2.00 (plus A4 SAE) from: *BCM Box 2002, London WC1N 3XX*.

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.
CamFIN - c/o Arjuna, 12 Mill Road Cambridge CB1 2AD.
EFFIN - c/o York, The Coffee Bar Grassroots, 58 Charles Street, Cardiff.
GuilFIN - PO Box 217, Guildford, Surrey.
MaidstoneFIN - PO Box 263, Maidstone, Kent.
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.
Oxfend - Box a, 111 Magdalen Rd, Oxford.
RatFink - 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.
Children'sFIN - c/o Brambles Housing Co-op, 82 Andover Street, Burngreave, Sheffield S3 9EH.

Free Tibet Campaign (Formerly Tibet Support Group) - 9 *Islington Green, London N1 2XH*. Tel: 0171 359 7573.

Freedom Network - Dishes out info on NVDA actions and events. Main Tel: 0171 582 3474. Action line: 0171 793 7343

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 on-the-case and vital group: 7 *Benedict Street, Glastonbury, Somerset BA6 9NE*. Tel: 01458 832371.

Frontline - a well on it magazine covering Travellers, parties, protests, animal rights and more. Available from: *Frontline, Victoria Road, Yarmouth, Isle of Wight PO41 0QW*. Tel: 09762 36216.

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. Donations gratefully accepted: *PO Box 5, Lost-withiel, Cornwall, PL22 0YT*. Tel: 01726 850500.

Gypsy Council for Education, Culture, Welfare and Civil Rights - campaigning for gypsies. 8, *Hall Road, Averley, Essex*. Tel: 01708 868986.

HHH Video Mag - non-profit making anarcho video co-operative. Currently available: Anarchy in Hackney, film of a corking week of events in the borough. Includes: Ken Loach interview, anarchist football and McDonald's picket. *HHH, PO Box 888, 10 Martello St, London E8 3PE*. email:

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.

Hunt Saboteurs Association - national umbrella for local groups. Very active on all fronts. Action and information - get involved. For info on local group near you: *HSA, PO Box 1, Carlton PDO, Nottingham*. Tel: 01159 590 357.

Institute of Race Relations (IRR) - educational charity. Collects and disseminates information about racism throughout the world and publishes the excellent European Race Audit quarterly: 2-6 *Leeke Street, Kings Cross Road, London WC1 9HS*. Tel: 0171 837 0041.

Justice? - committed activist networking group and producers of ‘Schnews’, wikid weekly newsheet keeping us all up to date with happenings as they happen. c/o *On The Fiddle, PO Box 2600, Brighton, E. Sussex*. Tel: 01273 685913. *e-mail: Justice@intermedia.co.uk*

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.

League Against Cruel Sports - Campaigning against hunting, shooting and other unspeakable pursuits. Publish *Wildlife Guardian* quarterly. 83-87 *Union Street, London SE1 1SG*. Tel: 0171 403 6155. Fax: 0171 403 4532.

Legal Defence & Monitoring Group - provide legal observers whomonitor police actions on demos and attend related court cases. Offer training and support. Essential service always in need

of volunteers and funds. *BM Box HAVEN, London WC1X 3NN*. Tel: 0181 802 9804.

Letslink UK - a network of Local Exchange Trading Systems based on the barter of locally available skills and services for non-currency based credits. Local group contacts, workshops, literature and advice available. 61 *Woodstock Road, Warminster, Wiltshire BA12 9DH*. Tel: 01985 217871.

Liberty - National Council for Civil Liberties. Mainly media and lobbying. *Liberty, 21 Tabard Street, London SE1 4LA*. Tel: 0171 403 3888.

London Animal Action - campaigning on local animal rights issues. Organise actions against fur trade, animal circuses etc. Tel: 0171 837 7557.

Manchester Freedom Network - Networking information on events and DIY actions in Manchester. 9 *Otterburn Close, Hulme, Manchester M15*. Tel: 0161 232 1598

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.

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*.

No M11 Link Road Campaign - NVDA against the M11 extension. *C/O Wanstead Environmental Centre, The High Street, London E11*. Tel: 0181 518 8222.

Ploughshares Support Network - committing acts of disarmament using household hammers. Inspired to fulfill the prophecy of Isaiah (2:4): “They shall beat their swords into ploughshares”, Ploughshares women have carried out over 50 disarming actions on warheads/planes worldwide.Box X, 111 *Magdalen Road, Oxford OX4 1RQ*.

Public Law Project - national charity aiming to improve access to public law remedies like judicial reviews for those who can't afford them/are discriminated against. Recent cases include Kingshill and the precedential Walsden District Council decision. 17 *Russell Square, London WC1B 5DR*. Tel: 0171 467 9800

Road Alert - Co-ordinating anti-roads protests across the country. Direct action arm of Alarm UK. Seriously excellent newsletter, seriously active NVDA organisation. Information, latest news, actions, networking - get involved. *PO Box 5544, Newbury RG14 5FB*. Tel: 01635 521770.

Reclaim The Streets - Highway hold-ups 90s-stylee. Street parties and anti-car culture actions planned for the summer. *RTS, PO Box 9656, Finsbury Park, London N4 4JY*. Tel: 0171 281 4621. email: rts@gn.apc.org

Release - offer confidential advice and carry out research on drugs and the law.

10 - 6 Mon-Fri advice line: 0171 729 9904. At other times: 0171 603 8654.

Small World - non-profit organisation committed to giving media support to campaign groups working on environmental and social justice issues. Produce campaign videos and provide camcorder training. *Small World Productions, 1A Waterlow Rd, London N19 5NJ*. Tel: 0171 272 1394.

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.

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*.

Taking Liberties - newsletter produced by the Anarchist Black Cross, a national network of autonomous groups who support prisoners and their families. c/o *London ABC, 121 Raiton Road, London SE24 0LR*. Tel: 0171 274 6655. Fax 0171 326 0353.

The Land is Ours - Campaign for land rights and free access: *Box E, 111 Magdalen Road, Oxford OX4 1RQ*. Tel: 01865 722016.

The Law - quarterly newspaper published by radical law students. The legal perspective on issues including McLibel, drug-use, road protests, and ploughshares. Available for £4 a year from: *PO Box 3878, London SW12 9ZE*. Tel 0181 673 0062. Fax: 0171 627 5803.

Third Battle of Newbury - the battle rages on. *PO Box 5520, Newbury, Berkshire RG14 7YW*. Tel: 01635 45544. Information line: 01635 550552.

Travellers' School Charity - provides a mobile classroom and distance learning for home-educated travelling children. £5 ‘friend’ subscriptions, newsletters and details of available resources from: *TSC PO Box 36, Grantham, Lincs NG31 6EW*.

Undercurrents - quarterly alternative video magazine. Features, direct action, anti-roads, campaigns, topical eco-issues. Back copies and Undercurrents 5 now available from *Undercurrents Productions, 16b Cherwell Street, Oxford OX4 1BG*. Tel: 01865 203663. Fax 01865 243562. email: underc@gn.apc.org

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*.

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 Raiton Rd, Brixton, London SE24*. Tel: 0171 274 6655.



**“World War Three is a guerilla
information war, with no division
between military and civilian
participation.”**

Marshall McLuhan