

SQUALL

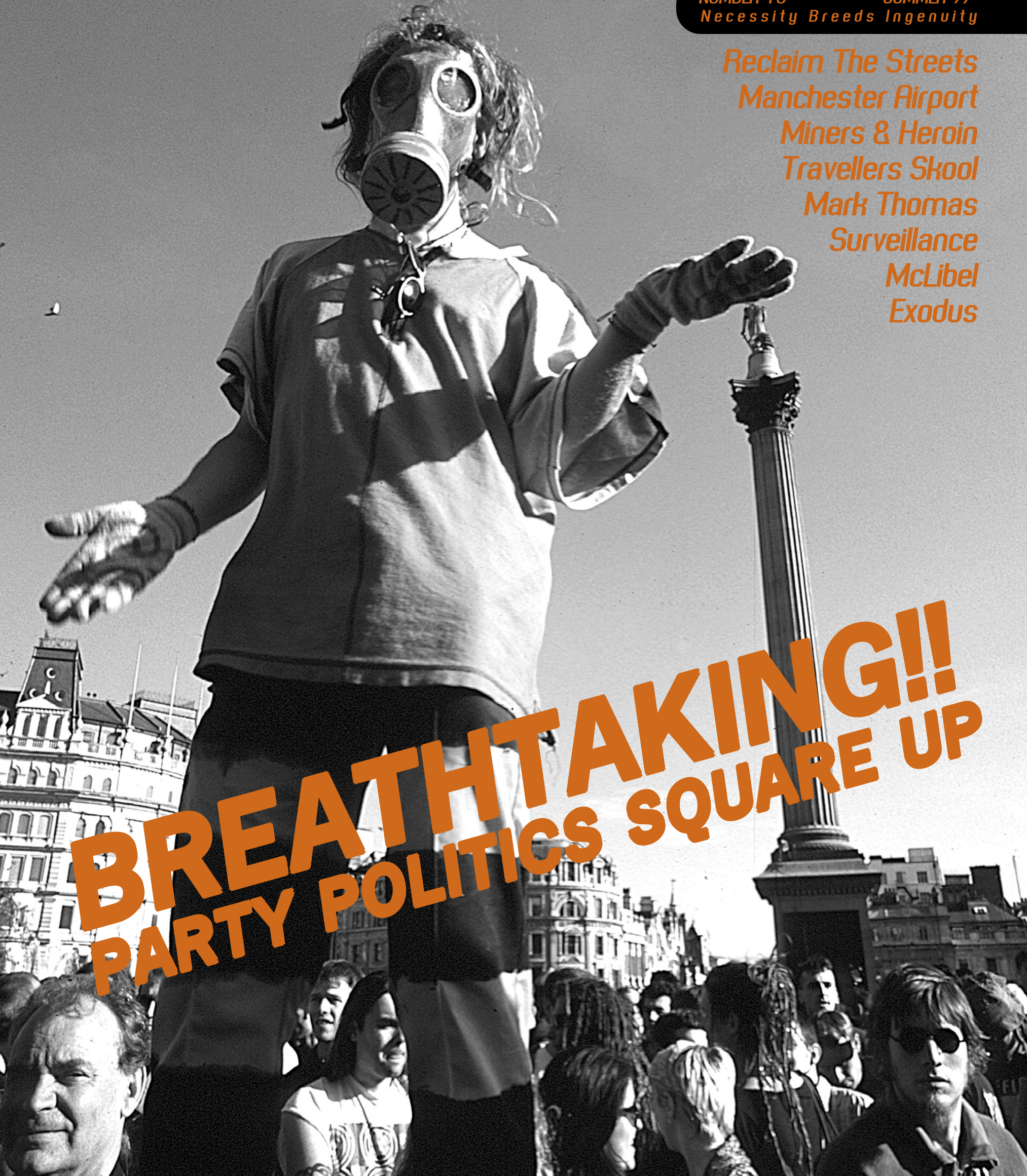
NUMBER 15

SUMMER 97

Necessity Breeds Ingenuity

*Reclaim The Streets
Manchester Airport
Miners & Heroin
Travellers Skool
Mark Thomas
Surveillance
McLibel
Exodus*

BREATH TAKING!!
PARTY POLITICS SQUARE UP







FEATURES

Wrong side of the tracks

Since the pit closures of the early '90s there has been a disturbing increase in heroin use in ex-mining communities. Annie Taylor investigates. page 22

Thomas the prank engine

Sam Beale interviews stand-up comedian Mark Thomas whose television series The Mark Thomas Comedy Product has ruffled a fair few feathers in high places. page 26

Watch with big brother

"To be feared is not to be respected and without respect, community cannot exist." Seamus O'Connor reviews the implications of new police powers of 'intrusive surveillance'. page 28

Aero-dynamics

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The government claims a new spy camera, dubbed Pubemaster 2000 by privacy campaigners, will aid clampdowns on terrorists. Gibby Zobel reviews the implications of its wider uses and abuses. page 34

Harbouring dissent in Merseyside

The Reclaim The Future weekend of action in Liverpool last September brought together DIY groups and sacked Liverpool Dockers. Ally Fogg reviews the event and the history of the dockers' case. page 9

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SQUALL

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Squall Drinks Cabinet

Chancellor of the Exchequer & Minister for Internal Affairs: Jez Tucker.

Minister Without Portfolio: Andy Johnson.

Home Secretary & Chief Whip: Sam Beale.

Ambassador General: Suzie Fenn.

Spin Doctor: Steve Redshaw.

Image Consultant: Nick Cobbing.

Cultural Attache & Pressed Secretary: Jim Carey.

Agriculture Minister: Mr Seed.

Minister for the Interior: Debbie Young.

President of the Bored of Trade: Rachel Cunningham.

Foreign Secretary: (On holiday).

Ministerial Outposts:

Ally Fogg (Manchester); Annie Taylor (Yorkshire); Rachel Wood (out and about).

Select Committee: Ben Skelton.

Photo creditz

Front cover: Dancer at Trafalgar Square – by Nick Cobbing.

Inside front cover: Allercoombe camp, Fairmile, now being cleared for Tarmac (A30) – by Andrew Testa.

Back cover: Occupation of a crane during a site invasion to mark one year since the first evictions of the Newbury camps – by Andrew Testa.

Contents page: Tunnellers at Manchester's Runway 2 – by Ivan Coleman.

much respect and without whom...

Mike, Spag, Tim Luton, Zoe Lelah, Tash, Baghdaddies, HMC, No.22 4 nutrition, Ceri & Cath, Chris Mc, Johnny O', Mz Caroline, Schneidy Ben, Nelson Dilation, Jo Shackleton, Tim Nunn X1000, Ivan Coleman, Stefan Tobler, Spam, Stevie K, Helen St, John Jordan, Golden Kate, Dave Disney, Eka Morgan, Andy, Emma K, Debbie Allen, Big Ben, all the Squall ambassadors, and thanks to everyone who played, helped and came along to Big Up at Roseberrys (except the dodgy bouncer).

The State it's in

A view from *SQUALL* central

Even those not normally disposed to nocturnal marathons popped corks in the cathode-ray flicker, erupting as each of the arrogant mighty fell. Portillo be gone! Maitland be gone! Howard? Ah, if only the Folkstone massive had gone tactical with this one.

The morning after had a surreal summer feel; a dark grey cloud, so familiar it was almost part of the accepted scenery, had lifted.

But for many, the overnight inflation of the feelgood factor was due more to the rout of the Tories than the succession of Tony Blair. Following the last election in 1992, the majority of the electorate were left groaning over their cornflakes when the Conservative's superior media machine steered them back to power. In the five years since, much has changed on the political landscape. The Labour Party now runs a whole Westminster office block solely devoted to media, whilst Labour parliamentarians attend media workshops to hone down their script deliveries.

In many respects the British general election now bears more resemblance to the Oscars than it does to a democratic consideration of political substance; perhaps one of the reasons why Tony Blair, Labour's most proficient media tart in living memory, could sweep into power with such a dramatic landslide.

Ask many people why it was they voted Labour and the most common answer comes back: "To get rid of the Tories".

Those who did vote displayed the most advanced form of strategic voting witnessed in recent times. Portillo lost his seat directly as a result of a last-minute campaign inspired by a poll published in *The Observer* on the Sunday prior to the election. The Enfield and Southgate Liberal Democrats seized the opportunity to unseat the unsavoury Michael Portillo with a voraciously enthusiastic last minute switch of support to Labour. God bless 'em.

In fact this election drew the lowest electoral turnout since 1945, a significant indication of the cynicism with which many people now view the British

electoral process.

Despite emphasis on Tory divisions over Europe as a primary cause of the electorate's dissatisfaction, it is undoubtedly the case that 'sleaze' was a more significant factor; a reflection of the public's weary disgust with the arrogant hypocrisy which comes with too much power for too long. Although most commonly associated with just one MP, Neil Hamilton was but the tip of a sleazy iceberg. And only the tip was exposed.

Although Jack Straw has concurred with the Home Affairs Select Committee recommendation that a full register of freemasons in the police and judicial system should be collated, he has stopped short of agreeing that such a register should be publicly available. And yet it is vital that this powerful network of privileged favouritism is outed if cynicism in British politics and the judicial system is to be properly addressed.

Those who watched draconian legislation like the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act and the Asylum and Immigration Act pass with barely a squeak from the Labour Party, are still waiting to see whether there will now be a political redress. Some defer to the incorporation of the European Convention of Human Rights

into British law as a move which will counter the long list of civil liberty clampdowns introduced by the Tories. However, the extent to which rights to privacy, assembly and a home will be incorporated into the British justice system remains to be seen. What is clear is that any such incorporation would have a long timescale. A Bill of Rights, on the other hand, would establish British human rights in a far more immediate and accountable form. Despite dangling such a Bill before the electorate prior to the election, it has now been pushed down the agenda of priorities.

Significantly, some of the worst blanket erosions of civil liberties such as those contained in the 1997 Police Act, were actually passed with the help of the Labour Party. Indeed, the new Home Secretary, Jack Straw, is the least appetising addition to the new list of political heavyweights. Having swung across Michael Howard's parrot cage for so long, Straw's law and order proposals are barely distinguishable from the Home Office's previous incumbent. The Police Bill, which introduced statutory powers of intrusive surveillance to be used against "conduct by a large number of persons in pursuit of a common purpose", had run out of

Tony Blair wooing children from behind a McDonald's burger bar in Coventry, 1996. Photo: Tom Pilston.

parliamentary time. Jack Straw ignored concerns from the likes of the Law Society, about the unspecific targeting of such powers, and negotiated with Howard to get the new law rushed through before May 1st.

Welfare has been another subject of much concern. The Job Seekers Allowance introduced by the Conservative Government at the end of last year looks set to be taken further by the new Labour Government rather than overhauled. The JSA allows for the cessation of benefits if a claimant's "appearance" or "attitude" "actively militates" against finding a job. Harriet Harman, the new Social Security Secretary, immediately announced she will not allow benefit to be used to support "alternative ways of living".

There are, however, several reasons to be cheerful about the arrival of the Labour Party in government. For a start it has doubled the amount of women in the Commons. British politics has traditionally been dominated by a dismissive and arrogant male dialogue. Frank Johnson, editor of the *The Spectator*, spoke for all disappointed misogynists with his appraisal of the general election: "The result is terrible for the country but great for newspapers. We will





Damages limited

new guidelines put police payouts to £50,000 maximum

AWARDS for damages against the police were limited to £50,000 in February at a successful High Court appeal against a £220,000 pay out to a London hairdresser

Over the last ten years damage awards made against the police by juries are estimated to have cost the Metropolitan Police Force £10 million.

The appeal against the £220,000 award to a London hairdresser, Kenneth Hsu, for assault, unlawful arrest and false imprisonment, was one of two test cases brought by Metropolitan Police Commissioner Sir Paul Condon.

Reducing the award to £35,000 the Court of Appeal set new guidelines for compensation awards, imposing a maximum of £50,000.

Lord Woolf, Master of the Rolls, upheld the £20,000 pay out received by Mr Hsu for basic and aggravated damages but slashed the £200,000 exemplary damages award.

Last year a record amount of compensation was paid in damages by the Metropolitan Police leading Paul Condon to question the use of police resources. But the new limit means record payouts will no longer hit the headlines and cause embarrassment.

The appeal court said that to justify an award of even £25,000 the actions of the police must be "particularly deserving of condemnation".

Mr Hsu was put in a headlock, punched and kicked and had his head prodded with a key after being thrown into the back of a police van.

He was later released from a police cell without any shoes or money and forced to make his own way home.

Setting the guidelines, the appeal court said the starting figure for malicious prosecution should be £2,000; false imprisonment for more than 24 hours was worth £3,000; and the maximum of £50,000 would have to involve an officer of at least the rank of superintendent.

AJ

Limited disclosure

legal experts warn of wrongful convictions due to law change

WRONGFUL CONVICTIONS and miscarriages of justice are likely to increase because of a new law which came into force in April, legal experts say.

The Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act, which became law on April 1st, limits the amount of material the police have to give to defence lawyers.

Previously, because of numerous high-profile miscarriages of justice, the prosecution in any case had to disclose all the information it had to the defence.

Now, for the first time, the defence must return the 'favour' to the prosecution and hand over its information.

But how much information is given to the defence is left to the police officer in charge of the case. The Act says they must hand over anything that undermines the prosecution case. But the decision as to whether information would undermine the defence case is left to the police officer in charge.

"We are going to have miscarriages of justice unquestionably," Michael Zander, professor of law at the London School of Economics, said. "If you leave it to a police officer to decide what he thinks is going to help the defence, it's going to lead to material not being handed over. It's a very worrying development."

AJ



Pictured: Former nationalist MP Bernadette McAliskey, Roisin's mother, delivers flowers to her daughter in Holloway prison during a "serenade for Roisin" on International Women's Day in March.

Roisin McAliskey still held

pregnant Irish prisoner held without charge faces extradition

AN IRISH WOMAN imprisoned since last November without charge was facing extradition to Germany as SQUALL went to press in May.

Despite no evidence being presented in court against her Roisin McAliskey, 25 and heavily pregnant, was denied bail and held on remand as a top-security, category A, prisoner following her arrest in November last year.

Her high-security status meant she was strip-searched twice a day and locked in a permanently lit cell for 23 hours a day, with no rights of association.

Her strip-searches did not end until April, when she was seven months pregnant, after a court reduced her status to medium category A risk.

McAliskey was arrested in connection with an IRA bomb which exploded in a British Army barracks in Osnabruck last year. Her fingerprints were found on a cigarette packet found "in association" with accommodation suspected of being used by the IRA in Germany. According to her solicitor, Gareth Pierce of Birnbergs,

such evidence would not be sufficient to bring a charge.

According to Fuscaillt, the Irish Prisoners Campaign, her doctors believe her baby will be born a month prematurely because of her treatment.

Although the German Government is attempting to extradite her at the invitation of the British Government, it is believed the German authorities are opposing bail.

On May 6th McAliskey was due to appear at Bow Street Magistrates' Court in London where a further application for bail as well as an extradition hearing would be heard. She was too ill to attend and the hearing will now take place after she has given birth.

According to Fuscaillt, the case against her has been crumbling. A German current affairs TV programme about the case interviewed the main witness - the owner of a Holiday Inn where the bombers are supposed to have stayed - who said he didn't recognise McAliskey.

AJ

Cannabis use in prison falls

prisoners switch to heroin as drug test crackdown fails

HUNDREDS OF PRISONERS have switched from cannabis to heroin and opiates since the introduction of drug tests in prisons, increasing the risk of HIV and hepatitis amongst inmates.

Figures which confirm pressure groups' warnings and contradict government denials, also show drug use is higher in private than state prisons.

The Prison Service's mandatory drug-testing programme was introduced in March, since when all prisons must test 10 per cent of inmates every month.

Cannabis can be traced in the blood stream for up to 28 days after ingestion, while opiates are detectable for only 2 to 4 days. With inmates describing heroin as much more readily available and only slightly more expensive, the temptation now to switch from

soft to hard drugs appears strong.

The Home Office denied tests would encourage the use of hard drugs. But results show a rise in the proportion of opiate users in prisons between March and September last year, from 5.01 per cent to 6.35 per cent.

With a prison population of 57,000, the results imply that in six months the numbers using opiates rose from fewer than 2,700 to nearly 3,600, an increase of five per day. In the privately-run Darlington prison, nearly 21 per cent of prisoners tested positive for opiates, compared with less than 10 per cent in comparable state-run prisons.

Prison reform groups have called for Britain to follow Germany and Switzerland, who withdrew cannabis from testing after a similar switch to hard drugs amongst inmates.

AJ



New law to close clubs

Entertainment Licences Act will lead to greater dangers

A NEW LAW giving local authorities the power to close dance clubs without warning was waived through the House of Commons just before the general election. Originally introduced as a private members bill by Barry Legg (ex-Con MP Milton Keynes, South West), the Public Entertainments Licences (Drug Misuse) Act was in fact a Tory government initiative which depended on Labour Party support in order to achieve statutory status in the last five minutes of House of Commons' business.

Paul Flynn (Lab MP Newport West) provided the sole voice of dissent against the Bill in the Commons, arguing that the law was both hypocritical and dangerous.

"This well-intentioned Bill is framed in ignorance. It is written with a great deal of prejudice and it is a poor example of tabloid politics dictated by the tabloid press. It could cause more harm than it would prevent," he said.

With the majority of ecstasy-related deaths in the UK caused by overheating in packed night-clubs, chill-out areas with readily available water and trained drug advisors had become an increasingly encouraged phenomenon. A recent Home Office report called 'Tackling drugs together' states: "Efforts should therefore also be made to protect those who are at risk by a range of responsible measures, often expressed as 'harm minimisation'."

However, the new law now gives

local authorities powers to close a club without warning if police report evidence of drug taking on the premises. With such a commercially disastrous threat hanging over club land, it now seems less likely that clubs will adopt 'harm minimisation' measures, when to do so requires an acknowledgement that drug taking does take place on the premises.

Paul Flynn also told the House of Commons: "By far the most dangerous drugs in circulation are alcohol and tobacco - the drugs of our generation..... I remind the House that in 1994, 585 people were killed by paracetamol; in the same year there were three deaths from ecstasy. That puts the matter in perspective."

However, with no support from the rest of the Labour Party, the only effective opposition to the Bill came from the Liberal Democrats in the House of Lords.

The original drafting of the Bill included drug taking "at or near the club". Arguing that this would mean clubs could be closed if drug taking took place on land over which the club had no control (such as a car park), the Lib Dem's succeeded in forcing an amendment limiting the law to include only land controlled by the club.

The Tory Government initially resisted the amendment but was forced to accept the change in order to get the law onto the statute books before the general election.

JC

Douglas inquiry doubts

family of man who died in police custody free to challenge verdict

PRESSURE on the police to revise methods of restraining suspects mounted last month after the family of Wayne Douglas, whose death in custody triggered Brixton riots in 1995, were freed to challenge the verdict he died accidentally.

Mr Douglas' sister, Lisa, maintains that the inquest jury, if properly directed, should have delivered a verdict of 'unlawful killing'.

Permitting the challenge, the judge, Mr Justice Forbes, said it was arguable that Southwark coroner Sir Montague Levine hadn't properly directed the jury on two possible forms of unlawful killing.

Such a verdict would have been possible if a 'deliberate unlawful dangerous act' had resulted in involuntary manslaughter, or if there had been gross negligence in the way 25-year-old Mr Douglas was treated during or after arrest.

The inquest jury said Mr Douglas had died from heart failure caused by positional asphyxia brought on by stress and exhaustion.

Following a chase Mr Douglas had been held face down, with hands cuffed behind his back, on four separate occasions. Mr Douglas had been arrested for aggravated burglary and officers claimed he had threatened them with a knife.

The solicitor for Mr Douglas' family, Louise Christian, accused the Met of failing to implement seven recommendations made by coroner Sir Montague

Levine at the December inquest, for improved training and research on methods of restraint. Sir Montague Levine had said he was 'appalled' that police training in restraint lasted only a few minutes.

Ms Christian said: 'It was not just Wayne Douglas who died because of asphyxia following arrest. Other young men, in particular black men, are dying for the same reason.'

Ms Christian said: "[Levine's] recommendations are not being implemented. After Wayne Douglas, there have been two more inquests involving deaths due to positional asphyxia. But still there is no implementation."

It was the second time in a month official doubts were raised over coroners' court hearings into the deaths of black men in South London. In March Mr Justice Laws gave the family of Brian Douglas (no relation) permission to challenge another Southwark coroner's court jury verdict of death by misadventure. Brian Douglas died in 1995 after a confrontation with two officers equipped with US-style batons. Both cases will now be subject to full judicial reviews, which could result in fresh inquests.

Meanwhile, the Police Complaints Authority is investigating the death at Harlesden police station, north London, of another black youth, Marlon Downes, 20, who was found hanging in his cell in March. His family say he had no history of depression.

AJ

Half BAe shareholders protest against arms

BAe directors shouted down by protestors during AGM

HALF the shareholders attending British Aerospace's AGM in April were thrown out by security guards - because they were protestors.

Seated behind glass panels, the directors of the transnational arms company, which wants to become the world's biggest, were shouted down by 122 shareholders at the Queen Elizabeth II conference centre in Westminster.

The disruption began when three of the Ploughshares women who successfully and legally disarmed a Hawk jet bound for Indonesia, stood up and demanded that BAe stop the sale of fighter aircraft to the Indonesian regime.

The protestors, who each bought one share in the company, chanted "stop selling arms to Indonesia" as they were carried out.

According to the Campaign Against Arms Trade (CAAT), who organised the disruption, a journalist who tried to film proceedings was assaulted by security.

Learning from past disruptions the directors, including New Labour peer Lord Hollick - who also owns substantial shares in the *Daily Express* newspaper, were protected from the shareholders by two rows of plants, with a space between patrolled by security guards.

A remaining corp of CAAT protestors took up the rest of the meeting demanding answers to detailed questions about the arms trade. Outside about 250 protestors took part in a "die in".

The action prompted calls from top business people for new laws to tackle such disruptions.

Tim Melville-Ross, director general of the Institute of Directors, said: "The law needs strengthening to keep these disruptive people out."

AJ



Protestors outside BAe AGM. Photo: courtesy of CAAT.

Inflated CCTV action

brainless activist rescued by fire service

BRITAIN'S NEWEST activist, Randy Sandy, made her direct debut up a street spy camera pole in a May action against CCTV in Brighton.

Pumped up and ready to go, Sandy, wearing nothing but a sash covering her most delicate parts, perched excruciatingly between the metal spikes which guard the rotating cyber cyclops. But she had a bit of a let down when firemen were called to remove her from the pole on which she'd been erected, as she cannot climb or walk.

Sandy, who has no ears and wears a constantly astonished expression, was said to be a little deflated after the experience. Asked how she was feeling, she could only whisper: "Pffffffffffffffffgh." She is, of course, a blow-up doll.

Three people were given police bail after being arrested for suspicion of criminal damage, for climbing up other cameras in the town centre, in what is believed to be the first organised direct action against spy surveillance in the world.

In one action a piece of Spanish street theatre (part of the Brighton Festival) was halted while one camera wrestled with a bag over its head. One Brighton resident refused to come down for two hours from his pole, from which he says a camera looks straight into his bedroom window.

Another troop carrying balloons blagged into an office block where Sussex Police's mobile camera had been placed on the roof to spy on a direct action conference. They told workers they were having a "surprise birthday party for their Big Brother". The merry throng were thwarted at the 19th floor.

GZ



Demonstration outside Rochester Prison. Photo courtesy of Crossroads Women's Centre.

Rochester refugees end hunger strike

refugees detained without charge or time limit are ignored reports Andy Johnson

REFUGEES imprisoned in a Rochester jail ended two months of hunger strike in March after several of their number were released and national attention was focussed on their plight.

In January 74 asylum seekers in Rochester jail, in Kent, announced they intended to go on a "mass hunger" until their cases were looked at by an independent committee.

Their statement read: "Many of us have already served two years and more. We are detained without charge or time limit. Numerous suicide attempts, hunger strikes and official complaints have gone unheard.

"Approximately 45 per cent of detainees have been diagnosed as having mental or physical disorders and traumas following psychological and mental torture, being poorly fed and from deplorable sanitation."

Demonstrations in Rochester in support of the hunger strikers were organised by grass-roots organisations and local union branches. The media did not take an interest until the condition of a core number of 20 hunger strikers, who came from places such as Angola, Algeria, Nigeria and Tunisia, became critical.

Although the then prisons minister, Anne Widdecombe,

correctly stated the jailed hunger strikers could apply for bail, bail conditions were being set at £5,000.

At the end of February five asylum seekers were released by the High Court who made it clear the only excuse for incarcerating refugees was if it was thought likely they would abscond.

Some of the asylum seekers went for 47 days without food. After 20 days the British Medical Council warned the then Home Secretary Michael Howard that even after that amount of time there was a "likelihood of serious and irreversible neurological and kidney damage".

It is believed at least one hunger striker suffered kidney damage. Another, an Angolan political refugee, was released with an £8 travel card, two £1 coins and left to fend for himself.

Mark Palframan, of the Autonomous Refugee Centre in Hackney, North London, said a feature of the campaign was the absence of the "liberal establishment".

"It was left to community groups, church groups, concerned local individuals and radicals to speak out about it," he told SQUALL.

Mr Palframan said weekly demonstrations took place outside the prison on Saturdays and

outside the Home Office on Wednesdays. They began small and soon grew to several hundred people. The campaign also included a disruption of Anne Widdecombe's weekly surgery at her constituency in Maidstone.

He added that the initiative for the hunger strikes came independently from the asylum seekers.

Brian Debus, a Unison organiser also closely involved in the campaign said exact figures of the number on hunger strike at any one time and the number of those released as a result was difficult to assess.

"One of the big problems is that at any one time there are between 180 and 200 asylum seekers at Rochester," he said. "Some have legal representation and some don't. Some of the detainees had their cases highlighted as a result of the hunger strikes and some were released."

He added that the official reason for imprisoning asylum seekers is a fear they will vanish while their cases are assessed. But campaigners suspected the hidden agenda was to deter asylum seekers from coming to Britain in the first place and also to "make those who are detained more complicit with the idea of being returned".

Radioactive Lobsters

Lobsters recording radioactivity levels 14 times above the safe maximum set by Europe are being caught and eaten along the Cumbrian coast.

The radioactivity is thought to stem from Sellafield discharges and has been recorded as far away as Dublin Bay and Scotland's Solway Firth.

The waste registered in the shellfish lasts 100,000 years before beginning to decay.

Organic farmers

Organic food production in Britain is being undermined because it receives no financial help from the Government, the Commons Select Committee on Agriculture said in April.

Organic farmers in Europe receive massive subsidies, the committee said, as do non-organic farmers in Britain, leaving British organic farmers unable to compete.

The committee, made up of MPs from all parties, said organic farmers should receive aid from the Ministry of Agriculture and farmers should be encouraged to convert to organic production.

Road Traffic Dilution

Targets to reduce road traffic must be set by local councils after the Road Traffic Reduction Act was passed by Parliament in February.

The Act, jointly sponsored by the Green Party and the Liberal Democrats, is intended to encourage cycling and walking.

But the Green Party say it was only passed after being 'watered down'.

Ex-Guinness Chair Evicted

Guinness fraudster Ernest Saunders was evicted from the US by immigration officials in April while visiting the HQ of his new firm Harpur-Gelco.

Saunders was appointed chairman of the information group after making a remarkable recovery from Alzheimer's disease which secured his early release from jail.

But his conviction for fraud, after claiming £1.5 million legal aid, means he cannot visit America.

Solar Power Loses to Oil

More money is spent by the British Government on promoting the oil industry than on researching solar power, according to Greenpeace activists.

The claim was made after Greenpeace gave the Department of the Environment an unexpected Valentine's Day present - a 20-square metre facade of solar panels for its new building in South London that has no existing means of generating clean power.

National Trust deny buy-off

The National Trust has denied its opposition to Manchester Airport's second runway was bought off with a land and benefits deal worth £75,000.

The Trust will receive 100 acres of the Bollin Valley worth £400,000, and financial aid for other properties from the airport, but maintain they still oppose the scheme.

Jeff Gazzard of the Manchester Airport Environment Network commented: "This is a very convenient package with which it [the National Trust] has been mollified. Would that such a deal were available to everyone whose lives will be affected and property blighted."

JC

FUKD on cake

two MPs made 'laughing stock' by spoof drug outrage

THE INDEPENDENT TELEVISION COMMISSION only partially upheld the complaints of two Conservative MPs in May, after the MPs were fooled into making confident statements about a non-existent drug.

David Amess (Con MP Southend West) and Sir Graham Bright (ex-Con MP Luton South) claimed that Chris Morris had "trivialised" the drugs issue by duping

them into talking about the dangers of a new danger drug called 'Cake'.

The two MPs were more than willing to make alarmist statements about the danger of 'cake' - shown to them as a huge yellow tablet the size of a dinner plate and as thick as a yellow pages - despite never having heard of the drug.

David Amess even tabled a parliamentary question

about the new drug from Czechoslovakia, receiving a response from a government department saying they were aware of the situation and had it under review.

He also appeared on the programme wearing a T-shirt adorned with the abbreviations of a spoof anti-drug campaign group called Free the United Kingdom from Drugs (F.U.K.D.).

The Independent Television Commission (ITC) ruled that the two MPs had indeed been "fooled" by Chris Morris, but that the programme had not "trivialised" drugs. Unusually, the ITC actually complemented the programme under investigation, describing it as "amusing and innovative".



Lords back Holtsfield

residents win but developer becomes landlord reports Andy Johnson

A PROPERTY DEVELOPER is facing costs of up to £100,000 after losing an eight-year battle in May to replace a low-impact village with a housing estate.

Five Law Lords ruled unanimously that a wooden chalet in Holtsfield, near Swansea, belonged to the land on which it was built.

But the battle to save Holtsfield, a low-impact community in the Caswell Valley, is far from over. The Law Lords' ruling means the property developer is now the landlord of the families and individuals who live there.

Developer Tim Jones, a solicitor who heads property firm Elitestone Ltd, bought the land on which the 26 chalets stand for £175,000 in 1989.

He then sought to evict the chalets claiming the residents did not own the land on which they stood and therefore had no legal right to remain there.

A Swansea County Court judge initially ruled that Jones was wrong, but this decision was overturned by Jones at the Court of Appeal.

Two residents, Judith Sked and Dai Morris, challenged this decision again in the House of Lords - the highest court in the land.

Judith Sked told SQUALL the issue at stake was whether the chalets were "chattels", ie moveable, or permanent fixtures. The Law Lords ruled they were a fixture thereby preventing Jones from continuing the evictions he had started.

"But the ruling means he's become our landlord," Ms Sked told SQUALL. "It's bizarre."

But the issue is more complicated. The House of Lords' decision affects only one chalet, that owned by Judith Sked and Dai Morris, but should be applicable to another eleven. This leaves 11 chalets without the same protection because the residents are not classed as permanent - they use it as a holiday home - or did not have an agreement

with Mr Holt (the original land-owner) before 1985.

Jones also successfully evicted one chalet after winning at the Court of Appeal. Two residents left of their own accord. Residents repelled the attempted eviction of a fourth.

Holtsfield was declared a conservation area in 1990. The wooden homes do not impact on the environment, there are no street lights, roads or cars. At least one resident has lived there since they were built in the 1920s.

Although Jones has become the legal landlord, Judith Sked and Dai Morris are protected under the tenancy act. But Jones has acquired, overnight, 26 chalets worth £10,000 each. In the local paper he said he will claim damages for eight years' unpaid rent and threatened to evict anyone who opposes his legal right to evict the other half of the community.

The community has not given up. Hope remains that the local council will compulsory purchase the land (although this is a long drawn out process) or that they will be able to raise enough money to buy the land themselves.

Judith Sked said their real hope, however, was that Jones would go bankrupt.

The Law Lords ruled he must pay full costs of the case and three quarters of the costs of the previous Appeal Court hearing. Combined this is thought to amount to £100,000.

"What we want to stress," said Ms Sked, "is the role of Barclays Bank who loaned him £800,000 without interest. They lent him money to buy the land, and to buy a house which he wanted to demolish and build a road."

Donations can be sent to The Holtsfield Fund, 6 Holtsfield, Murton, Swansea, SA3 3AQ.

The chalet home of Dai Morris and Judith Sked of Holtsfield, which now legally belongs to the developer. Photo: Nick Cobbing.

For their EDS only

'Big Brother' information systems move a giant leap forward reports Mike Light

THE AMERICAN FIRM, Electronic Data Systems (EDS), continues to collect government data-managing contracts at an alarming rate. Recent acquisitions include:

1. The Government Centre for Information Services - the agency responsible for the acquisition of all government software and hardware.
2. The South and West Regional Health Authority - valued at £8 million but sold to the only considered bidder (EDS) for just £4 million.
3. The BBC's 30 financial systems in conjunction with the accountancy firm Coopers (a ten year £400 million contract).
4. The Caseman Project - a £25million contract from the Lord Chancellor's department to manage court records.
5. The Paymaster Agency - dealing in state pensions. This contract was sold off quick and cheap (£2 million below value) in the run up to the election.

In addition to these EDS are also in the front running for further work including:

- a. The Civil Aviation Authority's (CAA) Ayrshire Control Centre's computer systems - worth some £50 million.
- b. The Prisons Service - a £150 million contract.
- c. The MoD's new Armed Forces Personnel Administration Agency - dealing with war pensions and the highly sensitive job of administrative preparations for war operations, without which the military would be severely crippled in times of need. The fact that the only other bidder for this contract is the German company Siemens, looks certain to secure the work for EDS. British war veterans have voiced concern over the prospect of having their incomes handled by a firm based in the country they fought against.

These are just the latest in a long line of government contracts EDS has secured since it broke into the UK market in the '80s, when it employed Mark Thatcher as a sales consultant.

To date EDS has more than 250 contracts in the UK alone, counting amongst its customers, the Metropolitan Police, Inland Revenue, MoD, MoT, DVLA, DSS, CAA, the Child Support Agency, Shell UK, Rolls-Royce Aerospace Group, London Underground and several local councils.

Indeed, the UK has proved particularly fertile to EDS's expansion plans due to the privatisation of government data systems.

EDS has also obtained thousands of key contracts world-wide, establishing offices in 42 countries. In Europe it runs the European Parliament's administration records, whilst in the US it data-manages for the Immigration Service and the military.

EDS is now the largest information management company on Earth and rapidly getting bigger. Such monopolisation raises serious questions of the 'Big Brother' variety. Whilst it may be argued that EDS is performing a job which is too complicated and costly for a department or agency, it should be obvious that if EDS were to collapse then the rest of the dependent edifice is in serious threat of doing the same.

As soon as this situation has fully established itself, governments will be forced to protect EDS in order to protect their own departments. The operation to manage much of the data held on everyone in the UK will then be under the select management of a large American company with a firm grip on some of the world's most significant information systems.

Clearances revisited

EIGHT PEOPLE protesting against plans to fell ancient oak trees for timber sale at Pressmennan Wood in East Lothian were arrested in April under the 1865 Trespass (Scotland) Act, even though their camp was on neglected land many locals believed to be common land before the protest began.

The 1865 trespass law was originally used to prevent dispossessed crofters re-occupying their land during the nineteenth century highland clearances. It could, in theory, be used against any hillwalker camping overnight without permission.

The campaign to defend the eight has been backed by the Scottish Council for Civil Liberties and Unison.



Harbouring dissent in Merseyside

dockers and DIY activists stand together to Reclaim The Future reports Ally Fogg

On September 25th, 1995, 80 dockers working for Torside, an independent contractor at Liverpool Docks, were summarily sacked when they threatened industrial action in an overtime dispute.

This small company was a sub-contractor of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company (MDHC), and it shared recruitment, training and customers with them.

When a picket line set up by the Torside workers was respected by all 329 dockers employed by MDHC, the company quickly sacked them too. In total nearly 500 dockers were sacked that week.

Under the iniquities of current trade union legislation, the refusal to cross a picket line established against another employer is illegal and the dockers' union, the TGWU, said they were unable to recognise the dispute.

For the past 18 months the dockers have been fighting their dismissal and the constant refusal of politicians and the media to even discuss the strike has emphasised the total detachment of the political establishment from the lives of ordinary people.

For the first year of the strike, media coverage outside Liverpool was effectively non-existent. Around the world dockers had

been building support with sympathetic actions being taken in numerous other countries. In Britain, however, the union's refusal to recognise the strike and the Labour Party's distancing of itself from its trade union roots meant it remained a non-issue.

In one of the most revealing statements of New Labour's values, minister for education Stephen Byers refused an interview with journalist John Pilger saying: "This is not a political issue, but an industrial dispute." In the summer of 1996, perhaps beginning to despair of finding useful support from traditional corners, the dockers heard of the sympathetic action conducted by Reclaim The Streets in London for striking tube workers shortly after the mass occupation of the M41 at Shepherds Bush. They approached RTS to ask for help and the seeds were sown for one of the most significant events in the recent history of the direct action movement and perhaps the trade union movement as well.

On the first anniversary weekend of the original sackings, September 28th-30th 1996, activists from RTS, the Advance Party, and a host of other DIY protest groups joined together under the banner 'Stop the Clampdown - Reclaim The Future'.

They joined the dockers and their more traditional supporters in a weekend of action that began with a demonstration and rally, complete with drumming, performance and bus-shelter dancing, and ended in a mass picket of Seaforth Docks, where veterans of direct action protests put their skills to good use, occupying gantry cranes and the MDHC office roof.

A small army of riot police made sure the day was not entirely peaceful, but when Bill Morris, head of the TGWU, called on the dockers to disassociate themselves from the groups involved, they responded with derision, praising the 'principled, courageous and peaceful support' of their new friends.

In April this year, at the height of the election campaign, the friendship was renewed on the March for Social Justice which ended with a Reclaim The



Streets party in Trafalgar Square.

Although few knew it last September, environmentalists had reason to be grateful to the Liverpool dockers.

Over the years they had refused to handle several cargoes on ethical grounds, including imports from Pinochet's Chile, Uranium Hexafluoride from South African occupied Namibia and, most famously, thirty shipments of Canadian toxic waste which they sent back in 1989.

The company which lost out on the £3million contract to process the waste was Rechem, a subsidiary of the waste disposal conglomerate Shanks McEwan. The Chairman of Shanks McEwan is Gordon Waddell. Mr Waddell is also chairman of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company.

The dockers believe that their stand against the lucrative toxic waste trade was typical of the reasons MDHC wanted to sack them and casualise the workforce.

Their claims appeared to have been given some credence in January 1997 when figures from the Environment Agency showed that the volume of toxic waste coming in through the docks had doubled since the dockers were sacked and replaced with an inexperienced casual workforce.

The docks company and,

bizarrely, a senior Environment Agency spokesman, claimed shortly after that the figures were unreliable because the manner in which the statistics were collected kept changing.

If this were true (which local anti-toxin campaigners doubt) it is a testament to the uselessness of the Environment Agency that even they don't know how much toxic waste is being imported through Britain's ports.

Support for the dockers fight continues to grow. Shortly after the Reclaim the Future weekend, journalist John Pilger and filmmaker Ken Loach pricked the conscience of the nation in a major Guardian feature and a television documentary.

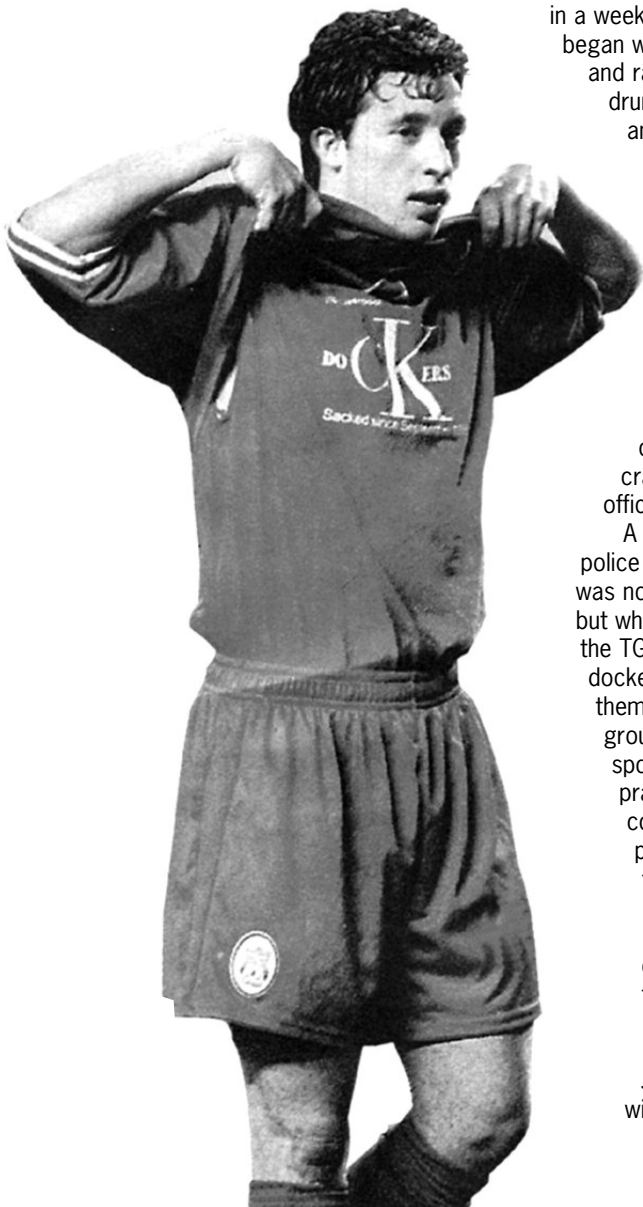
In Pilger's article, he praised the DIY protestors who joined the dockers saying: "Their alliance shames those who should have been there and were not."

Now that people such as footballer Robbie Fowler and comedian Lee Hurst are in support, all the activists who have helped make Reclaim The Future so successful can be proud of the part they have played.

It is in our own hands to make sure the momentum generated on Seaforth Dock and in Trafalgar Square is carried through to victory for the dockers.

Top: The 'Reclaim The Future' flag flies from the dock company's roof on the first anniversary of the sackings. Photo: Nick Cobbing.

Left: Footballer, Robbie Fowler, displays the Dockers t-shirt, given to him by fellow England player and Dockers supporter Steve McManaman.



**Bishop warns of violence**

A RETIRED bishop warned in March of civil unrest because one third of the population is marginalised.

Rt Rev Peter Hall, former Bishop of Woolwich and founder member of the Forgotten 30 Per Cent Group, said that unless society included the marginalised it would have to "keep them where they are by force".

Mad cows decimate deer

WILD deer are being "decimated" to cope with a 30 per cent jump in demand for venison since the mad cow disease scare, say the League Against Cruel Sports.

The League has recorded a 15 per cent drop in the deer population in Exmoor and a 35 per cent drop on the neighbouring Quantock Hills.

No moor shooting

TWO HUNDRED YEARS of shooting on Bradford Council's Ilkley Moor ended in February following a long campaign by conservationists and anti-blood sports lobbyists.

The Labour authority voted to forfeit the £8,000 a year it received from a local syndicate which killed 300 birds a year.

Poisoned apples

EXCESSIVE LEVELS of pesticides in apples and peaches have prompted the British Government to call for a review of international pesticide standards. Health and consumer experts recommend extra caution in peeling and washing fruit for young children - the group most at risk from pesticide residues.

Social housing goes private

SOCIAL housing with security of tenure is to be phased out with the introduction of "Housing Corporations" from this year.

Estate residents are being offered the necessary millions of pounds to repair their estates if they vote to join a housing corporation - managed by the council, housing association and a residents' body.

Mutant maize

FIFTY TWO per cent of Britons said they would not happily eat genetically modified food in a December poll.

Mutant maize is specially designed to resist pests, herbicides and antibiotics.

A Greenpeace spokesperson said: "The approval of this product continues despite consumer resistance. It is presumed safe, but nobody knows what could be long-term toxic side-effects."

Tobacco and fat world's biggest killers, says WHO

The World Health Organisation has called for an "intensified and sustained" campaign to encourage healthier lifestyles, after forecasting a dramatic increase in cancer and heart disease in the next 25 years. A report published in May identified the increasing tendency towards high-fat diets and smoking as a major factor in future disease. Tobacco-related deaths, primarily from lung cancer and circulatory disease, amount to three million a year, six per cent of the world's total deaths.

Travellers paid to stay away

TRAVELLERS living under Clifton Suspension Bridge in Bristol were paid £3,000 to temporarily vacate the site for a firework celebration in May. Around 100,000 people attended the 500th anniversary of the first voyage to colonise Newfoundland.



George Carey gets outraged. Photo: Piers Allardyce.

Homophobes may be gay

Outrage! target MPs and George Carey on gay stance.

TEN gay activists scaled the walls of Lambeth Palace, home of the Archbishop of Canterbury, George Carey, in April, in protest at the Anglican Church's stance on gay rights.

Outrage! say comments by Carey that the two options for Christians are marriage or celibacy, "endorses the continuing victimisation of gay people".

And well-known heterosexuals in the House of Commons may protest too much about their straightness,

according to Outrage!

The direct activists sent a letter to 20 MPs in March asking them to take a test which may reveal latent homosexual urges.

Research in the United States carried out by psychologist Henry E Adams, of the University of Georgia, showed that men who said they were exclusively straight were aroused by gay videos.

Professor Adams concluded his research showed that homophobia is a form of "latent

homosexuality where persons are unaware of or deny their homosexual urges".

To test the theory further Outrage! invited 20 MPs who had displayed strong anti-gay feelings to take the test, including Michael Portillo, who opposed the admission of gays to the armed forces while defence secretary; Peter Lilley who voted against reducing the age of consent to 16; and Ian Paisley.

All the MPs declined the offer. AJ

Handshakes in high places

"large number of freemasons within the criminal justice system."

THE HOME AFFAIRS Select Committee has recommended that "police officers, magistrates, judges and crown prosecutors should be required to register membership of any secret society and that the records should be available publicly".

After deliberating on the issue for many months, the Committee finally published its report on the influence of 'Freemasonry in the police and the judiciary' in March.

It was a highly controversial inquiry involving interviews with experts on both sides of the issue. These included Martin Short, author of the investigative 'Inside the Brotherhood', Ray White - president of the Association of Chief Police Officers and Commander Michael Higham RN, Grand Secretary of the United Lodge of Freemasonry and member of several lodges including the Knights Templar and the Knights of St John.

The Committee of 11 MPs, chaired by ex-Tory MP Sir Ivan Lawrence QC, concluded that "there are a large number of Freemasons within the criminal justice system" and that "there is widespread public perception that Freemasonry can have an unhealthy influence on the criminal justice system". However the Committee's report stopped short of saying the public perception was correct.

Three Tory MPs consistently voted against the report, whilst Chris Mullin, Lab MP Sunderland South, remained a vigorous interrogator throughout.

A memorandum sent to the committee by Jack Straw (now Home Secretary), states his party's position on the issue: "We believe that membership of the Freemasons (and any other similar organisation) should be a declarable, and registrable interest."

However, in marked contrast to the public scrutiny suggested by the Home Affairs Select Committee, Straw adds: "We accept there are important and sensitive questions about how any register should be maintained and the criteria of access to this."

There is still no word from Jack Straw about whether Sir Frederick Crawford will be replaced as the head of the Criminal Cases Review Commission. Temporarily vociferous outrage followed the appointment last August of Sir Frederick, a top Royal Arch Mason, to head the new agency responsible for investigating miscarriages of justice.

The Committee's conclusions can be found in the third report Volume 1, HMSO (£6.20), whilst the interview transcripts and memoranda are published in the third report volume 2, HMSO (£19.50).

SO'C

Wider powers given to police in new act

your SQUALL guide to the Police Act 1997

IN FEBRUARY this year, Jack Straw had meetings with Michael Howard in order to make sure the Police Act reached statute before the general election. On March 27th, in the last five minutes of House of Commons business, the Act was waved through along with 27 others.

The Police Act 1997, which still requires implementation by the new Labour Government, contains powers which:

1) Establish a National Crime Squad (NCS) for England and Wales which will investigate organised and serious crime* occurring across force boundaries within England and Wales and also abroad. It will also support individual forces in investigations into serious crime.

2) Puts the National Criminal Intelligence Service (NCIS), previously part of the Home Office, on a UK-wide statutory footing, allowing it to develop its role in collecting and analysing criminal intelligence to tackle serious and organised crime. Independent authorities will be created to maintain the National Crime Squad and NCIS.

* 'serious crime' is defined by the Act as that which carries a three year sentence or more for a first time, over 21, offender, or that which "involves violence, results in gain or is conduct by a number of persons in pursuit of a common purpose".

3) Puts 'intrusive surveillance' operations by the police and customs on a statutory basis, thereby increasing the admissibility of intrusive surveillance information in court. Police and customs will only be required to seek prior approval from a special commissioner for authorisations in cases involving private dwellings, legal privilege, journalistic or medical confidentiality and spiritual counselling - except in cases of "urgency". The team of special commissioners, made up of three high court judges, will also oversee the arrangements and investigate complaints. They will report annually to parliament but will not be required to mention anything which will prejudice an ongoing investigation.

4) Enables a Criminal Records Agency to supply information to individuals and registered bodies in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. In Scotland, this will be undertaken by the Scottish Criminal Records Agency. A code of practice will be introduced for employers eligible to seek full checks. This allows employers in selected professions to request a copy of a person's criminal record before employing them.

5) Puts the Police Information Technology Organisation (PITO) - previously part of the Home Office - on an independent statutory footing.

Marlow given leave to appeal

High Court says 'incitement' case needs re-examining

MICK MARLOW, the writer who was imprisoned in 1996 for incitement following the publication of a book on cannabis cultivation *Tricameral Sinsemilla* by Maria Warner (*Growing Pains* SQUALL 13) has been given leave to appeal by the High Court on May 13th.

Lord Justice Stuart-Smith, presiding, ruled that there were adequate grounds for appeal because the legal comparisons drawn in the original incitement case were inappropriate. He also recommended the 12 month sentence Mick received should be re-examined at appeal, and granted previously refused legal aid.

The appeal includes requests for the charge of incitement to be dropped and for remaining copies of the book to be returned, along with the only copy of a manuscript and colour slides of an unpublished book *Simple Sinsemilla* which was also seized during a police raid.

This is a positive development but it is not all good news for the Marlows. Following a raid, on the morning Mick was due to be sentenced for incitement, he and six others, including his wife Angie, were arrested for cannabis-related offences. At a subsequent hearing on

March 4th this year Mick and Angie each received two years probation and were ordered to pay court costs. Angie's sentence was for production and Mick's was for "suffering" his premises to be used for production. The couple have just lost their appeal to have the court costs dropped and must pay "something" or Angie will be imprisoned. Their inability to pay this fine (they have been forced to sell personal possessions to pay for other court costs) has been compounded by the DSS's failure to pay Invalidity Benefit Mick claimed due to a heart condition prior to his imprisonment.

An "exile" edition of *Tricameral Sinsemilla* has been printed in Germany. The book is available by mail order from InSuFo, PO Box 101561, D-33515, Bielefeld, Germany, price £16.

Pending the outcome of the appeal court hearing it is still an offence to import copies of the book to the UK. In addition, limited copies of a policy document Mick wrote in prison *Cannabis: Burying the Myths - Resurrecting the Reality*, are available, price £3.50 from PO Box 24, Newnham, Glos. GL14 1YA (cheques to Mick Marlow).

SB

The CJA includes demonstrations on public land, like this one in London, the high court ruled.
Photo: Nick Cobbing



Protests ruled illegal

CJA test case turn-around confirms police powers

PEACEFUL PROTESTS of more than 20 people were ruled illegal in a High Court test case in January.

Lord Justice McGowan and Mr Justice Collins confirmed the offence of 'trespassory assembly' in the 1994 Criminal Justice Act which gives police powers to ask a local authority to ban gatherings of more than 20 people.

Mr Justice Collins said peaceful demonstrations and vigils could be tolerated but "there was no legal right to pursue them".

The decision was made at an appeal by the Director of Public Prosecutions against the acquittal of two people arrested at Stonehenge in June 1995.

Margaret Jones, a university lecturer, and Richard Lloyd, a post-graduate student, both from Bristol, were arrested while taking part in a roadside demonstration along the route to Stonehenge in 1995 to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the Battle of the Beanfield.

They were initially convicted under clause 70 of the CJA, trespassory assembly, by a Salisbury magistrate. But their convictions were overturned after

they appealed to the Crown Court last year.

Then his honour Judge McClaren QC ruled the demonstration legal because they were on public land and so could not be guilty of 'trespassory' assembly.

But at the High Court the offence was finally confirmed in law, regardless of whether the land was public or private. Mr Justice McGowan said the Crown Court ruling was mistaken in law because an order banning the demonstration under the CJA had been made.

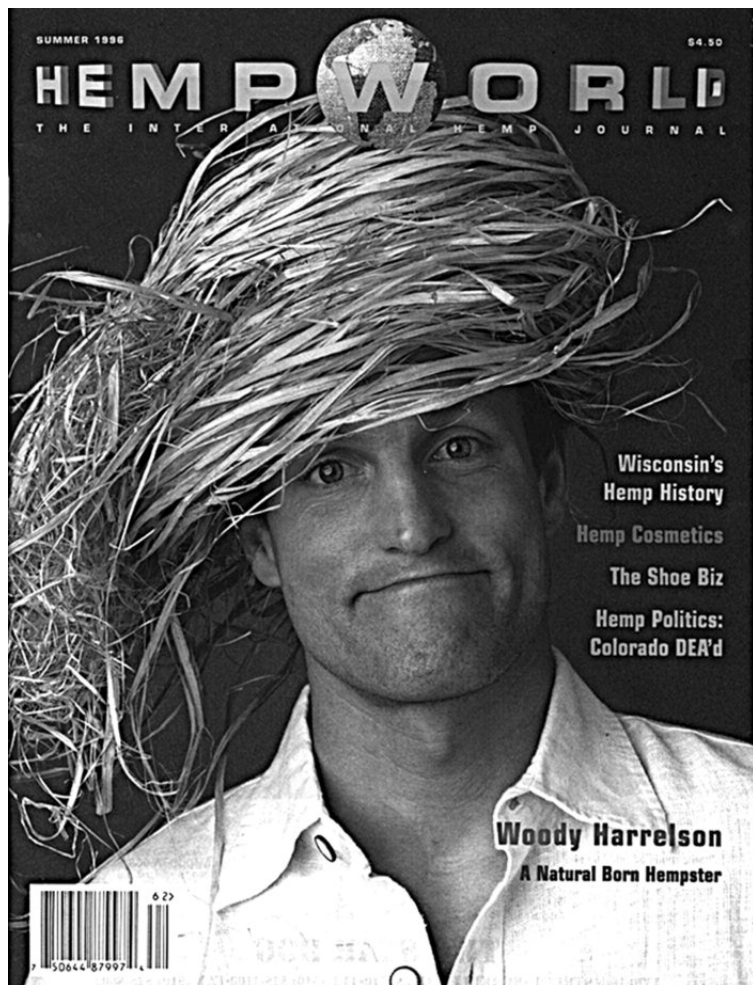
He invited the DPP to prosecute Dr Jones and Mr Lloyd again.

The decision will affect any demonstration as long as the police have first obtained an order under the CJA from the local council.

After the hearing Dr Jones said she would appeal to the House of Lords and, if necessary, take the case to the European Court of Human rights.

"This ruling is extremely bad for democracy," she said. "It supports something which is illiberal, undemocratic and wrong."

AJ



Woody Harrelson graces the cover of last summer's 'Hempworld', international hemp journal.

Cheers Woody - king hemp

Woody Harrelson wears hemp to the Oscars ceremony

ACTOR Woody Harrelson is best known for his part as the barman in the sit-com *Cheers* and for roles in films such as *Natural Born Killers*, *Kingpin* and *The People Vs Larry Flynt* for which he was nominated for an Oscar at this year's Hollywood glitz blitz ceremony.

The Oscars ceremony is as much about fashion as it is golden statuettes. With an estimated global audience of two billion, fashion empires such as Armani and Versace fall over each other to dress the stars and gain extremely lucrative free publicity.

What is little known about Harrelson are his environmental credentials. Harrelson is a vegan who hung off the Golden Gate Bridge in November with a bunch of American Earth Firsters to draw attention to the destruction of an ancient Redwood forest.

Earlier he had been arrested for planting industrial hemp seeds in Kentucky.

So, come Oscar time, Harrelson snubbed the fashion empires and paraded himself in an extremely stylish black evening suit - made from hemp!

AJ

Copex forced to pay up

arms exhibitors fail to evade £32,000 legal costs

AN ARMS EXHIBITOR forced to drop libel actions against two peace campaigns was made to pay £32,000 legal costs in February.

COPEX - Covert and Operational Procurement Exhibitions (see *Squalls 12 & 14*) - had their libel actions against *Peace News* and Campaign Against Arms Trade struck out of court last July after failing to show up.

The company tried to evade the legal costs it was ordered to pay.

The sole director, Julian Winkley, said the company no longer existed after he resigned and tried to

dissolve it.

But the Inland Revenue prevented this as the firm owed taxes. Copex were forced to pay up after CAAT and *Peace News* threatened to sue Winkley himself for the unpaid costs and infringement of company law.

CAAT, *Peace News* and a number of individuals were issued with writs by Copex after repeating claims in a Channel Four *Dispatches* programme that torture equipment displayed at the exhibitions.

AJ

Alco-shakes aimed at children

HEALTH experts greeted the introduction of alcoholic milkshakes by an Australian brewery in April with outrage, saying they could only be targetted at children.

Strawberry and banana flavoured drinks, which will be available throughout the country by the summer, follow hot on the heels of the £265 million a year success of "alcopops".

Sales of alcoholic lemonade such as Hooch and Two Dogs are expected to reach £400 million this year - becoming the fastest selling drink of all time.

Referring to Speciality Beverages' alcoshakes, called Moo, Dr Bill O'Neill, of the British Medical Association, said: "Who can this drink be aimed at if not at children?"

AJ

juxta-POSING

"When a country reaches a certain level of economic development, when it has a middle class big enough to support a McDonald's, it becomes a McDonald's country and people in McDonalds' countries don't like to fight wars they like to wait in line for burgers."

Thomas Friedman - commissioned by McDonald's hamburger University to write a thesis on McDonald's and civilisation - achieved extensive coverage in the *Guardian*, *Telegraph*, *Independent* and *Times* - December 1996.

with

"The sun never sets on McDonald's whether we're serving customers in the world's great metropolitan centres or near the picturesque rice fields carved into the landscape of the Indonesian island of Bali. Brand McDonald's is at home everywhere."

McDonald's Corporation 1996 Annual Report

and

"From the outset the Indonesian occupying forces were involved in violent confrontation with an armed Timor resistance movement which has always had the support of the East Timorese people and in recent years more particularly of the young. The assembly condemns the annexation of East Timor by Indonesia, which it regards as a violation of international law and more particularly of people's right to self-determination and independence."

Council of Europe Resolution 966 (1991) on East Timor



... Somewhere beneath the Tribal Gathering loos...



Surprise dump decision throws nuclear industry into turmoil

Gummer refuses go-ahead for waste dump in Cumbria

PERMISSION for an underground nuclear-waste dump in the Lake District was refused by then Environment Secretary John Gummer in March - possibly spelling the end for Nuclear Power.

It is the first time any application for planning permission has been refused the nuclear power industry.

Nirex, the state owned company which dumps nuclear waste, had wanted to build a one-thousand foot underground waste dump at the Sellafield reprocessing plant in Cumbria at a cost of £2 billion.

They had already spent £200 million formalising the plan.

A leaked memo before the judgement showed senior Nirex staff were not convinced of the

safety of their own plan. A key concern was the geology of the area, and whether water passing through the dump would find its way back to the surface.

Gummer refused the plan because he was concerned about the "scientific uncertainties".

The decision means nuclear waste will have to be stored above ground for at least the next 30 years. It would have taken Nirex 15 years to build the dump had the six month inquiry gone their way.

Without anywhere to store nuclear waste a limit on the amount of waste that can be produced is immediately established - potentially a major threat to the future of the nuclear industry.

AJ

Last respects to Judi Bari

inspirational eco-activist dies at 47

JUDI BARI, American full-on Earth First! activist and rights campaigner died on March 2, 1997 of breast cancer aged 47. During her life Judi was involved in anti-war protest, and campaigned for the rights of women, workers and the oppressed. As a construction carpenter she realised her heart was in promoting sustainable logging and preserving the two thousand year old forests of the North American Pacific coast.

In 1990 Judi initiated a law suit against the FBI after a car bomb almost killed her and passenger Darryl Cherney. The FBI insisted Judi had made the bomb and charged her with the explosion while she was still in hospital recovering

from horrific injuries which left her permanently disabled. The blast followed just months after Judi and other Earth First! activists received anonymous death threats, possibly from pro-timber groups.

Mock EF! press releases condoning EF! violence also began circulating according to evidence collated in Bari's ongoing lawsuit against the FBI. When Judi reported threats to police they told her "when you turn up dead, then we'll investigate". Cherney has pledged to continue the FBI lawsuit. Kindred activist Betty Ball has credited Judi with attracting and encouraging more women to the previously male dominated Earth First! movement.

DY

Four go down in Lewes

Shoreham protestors jailed, verdict astonishes judge

FOUR people jailed for between two and six years at Lewes Crown Court in April on charges connected with events at the Shoreham demonstrations against live exports are to appeal.

Observers say even the judge was astonished at the jury's guilty verdicts because of inconsistencies in evidence presented by the main police witness.

A fifth demonstrator was given a two-year suspended sentence and a sixth was due to be sentenced as SQUALL went to press.

Mick Roberts, Jo Taylor, Tony Daly and Kevin Chapman were jailed for six, four, three, and two years respectively for conspiring to cause criminal damage. The charges included sub-charges for arson.

Tracy Roberts was given a two-year suspended sentence and Matthew Leyh was awaiting sentence.

Solicitor for the six, John Robinson, of the firm Malcolm, Wilson and Gilby, told SQUALL there was concern over the principal prosecution witness whose

"evidence wasn't accepted by the judge as shown in the lenient sentencing".

"These matters will be covered in the appeal," he said.

Observers of the six month hearing, which cost £2 million, told SQUALL the main police witness was an infiltrator whose credibility seemed to be undermined.

Mick Roberts was a founding member of the highly effective CALF - the Campaign Against Live Freight - which spearheaded the demonstrations. Such were the feelings against the live trade going through Shoreham and the stretch on police resources caused by the demonstrations that eventually the police were forced to reduce their role to escorting only two convoys a week. This forced the exporters to move to Dover.

Mr Roberts also ran a charity which took aid to Bosnia.

The demonstrators were arrested between a year and 19 months ago and denied bail. All six intend to appeal.

AJ



Stilt-walker at Brighton Festival of Freedom, 1996. Photo: Sam Beale.

B-right-on festival not on

annual festival of freedom victim of new 'drug misuse' guidelines

BRIGHTON FESTIVAL OF FREEDOM which attracted over 20,000 throughout the day in 1996 has been refused permission to go ahead this year. Mel, one of the festival's organisers, told SQUALL this was due to a number of problems arising from last year's event.

The council notified the organisers that "the police have said they would need a huge presence to combat drug-taking due to new Home Office guidelines on drug misuse". There were no drug-related arrests at last year's festival. "In fact I don't think there were any arrests," says Mel.

Additional problems, such as opposition to the organisers' choice of site could be negotiated with the council. The organisers plan to hold a festival next year but first need to pay off £4,000 debts incurred last

year and says Mel: "We need more support; people who are willing to work on it."

Mel believes "the police are really against the festival" and fears that the need for a 'huge presence' could mean that in future years the police "might try and push us to pay for a police presence".

"It's a real shame that the festival's not going on because it's a cultural representation of something which doesn't happen that much anymore. There are so few free festivals this year. For us not to be happening is just another one off the calendar."

If you want to help BFF pay off their debts or get involved in planning next year's festival contact: BFF: PO Box 2762, Brighton.

SB

Police accused of cooking books

but police to investigate police again

POLICE in Nottinghamshire were accused of fiddling their solved crime figures in April.

An investigation into the claims is being overseen by the police complaints authority and carried out by Bedfordshire police, headed by Beds chief constable, Michael O'Byrne.

Last year Nottingham police had the best clear up rate in the country. Overall crime in the area dropped by over six percent.

But with police under increasing pressure to meet performance targets, it was claimed by a retired

superintendent that Nottinghamshire had, in fact, been cooking their books.

For example, a number of burglaries in one flat were recorded as one crime.

Police in Nottingham have also been accused of counting single crimes twice and attributing too many crimes to one person.

Three Bedfordshire officers have set up shop in Nottingham police station to audit the books.

Last year Bedfordshire came bottom of the crime clear up table.

AJ



Kingshill Collective safe for present

John Gummer decision overturned on technicality

A HIGH COURT decision in October has left a community of bender dwellers in Somerset temporarily safe from eviction, but in 'limbo'.

Judge Michael Rich QC overturned a decision by former environment secretary, John Gummer, to allow the eviction of the Kingshill collective near Glastonbury.

But he did so on a technicality. Although Gummer had

taken into account the European Convention on Human Rights, the Collective's grounds for appeal, he did not specify such a finding in his report.

"The Government were going to appeal, but dropped it," resident Christine Boal told SQUALL. "We're in limbo and can't do anything. It's alright for us, but it hasn't set a precedent and doesn't help anyone else."

The Collective cannot be evicted until the Government appeals. But new Labour's new super environment ministry may have more pressing matters.

The saga began when the collective of 20 benders bought the land but were refused planning permission to live there by Mendip District Council. (See SQUALL 12.)

AJ

Frozen motion: children at Kingshill can continue playing, safe from eviction, but must wait for the new environment department to make a decision. Photo: Nick Cobbing.

McDonald's Annual Report

Mickey and Ronald sign pact for world domination

THE NEW ANNUAL REPORT published by the McDonald's Corporation in April, is of course a high gloss affair.

The front cover photograph depicts a three-year old child standing next to a box of chips, whilst a double-page colour spread has Ronald McDonald and Mickey Mouse celebrating an exclusive 10 year marketing partnership between McDonald's and Walt Disney:

"What better cause for celebration than the unique global alliance between family brands like The Walt Disney Company and McDonald's Corporation? When you bring together Ronald McDonald and Mickey Mouse - two of the world's favourite characters - the winners are children and families everywhere."

The report also celebrates the global expansion of the golden arches, announcing record "systemwide sales" of \$30 billion and trumpeting the fact that McDonald's now have their tentacles in 101 countries worldwide, having invaded 12 new countries in 1996.

Japan heads the league table with 2,004 burger bars, Germany comes second with 743, whilst the UK is in third place with 737. The level of expansion is also indicated by comparing the figures with those of 1991, when Japan had 865, Germany 391 and the UK 431. The report also announces the Corporation's intention to "emphasize aggressive marketing" in the coming year.

The director's report attempts to rosily reassure shareholders that the drop in McDonald's share of the US burger market is but an anomaly: "In the current competitive US environment, some of our franchisees were dissatisfied with the sales and profit trends in their businesses in 1996", but "they are still proud to be part of the McDonald's system".

Financial observers suggest that the US burger market is now saturated, so that further expansion will now be sought globally whilst their sliding US position will be addressed with market consolidation.

JC

Patcham Travellers face eviction

land now ear-marked for supermarket

TRAVELLERS at Patcham Court Farm face imminent eviction after a Bank Holiday weekend party was deemed a 'statutory nuisance' by Brighton Borough Council. The party apparently attracted 29 complaints from housedwellers after three sound systems set up on site.

The Patcham site was one of two unofficially tolerated sites taken to replace Waterhall which

was cleared in January.

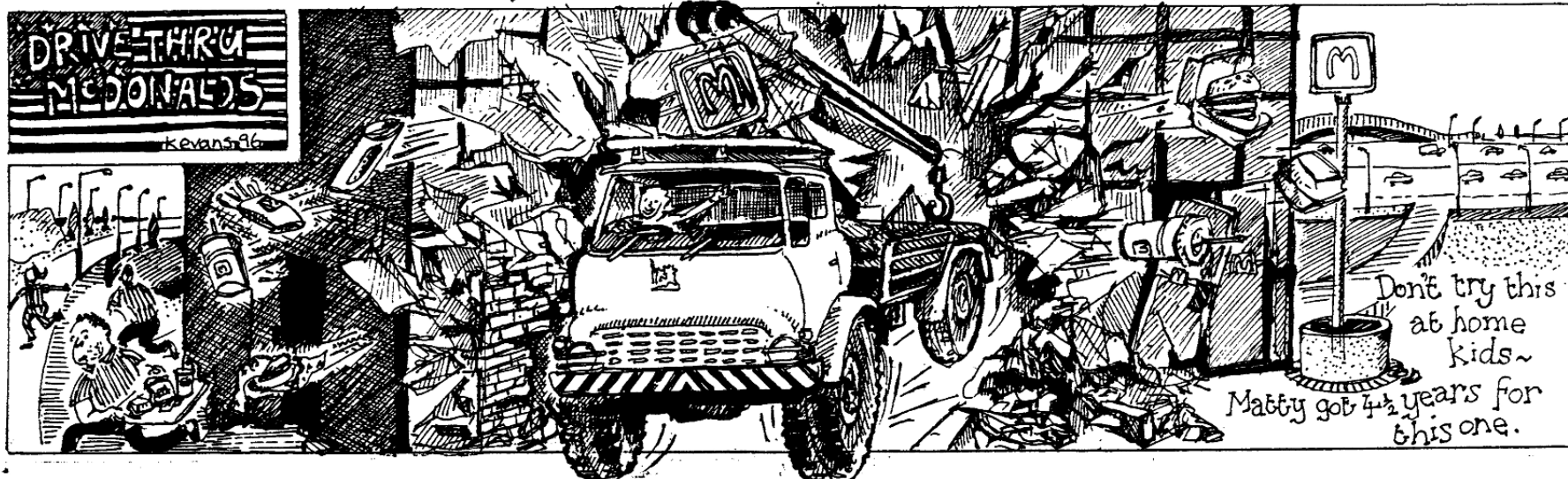
Many of the vehicles parked up at the farm have now pulled on to near-by Braypool provoking fears of a knock-on eviction.

The Patcham eviction notice - delivered appropriately on April 1 - came as a number of Travellers on the farm were completing an application for lottery funding to turn the farm into a resource site.

The proposal, which included

workshops for vehicle maintenance, wood-working, crafts and education, would have made full use of the outbuildings and hardstanding available at the council-owned site. The application has now been shelved and the farm is ear-marked for demolition as part of a park-and-ride scheme for a proposed Waitrose superstore.

RW





Ice shelves on the move

polar crack may be evidence of global warming

A MASSIVE 30-metre wide crack appeared in a polar ice shelf in Antarctica in February - two years after the sudden collapse of an adjacent ice shelf covering 4,200 square kilometres.

The disintegration of the ice shelves - called Larsen A and Larsen B - was monitored by Greenpeace during "Polar Melt Down", a month-long expedition to Antarctica to document the effects of climate change.

Greenpeace say the crack in Larsen B, estimated at seven kilometres long, could presage another dramatic collapse. In January 1995 4,200 square kilometres of its neighbour, Larsen A, dramatically fell into the sea.

The rapid deterioration of the ice shelves is, says Greenpeace, evidence of the effects of global warming which were first predicted to hit ice shelves as long ago as 1968.

Temperatures in the area have risen by 2.5 degrees Celsius since 1945 - faster than anywhere else in the world.

Ice shelves are the floating sheets of ice which surround the continent of Antarctica, fringing half its coastline.

The Larsen shelf is near the northerly tip of Antarctica, looking towards the tip of South America.

Larsen A is to the North and Larsen B to the south.

While ice shelves naturally retreat and collapse during the summer, the deterioration of the Larsen shelves has been dramatic.

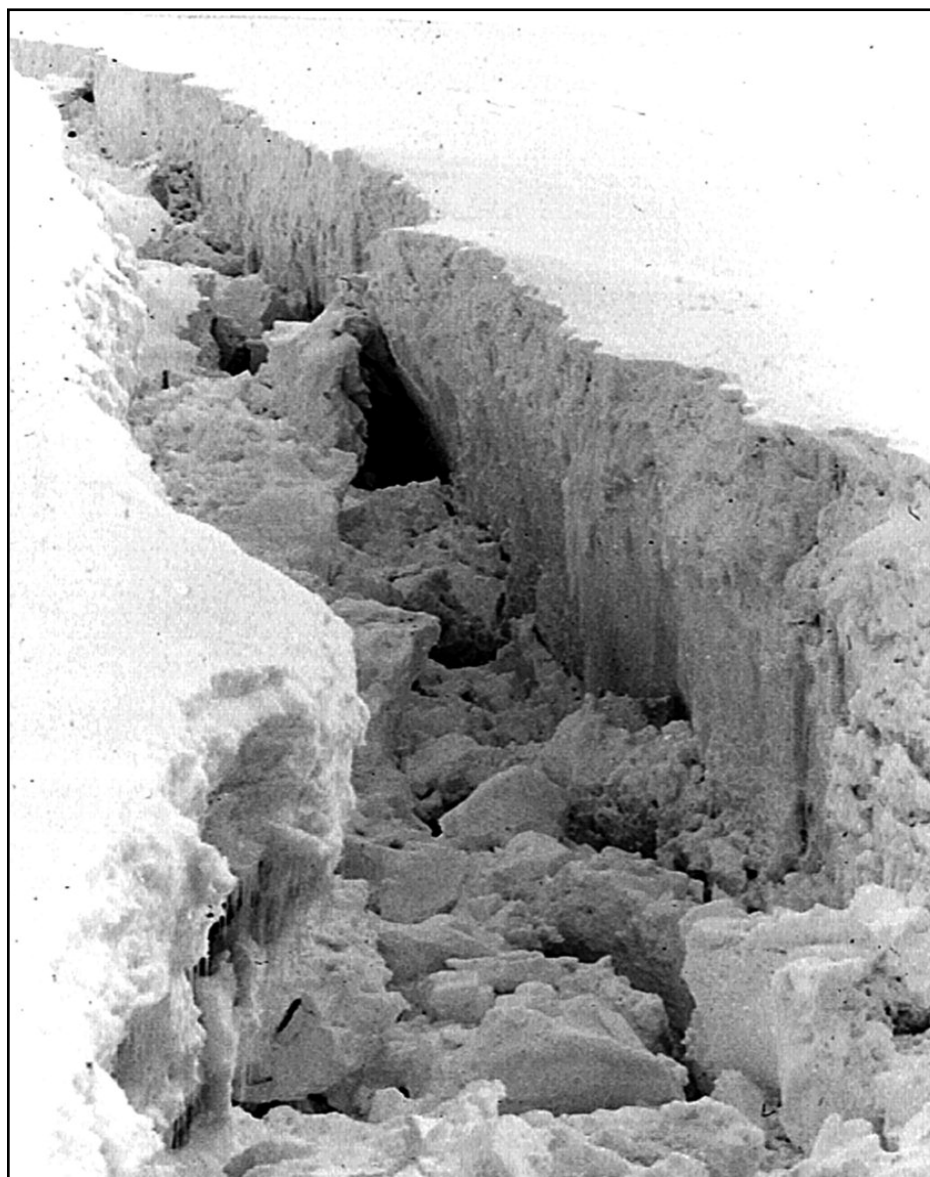
British Antarctic survey glaciologists have, according to Greenpeace, concluded that ice shelves are "sensitive indicators of climate change".

And scientists predict that ice shelves further south will begin to retreat further than ever before in the near future.

"It has taken centuries to millennia for these ice shelves to form and in a few short decades they are crumbling to nothing," said Erwin Jackson, a Greenpeace climate-change specialist who took part in the 'Polar Melt Down' tour. "From these sudden collapses, which are induced by local warming, it is clear that the vast bastions of floating ice around the edges of Antarctica are very fragile if human activities lead to more warming of the climate."

During their survey the Greenpeace ship, the MV Arctic Sunrise, navigated a passage around James Ross Island - formerly impossible due to 200 metre-thick ice shelf which joined the island to the continent until 1995.

AJ



Courtesy of Greenpeace

Scottish Travellers go to Europe

family accuse council of discrimination in planning dispute reports Annie Taylor.

A TRAVELLING family threatened with jail if they live on their own caravan site are taking their fight for the right occupy their land to the European Court.

The Lowthers bought a £120,000 caravan park just outside Kinross in central Scotland in 1991 and have been locked in a bitter struggle with their local council ever since. They believe that prejudice against Travellers lies behind the troubles they have faced and that the refusal to let them inhabit their land is a denial of their basic human rights.

When they bought the land they understood they could run a commercial caravan park on it according to consents granted in 1961 and 1979. They spent £80,000 on amenities and improvements to bring it up to licensing standard after threats of action from Perth and Kinross Council. The previous owners of the land had received no such warnings. Josephine Lowther remembers officials seemed pleased with the results and suggested they apply for planning permission just as a formality. But the application was rejected following objections from the same officials who had encouraged the Lowthers to invest heavily in the site.

Since 1992, the Lowthers have made four applications to keep

caravans on the site, all unsuccessful.

When an enforcement notice came ordering them off the site, 18 vehicles had to be moved and the non-Travellers among the residents were given housing. The family lost their business and their home land. At first they resisted the ban but when Mrs Lowther and her daughter Tracey were threatened with jail or a £20,000 fine Mrs Lowther backed down for Tracey's sake.

Their vehicles are now parked defiantly on the roadside just outside the gates to their site. The family suspect the root of the problem is that the land does have planning permission attached to it, but for houses.

The matter eventually went before the former Scottish Secretary Michael Forsyth who dismissed the Lowthers' appeal in March. But in the notes of the proceedings it was recorded that:

"If sympathy for the appellant's predicament could be an overriding planning consideration, then the way would be clear for the permission that they seek... There is an obvious contrast between the intensity of enforcement action by the planning authorities since 1991 and the relative inactivity before then in regard to breaches of

planning control."

The notes also state that the local authority's keenness to act against the Lowthers came once it realised that they did not intend to utilise the housing planning permission.

Since the inquiry ended, Mrs Lowther says she's been approached by three builders wanting to buy the land but despite her difficulties she remains resolute that it's not for sale.

"The fact that I am a Traveller makes it easy for them to threaten

and harass us and make us move on," said Josephine. "But we must stand and try to get something done. Non-Travellers say to travelling people 'why don't you settle down and educate your children?' and when you do - wallop, you get the planners wanting you to move on. Travellers do like to move on but we are in this too far now to let it go. We shouldn't have to go to Europe to get justice but there is no protection for Travellers in this country."

*Below:
Threatened with
jail or a £20,000
fine. The
Lowther family
fight on
Photo: Chic
Chalmers.*





SPECIAL EDITION

Evading Standards

LONDON, FRIDAY 25 APRIL, 1997

INCORPORATING THE UNCENSORED NEWS FREE

Win a Dream Home! Do You Have The LUCKY NUMBERS? It's a lottery! See Page 13

Never Mind the Ballots! vote SPICE! See Page 9 for the Special SPICE National Leadership

THE EVENING SUN IS SETTING TOMORROW IS YOURS

GENERAL ELECTION CANCELLED

Election collapses as new polls reveal massive public cynicism

by ANNA KEE, political correspondent



Dealers Panic as cancelled election sends markets into chaos

AT A PACKED press conference this evening, John Major announced that after overnight talks with the other main party leaders, the current election date had been abandoned.

The Tory leader said he was devastated, but the current levels of voter cynicism gave them "no other option". Asked if he would resign, a tearful John Major said he was in consultation with the other party leaders as to the "best way forward".

Reading from a candidly honest statement representing all three leaders, he said: "When voter interest dips below a certain level a belief in the democratic process leaves politicians with no other honourable course of action". In what appeared to be a frank admission of failure between us to say that the issue of abuse, government tries to corporate interest and

Labour's shift away from socialist values had left many convinced that the answers no longer lay with parliament. He then stressed onlookers by making an emotional apology on behalf of all three leaders.

The polls which led to the crisis, where first shown secretly to party leaders yesterday. Both polls show rising levels of cynicism and an increasing belief that non-parliamentary action was justified.

First hints that things were at crisis point came when John Major was seen entering Buckingham Palace by a back door. Although never done before, constitutional experts have suggested the formal asking of the Queen's permission for the cancellation may be an attempt to stop the Monarchy stepping in to fill the void.

Leaders close to Major, Blair and

Abdow, said a coalition government of national unity was being considered as a way of regaining voter trust, but others suggested that all three had admitted things were moving beyond their control.

Journalists described the scenes at campaign HQ's as chaotic with MP's of all parties greeting the news with shock. Disillusion was heightened as £30 billion was wiped off Stock Market share prices as investors lost confidence in UK markets.

With politicians in disarray, the public are taking things into their own hands. It has been reported that thousands of jubilant staff have abandoned their workplaces or simply taken control themselves. An eye witness described the city as "directed" with chief executives utterly powerless to stop the chaos. An analyst from JP Morgan said he thought it "unlikely that senior city managers would be willing to take on the more routine tasks" - he added - "in these circumstances it seems that the markets are heading for a total collapse".

Now that London Underground is under staff control and all travel is free it seems that if nothing else at least the London's transport problems will have been solved.

It is also reported that John Flint has been ousted, and the BBC declared a workers co-operative. As thousands of celebrating people block major road links and plant trees in the tarmac, observers say it is increasingly unlikely politicians will be able to regain control.

Without Government see page 2

TV & RADIO BLACKOUT 66 NO BUSINESS 36 ENTERTAINMENT ENDS 17 LIFE BEGINS 97

Read all about it

police impound alternative skit on the Evening Standard

ON THE FRIDAY before the general election, 20,000 rush hour commuters in central London were given the news. "General Election Cancelled - Election collapses as new polls reveal massive public cynicism."

And, leafing through their copies of *Evading Standards*, stunned readers read the kind of succinct editorial they were unlikely to find in the rest of the media deluge.

"The election is the defining moment of our so-called democracy. Even more hideous, it confronts us like a huge advertising war between Pepsi and Coca-Cola. Both claim to be the real thing and as the campaign piles farce upon farce it becomes clear that if our problems have solutions they surely lie outside the parliamentary fray. Machievelli wrote that the ruler must inspire either fear or love in his (sic) subjects. Our rulers do neither. They inspire at best pity and at worst contempt. But mostly they inspire nothing."

Evading Standards was one of the most well-executed UK guerilla-media spoofs in recent years. Fashioned convincingly on the *Evening Standard*, the Eros logo was reprinted with red horns and a pointy tail - but yer average commuter had to look closely.

The fact that *Evading Standards* was distributed at all was a monument to tenacity.

Two Fridays previously an attempt to distribute the newspaper on the evening prior to the March for Social Justice on April 12th, was thwarted when police swooped on the Piccadilly distribution point and impounded 20,000 copies. Three members of the RTS crew were arrested and charged with incitement to cause affray and highway obstruction. As an after thought the next day, they were also charged with breach of copyright on the *Evening Standard* logo and a Metropolitan Police logo changed to Multinational Police for a spoof advert on the back page (see 'Watch with big brother?' on page 28).

Police efforts to squash the distribution of the newspaper were bypassed when the paper was improved upon, reprinted and successfully distributed from several distribution points two weeks later. The quality of the spoof extended to a convincing weather report on global warming, a seditionary crossword and colour sports pages.

Copies of the original impounded version of *Evading Standards* as well as the the redesigned version can be won in the competition on page 43 Get your new Standard here!

JC

Packing them in

Tina Johnson reviews the implications of recent withdrawals of housing benefit

Karl and Emma may soon be living on the streets. Karl is 18, a trainee electrician living in Brighton. Emma is 21, a recent graduate living in Nottingham. She is unemployed. Karl was thrown out of home when he told his parents he was gay. Emma has no close family, and is in debt with huge student loans. The recent Government legislation on Housing Benefit means both may soon have no home.

A decade ago the Government stated that Housing Benefit might not last forever. Legislation introduced in October 1996, altering the qualifying categories of future claimants and the methods in which payments are made, is seen by many as the start of the withdrawal. The government claimed the changes were designed to combat fraud, although others argue it is a politically motivated deterrent designed to make life on welfare even harder. Young adults are the hardest hit, with under 25s now subject to rent assessment to determine the average rent for shared accommodation across the borough in which they live. This will be the maximum amount they could receive. Regulations brought in with the last gasps of the outgoing Tory government extend these new restrictions to under 60 year olds.

The legislation has met with widespread opposition from all sectors of the housing market. The National Housing Federation (formerly National Federation of Housing Associations) has slammed the new method of payment as leading to "more evictions and increased homelessness", a view echoed by Shelter, the charity for the homeless, and the Advisory Service for Squatters (ASS).

Payments of Housing Benefit will now be paid four weeks in arrears, instead of

the previous one week in advance and one week in arrears. David Flindall, Housing Worker with CDS housing management agents in South East London, believes this will reduce the availability of housing as "most rent agreements are to pay rent in advance". Many landlords already refuse tenants who claim benefits and the new legislation will further aggravate this situation. 'Assured' tenants may also find their tenancies threatened. Evictions can now be sought after eight weeks build up of arrears, meaning, according to the National Housing Association, that "tenants who accrue arrears (of four weeks) ... stand to lose their tenancy because their housing benefit is being paid a further four weeks in arrears."

A spokesperson at the Department of Social Security states the intention of the legislation is to ensure "the taxpayer has an interest too". More controls on who receives payments and how much is spent are required as "spending on Housing Benefit has spiralled and ministers are anxious to prevent this continuing". They foresee no problems in enforcing the legislation as "anecdotal evidence shows no problems" from previous Housing Benefit legislation.

However the latest legislation is dependent upon cheap, safe accommodation being available for all those in need. The Department of the Environment state it is "only reasonable to assume that they (under 25s) will seek accommodation at the cheaper end of the market" and are anxious that the introduction of the legislation will "ensure Housing Benefit does not provide an incentive for young people to leave home ... at the taxpayers expense". The lower earnings of the under 25s are reflected in the lower Housing Benefit payments.

This reasoning is reliant on many factors, primarily that under 25s are able to reside with parents and that cheaper accommodation is available. Rents charged by landlords do not take age of tenants into account. As Karl points out, not all parents are "fairy tale ideals who will support their children indefinitely". The options the Government are relying on "don't exist for many young people".

Shelter predict that young people will be "forced into poor quality... dangerous accommodation as they can't afford anything better." The legislation is based on economic calculations, unrelated to the realities of the Housing market. The "shortfalls in rent paid by Housing Benefit leads to increased poverty" as claimants have to make up the total themselves

"resulting in eviction and increased homelessness". Claimants of Housing Benefit are already assessed as being on or near the poverty line as defined by the government, and the legislation serves only to increase the divide. Emma believes she will be trapped in the "vicious circle of jobless equals homeless equals jobless".

According to Jim Paton at the Advisory Service for Squatters: "The process by which councils are selling off surplus properties is squeezing out many short life tenants and

will worsen the already huge shortfall of cheap accommodation, resulting in more squatting and widespread homelessness." Karl and Emma both believe this will be their only choice.

The legislation appears to David Flindall to be "designed to make it increasingly difficult for people to exist on Housing Benefit". As the Department of Social Security states "if people are not getting help, they will pick places they can afford. If they want better accommodation, they must find alternative funding". When asked about high rent levels and high unemployment levels meaning many can't afford to pay the extra rent themselves, the Department of Social Security refused to comment.



Nick Cobbing

SQUOTES

"No wonder then that young people with a different drug of choice turn to us and say, 'There you are in your parliament with its 15 bars telling us not to do drugs - you standing there with a glass of whisky in one hand and a cigarette in the other, and a couple of paracetamols in your pocket for your headache tomorrow morning.'"

Paul Flynn (Lab MP Newport West) - sole voice of dissent against the Public Entertainments Licenses (Drug Misuse) Act.

"This will all have to go. It is heavily mortgaged and there are massive legal bills. We are facing ruin. It's not just Neil who is out of work. I am as well because I was his secretary. We are both picking up our P45s"

Christine Hamilton, wife of Neil, on her imminent change of housing arrangements - Daily Telegraph 4/4/97

"If I am going to do something different at least for a period, I will have the opportunity to do it wholeheartedly. And I won't have to do it with one eye on the Nolan rules."

Michael Portillo on his business practices - Daily Telegraph 4/4/97

"In the last parliament there were more MPs called John than there were women."

Woman's Hour Radio 4 6/5/97

"Of course I get impatient. But it's very difficult to remain calm when you're listening to someone talk complete bollocks".

Jeremy Paxman on politicians. Daily Star, 3/4/97

"People say single issue politics is outdated or limited in its usefulness. OK. I'd like to know exactly what the Labour Party has fucking done in the past eighteen years, and they're not single issue. I would like someone to write down on a piece of paper: this is what we did that bettered the world we live in. If they can match up to what Ploughshares did when they got into the Hawk harrier jump jets going to Indonesia, then I'll listen to them. I can't see that the Labour Party... has accomplished anything that reaches that level of commitment, that level of action, that level of actual change: they actually stopped people dying."

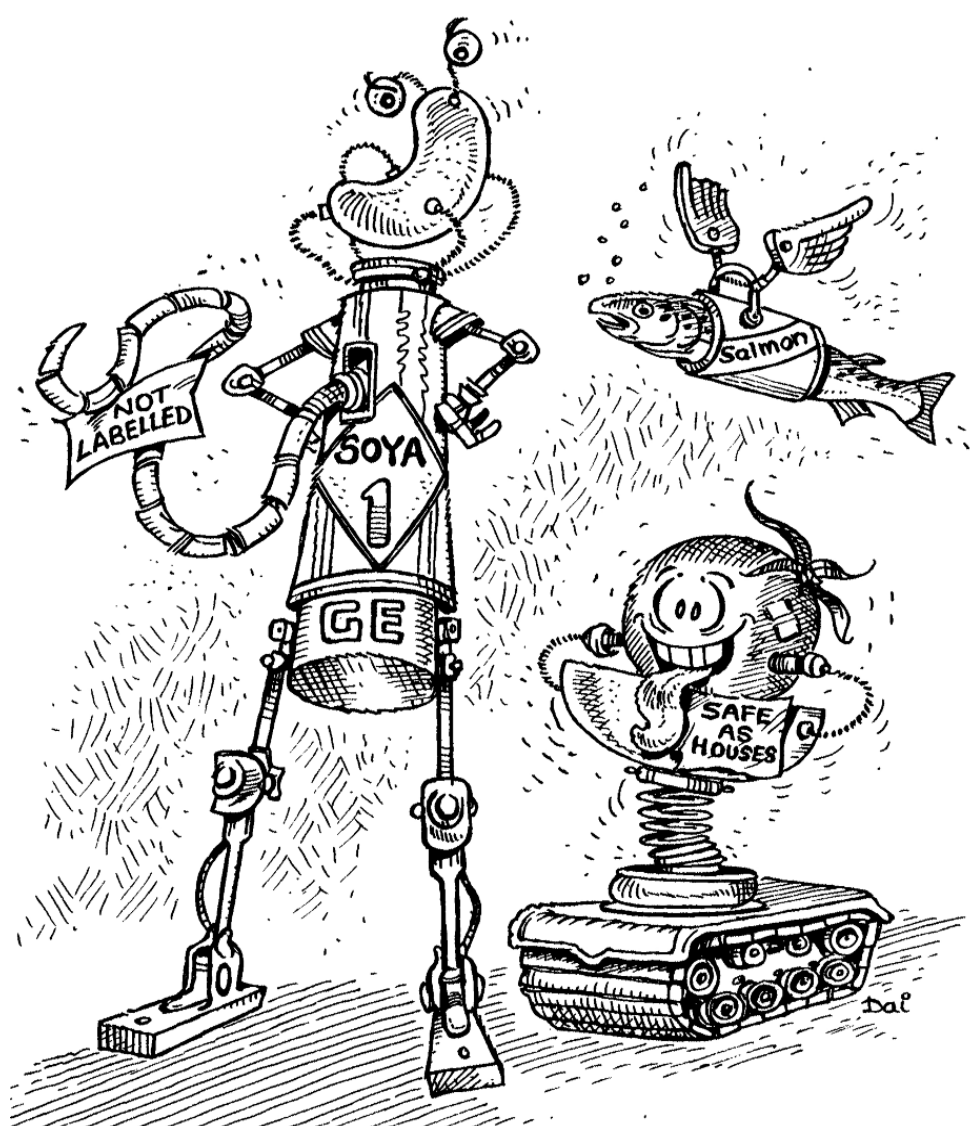
Mark Thomas on voting Labour

"I didn't exhale."

The refreshingly honest Alex Salmond - leader of the Scottish National Party - when asked whether he'd ever taken soft drugs - Dennis Pennis's Big Election BBC2 26/4/97

"The trespassers at Manchester Aiport come from the same political tradition as Mussolini and Pol Pot in rejecting the ballot box in favour of direct action and violence."

Graham Stinger Labour MP for Manchester Blackley and Chair of Manchester Airport plc. Letter to The Guardian 13/5/97

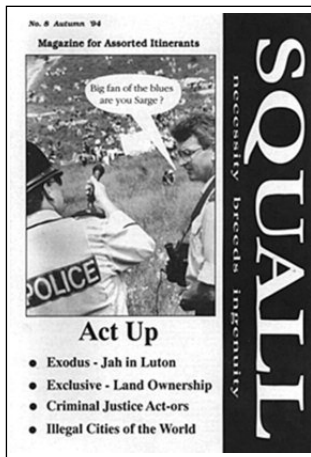


So, How Come:

The Daily Telegraph use rave music on their television adverts when their editorial line has been consistently in favour of legislation against rave culture?

- Changing their tune?
- Envious of the energy?

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 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)

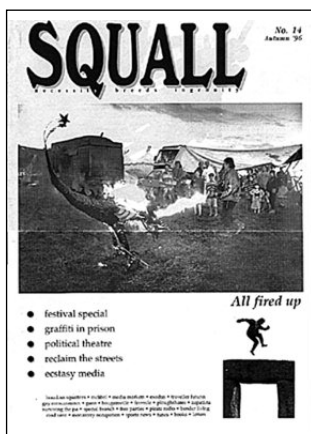
Raving in Bosnia/M15 and environmental activism/Pirate Radio/ Infiltrating the RSPCA/All Systems Go sound system/ McDonald's and Rainforests/The Environment Agency/Noise Bill/Ploughshares/Licensing Parties/ Alternative Technology/Mick Marlow - Cannabis cultivator/ Refugee

Squatters/CS Gas/Newbury road protest/ Tibet/Howard's prison regime/Music reviews/Mark Kelly/ Lofty Tones/letters, regulars and more.

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Each back issue costs £2 + 55p p&p. and are available from Back Issues, SQUALL, Box 8959, London N19 5HW.



YOUTH ACTION AND THE ENVIRONMENT

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

Media lust for riot

The March for Social Justice on April 12th became the subject of another chapter in the media riot act.

There was a fracas. There was paramilitary style policing. But for far longer and for a far greater majority, the march was a celebration of hearted yet peaceful public protest.

For the entire national media, however, a riot was the focus of a multitude of reports which identified the protagonists as march co-organisers Reclaim the Streets. RTS and their sympathisers were described in several broadsheets as 'militant environmental activists'.

Saturday evening's broadcast media and Sunday's national newspapers fortified the image with reports about three people charged with attempted murder whilst another one had been found with a three foot blade. The charges for murder were not included in the Metropolitan Police press release of arrests but was told to journalists by Metropolitan Police press officers over the phone. The dramatic impact of the 'three foot blade' was undermined when it was revealed that the blade belonged to man calling himself King Arthur. The 'King' is in fact a well known personality, not least because he always wears both his period regalia and his constant companion 'Excalibar'. He is in fact a druid of several orders, both firmly and peacefully believing in his own very unusual mission and a far cry from the uncontextualised connotation of a 'three foot blade'.

The charges of 'attempted murder' were in fact never carried forward, having served their purpose in the post-event media coverage. The only journalist to mention the fact that the attempted murder charge were never brought at all was Paul Foot in his 'Footnotes' column in *Private Eye* [9/5/97].

This very specific focus on both violence and environmental activism is indicative of an insidious sub-agenda. The pro-active paramilitary style policing strategies developed since the Miners Strike in 1984/5 and used on the March for Social Justice require continual justification. Meanwhile both the Security

Services Act 1996 and the Police Act 1997, allows police and the security service to authorise intrusive surveillance operations against anyone involved in serious crime. The definition of 'serious crime' includes "conduct by a large number of people in pursuit of a common purpose". Indeed both police and MI5 have an expressed interest in the arena of animal rights activism and, by easy extension, environmental activism. Whilst it has been revealed that Special Branch already have a data-base on road protestors, the DoT have paid out £2.2 million to Brays Detective Agency to gather intelligence on road protestors (see 'Watch with big brother' Page 28).

These operational powers have now been increased by both the Security Services Act and the Police Act. But for what?

Justification for these disproportionately draconian powers is in fact simply missing.

In its absence, media manufacture has been employed in attempts to engender a public impression likely to support state clampdowns and justify surveillance.

The only breach in this media barrage was presented rather unusually on the front page of Monday's *Daily Telegraph*; "Whilst police indicated that Reclaim The Streets...was responsible for the battles between 500 demonstrators and officers in riot gear, the marchers claimed that their event was sabotaged by unconnected extremists". The piece devoted an unusually large amount of space to a spokesperson from Reclaim The Streets: "I saw some of our people actually trying to stop yobboes who had got tanked up on beer and were mindlessly throwing bottles and rocks. A few of our contingent actually put themselves into the firing line and one was beaten up by someone who said he was from 'Red Action'. We are a direct action group and always say bad laws should be broken but we never do anything that would cause injury." [*Daily Telegraph* 14/4/97] Appearing on the front page of a national broadsheet this was remarkably different all the other media reports including those that had appeared in the Sunday Telegraph the day before.

Shortly after the media-onslaught on 'militant environmental activism', the

Guardian carried a large news piece headlined: "Bomb used by animal rights activists" [28/4/97].

The 'bomb' referred to was in fact a letter containing razor blades sent to a Conservative candidate in the Vale of York who publicly supports blood sports. However, the reader doesn't find this out until the second paragraph. The first paragraph and almost the entire ten column-inch article was based on an unnamed 'spokesperson' from the Animal Liberation Front, talking of a "new mood of militancy". The ALF of course do not have a central organisation, rendering it possible that anyone could claim to be a spokesperson. The 'spokesperson' used by the *Guardian* remains anonymous, rendering it completely impossible to work out the significance of the unattributed comments. It is remarkable for such a large news story, based on almost no actual news, to appear in the pages of a national newspaper.

What seems clear is that with most protestors holding an ingenious 'in their face but not with bricks' tactical line, the authorities find it increasingly hard to justify their heavy clampdowns and covert surveillance.

There is of course the ever present danger of active agent provocateurs sparking up violence on protests in order to give the authorities the justification they require. However, despite compliant sensationalist media coverage following the burning of a digger at Newbury and the fracas on the March for Social Justice, and despite the continual media-manufacture designed to inflate animal rights activism as terrorism, the authorities are failing to win the image war. A certain Labrador smile splashed consistently and liberally across the pages and screens of our national media, has a much to do with this failure. Even if certain quarters feel resentful at the singular media-hero-isation of Swampy, that resentment is nothing compared to those elements of the establishment who require the public to believe that all environmental activists have the potential to be terrorists at any moment.

Brazilian Aids victim labelled 'illiterate syphilitic' by Tebbit

On the 14th April José Tadeo dos Santos was a Brazilian musician dying of AIDS in Mildmay Mission Hospital.

By 18th April José had become, according to Norman Tebbit 'this creature...an illiterate syphilitic...who has no right to be here', one of the army of 'deadbeat infectious South Americans' (*The Sun*). Tebbit went on to name Jose as his On Yer Bike candidate for the week: 'Saddle up and off the pier you go. Start swimming westwards across the Atlantic - back home to Brazil where you belong. You have been freeloading here far too long.'

The scapegoating of a black,

developing world AIDS victim started in a feature in the *Evening Standard* (14/4/97). The journalist, Jo-Ann Goodwin, talked of José as if he were a plague carrier. The front page headline refers to José as the 'AIDS man' and she also states: 'José had slept with many girls since coming to London' to back up her nagging reminders of the 'unknown number of Londoners' he has supposedly 'put at risk'. He has 'been allowed to wreak such potential havoc'. This is unsupported and contradicts the experience of those who know José. Indeed, 'since 1993 I never saw him with a woman,' says a friend, José Pedroso.

'José Tadeo dos Santos, 36, who also suffers from ... highly-contagious tuberculosis is free to wander the streets of London' Goodwin reveals before describing with relish a 'multi-drug resistant TB, which is ...often fatal.' She ignores the fact that José's nurses and visitors at the hospital do not use any form of protection from infection.

Apparently it is also a scandal that he is receiving Housing Benefit and Disability Living Allowance and had the chance to die with proper healthcare, as he is an 'overstay'. (He has stayed in Britain longer than his six month tourist visa allows).

Nor is José a good-for-nothing 'with no intention of working...living off his friends'. In reality he earned money from his music and lived in a squat before his AIDS reached an advanced stage.

After the front page headline, '£250,000 Scandal of AIDS man Britain can't expel', the figure of £250,000 from some unspecified 'informal estimates' was on two further *Evening Standard* front pages, as well as in the *Daily Mail* and *The Times*. So where does it come from?

The whole incident has left José in despair. He knows that as a result of the *Evening Standard* article a Brazilian TV station contacted his mother and told her that he is dying of AIDS, which he had always hidden from her.

Nor is he surrounded by close friends in the UK anymore. He can't speak English and relied largely on Brazilians friendship. His best friend had been Gilmar Cruz da Silva who happens to be the husband of Jo-Ann Goodwin. It was through him that she had access to the Brazilian community. Media integrity plunging to a new low.

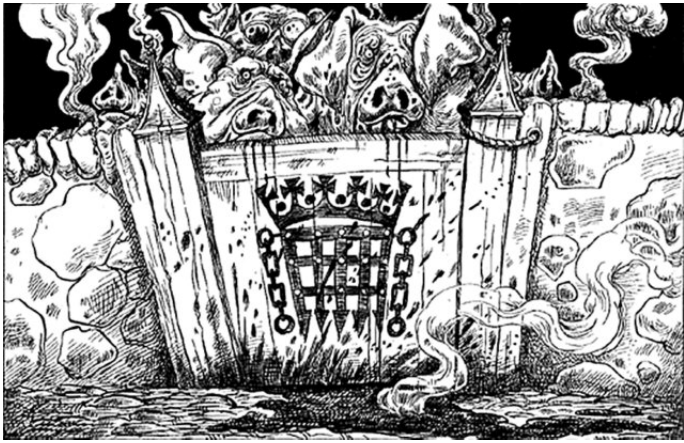
Time Out's Slimy shout

After being accused of attempted murder, why not arbitrarily accuse avowedly non violent RTS demonstrators of arson as well?

That's exactly what London listings and supposedly right on magazine *Time Out* did in April.

Discussing a new 'art' object in its Trends section, a portable arson kit, ie a box of matches, *Time Out* opined it would be "just the thing for rioting Reclaim the Streets protesters".

Ex-Actors of Parliament



Michael Portillo

ex-Con MP Enfield and Southgate

Crimes too numerous to fit into one magazine, he was “sneaky, too right-wing and arrogant” according to a focus group survey of floating voters conducted by the Financial Times and advertising agency FCB.

Neil Hamilton Christine Hamilton

ex-Con MP Tatton and secretary/wife

Consistently claimed that Neil was not a “liar and a cheat” after receiving back-handers for tabling parliamentary questions, when overwhelming evidence suggested this was putting it mildly. Deserve credit for keeping the whole sleaze affair ‘alive and kicking’ right up until election day.

Barry Legg

ex-Con MP Milton Keynes

Although escaping full responsibility in district auditor John Magill’s report, he was nevertheless deemed to have been “particularly” involved in the Westminster gerrymandering scandal. In an attempt to rehabilitate his political career he authored the Public Entertainments Licences (Drug Misuse) Act, 1997 allowing local authorities to close dance clubs if police think drug taking is occurring on the premises.

Sir Graham Bright

ex-Con MP Luton South

As parliamentary private secretary to John Major, he was revealed as a major conduit of political influence for parliamentary lobbyists Ian Greer Associates. He also authored the Entertainments (Increased Penalties) Act 1990 which put criminal sanctions of up to £20,000 fines and/or six months imprisonment for organisers of unlicensed raves. He was also a public critic of Luton’s Exodus Collective.

Olga Maitland

ex-Con MP Sutton and Cheam

Along with Margaret Thatcher and Damn Shirley Porter, Maitland formed a Beelzebub triumvirate and was often used by the media as a right wing dial-a-quote. As one of the sixteen Tory MPs on the Standing Committee, she was blurring advocate of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act. If she’d had her way during the passage of the 1996 Noise Act, criminal sanctions against private parties would have been even worse: “Noise at night from other sources should be included in the Bill. For example cockerels crow at night and with the early dawn they make a dreadful piercing sound.”

Walter Sweeney

ex-Con MP Vale of Glamorgan

Dame Jill Knight
ex-Con MP Birmingham Edgbaston

Warren Hawksley
ex-Con MP Halesowen and Stourbridge

As members of the Home Affairs Select Committee report on freemasonry, they consistently voted in vain against the committee’s recommendation that all members of secret societies in the police and criminal justice system should declare their membership and that the register should be publicly available.

McLatest

With 33 separate verdicts due by June, the result of the mammoth McLibel trial will deliver outright victory to neither side. But whatever happens, the McLibel team, Dave Morris and Helen Steel cannot lose. Nor will they let the matter lie. **SQUALL** has the update.



Following over two years of testimony, submissions to the McLibel trial finally finished on December 13th 1996.

Through an often laborious process of legal disclosure and cross examination co-defendants Helen Steel and Dave Morris have induced the public disclosure of huge quantities of previously hidden corporate information. Their monumental tenacity was employed without legal aid and broke the record for the longest court case in English legal history. Justice Bell's final verdict is expected in June or soon after.

Because of the multi-faceted nature of the case, the judges decision is likely to entail 33 separate verdicts. Hold tight for the explanation.

McDonald's sued Morris and Steel over 16 specific criticisms levelled at the Corporation in the six-sided allegedly libellous *What's wrong with McDonald's* factsheet published by London Greenpeace in 1986. Under British libel laws the burden of proof lies with the defendants, who must show using primary evidence that the criticisms in the leaflet are true. A verdict of libellous or not libellous will be given on each of these 16 points.

Helen Steel and Dave Morris have also counter-sued McDonald's following the publication of a McDonald's leaflet claiming the 'factsheet' to be "lies". This means that Justice Bell is also likely to pass another set of verdicts on the same 16 points but from a different angle. These verdicts will rule whether McDonald's have actually proven that each of the 16 specific criticisms are untrue and that Steel and Morris knew them to be untrue.

In addition to these 32 separate libel verdicts, Justice Bell will rule on whether McDonald's have proven that Morris and Steel were involved in the publication and distribution of the *What's wrong with McDonald's* factsheet in the first place.

Certain aspects of the trial suggest that McDonald's might come out with a higher percentage of favourable verdicts, although it is thought likely that the 33 verdicts will be a mixture.

With the verdicts decided by a single judge presiding over his first libel case, the balance of decision making is likely to be in accordance with the status quo and based very much on legal technicalities. With the high burden of proof required by British libel law, and with the onus of proof in the main case lying solely with the defendants, the absence of a jury was a serious disadvantage.

Mr Justice Bell has even on occasion sought professional advice on the protocol of libel court cases from McDonald's highly experienced libel QC, Richard Rampton. Nevertheless, if just one of the verdicts were unfavourable to McDonald's, it would represent a thorn in the Corporation's media balloon. The High Court exoneration McDonald's are undoubtedly looking for will be complicated by a mix of verdicts.

Were a jury to have judged the case, it is likely a higher percentage of verdicts favourable to the defendants might have resulted.

As Dave Morris told SQUALL: "If we lose we will lose solely on the extreme interpretation of the words in the factsheet as presented to the judge by McDonald's, including the satirical content."

Steel and Morris intend to sue the undercover spies hired by McDonald's to infiltrate London Greenpeace.

Steel and Morris's determined drive to defend the truth is to continue with further court action.

The consequences of the verdicts are three-fold.

Firstly a decision over damages has to be made if any of the verdicts are favourable to McDonald's. The Corporation have put in for £40,000-£60,000 for each defendant making a potential total of £120,000. If damages are awarded against them, Steel and Morris intend to sue the undercover spies hired by McDonald's to infiltrate London Greenpeace. (see SQUALL 14) Evidence came to light in court that these undercover spies had actually been involved in distributing the allegedly libellous 'factsheet' themselves. Consequently, Morris and Steel's intention to sue them if damages are awarded, may lead to the spies having to pay some of the damages. Both Helen Steel (a part-time bartender) and Dave Morris (a single-parent father) survive on subsistence incomes and will simply be declared bankrupt. If McDonald's lose the counterclaim they may have to pay damages to Steel and Morris.

Secondly, the legal costs of each party will be distributed by the Judge. The defendants legal costs have relied on around £35,000 of publicly

donated money, whilst McDonald's legal costs are estimated to be between £5-10 million.

Thirdly, the judge will then decide on an injunction applied for by McDonald's concerning the further distribution of critical material. At present McDonald's want Morris and Steel banned from distributing the original leaflet "or similar criticisms". Unbelievably, the Corporation also want such a ban to extend to "servants and agents" of Steel and Morris.

The defendants have also announced their intention to appeal against unfavourable verdicts, a course of action which McDonald's may take also. As is usual for High Court decision making, the judge will be looking to phrase the reasoning behind his verdicts in a way which provides the least opportunity for appeal.

Steel and Morris are also preparing to take the British Government to the European Court of Human Rights to argue that libel laws in the UK side with the most resourced legal department rather than with the truth. In the process they will challenge their denial to a jury trial, their disqualification from legal aid and the exhausting burden of proof even on satire. They will also seek to establish the right for people to criticise multinationals without being sued.

The Saturday after the verdict, a date yet to be announced, has been declared 'Victory Day' by the McLibel Support Campaign, with an 'Adopt a Store' Scheme being organised nationwide. Already 400 stores (over half the number in the UK) have been adopted. The campaign is appealing for further volunteers throughout the country, who will be encouraged to hand out copies of a condensed version of the *What's wrong with McDonald's* factsheet leaflet summarising the criticisms levelled at the McDonald's Corporation. Over two million of these leaflets have been handed out since McDonald's first issued writs. This leaflet is also available in an annotated version connecting the criticisms with the relevant exposures drawn from the trial transcript itself. To join the list of volunteers and help target your local McDonald's burger bar on the day, contact the McLibel Support Campaign on 0171 713 1269.

Meanwhile the entire set of trial transcripts and documents, as well as a multitude of press coverage and much more, is available on the highly impressive McSpotlight Web-site at <http://www.mcspotlight.org>

Coverage of the case can also be found in back copies of **SQUALL** (see back copies advert for details).



Wrong side of the



Above: as jobs have lost pit communities have gone into decline. Those who can have left.

Left: The ceremony of drug use now passes the time.



From comfortably NUM to uncomfortably numb. **Annie Taylor** investigates the escalation in heroin abuse in former mining towns. Photographs by **Richard Heys**.

tracks

REJOICE, a housing boom is upon us. Propertied southerners can celebrate that their homesteads are rocketing in value. But the less well-heeled wanting to buy their own bricks and mortar can take heart that there's now somewhere where houses come well-cheap. A three-bedroomed family terrace in corners of post-industrial Yorkshire is now yours at auction for a knocked-down, rock-bottom £5,000 - or the price of a good second hand car. Why such a snip? Research suggests it's just one of the ramifications of the swingeing closure of the coal mines and the decline of heavy industry that has blasted the area. The ripple effect of the mass pit shut-downs announced by Michael Heseltine in 1992 has been far more wide-reaching than was publicly anticipated. But at Hallam University in Sheffield - the city where Scargill's NUM used to have an impressive office until plummeted membership forced it to sell up - academic Alan McGauley has been investigating the continuing impact of the decimation of the industry and has exposed a disturbing, rarely acknowledged side-effect.

He has been examining the massive explosion in the market for heroin in the former pit communities since the closure of their mines and his findings make uncomfortable reading for those who have sought to ignore or gloss over the drastic results of stripping an area of it's staple employment, who have failed to acknowledge the link between deprivation and drug use.

McGauley is in no doubt about the seriousness of his findings and his work makes grim reading. That's if you can get copies to read. His recent study on the once-thriving mining area of Barnsley which was funded by the local health authority was suddenly, after its completion, turned into a private internal document and he is unable to talk about its contents.

So SQUALL has obtained a leaked copy. In it McGauley concludes: "... economic and social conditions have a very strong impact on developing drug markets. The increasing and well-established deprivation which characterises large parts of Barnsley provides a potential market for many different substances that can, and are, being abused... It is clear that 'problematical' drug use has a strong correlation with other factors such as high levels of poverty and deprivation."

This is a town which in the past few years has experienced a 300 per cent increase in the number of drug users declaring themselves addicts. McGauley has seen a similar trend in several former pit towns and says the reasons are clear.

"If you have a situation as you have in the coal areas where they lose almost all male employment overnight that doesn't only impact on the people who lost their jobs. It's their kids' jobs that have gone as well and with them their kids' prospects. And it also has an effect on shops and local businesses. People who can leave have left and others have gone on long term sickness benefit. It creates an environment of decay and loss. What held villages together was the pit and work. Without that structure people who are using heroin have more impact and pull others into their group who would have been peripheral if there was something else to do or if they had money."

He's found that heroin now fulfils a crucial role in the lives of many young people.

"Major social changes in employment available particularly to young men has important consequences for young people's lives in terms of structuring the day as well as economic prospects. Ten to fifteen years ago a sixteen year old would have had a good chance of getting a job in heavy industry. That to a degree would have socialised him into a lifestyle where he would

probably have gone and abused alcohol. He would have eventually got married, because that's the structure that the men at work would have socialised him into by the age of about 23 or 24. But without a wage they are excluded from the male world of the pub and they need to find alternatives. The appeal of drugs is more likely to get to them now - it's something to block your time out with. The ceremony of drug use passes the time and heroin provides a structure in terms of a network of users and also for some improved economic status."

He says that while there have always been a small number of old alternative-culture heroin users in every town, what's happening now is that a new wave of heroin users have come to the fore. Over the past two years heroin in the north appears to be getting cheaper, making it more accessible to more people. It's now as cheap to buy a small amount of heroin as it is to be a cannabis smoker. New users around here seem to prefer to smoke heroin rather than inject it, which again encourages experimentation by those who were squeamish about the idea of dirty needles. One 22 year-old woman I met was having a great time tooting something she called "brown". It wasn't until she realised that she was addicted to it that she discovered what the substance was - she was panicked to learn that brown was another name for smack.

McGauley believes that her story is not unusual. There are plenty of people looking for a means of escape and have got to the stage where they will try anything.

"No-one chooses a career as a heroin user, people fall into it. We shouldn't forget in all this that heroin is something they enjoy. The 'Just Say No' message doesn't work. Why should they say no when there's nothing else on offer?"

continued →



Above photo:
Living amongst the boarded-up
derelicts of Barnsley

Frickley pit which employed
3,000 at its peak.

Below photo:
Ex-miner, Steve, stands on the
wasteground that used to be

SQUALL has visited several former mining areas to see for itself the extent of heroin use and to meet those involved. Users, their parents, their lawyers, the police who arrest them and the probation officers and counsellors who try to get them off the stuff all say that in the past two years heroin has become the drug of choice in these areas. And they all feel powerless to help the twelve years olds showing up at court off their faces and the sixteen year old girl about to go to prison for persistent burglary to support her habit.

Neil is one of this phenomenon's young entrepreneurs who was doing very nicely out of it for a while. In his early 20's, he has run a business - the corner shop of the alternative heroin economy - selling heroin from his home. He says there's at least one small-time dealer in most of the streets around him, but small-time can mean big money when demand is so high.

His start-up costs were met by a local legit businessman who saw the easy profit to be had if he could find someone to take the risk and sell. Neil accepted the offer as a way of funding his own habit. He'd been out of work since a period of illness forced him to leave a warehousing job. But soon found he could make more money than he'd ever thought he'd earn.

"I was making owt from £200 to £500 a day. I'd had a warehouse

job and I could earn in a day or even a couple of hours what I used to earn in a week. It were so easy. My friends who have been to university and that, they've finished their degrees and they ain't got a job. They're just bumming around the village. They're just the same as me - on the giro except they've got a degree. Studying had been a waste of three or four years." His was the only route he could see to decent money.

His enterprise has had its down sides as well. He had to get used to living with half a dozen bolts on his door. They paid off when the police busted him. It took them as many attempts to get in as he had bolts by which time the place was clean. "You never got a minute's peace, that's the main downfall. As soon as you sat down to do anything it were ch..ch..ch.. on the door. Someone else wanting stuff."

He's heard of all the grant aid supposedly aimed at relieving these areas but he's sceptical that the benefits will trickle down to the likes of him. He thinks heroin will remain the main source of relief for some time to come.

"It's just going to stay round here and kids coming up now through schools, they're just going to do exactly the same as we did. There's nowt round here, no jobs, nowt."

He's stopped dealing now and is taking a course of methadone.



HEROIN has become an inescapable part of life for many in the former pit communities, and not just for those who use it. Rachel, who's 22, grew up in South Kirkby and South Elmsall near Wakefield and understands the pressures on her peers but she's found the signs of the popularity of heroin too in her face to hang around. She's left the villages in the hope of bringing up her daughter away from daily sightings of drugs doing their worst. Out shopping in the village she was regularly encountering friends who are now slaves to it. It was too close for comfort. She felt depressed and angry knowing kids of fourteen who were on it and she decided she had to get out.

"It's worse round here than ever. Two dealers got thrown out of their houses not long ago. But there's still more folk getting on it. In nearly every other house there's someone using. I see some of them on it - mothers my age with two or three kids round them and I think 'Get a life'."

She's taken a house several miles away in a remote village.

At a Barnsley village community centre the afternoon drinkers are confident that their response to the problem is proving a great success. Forget the police... a bit of DIY is all you need, they say.

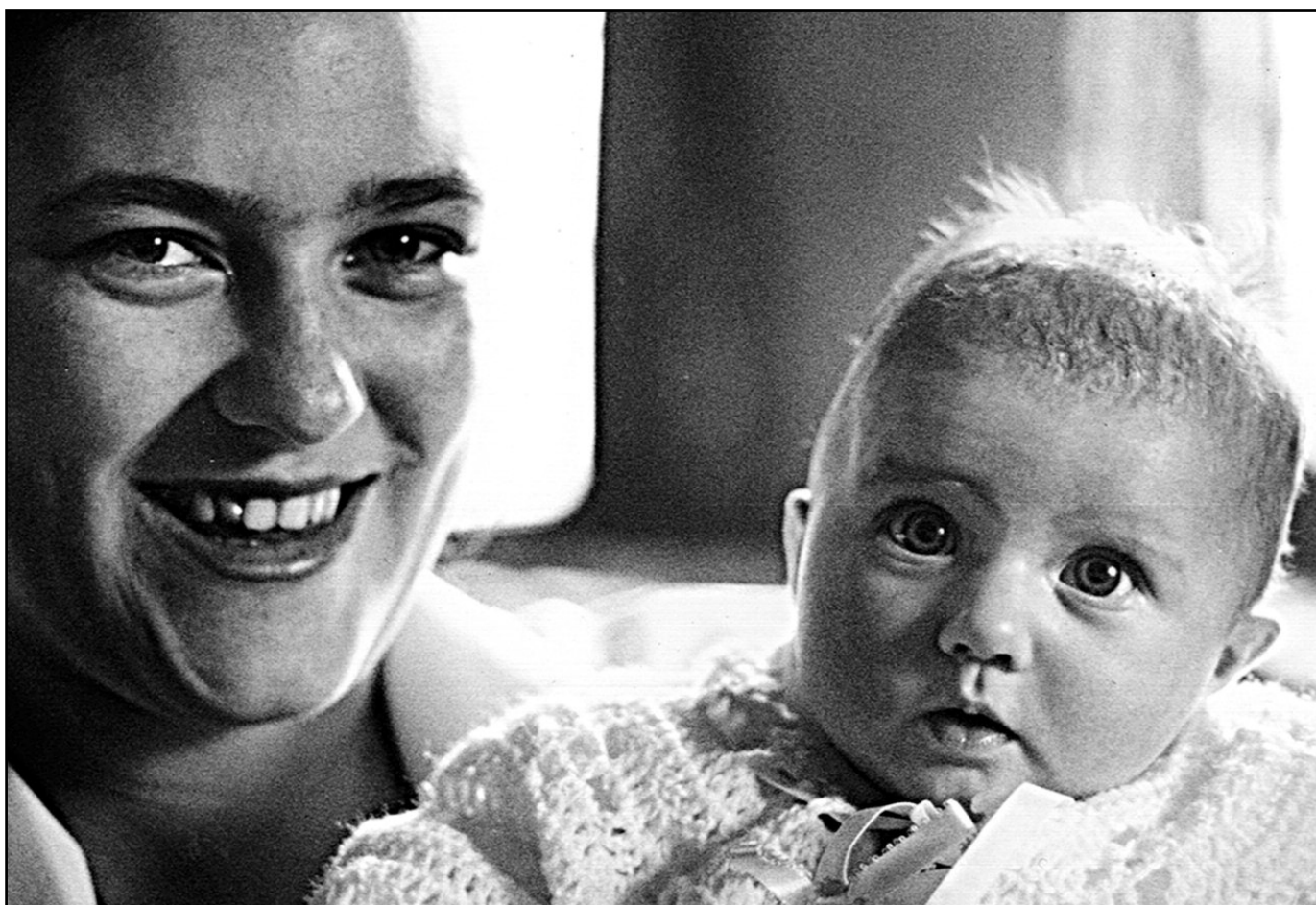
"Drugs aren't a problem round here. A certain lad comes in here, I'm not going to put no names to him, but he got rid of certain drug dealers. We've looked after ourselves, we've gone in a roundabout way to sort it out ourselves. We get shot of them as quickly as possible. A lot of these guys in this village have got a lot of muscle and are very determined."

Carl recalls there was much commotion one night last summer when a house caught fire. The emergency services were ranked outside. Carl was out with his dog and took the opportunity of giving them a clue as to the cause of the blaze.

"I says 'what's going off, like?' They said 'well we don't know'. I turned round to one of the police officers and I says 'look I'm telling you now it's time you'd raided that place because they're dealing'. I just walked away and took me dog back home."

The dealers moved away and villagers claim it's been all quiet ever since, no thanks to the police.

"In the miners' strike they were pulling police out everywhere but where are they now? We were ordinary working men fighting for what we believed in, for our rights, and they put thousands of police



Above photo: Rachel, who moved to another area for the sake of her baby, Courtney.

into the lines to get the miners down. But they're not putting thousands of police into the lines to get the dealers down," said Carl.

There's much talk about how much property crime is generated by drug users on their desperate sprees to raise the cash for their next feed. But for many people there's now bad crime and good crime. It's OK to break the legs of the lad you catch stealing your video who's robbing to fund his habit, or to scare dealers shitless. To them this is not vigilante-ism, it is protecting your kids and the law is far more useful in the hands of a community than those of a remote police force.

They may be convinced that their homespun drug prevention measures are standing the test at present but you can see in their posture and their furrowing foreheads as kids bomb past on their bikes that they still fear for their futures. They admit there's nothing for the kids to do and worry about them searching out ways of whiling away the time.

A mixture of pride and regret comes over Steve as he flicks through the volume of pictures telling the history of Frickley pit that he has painstakingly compiled. He worked in mining for nearly 30 years, more than 20 of them at Frickley in his home town of South Elmsall. Frickley shut in 1994 and Steve says the effect on the village was "tremendous".

"There was a lot of despair because things looked so bleak. Local shops closed, big chains

moved out, the crime figures rocketed and the druggies moved in. When the pit closed people had money to burn and they were easy to convince that drugs were a good thing. The dealers moved in in a big way, people started getting habits and the burglary rate shot up."

He says the younger men who were redundant and still in their 20s were the ones who eagerly gave it a go.

His new role as chairman of the district's crime prevention panel keeps him well informed on such trends. Since 1994 there have been 10 new addicts on the register in his district every week. The figure has remained static and some come off the register all the time but the fact that there are still new names being added alarms him.

In his new role he's heavily involved in damage limitation, fitting security locks and toughened doors and windows to the homes of the elderly. Comfort in difficult times. He's full of praise for the miners who spent their redundancy money on sensible business ventures. Two former colleagues have a thriving welding company with a popular line in security shutters for shops and they're snowed under with work.

At its peak Frickley employed 3,000 men, dwindling to about 800 when it closed. Nothing remains of the bustling, churning complex but hillocks of coal awaiting removal to storage. Standing on the banks surveying the errie flattened expanse it's as if a whole century has passed. A landscape transformed in three years, and in another five years Steve expects it will have

changed again. The land is due to be handed over to the local council and Steve has founded an environmental group to steer through plans to create Frickley Country Park complete with a fishing lake, woodlands, picnic park, bike track and skateboard area.

He's keen that the community should get something back to help it break through the bleakness.

Fear of putting off potential investors is often cited in these areas as the reason for not publicising their plight. Health authorities and councils worry that the major consequence of standing up and saying they have a problem will be that they will be dubbed the heroin capital of the north.

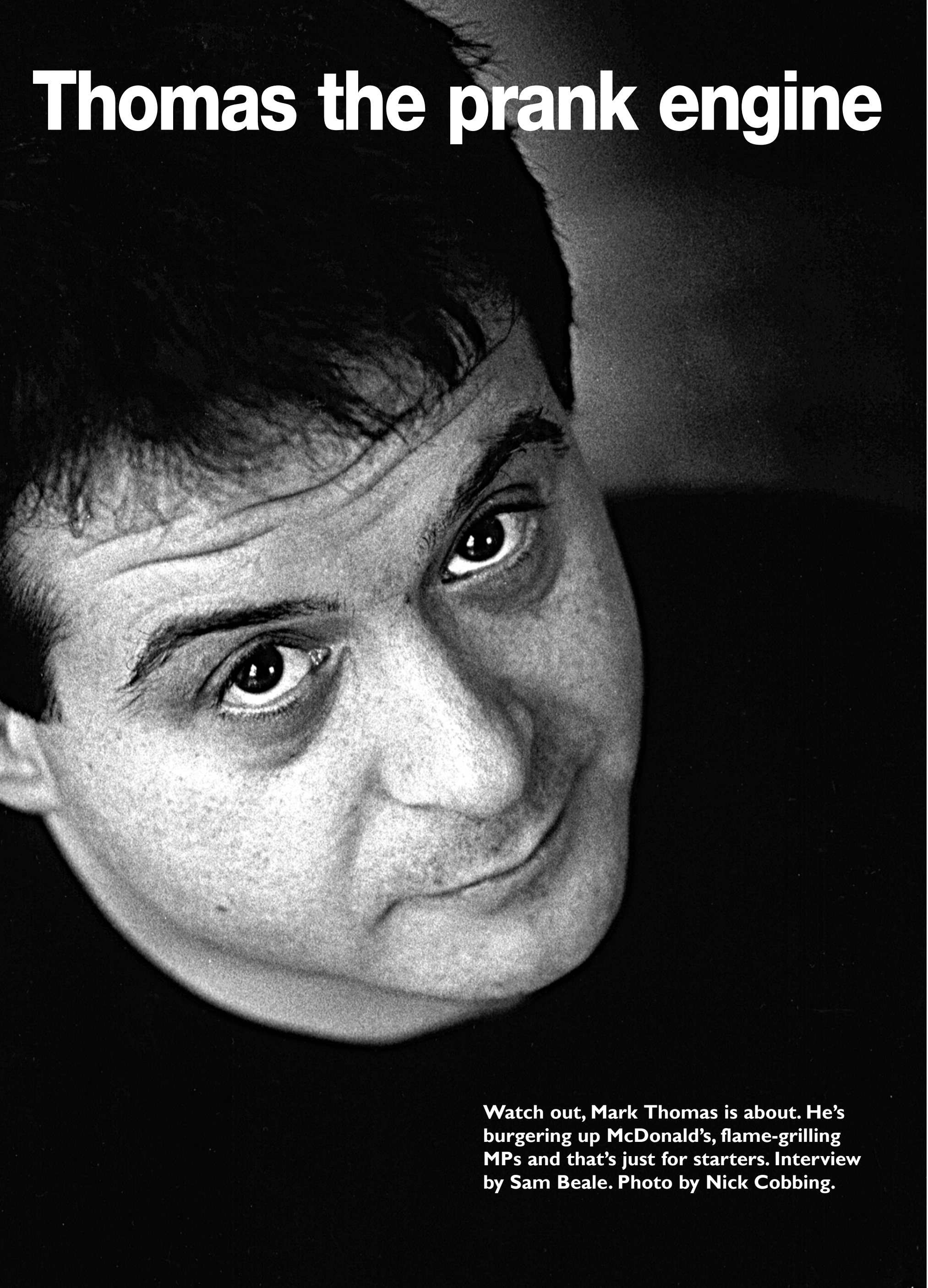
But locally Alan McGauley senses that the communities are starting to exert pressure for something fundamental to be done.

"People see what's happening around them, but what do you do? Heroin is just so widely available now that you can get it wherever you are if that's what you want."

For him the answer is obvious but he says it's old and unfashionable. It's jobs:

"You can have addicts going into schools talking to kids. They have credibility so they have a good impact. You can improve access to drug rehabilitation which is terrible at the moment. But what do you do when people come out of rehab? How do you stop them going back into the same cycle if they haven't got a job, they haven't got a decent home and they haven't got hope?"

Thomas the prank engine



Watch out, Mark Thomas is about. He's burgering up McDonald's, flame-grilling MPs and that's just for starters. Interview by Sam Beale. Photo by Nick Cobbing.

Blackpool. The 1995 Tory Party Conference. A meeting of the Monday Club and Tory MP for Batley & Spen, Elizabeth Peacock waxes lyrical about the benefits of publicly lashing young offenders live on the national lottery. Sat in the audience is Mark Thomas. He stands: "I think it's a great idea, but if you really want it to work you have to put it on at an earlier time so that young people know the implications of breaking the law. I think what you should seriously look at is publicly lashing young offenders on *Blue Peter*." Mrs Peacock agrees. Thomas goes on to suggest that in addition to bringing back hanging - seeing as this is a Christian country - we should have some form of public crucifixion. Mrs Peacock replies that Thomas is perhaps a little bit more right wing than she but she sympathises with his point of view.

Mark Thomas' comedy series *The Mark Thomas Comedy Product* was televised last year on Channel 4. It was an attempt, he says, to make television "that was real, that meant something, that was about something and actually tried to challenge... It sprang out of an urge to create things that would throw spanners in the works". What's more, it was very funny.

The show was essentially a series of elaborate set ups à la *You've Been Framed* interspersed with bursts of stand up. Mark actually cites Jeremy Beadle as "genuinely fucking inspirational". However, as the Mrs Peacock example illustrates, there are notable differences between the Beadle and Thomas approaches. Beadles' targets are, as Mark observes, usually ordinary people who "have the piss taken out of them enough, so I thought it was important to try and get to the people who aren't answerable; who normally get away with it".

Thomas is not adverse to being extremely silly if it helps tease silly behaviour from those who generally bask in the serious glow of image-manufactured self-importance. For one show he dressed as a giant teddy to interview MPs including Gerry (it'll be fucking curtains for me if I put on that giant dick costume) Hayes, David Amess and Sebastian Coe. He tried to convince each of them to draw a map of their constituencies on a young woman's stomach and then have their (clothed) bums photographed. *Terry & June* stylee social-embarrassment shudders from all sides of the house.

Each stunt was executed with a home video-meets-*Cook Report* minimum of TV pizzazz and it frequently seemed likely that Thomas or a member of the crew might get punched in the mouth or arrested.

Following an interview with a McDonald's publicity spokesperson - who assured them that at McDonald's the emphasis is on 'food, folks and fun' - the *Comedy Product* 'folks' were less than convinced so they set up some fun of their own. Firstly they bought 100 burgers from a McDonalds drive-in and attempted to sell them from a burger van parked right outside: "They got really upset about that," recalls Mark. The crew then tried to order burgers from various vehicles including a very large tank; a clown car which collapsed half-way through their order (as clowns ran around asking "is Ronald in?" and dropping their trousers); and, having been asked to remove two cows from the forecourt, they finally rolled in with a low loader occupied by punk band Chaos UK. They were banned by the manager. Any feelings of guilt that they were merely targeting individual managers who were 'just doing their jobs' had been allayed says Mark when the manager, noticing some McDonalds' workers looking through the windows at him and the film crew, became irate: "He shouted, 'get back to work before I sack you'. It was like yes! Comedy gods you have smiled upon us!" At this point, says Mark, "we saw the difference between the reality and the advertising".

The comedy gods' smiles grew wider when the crew attempted to gain access to some of the 18,000 works of art on the Conditionally Exempt Works of Art List. This list, open to people who inherit works of art, means no inheritance tax has to be paid on the specific items on the list providing members of the public can view them. Seeing as half a billion to a billion pounds of tax has not been paid on artworks on the register Mark and his team set out to discover just how easy it is for ordinary people to gain access to

the items and their owners. Their biggest coup involved a large number of people turning up at Rothschild's Bank dressed as all sorts of strange fluffy things asking to see a Gainsborough painting Sir Evelyn de Rothschild had registered on the list. They were refused entry and all wrote letters on the spot requesting to see the painting. After two months they had not heard from Sir Evelyn so they contacted the Inland Revenue. They were informed that Sir Evelyn had removed a number of his works of art from the register. Mark estimates that as a result he had to pay somewhere between £400,000 and £1m in tax: "Basically we were just obstinate letter writers and yet we've made the 43rd richest man in Britain cough up this amount of money. If we can do that just through a bunch of letters then the possibilities before us are completely endless."

Such antics within the jealously protective worlds of big business, politics, and the stinking rich are not without their risks. During the making of the exempt works of art stunt Mark received a phonecall to his home from MP and then Armed Forces Minister, Nicholas Soames, and Channel 4 was threatened with a government D Notice gagging order forbidding broadcasters and journalists from mentioning a specific piece of information (in this case the Soames' home address). Though the notice was not actually served, Channel 4's lawyers advised the programme not to encourage viewers to contact Soames to request access to works he had on the list. As such it was, says Mark, "a direct act of censorship initiated by the state".

There were a variety of other legal problems during the making of the series including one MP accusing the show of entrapment, and other prey insisting on legal constraints which made broadcasting a number of items utterly pointless. Mark says Channel Four was, overall, actively supportive. Nonetheless he stresses there are inherent pressures on programme makers: "When you fuck off people like Sir Evelyn de Rothschild... they know the head of Channel 4, Michael Grade. They're mates. They go to football together." He is in no doubt what makes these worlds go round: "What you have is a class of people who are working with similar interests and who know each other on a social level." Similarly broadcasting standards regulatory bodies which determine what is and is not 'acceptable' are examples of the same class of vested interests working together. These bodies are, believes Mark, "used by companies and powerful individuals rather than by ordinary people to register complaints or to control content within the media".

Corporate interests also have their role in controlling the nature of an evening's viewing: "You can," says Mark, "always tell what advertisers think of the audience by the adverts they place. If you look at Chris Evans' show, there's car, beer and holidays; that flash, laddish disposable income bracket". He delights in recalling, "for my show it was Canestan thrush cream advertised in between every fucking one! So it's nice to know that people watching were sexually active... and infected!" Whilst fungicidal treatments are not likely to be prey to Mark's curiosity, it is clear that programme makers are beholden to advertisers and it is therefore safe to assume that ultimately TV executives do not take kindly to shows which directly criticise or attack the interests of corporate paymasters.

Despite such pressures Mark refuses to see making a successful TV show as a step on the show-biz career ladder which, for comedians, goes something like this: "You get your twenty minutes; get bookings at Jongleurs and the Comedy Store, go on and do an hour; do Edinburgh and get nominated for the Perrier; get five minutes on a telly show and then get offered your own show; do that for three series. Then you do a light entertainment show, maybe a game show, maybe a chat show; then you play golf, then you die. In

between you're advertising beers".

Once you become a 'viable proposition' in the world of mass media, there is a chance that your ethical dilution has begun and, says Mark, "you go from being an angry young man into quite a nice young chap who occasionally writes rather witty columns... there is an assumption that what you have now is a career". The day after the first programme in the *Comedy Product* series was

broadcast Mark received a phonecall from an advertiser. He remembers an agent telling him: "They really like the show. They think it's really radical, really cutting edge and blahdeblahdeblah... would you like to do a voiceover for BisoDol?! It's like no, I'm all right thanks very much. There's this feeling that we've

fought for three years to get this show on air so that I can be the voice of fucking indigestion!"

Mark does not accept the decline to 'nice young chap' as unavoidable: "People always have choices. Change is absolutely inevitable and crucial but to see it as a watering down of what you think or what you believe is really awful." He maintains that: "If anything my views have become more defined. By stepping into that world you're forced to define your views."

He wants to 'succeed' on his own terms; if Carlton were to ask him to do their 'new, cutting edge satirical show' he would not accept: "Because their version of what is cutting edge and satirical isn't mine." Nonetheless, "that doesn't mean I have to ghettoise myself. I have seen performers who I regard as brilliant put the knife into themselves in the name of integrity. They have deliberately sabotaged their own ability to remain ghettoised. For me that is as stupid as suddenly appearing with a bowl of cornflakes singing they're tasty tasty very very tasty".

He acknowledges that to be a performer in the first place you must have "an ego the size of an urban conurbation"; his point is that television, success, and a certain amount of fame are not ideological curses if you know why you are doing what you are doing: "If you do have any kind of personal, moral integrity then why are you frightened of moving into another arena? Ken Loach would still be making student films if he had that mentality."

Nonetheless some people, as they say, will do anything to get on telly. Mark Thomas cringes as he explains why he hates to see performers he respects doing this, "for one you look a twat," and more importantly, "human creativity is there to be enjoyed, encouraged and celebrated. Human mediocrity is fucking celebrated enough. We don't need people saying 'fuck it, I'm stupid. Let's join the stupid gang.'"

He hopes the series he made encouraged people to believe they can effect change: "One of the most important things to do now is to sponsor dissent: to actually sponsor the fact that you can change things. There's a prevalent mode of thinking and a way of behaving which says we live in the world and there is nothing we can do to change it. It's a patently ridiculous idea but one that is enforced all the time." Making this television series was confirmation for Mark that "we can get away with much more than we think we can".

The making of the next series is currently underway with plans for such gems as a nationwide scheme to plant hemp-seed in public places: "We're hoping to act as a seed bank. We intend to distribute low THC seeds to people. We'll supply them with a legal aid kit and ask them to plant seeds in public places...from outside law courts to the Queen's garden. The idea is currently being legally approved at Channel 4..."

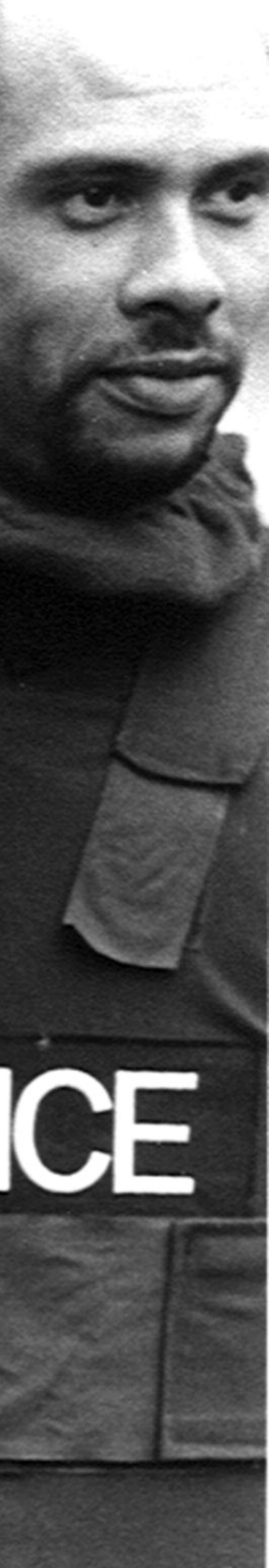
"I think what you should seriously look at is publicly lashing young offenders on Blue Peter."



big Watch with brother

“To be feared is not to be respected and without respect, community cannot exist.”

Both the police and MI5 already have a history of conducting intrusive surveillance on political protestors. **Seamus O’Conner** reviews the implications of new legislation which increases these powers.



Above: Police surveillance of Reclaim the Future at Liverpool.
Photo: Tash

Right: Photomontage 'two heads no better than one' by Steve Redshaw.

According to the recently deposed Home Secretary, British police needed instantly available statutory powers of 'intrusive surveillance'. And so, with Labour Party assistance, the Police Act was hurried onto the statute books in the last hour of a dissolving parliament.

Under the new Act, which still requires implementation by the incoming government, police will have the statutory powers to 'bug and burgle' anyone likely to provide information remotely relevant to an investigation into 'serious crime'.

On the face of it, more power to fight serious crime might seem reasonable enough, but as a major adjustment to the law affecting civil liberties, the issue deserved far more consideration than it actually received.

With no bill of rights in the UK, the very existence of civil liberties is almost completely reliant on a fluctuating degree of parliamentary respect. If this respect withers in the shadow of other agendas, the population of the UK will have major cause for concern. The Police Act is the latest in a series of legislation which provides such cause, not least because of its wide definition of intended targets.

Under the Act, "serious crime" includes "conduct by a large number of persons in pursuit of a common purpose".

Regularly attracting over 5,000 people, Reclaim The Streets' imaginative and socially-oriented 'political parties' easily fall within such a definition.

Following their successfully inspired 'pedestrianisation' of Islington in 1995, unmarked vehicles were deployed outside the RTS office in North London. People leaving the premises were followed, sometimes on the mountain bikes kept in the back of the trailing vehicles. In conjunction with this rather obvious tactic, RTS's mail began arriving displaying overt evidence of interference. Letters were regularly restapled and labelled with Post Office stickers claiming the mail had been found 'open in the post'. Following their most successful political party on the M41 last summer, the covert became the overt when Reclaim's London office was raided by police and their computer hard discs confiscated.¹

RTS events are also consistently attended by the Forward Intelligence Team attached to the Public Order Unit of the Metropolitan Police. According to reports in the Met's magazine *The Job*, this team comprises 12 specially trained officers who work in uniform "to build a rapport between themselves and street activists so that the people likely to provoke disorder can be identified early in an event."²

This "rapport" includes photographing and videoing individual protestors and matching them up with intelligence files. As the *Police Review* forewarned in July 1994: "The aim is to target known activists in the same way as convicted football hooligans - and to use the most modern technology available."³ Individuals identified as regularly present on public demonstrations are then singled out for special attention.

On the Friday night prior to the March for Social Justice in April, RTS printed 20,000 copies of a spoof version of the *Evening Standard*. The intention was to ask volunteers to hand out 10,000 copies of *Evading Standards* to rush-hour commuters in central London. However, police found out the delivery point for the newspapers and, as the papers arrived, swooped to impound the lot. Two members of the Met's Forward Intelligence Team, Sgt Mark Sully and Sgt Chris Fenot were present on the scene.

Although six volunteers were at the distribution point, Sgt Sully specifically arrested three regular RTS activists known from intelligence files. After taking them to Bow Street Police Station, he charged them with incitement to cause affray and highway obstruction. The three were bailed to appear at

Walworth Road Police Station at 12.30pm the next day. When the activists turned up the next morning they were detained and further charged with breach of copyright on the Eros logo and a Metropolitan Police logo used on a spoof advert (altered to read 'Multinational Police'). They were kept in cells for most of the day and weren't released until 6.15pm, causing them to miss the march altogether.

Whilst the Metropolitan Police might claim "the relationship between these officers and the individuals will avert trouble before it happens",⁴ in reality this has meant using intelligence in attempts to prevent demonstrations altogether.

When a relatively small action was planned by RTS to block a BP tanker leaving a London depot last December, very few people knew of the location. Protestors arriving at the site that morning, however, were greeted with a swarm of riot police and the action was abandoned.

It is now well-known that road protest stand offs such as those at Twyford, M11 and Newbury have involved the deployment of private detectives, hired to collate intelligence on individual protestors. Up until March this year, the Department of Transport has handed over £2.2 million to Bray's Detective Agency for just such a purpose.⁵ The passing of the Police Act now suggests other agencies are poised to take over this key surveillance role, with the DoT no longer stumping up the cash. As Inspector Gwyn Williams from the Met's Public Order Training Unit said: "They [police commanders] must assemble their command teams and planning teams, learn how to get information and how to analyse it. They must also consider wider issues such as the effect of the disorder on communities and government departments."²

As the March issue of the *Police Review* explained: "Forces are having to deploy increasingly sophisticated techniques in the policing of environmental protests."⁶

Police reasoning for such sophisticated approaches were suggested by Chief Superintendent Mike Davies, from the Met's Public Order Unit published recently in the *Police Review*. Davies described environmental protestors as "... ingenious, organised, articulate and well informed on environmental matters. They use flexible, sometimes inventive, tactics to achieve their aims."⁶ Imagination, it seems, is a force the authorities find hard to counter with above board methods.

Chief Superintendent Mike Davies also addressed a recent seminar on the issue of policing environmental protest: "If a particular environmental cause were to spread countrywide, then mutual aid on a scale not seen since the miners' dispute might once again be required."⁶

The paramilitary police response to the 1984 Miners Strike is now well-known.⁷ In conjunction with these overt tactics, the mutual aid referred to by Mike Davies could well include the deployment of MI5. Indeed, evidence of MI5's involvement in Margaret Thatcher's war against Arthur Scargill and the Miners Union has long been in the public domain.⁸

Following the Security Services Act passed last year, MI5 now have a statutory "supporting" role in police investigations into domestic "serious crime", using the same wide definition of 'serious crime' found in the Police Act.⁹

Prior to the Police Act, British police were unhappy with the superior powers of intrusive surveillance available to the security services for domestic investigations involving the police. The result was a 'turf war' between police and security services which induced some candid comments about the way the security services conduct their business. One senior regional crime squad officer was quoted in the *Police Review*: "Their lack of accountability may encourage them to go further than the police would. One scenario is getting gangs fighting each other, taking each other out and doing the job for us. In drugs there is a lot of inter-gang rivalry and violence already and it would not be hard to set them against each other. I could easily see a situation where local forces may be left to pick up the pieces."¹⁰

Partly to placate police disquiet over the superior investigative powers of the security services, Michael Howard brought in the Police Act, essentially to equalise the intrusive surveillance capabilities of MI5 and the British police force.

continued





*'Evading Standards' being impounded on Piccadilly, London, as RTS activists were arrested.
Photo: Alex MacNaughton.*

In its list of new domestic investigative arenas, MI5 have expressed interest in "animal rights" activism, a brief which easily extends into all related environmental protest issues.

Surveillance operations on animal rights activists had previously been the sole territory of the Animal Rights National Index (ARNI), a section of the police's Special Branch.

A confidential report on road protestors clearly demonstrates their extended interest. Written by senior special branch officers in early 1996, the report identifies 1,700 activists.¹¹

Evidence revealed during the mammoth McLibel trial also provided some indication of the lengths to which Special Branch's operative powers have already been taken. Sid Nicholson, Vice President of McDonald's UK, revealed to the court that Special Branch freely offered to provide the Corporation with information about protestors attending anti-McDonald's demonstrations. Nicholson, who at the time was also executive head of security, described how Special Branch even asked to use an office within McDonald's headquarters from which to conduct a surveillance operation on a demonstration taking place outside in October 1989. According to Nicholson, such mutual favours were easily facilitated because "all the security department [McDonald's] have many, many contacts with the police..... they are all ex-policemen." Indeed, Nicholson himself was a member of the police force for 31 years.¹²

Home Office guidelines issued in 1984 state: "Access to information held by Special Branch should be strictly limited to those who have a particular need to know. Under no circumstances should information be passed to commercial firms or to employers' organisations."

Alarm over such casual management of covert surveillance information was also heightened in January

of this year, following an official investigation into the large scale mis-handling of information by the police's National Criminal Intelligence Service (NCIS).

The NCIS is a nationally based organisation responsible for overseeing police intelligence. Whereas previously it has operated as a section of the Home Office, the new Police Act imbues the NCIS with statutory 'independence' and new statutory powers of intrusive surveillance. It has also been given responsibility for overseeing liaisons between the security services and the police. The Director General of the NCIS, Albert Pacey, said: "I am confident these new arrangements will enhance our intelligence and operational capabilities."¹⁰

Under legislation covering the interception of communications, senior NCIS officers are allowed to make notes from the transcripts of surveillance operations and take them away. They are required to return them at the end of each investigation.

During the course of a recent corruption case against a South East Regional Crime Squad officer, it was discovered that 900 police notebooks pertaining to a host of surveillance operations were found not to have been returned to the NCIS. No-one knows what happened to the information contained within them.¹³

The use of intrusive surveillance has not only been applied to protestors. A long history of surveillance targeting of travellers and ravers culminated in the infamous Operation Snapshot. This operation, initiated in 1993 by the Southern Central Intelligence Unit, gathers "any information, no matter how small, on New Age Travellers or the rave scene". Leaked minutes of one of their meetings reveals the first Snapshot database had space for one million items of intelligence information.¹⁴

When questioned on a recent Radio 3 programme on dance culture, Detective Chief Inspector Jerry Dickenson, the head of West Yorkshire Drug Squad,

was candid in his explanation of police strategies: "We are acting proactively now as we do in all aspects of criminal investigation. We raid the premises we collect and collate intelligence, analyse it, disseminate it, and act on intelligence-based operations. This is from informants, undercover police officers and any information we can get."¹⁵

As revealed in a documentary made for Channel Four by Spectacle Productions to be broadcast this summer, evidence has come to light of covert surveillance operations carried out on properties occupied by Luton's rave and social justice collective, Exodus.¹⁶ A long series of named police operations against the collective, one of which was deemed by a jury to have been a possible drugs plant, are a testament to the level of covert targeting already deployed against "large numbers of people gathered in pursuit of a common purpose"; dancing.¹⁷

Despite the obviously hidden nature of surveillance operations, evidence strongly suggests that environmental and social justice groups have been disproportionately targeted. With the extra legal weight given to the covert surveillance powers of both the police and MI5, an increased incidence of intrusion is inevitable.

The rapid move towards proactive protest prevention dramatically shifts the role of the British police force. With tactics increasingly dominated more by politics than by the local community, the police slide into a role as the front-line troops for a draconian ideology. The political forces behind these manoeuvres will undoubtedly be content if increasing numbers of people view the police as the enemy itself. Some members of the British police force are less than happy with this possibility. According to John Woods, a detective chief inspector in the Metropolitan Police: "There is a danger of officers becoming pawns in what is essentially a political game. Surely it is in the interests of the service to avoid such a path to destruction?"¹⁸

Certain members of the police force have left as a result. John Alderson, ex-Chief Constable of Avon and Somerset Police hardly minces his words: "Howard is putting the building blocks in place for an East German-style Stasi-like force. It is there for future governments to build on. No government in my lifetime has ever given liberty back; it is not in the nature of governments to grant liberty."¹⁹

Nevertheless the tide of surveillance policing and domestic encroachment by MI5 is being advanced with little consideration for the social consequences. According to Sir John Smith, deputy commissioner at Scotland Yard between 1991-95: "In the longer term the absence of privacy will be seen as a greater problem than that of crime itself."²⁰

Yer sauces:

1. SQUALL 14 - 'Police clampdown on RTS'
2. *The Job* - newspaper for the Met Police. special supplement Public Order 21/7/95
3. *Police Review* 22/7/94
4. *The Job* 21/7/95
5. *Hansard* 17/3/97 Col.417
6. *Police Review* 21/3/97
7. "A subject for concern is the move towards paramilitarism in the police. I accept that such a move has occurred." Peter Imbert, ex-commissioner of the Metropolitan Police - Tony Jefferson *The case against paramilitary policing* (Open University Press 1990)
8. Seumus Milne - *The enemy within - the secret war against the miners* (Pan 1995)
9. SQUALL 13 'Unleashing the spies'
10. *Police Review* 25/10/96
11. *Contract Journal* - construction industry weekly. 18/1/96
12. SQUALL 14 - 'Special Branch help McDonald's'
13. *Independent* 22/1/97
14. SQUALL 14 - 'A criminal culture?'
15. BBC Radio 3 *Nightwaves* 26/3/97
16. *Spectacle Productions* presently untitled Channel 4 July 1997
17. SQUALL 8 'Exodus - the battles'
18. *Police Review* 27/1/95
19. *Red Pepper* May 1996 Issue24
20. *The Sci-Fi Files* BBC2 3/3/97

The Voice of Treason

Ten Imagined Deaths Of Rupert Murdoch

rupert murdoch is delighted, though surprised, to be invited to receive a prize for his contribution to social progress. then, in a super, sensational, soaraway, twist of a tale by edgar allen poe, he finds himself strapped to a table and left gazing helplessly upwards to where a topless woman waits, suspended, above him. mandy, 17, says she'd love to make it in the movies and the boys already reckon her breasts make an outstanding feature. tantalisingly, her pendulous appendages swing to and fro as, inch by busty inch, her colossal cleavage descends towards murdoch's fearstruck face. the ballistic bosoms slowly smother the hapless publisher who, in his death throes, can only dread the possible headline:
THANKS FOR THE MAMMARIES !!
RUPE DUPED BY BOOBY PRIZE !!

in a bizarre contractual mix-up, rupert murdoch is compelled to fight mike tyson. to the death. the pay-per-view figures break every known record as tyson breaks every known bone in his opponent's punchbag of a body.

in america, murdoch tries to cross a picket line and is duly turned back. the same thing happens a second time. attempting to cross a third picket line, he is beaten to death by angry workers.
that's the american way : three strikes and you're out!

in a dream of terrifying realism, murdoch is murdered by the ghost of dennis potter. he wakes in a sweat but cannot forget the lines which the playwright has placed in his head. later that day, crazed and afraid, the publisher signs what will prove to be his only literary success:
a wonderfully well-written suicide note.

one day, r. murdoch checks his numerous bank accounts and discovers that the people of the world have already given him everything. every single thing. " it's all yours, rupert, " they smile, "congratulations. you own the whole caboodle. we give in.

you've won." the puzzled tycoon ponders his next move. it's a meaningless game of monopoly with only one player. it's a dull competition with only one entrant. in the penthouse suite of the world's tallest building, he slowly curls up into a fatal foetal position. the world breathes easily as a million umbilical cords are cut.

rupert murdoch is eaten by metaphorical sharks. then he is eaten by literal sharks which proceed to eat all the metaphorical sharks in a wanton act of allegory.

murdoch's body is dumped in an alley. he has been crushed beneath a satellite dish ; the sky has fallen in on him. police label it as the work of someone with a definite grudge and are forced to question several million suspects.

in an extreme case of poetic justice, murdoch is tried on a charge of corrupting the language and is executed by a gang of guerilla poets who split his infinitives and leave his participles dangling from a lamp post. the warning sign hung round his neck says: GOTCHA!

at an amazing press conference, rupert murdoch peels off a mission impossible-style mask to reveal that, in fact, he is robert maxwell, the disgraced media magnate who, after completing a crash diet, had taken the place of his well-respected media magnate rival. the fearless reporters of the free press cheer:
the boss is dead! long live the boss!

somewhere above the clouds, murdoch waits at the pearly gates. he is turned away by a picket line of angels.
"there's been a terrible mistake!" he wails, "i've been born again!"
the voice of god booms out :
"that was my mistake. you shouldn't have been born at all!"

these are ten imagined deaths.
i'm only sorry i couldn't imagine more....



If you can imagine any more potential ends for RM please send them in.

Isobel: You sent a cheque to Mark for a one of his books a few months ago but you didn't enclose an address! If you get back in touch he'll get a copy to you.

I Know Someone Just Like That!

**he served as his own jailer;
every warning was heeded.
he wanted to be a failure;
in the end, he succeeded.**

Swampy - Ace Of Spades

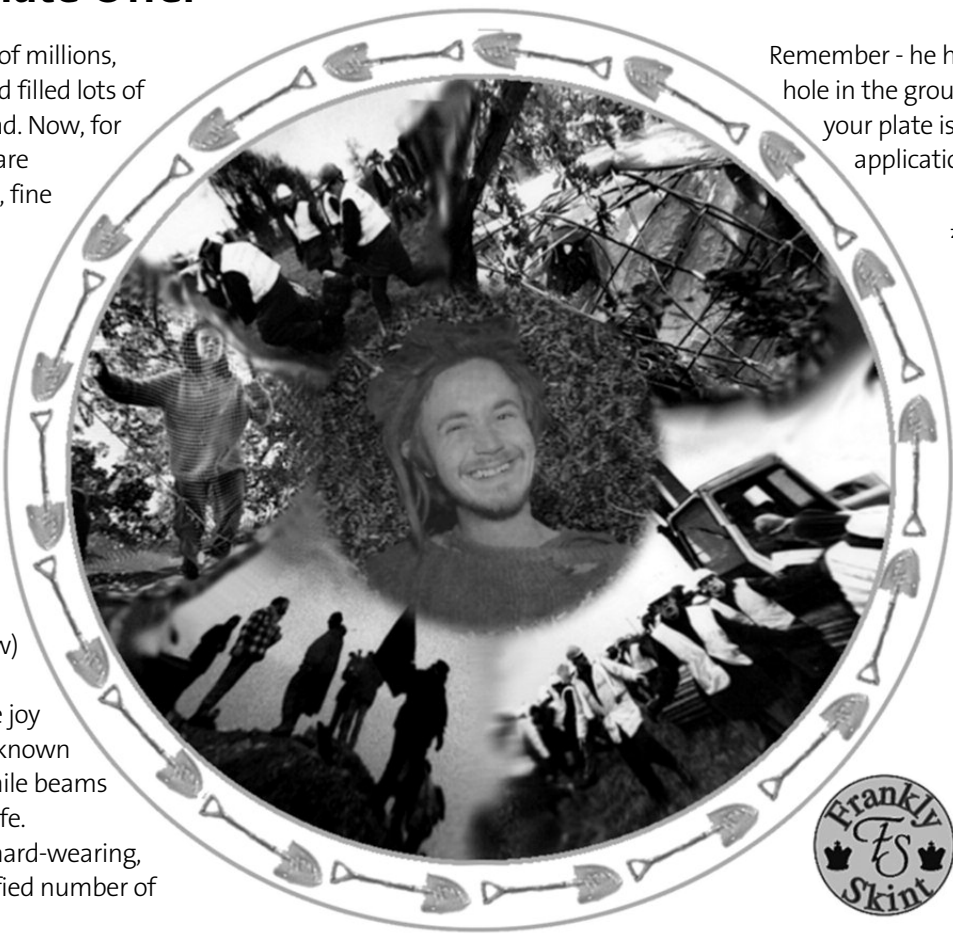
Commemorative Plate Offer

Swampy - he's captured the hearts of millions, preserved the heritage of Britain and filled lots of empty column space in the Grauniad. Now, for the first time, his heroic escapades are captured on this beautifully-crafted, fine bone china commemorative plate. Encircling the cameo is an ornate border decorated with exquisite real gold rim and spade motif. Exclusively available from The Frankly Skint.

From tree-house to tunnel, from the clutches of security guards to the free spirit of protest. It's all lovingly depicted here on this collectable tableware - yours to keep and cherish, to pass on from generation to generation, from (new) age to (new) age.

Now you too can experience the joy that so many jinnos have already known as Swampy's innocent, child-like smile beams into the empty copy space of your life.

Each plate comes with its own hard-wearing, transparant display stand and certified number of limitation.



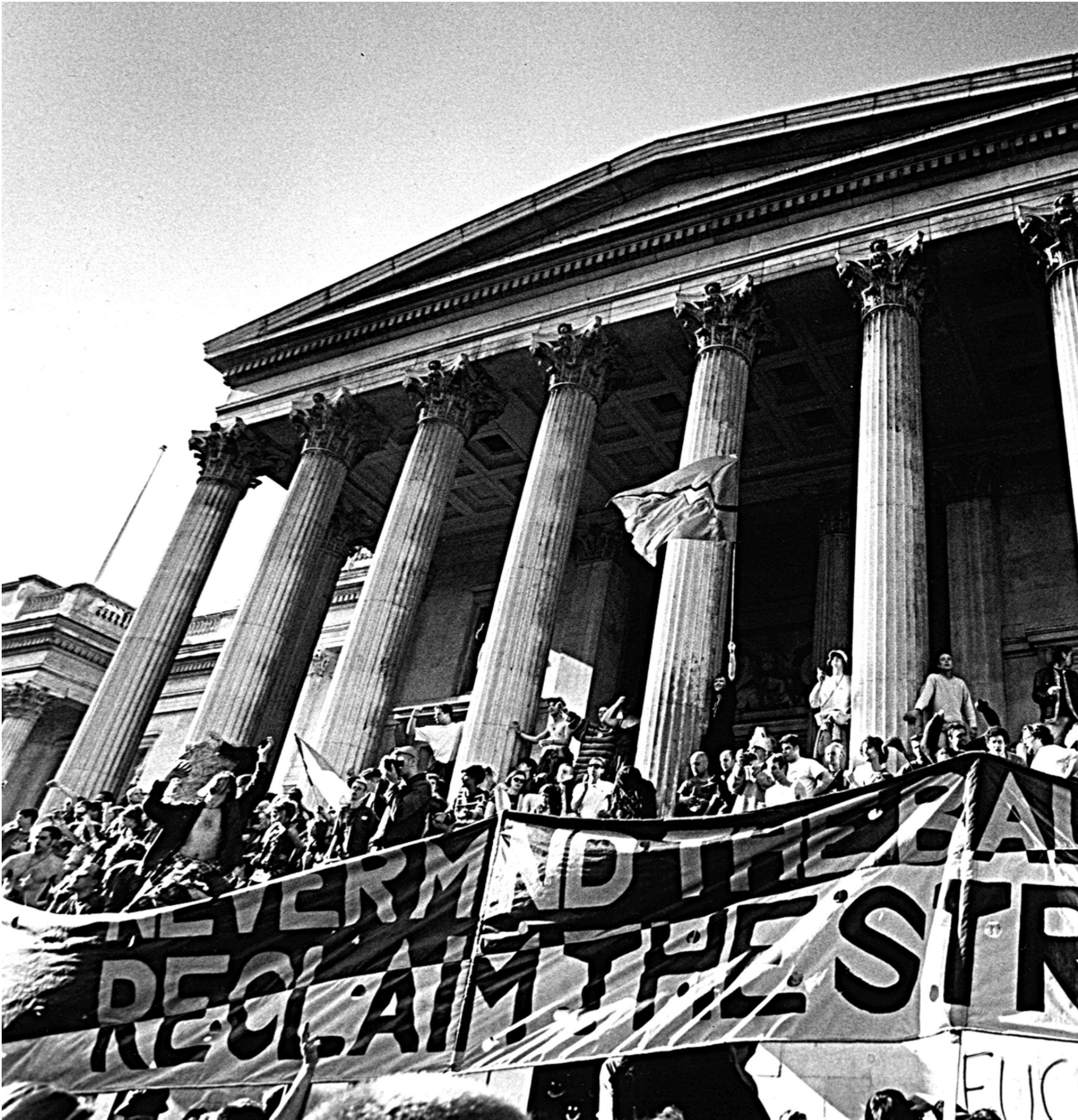
Remember - he had to spend seven days in a grotty hole in the ground, all you have to do to reserve your plate is complete and return the application below.

The full issue price for the plate is £599.99. If you decide to keep it you may pay in twelve monthly instalments of £49.99. You will then be sent further plates and delightful figurines in our 'Eco-Warriors' series; always on the same no-obligation basis.

No-obligation reservation form.
Swampy - Ace of Spades
send no money now - no stamp required
to: Swampy - Ace of Spades
Beautiful Plate Offer
The Frankly Skint
Tacky Crap House
Cheapside.
Mr/Ms/Mrs/Past Caring _____
Address _____

I am over 18. Certifiably insane and have appalling taste in household ornaments. I think the Queen Mum is nice and policemen are there to help you tell the time. I hereby give my consent to you selling my details to every junk mail database in the country.

Square dancing



"It was a marvellous day organised jointly by the Liverpool Dockers, Reclaim The Streets and other environmental groups... The only way forward is to get together more and more; speaking for the dockers, we can't wait to organise our next joint action."
Billy Jenkins, Liverpool Dockers Shop Stewards Committee quoted in Evading Standards 25/04/97.

"What a great sight, when we paused at Lambeth Bridge and looked back at the numbers of our supporters, especially 'RECLAIM THE STREETS'. Thank you."
Andy Dwyer, sacked Dockworker.

Mersey misery turned to Dockers' delight as the March for Social Justice brought together Liverpool Dockers and Reclaim The Streets in London on April 12. Many of us wondered whether the mainstream media had attended a different event. Just as a reminder, here's the day as seen through the eyes of **Ivan Coleman** (main pic) and **Nick Cobbing**.



"The "signbite" riot and no amount of disinformation can wipe out the memories of the 20,000 people who will remember the joy and festivity of the day, long after the police-hyped media spectacle is forgotten."
Evading Standards 25/04/97



"A magnificent demonstration of unity against social injustice mis-reported to satisfy a phoney state."
Mike Carden, Merseyside Port Shop Stewards.

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1994 in Brighton town centre, and the technology has spread rapidly. Hove now has its system in place and other schemes are promised in Bexhill, Hastings, Hayward's Heath, Bognor and Shoreham. Two of those Whitehawk cameras will be outside the gates of Stanley Deason school. But a group of mothers who have come together under the title Families Need Freedom are concerned at the impression this may be giving to children. They state: "The stabbing of one man, a headteacher [Philip Lawrence] and a unique event like Dunblane should not form the basis of national policy feeding the growing insecurity parents feel for their children. We are in danger of caging the next generation for no good reason. Turning schools into prisons is no solution: when are we adults going to calm down and grant our kids the space, time and privacy they need to grow up?"

Brighton & Hove Council claims that 97 per cent of Whitehawk residents polled voted in favour, and equally high figures have been given by police to claim support for the cameras. But are they actually effective in cutting crime? Jason Ditton, Director of the Scottish Centre for Criminology, who after completing an 18-month study, thinks not. "All evaluations and statistics we've seen so far as to the effectiveness of cameras cutting crime are wholly unreliable," he says.

The danger, say campaigners, is the reliability on cameras as the Holy Grail of law and order. In Bingley, West Yorkshire, when a surveillance camera system was introduced the local police force was reduced from 24 to just 3. "The clear evidence is that while a policeman on the beat will increase in efficiency over time, a camera will decrease in effectiveness over time," says Davies. "The local bobby would get to know the criminal, but now the criminal will simply learn how to evade the camera."

Police say the cameras were responsible for 400 arrests in Sussex last year and argue that "if you have nothing to hide, you have nothing to fear". That phrase, it should be noted, is a direct translation from the slogan of the Stasi, the old East German secret police. People have been arrested for urinating in public, smoking dope and putting up flyposters. Bus drivers no longer let passengers out at red lights for fear of losing their jobs. In many instances, CCTV system operators routinely exercise their prejudices to discriminate against race, age, class or sexual preference. They openly proclaim this as a necessary part of their duties. One camera operator in Burnley told a Granada documentary: "People mainly with

shirts and ties are OK. Most people you can tell just by looking at them." Another said: "I tell by the hair." And a recent report by Hull University highlighted endemic discrimination against blacks, gays, minorities and young people.

But what the cameras see may not be the full story. Crafty car cruisers down the seafront in Brighton sent up this new voyeur mentality with a spoof last month. Parking underneath the gaze of one CCTV camera, they poured from petrol cans as if to set alight to the vehicle. Police raced to the scene to find the jokers had filled the cans with water.

"Eventually the cameras will disappear, become invisible," concludes Davies. "There is a computer in your microwave, in your washing machine and in your watch and you don't notice the technology. The same will happen with cameras. You won't know where they are, they will become part of the fabric of the world around you.

"All the systems are now being marketed for their interconnectability. Once you create a system that has a mass of potential of links to other systems and media, not only the power of the system, but also its uses massively increase. This is very powerful military technology, becoming infinitely more powerful as each year passes. Systems are going to be linked to computers. These are the foundation stones of a surveillance society which will lock us in for all time.

The journal New Scientist gave over its April editorial to sound the alarm over CCTV: "Now is the time to act. The right of privacy of individuals needs to be guaranteed before all power passes to those who own the tools of surveillance."

Simon Davies agrees. "It is not irreversible. We have the power and the democratic right to remove them, and we have a responsibility to do so."

* The new Social Security Administration (Fraud) Act has moved the goalposts on rules relating to privacy and data protection. These changes will allow the government to trawl through files held on each of us by every government department to look for inconsistencies between the files. A mismatch, an offence, an unpaid bill, or indeed an error will domino through the system. Tax, driving licence, social security, national insurance. If you fart at one end of the system, you'll be shat on at the other.

One American company, Electronic Data Systems (EDS) has a strategic monopoly on this data in Britain. They control the entire tax records system, the court and justice system, parts of the NHS,



Nick Cobbing.

“The legal status of surveillance in Britain in 1997 is probably about the same level as its legal status in 1797.”

social security and the child support agency - virtually the entire population. They are now poised to take the plumb Ministry of Defence contract. At the stroke of a pen, EDS will have the capacity to link all of these centrally-held data bases.

Data matching is the technological equivalent of a general warrant on the entire population. It is no different to the notion of police being empowered to enter your home in your absence, search through your papers and take what they wish. In short, it's a hi-tech parallel to the Police Act.

Silent and invisible, data-matching, has been introduced under the cloak of fraud. The faceless bureaucrats can go on arbitrary

fishing expeditions, in this pool of liquid info whenever they like. Not that they don't do it anyway - in 1994 there were 655 reported incidents of civil servants using passwords to obtain info on people to pass to outsiders. There are no independent safeguards against abuse. "The freedom of the individual will be gravely at risk. The dossier of private information is the badge of the totalitarian state," says Lord Browne Wilkinson. More than a million people in the UK are employed full time in the business of collecting our personal information. The average British adult is identified on 200 files. Hundreds of thousands of innocent people will be placed under suspicion.



Aero-dynamics

As airlines cloud the skies, tunnel tactics at Manchester Airport are undermining the ground beneath their feet. Ally Fogg clears the smog.

RECIPE FOR A RUNWAY

1. Take an area of ancient woodland double the size of that lost to the Newbury Bypass.
2. Cover with a million tonnes of stone dug from Derbyshire quarries. Remove a few cute furry animals and relocate in an unsuitable corner.
3. Sprinkle liberally with promises of jobs and assorted propaganda.
4. Add the most unsustainable industry imaginable and leave to boil for twenty or thirty years.
5. When the planet turns a nice golden-brown colour, remove any remaining traces of life and leave your creation for eternity as a monument to twentieth-century insanity.

When former Environment Secretary John Gummer and Transport Secretary George Young gave the go-ahead for £170 million's worth of runway at Manchester Airport in January, few in the area were surprised. Despite twenty five years of local opposition to the plan, the Ringway consortium of Manchester Airport PLC and its chums had launched a propaganda onslaught over several years which promised the Earth. It left the local campaigners looking like a few selfish villagers from affluent North

Cheshire, worried about little more than their house prices. Unfair though this portrayal was, there seemed to be nothing they could offer to compete with promises of 50,000 local jobs, untold riches to the local economy, and even a 'Green Charter' promising species relocation, tree planting and a hundred other 'benefits to the environment'. With Ringway boasting the support of the City Council, the local press, local and multinational industries and even Labour's shadow transport minister (Manchester MP Keith Bradley), opposing voices were few and far between. It is no coincidence that Graham Stringer (now a Labour MP), was simultaneously leader of Manchester City Council and Chairman of Manchester Airport PLC - the Council owns 55 per cent of the Airport.

Only after the decision was announced did the volume of arguments against the runway begin to match and even exceed the local establishment's PR offensive. This is due almost entirely to the efforts of the fastest growing eco-protest camp Britain has ever seen.

LOCAL FACTS AND FICTION

1. *Land.* Building the second runway will require the destruction of 43 ponds, 15km of hedgerow, seven hundred acres of mature woodland and over 1,000 acres of greenbelt. The Airport's 'Green Package' promises to create new habitats for a range of wildlife including badgers, bats and Great Crested Newts, but such schemes are notoriously unreliable. As to whether naturally occurring ancient woodland can be replaced, perhaps we shall find out in a couple of thousand years.

2. *Jobs.* The claim by Manchester Airport that Runway Two would create 50,000 jobs, still parroted regularly by the *Manchester Evening News*, was discredited during the public inquiry by an estimate (ironically from a Manchester City Council economist) that 8 or 9,000 was closer to the mark. This February, Manchester Chamber of Commerce put the figure at 5,000. In truth no-one knows; there has been no independent study of possible employment-creation effects. What is widely presumed however, is that any new jobs created are likely to be low-paid and short-term. They are also unlikely to go to those who need them in the massive nearby housing estate of Wythenshawe, which has 30 per cent unemployment. Since only 10 percent of the current Airport personnel come from the estate, there is no reason to believe a higher percentage will be employed by the expanded airport. More importantly, if £172 million were spent in other areas of the local economy, far more and better employment could be created. Manchester City Council's figures show it costs £76,464 to sustain a job for a year at the airport, compared to £26,913 in education.

3. *Associated development.* Perhaps the most devastating effect of the new runway on the local environment will come not from the planes but from cars. An estimated 15 million extra car journeys per year will take passengers to and from the airport, primarily on the already congested M56 which is expected to carry 30 per cent more cars than the M25 carries now. To cope with demand, new roads are planned including the A6(M) Stockport bypass and a new Eastern Link Road. A number of office developments and retail parks are planned near the airport and new roads, again built on greenbelt sites.

4. *Air and Noise Pollution.* It is known that the components of incompletely combusted gases produced by aircraft are toxic, but there has been no independent study of effects on human health. Taking what is known already about the effect of car exhausts, and adding the 'factor X' of local air traffic, there can be no doubt that the impact of Runway 2 on local air quality will not help Manchester's status as pollution capital of Britain. Those living closest to the flightpath are already suffering distressing levels of noise pollution, something which is guaranteed to increase with a second runway. An elderly couple from the local village of Styal have complained to the press about having to replace the glass in their greenhouse every year because the noise of planes keeps cracking it.



Left: Tunneling under the proposed runway. Photo: Andrew Testa.

Above: Treehouses on the edge of the runway at the Zion Tree camp. Photo: Nick Cobbing

PLANES AND THE PLANET

"The full environmental effects of air travel are still somewhat unclear," Malcolm Ferguson, Senior Fellow at the Institute of European Environmental Policy stated recently, "but even based on what we already know, there is a significant impact on global warming and ozone degradation which is totally disproportional to the benefits. The demand for air travel exceeds any possible definition of sustainability, and any scientist taking a precautionary line would say that at the very least, there are serious grounds for concern." Estimates for the contribution of air travel to global warming range from 3 to 30 per cent. A recent study has estimated that 'if the airport grows as planned, CO₂ emissions by 2020 [from planes] could be greater than from all other transport in the regional catchment'.

The impact on the ozone layer of jet travel is also worrying scientists. Already it is suspected that high-

flying aircraft are causing damage, but a report in a recent *New Scientist* entitled 'Aircraft wreak havoc on Ozone layer' crystallized those fears. It described how a new range of 500 supersonic airliners will fly high enough to deposit ozone-eating pollution in the ozone layer itself, having a direct effect on stratospheric ozone.

It is also self-evident that the more accessible and affordable air travel becomes, the more it becomes feasible to transport people, food and consumer goods thousands of miles around the world. The effects are to encourage economic and cultural dependency on a deeply unsustainable and temporary system of transportation, with inevitable consequences for smaller and more sustainable local economies. It takes up to 2.2 litres of (untaxed) kerosene to transport just one pound of vegetables across the world.

continued



LEGALITIES AND HOT AIR

The total process of planning applications and Public Inquiry took nearly five years. The Airport presented a host of contradictory economic and environmental evidence. The Inquiry refused to consider the global environmental impacts of the runway. The Secretaries of State concluded that the runway was an 'inappropriate development in the greenbelt' but perversely decided it should go ahead anyway, similarly they noted many of the environmental problems that the Runway would create but then dismissed them. They described the natural woodland lost as "irreversible and irreplaceable". Bizarrely they noted "with concern" that climate change effects had not been modelled, but then said that Runway 2 would not be an important contributor to climate change. How did they know? All of this will come as no surprise to anyone who has ever been involved in a Public Inquiry.

The legal process is not yet quite exhausted. As well as challenging the eviction order on the protest camp at appeal, the

protestors are currently taking the case to the High Court to demand a judicial review of the Public Inquiry. As SQUALL goes to press, they are arguing that the Inquiry process itself was flawed. To be granted the review they must demonstrate that the Inquiry was either illegal, against the spirit of the law, or irrational. On the face of it, the latter seems to give them a pretty good case. Fighting the case officially has been a frustrating task for those involved, but a necessary one. Jeff Gazzard of Manchester Airport Environmental Network attended all 101 days of the Public Inquiry, he told SQUALL:

"We've had to explore every avenue, however cynical we were. We will try any legitimate means to stop this runway, to the very best of our abilities. When we've been through the legal process and won the arguments but still lost the decisions, we are in a much better position to complain, because we've done it properly. That's why we have joined in the direct action protest and become very much part of it. We are going to fight this all the way."

*Above: in the trees above the Bollin Valley
Photo: Nick Clague.*

TAKING TO THE TUNNELS

On a cold Saturday night in January, ten activists, many of them veterans of the M65, M66, Newbury and other road protests, set up the first tree-house overlooking the River Bollin and announced themselves as the Coalition Against Runway 2 (CAR2).

This was to become Flywood camp, the first of seven separate camps along a short stretch of the valley. It is still the acting camp HQ, and where visitors arrive first, to be met with a banner reading No Members, No Leaders, No 2nd Runway, No Pasaran!

Under the camp are five tunnels, each with an array of new hurdles to flummox scab tunnellers. The other camps are Zion Tree which claims the biggest tunnel; The Sir Cliff Richard OBE Vegan Revolutionary Camp which claims the best name and what one protestor describes as 'the tightest, nastiest, meanest tunnel in the world'; Wild Garlic Camp which is possibly the most defensible, and certainly the most beautiful camp; River Rat (aka River Tarts) is now the fastest growing camp; The-Camp-Of-Many-Names and the family friendly Jelly Baby Camp are the newest and currently the least populated, but hopefully not for long.

The eleven tunnels which now snake below the camp shall be considerably more difficult to evict than their predecessors at Fairmile. This is due in no small part to the presence of a small army of Fairmile tunnellers who came to the airport after the evictions in January, including some bloke called S****y.

'Hyper' Phil told SQUALL "There's no doubt that S****y has learned a thing or two since Fairmile. If they want to get us out of some of these tunnels they are just going to have to dig their own tunnels around ours."

The expertise of the world's most famous tunnel dweller has more than made up for the hassle of 'S****y Fever' which has brought dozens of teenage fans to the camp in the hope of meeting their hero. It is also worth mentioning that an unprecedented amount of publicity, some money and huge support has been generated by the celebrity presence.

In early March the airport made the unprecedented step of beginning to erect massive barbed wire fences around the camps. The decision was

provocative and intimidatory. Fences would go up by day and come down again by night.

Police claim that £30,000 damage was done to fencing in one weekend. A massive security presence was employed around the 3 to 4 miles of perimeter fence, costing somewhere in the region of £5,000 a night. Twelve sets of floodlights shine all night. Both Manchester and Cheshire Police vans patrol every half hour, and still fencing comes down. There have been some unsavoury incidents during confrontations between protestors and security and police, of which no-one is very proud but, by and large, the protest remains peaceful, and the protestors continue to enjoy camp life.

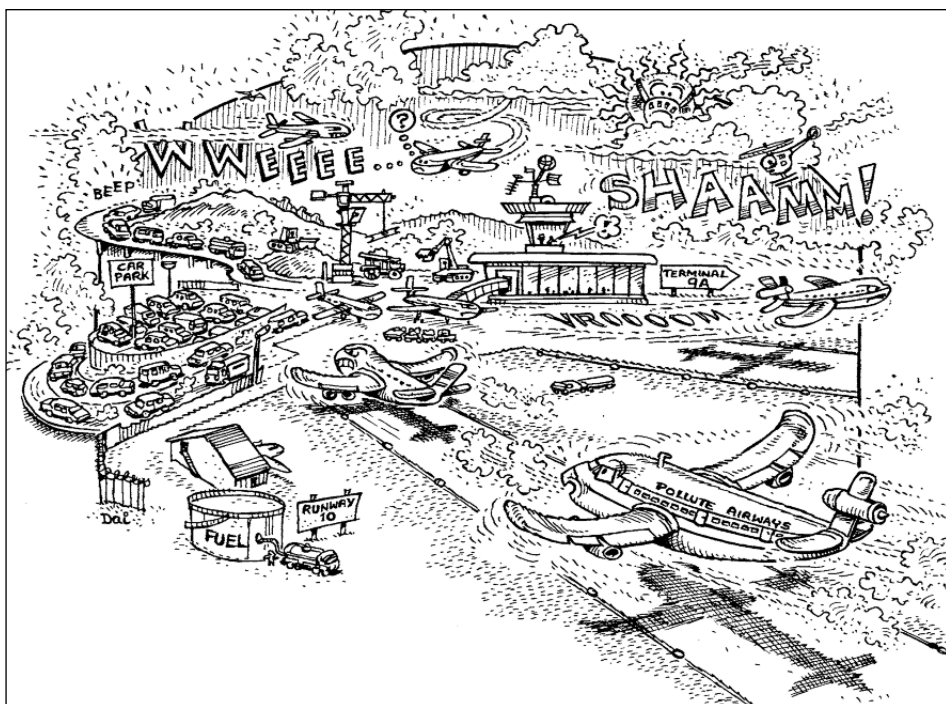
"The people here are amazing," says Hyper Phil. "Everybody's working really hard, there's very little lurching out going on. I spend half my time in a state of total exhaustion and the other half in total elation."

The camp is growing, but there is still a great need for people to come and join the protest. With the fencing in place it may be very difficult for people to gain access once evictions have started, although several cunning plans are being devised. If people want to join the protest they may have to come before the eviction and stay, particularly if they are inexperienced climbers who need to learn to use harnesses, walkways etc. Plenty of tuition is available. New arrivals should not be intimidated by the security gate they have to grant you access until the eviction begins. The protestors are determined that they can win, as Hyper Phil told SQUALL:

"We can stop this runway by mass non-violent direct action. If it is not stopped it is not because we couldn't, it's because we didn't have enough people. It comes down to every individual and their own involvement."

With Airport developments now planned at Heathrow, Birmingham, Newcastle and possibly even a third runway in Manchester, it is possible that the next great battleground of the environmental movement will be for the skies. Be there at the beginning.

Coalition Against Runway 2 can be contacted on (0161) 834 8221





LOFTY TONES

Tony Allen, Global Village Idiot, states his case for suing Nirex.

By the same logic that smokers are now suing tobacco companies who advertised cigarettes knowing them to be dangerous to health, I reckon I've got the makings of a case against Nirex, the company that was employed by the Tory Government to persuade us that the safest site for a nuclear waste dump must be a deep hole underneath the British Nuclear Fuels plant at Sellafield, West Cumbria.

Nirex have recently been forced to admit that they were wrong and that any site in this part of the country was a crap idea. A lot of honest people with sound arguments and tight evidence continually told them so, citing dodgy rock formation and chaotic subterranean waterways posing the risk of eventual radioactive drinking water. These arguments were good enough for me and I demonstrated, scrawled graffiti and played benefits in support of the anti-Nirex campaign; and if there was any justice I'd be up for some compensation for all that time and energy I wasted on political action.

My gripe is that Nirex always knew they were wrong but chose to ignore reasoned scientific argument in favour of an overwhelming political argument - there was nowhere else. Every other possible site in the country presented problems involving a matrix of strong local opposition - in fact the second site on the hit list was in the Tory constituency of ex-environment minister John Sell-by-Date Gummer. So Nein Danke on that one.

The West Cumbria site, however, offered what no other site offered - soft locals. The relationship between the local population and BNFL at Sellafield is neo-feudal. Adjacent Whitehaven is a company town - a whole generation has been bought off.

Nirex and BNFL sponsor, fund, favour or feed everything from the family planning clinic to the funeral parlour.

When the end finally comes we won't be over-run by some Saddam with an army of clones or knocked off-centre by a wayward asteroid, no, it'll be a cocktail of apathy and pragmatism that does for us. No conspiracy - they were all just doing their jobs and obeying orders.

But even if I haven't got a decent case against Nirex, surely Johnny and Joanne taxpayer must have; Nirex pissed away £250 million in ten years with their futile drilling operation and tacky PR campaign.

Don't be surprised to hear politicians in the new parliament talking down the dangers of nuclear waste: on March 24th 1997 Nirex announced a reduction in its West Cumbria activities and are now quietly touting around the country looking for a likely landfill site. Coming soon. To a back yard near you.

But in truth there's only the secret fall-back Site 6, reckoned to be the army base at Thetford - government-owned and with very soft locals. And to trudge all the deadly nuke-goo, critical mass across country at the dead of night will take the best part of a year, road protestors, anti-nuke groups and the IRA permitting. And it will cost a further billion pounds.

Yes! In my back yard!

So let's anticipate a modest proposal: turn the whole shebang into a cottage industry. Work-from-home security jobs for the unemployed, each with their own little lead box to look after. £10 a week on top of the dole and no JSA hassle? There'd be takers.

More soon. Check me in the Green Futures field, Glastonbury. I'll be the one on the bike powering the sound system.

Tony Allen being arrested following a rant at Speakers' Corner in 1979. Photo: Phil Wolmuth.

Lycra Shorts

IT'S ONLY A GAME...

Premier League plc	Market Value (£ millions)
Manchester United	418
Newcastle United	200
Chelsea Village	195
Aston Villa	120
Tottenham Hotspur	107
Leeds United (Caspian Group)	100
Celtic	90
West Ham	58
Sunderland	45
Sheffield United	34
Loftus Road (QPR)	26
West Bromich Albion	15
Millwall (Millwall Holdings)	14
Chalton Athletic	13
Preston North End	11
Southampton (Leisure Southampton)	8
Birmingham City	7

IT MUST BE LUST...

"Our relationship with the premier league is amazing, one of the great corporate romances of our time." BSKyB boss Sam Chisholm.

STITCHED UP

BALL boys in Pakistan don't spend a fortnight in the sun acting as gofers for top tennis stars. They spend years in sweatshops making footballs for the European market.

According to *Goal* magazine an estimated 7,000 children under the age of 14 (some as young as five) are employed to hand stitch footballs for the princely sum of 75 pence a day.

Footballs bought for kids in this country last year bearing the Euro '96 legend and cuddly mascot, for £20 upwards, were probably made by kids in Pakistan. Seventy five per cent of the world football market is based in one Pakistani region.

Surprise, surprise, the multinational companies flogging the balls say the work is subcontracted and they have no idea about conditions.

AJ

NIKE CREAMING IT

An Indonesian factory which manufactures Nike trainers closed for a weekend in April after thousands of workers ransacked an office and damaged cars in protest over the 80 pence a day wages they receive. It was just one amongst many such protests occurring recently at Nike factories in the Far East. In North Vietnam around 800 workers at a Nike plant staged a three-hour strike over a paltry five per cent pay rise which took their monthly salary to £24.84.

Meanwhile a supervisor at another Nike factory in Taiwan is to stand trial after the 56 workers under her control were made to jog twice around the 1.2 mile factory perimeter for failing to wear regulation shoes.

Nike, who sell their trainers for up to £130 a pair in Britain, paid Michael Jordan - the American basketball player - £10 million to promote their sportswear in 1992. That's more than the entire 75,000 Indonesian Nike workforce were paid in the entire year.

JC & DY



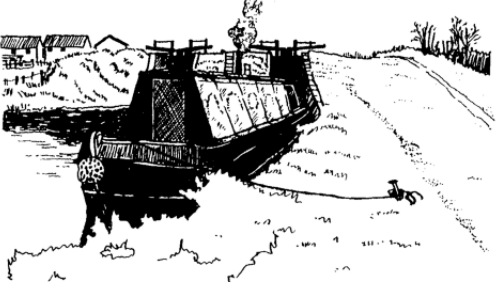
The Travellers' School Charity began in a bus over a decade ago. **Sam Beale** finds out how it has moved into the '90s.

Howard outside the School dome with kids from the Temple Wood site, Lincolnshire. Photo: Fish. Illustrations: Gubby and Fiona Earle.

Skool's out (and about)

Old barge

Here is an old barge on the cut.



List some descriptive words and phrases about it.

What I can see _____

What I can hear _____

What I can smell _____

What I can touch _____

Colour the picture.

“I don't think school is a very good place to educate children really...” These are not the words, as you might imagine, of your average reluctant 11-year old just prior to being starched into a school uniform. It is actually the opinion of a teacher. He goes on: “There are better ways to get kids to learn. At school there's not space for them to develop their own interests, make mistakes and just play.”

Howard Allen is the teacher for the Travellers' School Charity (TSC) which began in a bus in the mid-'80s to provide on-site educational support for children on the road. He has worked for the TSC since October last year, following six years teaching in London primary schools. His job now is radically different to the “bits of paper under your nose” and children having “no say at all” which left him highly disillusioned with the state system. He opted out of that system believing that a major preoccupation of large schools is simply “managing a large number of kids who are all in the same place at the same time. It's just about organising it so you don't get a riot”.

Howard now works with Fiona Earle, a former secondary school teacher, who taught on sites from the 'Skool Bus' in 1990 and later from a caravan. She carries out the School's correspondence-learning; organises publications, resources and PR; fund raises, and liaises between the Charity and official groups.

The School bus had “a chequered career,” says Richie Cotterill, one of the founders of the School and now a trustee of the Charity: “Sometimes it was being run and used really well.”

At other times a lack of resources and full-time staff made effective running of the School difficult. Following several lean years at the beginning of the '90s when there was no money to fund on-site

provision, the Charity received lottery funding last year which is now paying Howard and Fiona and will provide money for resources for three years.

Howard runs the School from a dome (easier to move and more spacious than the original bus) which he takes onto sites around the country as Travellers request a visit. He aims for a free-school atmosphere: “It's up to me to provide somewhere kids want to be. If they don't want to come then I'm doing something wrong.”

Excruciating sunny days spent staring at blackboards and clocks, scoring names in desks with compasses whilst repeating after teacher, pass through the mind as Howard expands his notion of positive, effective learning for younger children: “I'm there and I've got things they can do: stuff for drawing, painting, books to look at, lego, glue and sticking stuff, dressing up clothes and toys. They can all be doing different things at once.” He is convinced that the key is to run education “in a child-centred way. I don't try to intervene too much because I think kids learn more like that”.

This style of learning, with a number of children of varying ages all gathered in the same place at the same time, sounds chaotic but Howard is convinced: “It's really easy if you let them lead all the learning. The younger kids sit and watch the older ones work and get an idea of how long it takes them to do tasks, so it helps their concentration span.” The older children in this scenario learn to tolerate the younger ones, and encourage them.

With this level of freedom it's hard to imagine ever wanting to count or read but, says Howard: “When they are five or six I'll give them an alphabet book, a drawing book and a sticking book; or a writing book at seven or eight. I'll encourage them to

do something in one of those books everyday.”

The school is equipped with drawing and painting materials and a stack of picture and reading books for kids of all ages. In this way they get used to doing a little bit of writing or colouring each day. “So they’ve got ‘schooly’ stuff that they can go to and most of them do go to that,” says Howard. “If they play and paint a lot I usually find that they want to do something like that without me having to ask them.”

Richie Cotterill says the TSC aims to “help parents do whatever they want to do in terms of their kids’ education”. This includes putting them in touch with Traveller Education Services, supporting individual home education or facilitating co-operative schooling. At a site in Brechfa, South Wales, where there were around 15 to 20 children last year, the TSC went on site to assist parents who wanted to set up a school. Richie considers this to be very positive: “The teacher helped teach on site and helped give the parents the feeling that they could do it. We spent some of the money we had on training the parents to carry the school on.”

Howard believes parental involvement in education is essential: “When children go to school a lot of parents think that the school should be doing all the educating.” He believes that education involving parents need not be as time-consuming as it sounds: “It’s just doing a little bit frequently. Just an hour or a couple of hours a day.” He recalls the amount of time spent going to assemblies, lining up and taking registers in schools and thinks kids at the Travellers’ School may well spend longer actually carrying out ‘tasks’ than they do at school.

Few people consider educating their children out of school. According to Howard: “There’s a big misconception. Most parents assume their kids have got to go to school. Education is compulsory but schooling isn’t. They don’t have to go.” Parents can simply write to a school informing them that they intend to educate their child out of school. Prosecutions only occur in instances where children are registered at a school from which they are continually marked absent. If an education authority does check up (which is unlikely when on the road) parents need only produce some work - writing, drawing, painting - that a child has been doing. Howard also suggests keeping a simple diary.

Fiona agrees but stresses that, although it’s easy not to send your kids to school: “You have to be really positive and organised to educate your own kids, especially when you’re living on the road and you’ve got to do water runs and wood runs. It only takes a couple of hours a day but, especially in winter, you don’t always have a couple of hours.”

Fiona co-ordinates the TSC’s support for home education. The Charity produces workbooks to enable parents to organise effectively what little time they may have. These are designed specifically for Traveller kids with tasks relating to travelling, an activity book that asks kids to colour in buses and benders; and an Alphabet Book in which ‘t’ is for truck, trailer, tippee and tent. A new set of four workbooks, provided free to home-educating Traveller parents, include English, Maths, Science, Humanites and technology activities organised into sections relating to Circus, Gypsies, Canal, Fair and New Travellers. These are available at four levels for children aged 4-11+ and each is accompanied by a detailed parents’ guide.

In addition the TSC can provide national curriculum material: “We are not national curriculum friendly although we have stuff that is. What we produce is culture friendly,” says Fiona. She notes that it is useful to have National Curriculum-based educational material to copy for parents because “people do want to know what level their kids are ‘meant’ to be at. It’s a good idea to be aware what the levels actually are and I think parents want to have that awareness so they know if their kids are going to integrate successfully in school if they have to”.

Most requests to the TSC are for children aged seven or under but the Charity also supports older children who want to study specific subjects or take exams. Fiona, a GCSE English examiner, is also qualified to teach to GCSE and is keen to teach on this level.

However, she acknowledges it is difficult for older children to study alone: “It’s hard to enthuse them if they’re not in a group. Motivating yourself and making the time and space to do it isn’t easy.”

Lynn, who has educated five of her six children in state schools (for about a term and a half each year) over the last 14 years on the road, believes that home education at GCSE level is extremely difficult: “A lot of people come off the road when their kids hit secondary age. We struggled on for a long time but at GCSE I think it’s quite critical for them to be in school... for the whole term.” Lynn recommends that Travellers investigate the possibilities of school-based distance-learning schemes which are designed for the children of circus and fairground Travellers.

At the Charity’s children’s camps this summer Fiona plans to work with a few older children who want to take exams out of school: “We’re going to try some English and writing together and then hopefully maintain the momentum through monthly contact.”

Local authority attitudes towards Travellers and their education have changed in the last ten years. Fiona remembers when the few Traveller education provisions existing within local authorities were entirely Gypsy

orientated: “A lot of them had never come across New Travellers at all. There is a lot more awareness now.” Fiona has worked to improve liaison between the TSC and education authorities. Nonetheless educational policy

regarding the children of Travellers has essentially remained the same. Every authority now has a Travellers’ Education Service but, says Fiona, “almost all have an integration policy as opposed to offering support at home”.

Lynn has wide experience of local authorities and recalls one Gypsy Education officer who was “more interested in whether you had the proper school uniform or not... It’s the same as with schools... some have been brilliant, some are crap. It’s the luck of the draw; where you happen to land for the winter”.

The difficulties many Travellers have sending their children to school are self-evident. An integration *only* policy which does not consider out-of-school options suggests not just a lack of governmental understanding of the educational needs of travelling families but also a wider agenda which favours making nomadism as difficult as possible.

Paul Winter, Traveller Education Co-ordinator for the joint Traveller Education Service in the East Riding of Yorkshire, Kingston-Upon-Holt and North Lincolnshire, recognises that often: “Sites are either short-term or inaccessible to local schools.” He applauds the work of the TSC as an alternative provision. “It’s about a recognition of nomadism. Not every service provided for Travellers should have to be a mainstream service that’s bricks and mortar. When you’ve got parents who are willing and able to be actively involved in their children’s education it’s viable to have alternatives such as the Travellers’ School.” However, he stresses this is not always the case: “There would be difficulties for example with Gypsy families who may not have literacy or may be working without many resources.”

He also warns of the danger of mobile or independent services such as the TSC becoming considered by education authorities as “a substitution for entitlement of access to mainstream.

“There’s got to be pressure on schools and education authorities to continue to provide for all Travellers whether they are just coming briefly into an area or not. The views of Traveller parents are crucial: if the services are there and they decide they want to take up an alternative they should have the freedom to choose.”

*** In July the TSC is running a four-day conference entitled Insights into New Traveller Culture: an on-site experience. For information about this, the children’s camps, publications or to get the school to your site contact: TSC, PO Box 36, Grantham, NG31 6EW.**

*** For information and advice about education outside the state system send a SAE to: Education Otherwise, PO Box 7420, London N9 9SG. Tel: 0891 518303**



OUR TRUCK HAS BROKEN DOWN (AGAIN)
IF YOU CAN DRAW IT, WE CAN MEND IT, (MAYBE).



NOW IT IS WINTER,
CAN YOU DRAW A BURNER OR A FIRE?

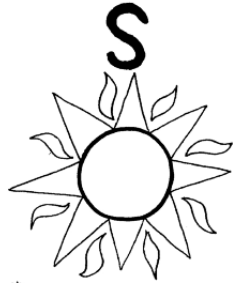


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Draw a tortoise coming out of his shell

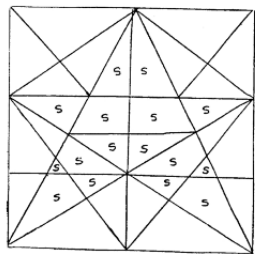


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Nick Cobbing

Building bridges

A recent report written by a lay minister of the CoE praises the spirituality of the Exodus Collective. **Jim Carey** talked to the author.

“Today here in our diocese, we have Exodus... with an alternative to the materialistic and oppressive market-driven society in which we live.”

So says a new report on the Exodus Collective written by Malcolm Nobbs, a lay minister in the Church of England.

“The shopping mall has become the church where people go to worship the god mammon. For Exodus neither shopping nor the ownership of commodities is the most important thing in life.”

This 13-page investigation is, without doubt, a bravely candid affair. After all a radical rave collective like Exodus introduces a multitude of controversial social issues; hardly the usual fodder for the parish missalette.

SQUALL readers will be familiar with some of the attacks levelled against the Collective by other forces of the establishment, but Malcolm Nobbs provides a new insight into the views of the local religious institution.

“They have been attacked by those who see them as a threat, by those who simply do not understand the Collective. I had some trepidation about what the reaction in the church might be, because some of the clergy had been vociferous against them,” Nobbs told SQUALL. “I had heard that there were things like satanic rights there and that it was demonic; very much the sort of thing which goes with the unknown. It goes right back to the witches in medieval times; people didn’t understand these old ladies so they feared them. It’s people who have no understanding of the situation.”

Nobbs, however, came at the subject from a different angle. “I’m looking for Jesus not only in the church but in people outside the church.”

After watching an episode of BBC1’s *Heart of the Matter*, which featured Exodus in a debate on dance

culture, Nobbs contacted the Collective through Luton Borough Council and was consequently commissioned to write a report for the St Alban’s Diocesan Board for Social Responsibility.

As the report notes: “Jesus himself was seen as threat in his time, though his motives were just....his words and actions increasingly annoyed and threatened the established authorities of the time. They feared a public uprising, they feared loss of power they feared the hypocrisy of their actions would be exposed.”

Describing the Collective as a “movement”, Nobbs’ report draws parallels with the long march of the Israelites away from oppression and slavery in Egypt.

“In the case of the Exodus Collective, they are distancing themselves from what they feel is an unjust and oppressive society. The members have decided that they no longer wish to be thought of as being derelict like the old hospice.”

The hospice referred to by Nobbs is a previously derelict premises in Streatley on the outskirts of Luton, now refurbished by Exodus and renamed Housing Action Zone Manor. As the report notes, it was once - appropriately enough - a refuge for “the waifs and strays of Luton”. Indeed instant feedback to the report came from the Reverend Roger Woods, vicar at Streatley for the last 24 years and once the chaplain of the very hospice now occupied by Exodus. He telephoned Nobbs and asked if he could reprint the report in his parish magazine.

For a publication as candid and open-hearted as this, such reverberations build significant bridges between two sub-cultures; especially when drugs are mentioned.

And much to its credit, the report doesn’t shirk the drugs issue in order to make the story more palatable to

a straight audience: “Some people come to the dances and take drugs, mainly cannabis and ‘Ecstasy’....We may or may not approve of the use of drugs but it must be recognised that it is part of today’s culture, not only the youth Dance culture but also drugs are being taken in respectable middle-class homes.”

Malcolm Nobbs does, however, have his own feelings about ecstasy:

“I’ve got to say I oppose it. I personally have worries about how it affects people’s physiology and the mental state. Exodus are proving that you don’t truly need to take the drug. OK there are members who take the drug but there are some members who actually don’t take the drug now and are enjoying that same bonhomie - that feeling with another - the same breaking down of barriers. I think in some way they are a living example that you don’t have to take E to get that, although they might have found that feeling through taking E.”

With cannabis, however, he is less reserved: “If you talked about cannabis then I don’t bother about that at all. It’s no more harmful, if not less harmful than alcohol.”

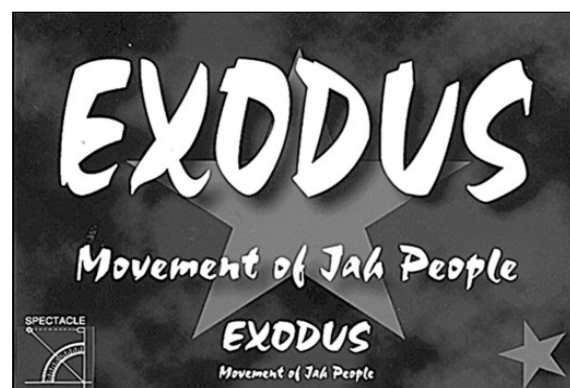
Again much to his credit, Nobbs ventured to one of Exodus’ raves and found community amidst the techno-jungle. The dancers he interviewed described it “as a warm and good dance.....there is no hostility, dealing in drugs and extortion which can be found at other dances and clubs.”

Malcolm Nobbs is a firm believer in his church but as he readily points out Jesus was politically involved: “In his own way, he did make political statements about the injustices of the world. He was there to buck the trend which is very similar to now because there was a society that had begun to lose its spirituality; the spirituality of the times had become institutionalised and he had come to shake them up”

Indeed, the New Testament story of Jesus up-turning the tables in temple could be taken as piece of direct action against the corruptive power of the market: “We always think of Jesus as meek and mild but he got angry, he got upset. There’s no harm in taking direct action as long as its just.”

There is also no doubt that for Malcolm Nobbs the investigation into the Exodus Collective and their activities was an inspiring experience: “I actually felt closer to God at Exodus than I have in some churches in the diocese.” It will be interesting to see how the institutionalised church swallows such an observation.

Copies of the Malcolm Nobbs’ report on the Exodus Collective are available from The St Alban’s Diocesan Board for Social Responsibility, 41, Holywell Hill, St Alban’s, AL1 1HE. Price £1.



The 42 minute extended mix of the film first broadcast on Channel Four in 1995.

“This remarkable film is an antidote to the dereliction and paranoia on Britain’s streets. Squatting and renovating decayed buildings, Exodus pursue a mutually agreed quest to regenerate their disaffected community. Their regular free raves bring ex-army, ex-estate agents, ex-shop assistants and ex-criminals together as Exodus, a dance with new direction. For anyone interested in a street relevant discussion on drugs, criminality, spirituality and community, this film is a must see.”

SQUALL

Now available on video for £8 individuals and £20 institutions. Send cheques payable to Spectacle Productions Ltd. to Spectacle Productions, TV Centre, Thackerey Road, London SW8 3TW.

Yer SQUALL competition innit

Cast your mind back to the hazy days of summer last year. The sun was shining the birds were singing and the sound of laughter filled the air as people around the nation gathered to discuss possible entries for 'Yer SQUALL Competition innit'. As usual the Post Office had to raid the dole queues for reinforcements to cope with the volume of entries.

Laugh? We... well, anyway... Last issue's picture is re-printed below right and the winner of a 90 min. Jazz Jungle tape mixed by

our kid DJ Seed is J.Thompson of Chippenham, Nr Bristol for "Roger's invisible tippee soon became a popular local tourist attraction". She also wins a years subscription to SQUALL as does second prize winner Mark Bentley of Leeds for "You've never played cricket before have you Jonathan?"

Well a year's passed, we're all older and funnier and it's that time again. For this issue your comic caption-writing capabilities are put to the test by Ivan Coleman's photo (left) taken at the March for Social Justice.

You lucky people stand to win the new extended Spectacle Productions video *Exodus: Movement of Jah People* (see ad on page 42) and a copy of Visual Corporations' *The Hemp Revolution* video (see review on page 54). The two winners and five runners up will also receive a copy of the impounded *Evading Standards* and a copy of the new edition. Remember to send your entries on the most unusual postcard you can find (so we can decorate our new office!) to 'Competition (isn't always good for you)', SQUALL, PO Box 8959, London N19 5HW.



UNCAGED CAMPAIGNS ENDING VIVISECTION - we won't give up!

Uncaged Campaigns is one of the most active, dynamic and radical anti-vivisection pressure groups in the UK. In the face of initial political apathy and media disinterest Uncaged Campaigns has worked incredibly hard to keep anti-vivisection in the public consciousness. Such efforts account for the renewed interest in and opposition to animal experiments. And Uncaged Campaigns will not cease campaigning until vivisection is dead and buried.

Uncaged Campaigns outlook is positive and democratic. We are committed to achieving the abolition of vivisection through working with a wide range of sympathetic individuals and organisations. We have a holistic view of campaigning and we attack vivisection from many different angles and on all levels, from having vegan ethics both as individuals and as an organisation to using scientific facts to out the flawed arguments of the pro-vivisectionists. We support research that is truly scientific, responsible and humane. But most importantly Uncaged Campaigns believes that social change has to be democratic in order to be successful, long-lasting and morally compelling. Therefore Uncaged Campaigns puts a huge effort into campaigning directly in the public arena. At the same time we are developing the skills needed to attract the media to our cause and to effect change on a political level.

Our literature is well researched and accessible to the general public. Campaign resources are available to all - and many local animal rights groups are participating in our campaigns all over the UK as well as using our information leaflets to address any questions the general public may have about vivisection. We are working very hard to achieve our goal of ending vivisection. In our relatively brief history we have reached millions of people with our positive campaign against animal experiments, giving information and encouragement about a cruelty-free way forward.

MARCH AGAINST VIVISECTION 7TH JUNE SHEFFIELD (coach from London)

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Road Rage round-ups

Teddy Bear Woods - Weymouth

A public inquiry gave the go ahead (surprise surprise) in January for a four-lane relief road through the Weymouth countryside planned by Dorset County Council. But all is not yet lost. Before building work can start the council must gain an Act of Parliament for permission to close long distance footpaths. They have also yet to complete the necessary compulsory purchase orders.

It is also suspected the road may have to be a DBFO (Design, Build, Finance, Operate) because the council won't be able to afford the £25 million cost.

If all obstacles are eventually removed the road will slice through the Ridgeway destroying sites of archaeological importance; pass near three primary schools; cut through a 200 year-old wood known as Teddy Bear Woods; cross a nature reserve; and - here's a new one - pass through a toxic-waste tip.

The Lodmoor North landfill site contains asbestos, pesticides, biocides and at least eleven other dangerous substances.

The locals are rebelling and a protest site has been established at Teddy Bear Woods.

Protestors want to hold down the number living on site at the moment to ensure minimum impact on the environment as they are confident the road will turn out to be unfeasible. There is a policy of no vehicles on site and no dogs - because badgers are living in the woods.

"These woods are beautiful and we don't want to trash them," one protestor told SQUALL.

Visitors however, complete with dogs, are most welcome, especially those carrying gifts. Food, clothing, tools and money are needed.
Info: 0468 221454

A55 - Anglesey

Late converts to public transport, contractors Mott MacDonald, hired a mini-bus in April to, er... bus pro-road lobbyists from local villages along the route of the new A55 in Anglesey to the first day of a public inquiry. But alas, the pro-road argument that no-one uses public transport was proved. The bus turned up empty.

The inquiry into the second phase of the scheme which took place in Holyhead, was well attended by protestors.

The A55 will be a dual carriageway Euroroute across Anglesey about 500 yards from the existing A5. Swallowing up the usual - SSSIs, woodland, etc - it will also trash some marshland. An embankment will be built across the water between Holyhead and Anglesey.

As the Welsh Office can't afford it, the road will be one of those Design, Build, Finance, Operate money making scams.

Contact: Amgen, c/o (Alternatives), Blwch Post 7, Llangefni, LL77 7ZJ.

Western Chippenham Bypass

Bulldozers were expected along the route of the Western Chippenham bypass, near Bath, in May. Again the road planners made sure they included a nature reserve and area of archaeological interest on the route, but threw in some houses and a badger set for good measure. The locals are rebelling.
Contact Bath Earth First! for info.

A390 - Cornwall

Clearance work on the new St Austell North Eastern Distributor Road in Cornwall was brought forward from the summer to April when contractors discovered an outbreak of protest fever on the site.

Several protestors were arrested while chain-saws felled trees.

Cornwall's first road-protest camp may have lasted only four days and gained negative local press coverage, but it aroused the slumbering traffic issue in the area and more protests are planned.

The scheme is supposed to relieve in-town congestion of heavy lorries but will only feed traffic onto the A390 which is already gridlocked at peak times.

There are even suggestions that the road is just a wheeze to expand the boundaries of the town eastwards and strengthen the arguments for a southern bypass.

Contact: 01726 843586

A320 - Stringers Common

Surrey County Council have come up with an excellent way of getting rid of protestors - decide not to build the road.

While activists in four camps along the route of the A320 road widening and straightening scheme in Guilford, which would have cut through Stringers Common, were busily burrowing away in May fearing imminent eviction, the council ran out of money.

"With regret" the council, which went Tory in May, announced they had to abandon their evil plan.

So 220 mature trees, wet grassland, homes of bats, lizards and aquatic life, as well as the usual SSSIs will not be destroyed.

Campaigners get on Steven Norris' goat.
Photo: Gary Essex

Curious Converts

STEVEN NORRIS

There shall be more rejoicing in heaven for the one sinner who repenteth than the ninety-nine righteous people - but Steven Norris?

Steven Norris was transport minister between April 1992 and July 1996 - during which time the Newbury bypass was signed, sealed and delivered.

It now transpires that during this time Mr Norris opposed the bypass. But, like all the best politicians, he kept his mouth shut.

Norris confessed on a *Panorama* programme about road-building in March. "I think it's fair to say that the formula was more motorist-based than it should have been and that it didn't apply the same kind of cash values to environmental considerations which it did to motorists' inconvenience," he said.

Not only this, Norris had every sympathy with the protestors. While they were being thrown from the trees during Norris's dying days at the Transport Ministry, he thought all along they "were right". He went on to say that the bypass should never have been built on the chosen route.

So does Mr Norris deserve high praise for ruining his career and speaking out against his Government's policy? Obviously not. He stepped down at the election.

THE MIRROR

Just before whatshisname, er... Swampy, was touched by the finger of fame, *The Mirror* found room in its wall-to-wall coverage of those other media sensations, the Spice Girls, for a two page special in defence of road protestors.

This was January 29th, a couple of days before Swampy had surfaced from the Fairmile tunnel, but Animal had.

Headed Animal Magic: Mirror News Special on the Battle to Stop Cars Taking Over Britain, there followed a long interview with Animal entitled 'Hero 16-year old's four days in a tunnel to fight £65 million highway.' The same edition also carried an editorial called 'Why Animal is Right'.

"Britain faces a choked, gridlocked future," *The Mirror* gasped.

Thus did a sleazy tabloid rediscover for a moment its noble tradition, and become the first popular paper to present road protestors in a favourable light.

"We're not nutters and scroungers," it cried. Amen.

and finally.....

DISSATISFIED with the current havoc being wreaked on the Newbury countryside, Costain Civil Engineering Ltd, constructors of a certain bypass in the area, have applied to dump more waste into the River Kennet and the Benham Lake Stream.

Costain have applied to the Environment Agency for a variation in the amount of effluent from the Newbury bypass works they can jettison into the rivers from September 5th 1999 for a period of 12 weeks.

They want to pump 32,400 cubic metres a day into the Benham Lake, and 35,500 into the Kennet.



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ROUNDABOUT

Snippets of informed gossip, intrigue and odd occurrences

Rifling the ravers

Cruising back to London from the Easter Exodus rave we were pulled over by a group of fat machine guns ready to burst. It was around 11am on Easter Sunday and the blue circus performer's truck, complete with chimney stack and ornamental paint work, was being ably handled by a trapeze artist, who had herself been at it all night. Sprawled in the back were around eight slumbering aftermaths and a still bubbling four and a half year old girl.

The Anti-Terrorist Squad ordered us against a wall - "I said backs against the wall!" - before proceeding to search our pockets for rocket launchers and our cigarette packets for Semtex. Even ripped rizla packets were held up as evidence of potential terrorist activity - "So what's this for then?" said one, "roach?"

No, no you've got it all wrong officer, we use bits of cardboard to light fuses.

I suppose the forty minutes we spent being manhandled and prodded with machine gun barrels was prolonged somewhat by one post-rave casualty's insistence that one of the coppers looked like a familiar member of the the Stoke Newington Police Force - "Didn't I buy some crack off you once?" He felt the necessity to ask.

However, twitching trigger fingers were eventually disarmed by four and half year old Leah, when she insisted that police take her name as well.

"Well I couldn't faakin' believe it," Leah told SQUALL. "They handed me a note saying that under stop and search powers contained within the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994, they were allowed to treat us like international terrorists. What I want to know is how many flat-beds packed with explosives slipped passed whilst they were giving us the third degree?"

Fitted right up - a cautionary tale

A fifteen-storey former dole office seemed the perfect choice for an overnight squat to highlight the introduction of the Job Seekers Allowance last October so a bunch of likely squatters occupied the building with a view to drawing the media's attention to this introduction and changes to Housing Benefit payments for under 25s.

In the morning, the JSA became law and the rozzers eventually realised the building was occupied. They worked their way around it, trying to work out how the squatters had gained entry. At this point one of the squatters - who wishes to be known as SOS (Sadly Optimistic Squatter) - was convinced that running round the building checking up on the police all day was pointless after a sleepless night, deciding instead to go and have a chat with them.

Having explained what the squat was about and when the occupants planned to leave, our SOS then attempted to get back into the building as agreed. Little did she know she had been talking to PC Tony Brittain, of the Metropolitan Police's Forward Intelligence Team (FIT). This FIT ferret had failed to sniff out any information

about the squatting of this huge building, despite having been specifically working in the area because of predicted actions outside local dole offices. Consequently, he was not in the best of moods when our squatter chose to inform him about the action after it had happened.

SOS: "So I can go back in now can I?"

Brittain: "Shall we let her? Oh all right then, go on. But you're all out by six, right?"

SOS: "Yep".

She then spent a few moments convincing her slightly less sad and optimistic mates still inside the building that it was OK to open the door. After much cajoling they agreed.

No sooner had SOS put her foot in the door than Brittain and his pals had theirs in there too. With a sickly smile Brittain turned and said: "Sorry, SOS, I lied. I am a bastard aren't I?" How they all laughed.

Brittain proceeded to point at people who had gathered outside the building to prove just how much he knew about activists and what they do, recalls SOS: "To be honest he wasn't that impressive, but he knew a few names and was clearly aware of loads of different groups and what they do. What was most disturbing was his underhand, slimey pleasantness and apparent understanding of the issues. He was clearly trying to extract information from me" She later told SQUALL what she had learned from the incident: "I can't believe I was so fucking stupid. Never trust a copper."

McGreedy V the BBC

The McDonald's Corporation dug itself deeper into the McLibel public relations quagmire last December, when the longest court case in English legal history finally finished hearing its testimonies.

Naturally the media were interested in the news value of the grand finale and amongst those attending the sum up speeches was Joshua Rosenberg, legal affairs correspondent for BBC news. However, Richard Rampton QC, who submitted his sum up speech to the court in written form, refused Rosenberg's request to view a copy. Much to the further annoyance of Rosenberg and the BBC news team, McDonald's then changed their mind and said they would give the BBC a copy but only if they gave a donation to one of McDonald's children 'charities'.

The outraged Joshua Rosenberg had no intention of funding one of McDonald's public relations scams and refused the offer. As a consequence, BBC news coverage of the event was unusually non-conformist, and included lingering camera shots of the McGreedy logo presented in the very 'factsheet' over which McDonald's are suing. It also included a quote from Dave Morris letting the audience in on the secret that "McDonald's are one of the most successful propaganda machines" on the planet.

Meanwhile, an offer from McSpotlight to put Rampton's closing speech on the internet was similarly refused. As Mike Love, Communications Director for McDonald's UK, told SQUALL cryptically: "Those taking part in the action should look at the facts and be aware of the truth."

The State its in continued from page 4

wait until Labour start messing up, and they will. Just look at all those women in there, for a start. God knows what they'll get up to."

Without a doubt the 101 new female MPs represent a sorely needed concentration of female expressiveness in what has rather inappropriately been described as the 'mother of all parliaments'. The likes of Clare Short add a refreshing potential for honesty which nearly, but significantly did not, cost her a place in Blair's new cabinet.

There are other reasons to be cheerful. The Social Chapter of the Maastricht Treaty, setting workers' rights in a new contract of conditions, was of course rejected completely by the previous government. After all the Tories had spent so many years strategically eroding conditions of employment they weren't about to allow Europe to over-ride all their hard work. The new Government has signed up immediately.

However, with Tony Blair prepared to pose for the cameras in a McDonald's bar in Coventry, concerns have yet to be met over what kind of employment conditions will be negotiated from a Social Chapter, much of which still remains abstract. Indeed, if the British electorate has its fair quota of media-worried sheep, politicians hardly qualify as shepherds. Their role is more the sheep dog, with big transnational concerns like McDonald's or global media-barons like Murdoch pursuing their mammonian lips to issue the whistle. What part will corporation's like McDonald's play in keeping Tony Blair's commitment to a minimum wage down to not much more than £3 an hour.

By the end of this century McDonald's will be one of the biggest employers in the UK, whilst their decision to quit buying British beef instantly took £350 million out of the beef market. Such clout is courted, rather than checked by politicians from both sides. Any nationalist concerns about paling British power in a new Europe are merely academic compared to the march of the transnationals. Such global power was alluded to recently by James Cantalupo, president of McDonald's International: "McDonald's is a symbol of international maturity. I don't think there is a country out there we haven't gotten enquiries from. I have a parade of ambassadors and trade representatives in here regularly to tell us about their country and why McDonald's would be good for them." Recent changes to the regulations governing the activities of transnationals in host countries, incorporated in the General Agreement on Tariff and Trade (GATT), the North Atlantic Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the upcoming Multilateral Investment Agreement (MIA), ease the global-expansion plans of transnationals at the expense of host country accountability and control. Meanwhile public criticism of this cultural and consumer foist is an open target for corporate libel suits such as the McLibel trial. Freedom to speak out about such corporate invasions is but one of the rights yet to be established with a Bill of Rights.

It will also be interesting to see the extent to which the powerful Tobacco lobby will smother Labour's stated intention to ban tobacco advertising. And similarly, how the British Arms industry - the second biggest in the world - will be allowed in to neutralise Robin Cook's stated intention to put 'human rights' at the forefront of foreign policy. The general election was but one theatrical battle; the behind-the-scenes power war is far more significant.

The point from all these observations is not to denigrate or stand negative to a new feeling of political optimism, but rather to make sure that such optimism is manifest in real terms. The landscape of British politics now lies more open to being populated with genuinely new ideas than it has done in many people's living memory. If the latest feel good factor is not to be dashed on the rocks of reality, it will be up to the British population to play an active part in steering its course, not merely abdicating the wheel to Admiral Blair.

Whether you put a cross in a box, consciously spoilt your ballot paper or refused to vote altogether, the future depends not on the benevolence of politicians but on an active population.



The drilling fields



Colombian President, Ernesto Samper, has admitted that more than 30 per cent of his country's military machine is currently engaged in protecting oil fields and pipelines. **Debbie Young** investigates the involvement of British Petroleum in the rush for Colombian oil. Photos courtesy of **Peace Brigades International**.

A soldier of the XVI Brigade: 'The Oil companies loyal friend.'

Photo (right) translations.

Top left: "Where are they?"

Top right: "Today somebody wanted to play fair but their luck ran out.... It's hard to fight against death.

"We'll put our grief to good use until we find them.

"We'll never forget and never forgive."

Bottom right: "Someone cleans the torture cell. They clean up the blood but not the bitterness.

"Respect the following: Life, liberty, integrity, dignity, the right

not to be tortured, to have a family, a name, not to be persecuted.

Bottom left: "Yesterday we were a complete family, only struggling for progress and well-being without realising that for some people that's a crime."

ASFADDES is the Association of Family Members of the Detained and Disappeared.



The Casanare region of Colombia is a remote frontiersland in the Andean foothills, a few hundred kilometres north east of Bogota, home to cowboys, subsistence farmers and peasants. The discovery of oil in the late '80s changed everything: communities have been forced to move from their land; the Colombian army moved in to protect oil installations and pipelines, including those of British Petroleum Plc, from guerilla groups in conflict with the Government. Locals who voiced opposition to environmental damage and lack of steady employment have become victims of intimidation, torture, murder and disappearance. As a result of its links with the Colombian army, BP has been confronted with loaded allegations but denies all.

In an effort to stamp out further allegations of links with human rights abuses and environmental destruction in the region, British Petroleum Plc last month published a leaflet *BP In Colombia - The Facts*. BP says it "is convinced its presence in Colombia is fundamentally good and honourable and deserves to be better understood".

The sign outside the XVIth Brigade's headquarters in Yopal reads Ejercito Nacional Un Amigo Leal. Translated this means National Army A Loyal Friend. The XVIth Brigade protects BP's operations from guerilla groups who live in the remote Andean foothills. According to locals, people are more afraid of the army with whom BP has very close ties. In a country with one of the worst human-rights records in the world, approximately 100 campaigners voicing opposition to BP's operations in the Casanare region have been brutally murdered or disappeared. Other campaigners have been silenced by intimidation and beatings. One of BP's latest PR tactics, according to *The Facts*, is "sponsorship of 'human rights cards' (pocket guidelines) for Colombian soldiers".

Richard Howitt, South Essex Labour MEP, has made two visits to Casanare, this year and last year, to follow up allegations of human-rights abuses and environmental destruction. He was told by a local that to speak out against BP is suicidal. Typically, anyone opposing BP is branded a subversive, a guerilla sympathiser and therefore an enemy. Pedro is a highly respected member of his community but when he tried to help resolve a strike against BP contractors, he was accused of being a guerilla and detained. Pedro told his translator that the army in Casanare is BP's army and the Colombian Government does exactly as BP says. A soldier told Howitt plainly "we work for BP, they give us orders".

In 1991, the 5,000 troop-strong XVIth Brigade was established in the region to protect oil installations. It is alleged that BP funded the Brigade's barracks and other military complexes. BP state in *The Facts* they "do not employ a private army" and "do not resort to bribing" although they have struck an agreement with the Ministry of Defence to provide housing, food, transportation and health services to troops. To fund security, oil companies are obliged to pay \$1.25 a barrel for 'war tax' to the military for protection from guerrillas. In BP's case, an extra \$11.6 million was paid to the military for tighter security measures over the

next three years.

A report from a multi-institutional human rights commission which included the Attorney General's Office, the National Peasant Union and the Committee for Solidarity with Political Prisoners, alleged that information on strikers and protestors were passed on to the army by informers working for oil companies. This resulted in the murders of ANUC, (the peasant farmers union) members and supporters. BP flatly denies passing on any information but local sources say the company is guilty of colluding in this way. Howitt told SQUALL that "video surveillance may not have been passed on to the military but to the government, and the government/military link is paper thin".

Amnesty International has called for "BP and other oil companies to review their policies of operation in areas of conflict to ensure that never again, however unwittingly, do they provide information to military intelligence or to the security forces which subsequently leads to human rights violations".

Roddy King works in BP's Press Office in London. He told SQUALL that "BP has made some stupid mistakes but nothing as extreme as the media has made out". La Tablona is the main source of water for Yopal, capital of the Casanare region. When questioned about the environmental damage in the area, King denied all allegations shifting the blame instead onto migrant workers. In regards to reports about cows and horses blinded by water contamination he said that "that was just emotive". Landslides caused by erosion as a result of seismic exploration in protected forest area was caused, said King, by "heavy rainfall". Nothing to do with BP. An ex-governor of the Casanare region has said that, "oil companies are benefiting from a deliberate lack of environmental control at provisional and national levels."

Striking oil here has not rewarded locals with steady employment but with 28-day contracts that are intermittent, unreliable and badly paid. Any strike measures against BP and their sub-contractors have been broken up by the army resulting in violence and death. The most basic complaint is that none of the oil's wealth has filtered down to the people of the region. King estimated that this might take five to ten years but that it would happen eventually. In *The Facts*, BP maintains that they have invested in "programmes designed to raise educational, housing and health standards..." A campaigner who asked not to be identified, writing from Casanare, told SQUALL: "BP has spent a good deal of money on projects but more to win public opinion and politicians over than for the projects themselves. Most of BP's social action has been concentrated on the construction of works (schools, healthposts, roads etc) without analysing their role within the infrastucture of the region and whether they are really necessary."

Helena Paul of Oilwatch, a London-based organisation which monitors the oil industry, says there is often "a lack of respect on the part of companies and no understanding or appreciation of cultural differences".

Writing in the March 23rd edition of Colombia's *El Espectador*, Editor Marta Morales Manchego described Casanare as a region of "nineteen forgotten municipalities that were born one day with a budget of a

hundred billion pesos" which was now a "rich poor man with many problems". Manchego reported the jail had 64 prisoners in a space for only 25 and there is pollution and overcrowding. The Human Rights Ombudsman Miguel Alfonso Perez told Manchego there was an "non-existent political system; no justice; no support to victims of crime and there has been too much investment without development."

Howitt told SQUALL he has "nothing against BP and no axe to grind" but when he was approached by a Colombian in exile who presented a clear story of human rights abuses and environmental damage he decided he would not let allegations against BP go unchecked.

"I would be evading my responsibilities if I didn't follow these issues closely. I have no great wish to bash BP. As a British politician I want to be proud of a British company's successes but these are very serious allegations."

If capitalism works on expectation and investors get a whiff of any difficulties in the proverbial pipeline, share prices will plummet. BP is riding on the back of a £23 billion "elephant"; a huge find in oil industry lingo. BP has put 20 per cent of its entire budget into Colombia this year. Next to Alaska and the North Sea, Casanare represents BP's third most profitable operation. Derek Newman, a close observer of the oil industry explained to SQUALL the motivating factors behind BP's grip on Casanare.

"It is important for people to understand the corporate dynamism in which BP impels itself, to carry on a course of action which it started upon a decade ago; to expand its exploration in non Anglo-Saxon areas - the foremost of these at the moment being Colombia - and this dynamism makes it extremely difficult for BP to change tack on Colombia. Therefore, they can persuade themselves and others that everything is going according to plan."

Phil Mead, Associate President of BP's operations in Colombia, requires bodyguards everywhere he goes. In a speech to reporters he lamented the deaths of local activists but denied any link whatsoever between their fate and BP. He said "the last thing that BP wants to do is to have these people disappear in a shroud of secrecy and mystery and surrounded by accusations. It's not in our long term interest."

In *The Facts*, in the section entitled 'Why is BP in Colombia?', they sum up their presence with the proclamation: "Finally, we believe that responsible oil development represents Colombia's best hope for future peace and prosperity."

In contrast Helena Paul of Oilwatch believes they may be fuelling tension just by being there. BP's presence in this part of Colombia "makes them a focus for increasing the stakes and therefore the violence in this region. This is inevitable given the conflicts in this region".

The situation in Casanare is so complex that there needs to be a total rethink of the over-consumption of oil and oil derivatives which make the exploitation of people and resources so necessary.



Trainstopping

In February 15,000 people gathered to protest against the transportation of nuclear waste to the Gorleben reprocessing plant in Germany. **Ben Taverner** was there.

Protestors faced German riot police (above) who then were themselves caught in water canon fire (below). Photos: above Michael, below Alfred.

For over 20 years, a small German town 50,000 kilometres south-east of Hamburg, has seen a mass of activity and organisation against the opening of the Gorleben nuclear waste reprocessing plant on the outskirts of its suburbs. Locals, anti-nuclear campaigners and environmentalists spent two decades fighting the scheme. However, Western Europe's fixation with nuclear power demands adequate resources to dispose of toxic plutonium waste which will not break down to a safe level for tens of thousands of years.

The enormous Gorleben plant was opened in the beautiful pine forests of northern Germany to the abhorrence of the German public; giving birth to an anger that was soon to grow into one of the biggest shows of defiance to a European state by its own people for decades.

Gorleben receives deliveries of radioactive waste from power stations around Europe on a fairly irregular basis. There have only been three occasions where a sizeable amount of waste has been delivered. Each has

been confronted by crowds from around Germany and much of Europe so determined to prevent the plant from functioning effectively that they are willing to take direct action, and in turn suffer under the none too friendly fist of the German state.

This year, the last week of February and the first week of March, saw the arrival of around 15,000 activists, summoned by the Europe-wide "arrugha" as waste left power stations around Europe, including Britain's Sellafield, for its controversial destination. 1997 was to see the third mass attempt to slow the arrival of waste to the power station to a point where it was no longer cost-effective for the German Government to leave the plant in operation.

The waste, which was transported through Germany by rail, had been stopped several times by activists who had felled railway cables, removed sections of track, or cemented themselves in the path of the train. Dannenburg, Gorleben's nearest town, which has a railway station and is the point where the castors had to be transferred from rail to road, was the centre of activity where the majority of people gathered in the days before the arrival of the waste in an attempt to blockade the station and prevent the waste being taken by road to Gorleben. However, seven other camps were set up along the route, partly with a view to confronting the convoy at as many places as possible along the 25 kilometre road, and partly to cater for the different ways in which the various groups within the giant German environmental movement wanted to confront the convoy and the German state. These varied from dedicated pacifism to all-out pitch battles involving rock, bottle and molotov cocktail hurling and the inevitable police baton charges.

On March 4th, the day before the waste left Dannenburg station, a festival-like atmosphere surrounded the eight camps along the route. This was due, in part, to the meeting of old friends and the huge scope to meet people with wide experiences of pan-European activism. In addition it reduced the anxiety felt about the presence of 30,000 police officers accompanied by a squadron of helicopters, numerous water canons and several armoured personnel carriers. This was the biggest mobilisation of police in post-war Germany, costing the German Government £35 million.

Shortly after midnight on March 4th, police moved in to spend a few hours attempting to begin moving part of the non-violent blockade of Dannenburg station which had grown to nearly 9,000 people. Members of a women's group which started the campaign over 20 years ago (and many of whom were well into their 50s and 60s) were thrown into ditches on either side of the road. No arrests were made at this point. At around five o'clock the next morning the police began to make a concerted effort to move the protestors who were persistently reoccupying the road and the exit from the station. High-pressure water canons, surrounded by thousands of police were used on the crowd indiscriminately; men and women, children, the elderly, and even police who got in the way, were hit and left drenched on a cold and windy morning.

Spirits remained high, activists sheltered from the water under giant tarpaulins and Ramenplan, the Dutch food collective, provided drying facilities and changes of clothes. The convoy was delayed for hours.

As soon as a path was cleared the convoy of six nuclear-waste containers left the station under the escort of thousands of police. However, only a few metres down the road, several activists from Germany's Thuringen anti-roads protest dropped from the trees in harnesses and dangled in front of the bemused convoy, blocking its progress. The delay was significant and allowed those who took part in the train-station blockade time to race ahead to the next camps to join later blockades.

At the cost of \$53 million, police fought back numerous attempts by activists to halt the convoy for any further significant periods of time, except when one activist managed to chain himself to one of the vehicles in the paint-splattered convoy. Acts of defiance by 15,000 people who refused to obey laws which ordered them not to go within 50 metres of the road; 500 arrests; the threat of a European inquiry; the embarrassment of the fact that it took the might of the German state 14 hours to transport a convoy 25 kilometres; and the enormous cost of policing the route make it unlikely that Gorleben will be receiving any more deliveries over the next two years. The entire fate of the reprocessing plant has been cast into doubt.



Jewel in the mud Award



This issue's Jewel in the Mud Award goes to an unusual editorial from the *Independent* newspaper (5/1/97). Headlined: 'Less hysteria, more truth', the piece is unusual because it criticises the hysterical nature of media coverage on Ecstasy; the kind of coverage that on any other day the *Independent*, along with every other national newspaper, might itself have been pedalling. Anyway not to denigrate the achievement of the person who wrested control of the editorial line that day, here it is:

Three young people died over the Christmas and New Year period, suspected of having taken Ecstasy, and that is a tragedy. Each year, on average, 500 people die in drink-driving accidents and that, too, is a tragedy. Yet while the annual toll of deaths from Ecstasy - around nine - is the subject of lurid articles in right-wing tabloid newspapers, we are strangely unconcerned about alcohol. A survey by the Royal College of General Practitioners estimates annual booze-related deaths at 40,000. The Government estimates a total drinking population of 8.4 million. Based on the College's estimate, the death rate amongst drinkers is 0.5 per cent.

"By contrast, the Ecstasy fatality rate is a mere 0.0002 per cent. Around one million Ecstasy tablets are consumed in Britain each weekend, mainly in clubs up and down the country, yet, declares the *Daily Mail*: 'There's only one truth about Ecstasy; it kills.'

"Research in the US and here, at Sheffield University, suggests that Ecstasy may have long-term side-effects - just like alcohol. And, unlike alcohol, the sale of Ecstasy is an illegal trade, aimed at young people and exploited by organised crime. From a standing start of less than a decade ago, Ecstasy has grown into a £600m black-market industry. Ecstasy will not go away; dealers and the club operators who accommodate them will see to that. Instead, it will plunge further underground, a subject of hysteria rather than informed debate. Young people deserve better than tabloid prejudices. They deserve properly funded research. Then the real dangers of Ecstasy can be assessed and properly understood - just like alcohol."

juxta-POSING

'Freemasonry is fun, says judge'

"There is half an hour of ritual. It involves a certain amount of learning and performing which is quite fun. We claim to have secrets but they are harmless."

Sir Maurice Drake - leading Royal Arch Mason and High Court Judge -Daily Telegraph 8/11/96

and

"The blind folded, bare breasted and noosed candidate places their hand on the open bible and solemnly swears to observe the secret laws of freemasonry and to keep them secret, under no less a penalty than that of "having my throat cut across, my tongue torn out by the root, and be buried in the sand of the sea at low water mark or a cable's length from the shore, where the tide regularly ebbs and flows twice in 24 hours, or the more effective punishment of being branded as a willfully perjured individual, void of all moral worth and totally unfit to be received into this worshipful lodge."

Oaths and consequences upon the first degree of Freemasonry

"A law allowing people to use a loud hailer is not going to lead to civilisation as we know it come crashing down. I would remind some of those who will be responsible for Hong Kong in the future of a very wise remark of the political philosopher Edmund Burke: "People crushed by law have no hope. If laws are their enemies, they will be enemies to laws."

Chris Patten, Governor of Hong Kong on China's intention to remove rights of democratic protest 16/1/97

and

"Judges end the right to a peaceful rally."

The Independent 24/1/97 - headline of article on senior judges' interpretation of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994

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Chapeltown Leeds,
LS7 3HB, UK.

Telephone and fax (phone first): 0113 262 9365.

If requesting information please send a SAE.

e-mail:

cornerstone@gn.apc.org

for the latest news check out the Earth First! web site at:
<http://www.hrc.wmin.ac.uk/campaigns/ef/earthfirst.html>



Wh'appen with

Top Left: Lyle, one of the youngest members of the collective with mum, Ruth.

Below left: Biggs and Glenn in a familiar role.

Farm eviction delayed

As SQUALL readers last left this ever- evolving saga, Long Meadow Community Farm was threatened with eviction.

The Department of Transport had originally compulsorily purchased the premises for a road-expansion scheme which had never materialised. The Collective then squatted the derelict farm in 1993, rebuilding it and stocking it with farm animals. They obtained a rent- paying licence to remain on the property and, pending the construction of public toilets, aspired to open the farm to the local community. Last year however, the DoT sent notice for Exodus to vacate the premises, announcing their intention to sell the farm to a winning bidder. After having the property valued, the Collective began seeking loans from organisations like the Ecology Building Society. As prospective usage of the property is limited by agricultural planning restriction, the DoT said it was not expecting much interest and advised Exodus to put in a bid 10 per cent lower than their valuation. The Collective consequently registered a bid of £54,000. They were then told by the DoT that higher bids had been entered, and that the new guide price for the property was £63,000. Exodus upped their bid to £70,000 to be sure.

The next they heard about the issue was a court summons for possession.

The DoT issued a statement saying: "We're charged with obtaining the best possible price for property declared surplus to requirements. Two offers received were substantially higher than the offer received from Long Meadow Farm's short-term tenants."

The DoT have refused to say who the other bidders are, although, despite their statement to the contrary, they are not obliged to accept the highest bid.

Exodus subsequently lost the court possession proceedings, primarily because they had not sought legal advice on their rights to remain.

Exodus appealed against the possession order at Luton County Court arguing their expectations of property purchase had led them not to seek legal advice about their existing tenancy. And yet there were strong legal arguments. However, the judge dismissed their appeal.

For their last appeal opportunity at the High Court on March 13th this year, the Collective were legally represented by one of the most socially committed firms of solicitor's in the UK, McGrath & Co from



the Exodus Collective ?

A judge describing their work as “splendid”, an invite to discuss their alternative to ‘Misspent Youth’ and attempts to close the pub managed by the mother of collective members. All in all an eventful few months in Luton. **SQUALL** comes with the update. Photography by **Nick Cobbing**.

Birmingham. Their London-based barrister was David Watkinson, a legal professional with a long history of court battles on behalf of squatters and Travellers.

In one of the most jovial court cases SQUALL has ever witnessed the judges presiding over the case made it clear from the start which way they were going to rule. After describing the work the Collective had done on the farm as “splendid”, they passed judgement that Exodus should have the right to put their full legal arguments before a court. Following the verdict, the High Court echoed with a highly unusual round of applause from a gallery packed with members of the Collective and assorted empathisers. This means they now have a stay of execution until a newly arranged court case on an as yet undetermined date.

Both Exodus and their legal representatives believe they have a reasonable chance of success in establishing rights to remain on the property under the Landlord and Tenants Act 1954 and Agricultural Tenancy stipulations.

New Conference invites Exodus

An imminent round table conference on ‘Misspent Youth’ covering unemployment and crime, will involve police, local councillors and social workers. Exodus have been invited to contribute to the conference and will discuss their proposal to open a community centre in Luton. The centre, to be known as the Arc, aims to provide cultural activities, craft markets, food and dance events for Luton’s youth. Everything will be low cost and funded by a £5 levy on each rave. The proposal has been strategically blocked at various stages (see previous SQUALLS) but now perhaps there is light at the end of the Caesar’s Palace tunnel.

Heat from a different angle

For the last three years, the Globe public house in Dunstable has been managed by Betty Jenkins, the mother of Exodus spokesperson Glenn, Exodus DJ Hazad and fellow founding member Elaine. Over the last year, bizarre moves have been made to try and force the pub to close.

When a local resident began making noise complaints against the pub, the police and local council asked him to keep a log of all the misdemeanours he observed from his house across the road. Mr Anderson, who at one time had draped a confederate flag across the entire front of his house, claimed that the Globe was very noisy and that Mrs Jenkins had both chased and set her dog on him. Amongst the multitude of allegations, Anderson also complained about seeing fights in the street and of women urinating in the street. The brewery which owns the Globe public house then received a letter of complaint from the housing association responsible for managing properties in the surrounding area, with Anderson’s complaints as their sole reason for concern. In order to placate this sole complainant, Mrs Jenkins spent £3,000 putting in double glazing and bricking up one door way to cut down any noise escaping from the pub. However, this failed to stem Mr Anderson’s barrage of objections. Meanwhile Mrs Jenkins held coffee mornings for local residents to gauge whether Anderson’s objections were shared by other locals. Far from being in agreement with Mr Anderson, the other residents signed a petition in support of Mrs Jenkins. Of the ten people living in a nearby close, only Mr Anderson failed to sign the petition. Remarkably, in response only to Mr Anderson’s complaint, South

Bedfordshire District Council Environmental Health Officers issued a noise abatement order against the pub. However, Betty Jenkins successfully appealed the order and it was withdrawn. In June 1996, South Beds District Council wrote to Mr Anderson telling him there was no point in keeping a log of alleged misdemeanours anymore.

The following weekend six police detectives then moved into a house across the road in order to carry out weekend surveillance observations on the Globe. In sharp contrast to Mr Anderson’s long lists of sometimes bizarre allegations, the sum total of their surveillance log - now disclosed to Betty Jenkins - cited a few incidences of men urinating against a wall in an alleyway nearby, and some men walking out of the pub at 11.40pm with beer.

One evening in September 1996 Inspector Nicholas Banfield from Dunstable Police, walked into the pub, looked around and walked out again without saying anything. The next morning he came back and warned Betty that it was an offence to have drunk people at the bar.

On October 18th, Inspector Banfield returned with another policeman, and according to witnesses demanded, “Where’s Jenkins?” (referring to Betty). He then attempted to caution Mrs Jenkins for the two people he said he had seen walking down the road with bottles of beer at 11.30pm.

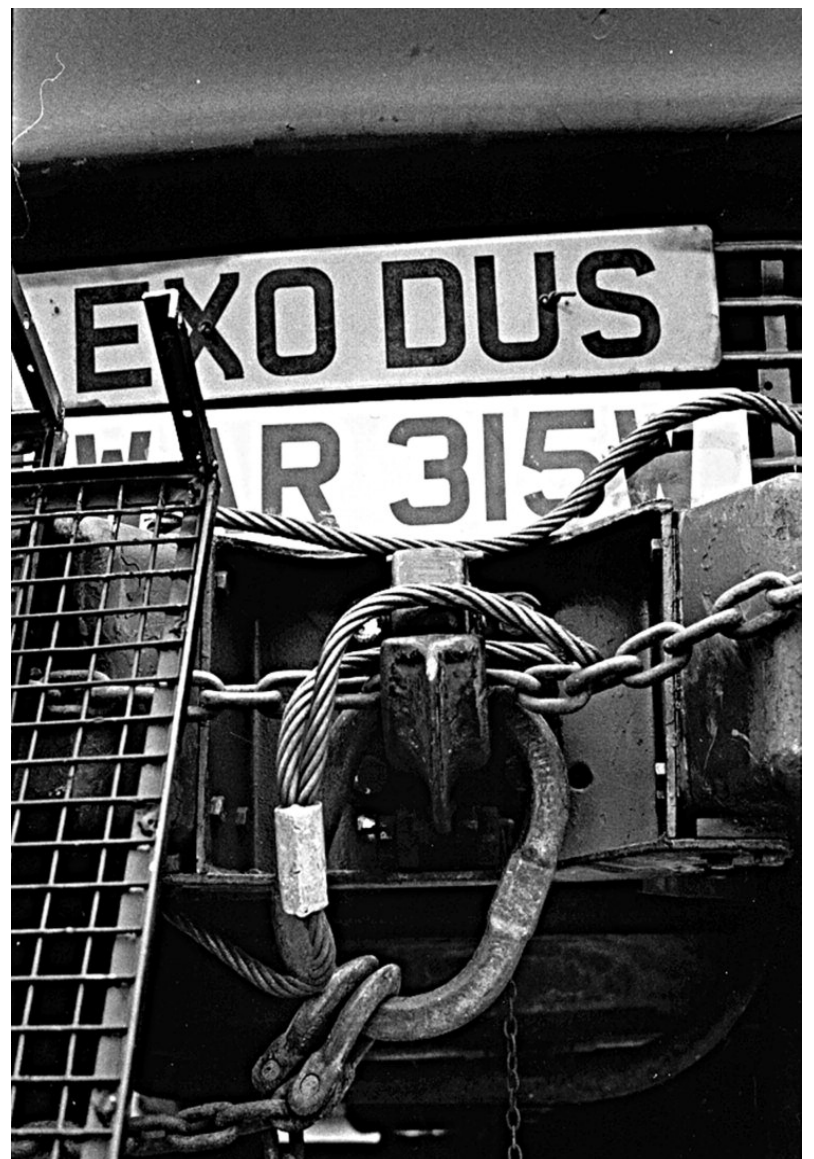
Betty Jenkins refused to accept the caution claiming the incident, if it happened at all, was unconnected with her pub because her doors had been locked. Banfield then pushed Richard Jenkins against the bar and, when other people on the premises raised objection, left saying he felt intimidated and telling Mrs Jenkins to come and see him the next day. The next morning Mrs Jenkins’ telephoned Superintendent Brian Minihane, divisional commander of Dunstable Police Station and registered her complaint over Inspector Banfield’s “obnoxious attitude” and his assault on her son.

On November 15th, Inspector Banfield reappeared with six other policemen and claimed that someone was still drinking up at 11.23pm. Two probation officers, also finishing their drinks in the pub, have testified that they saw police punch one customer and push others off their seats. When one of the probation officers protested to the police, she was told to shut up or she would be arrested. Within minutes the number of police had swollen to over twenty, with officers drawn from three divisions. The speed with which such a number of police officers

could be summoned suggested they had all been on standby nearby. Such a response for an alleged licensing check is extraordinary, and further suggests a deliberate proactive operation directed against Betty Jenkins’ licence. Indeed, two days after this last visit, police served a ‘revocation of licence’ notice on Betty Jenkins accusing her of being unfit to run a pub despite the fact that she had been successfully doing so for the last eight years. A licensing court case is pending. Meanwhile, Richard Jenkins and one other Globe regular have now served a summons on Inspector Banfield for assault. This case is also pending. Police attempts to prosecute one of the punters in the pub for assaulting an officer was thrown out of court on May 1st. The judge ruled that police had gone “gone beyond the execution of their duty”.

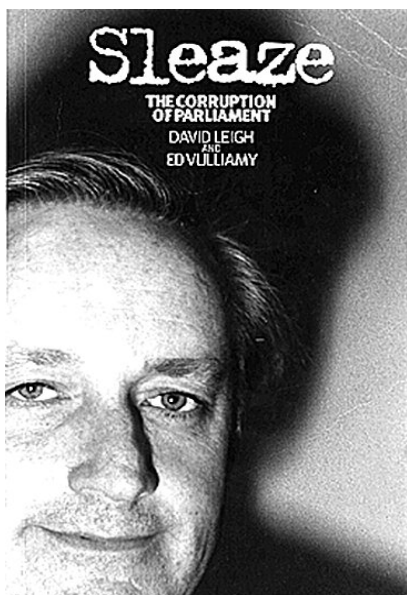
Exodus on Channel Four

This summer keep your eye on Channel Four for the most up to date and authoritative media investigation yet. Spectacle Productions’ brand new documentary investigates the multi-strategic attempts used by vested interest to destroy the Collective. The programme is a cutting-edge follow-up to their inspirational *Exodus - Movement of Jah People* also broadcast on Channel Four last year.



**Sleaze: The Corruption of Parliament**David Leigh and Ed Vulliamy (*Fourth Estate*, 1997) £9.99 pb

review by Sam Beale



It could have been the colour on the TV playing up again but Neil Hamilton, former Tory MP for Tatton, appeared to go a rather strange shade of green/grey when his successor, the refreshingly independent Martin Bell, was announced on election night. Not before time. Hamilton lost his seat

for one reason alone: sleaze. This now familiar word was defined in 1995 by Lord Nolan, during his investigation into standards in public life, as 'a pervasive atmosphere... in which sexual, financial and governmental misconduct were indifferently linked'.

Leigh and Vulliamy's book specifically focusses on the cash for questions scandal. Once through the wave of powerlessness inspired by the knowledge that surely it has ever been thus ('politicians are corrupt? You don't say...'), this book reads like an adventure story in which truth and integrity are the heroes. The mind-blowingly brash and bent Hamilton gradually emerges as the quintessential slimeball villain as his acceptance of 'brazen bungs', holidays and expensive gifts in return for political compliance benefiting a repulsive list of corporate interests are revealed.

The truth about the lobbying business (of which Ian Greer Associates is currently the most

well-known tip of a huge iceberg) is beyond disturbing. The most obscene of his professional relationships as recounted in *Sleaze* was with the Serbian regime, shortly before the world learned the extent of anti-Bosnian muslim atrocities.

This is, on one level, a depressing and laborious dissection of the worst elements of this country's parliamentary processes. But it is given an edge by the direct involvement of the authors as journalists reporting the story as it unfolded, and the creative embellishment they have applied to descriptions of Hamilton's ill-gotten shopping trips and hotel stays.

The chapter entitled End Game recounts efforts by various newspapers and tv documentary teams to break the story. There is an excruciating section where a number of journalists are banging their heads against brick walls trying to get MPs to admit that cash changes hands for questions in the Commons. Finally, one reporter manages to get a positive dis-

closure and it seems as if, at last, there might be the big chase after which the baddies get blown away when... oops, the journo in question is travelling home on the tube when he realises the pause button on his dictaphone has accidentally switched on during the interview.

A meticulous description of The Guardian's legal team, building its defence against Hamilton and Greer, is appropriate in light of the fact that the case that was never heard, and thus the facts of it have yet to be fully aired in public.

This book is important because it offers unique insights into the machinations of the 'Mother of Parliaments' pertinently described in the book as 'a Looking Glass world which seemed perfectly normal to its inhabitants, but utterly impenetrable and strange to any outside...' It reveals and describes the specific processes by which vested interests are to be found lunching together. It alerts us to connections and connivings beyond our worst imaginings and thus increases our future chances, not of preventing the corrupt being corrupt, but of hammering the bastards when they are.

**Stilled Tongues: From Soapbox to Soundbite**Stephen Coleman, *Porcupine Press* 1997. £8.99 pb.

review by Andy Johnson

In 1732 Thomas Snout was tried for his life at the Old Bailey for shouting in public "God damn King George". In December 1656, after six weeks debate, the House of Commons resolved not to hang James Naylor, a Quaker preacher. They decided instead to bore a hole through his tongue.

Naylor had consternated the powers that be - church and government - by criticising them at an open air meeting with the words: "God is against you covetous cruel oppressors who grind the faces of the poor and needy."

Not until 1872 was the right to gather freely and discuss enshrined in law.

The first half of Stephen Coleman's analysis of free speech and democracy in Britain provides an immensely readable history of the struggle for this basic right.

From around 1400 the heresy laws assured a certain death to anyone who dared criticise the church (people used to heckle at mass). But a serious challenge to the state's successful attempts to suppress free speech was not mounted until the Chartist movement of the last century.

In 1819, 500 people were injured and 11 killed when the cavalry charged an open air meeting in St Peter's Field, Manchester.

Fearing a repeat of the Peterloo massacre, the government drew back from carrying out its threat to forcibly prevent a meeting of the Reform League

in Hyde Park, in 1867.

One hundred and fifty thousand people turned up. Troops and police stood impassively by.

There followed an "age of discussion" where speakers would gather every week in parks and street corners across the country.

This, argues Coleman, was democracy in action. Politicians and pontificators could be heckled and questioned. They had to know their stuff and meetings could go on for hours.

But the advent of the motor car, which drowned out unamplified voices, and radio and television, killed this.

With radio and TV discussion became one way - politicians spoke, the audience listened. Speakers were questioned by self-appointed broadcasters. Any role of the audience was to ask one vetted question to provide a topic for 'debate'. Audience participation in the discussion is seen as undesirable, and a headache for the editors.

Coleman concludes that although the right to free speech is now assured, there is no where to practice it. Public opinion becomes a mass which individuals fear to differ from. Dissent is, in effect, silenced.

The first, historical, half of the book jaunts along. After the readable history comes the thicker analysis and theorising. Not as easy, but equally fascinating.

**It's Not A Runner Bean... Dispatches from a Slightly Successful Comedian**Mark Steel, *The Do-Not Press*, 1996. £5.99 pb

review by Sam Beale



nature of fame: '...fame is the most appalling possible yardstick to measure success by. David Mellor, after all, is famous. So is Keith Chegwin. And Myra Hindley and Jeremy Beadle and Alan Titchmarsh and Reggie Kray and that irritating twat who introduces Countdown.'

Runner Bean is full of well-told tales; there are stories about puffed up people in positions of power proving themselves to be prats, and an equal number about rebels, the 'humour and resilience' of ordinary people and the delight to be had from lateral doubletakes when all about you has gone awry. Steel's honesty about his politics, his razor-sharp rants and straightforward compassion combine throughout with a healthy dose of mischievous fuckery.

This is a book which makes you wish you were the sort of person who writes down all those funny little things that happen every day. And it shows, for those who have lost faith, that comedy can 'deal with matters... more urgent than how difficult it is finding the end of a roll of Sellotape'.

Mark Steel's book 'It's Not A Runner Bean' is a selection of 'Dispatches from a Slightly Successful Comedian'. It is not a 'so then I said...' smug, luvvies account of the crazy, show-biz life of a stand up; it is a collection of astute insights, political observations and everyday occurrences from the viewpoint of a funny, socialist performer who is also a highly entertaining writer.

Steel shares his thoughts on his forays into television, mining communities, student unions, America and more whilst dropping in observations about people, politics, publicity and the



Altered State: The Story of Ecstasy Culture and Acid House

By Matthew Collin, with John Godfrey.
Serpent's Tail £10.99 pb. review by Ally Fogg

"This is the story of how we reached the peak of human experience - and what happened afterwards" or so it says in the prologue at least. Actually the prologue is the peak of this careful, but slightly unsatisfying book, written by two former editors of i-D magazine.

It opens predictably with a 'my first E' narrative, then quickly raises some interesting analyses and observations, particularly that 'the typical cycle of Ecstasy use can also be mapped culturally.'

The argument is that an individual E user will typically have an evangelical honeymoon period for a few months, followed by a period of either diminishing returns or excessive use, then a comedown period of disillusionment and readjustment, and finally a rebalancing of equilibrium in a post-ecstasy world. The parallel is drawn throughout the book with a succession of 'scenes' which are destroyed by their own success, with fashionability leading to the loss of the original spirit and the attention of police and/or gangsters.

And that's about as sophisticated as the analysis gets. What we are left with are detailed accounts of how the music, drugs and technology of rave culture developed and then collided in the late eighties to change the face of popular culture forever.

We are led through the Summers(!) of Love in 1988 and '89, the 'Magical Mystery Tour' of commercial, unlicensed raves in '89 and '90, the Manchester Scene, the free party scene, Hardcore, Jungle and Drum and Bass. Many readers may be interested in the 'Techno Travellers' chapter which

charts the convergence of the travellers' free festivals with the sound systems and ravers coming out of the cities, culminating in the magical mayhem of Castlemorton. It is a creditable chapter which begins at Stonehenge and the Battle of the Beanfield, ends at the ill-fated 'Mother' festival in 1995, and includes a glowing mini-history of Spiral Tribe.

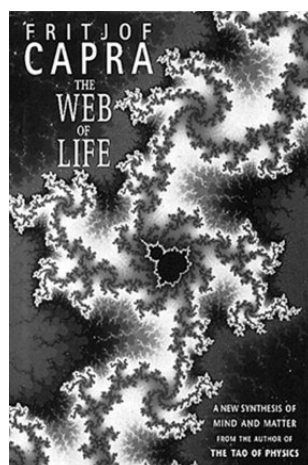
For the most part, *Altered State* is a fascinating and very well-researched collection of trivia. If you didn't know that Soft Cell were Eeked to the eyeballs when they recorded their first album in 1981, you do now. More importantly, if you didn't know that the Thatcherite Yuppie scum who were behind commercial raves around 1990 included one who went on to manage the Crinkley Bottom theme park, perhaps you should.

Part of my reluctance to fully endorse this book is that the authors seem reluctant to criticise anyone. If you have been involved in any dance music scene in the past ten years then *Altered State* will probably say something nice about you and your friends. This means that the book will probably sell by the bucketload to an audience grabbing at any authentic document of their own culture, it is what Irvine Welsh on a cover blurb calls 'a positive affirmation'. It reminds me of Mark Lamarr's joke about Shaun Ryder: "Shaun used to be the lead singer of the Happy Mondays, and then went on to form Black Grape. So if you're watching Shaun, that's what you've been doing." This book is aimed at the generation who have been 'on one and off it' for a decade. This is what you've been doing.



The Web of Life

Fritjof Capra (Harper Collins, 1996) £20 (hardback)
review by Jay Griffiths



It is a retelling and combining of the most recent scientific discoveries - including the theory of complexity, Gaia theory and chaos theory. It is compendium of systems thinking which sets out to illustrate the insufficiency of the mechanistic model of physics - or indeed of society - and the necessity for conceptual models which are systems-based, holistic and inter-connective.

Back to basics; you and the tree are inseparable. Your mind is indivisible from the system in which it exists, and that includes the tree. Connection is not identity, and to say "only connect" is not to say "only merge." In conceptual terms, to say that you and the tree are intrinsically related is not the evaporation of difference but the exuberance of difference, because you are *not only* connected to the tree, but also to the parrot, the tide, the turnip, the blackberry and the hour. This is Liberation Physics, opening your mind to unimaginable freedoms. The practical applications for environmentalism are as important as the psychological implications.

"Care flows naturally if the 'self' is widened and deepened so that *protection of free Nature* is felt and conceived as *protection of ourselves*." (Italics added.) If you and the tree are connected, to cut it down is to hurt yourself. Seattle knew it. Now science does too.

The *Web of Life* opens with a quotation from Chief Seattle, "This we know, all things are connected like the blood which unites one family... Whatever befalls the earth, befalls the sons and daughters of the earth. Man did not weave the web of life; he is merely a strand in it. Whatever he does to the web, he does to himself". What Fritjof Capra, highly trained theoretical physicist, does in this book, is to come back from that dark and complicated world of modern physics and tell us "Chief Seattle was right".

Capra is the author of bestseller 'The Tao of Physics'. Many people remember that Eureka moment on first reading 'The Tao', they know where they were and what they were doing like when John Lennon was shot.

'The Web' is a much more complicated book to read, but its message is vitally important.



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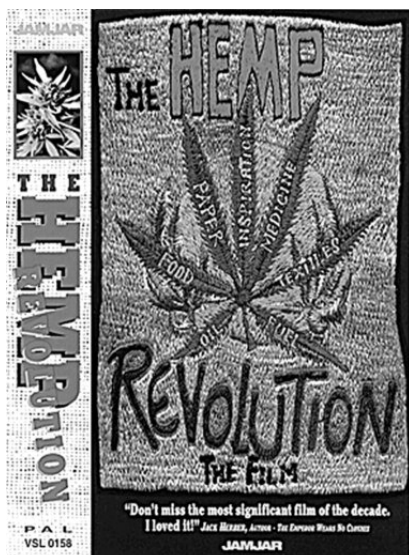
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The Hemp Revolution

Visual Corporation Ltd, London. No: VSL 0158
running time 74 minutes.
review by Mick Marlow



Broadly, this video covers the social history of cannabis use; the business conspiracy behind its ostracism and the latter-day recognition of its potential to reverse, or at worst, to slow dramatically the pace of global ecocide. Before delving further into this intriguing topic, there are a couple of technical criticisms which if corrected, would improve its ability to convey such an essential message.

It must be said that the sound quality on my review copy was abysmal and informative areas were lost as a result, which is a great pity, especially in a video which furnishes realistic proposals for restoring global well-being. My own feelings were that the whole production could have been more tightly edited down to sixty minutes or less without losing, maybe even enhancing, the power of the narrative.

After some gratuitous ads for other, disparate titles, the video proper opens with beautiful shots of resinous female cannabis colas or flowering heads in bright sunshine in what looks like Nepal. Despite the illegality of their legendary black hashish, the Nepalese harvest cannabis plants much as they have always done for seeds, food, fibre, textiles, inspiration, seed-oil, fuel and paper pulp.

Archaeological evidence and written documentation have confirmed that for the last eight

millennia, cannabis has served humankind with sustainable provision, not only of the more utilitarian needs, but with one of the safest medicinal and recreational drugs in the known world.

The video embraces the historical major uses of cannabis and begs the question: how could the suggestion of legalised public use and cultivation create such apparent uproar from governments?

"Cannabophobia" is the word I use to define the condition inflicted on the public by governments eager to maintain their allegiances to those industries made obese by the ongoing criminalisation of cannabis.

Fears generated in America over sixty years ago still form the basis of our popular perception whenever cannabis is brought forward for discussion. The efforts of such notables as William J. Hearst, publishing magnate and father of bank robber Patti; J. Edgar Hoover, prohibitionist, paederast and founder of the FBI; and Harry J. Anslinger, maniacally zealous cannabophobe whose Federal Bureau of Narcotics successfully campaigned for the 1937 Marihuana Tax Act and with the use of such films as the laughable "Reefer Madness", actually convinced the American public that marihuana was addictive, caused violent crimes, psychosis and mental deterioration.

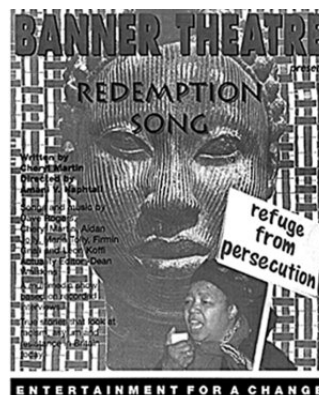
It is not the intention of governments that anything should disturb the focus of their interests, so clearly, nothing can progress in such a created adversarial atmosphere. As a consequence, there is a great void of honest, practical information on the many uses of cannabis, which is where 'The Hemp Revolution' could make its great contribution.

There are many clean and realistic answers here to the most compelling environmental questions; primarily, we need a wide working knowledge of cannabis before we can form realistic opinions about its uses, or begin to repair the devastation wreaked by its enforced removal. Essential fluffy fodder.



Redemption Song

Banner Theatre at Chat's Palace, Hackney, London, March '97.
review by Sam Beale



Banner Theatre's current show, *Redemption Song*, is a blend of stories, music and physical theatre and the Company's hall-marked use of recorded interviews and slide projections. The production deals broadly with racism, specifically highlighting the experiences of political refugees and asylum seekers.

It focusses on the story of a 16-year old woman, Djeneba, who fled police torture and rape in the Ivory Coast for her role in organising a peaceful student demonstration. When she arrived in this country Djeneba was held at Campfield detention centre in Oxfordshire. She went on prolonged hunger strike to protest for her release.

The show crystallises the history of British imperialism in African nations and its disastrous repercussions for these countries in the 1990s: "take one colonial nation... 3, 4, maybe 5 African states... drain their resources... sell them guns... sit back and watch the fun..." says the presenter of an African cookery programme 'A Recipe for Disaster'. The hypocrisy inherent in this process in the light of growing racism in European immigration policies is clear.

One section of the show tells the story of Liverpool Dockers visiting workers in Istanbul where they witnessed police brutally breaking up a peaceful demonstration by women and children protesting against the 'disappearances' of family and

friends. This scene is performed in front of a series of projections of tourist images of 'Turkey - Infinite Paradise' including a shot of a speed boat and ecstatic water-skier whilst the cast sing 'while you're sunning yourself so calmly/the death squad are keeping the peace...'

This section was particularly potent because it placed an 'ordinary' English bloke - a Liverpool Docker - in the midst of a situation few English people have experienced. The horrors of persecution and torture, and the inhumanity of blatantly racist immigration policies are presented pulling so few punches in this show that it's all a bit much to take on board as you go to the bar for a refill.

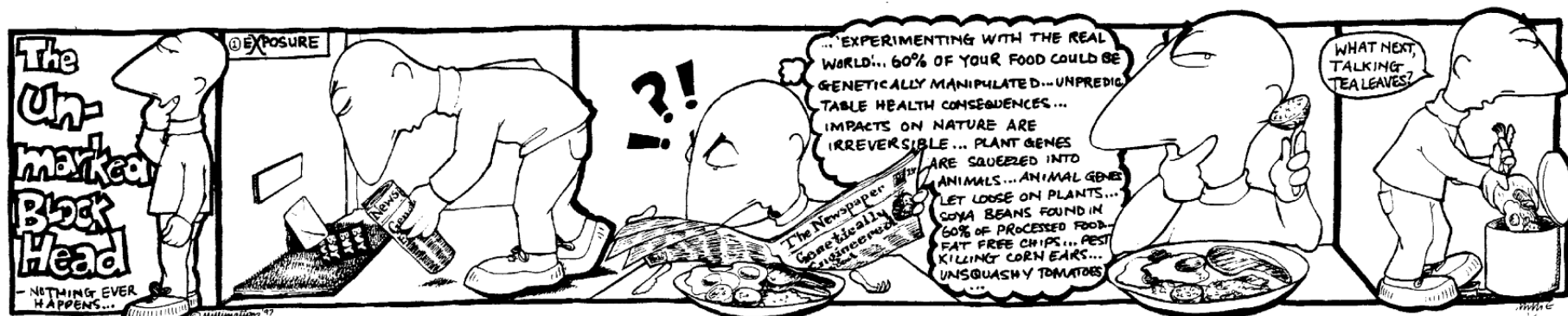
Through hearing his recorded voice the audience becomes aware of the Docker's anger, confusion and fear and is able to identify with his sense of humility that, however difficult his own situation, he is lucky to be going home to Liverpool.

The strength of this production is the vitality of its music and the strong physical performances given by all members of the cast. The music varies from diddly folk to strong African beats; amazing drumming defines the rhythm of the piece, focussing the physicality of the performers and heightening their spoken words.

As ever Banner walk that brave line between humour and outrage. The over-riding message for British audiences is summed up as asylum seekers sing the song 'No Deportations': "We're here because you're there..."

Banner Theatre are touring *Redemption Song* up and down the country until the end of July.

For details of performances contact: Banner Theatre, Friends Institute, 220 Moseley Road, Highgate, Birmingham B12 0DG. Tel: 0121 440 0460.





In-Sites

by Annette Hed

It's always fortifying to know in this age of increasing surveillance that someone is bugging the buggers. **STATEWATCH** is a hard copy magazine published six times a year, doing just that; keeping abreast of European civil liberties and security service manoeuvres. Its website is less a fountain of colour visuals, more a deep reservoir of accurate information. With the web offering a deluge of information, the accuracy of which you can never be sure of, Statewatch are reliable to the max. Their Textract database means you can find anything they've covered at the drop of a quick word search. It's an essential research site whilst also accessible to the peripherally interested browser.

<http://www.statewatch-off@geo2.Poptel.org.uk>

PRIVACY INTERNATIONAL (PI) was formed in 1990 as a watchdog on surveillance by governments and corporations across the globe. It runs a latest news service on developments in encryption, surveillance, and a multitude of issues relating to our privacy. PI are based in London, although administered by the Electronic Privacy Information Centre in Washington DC. Nevertheless it has members in more than 40 countries and has good global coverage. Simon Davies operates on behalf of the PI in the UK and writes regularly about surveillance in the national press. His articles, like the entire web-site, are seriously on the case and once again accessible. PI also publish a quarterly newsletter and organise conferences. Vital info.

<http://www.privacy.org/pi>

UK Free Outdoor Party Network. Despite the prevalence of vomit yellow backgrounds (on our browser anyway!), this is a great site for free party people in the north of England. Acting as a bulletin board they aim to provide a guide to midnight manoeuvres in the summer and happy hideaways in the winter. Where possible, a link to the home pages of the crews concerned is supplied. You can also download homegrown tunes or listen to the tracks that the DJ's themselves rate.

Spawnee Posse and Boom Boom (Manchester),

Source (Lancs.) Art Lab (Preston), Top Banana (Sheffield), Ram Raid (Leeds) Children Of Kaos (South West) are among those featured at the moment but if you've got something to shout about the opportunity's there too.

<http://www.geocities.com/sunsetstrip/alley/>

URBAN 75 have had over 30,000 visitors to their site since the beginning of April '97. With wicked content, design, imagery and graphics, it's not surprising. They strike a superb balance between underground reportage, interactive games, sharp humour, observation and style.

Currently on issue 2.2, Urban 75 are, "...fuelled up... fed up and fucked off with seeing an endless succession of vacuous swanky new magazines purporting to tell us what's happening and where 'the scene' is at.... in short, a whole load of vacuous posturing without commitment, conviction or honesty".

After getting in head straight for the face-slapping gallery and 'Belt a Bullshitter'. The aim is to belt, "every blathering bullshitting politician that comes crawling out of their hole". Every time a politician appears on your screen you can give it a resounding virtual slap by pointing your mouse and then click hard! For every hit you score a point. Super Howards earn you a bonus 10 points, but be careful of hitting the spliffed-up 'eco-warrior', you'll lose points (but hey! Who's keeping score here?).

In the news section there's plenty of well-written, information from the underground. In the magazine section you'll find an excellent article on the state of the internet. For those net hedz, 'The Art of Trolling' is a must. Also check out the rave section for a report of rave imagery in corporate advertising and the corporate rave organisations.

Urban 75 may be one of the activist movement's most visible net representatives to 'mainstream' culture. The crew at Urban 75 welcome anyone with a relevant message. Contact: <http://194.112.40.4/urban75/> or if you have trouble try <http://www.urban75.demon.co.uk/> from where you'll be re-directed.

Alan Lodge's (aka **Tash**) home pages have been reviewed before on these pages but, owing to a serious re-vamp and expansion it's necessary to do it again.

Tash has been recording events in the alternative community since the '70s. The site is brimming with photography from the late '70s travelling community, through to events at Stonehenge in 1985, which is accompanied by graphic articles describing events. Late eighties and early nineties rave culture including All Systems Go, the Midlands free party sound system collective allied against the Criminal Justice Bill. Again, photos of that time are accompanied by text describing the gradual erosion of liberties with respect to land-use and freedom to gather.

The activities of police information-gatherers and the massive issue of trespass is covered as well as the drug misuse act originally put forward by Barry Legg (MP-ex).

For a one-man project this site is awesome and whilst some of the images and frames are slow to load, it's well-worth a visit for an all-encompassing view of how public order law has affected 'alternative' culture and the right to protest.

http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/tash_lodge/

A brief mention must be given to both **schNEWS**, <http://www.cbuzz.co.uk/schnews/> and **Stonehenge Campaign**, <http://www.algroup.co.uk/wpb/stonehen.htm> websites which contain two major contact lists. And to the **Earth First!** <http://www.hrc.wmin.ac.uk/campaigns/ef/earthfirst.html> site for eco-active news.

The final recommendation is **UTHER PENDRAGON's** site. Activists attending civil/land rights protests over the last few years will be familiar with King Arthur, complete with greying beard, long white robes and Excalibur. He has been arrested several times and, in March, legal papers were filed in the name of King Arthur Pendragon vs the United Kingdom and Ireland over the issue of access rights to Stonehenge and the total exclusion zone that is placed around it. The case, to be heard before the European courts, has yet to receive a hearing date. He has now become the first monarch in history to take his own kingdom to court. Respects to the once and future king to be paid at <http://arthurpendragon.ukonline.co.uk/>

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Focussing on industry's driving of the economic machine, issue 3 of **CORPORATE WATCH** investigates and exposes corporate connivance and coercion.

Kicking off with a trawl through the mainstream media's recent findings, this A4, 28-page magazine leads with the story of the Sea Empress, grounded off the coast of South Wales in Spring, 1996, concluding that business considerations were valued over those of the environment.

Following articles focus on the arms trade and Nirex. A guide to cross-industry lobby groups, the Confederation of British Industry and the roads lobby give insights to cross-corporate interests. News of campaign updates let you know of activists working in your most despised arena.

Whilst not as polished as the Ethical Consumer this magazine has a similar feel, albeit aimed not so much at reducing consumption but more at direct action.

£1.50 from: **Corporate Watch, Box E, 111 Magdalen Road, Oxford, OX4 1RQ. Tel/fax: 01865 791 391. e-mail: mail@corporatewatch.i-way.co.uk http://www.oneworld.org/cw**

One of the better-presented magazines on the alt.market at the moment is **FRONTLINE**. Costing £1.80, Spring '97's edition is a stylish, shiny, A4, pink, 48-pager that zaps you through alt.culture's sub-cultures with grace.

Coming, essentially, from a traveller angle, this magazine is celebratory and has articles on the Harvest Fayre, Czech technivals, "Full on '96" and traveller culture in Germany. Respects are paid to land activists in an obituary for the Wandsworth eco-village and a spokesperson for the Green Party endorses NVDA. A section on 'real women' adds a certain style to the content while a feature on Mamalocous circus continues that vein.

You can get a copy of Frontline

from selected bookshops all over the country. If you have trouble getting a copy try: **Frontline Advertising & Distribution, Victoria Road, Yarmouth, IoW, PO41 0QW. Tel:0973 328640. http://www.c-comm.demon.co.uk/front-line/frontline.html**

"Progressive but interesting" is how **THE LAW** describes itself. An odd choice, you think, until you get inside. This tabloid paper is put together by activists on the inside of the law.

The April/May issue's cover story features Rob Christopher, of the Cannabis Hemp Information Club (CHIC), who tried to hand himself to the police after distributing hash cakes in Hyde Park. Below-the-belt legal gossip, miscarriages of justice and prisoners, JSA madness, arrests at Stonehenge, immigration & refugees all feature in a 32page, quarterly.

Towards the back of the paper is a deft analysis tying in refusal of legal status to refugees with British foreign

policy, the media and corporate interests. Interspersed with news, ads, reviews and letters, The Law is indeed progressive, and certainly very interesting.

The Law, PO Box 3837, London SW12 9ZE. Tel/fax: 0181 673 0062. Subscriptions are £4 per year.

To compensate for the lamentable lack of coverage within Squall of the Faslane peace camp, check out **FASLANIA** the regular news-zine from Faslane protestors against Trident submarines and their Clyde nuclear base.

The Spring/Equinox edition of FASLANIA tells of actions against warhead convoys, information on nuclear dumping, frontline reports of direct action, poetry and personal accounts. Twelve A4 pages are available from **Faslane Peace Camp, Shandon, Helensburgh, Dunbartonshire, Scotland**. Be sure to enclose a healthy donation to support postage, and activity.

reviews by Jelly Bean



Bitten (Smitten Records 1996) / **Political Party Broadcast** (Routemaster Records 1997)
CD format.
review by Paul



An album apiece from two labels that together with Stay Up Forever are at the forefront of the London acid/techno/trance underground that recently received mucho media attention. Providing the perfect antidote for trance fans who don't want to Goa all the way, both compilations are chock full of 'avin it acid with a funky kick.

'Bitten' appeared late last year with a round up of the full throttle 303 throb that fuelled it

through successively successful 12"s during the latter half of '96. From the punchy chunky 'Ballistic' by Ballistic to the breakbeat based 'jazzy mix' of Starpower's 'Nothing Can Save Us' the album sinks its teeth in all the way to the bone and it's all topped off with the M41 street party opening anthem 'London Acid City'.

In a way the top titled 'Political Party Broadcast' due to be released any day now carries on where 'Bitten' leaves off with a collection of new and recent Routemaster including tracks from Kektex, Sarcoblast and Immersion. Meanwhile the second disc sees Laurie Immersion take us on a mix trip through the Routemaster back catalogue with added 'erbs and spices from the Bag, Cluster and S.U.F. labels.

With a solo Immersion album project also in the offing later in the year... if he were around today would be bound to say "You've never 'ad it so good!"



Theo and Shannon - Child of the Universe

(Shannon and Theo 1996 - tape only)
review by DJ Seed



Album's like this restore your faith in the relevance of crafted acoustic folk music.

Theo and Shannon are in fact two residents of the bender community at Kingshill in Somerset, and without a doubt sow a well crafted selection of self-penned tunes that do everything to reflect both their close-to-the-soil lives and the state we all live in. Check the lyrics to 'Bastard mastercard' for a cutting comment on the trap of mammon, whilst Nature's Song gives thanks to the first sounds they hear when

they wake up on their hill near Glastonbury.

Theo and Shannon are a constantly touring musical outfit, gigging throughout the UK and beyond, and often to be found lending musical uplift on road protest sites and festivals. Such connections, with the cutting edge of political stances, lends their lyrics a sharp social slant; beautiful music with intelligent message.

The best example on this album is 'Only doing my job'; a cutting lyric classic. Viewed through the eyes of the veal-crate lorry driver whose vehicle killed animal rights protestor Jill Phipps last year, the song calls for understanding as well as action. It challenges the arrogance of protestors who think that all people paid by unethical companies should immediately give up their job, even if their families' immediate survival depends upon it. And at the same time it leaves the listener in no uncertain doubt that 'only doing your job' can mean to kill. Play on this crew. Play on. And how about a lyric sheet?

Available from Shannon and Theo, Kingshill, Cockmill Lane, East Pennard, Shepton Mallet, Somerset BA4 6TR Tel: 01926 499 385 or 01749 860 660



Jhelisa - Language Electric

(Dorado 1997 - all formats)
review by DJ Seed



Having been brought up surrounded by gospel and soul music, the Anderson family - which include Carleen from The Young Disciples and Vicki from D-Note - branched out and moved to the UK. The result is a stunning geneology of sensuality and social comment with Carleen writing and singing the excellent Young Disciple's hit 'Apparently nothing' and Vicki delivering the vocals with D-Note.

Having sung on The Shamen's 'Phorever people', Jhelisa Anderson went solo with London's independent Dorado records, and gifted the world with her first album 'Galactica Rush', the four track acoustic EP 'Galactica Moods' (containing the most beautiful song in the world 'Hold

my peace') and now Language Electric. Her vocals are simply so tuneful and soulful you can barely believe she's singing about incest in 'That's bullshit woody' or forced marriages in the gorgeous(!) 'Sell me away'. It's also difficult to believe that for her, "This whole songwriting thing is still new to me, it's kind of uncomfortable".

On the whole Language Electric is a more thoughtful and darker collection of tunes than its dancier predecessor, although the cruising funk of 'Everybody drop off', 'drops' on a dance floor. Keep your nerves about you though for the bloodcurdling scream five minutes after the album's finished!

Despite having a talent which could easily break on global scale (a la Seal), Jhelisa admirably sticks with an independent label in the name of creative freedom. As a result you might not have come across her amidst the deluge of music marketing, but for all those who love melody, funk and fantastic female singers with socially relevant lyrics, a date with Jhelisa should be hastily arranged. "The spirits are coming"; the spirits are here.



Spearhead - Chocolate Supa Highway

(Capital 1997 - all formats)
review by DJ Seed



Dynamite business from the dozens of conscious rap and funky hip-hop. Those already exposed to the Disposable Heroes of Hiphoprisy or to Spearhead's first album 'Home', will appreciate Michael Franti as a supremely sharp lyricist. The talent that brought us the seminal 'Television, drug of the nation', develops his art yet further on 'Chocolate Supa Highway'.

It is both rare and refreshing to hear such politically on-it lyrics stung at you from a frolic of funky hip-hop: "Yes I remember the time in Oklahoma/you tried to blame an Arab but the whitey was the bomber" and "Don't get thee behind me Satan/ I'll keep thee in front so I can kick thee in the ass and/assassinate all your wicked inventions/ your new world order and your global intentions/not to mention the department of corrections..... in the belly of the beast only God hears confessions".

Spearhead's latest offering is more edged with the urban than

the last album 'Home', with Franti twisting his vocals inventively around the kind of social observations which only emanate from the streetwise and conscious: "Shooting funky venom from my sharp teeth injectors/not to vex ya but yes to resurrect ya/cos I can't stand the pain outside my window". But Franti and his crew are far from just spitting politico's, there's plenty of sensuality, herbal praise and laughter mixed in with the lyrical barb.

What is obvious is that Franti feels totally at home with his lyrics, a familiarity fuelled by the captivating acapella solo poet/rap shows he performs. As a consequence his delivery is playfully peppered with one-line melodies from tunes you just know you know. All of a sudden he'll drop in four-note 'mouth samples' from 'Swing low sweet chariot', Earth Wind and Fire's 'September', the Rolling Stone's 'Satisfaction' and a multitude of other classics, the names of which perch on the tantalised tip of your tongue, refusing to drop off.

The new album also gives thanks and praise for Bob, with an authentic-to-the-max version of 'Rebel Music', a co-sung and co-produced collaboration between Franti and Bob's son Stephen Marley. If you can't scrape up the lolly yerself then for God's sake organise a communal whip round, no-one will dispute the fruits.

Top Ten Free Party Tunes

CHRIS LIBERATOR

1. The Shredder - Gravel/Facelift (Cluster)
2. Thomas Krome - Eggplant EP (Planet Rhythm)
3. Lochi - Acid Riot (Routemaster)
4. Tesox - Disintegration (Plastic City)
5. Secret Hero - Control Remixes (Stay Up Forever RMX)
6. Kektex vs Circog - Is Vic There? (Smitten)
7. Ha-lo - Dlrty Fucking House (Deluxe)
8. Blunted Boy Wonder - Crossroads (Novamute)
9. Immersion - Rave (Stay Up Forever)
10. Diva - Cobalt (Redweed)

JOHNNY O' - HIGH RISE DRIFTERS URBAN BEATS

1. Monkey Mafia - Lion in the Hall 10" (Heavenly)
2. Finley Quayle - Sunday Shining EP (Epic)
3. Acacia - Maddening Shroud - Les Vistiteurs Du Soir Mix 12" (Warner)
4. 4Hero - Loveless 12" (Talkin' Loud)
5. Various - Hip-Hop You Don't Stop LP.
6. Skunk Anansie - Brazen Weep - Electro Mix 12" (White)
7. Dub Pistols - Westway 12" (Concrete)
8. Jay-Z - Ain't No Nigga - Rae & Christian Mix 12" (Northwestside)
9. Sukia - 12" (Mo Wax)
10. Shades of Rhythm - Psycho Base - Headrillaz Mix 12"

EXTRA EXTRA - get Erykah Badu's longplayer, roll up a spliff, turn off the lights. Stunning. Baduism LP (Universal).

The write stuff

LETTERS TO SQUALL



If you have any comments on the content of the magazine, or wish to add a few of your own write to: SQUALL, PO Box 8959, London N19 5HW.

A BRIXTON CHALLENGE

Dear Squall,

I am writing to express the dismay and disgust that a number of local squatters and activists are feeling over your recent Reclaim the Screens benefit.

A bunch of us paid to see the films in the anticipation that it would be a night in support of squatting activism, not one that was aligned with anti-squatter interests. Whilst the films were enjoyable enough, the fact that the event's costs were at least in part paid for by Brixton Challenge businesses (who form the frontline of gentrification in Brixton), and that the after movie gig was at the notorious Canterbury Arms, was enough to make anyone wonder what the whole point of the exercise was.

The situation we currently have in Brixton is one in which Lambeth Council, central government and other interests are making yet another attempt to gentrify the area. Unlike earlier attempts they are, this time, having some success.

The first tactic the council has been using has been to sell off the 100s of the empty properties they have left to rot in the past. Other than allowing them to evict around 50 squats this is also allowing them off the hook in terms of dealing with homelessness since they can now claim not to have lettable properties left. It also opens up large areas of Brixton to property sharks.

Their next tactic has been to run-down and close numerous libraries, shelters, schools, creches and other services, thereby paying off debts accrued through corruption and also freeing up money for the Brixton Challenge. Incidentally, the removal of schools and services also makes the area less-attractive to low-income people and families, these groups are already beginning to shift elsewhere.

The third tactic the council has used has been to launch the Brixton Challenge, a program which diverts money from public needs into the pockets of businesses that would not normally think of setting up here. Yuppie bars such as the Dogstar and the Satay bar have been the recipients, as well as restaurants, health food stores and the police (for CCTV cameras). Needless to say these businesses sell products out of the reach of low-income residents and

attract wealthy hipsters. Due to Brixton's obvious proximity to the Victoria line we now see increasing numbers of yuppies attracted by these businesses moving into the area and buying up ex-council housing.

Naturally this process has encountered resistance, albeit minimal due to the apathy and resignation of many squatters and residents. During the 1995 Brixton riots the Dogstar was burnt out and attacked along with other Brixton Challenge sponsored business whilst community-owned shops were left untouched. Since that time attacks have continued, most notably against the Dogstar which has had its windows smashed on a few occasions, as well as being gratified with the slogan "racist pub".

Squatters have also organised actions against council auctions (one successful, one not so), held protests outside the Town Hall, disrupted a council meeting and leafleted and letterboxed the neighbourhood with information about what's going on. Whilst we are hardly beating back the tide of government-sponsored gentrification we have forced buyers into making concessions to squatters (paying them compensation, giving them time to move) and have done what we can to slow the process.

No doubt, having read this you can see why we are just little pissed off that the Squall benefit was sponsored by the Dogstar, Satay Bar and other businesses who have stolen money that should have been spent on housing and services and who are helping undermine and force out the local community. When we spoke to the event organisers about this incredible contradiction (for squatting and the community, but associated with those against it) their only response was that they needed to get the money from somewhere and that those businesses were not anti-community because they provide jobs within it. Other than these hardly being excuses for associating with, and promoting, greedy entrepreneurs they are also obviously completely facile.

The Exploding Cinema group have been "reclaiming the screens" for years with events in a variety of locations and have not had to stoop to begging from businesses. By the organisers' definitions McDonald's, Costain, and Sitex are all community businesses since they too create jobs.

Whilst I realise that it was not Squall that specifically organised the

event, you cannot just wash your hands of its failings as at least one editor tried to do so on the night. Hopefully, in future, both Squall and the event organisers will look a bit closer at what they are trying to achieve and try not to undermine the efforts of others.

To finish I should also mention that the choice of the Canterbury Arms as a venue for the Freetown show was an incredibly poor one. This pub is not only owned by a former cop, but is also the haunt of current ones. The owner has a history of ripping off local groups and acts and of cop brutality against patrons including bringing the TSG on a few occasions against squatters and patrons whose only crime was to hang around outside on the pavement.

Iain (Brixton Squatters Aid)

Squall responds:

You're right in saying that Squall did not specifically organise the event. We had very little to do with the work that went into putting on the night at the Ritzy, most of us could not get in because it was so rammed. We were simply grateful when the organisers offered to put on a benefit for us which did not involve the usual amount of graft. Nonetheless we have no intention of 'washing our hands of its failings' as you suggest.

Squall and the organisers of the event admit a level of ignorance concerning the Brixton Challenge and its affects on the Brixton community. Thanks for drawing this to our attention.

The organisers' position is that they needed to raise money to pay for projectors, the band's expenses and the hire of the Canterbury Arms. They were obviously keen to get cash from 'sound' organisations and businesses and approached these first. None they put in this category had any money to spare.

The organisers consciously chose the Ritzy as the venue for the event to avoid what they have since described to Squall as 'cultural ghettoisation'. They were keen not to simply put on an alternative film night which effectively preached to the converted by holding it in an 'alternative' venue.

They encouraged activists and protest groups to have stalls in the

foyer of the cinema specifically so that the crowd arriving to see Sense and Sensibility (which was also showing that night) would be exposed to radical literature and would know about the event.

You say the Canterbury Arms has a 'notorious' reputation. The organisers of the event were aware that the pub is in close proximity to the police station and therefore coppers would probably drink there. They saw this as merely ironic and were not aware it was owned by an ex-policeman who has 'a history of ripping off local groups' or 'cop brutality' (please send us any info you have about him). They chose this venue for practical reasons: it has a stage and a reputation for putting on bands and because it is close to the cinema.

Both the Squall posse and the organisers take your point that we should 'look a bit closer' at the way future events are funded, although, with seriously limited resources, it is not always possible to be aware of the detail of local politics. We see the irony of holding an alternative evening which is partially funded by businesses who are, as you say, 'helping undermine and force out the local community'. This is a cause for regret and we'll endeavour to ensure that it doesn't happen again.

EXODUS BROTHERS DENY BIRDIE

Dear Squall,

With reference to the article published in Squall issue 14 under the heading 'Hardcore Conga', my brother and myself are currently consulting our solicitors, as we maintain that neither of us, at any stage, sang 'The Birdy Song'. Although we had previously joined other guests in the singing of 'The Music Man', and possibly even 'Agadoo', we deny totally 'The Birdy Song' and are presently viewing a film taken on that day with regard to 'Stars on 45'. Please forward a copy of this paragraph to Sam Beale. (Is she any relation to Ian Beale? If so please forward our regrets at his recent misfortunes.)

One Love,
Glenn, Exodus Collective

Sue and be damned! We have primary source evidence - squeds

**HOT DAM**

Dear Squall,

On the 16th-17th of June 1997, the 'EuroTop' is happening in Amsterdam. At this summit of European heads of state in the Dutch Bank in Amsterdam, work will be done on extending the creation of an economic power-bloc.

At the whim of the free market, social services will be privatised and wiped out. Inside the EU's impenetrable structures, policy will be made behind closed doors. This tiny group of state leaders will hand over an all-encompassing power to Capital; at the same time throwing overboard all possibility for grassroots democratic alternatives. More and more state control - within, on and outside of Europe's borders - is meant to ensure that this process all flows smoothly.

The government leaders have great plans for this EU-summit. They intend to conclude the 'Treaty of Amsterdam' (also known as 'Maastricht 2'). This treaty should agree upon, amongst other things, the scrapping of the right to veto in the council of ministers, and the implementation of new rules on foreign and defence policy for the courts and the police.

Amsterdam City Council sees the 'EuroTop' as a blessing. Amsterdam gets the chance to clean up its Sodom and Gomorrah image of sex, drugs and slums and to present itself as a respectable, economically successful city of the world. To spoon-feed the heads of state this image and to ensure that the summit comes off smoothly, thousands of extra cops are being drafted into Amsterdam and large areas of the city are being turned into security zones. Within these security zones will be a strict compulsion to identify yourself, and the streets will be 'cleaned up' of homeless people, illegal foreigners and other 'undesirable elements'. A glimpse into the future perhaps?

Fortunately, there's plenty of individuals and organisations who won't take all this sitting down, who want to use the event to display their contempt and resistance. People from other countries who want to support this resistance will be very welcome. There's already a number of actions and events prepared for the 'June Days'. These are being organised by a broad spectrum of individuals and groups. Each group is responsible for its own activities. Although these activities are being co-ordinated as much as possible, it was deliberately chosen not to have any central control. This way there's room for all sorts of spontaneous initiatives. During the June Days there will be a number of info-points around Amsterdam, where you can get an action calendar and other related info. It promises to be a long hot summer...

Between June 11th-17th days of action, demonstration, partying and discussion are planned in Amsterdam including: 14/6 Demo against unemployment, poverty and social deprivation; 13,15 & 16/6 Days of Chaos - a Dutch Stop The City; 15/6 Big Street Party; 16/6 Gay & Lesbian Demo. For details contact:

Tegencontrole
postbus 3762
NL1001 AN Amsterdam

DON'T BE A WEED ABOUT HEMP

Dear Squall,

Last September, as a protest against 68 years of Cannabis Prohibition in Britain, myself and former international Cannabis smuggler Howard Marks distributed free Hash Cakes in Hyde Park. After the deed was done and with only one cake remaining as evidence, we made our way to Marylebone police station, where I had already made an appointment for us to be arrested on Cannabis-related charges. After a short delay, being locked out of the station, I was allowed in on my own.

I explained what I had done to the smiling sergeant behind the desk, who replied something along the lines of, "Okay you've proved your point, would you like to leave now please".

So what have I proved? Well firstly I have shown that as far as Cannabis is concerned the Police just aren't that bothered. Secondly, I have demonstrated that laws only function with our co-operation. By refusing to co-operate with the system, the system cannot work. I refuse to co-operate with a law which in itself is illegal.

So if you are ever stopped by the police and they try and steal your Cannabis from you, inform them that you do not recognise this law and will refuse to co-operate in any way with them.

If enough people do this then the truth about Cannabis will become a reality for all, and the truth is this:

Cannabis is legal and denying this is a crime against nature. Have faith and believe in the truth.

FREE 'ROB' CANNABIS

Cannabis Hemp Information Club
PO Box 2223, Glastonbury BA6 9YU
01458 835 769

ANARCHIC BOREDOM

Dear Squall,

The fluffy Vs Spikey debate that I've read with interest in the columns of your letters page, but more energetically in others, is a non-starter. Take all the infighting, the point-scoring and the power games in the so-called alternative, DIY, anarchist movement, multiply it by ten thousand and you have the establishment.

Respect is a fundamental principle of anarchy; respect for people, histories, culture and motivation. Just because one side doesn't understand the other doesn't necessitate defensive posture (read aggressive).

What about some real dialogue? The whole of the classic class structure needs an overhaul; one that doesn't compartmentalise and divide but one that is open enough to accommodate.

There are emergent sub-cultures that need to be able to access traditional structures but are excluded by a sociological framework, or more accurately, by people who are desperately hanging on to worn out theories.

The modern middle classes are a relatively new, and rapidly mutating,

phenomenon that need to be understood more fully than classification as one or two distinct groups. Come to that, so does the whole class system. To the hard-core; stop, contextualise, and embrace the new. To the fluffy, NVDA crew; understand your history.

Political and ideological in-fighting is, historically, the downfall of every exciting, social experiment when, at the root, we are all fighting for the same thing; respect.

I would love to point the finger certain misrepresentations perpetuated on both sides, but fuck it, my indignation can wait until I've truly understood what offends me so much and, more importantly, what insecurities motivate me to be so vociferous.

Yours in respect,
a very bored anarchist,
Derbyshire.

MICKY MOUSE SURVEILLANCE

Dear Squall,

As a protestor myself I do think it important to record increases in powers of state surveillance against dissent as you did in issue 14. But I must say though that my own impression of what the authorities know about the scene by way of 'intelligence' is in fact pretty Mickey Mouse.

I also think that a lot of the 'blahing up' of intrusive surveillance powers is undoubtedly designed to spread a paralytic fear amongst those who might involve themselves in a protest campaign.

A similar tactic was used with speed cameras on roads. The warning signs appeared everywhere but the camera's themselves did not. Then the news broke that due to the cost of the film and the time required to process and analyse it, a lot of cameras were not even loaded with film anyway.

I think that both MI5 and Special Branch love scary stories about what they might be up to because it helps them achieve what their actual level of intelligence does not.

Yours,
Dave Reade,
Newcastle

EUROPE PLC

Dear Squall,

I think it should be pointed out to all the celebrants of the Labour Party victory that the appointment of David Simon as a new Labour lord and Minister for Trade and Competitiveness in Europe is a disturbing choice. Not only was Simon chairman of BP when that company were involved in Human rights abuses in Colombia, but he was also on the board of mining company RTZ - whose long list of crimes against the people of Bougainville was well charted in your last issue.

After his appointment, Simon recently told the Daily Telegraph: "I

am interested in mechanisms that make it [Europe] more competitive. Europe is a wonderful civilised Babylon." All worries that European integration is being driven by 'plc brigade' were thus compounded.

How about more stuff on Europe in Squall? - it's coming but most of us still know very little about what's going on.

Respects,
Trevor Dougal
Dumfries, Scotland

SPONSOR THE SHIP

Are you able to help SQUALL keep sailing with full spinacre, steady rudder, and the odd dab of paint on the masthead?

Then all hands on deck me er... hearties.

SQUALL magazine is written, photographed and produced entirely by an unpaid, press-ganged crew and wastes little of its cargo on advertising. The cover price repays a small fraction of the cost of the voyage, whilst benefit events and donations help buy some rope and occasionally some hemp for the sails. At present there is almost permanently a slowly met deficit in ships biscuit supply.

If you are able and willing to help SQUALL pirate its way through the shark infested sea of mammon, then there is a positively constructive way you can do it. Sponsor it.

A page of SQUALL works out at roughly £150. So if you'd like to sponsor 1/2 a page then send £75.

A major SQUALL expedition of around 3,500 words works out at roughly £700 (research, pictures and production). This is exclusive of any remuneration for crew members. Any sum sent for this purpose will be kept in a big treasure chest and buried on an island until £700 is accrued in a particular subject area, following which a course will be charted to those particular waters. Please specify to which of the following ports of call you would like your sponsorship to be devoted:

- 1) Drugs
- 2) Surveillance
- 3) Parliamentary
- 4) Raves and Festivals
- 5) Secret societies
- 6) Direct action
- 7) Homelessness
- 8) Alternative communities
- 9) Prisons
- 10) Environment
- 11) Arts/culture
- 12) Transnational corporations

In future SQUALL's we will publish the log book of each 'investigation fund'. Send cheques and choices to: Sponsor the Ship, Squall PO Box 8959, London N19 5HW. Cheques payable to SQUALL.

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: fimone@sypte.co.uk

Alarm UK - networking over 100 community anti-roads groups nationwide. Information, lobbying and media. *Alarm UK*, 9-10 College Terrace, London E35 . Tel: 0181 983 3572.

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. Fax: 0171 281 4369. email: caat@gn.apc.org <http://www.gn.apc.org/caat>

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. Suite 102, 16 Baldwin Gdns, London EC1N 7RJ. Tel: 0171 831 7477. Fax: 0171 831 7461.

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>

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 Efl 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.

East Devon Earth First (A30) - direct action in Devon. *PO Box 6, Ottery-St-Mary, East Devon*, EX11 1YL. Tel: 01404 815 729.

Eco-Trip - touring information, workshops, performance, cafe, NVDA. Tel: 0171 737 0100.

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, Chilton 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 current 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 Silverton Crescent, Moseley, Birmingham B13 9NH. NeverNeverFIN - 8 Campbell Rd, Southsea, Hants. NottFIN - c/o The Rainbow Centre, 180 Mansfield Rd, Nottingham. Oxfiend - Box a, 111 Magdelen 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. *PO Box 9384, London SW9*. Main Tel: 0171 978 8214. Action line: 0171 793 7343. e-mail info@freedomnet.demon.co.uk <http://www.freedomnet.demon.co.uk>

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: *Top Floor, 33 High St, Glastonbury BA6 9HT*. Tel: 01458 832371.

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: HHH@tarakan.demon.co.uk

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 2786, Brighton BN2 2AX*. Tel: 01273 622 827. email: hsa@gn.apc.org

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: Schnews@brighton.co.uk web: <http://www.chuzz.co.uk/schnews/>

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.

Most of the groups listed below are run by volunteers on non-existent budgets. If you want information, or any of the publications mentioned, make sure you send the required money, an SAE plus as much as you can afford as donation. Give more, get more.

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. email: league@computers.com <http://www.lightman.co.uk/lacs/>

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 Woodcock 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. *BCM 2248, London WC1N 3XX*. Tel: 0171 278 3068.

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. McSpotlight - Web: <http://www.mcspotlight.org>

Oilwatch - connects communities and organisations in tropical countries affected by oil exploitation. *Oilwatch tel: 0171 435 5000. email: helen@gaiafund.gn.apc.org or Oilwatch direct in Ecuador: tegantai@oilwatch.ecx.ec.*

Peace Brigades International (PBI) - an international organisation committed to the non-violent resolution of conflicts and respect for human rights. It sends teams of 'accompaniment' volunteers to areas of conflict which acts as a deterrent to violations of human rights. *PBI tel: 0171 636 5564.*

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 Magdelen 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 Wealden District Council decision. 17 Russell Square, London WC1B 5DR. Tel: 0171 467 9800

Road Alert - Help co-ordinate anti-roads protests across the country. Information, latest news, actions, networking. Publication *Complete Guide to Road Protest* available. *PO Box 5544, Newbury RG14 5FB*. Tel: 01635 521770. email: roadalert@gn.apc.org

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 cam-corder training. *Small World Productions, 1A Waterlow Rd, London N19 5NJ*. Tel: 0171 272 1394.

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 Railton 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.

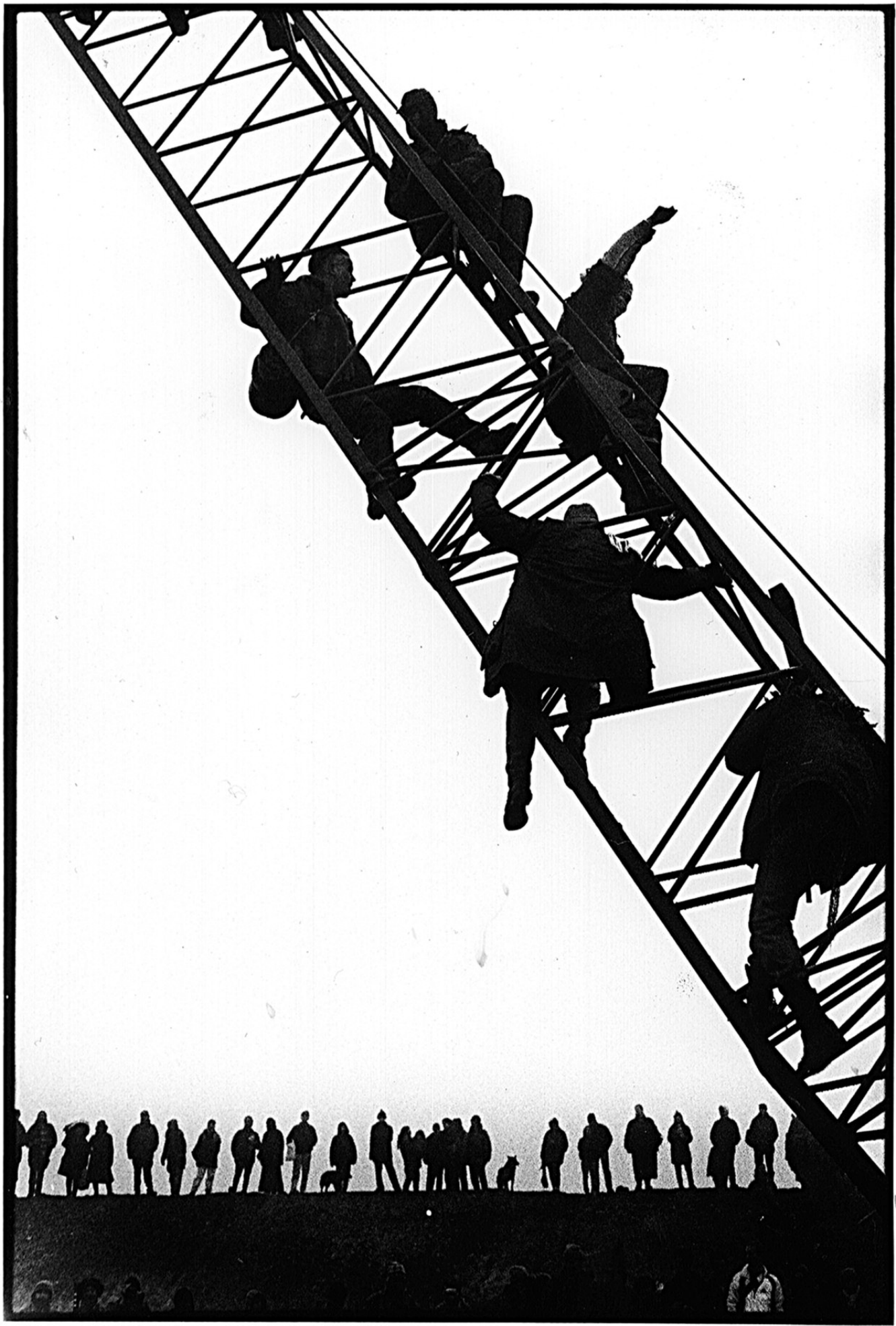
Third Battle of Newbury - the battle rages on. *PO Box 5520, Newbury, Berkshire RG14 7YW*. Tel: 01635 45544. Information line: 01635 550552.

Travellers' School Charity - provides a mobile school and distance learning for home-educating 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 Railton Rd, Brixton, London SE24. Tel: 0171 274 6655.



In the ballot box no-one can hear you dream