

SQUALL

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

No. 13
Summer '96



Out after curfew

- MI5 turn up the heat
- Raving in Bosnia
- Asylum seekers
- Poverty knocks
- Pirate radio

mclibel • desert storm • cs gas • noise bill • tibetans under pressure
east midlands sound systems • urban land squat • planning • mick marlowe
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exodus • newbury • latest news • reviews • letters





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Subscriptions

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

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Front cover photo: Joy & Nuala at King's Hill - **Nick Cobbing**

Inside front cover photo: Bailiffs at Newbury attempt to evict 'the Pine' - **Adrian Fisk**

Much Respect & Without Whom.....

Rachel Cunningham, Tash, Ambassador Malyon, Roger Holman, Nikki Spawls, Rosie, Gerry Oates, Debbie Allen, Matty, Jamie, Andrea, Tara@BSF, Milo, Michelle Dunne, Capt. Dan, No 28 for hot baths/clean threads, 52bers, Dinah Murray, Johnny O Sullivan, Debbie Young, Mike, Rachel (for Jah say jelp), Lyn & Nigel, Liberator, ASS, Ben and all those whose donations have helped the magazine survive.

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The State it's in

A view from **SQUALL** central

Fear is the most prevalent form of social control.

Fear of crime has been news-manufactured to a point where new measures of social control, however draconian, meet little opposition.

No challenge from a British public frightened into accepting such measures as necessary, or from politicians afraid to stand up and face the macho accusation of being too soft. In the war for political control, fear is used to disperse the opposition; instead of fighting, they run for their lives and careers.

Whilst statistics are unconvincing in their support of this rising tide of crime, there is hardly anyone in Britain who has been unaffected by the acres of alarmist news coverage. No matter how isolated the incident, it is invariably presented as a disturbing new trend.

Imagine a scenario where a government is keen to tighten its grip on personal freedom, but faces a public unlikely to find this palatable. So political strategists set about convincing the nation of the need for such social control. If you then consider the huge resources poured into politically disingenuous news manufacture, the fear of crime pervading the minds of the nation can be viewed in a less hysterical light.

When Jamie Bulger was murdered, it did not mean that all across the nation children were killing other children. Yet, as a result of the coverage devoted to the case, how many parents refused to let their children out to play anymore through fear of similar tragedy. What is billed as a 'disturbing new trend' facilitates disturbing new measures to deal with it. The Bulger case helped

facilitate Michael Howard's introduction of child prisons, as well as the exponential growth of CCTV cameras on our streets. It also provided the ground for Jack Straw's recent suggestions of street curfews for children.

The break in the IRA ceasefire also facilitated a situation where stop, search and detain powers were recently increased with cross party support.

The description of squatters and travellers as "hordes of marauding locusts" in a Daily Telegraph editorial is another example of media manufacture used to induce public palatability for the multitude of social control measures contained within the Criminal Justice Act.

If we have done nothing wrong, what do we have to fear from the loss of the right to silence contained within the CJA? So ran Howard's reasoning.

However, the record amount of compensation paid this year by the police for the fabrication of evidence and violence against prisoners, is a relevantly juxtaposed reply to his simplistic arguments.

And, in the taught fear of current politics, the Labour Party either abstains or joins in the game of political trumps with a few social control ideas of their own. This situation effectively means there is no parliamentary voice representing the freedom of British citizens. With no bill of rights written into the British constitution, the concept of civil liberties has atrophied to a degree which affords it little political respect.

The last recourse currently available to any citizen caught up in the deluge of British social control is the European Court of Human Rights. Small surprise was it when Michael Howard recently announced his campaign to

diminish the powers of this court after being found guilty by its judges on several occasions.

Whilst the Criminal Justice Act introduced sanctions against public protest, the Security Services Bill currently creeping through parliament will bring MI5 onto the environmental protest scene (see 'Unleashing the spies' - page 16). Indeed the sinister imagery associated with MI5 will undoubtedly be used to instil fear amongst environmental protestors. With Michael Howard responsible for both granting MI5 surveillance warrants and overseeing the complaints procedure against its agents, this fear mechanism is at his disposal. Our response is supposed to be submission, for the purposeful manufacture of fear is designed to induce compliance.

The same concept is being applied to the prison system, where a record and rising number of inmates are being crammed into ever more austere prison conditions. Michael Howard's intention is to introduce some of the harshest prison conditions seen in modern times (see 'Howard turns the screws' on page 28). As a result, the number of prison officers has been cut, as have educational programmes, and entertainment facilities (eg televisions).

Howard has also made attempts to introduce ex-army personnel into probation as a way of replacing social workers with harsh disciplinarians.

The rising number of people imprisoned for fine default is an indication of the levels to which his measures are being taken. The number of people imprisoned for points of conscience is also on the increase (see 'Hawks and Doves' on page 34 and 'Growing Pains' on page 36) But whilst Michael Howard considers that prison works, his own Royal Commission

on Justice says it doesn't. Meanwhile the easily manipulated British fear of foreigners has been harnessed to pave the way for the Asylum and Immigration Bill and the incarceration of asylum seekers (see 'Desperately seeking asylum' on page 24). Fear of unemployment and house repossession combined with decreasing employment rights has also fuelled a seeping workplace insecurity, helping to keep employees compliant.

The fear of crime, the fear of being criminalised and the fear of stepping out of line are part of Howard's drive to facilitate his designs on ultimate social control, where justice is a side issue.

The key to resisting this deluge of fear, is the development of an understanding of the way in which it is perpetrated. For it is a device designed to paralyse the conscience of a nation and have us running to the nearest available tyrant who promises to protect us.

The increase in paramilitary style police responses to civil disturbances like those in Leeds, Bradford and Luton last year, also confirms an undiscussed change of tactics.

The definition of terrorism contained within the 1974 Prevention of Terrorism Act includes "the use of violence for the purpose of putting the public or any section of the community in fear."

Under this definition, the present government are as much terrorists as any of their social control targets. As such we are all potential victims of their crime; unless of course we recognise the bluff behind the bluster and elect to operate on a basis other than the fear expected of us.



Members of Universe outside Thame magistrate's court after Thames Valley Police successfully blocked their licence application for this year's originally intended Tribal Gathering at Otmoor.

Tribal Gathering

- fooling the dancers

to put on the Tribal Gathering.

The 1994 Tribal Gathering billed itself as a stance against the Criminal Justice Act in a year when anti-CJA battle cries were breaking out on dance floors right across the country. However, the CJA placed criminal sanctions on unlicensed raves, so targeting free party posses but not the money-making likes of the Mean Fiddler Organisation or indeed the licensed pay-party events put on by Universe. By attempting to buy into the new atmosphere of political dance stance, the Mean Fiddler have tapped into the market potential of a criminalised culture.

In a publicity brochure for the 1996 Tribal Gathering, these intentions are amply confirmed. It reads:

"With the passing of another lunar cycle all generations are once more invited to unite and participate in the only true original outdoor tribal house party experience, as we dance together under the sun, moon and stars in spiritual communion with Mother Earth and in ritual shamanic celebration of life, love and the universe. Join with us on our epic onslaught as we strike back against the establishment and clubland's evil empire of mediocrity, commercialism and the creeping corporate capitalisation of our cosmic counter culture."

The added irony of the Tribal Gathering coming to Luton, arises from the fact that this is the area where the Exodus Collective hold free raves and make a serious stance for community against the forces of commercialism.

Whereas the Mean Fiddler organisation have recently opened another commercial club in Luton, the Exodus Collective continue their long battle to obtain a community centre for local people in the same town. And whereas South Bedfordshire District Council have readily given the Mean Fiddler a licence for its commercial rave, they had previously brought out several injunctions in an attempt to stop

Exodus holding their free raves. And whereas Luton police have given their support to the Tribal Gathering, they have previously carried out eight operations against the Exodus Collective, as well as bringing charges of Ecstasy dealing against one of the Collective's prominent members; a charge that was thrown out of court. (see SQUALL 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12.)

The Tribal Gathering 1996 is also co-sponsored by Red Bull. It will be sobering to most ravers to learn that the advertising agency which operates Red Bull's £5 million advertising campaign, were the major force behind the 'Sorted' bill boards which spread so much misinformation about Ecstasy and Leah Betts.

In an audacious attempt to capture the loyalty of ravers' political sensibilities, Universe distributed a petition after Thames Valley Police opposed a licence for its original venue in Oxfordshire. It was worded: "We the undersigned:

- 1) Believe that dance music culture has the right to express itself at least once a year with an all night event like Universe's Tribal Gathering.
- 2) Express deep concern that a hard line attitude will only lead to the setting up of unlicensed and unsafe events.
- 3) Call on the authorities to recognise dance music culture as the heartbeat of modern culture music that is as valuable to them in income terms as it is to us in cultural terms."

In three foul swoops the petition reveals Universe's contempt for the unlicensed events criminalised by the CJA, claim their money spinner to be the true rave event of the year and hypocritically express the income value the authorities place on public events.

Suppressing the physiological desire to vomit at this hypocrisy, there is a lesson to be learnt from this hijacking of freedom-fighter talk for commercial ends. Before you rush in on the back of a battle cry, check the cause the soldier is serving.

When the news broke that the Mean Fiddler Organisation had secured a licence for its Tribal Gathering from South Bedfordshire District Council, there were many who thought it to be a joke press release.

SQUALL readers who remember 'Culture cash-in on raves and festivals' from Issue 10 will understand why.

For those fresh to the subject, a brief precis:

The Mean Fiddler Organisation is one of the largest commercial events promoters in the UK, owning most of London's music venues: The Forum, The Roundhouse, The Grand, The Jazz Cafe, Subterranea, The Mean Fiddler, The Rhythmic and the Cross Bar. They also run many of the UK's major commercial music festivals, including Reading, Phoenix and the Fleadh.

The Phoenix festival began in 1993, accompanied with publicity designed to suggest it would be similar to Glastonbury. It wasn't.

No drinks of any kind were allowed to be brought onto the site, all fires were doused with hoses at midnight and all boogie boxes were ordered to be switched off at midnight by heavyweight security. The large amounts of money collected from the monopoly on both entrance fees and drinks went to the Mean Fiddler organisation. Those who went to the event expecting a festival felt cheated; a riot ensued and the fences were torn down.

After buying his way into ownership of the Reading Festival, Vince Power - the wallet and brain behind the Mean Fiddler organisation - realised that the big money was in fact moving into rave promotion but that his organisation's experience and contacts were all based in rock music promotion. In order to overcome this lack of dance music credentials, Vince Power decided to collaborate with Universe

Exodus under fire

FIRST CAME THE FIRE-BOMBING of an Exodus jeep and the bungalow where collective member Paul Taylor lived. Taylor is facing a murder charge (Squall 12) which he resolutely denies.

The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) initially opposed Taylor being allowed home on bail on the basis of police intelligence that there might be an arson attack on the bungalow. On February 2nd the CPS dropped all opposition to Taylor returning home. On

February 4th the firebomb dropped. Nobody has been charged.

Three months later, on May 13th, a second Exodus jeep belonging to Stephen Jacobs was also torched outside the same bungalow. Beds Fire and Rescue Service reported the incident to the police as "an incident of a suspicious nature". Fire and Rescue Press Officer Sarah Sidney explained: "That normally means we're fairly certain it's malicious ignition." Exodus

spokesperson Glenn Jenkins called the police at 6am the next morning and spent the following week asking police to "get on the case" and, in particular, to view petrol station video surveillance film of the previous night. Yet nothing was done barring an inspection of the jeep and a check on who owned it.

A week after the attack local officer PC Moran told Squall: "I didn't know this was a firebombing. I can't find it on the computer. I don't know about the bungalow bombing." DS Roach, responsible for the Crime Management Unit at Dunstable, which logs crimes, monitors them for trends and statistics and allocates them for investigation, confirmed the

arson incident was not listed for investigation by the CID. "Nobody from the group has made a report that this vehicle was damaged, as far as I'm aware," he explained, adding, "if somebody sets fire to a vehicle it should be investigated." Police Media Officer Jo Hobbs confirmed that "the reason why a crime report wasn't filled in when Glenn Jenkins came to us is that we had no proof that it was his car, and as it turned out it wasn't anyway. We can't get someone to fill in a crime report if they can't prove the crime was to do with them." A crime report has now been filed. Nobody has been charged.

Compare this with another recent incident: a man

whom police believed was wanted on a warrant for theft of a sandwich allegedly evaded arrest after being stopped in an Exodus jeep. He was said to have driven off in the direction of Exodus' HAZ Manor. An hour later some 27 officers, one with a bullet-proof jacket, broke down Manor doors and windows in their haste to solve the crime. Beds Police's new helicopter hovered over the house. The man was not located. He handed himself in voluntarily a few days later and was charged with attempting grievous bodily harm resulting from his alleged attempt to evade arrest in the Land Rover - the reason given by Beds Police Press Office for the raid on the Manor.



Nick Cobbing

Show us an ankle

ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTION NIGHT, May 2nd, members of the Exodus Collective visited the Luton count. They handed out a leaflet revealing that, according to a 1982/83 Masonic Handbook, leader of the Labour Council, Roy Davis, had been a Freemason at Leighton Cross Lodge.

When confronted, Davis admitted to being a Mason, but said he resigned when he became a councillor in 1983. He has produced no proof of leaving. Both his father and brother were listed

in the same handbook, although his father is now dead. When asked if his brother was still a mason Davis replied: "That's his business, not yours." The day after polling, Luton Borough Labour group reappointed Davis leader.

As council leader, Davis has opposed setting up a working group to help procure a suitable licenced venue for Exodus' community centre, the Ark, where monthly dances would fund the centre's other activities. "We have no confidence that they'd run the

rave events according to the rules," he commented. Davis also backed the recent injunctions against named Exodus members to stop them attending unlicensed parties, as well as the failed attempt to imprison Glenn Jenkins for breach of injunction, citing 'public safety' as the reason; this despite Exodus' confirmation of an unblemished safety record. These moves were described as "the sort of behaviour you find in fascist countries," by David Franks, leader of the Liberal Democrat group.

Drugs death not ecstasy

THE DEATH of 20 year old Claire Pierce in May was another example of the manufactured campaign against Ecstasy.

According to coroner, Dr Nigel Chapman, Claire died of poisoning directly attributable to drinking large quantities of Hooch Alcoholic Lemonade and consuming 10 dystalgic painkillers. He did not say that the Ecstasy tablet she had also consumed was responsible for poisoning her.

Nevertheless much media coverage, from tabloid to broadsheet, was given over

to the farcical suggestion that she had consumed alcohol and painkillers in order to heighten her Ecstasy trip and therefore that the E was to blame. Alcohol is well known to lessen the effects of Ecstasy and is therefore generally consumed less by people who take E.

This fact has provided the primary motivation behind the alcohol industry's support of anti-Ecstasy news manufacture (see Recreational Drug Wars SQUALL 12). There is also no connection between taking pain killers and heightening

the effects of Ecstasy. Dystalgics are powerful painkillers with a maximum of eight tablets recommended over the course of one day for a patient in severe pain. They are strictly not to be taken with alcohol.

The media aspersions made about the role of Ecstasy in Claire's death represented yet more recklessly inaccurate information. Anyone who read the article, and is thinking of dropping some dystalgics to heighten their Ecstasy trip, should take heed.

Business acknowledges environment lobby

A RECENT BUSINESS AND THE ENVIRONMENT SURVEY has demonstrated that Corporations are becoming more aware of the power of increasing environmental concerns.

The report commissioned by the Environmental Consultancy company Entec, reports that 90 per cent of the 300 large UK companies questioned for the survey now see it as

important to be seen to be "green", though the actual development of "green" products came bottom of the list of priorities. Moffatt Associates Partnership who conducted the survey say one of the factors influencing corporate acknowledgement of the pro-environment lobby was Shell's defeat over its intention to dump the Brent Spar oil platform last year.

Police violence after Islamic festival

A YOUNG ASIAN STUDENT lost an eye whilst in the custody of a Tactical Aid Group squad in February.

Amer Rafiq, 21, a part-time student, was arrested at the end of the Muslim festival of Eid on February 21st at around 2.30am after an altercation with police over parking.

He was taken to Platt Lane police station, around a mile away from the site of the arrest. However, the van transporting him appears to have taken about twenty minutes to cover the distance. After arriving at the police station, he was taken to hospital where he was found to be suffering from a fractured eye socket and a number of other injuries. Surgeons had to remove his right eye, and it was also thought he might lose his sight in the other. Amer's family say the police did not even notify them that he was injured or had been taken to hospital.

The police have admitted the incident took place in police custody and have referred the matter to

the Police Complaints Authority. Nevertheless, the incident has provoked outrage in the Asian community.

Many young Asians believe the alleged beating was in fact an incident waiting to happen. They say that police harassment of the Eid festival is commonplace. Baljit Badesha, of the South Manchester Law Centre says they have an increase in complaints of police harassment every time Eid comes round.

Because the Eid celebrations are Muslim, they are largely alcohol free. Despite this, Asian people complain their festivities are treated very differently to the English festivals such as Christmas or New Year.

The use of horses, riot vans, dogs and police helicopters is regarded as excessive. "It's a religious celebration. It's not a drunken rowdy mob. It's women, children, families coming for meals to celebrate the end of Eid," says Baljit. Although the police admit they had 200 officers present for 2,000

participants on February 21st they describe the celebrations as: "peaceful and good-natured".

The policing of the Eid festival can be seen in the context of a history of policing problems in areas of South Manchester with high ethnic minority populations. In neighbouring Moss Side, distrust of the police is even higher.

The editor of a local newspaper based in Moss Side/Rusholme says they often have people coming to their office alleging police harassment, but few are ever prepared to register a formal complaint.

In 1994 three complaints were upheld against police officers in the area after a retiring police officer, Michael Reid, submitted a dossier of incidents to the Police Complaints Authority. However, the incident with Amer Rafiq is the worst for a long time. Community leaders admit it came very close to sparking a riot. On March 9th, around 1,500 people marched in protest past both Platt Lane police station and



Justin Cook

the place where Amer was arrested. There has also been a picket of police headquarters. A campaigning group has been set up, calling for an independent inquiry, the suspension of the officers involved, and compensation for Amer. So far, no action has been taken against the officers involved.

Contact: Amer Rafiq Defence Campaign, Dept 107, 1 Newton St, Manchester M1 1HW

British Aerospace brainwashing

A PLAN by Britain's largest arms manufacturer and exporter to establish its own education system has been described as "insidious" by peace campaigners.

British Aerospace, who turn over £4 billion a year making fighter aircraft and missiles, are planning a global network of universities in their key export markets - beginning in Malaysia, South Africa, Australia and the United Arab Emirates.

A deal for £150 million with the University of Industry in Malaysia is already under discussion.

The move is designed

to answer BAe's need for a highly-skilled technological workforce in the next century. But the company do not deny that it will also provide an incentive for countries to buy military hardware from the company.

"I don't think there is anything wrong in making the connection between provision of education and commercial contracts," said Professor Stephen Grigg, BAe's director of education who came up with the idea.

The plan will also entail joint ventures with schools - beginning at primary school age - to identify promising pupils

and steer them through to graduation.

Initially, young children would be encouraged to take an interest in technology and then, as teenagers, they would take the decision to make technology their main area of study.

Almost 500 schools already have some involvement in the nascent British Aerospace Schools Network.

Educationalists have expressed concern over the intellectual development of pupils and the independence of a BAe classroom.

But both the Labour and Conservative Parties

have welcomed the idea.

Tony Blair is reported to have said: "This is just the blueprint I'm looking for my University of Industry idea."

But a spokesman for the Campaign Against Arms Trade called the idea "insidious".

"There is a growing tendency for arms companies to win deals by promoting social spending," he told Squall. "This is insidious because many of these countries do need economic and social development. But the very companies that are providing it are most likely to lead to their economic ruin."

US candidate advocates end of welfare

THE REPUBLICAN CANDIDATE challenging democrat President Bill Clinton in the next presidential elections, Bob Dole, has outlined his plans "to end welfare as we know it".

They include an absolute five year limit on welfare "with few exceptions", with able bodied unemployed being denied welfare if they fail to find work within two years. He has also demanded that welfare beneficiaries should be subject to mandatory drugs testing. Dole described the American welfare system as "the killing compassion".

Children at Tinker's Bubble. Pic: Nick Cobbing



Ministers veto low impact solutions

THREE LOW-IMPACT COMMUNITIES are planning appeals to the High Court following refusals of planning permission by Government ministers.

All have fallen foul of planning laws which do not differentiate between low-impact dwellings and full urbanisation.

King's Hill collective, a three-year old settlement of 15 benders in the Mendip Hills, lost their appeal against eviction in March.

They have been granted legal aid to appeal against the decision in the High Court.

They will argue that Environment Secretary John Gummer, who turned down their first appeal on the advice of his planning inspector, wrongly dismissed Article Eight of the European Convention of Human Rights.

This states that every person has the right to respect for their own home, privacy and family life. Governments can only interfere in such rights in particular circumstances.

"Regard has been made to Article Eight," the decision states, "and it is recognised that dismissal (of the) appeal would result in an interference with (the collective's) homes and private family life. The view is taken that all of these considerations are not of sufficient strength to outweigh the strong planning objections."

Gummer's decision also states that the convention is not incorporated into English law. "Violation of (the collective's) rights does not arise and no view is expressed on it," the decision states.

Gummer's inspector, however, said the convention was not irrelevant to the case and lent "limited support" to the King's Hill scheme.

The appeal was also turned down on the basis that the benders, while not development, amounted to a change of land use which was formerly agricultural.

The DoE inspector also refused permission because, he said, the

community would set a precedent for others to follow and the site altered the character of the landscape.

According to Mike Hannis, of the collective, based near the village of East Pennard, Glastonbury, they will also argue that the local council has not taken sufficient account of the welfare and circumstances of the residents before issuing an eviction notice.

This argument succeeded last year in delaying evictions of travellers in Crowborough, Kent, granted under the CJA.

"Hopefully with these arguments we should get somewhere," Hannis told Squall.

Mendip District Council had argued the 12 months notice of eviction given to the collective allowed for this "human element".

The inspector did find that savings to the "public purse" in not having to rehouse the 20 occupants lent weight to their argument against eviction.

The appeal is

scheduled for July.

The residents of caravans in a field at Teepee Valley, in Wales, were granted permission to remain on their site by Welsh Secretary William Hague in May.

But Hague refused similar permission for three teepees in the same field - against the advice of his own inspector and despite their meeting the same criteria as the caravans - ie they had been there for over ten years.

The residents now intend to appeal in the High Court arguing that Hague is wrong in law.

Like much of Teepee Valley, a settlement near a small hamlet called Llanfynydd, near Carmarthen, the caravans and teepees have been on site for over ten years. In such cases normal planning considerations are void and a "certificate of lawful use or development" is obligatory.

A public inquiry was launched 18 months ago when the then local authority, Dinffwr Council, issued an eviction notice against the

valley. The report of the planning inspector, which recommended granting certificates for both teepees and caravans, was called in by Hague for his personal decision, published on May 15th.

"We believe the Secretary of State was wrong in overruling his inspector," Valley solicitor David Stevens told Squall. "Subject to legal aid we will appeal to the High Court to get his decision overturned as an error of law. If they've been there ten years, which they have, they should get a certificate of lawful use or development. This is a matter of facts. It is not a matter of planning merit."

Stevens added that such certificates don't affect any other piece of land but are important for the survival of the Valley.

"If you have half a dozen fields and four have lawful planning certificates it makes it harder for a local authority to refuse permission to those in the middle," he told Squall.

An appeal is to be lodged by the Tinker's Bubble collective after a High Court judge refused in May to grant planning permission for their low-impact dwellings.

The ruling enshrines in law that permaculture - practiced by the collective - is the same as subsistence agriculture, which it is not.

According to Bubble member Simon Fairlie the decision could be used against other permaculturists who want to live on their land.

Simon Fairlie told Squall: "The planning system makes it virtually impossible to live on your land if you are a subsistence farmer. But a number of people have planning permission to live on their land where there is permaculture."

The eleven members of the Tinker's Bubble Trust - a sustainable community based in a small area of woodland near the Somerset Village of Norton Sub Hamden - had brought their case to the High Court in order to overturn a decision by Environment Secretary John Gummer.

Gummer had overturned an earlier decision by

one of his own inspectors that the dwellings at Tinker's Bubble, benders and tents, should be granted permission.

Although the inspector had visited Tinkers' Bubble, and Gummer had not, Gummer refused permission on the grounds that the Bubblers were "subsistence farmers" which, he said, was the same as permaculture.

According to Simon Fairlie the two are completely different. He says the dictionary definition of subsistence agriculture is farming "without any significant surplus or sale".

Permaculture, on the other hand, is "the harmonious intergration of landscape and people" who live sustainably on their land.

Fairlie says the Bubblers do have a surplus of produce which is sold into the wider community.

In May a statutory review of Gummer's decision was thrown out by deputy judge Nigel McLeod QC who agreed with Gummer that permaculture is a form of subsistence farming.

In a statutory review



Lisa in her bender at Kings Hill. Pic: Nick Cobbing

no new evidence is admissible - even to disprove erroneous statements.

The Bubblers had also argued their settlement was a form of sustainable development as defined under the Agenda 21

agreement, signed by Britain, at the Rio Earth Summit in 1992.

Gummer said this argument had "negligible weight" because the collective were "subsistence farmers". Sustainability is, he

said, only relevant to the occupants and not the wider community.

In his ruling McLeod agreed with Gummer, saying what constituted sustainable development was a matter of opinion and so Gummer

could say what he wanted about it. According to the Bubble collective, however, the term was exhaustively defined at the Rio Summit.

It means, they say, not consuming more than one's fair share of the resources.

Aggravated press pass

TWO JOURNALISTS arrested under the CJA while covering an anti-quarry action in Leeds had their cases thrown out of court in April - after film evidence showed police evidence to be wrong.

Six other activists received fines and suspended sentences under Sections 68 and 69 of the CJA - aggravated trespass and failure to leave a site.

Journalist Ursula Wills-Jones and photographer Justin Cooke were covering a demo against an open-cast mine at Garforth, Leeds, for the Big Issue in June last year. They were arrested along with 19 other demonstrators.

Ursula's case was thrown out of court after filmed evidence (shot by the police) showed she was

arrested by a woman police officer, not the policeman who claimed in court to have arrested her.

"Our lawyer shredded them," she told Squall.

Justin Cooke, arrested under Sections 68 and 69 of the CJA, had his aggravated trespass charge thrown out and was found not guilty of failing to leave the site.

"It was thrown out because we had no interest to stop the work and there was no evidence we had stopped work," he said.

Six activists who appeared in court on the same day were found guilty under Sections 68 and 69 of the CJA. They all received 12 months suspended sentences and were fined between £130 and £170.



Julia Guest

FIFTY GREEN ACTIVISTS released eighty balloons carrying "a gift from nature" from the top of Parliament Hill, Hampstead Heath - one of the highest points in London - in May to draw attention to the absurdities of cannabis prohibition.

The biodegradable balloons, filled with hemp seeds, were intended to drift across the countryside and, when they burst, scatter their cargo.

David Taylor, of the Green Party, organisers of the action, said cannabis should be an alternative crop for farmers as it needed neither pesticides nor herbicides and can be used for the manufacture of paper, linen, textiles, oil, plastics, ropes, paint and other agro-chemical products.

Ten years for animal rights activist

A DEMONSTRATION will be held on July 31st at the Royal Courts of Justice in London to protest against the ten year prison sentence currently being served by animal rights protestor Dave Callender.

He was sentenced on March 6th for his part in a campaign to plant dummy incendiary devices at targetted establishments and temporarily close down or produce negative publicity about them. These included Thames Valley Eggs and the Animal Health Trust in Newmarket.

Despite the fact that the devices were intended to be entirely non-explosive Dave was charged with conspiracy to commit arson.

The case hung on the possible intent of the campaign he was involved in planning. The Crown's only expert witness conceded that the materials recovered could be used for hoaxes.

The prosecution objected to several highly credible witnesses Dave called in his defence, on the

grounds that their evidence was based on heresay. The judge then refused to admit these testimonies as evidence the jury could rely on in considering Dave's case. This evidence would have confirmed Dave's intention to cause no harm or criminal damage.

Kevin Tomlinson, Dave's solicitor, told Squall that: "the judge ruled that the evidence of these three independent witnesses could not be considered by the jury when deciding whether Dave Callender was guilty or not because it was considered heresay evidence. This decision will be a major ground in the appeal against conviction."

Bizarrely the jury was allowed to consider this same evidence in deciding the fate of Dave's co-defendant, Gregg Avery.

Mr Avery was acquitted. He told Squall: "I couldn't understand it. We were all gobsmacked. It just seemed that these people were damaging witness for the prosecution and they

wanted their evidence removed at all costs."

If evidence is considered heresay it is, presumably, inadmissible full-stop. Nobody could come up with any direct authority in terms of previously decided cases to justify the judge's decision and as a result the jury convicted Dave and the judge sentenced him to ten years imprisonment on the basis that he intended to plant real incendiary devices not dummy/hoax devices. Why evidence was allowed for one defendant and not the other is a question no-one can answer. Dave and his supporters are demanding a retrial.

Contact: Dave Callender Justice Campaign, PO Box 38, Manchester M60 1NX or write to Dave Callender, HV3314, HMP Birmingham, Winson Green Road, Birmingham B18 4AS. Demonstration: Royal Courts of Justice, The Strand. 11.00am July 31st.

More women behind bars

A REPORT PUBLISHED by the Penal Affairs Consortium in April revealed that the number of women in prison has risen by 57 per cent since the end of 1992.

Most women given custodial sentences are non-violent offenders. Many of these have committed minor offences: of the total 4,406 women sentenced to prison in 1994, 1,454 (33 per cent) were fine defaulters.

Most have few or no previous convictions. Sixty per cent have two or fewer previous. Twenty per cent of these are first-time offenders.

The Penal Affairs Consortium report reveals that over the last three years the number of women prisoners has increased at a rate twice that of male prisoners. Less women offenders than men are fined (28 per cent compared with 36 per cent) or given community service orders (7 per cent compared with 11 per cent). Only 29 per cent of the 3,714 women remanded in custody in 1994 were finally sentenced to prison.

Because there are only 14 prisons which hold

women in the country, far more women are likely to be imprisoned a long way from home. Only four prisons have mother and baby units.

The report concludes that the number of women in prison reflects a "growing mood of toughness in penal policy". It stresses that: "The rapidly increasing use of prison for women is not due to a rising tide of female violence but is primarily due to a greater readiness to lock up non-violent women offenders."

Critics of this trend encourage a policy of community supervision for women offenders, particularly mothers.

Commenting on the results of the report Mary Honeyball, General Secretary of the National Association of Probation Officers, said: "No one wants to excuse crime and offending, but when we look at the numbers and reasons for so many women, especially those with children, being held in prison, we must ask: 'is this something that the public demands and that women offenders deserve?' On both counts the answer is no".

Shareholders urged to vote against Shell

A MAJOR SHARE CONSULTANT, PIRC, urged its Shell shareholding clients to vote against Shell's annual report and accounts at its AGM last May.

The company's managing director, Alan MacDougall said: "We have serious reservations about Shell's policies in relation to the environment and human rights." PIRC's stance follows concerns expressed by its pension-fund clients over Shell's pollution and human rights record in the Ogoniland region of Nigeria.

MPs demand more protection from investigation

AN AMENDMENT to the Defamation Bill currently making its way through parliament would allow MPs and peers to sue newspapers over reports of their parliamentary activities.

The Government have said they are neutral on the subject, although it is widely recognised that the "cash for questions" scandal implicating Tory MPs in parliamentary bribes, raised some MPs' fears about the power of the press to expose their activities.



McDonald's set new targets of domination

THE ANNUAL REVIEW of McDonald's UK, published at the end of the last financial year, announced the burger giant's intention to double their expansion plans.

With pre-tax profits rising by a massive 53 per cent last year, the Corporation intends to add another 100 burger bars to its current 650 UK outlets by the end of 1996. The annual review states McDonald's intention to complete its previous ten-year expansion programme within five years. By the end of the millenium the Corporation say they will be the one of largest employers in Britain.

Meanwhile the McDonald's Corporation US has also released an

annual report containing a chapter entitled "Strategies for World Dominance", an overt admission of their intentions. At present the Corporation operates 18,000 burger bars in 89 countries spanning six continents.

Meanwhile, the Corporation have recently signed a ten-year exclusive deal to co-promote their fast-food products with all new Walt Disney films. As David Green, Senior Vice-President of the McDonald's Marketing, said during crosss examination in the McLibel trial: "[Children] are virgin ground as far as marketing is concerned".

The Corporation are also official sponsors of the 1996 Olympics. Their adverts show an athlete

jumping hurdles, overlaid with the words: "The best athletes all hunger for the same thing: McDonald's." And all this, despite an internal company memo disclosed during the McLibel trial saying: "McDonald's should attempt to deflect the basic negative thrust of our critics. We can't really address or defend nutrition. We don't sell nutrition and people don't come to McDonald's for nutrition."

As well as paying for an advertising billboard behind every premier division goal mouth, McDonald's have also bought their way in as the "Official Restaurant of the 1996 European Championships" to be held in the UK this summer.

Heroin 'drug of choice' in prisons

HEROIN is becoming the drug of choice in Britain's prisons due to the Government's new drug-testing policy, according to research published in June.

Figures published in *Drug Link*, the journal of the institute of drug dependence, show the number of prisoners testing positive for heroin increasing with the number of positive cannabis tests dropping.

It was widely predicted that prisoners would move to heroin when the Government introduced its mandatory drug testing policy last year in a "get tough" policy on prison

drug use.

Cannabis stays in the body for a much longer period than heroin. With a positive drugs test, or refusal, leading to longer sentences, a prisoner has less chance of being caught with heroin in the blood stream.

The new regulations mean ten per cent of prisoners in each prison must be randomly tested for drugs each month.

"The irony is that testing may actually be creating a drug problem in prisons where there was not one before," *Drug Link* say.

Scientists criticise government support for Shell

A PANEL OF EXPERTS commissioned by Energy Secretary Tim Eggar, has said Government approval for Shell's intention to

dump the Brent Spar oil platform was wrong. The 14 top scientists say that government support for the dumping of the 14,500 ton

contaminated platform failed to take into account the "unacceptably large overall impact" of dumping redundant oil rigs.

Personal details for sale

A NEW DATABASE of social security claimants could be sold to advertisers for direct mail shots, the Government said in May.

Over the next eight years a data base of all benefit claimants, including details of their income and ages of their children, will be installed by a private company.

The Government is considering allowing the company to sell the information - including personal details - for marketing purposes.

A list of child benefit claimants alone is thought to be worth £700,000. Such a list

would allow relevant industries to directly target mothers claiming benefit. A list of incapacity benefit claimants could be used by drug companies and a list of unemployment benefit claimants by low-wage employers.

At the moment such a scheme would run into difficulties surrounding privacy laws. The Government has said there would be "safeguards" to such a scheme.

But John Wadham, director of Liberty, said: "The kind of benefits people claim goes to the heart of very personal issues like health."

Corporate campaign against dissent

SHELL AND WIMPEY have begun a campaign to create a specific number of shares below which shareholders are disqualified from speaking at Annual General Meetings.

The move is designed to thwart people who obtain a small amount of shares in order to call the board of directors to account for environmental and human rights abuses.

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What is it with grocers' daughters?

FOLLOWING A SIX-YEAR INVESTIGATION District Auditor John Magill has imposed a £31m penalty for gerrymandering on Shirley Porter and five other Westminster Councillors for their roles in the 'homes for votes' scandal in the borough (see Squall 8 for a full account).

Porter's obsession with keeping Westminster Tory whatever the cost is clearly revealed in a letter she wrote to Thatcher in December 1986: "We must protect our electoral position which is being seriously eroded by the number of

homeless that we have been forced to house..."

The belief that ridding Westminster of the "homeless/ down and outs who are not our natural supporters" would ensure Tory re-election in the borough led her to implement a 'designated sales' policy to 'export' homeless families from eight key wards and sell off council houses in order to replace them with potential Tory-voting home-owners.

In a document sent to senior Westminster Tories in 1986 Porter advised them to "test the law to its limits" in order to move homeless

people out of the borough. She requested: "When you've read these documents...it would be helpful if you swallow them in good spy fashion otherwise they might self-destruct!!"

As a further incentive to vote Tory the new Westminster tenants received no bills for maintenance and repairs. This, in conjunction with the designated sales policy is now estimated to have cost the borough at least £31m. The list of misdemeanours under investigation also included the housing of homeless people in asbestos-ridden council tower blocks.

Magill's report covers the designated sales policy for the years from 1986 to 1989. However his report suggests that gerrymandering in other council departments continued until 1994. If this is the case the payback figure could rise to between £70m and £80m (not including the legal costs of her appeal).

Lest we forget...Dr Michael Dutt, one of the 10 council officials originally implicated in Magill's investigations, committed suicide when his involvement in Porter's corrupt reign was uncovered.

Sunday Business (19/05/96) has suggested that Porter has already begun moving her assets around so they will be harder to find when its time to foot the bill. Dame Porter maintains: "I have done nothing wrong, nothing illegal and nothing improper. I shall fight for my good name."

Gypsies in huge libel struggle

THE ANIMOSITY BETWEEN HUGHIE SMITH, head of the National Gypsy Council and Britain's other major Gypsy organisations is finally coming to ahead in court.

Hughie Smith has been the object of considerable criticism ever since he became president for life of the National Gypsy Council in 1974.

His organisation runs over 13 private gypsy sites mainly in the North of England, and is planning to expand this operation further. His organisation has been one of the very few Gypsy organisations to be supported with a grant by the Department of the Environment.

As a result of publicly aired criticisms of him and his organisation, Hughie Smith has resorted to the libel court.

In one huge court case, he is suing: Tommy Docherty from the Society of Travelling People, William Nicholson from the Northern Gypsy Council, Eli Frankham from the National Romany Rights Association, Peter Mercer from the Gypsy Council for Education, Welfare and Civil Rights and the presidium of International Romany Union. Charles Smith and Anne Bagehot from the

Gypsy Council for Education, Welfare and Civil Rights. Author and gypsy activist Dr Donald Kenrick and Paul Winter a teacher of travellers.

It is a testament to the dissatisfaction felt about the way Hughie Smith runs the National Gypsy Council, that so many prominent Romanies and Gypsies are being sued by him.

Originally, the libel suit also included three members of the Derbyshire Gypsy Liaison Group, but after deciding they could not afford to fight the case, they apologised and paid £3,000.

The case is currently in its pre-trial stages and a fund has been set up to help defend the case because the defendants have very little money.

It is vitally important to the health of the Gypsy community in Britain that this case is heard properly and that the lack of available funds is not a hindrance to the court disclosure of the truth.

Send donations to "The Hughie Smith Libel Fund" c/o Julian Pheby (Solicitor), Ison Harrison & Co, 31, Bishopthorpe Road, York YO2 1NA.

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**Did you ever live in Hermes or Chantry Points on the Elgin Estate, London W9?
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Since 22 March 1996 Westminster City Council has been writing to everyone who is known to have lived in the Points. If you have not yet heard from us, please contact Helena Shore at the City Council on 0171 798 2633. When you phone please have ready some basic details, such as which flat you lived in, when you were there, and who else lived with you.

We will then send you a copy of the letter, which contains information on asbestos which was present in the Points during the time you were there.

Bill Roots
Chief Executive and Director of Finance
Westminster City Council
City Hall
64 Victoria Street
London
SW1E 6QP

Drugs companies to sponsor nurses

NURSES COULD BE SPONSORED by pharmaceutical companies in future if a discussion paper circulated by Secretary of State for Health, Stephen Dorrell, is enacted.

In the paper Dorrell suggests drug-company sponsorship of nurses could be part of "disease management packages" which will increase private sector involvement in the NHS.

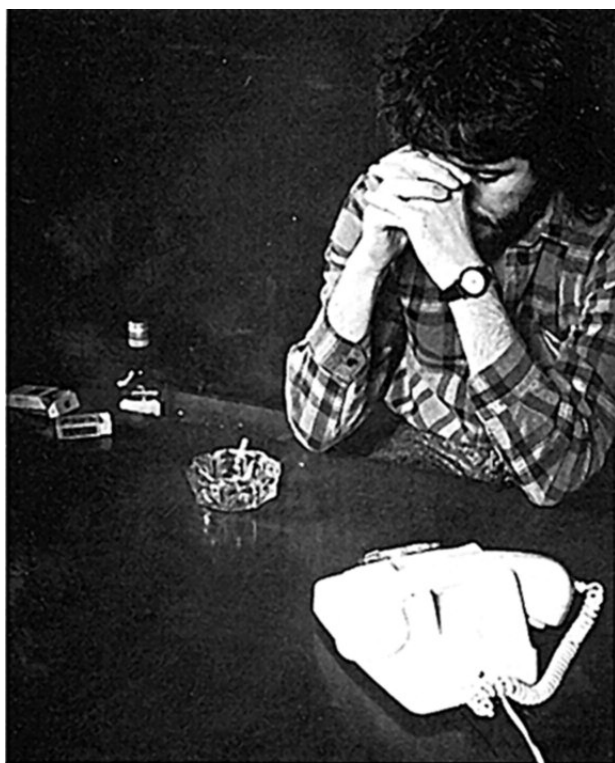
Such pharmaceutical company sponsorship was firmly rejected in a guidance note issued by the NHS executive in December 1994.

The guidance note expressed concerns that

such vested-interest market involvement would further threaten a doctor's selection of the appropriate drug rather than one belonging to the sponsoring pharmaceutical company. However, this guidance lapsed this June and Dorrell is now keen to provide opportunities for

pharmaceutical companies to exert even more market influence on frontline medical services.

A spokesperson for the world's largest drugs company, Glaxo Wellcome, praised Dorrell's idea, describing it as "the beginning of a dialogue between people talking the same language".



MARK KELLY

"dates still available"

This and other poems, all suffused with a cascade of off the cufflink witticisms, form part of Mark Kelly's unmissable live act. Check him out: August 21st @ the Firkin Pub next door to St Alban's railway station 9pm or August 24th @ The Hampstead Clinic Club, G E Ardinkles, corner of Pond Street/Fleet Road, London NW3 or August 25th @ Big Fish Sundae, Bull and Bush, Kew Road, Richmond 8.30pm or September 1st @ The Kings Head, Crouch End Broadway, Crouch End, London 8.30pm.

Mark Kelly currently has books of poetry available: 'No to Negativity' and 'No Future in Nostalgia'. These can be obtained for £2 each + 36p P&P by writing to Mark Kelly, SQUALL, PO Box 8959, London N19 5HW.

The Triumph of Capital

the shop window display:
a dazzling array
of consumer durables.
of course,
some consumers
are more durable than others
and, in the shop doorway,
lay the sleeping bags
of several
of our surplus requirements.

noses press against the glass,
breath misitng,
silently listing
those things they are without.

everything you could need
(provided you can pay)
for your skiing holiday
sits safe and warm within...

the glass is unduly alarmed.

MARK KELLY

'Another Chapter from the Citizen's Charter'

in the interests of economy take a good, long hard
look at your lover
and ask yourself this simple question:

am i getting value for money?

could someone else provide the same service
just as effeciently but a little more cheaply?
do you need affection to be supplied every night
or could you make do twice weekly?

is your lover a leader in his or her field?
does your investment guarantee a high enough yield?
is he or she responsive to you demands?
do you both have long-term business plans?

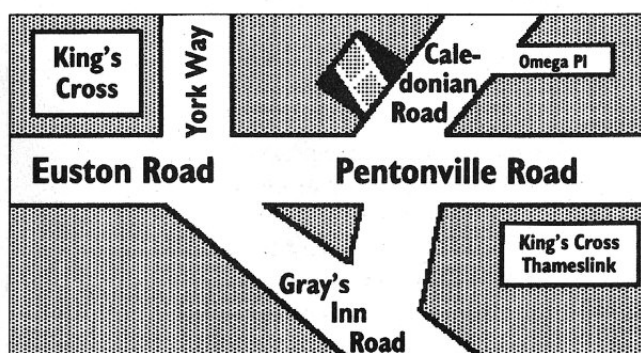
for every heart
must surely surrender
to the cupid's dart
of a competitive tender.

so don't be a martyr-
treat yourself pro rata
play as you earn
and learn to love your citizen's charter...

(From 'No to Negativity')

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NEWS OF THE SKEWS

This issue's look at national media skew-whiffery focusses on 'Expert Witness - The Bomb Maker', concerning animal rights activist Keith Mann shown on ITV in May.

George Orwell's dystopian vision of the future, 1984, predicted, among other things, a culture of mass media manipulation.

Entitled The Bomb Maker, the Expert Witness programme broadcast at peak time on May 31st, is introduced by the actor Michael Gambon thus:

"George Orwell once wrote: 'the more you are in the right the more natural that everyone should be bullied into thinking likewise'.

"His definition of a fanatic paints a perfect picture of the central character in tonight's case. A man whose passionate belief drove him to a campaign of violence and terror".

"Here was a man who had a deep concern for the well being of animals. But this was in contrast to his disregard for the lives of human beings."

It is deeply ironic that Orwell's words should precede one of the worst examples of media manipulation he so astutely predicted.

Expert Witness is a "Docu-Drama" portraying "real life" crimes. It takes a Hitchcockian format, with the portly Gambon (best known as Dennis Potter's Singing Detective) introducing the dramatisation to camera from a living room.

The programme portrays Keith in a typical, clichéd fashion. He wears leather para boots, combat trousers, sports a shaved head with mohican, has a face full of piercings and chain smokes broodily. He has a beagle called Alf (geddit?).

In reality, Keith doesn't wear leather, does not possess a pair of combat pants, has never smoked, has two earrings and never possessed a beagle called Alf.

These are just a few of the basic factual errors in the programme.

More disturbing is the obvious attempt by the programme to ensure Keith is seen as a dangerous terrorist.

The dramatisation begins with Keith in a supermarket where he frightens a little girl by describing an account of animal slaughter. Every text book example

- from shocked faces staring into a moving camera, to chilling background music - of the thriller genre is employed. At first, we only see glimpses of Keith's boots and hands before his face.

We then move on to Keith as ringleader. After a skewed account of his sabotage of vehicles at Striven's article in Oldham "Keith" and his mates are in a meeting. "We've got to keep the pressure on," says a harmless idealist. "What we need is maximum publicity. We've got to hit the butchers and the fur shops picketing and handing out leaflets."

"Child's play," says Keith, menacingly - moving out of shadow. He is seated apart, drawing heavily on a cigarette. He picks up a fire bomb - to gasps - and suggests a fire bombing campaign.

"But you could end up killing someone," says a shocked female compratriate.

Keith turns his icy stare to her. "You're either committed or your not," he says.

The programme continues in like manner:

"You can forget about students setting bunny rabbits free," says a police inspector, "this bloke's started a fire bombing campaign."

When Keith is arrested: "You had bigger plans than that, didn't you Keith? I'm talking about blowing up people."

After his escape: "This is a very dangerous young man we have out there."

The most insidious part of

the programme comes in a voice over by Gambon: "In the months after Mann's escape animal rights activists sent 36 incendiary devices to targets nationwide. A parcel bomb injured a fur trader and his daughter - a three year old child. It was only a matter of time before someone was killed."

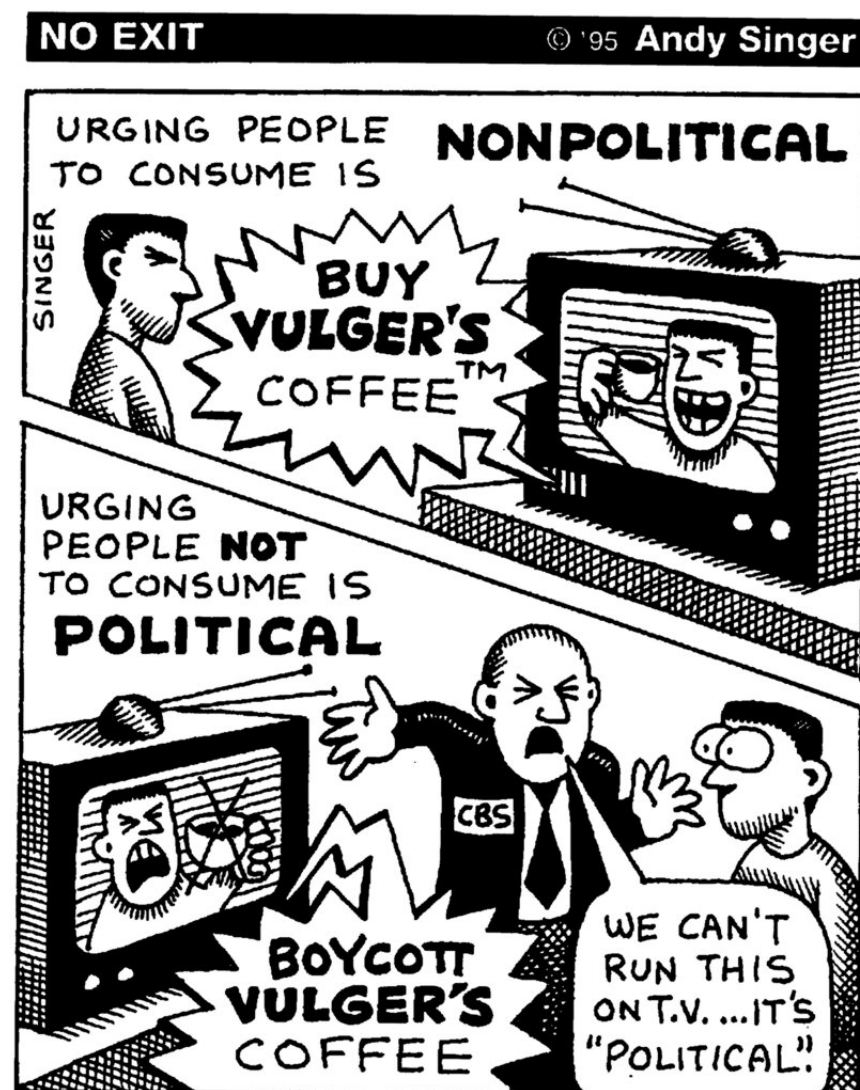
Without actually stating so, the clear implication is that Keith was responsible for this campaign. He was not.

The only grain of truth comes from a speech by his mum to the police: "You're wrong about my boy," she says. "He told me he was the one in danger because he's campaigning against some very powerful people." Keith's mum did say words to this effect.

Keith's mum, Doreen, tried to prevent the programme being screened. LWT refused to let her see a preview or the script. The High Court refused an injunction on the basis that, having not seen the programme, she could not be sure it was libellous.

The programme was made before Keith's appeal in November last year. At the time there was much publicity surrounding his case and its inconsistencies. The programme-makers have obviously garnered all their information from the police.

Doreen Mann had not heard of the programme until five weeks before its broadcast. She is now instituting proceedings for libel and malicious falsehood against the programme-makers.





Actors of Parliament

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

Secretary of State, Peter Lilley staked a claim for the loyalty of the working classes in a speech delivered to the Scottish Conservative Party Conference in Aberdeen in May. He said: "We must make it clear. We Conservatives are the party of the hard-working classes. We don't care if they have blue collars or blue blood."

The board members of the newly created Environment Agency, the biggest quango in Britain, would undoubtedly waggle their cigars in agreement. They each receive £12,000 a year for putting in four days of 'work' a month. Unelected chairman of the new Agency is Lord De Ramsey, a rich landowner living in John Major's Huntingdon constituency. Despite all this, Prince Edward recently voiced his deep conviction that Britain no longer operates a 'jobs for the old school tie' system. Instead, he suggested, promotion and reward were offered on a basis of of personal merit and hard work: a "meritocracy" according to man of the world Eddie.

Indeed, when Sir Derek Barber was chairman of the the Countryside Commission - another government-appointed quango - he wrote about this new meritocracy: "I became chairman... as a consequence of sharing a cab with a stranger. Another quango chairman was appointed following a pheasant shoot at which the Secretary of State was a fellow gun; the subsequent chairman of a water authority bumped into a cabinet minister while

birding on a Greek Island. It is a splendidly capricious and British way of doing things. I am advised that the success-failure rate is about the same as when headhunters are engaged. And look at the thousands of guineas you save." (Countryside Commission Newsletter March 1991). So plebs, stop moaning about vested interest nepotism, get on your bike and go and earn your ancestral inheritance. Hard work all round what, what, and pass the port.

Lady Olga Maitland, Con MP for Sutton and Cheam and ever the outraged open mouth, made her pedantic contribution to the 2nd reading debate on the Noise Bill. Whilst most MPs banged on about how disruptive modern music was to the nation's sleep patterns, Maitland concerned herself with other abominations: "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." (Hansard 16/2/96 Col 1290)

According to a recent opinion poll conducted by MORI, Britain's parliamentary system has lost its democratic mandate. In 1991 59 per cent of those questioned thought Parliament worked "very" or "quite" well. By 1996 this majority had disappeared, as the figure slipped to 44 per cent. Despite this vote of no confidence, MP's are pushing for a 30 per cent pay rise.

JUXTA-POSING

Front page of the Guardian 6/4/96:

Headline - "Archbishop Carey says changes are working as soaring assets near 1989 peak."
"The Church of England's assets soared last year by £300 million, almost reversing the huge losses from property speculation disclosed in 1992."

and

Page Four of the Guardian 6/4/96:

Headline - "Church leaders lament loss of Easter spirit."
"Church leaders yesterday denounced shops, publicans and local authorities for devaluing the religious significance of Easter. The Bishop of Birmingham Mark Santer, said he was saddened that the spriritual meaning fof the most important period in the Christian calender was being lost to commercial pressures."

Yer SQUALL Competition innit

We had loads of people who thought the last competition was a joke. But hey, listen, SQUALL is serious sometimes.

The list of winners amazingly included two entries from New Zealand - yes Glyn and yes Elena with the most unusual postcard. And to Lin & Nig from New Mills in Derbyshire with the most arty postcard, as well as the man Martin from Bristol and the androgenous T.S Maher from North London. Witty caption winner for Andrew Testa's photograph of Tragic at Newbury came from New Zealand Glyn (hope yer enjoying the green mountains and yellow beach yer bastard).

For this issue's competition we'd like a caption for Nick Cobbing's photograph of the three diuretic Thames Valley policemen printed on the back cover of this issue.

1st prize is a copy of George McKay's 'Senseless Acts of Beauty' reviewed on page 60, + a Tofu Love Frogs 'Rentamob' CD reviewed on page 62 + a Zion Train 'Natural Wonders of the World in Dub' CD.

2nd Prize is a Tofu Love Frogs 'Rentamob' CD + a Zion Train 'Natural Wonders of the World in Dub' CD

3rd, 4th and 5th are a Zion Train 'Natural Wonders' CD a piece. Apologies for the CD only situation - we use what we have. Send yer ideas on the most unusual postcard you can find to '**Competition (isn't always good for you)**', SQUALL, Box 8959, London N19 5HW

Unleashing the spies

Home Secretary.

When an individual files a complaint to this tribunal, they are not told whether or not they have actually been the target of MI5 surveillance. Under current procedure, they are only told if the tribunal considers MI5 to have acted wrongly. In effect, filling in one of the complaints forms, available from most police stations, simply alerts the security services to the fact that the individual suspects they are being watched.

Lord Justice Stuart-Smith, the judge appointed to monitor the activities of the other intelligence services has also officially confirmed that GCHQ, the Government's electronic eavesdropping agency has already been targeting British citizens as well as foreign communications.

Lord Nolan's interception of communications report, published in June, also reveals that the number of telephone taps authorised by Michael Howard is already double the number granted by the Home Secretary five years ago. This figure only applies to telephones, not to any other form of surveillance.

Nolan's report did not differentiate the targets of these telephone taps, but does acknowledge that domestic "subversion" was amongst them, although he describes this category as "very small". This situation is likely to radically change after the enactment of the Security Services Bill.

MI5 involvement in domestic crime investigation has been the subject of much police concern, with a widely recognised turf war being fought between the police and MI5.

The investigation of animal rights activism has been a territory dominated up to now by Special Branch.

According to William Taylor, the Commissioner of the City of London police: "We are concerned that in the absence of any legislation, we have a twin-tack system, one where MI5 has a statutory basis and one where the police do not." (The Times 6/5/96)

In order to placate these fears, the wording of the Security Services Bill was actually changed to offer MI5 a "supporting" role in domestic investigation. This concession of terminology is not the only device designed to satisfy the police. In April this year the Association of Chief Police Officers met and agreed that the Anti-terrorist squad should incorporate environmental protest as part of its investigative brief. This alarming decision went almost unheralded in the media. When Observer journalist David Rose spoke to an anonymous spokesperson from the Anti-terrorist squad, he pointed out that no terrorist activity had taken place in the avowedly non-violent environmental protest movement. The spokesperson replied: "It is our job to know about these things before they happen."

Once again the inclusion of environmental protest as a category of terrorism, is reflective of the fact that such protests are registering a significant affect on big business lobbies. The furrowed brows in this case belong to large landowners, the oil industry, the pre-privatisation nuclear industry, and of course the massive road-building and car industry.

In new legislation promised by the government in November, police will also be given increased powers of forced entry, bugging and surveillance, putting them more on a par with MI5. Although these are activities the police have been involved in for some time, they have only had loose Home Office guidelines to back them up rather than a more conducive statutorily-based right. However, the creation of a legislative backbone this autumn will facilitate the ease and expansion of such activities. The proposed new laws will also create a new National Crime Squad responsible for co-ordinating this and other police operations, as promised by the Government at the last Conservative Party conference

Whilst security service interest in pro-animal activism has been publicly legitimised,

environmental protest has so far escaped unscathed from media attempts to engineer a similar situation. Not for the want of trying: an article printed in Construction News in 1994 falsely suggested road protesters were building spiked man traps. The Sunday Times reprinted the story under the headline 'Green guerillas booby-trap sites' and followed it up with a series of unsubstantiated articles about other similar incidents.

The deliberate engineering of a serious incident designed to discredit the environmental movement is now a worrying possibility.

The new police and security service powers obviously present alarming implications for democratic protest. Whenever a political campaign becomes effective enough to significantly register its concerns with big business, British security services will be statutorily entitled to investigate and potentially undermine its operation.

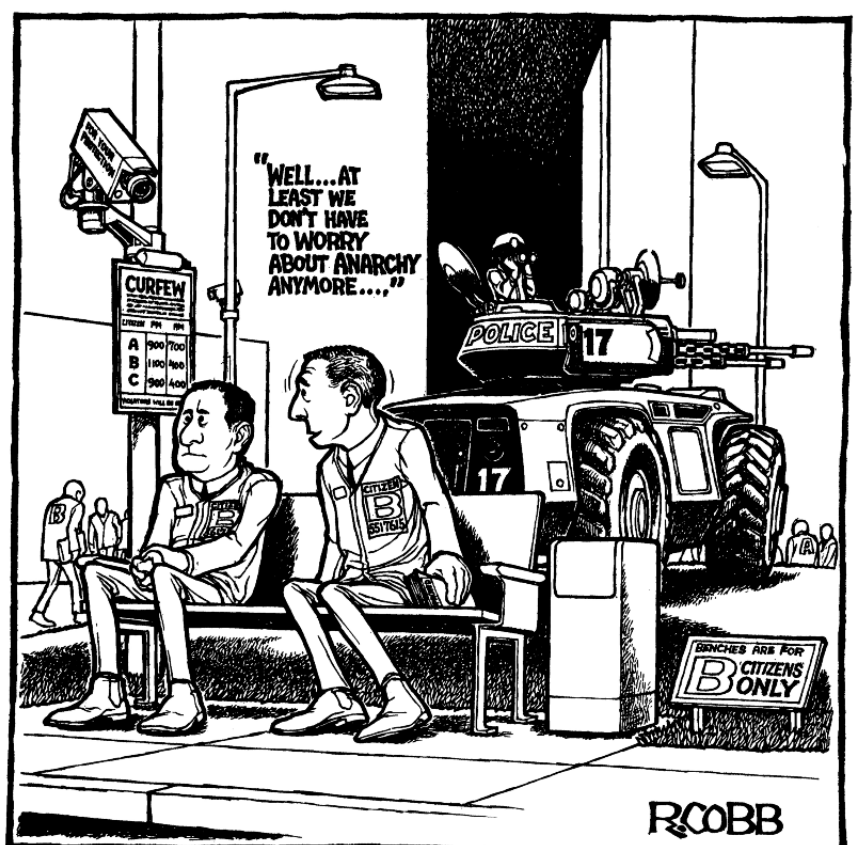
With Michael Howard sitting in a front row seat, Stella

Rimmington concluded her Dimpleby Lecture by saying there was after all no conflict between Security and Democracy. However, all evidence suggests that MI5's new public relations openness is a mask designed to cover draconian new involvement in the investigation, infiltration and undermining of any groups considered "subversive" to big business interests. And what's more, the police have been given powers to match.

As John Alderson, ex-Chief Constable of Devon and Cornwall, observed recently:

"Howard is putting the building blocks in place for an East German-style Stasi-like force, where half the population finishes up spying on the other half. At the moment the acorn of a Stasi has been planted but 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 - they are all about power."

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Green

Defending the environment is an ongoing battle for hearts and minds - and the environmentalists are winning. But Neil Goodwin sees dirty tricks American-style on the horizon.

Julia Guest



Hidden amidst the political in-fighting over the Government's upgrading of the Prevention of Terrorism Act, came a call from increasingly frustrated chief constables for the assistance of the anti-terrorist squad in tackling "environmental extremism". On April 10th the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) voted to involve Scotland Yard's anti-terrorist branch in co-ordinating a response to "top of the scale" activists.

Sources within the force are keen to point out that "people sitting down in the middle of the road" won't be affected. The proposal only concerns acts of violent protest. But senior bomb-squad officers are

said to be scathing over the prospect of wasting resources on what they consider to be "a public order issue". "What are we talking about here most of the time? Criminal damage?" said one. "It's a public relations disaster." So why the initiative?

Increasing numbers of articulate and resourceful young people are embracing direct action as their only recourse to a cumbersome and alienating parliamentary system; a situation about which the Department of Education had been warning the government since 1984. "We can cope with the Toxteths," wrote Stewart Benson, in his report, 'New Codes of Social Control and the 17 plus'. "But if we have a highly educated and idle population we may possibly anticipate more

serious conflict."

Of greatest concern to Ministers is the way this challenge is now being taken up across the social and political spectrum. Middle England's active endorsement of civil disobedience, and the accompanying media interest, has dealt a crippling blow to the roads programme, and prior to the present crisis in the beef industry, was poised to finish off live exports as well.

When riot police were used to clear Brightlingsea's human barricade during last year's animal export protests, Essex police received over 200 complaints a day. Sensing a disaster in community relations, Geoffrey Markham, the Assistant Chief Constable, apologised for upsetting local people, explaining: "It is a very different situation to what we are used to - when there are people of all ages sitting in the road. There were about 50 or 60 people who we would describe as hard-liners."

Seventy nine year old Tilly Merritt was so angered by the harsher treatment meted out to so-called 'professional protestors' that she had her nose pierced and dyed her hair orange. "The police just couldn't believe it," she recalls "I said to them: 'See I'm no different to

these youngsters, they're just ordinary people like me'."

In dealing with the growing culture of dissent, the police have had to negotiate a political tightrope. When James Anderton, Greater Manchester's former Chief Constable, ushered in the new era of pro-active policing in 1979, shifting "the matter of greatest concern" away from "basic crime - theft, burglary even violent crime" towards "acts of sedition designed to destroy our parliamentary system", no-one could have predicted a scenario where elderly ladies regularly take to the streets to "subvert the authority of the state".

The combined cost of policing the protests at Shoreham, Dover and Brightlingsea now stands at £5.4 million, while the No M11 campaign cost the Metropolitan Police £6 million. The Home Office recently turned down an urgent request from Thames Valley police for extra funding for its joint operation with Hampshire police at Newbury. 'Operation Prospect' has so far cost £3.6 million, and is expected to reach £12 million by 1998.

With road protestors already speculating on future showdowns at Stonehenge, Sherwood Forest, and the Exeter-Honiton relief road, the

terrorism?

massive haemorrhaging of police funds looks set to continue.

For years sections of the press have chipped away at the environmental coalition, trying to alienate potential middle-class supporters with insights into the squalid world of hippie “dole scroungers”, and tales of violence. In 1994, John Harlow wrote his infamous “Green guerillas booby-trap sites” exposé for the Sunday Times, heralding the so-called “Summer of Hate” with lurid accounts of spiked man-traps, crossbow attacks, and booby-trapped buildings at “flashpoints” such as the M11 Link Road and Solisbury Hill.

In July 1994 Madeleine Bunting used these unsubstantiated allegations of protest violence as the basis for her Guardian piece: “All Creatures Great and Smart”, and asked: “Now that environmental and animal protests have turned nasty, how long before their middle-class supporters quit in disgust?” No doubt the question on Michael Howard’s mind.

The Independent rounded-off 1994 with a front-page article entitled: “Crackdown on Green Terrorists”, quoting the head of Special Branch, John Howley, as saying: “There are a lot of people concerned about the environment... We are primarily concerned about the extremists, those who for example put bombs under cars.”

More recently, Contract Journal, the construction industry’s weekly magazine, exposed: “A CONFIDENTIAL report by senior Special Branch officers”, raising the bizarre possibility of “suicide attacks as a tactic to halt road construction contracts”. The document, which allegedly identifies 1,700 activists and names Earth First! and the Earth Liberation Front as two of the most radical groups, is reported as saying: “Radical environmentalists have made it clear that the emulation of animal rights groups is an objective. A further concern is that the ideal of martyrdom, thankfully as yet unseen, is an accepted philosophy in the environmentalist field.”

In tandem with this black propaganda, the Government has produced a series of measures

designed to crush the protest movement. Beyond the criminal sanctions of the CJA, accompanied by the strictest of bail conditions (daily signings, 1km exclusion zones, night-time curfews), these include the setting up of a Forward Intelligence Team to co-ordinate evidence gathering on principle targets. The loosely-phrased Security Services Bill, currently making its way through parliament, gives MI5, with all its eavesdropping capabilities, “the function of acting in support of the prevention of serious crime”, including “conduct by a large number of persons in pursuit of a common purpose”.

Now, by linking environmentalists to the activities of the bomb squad, ACPO has further accelerated the process of forcing the movement underground, where it could join the likes of the Animal Liberation Front (ALF) in social and political isolation. Once marginalised, road protestors could face fifteen-year sentences for criminal damage, as in the case of the ALF’s Keith Mann, instead of fifteen months.

“These are text book tactics,” says Jai, a veteran of several campaigns. “When the minor sentences don’t work, you start by harassing people - raiding their homes. When this fails, what do you

No-one could have predicted a scenario where elderly ladies regularly take to the streets to “subvert the authority of the state”.

do? You turn them into eco-terrorists. These tactics were used against Judi Bari in the States, when the FBI sought to subvert Earth First!”

The attempted murder of Judi Bari in May 1990 undoubtedly represents the worst-case scenario for green activists. Whilst co-ordinating what promised to be a huge non-violent mobilisation against strip-logging in the redwood



forest region of Northern California, Bari and fellow activist Daryl Cherney were seriously injured by a car bomb.

During the FBI investigation into the bombing, initial police reports describing “damage under the driver’s seat” were dismissed. The location of the explosive device was eventually judged as being “immediately behind the driver’s seat”, and Bari and Cherney were subsequently charged with “illegal possession of explosives”.

“The official response to the bombing had nothing at all to do with finding the guilty parties,” says Bari, who was eventually cleared of the charge. “It was a ploy to isolate and intimidate key organisers of Redwood Summer in such a way as to


undermine or completely destroy the anti-logging offensive we were planning. [The police] just used the whole thing to garner a tremendous propaganda coup... eight solid weeks of sensational press coverage about us - and, by extension, all environmental activism - as being eco-terrorists.”

Bari began an investigation, and uncovered disturbing similarities between her own experience and what had occurred within the

framework of known FBI domestic counter-intelligence programs (COINTELPROs) operating in the 1960s. She discovered that the stated purpose of the program was: “To expose, disrupt, misdirect, discredit, or otherwise neutralise” political dissent within the United States.

Despite the programmes’ alleged termination in 1971, a former FBI agent informed Bari: “Nothing else changed. We just kept right on using all the same illegal techniques for repressing political dissent we’d used all along. Only we began framing what we were doing in terms of ‘combating terrorism’ rather than neutralising political extremists.”

Last Summer, American activists issued grave warnings to their British counterparts over the introduction of an FBI-style counter-intelligence program this side of the Atlantic.

“We’re becoming too effective,” says Jai. “This is not so much a movement anymore, but an underlying mood change. They now realise that as the environment gives out more and more warnings, the resistance is going to get bigger and more diverse. But for the moment, with the way things have been progressing here as to the monitoring of our activities - the harassment and searches - it’s like we too are about to be set up.” 

Gobbling the rainforests

As the McLibel trial edges towards its conclusion, dramatic new court disclosures have provided the strongest evidence yet linking the McDonald's Corporation to the destruction of tropical rainforest.

Jim Carey reviews the latest successes in the coup against the Corporation.



Much to the world's increasing alarm, an area the size of England is stripped of primary rainforest each year.

Such forest provides the planet's largest single source of both oxygen and medicines, and is vital in the maintenance of our steadily thinning ozone layer. The major economic force behind the clearances is the global beef market and its insatiable appetite for the huge profits obtainable from cheap cattle raised on cheap land.

As the world's largest single user of beef, the McDonald's Corporation has been accused of having its foot firmly on the accelerator. However, given its economic reliance on public relations, the Corporation has gone to extraordinary lengths in order to extricate itself from any responsibility in the eyes of the world's public.

For the two defendants in this longest ever civil court case, rainforest destruction was also one of the subjects most difficult to prove from the allegedly libelous 'What's wrong with McDonald's?' factsheet.

The chainsaws invariably belong to a multitude of small companies, whilst the money driving the market process comes from huge multinational corporations. Distanced from the actual chainsaws, corporations portray an environmentally concerned image whilst still being highly implicated in the destructive market process.

Before a jury, corporate culpability in this practice might have been easier to establish. However, one of McDonald's first moves was to apply for a non-jury trial. Much to the defendants dismay, the judge agreed that the evidence might be too complicated for a jury to understand; the judge alone will make a decision

on whether the criticisms of McDonald's have been proven in court.

Following an incident involving the Duke of Edinburgh over ten years ago, the McDonald's Corporation thought they had successfully countered allegations of any involvement in rainforest destruction.

Prince Phillip, as President of the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), was introduced to a McDonald's executive at a 1983 WWF function in Canada. According to a letter disclosed during the McLibel trial, the Duke said to the executive: "So you are the people who are tearing down the Brazilian rainforests and breeding cattle." The executive told Prince Phillip he was mistaken, to which the Duke replied: "Rubbish" and, according to the letter, "stormed away".

When word of this exchange got out, the McDonald's camp took immediate steps to avert the potential PR disaster. Fred Turner, chairman of the McDonald's Corporation, sent out a world-wide edict saying no McDonald's plant was to use Brazilian beef. The Corporation then sent a letter to the World Wildlife Fund saying: "McDonald's world-wide is not involved in any manner in dealing with rainforests or their removal or in buying beef as a result of cattle that have been grazing in areas that formerly were rainforests." The World Wildlife Fund subsequently wrote back saying the Corporation was "exonerated".

In an obvious attempt to affirm this exoneration in the minds of the general public, McDonald's and WWF later collaborated on a co-promotional schools campaign.

However, a letter mistakenly disclosed by McDonald's during the trial reveals that, despite the "political" ramifications of ignoring the world-wide edict, the Managing Director of McDonald's UK gave covert

permission to McKey meat suppliers to provide its UK burger bars with Brazilian beef. Furthermore, letters from McDonald's Costa Rican meat suppliers revealed that the company reared cattle on ex-tropical rainforest land.

The court was also shown film footage in which the sales director of that company stated they had supplied beef for use in McDonald's US outlets. Cross examination of McDonald's International Meat Purchasing Manager, Dr Gomez Gonzales, also revealed that Brazilian beef has also been exported for McDonald's use in their Swiss and Argentinean burger bars during the 1990's.

By May of this year, it had been assumed most of the significant rainforest evidence had already been heard. Although establishing that the Corporation's statements were inconsistent with practice, would it convince the judge of a direct involvement in rainforest destruction? Then, on one day at the end of May, an additional witness unexpectedly delivered a killer punch.

The telling testimony came from Sue Brandford, an expert on the Amazon region, and currently working for the BBC World Service. She had already entered a signed witness statement to the court which both sides in the case had been aware of for some time. However, her powerful eye witness accounts of rainforest destruction included regions of Brasil only recently disclosed as sources for McDonald's beef.

Brandford described how the cattle ranching industry had caused widespread environmental damage to the area and had violently displaced small farmers and indigenous peoples. She specifically described the rainforest areas of Mato Grosso, which had supplied beef to McDonald's between 1979-1982, telling the court that she had witnessed the region being

deforested for cattle ranches in the early 1980's.

Her most telling testimony concerned the Goais region of Brasil, an area which McDonald's had only disclosed information on two days prior to her appearance in court.

Unbeknown to both parties, this was the region Brandford had visited most regularly throughout the years.

To the dismay of McDonald's legal team, she began describing the large scale deforestation that had taken place in this region.

In the freshly disclosed document, Roberto Morganti, director of McDonald's local hamburger manufacturers Braslo Ltd, stated that the Corporation still purchases meat from several collection points in the Goias region, specifically naming towns along the banks of the River Araguaia and its tributaries.

Brandford told the court that this region had consisted almost entirely of tropical rainforest in the 1970's but she had witnessed its systematic clearance by cattle ranchers from the mid 1970's to the mid 1980's. She said rainforest clearances still continue in this region today. After three years of pushing McDonald's to disclose documents on Brazilian Beef, it is an irony McDonald's are unlikely to appreciate, that the Goias document was disclosed two days before Brandford's appearance in court.

For McDonald's, this testimony was a last minute nightmare. However, for the McLibel defendants it was the powerful primary evidence they had been looking to sew up what had already been established in the trial so far.

The subject on which it was thought hardest to clearly demonstrate corporate culpability has consequently turned into one the strongest areas in the long running saga of careful truth extraction.



Quangoes the environment



Jim Carey slips behind the scenes of the newly-launched Environment Agency to uncover a nest of vested interests.

Despite its significance to the future of Britain's environment, the recent launch of the Environment Agency went virtually unheralded in the media. And yet from April 1st this year, the EA became Britain's largest quango, overseeing a budget of £550 million and employing 9,500 staff.

The responsibilities invested in this new leviathan include the regulation of air, land and sea pollution in England and Wales, and the prosecution of industrial polluters.

Despite recent improvements forced by the European Union, the UK still has weak environmental legislation. The Environment Agency replaces both the National Rivers Authority (NRA) and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Pollution (HMIP), whose weak armoury of available punitive measures was strengthened by their experience of industrial pollution and their knowledge of which companies had toxic substances they were keen to dump. Once made aware they are being watched, companies tend to avoid dumping their waste into the environment. There are some concerns that the rapid change of infrastructure involved in replacing the NRA and HMIP, might disrupt this fragile stand off.

The new Agency will also take over the responsibilities currently fulfilled by local authority waste regulatory bodies. These provided valuable locality-specific controls over environmental regulation, which have now been replaced with eight regional offices co-ordinated by the new super-quango. Despite extensive lobbying, local authorities failed in their bid to keep local environmental regulation accountable to the local electorate.

So who then is in control of this new unelected super quango, and can we rest safe in the knowledge

that those running the Agency have our best environmental interests at heart? Even a cursory investigation suggests not.

The man chosen to be chairman of the new authority is Lord De Ramsey, a rich landowner resident in John Major's Huntingdon constituency.

Both he and fellow board member John Norris, another large landowner, are previous presidents of the Country Landowners Association (CLA), an organisation representing the business interests of landowners. As such, its agenda is often at complete odds with environmental concerns. Indeed, over the last fifteen years, the CLA has vehemently campaigned against many pro-environment initiatives. The long list includes environmental conditions attached to farm subsidies, measures to reduce pesticide and nitrate use, measures to prevent the grubbing up of hedgerows, measures to manage ancient woodland, public access to the Land Registry and new legislation to prevent badger baiting.

Furthermore, the aggravated trespass sections of the Criminal Justice Act, currently much in use against environmental campaigners, were advocated and lobbied for by the CLA. Indeed, when Michael Howard was moved from the Department of Environment to become Home Secretary in 1993, the president of the CLA wrote: "If moves had to be made, Mr Major's choice has probably been as helpful to landowners as could be hoped for." The author of this sentiment was the then CLA president, Lord De Ramsey.

Further evidence of the CLA's agenda is revealed in the following statement made by its legal adviser in Country Landowner magazine: "While the CLA is not opposed to the creation of an environmental agency, we shall

need to watch the Bill closely to ensure that the landowner's legitimate interest is protected, for example in representation on committees on river management and drainage."

This statement was made in 1994. By 1995 Lord De Ramsey, previous president of the Country Landowners Association for three years, had been selected to lead the new environmental agency. The successful positioning of both De Ramsey and fellow board member John Norris, completes what the country landowners must view as a highly successful coup.

Meanwhile the BBC documentary programme *Here and Now* investigated the political background of two the Environment Agencies regional chairmen. The first was Christopher Hampson MBE, appointed to the Agency's board and given specific responsibilities for the North East of England. Between 1984-1987, Hampson was Chief Executive of ICI Australia, a period which saw his company fined for pollution by the Australian government. Upon arrival in the UK, Hampson sat on the main board of both ICI and ICI Chemicals and Polymers, and once again his company was the subject of a string of pollution prosecutions. From here he was appointed to the board of the Environment Agency, whilst also becoming the non-executive chairman of Ready Mixed Concrete (RMC). Indeed, one of the factories within his region as North East regional chairman belongs to Blue Circle Cement. The Agency are currently contemplating whether to allow Blue Circle Cement permission to burn toxic waste in its kiln. This waste originates from the huge ICI plant on Teeside, another establishment with a long record of pollution breaches. The consequence of Blue Circle being given the go ahead will be the production of cheaper cement. Small

surprise is it to the observers of vested interest, that Hampson's Ready Mixed Concrete purchases one million tonnes of cement a year from Blue Circle.

The other board member investigated by the documentary makers was Brian Alexander, chairman of the Environment Agency's North West Advisory committee. Between 1989 and 1992, Alexander was Managing Director of North West Water, one of the region's top polluters and responsible for roughly 70 per cent of pollution discharges into the Mersey basin. After leaving this company Alexander's satirical career continued with a stint as Chairman of the Mersey Basin Campaign, a funded clean up operation. During his stay, the Campaign's progress slipped a staggering 100 years behind its target time for pollution clearance. Despite these shakey qualifications Alexander was then appointed to the Environment Agency board and given the responsibility for the region he is implicated in polluting.

Indeed he is just one of 18 board members each receiving £12,000 a year for working just four days a month.

In his launch speech, Lord De Ramsey assured the assembled dotage that his new Agency would recognise the "need to establish our credibility with all sections of society".

All in all then - a pretty bad start.

The Environment Agency ran a competition to design its logo, although entries for the competition were never published. Instead £50,000 of public money was paid to Colley, Porter, Bell for designing the symbol at the top of the page.



Animal Warfare

Jim Carey examines the recent rash of calculated attacks on the RSPCA and the animal welfare movement.

By the time the Wild Mammals (Protection) Act finally came into force at the end of April, all its original clauses outlawing mammalian blood sports had been disgorged. Despite opinion polls suggesting the majority of the general public to be against mammalian blood sports, the pro-hunting lobby is extraordinarily powerful.

As one of the Bill's principle advisors, the RSPCA reconciled itself to the removal of certain clauses in order to negotiate a way around the filibuster of parliamentary opposition; so making sure that at least some mammalian anti-cruelty measures reached statute.

The pro-blood sports parliamentary lobby, spearheaded by Dr Charles Goodson-Wickes, (Conservative MP for Wimbledon and Chairman of the British Field Sports Society) also forced the removal of the word 'torture' from the Bill, worried that such wording could have been used against blood sports enthusiasts in a court of law. In replacement, the new law now makes it an offence to "cruelly kick, beat, impale, crush, burn or drown any wild mammal" but not to goad a pack of hounds to rip one apart.

However, not content with their defensive success, the British Field Sports Society (BFSS) have gone on the attack with calculated manoeuvres designed to dismember the RSPCA.

Earlier this year the BFSS requested its supporter's to seek membership of the RSPCA in order to gain the voting rights necessary to influence charity policy. As a result, the RSPCA noted an immediate blip in its membership pattern estimated at around 1,000 new members.

According to Richard Ryder, a previous Chairman of the RSPCA and now Chairman of the RSPCA's Campaigns Committee: "There were attempts in the '60s and '70s to infiltrate the RSPCA but this time they appear more organised."

Indeed, the British Field Sports Society now has a powerful new ally in the form of the Countryside Movement.

Launched last October, the Countryside Movement states its primary aim to be public education about countryside issues. However, the Movement's ruling body is in fact staffed almost entirely by top names in the pro-hunting lobby. At the first two inaugural meetings, these included Max Hastings, editor of the London Evening Standard; Earl Peel, Chairman of the Game Conservancy Trust; the Duke of Westminster, President of the Game Conservancy Trust and the British Association for Shooting and Conservation; and Hugh Van Cutsem, shoot owner and head of the Countryside Business Group (CBG). The CBG act as principle financial sponsors of the Countryside Movement, and were formerly known as the Country Sports Business Group. This group was launched by Eric Bettelheim, an American who joined the Atherstone Hunt whilst studying law at Oxford in the 1970s. He was quoted recently in a pro-hunting article in *The Spectator*: "If you can sell death in packages called cigarettes, you can sell field sports....We need to communicate the importance of the countryside and of field sports at all levels of political and public opinion....We are engaged in a struggle to influence opinion."

The Countryside Movement's Board of Directors also includes Robin Hanbury-Tenison OBE, Chief Executive of



the British Field Sports' Society and John Smith, Director of the British Association of Shooting and Conservation.

The huge advertising campaign which trumpeted the Countryside Movement's launch was orchestrated by one of the UK's top advertising agencies, Bartle, Bogle and Hegarty. The deal with Bartle's was struck by Alan Kilkenny, another key representative of the Countryside Movement. Kilkenny's experience in public relations and news manipulation includes work with Lowe Bell Associates, the PR and parliamentary consultancy started by Thatcher's ex-spin doctor Tim Bell. At the time, Bartle's was also co-ordinating the advertising campaigns of the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW). The instant IFAW became aware of the deal, they complained to Bartle's. Senior partner in the firm, James Hegarty made attempts to placate the charity by saying his company would agree not to promote fox hunting. IFAW, however, were under no illusion that the Countryside Movement would ever advertise its concealed agenda anyway, subsequently cancelling their contract. The RSPCA who were also negotiating with Bartles at the time, immediately dropped out.

One month after the Countryside Movement's launch, *Country Life* magazine published an article overtly critical of the RSPCA, suggesting the charity had been infiltrated by animal rights activists and were refusing membership to those who did not agree with such policies. Citing the article as his cause for concern, Sir David Steel MP, ex-leader of the Liberal Party and now Chairman of the Countryside Movement, wrote to the Charity Commission complaining about the RSPCA's campaigns. At the same time Viscount Astor, until recently the Parliamentary Under Secretary at the Department of National Heritage (including sports), also wrote a letter of complaint to the Commission, once again citing the allegations from the *Country Life* article. It is interesting to note that Ian Sproat MP, Viscount Astor's predecessor at the Department of National Heritage and now Minister of State in the same department, stated: "Our party remains a true friend to field sports" (Hansard 26/6/95).

In the media coverage which followed this evidently significant *Country Life* article, there was no mention that the author, Michael Sissons, is a pro-hunting journalist who was not only present at the first two inaugural meetings of the Countryside Movement but now sits on its board of directors. In the leaked minutes of the inaugural meetings, Sissons talks of "the threat of the animal rights movement to many of the traditional activities of the countryside".

The significance of the phrases 'animal rights' and 'animal welfare' is integral to the public relations war designed to discredit the entire pro-animal movement.

The RSPCA say the use of the phrase 'animal rights' has become publicly associated with images of "balaclavas and violence" and despite acknowledging such images to be largely manufactured, are keen to avoid any association.

According to Hugh Rogers from the Charity Commission: "Taking it to the extreme, animal rights activists take the welfare of animals to be supreme, regardless of any other factor involved. The reason why animal welfare charities are 'charitable' is not so much that they benefit animals, it is that by benefiting animals they also benefit man. People are suggesting that the phrase 'animal rights' presupposes an extreme activism."

Indeed, the phrase 'animal rights', once the terminology of philosophers and

environmentalists alike, has for all intents and purposes been hijacked. When Michael Sissons spoke at the Countryside Movement's meeting, asserting the "seamless nature of the animal rights movement", the implication was clear - if animal rights means 'balaclavas and violence', then so to does the whole animal welfare movement.

As Chief Press Officer at the Charity Commission, Hugh Rogers is revealing as to the source of the hijacking: "The allegations started in the *Country Life* article suggested the RSPCA was heading off towards the animal rights lobby as opposed to animal welfare and was excluding would-be members that didn't think that way, primarily the countryside lobby."

Seen in the light of this sequence of events, complaints about the 'excluding of members... primarily the countryside lobby' appear as a calculated set up. For within a month, the British Field Sports Society had placed adverts in the hunting press calling for its members and sympathisers to infiltrate the RSPCA. By suggesting to the Charity Commission that the RSPCA were already being exclusive over membership, the BFSS paved the way for its members to infiltrate the charity without being blocked. Not surprisingly the RSPCA were furious at these calculated chess moves.

"The BFSS have tried this before, they didn't succeed then and they won't now," asserts Melanie Whitehouse, the RSPCA's chief press officer. As an active response, the RSPCA have initiated a campaign aimed at encouraging its 600,000 supporters to become active members, so counter-balancing the effects of infiltration.

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an offence to "cruelly kick,
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Prompted by the letters from Sir David Steel and Viscount Astor, the Charity Commission wrote to the RSPCA asking them to answer allegations that "it has gone beyond legitimate campaigning in pursuit of its charitable objects in particular by getting involved in animal rights matters which go beyond proper animal welfare activities". As a result of this pressure, the RSPCA dropped its official 'Declaration of Animal Rights', a major part of its policy document for the last twenty years.

The RSPCA was also forced to tone down its campaign against animal experimentation.

However, in its letter back to the Commission, the RSPCA defended its right to campaign against hunting on the basis that it was a cruel practice and that any reactive campaign would therefore "raise man's moral status and outlook", a practice encouraged under charity law.

Of the 1,000 new RSPCA members thought to have resulted so far from the British Field Sports Society call to infiltrate, only around 100 joined in time to wield a vote at this June's annual meeting. However, if the trend continues, next year's meeting may well witness a repeat of the bizarre state of affairs that occurred in the '60s. During that decade the blood-sports lobby achieved such power within the RSPCA that huntsmen used to show up at the Charity's annual



meeting in jodhpurs and other hunting regalia.

"We do not like to see charities criticised unjustifiably because it beats at the whole principle of charity," says Hugh Rogers. "The Commission feels that the RSPCA is entitled to campaign in respect of the hunting of foxes with dogs because it could be argued that such activities affect unnecessary cruelty, which after all, is the whole point of the RSPCA in the first place."

However, when the Charity Commission did reply to the RSPCA it declared the dropping of the Declaration of Animal Rights to be "appropriate". It also said RSPCA membership should not exclude people with interests different to current RSPCA policy.

Interestingly, Chief Charity Commissioner, Richard Fries, says in the letter that they had written to Michael Sissons explaining the situation. However, as a freelance journalist writing in an avowedly pro-hunting magazine, why was Sissons owed any written explanation from the Charity Commission? The answer can only be found in the distinguished names sitting beside Sissons on the Countryside Movement's Board of Directors.

Meanwhile the Countryside Movement has already been successful in forcing the UK's most established animal welfare charity to curb its campaigning activities and go on the defensive. With the highly publicised campaigns over live animal exports and the recently manifest effects of intensive farming on animals (BSE), animal welfare has grown as a public issue. The vested interests harmed by these changes in public attitudes are, unsurprisingly, not amused. The RSPCA, as the most well known animal welfare charity in the UK, has consequently become the major target of those with market interests hindered by the animal welfare movement.

According to Richard Ryder: "The RSPCA may be seen to pose a major threat to commercial interests - pharmaceutical and cosmetic companies using animal experimentation, the agriculture industry with its factory farming and live animal exports, the hunting lobby and the fur trade - they have all become more alarmed by the recent increase in the effectiveness of the animal welfare movement."

Andrew Testa

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Karen Robinson

Sam Beale
uncovers an
unlikely alliance
between church
groups and
squatters,
providing
support for
people caught at
the sharp end of
new asylum and
immigration
legislation.

In February 1996 a loose affiliation of squatters, activists, church groups and concerned individuals, tentatively met to discuss the occupation of a building in Hackney. They called themselves ARCH (Autonomous Refugee Centre, Hackney) and hoped the meeting would form the basis of a practical campaign against Government changes to Social Security regulations for refugees and asylum seekers, as well as the upcoming Asylum & Immigration Bill (A&IB).

Chris Locke of ARCH explains: "We wanted to provide homes for refugees affected by the Social Security changes. On the way we found lots of other stuff to do; ranging from getting decent solicitors for people to finding them clothes and food." Warren, another member of ARCH, states the group's intention to create alternative solutions: "We understand these people are alienated, some come from war zones and oppressive regimes to the big city. Providing bedding, conversation and a good meal is enough to give the basis of what they need; the dignity to keep their sanity and keep on living."

ARCH subsequently squatted an empty magistrates court in Stoke Newington to provide immediate shelter and publicise the legislation.

The new Social Security regulations mean any asylum seekers applying for asylum 'in country', ie after they have entered the country rather than at their port of entry, are no longer entitled to any benefits. (Currently around 70 per cent of asylum seekers apply after they have entered the country. 80 per cent of these within the first week). Similar rules apply to those appealing against an asylum refusal. According to a recent report by the Campaign for Racial Equality, the impact of these changes is inescapable and includes: "Increased hardship, poverty and further exclusion for an already marginalised group."

Debbie Young is a member of the Prisoners of Conscience Appeal Fund (PoC), a small organisation which finds funds for the basic needs of refugees persecuted for non-violent expression. Her main fear is that: "the most vulnerable and traumatised refugees are

coming through, not making in-country applications and not getting to agencies like the Refugee Council because they don't want to deal with any sort of officialdom whatsoever".

People who have been persecuted, imprisoned or tortured, who have narrowly escaped death under oppressive regimes or witnessed the murder of family, friends or colleagues, are likely to have a lingering suspicion of authority of any sort. Many would rather take the risk of staying here illegally than place their fate in the hands of officials and face possible deportation. Debbie Young explains: "We contacted ARCH to ensure that those refugees within our remit who decided to squat would not slip through the net and miss out on a PoC grant."

"This is a time for alliance between all sections of the community to help these people cope. The idea that they're squatting is irrelevant. This is about basic human survival."

ARCH are learning on their feet, offering to take people to Law Centres as well as finding funds, food, and language courses. Volunteers have been working alongside the Churches Refugee Network (CRN), a group set up in Hackney in 1989 to deal with an influx of Kurdish refugees.

Revd Lance Stone, Pastor of the United Reformed Church in Stoke Newington, has direct experience of providing food and shelter for Kurdish refugees: "This is a Government policy which says the way to happy race relations is to keep black people out, which is a bit like saying the way to stop mugging is to keep people in their homes or the way to stop rape is to make sure women don't go out at night. This is a dying Government's last kick, trying to engender some kind of popular support from a racist population."

His congregation has, through referrals from the CRN, allowed asylum seekers and refugees to sleep in their church: "I think the most humanising stuff goes on where people just take responsibility outside institutions and structures. I think the squatters are wonderful. They get things done. I have been humbled and

amazed by the work they are doing."

Revd Stone has attended countless meetings on this issue: "There's an awful lot of talk about politics and mobilising the community which is great rhetoric. And there is a serious job of consciousness raising to be done, I don't deny that. But at the end of the day somebody has to deal with the fact that there's a refugee on the street who needs a bed and food."

Lance Stone organised his congregation to provide food, baths and other support, a responsibility now aided by the ARCH collective. "It's just insane to have properties vacant when there's people in this kind of need. We would always try to find accommodation other than squatting if it was available," he says.

Warren of ARCH describes the churches as "a vital link in the chain". The unlikely alliance between the Church and the squatters is, he says, "a very youthful relationship. We find ourselves on equal footing in as much as we are blindly going into something that needs a lot of work". Chris Locke agrees: "It is weird but it seems to be working out."

For squatters this is a simple extension of the logic of turning empty buildings into homes. Here are people in a strange country with very simple and urgent needs: somewhere to live and something to eat. Here is a borough with a record for keeping properties empty and here are some activists willing to crack a few buildings. Simple.

However, not all the agencies dealing with the rapidly rising number of destitute refugees accept this. The Refugee Council who have seen and referred around 400 people affected by the new legislation since February has a clear policy on squatting.

Richard Lumley, Housing Advisor on their National Development Team, told Squall: "We will not work directly with squatting groups. As a charity it is not something we can get involved in." Even when presented with a situation of either referring someone to ARCH or sending them onto the streets, this position would not change: "If we knew of vacancies in a squat we would not send people to them," said Lumley.

Billy McKenna from Shelter adopted a

Desperately seeking asylum

similar line: "As a registered charity, Shelter could not support any action which would encourage the breaking of any law." Reminded that squatting is not actually illegal he said: "No, but with the CJA it does push very near the line."

Subject to restrictions on charities, image-bound by conservative funders and caught up in time-consuming bureaucracies, many official organisations keep their efforts strictly within the mainstream.

Meanwhile in a Stoke Newington pub, a week or so after the eviction of the courthouse, two ARCH volunteers stroll in with a couple of young refugees; Varben from Cosovo in former Yugoslavia and Antonio from the Angolan enclave of Cabinda. Present in the pub that night are members of ARCH, planning to

squat an empty house for the new arrivals to live in. One of the volunteers is also taking them swimming the next day: a far cry from an overcrowded hostel in the West End, where nobody has the time to think beyond the barest necessities.

Varben and Antonio have very different histories and different reasons for being in London. Antonio, a doctor from Cabinda, tells his story: "I left because of the civil war. I was afraid I would be killed. I had many problems because I was treating people from all the different parties who are at war. Some parties didn't like me helping all sides but I am a doctor, I must help anyone who needs it. They put me in prison for a long time. Then I escaped and came here." Antonio had no idea he had to apply for asylum as soon as he arrived and is currently waiting for the Home Office to process his asylum application. On average this takes nine months.

Varben hitch-hiked to England in a lorry from Macedonia: "When I got to London I slept out on the streets at Victoria Station for three days. I met an African who told me to go to the Home Office." Varben says there were at least ten other refugees sleeping at Victoria whilst he was there: "I don't know what happened to them, they didn't speak English." The Refugee Council referred him to a hostel for five days and then on to a church. He believes that squatting is a logical solution: "Why have houses empty? Why have people sleeping in the church?" He is looking forward to an English course organised for him by ARCH and the CRN. He too awaits a Home Office decision.

Meanwhile ARCH ensure asylum seekers

understand what squatting entails, whilst also being acutely aware of the need to ensure the legality of any building in which they are housed because of the vulnerability of their situation.

The reluctance of official agencies to work with squatters is maddening. The reasons are clear enough but there is little sense in, as Chris Locke says, "blanking squatting completely". ARCH has the experience and the political will to

provide time, support and buildings. With the support of 'respected' organisations, a little co-ordination and some intelligently directed cash, real differences could be made to thousands of shattered lives.

Such a move does require an imaginative and ideological leap for many 'legitimate'

organisations. But faced with the sort of crisis predicted once the A&IB becomes law, what choice is there?

This is not scaremongering. Predictions for the effects of the passing of the Asylum Bill are grim. These people will quickly fill already overburdened hostels whilst Debbie Young is convinced that within a few months the "churches will not be able to cope with the numbers".

Empty properties, particularly council properties, are an obvious solution. The work currently going on in Hackney is a precedent for positive responses to unspeakable legislation. To ignore it is blind arrogance. If no-one will co-operate with them it will be a slog, but have no doubt, the squatters will carry on regardless. They know it makes sense and they have been marginalised and misrepresented for too long to be deterred by the prospect anymore. As Revd Lance Stone says: "This is a desperate situation and desperate situations require imaginative initiatives."

ARCH is desperately in need of cash.

Donations c/o: 2 St Pauls Rd, London N1 2QN.

Refugee support contacts:

ARCH c/o Squash: 0171 226 8938

Churches Refugee Network: 0171 241 6646

Prisoners of Conscience Appeal Fund: 0171 328 0153

Hackney Migrant & Refugee Support Group:

0171 533 7111

Medical Foundation for the Victims of Torture:

0171 813 7777

Refugee Council: 0171 582 6922

Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants:

0171 251 8706



The Asylum & Immigration Bill and Social Security Amendments:

A brief history

- In 1993 the Asylum & Immigration Appeals Act was introduced accompanied by alarmist media reports of 'bogus refugees'. It tightened the criteria for gaining asylum and led to the development of a 'culture of disbelief': a disturbing trend whereby asylum seekers are assumed to be lying about their reasons for seeking asylum unless they can produce proof.
- 1993 also saw the introduction of a fast-track system which meant that any asylum seeker who had passed through a third country on their way to the UK could be arbitrarily returned to that country without regard to individual circumstances and without any guarantee that the third country in question was any more likely to offer asylum than the UK.
- In May 1995 the Government introduced a pilot scheme for quick decisions on 'in-country' applications. Applicants from named countries (including Nigeria, Romania and Ghana) were given a short interview to determine their eligibility. The Home Office has confirmed that under this scheme 100 per cent of applicants were refused asylum.
- In 1990, 17.5 per cent of asylum applications were refused, by 1995 this had risen to 79 per cent.
- The Government claims this shows a rise in 'bogus' claimants. However, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees states: "A country's recognition rate of refugees may more often reflect the narrowness or liberalness of that State's application of the refugee definition than the legitimacy or otherwise of individual's claims."

Asylum & Immigration Bill

- The Bill provides a 'fast track' appeal mechanism for rejected applicants whose cases are deemed unfounded including those from a new 'white list' of supposedly 'safe' countries.
- Applicants from this white list of countries will almost automatically be presumed to be 'bogus' claimants, regardless of individual circumstances. The Bill will also abolish the existing right to appeal prior to expulsion in cases where an applicant arrives in Britain via a third country. Chain removals of people from one country to another, including to those with seriously deficient asylum procedures are inevitable.
- Both the White List and the Third Country policies are drawn directly from European Union agreements drawn up in secret by a European Steering Group. This is contrary to Michael Howard's pledge to his party conference in 1995 that immigration policy would be "decided here... not in Brussels." None of the EU documents in question have been debated by British Parliament.
- The Home Office takes, on average, nine months to reach an initial decision on asylum claims. During that time applicants are now unable to physically support themselves. The backlog of applicants awaiting decisions rose to 85,000 in March this year.
- The Government has made no provision for people affected by these changes. Other European countries, some with traditionally harsher immigration policies than the UK, have at least provided reception centres, ensuring accommodation and basic needs, whilst claims and appeals are pending.

Substance abuse:

Dr Corson's and Dr Stoughton's hand-held hazard

CS spray could soon become standard police issue in the UK, despite one suspected death and mounting complaints of serious injury. **Shaun Trevisick** investigates the dubious history of this supposedly safe chemical. Picture by **Paul Mattsson**

"CS spray has been used in Northern Ireland for years and fears about its use are a load of rubbish" Sgt. Len Watts in the Medway Standard, 12/3/96

On March 1st trials of hand-held CS gas sprays, involving 16 police forces, were finally given the go-ahead by Michael Howard. On the same day the National Black Caucus announced that the first man to die of the spray would be a black man.

Scarcely over two weeks later, Ibrahima Sey, a 29-year old Gambian-born asylum seeker, died whilst handcuffed in police custody. Although he had been sprayed by CS gas the authorities continue to deny any connection between the chemical and his death.

The chemical agent orthochloro-benzylidene malononitrile, is commonly called CS after Drs Corson and Stoughton refined it at the Government's secretive Chemical Defence Establishment at Porton Down in the early 1960s. It has a long history of use and abuse.

In its latest incarnation, it has become a hand-held spray, designed to incapacitate violent or armed assailants by acting on the mucous membranes of the eyes, nose and throat and inducing streaming eyes, coughing, sneezing, and occasionally, vomiting. It is supposedly 'safe' but research in medical journals has linked CS to dermatitis, second-degree burns, respiratory problems, and at high enough doses fatal pulmonary oedema (flooding of the lungs). Asthma sufferers may be particularly vulnerable, and in some cases it may cause an allergic reaction. There is also some debate as to its effectiveness since, in subjects under the influence of drugs such as alcohol and cocaine, it could have a reduced or delayed effect.

CS gas gained notoriety in 1968 when the media discovered it was being supplied by Britain to the US Army for use in Vietnam where it was thought responsible for an escalation in deaths. The scandal forced the Secretary of State to concede that "in no circumstances should it be used to assist in the

control of disturbances". Yet not only had it already been used for precisely such purposes in some of Britain's erstwhile colonies, including Cyprus and British Guyana, but the very next year it was being used to stifle disturbances in Derry and Belfast. In response to the public outcry the Government commissioned the Himsworth report. Whilst acknowledging certain health risks up to and including death, the report concluded that the doses required were so much higher than that found in the gas being used in Northern Ireland that it did not constitute a significant health risk. Nevertheless CS gas has not been used in the province since. Not so on the mainland. In 1981 Chief Constable (now Sir) Kenneth Oxford authorised its use as a response to three nights of rioting in Toxteth, Liverpool. Afterwards controversy over injuries caused by the use of CS 'Ferret' cartridges - shot from 12-bore shotguns and normally only used for siege situations - culminated in Oxford's acknowledgement that such cartridges should never be used again to deal with public disorder. However, CS gas in one form or another still remained in police stores, and was even being carried by police during the notorious 'Battle of the Beanfield' in 1985. As a 'non-lethal' weapon it is also still being approved for export to countries such as Nigeria, where the military regime continues to use it in their ongoing repression of the Ogoni people.

The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) approved the French-made Alcotex CS spray in January, after a delay in preliminary trials last November. Howard announced his support of the ACPO approval in March. By strange symmetry it more or less coincided with the rather contradictory news that the Police Federation had overwhelmingly voted against being armed, and that the latest figures for assaults on police actually showed a decrease. All this was lost amid Howard's tabloid justifications.

It has become apparent that the delay, originally dubbed obliquely as a 'problem over health



and safety', actually involved a legal action by three police officers whose injuries from the trials included severe retinal blistering and facial burns. Rather than fading in hours, symptoms have persisted for weeks or even months. Liability for injury caused by the spray has now become a contentious issue, with one Chief Constable, Ted Crew, banning his CS spray instructors from training officers outside his own force because he does not want to be liable in any civil claim resulting from its (mis)use.

There is mounting evidence of the reality behind Ted Crew's fears. On March 26th, following a fight outside a club in Bromborough, CS was sprayed into a coach and police would not allow passengers to

... the police have clearly been breaching their own rules.

leave it or even open the doors for ventilation. As a consequence, David Aveyard, the angry father of one of the occupants, is co-ordinating an action against the police. Other notable cases of abuse include its use on a man to "calm him down" during the evacuation of a club in Shropshire and the spraying of another man in police cells. Wolverhampton police used CS on a community worker whilst attempting to detain a 16-year-old girl outside a community centre.

According to the human rights organisation Liberty, who have obtained a copy of ACPO's confidential guidelines on its use, the police have clearly been breaching their own rules. The guidelines state that the spray is issued to provide officers with a "tactical advantage" when "dealing with violent subjects who cannot otherwise be restrained". How on earth can this include handcuffed detainees such as Ibrahima Sey?

According to Walter G. Hyzer, a US expert interviewed by The Yorkshire Post, the sprays carry "a very high risk of serious injury" because their five per cent solution of the chemical is "too high a strength of CS". Further, the solvent (methyl isobutyl ketone) used in the sprays to activate the CS is itself dangerous because it is flammable. According to a confidential memo leaked to the paper and dated last May, Dr Jill Tan of the Police Scientific Development Branch warned of eye and respiratory damage, especially at ranges shorter than the recommended minimum of three metres between spray nozzle

and assailant. She also warns of a form of asphyxia caused to those handcuffed and laid on their front. It has since been revealed by the magazine Statewatch that Tan herself has been injured by the sprays.

Another danger identified by the Himsworth report was the possibility of permanent lung damage being caused to individuals who had built up a superficial tolerance to the more obvious symptoms of CS. This surely raises question regarding the long-term health effects on the police themselves.

According to ACPO's press release, the replacement of CS sprays by oleoresin capsicum (OC) or pepper spray, used in the US, has "not been ruled out". Although promoted as 'organic' pepper sprays are far from safe. Since 1990, pepper spray has been a contributing factor in the deaths of over 60 people in US police custody. The American Civil Liberties Union has undertaken a major study of its use in California and found "racially disproportionate deployment of OC by the LAPD" as well as a link between pepper spray, various 'restraint' holds and deaths in custody. More startlingly it has since become public that the head of the FBI's 'Less Than Lethal Weapons Programme', Thomas WW Ward, who was instrumental in approving OC for national police use, did so after taking a substantial bribe from a multinational chemical manufacturer.

Despite short notice and little publicity, hundreds of people turned up to a memorial demonstration outside Ilford police station shortly after Ibrahima Sey's death. Among the many banners one stood out ominously: "You can fuck your weapons amnesty!" Piara Powar, a spokesman for the Newham Monitoring Project, a local campaign group who helped organise the march, was not surprised by the reaction. Although there is a growing body of evidence to support the family's claim against the police, he doubts anything will come out of the enquiry. Speaking to Squall he said: "No officer has ever been dismissed for racism and recent history suggests that just like the killing of Brian Douglas - which involved the new truncheons - this will be another whitewash. The police will never be accountable so long as they continue to investigate their own misdeeds. The officers will get off scott-free with yet another weapon at their disposal."

The Civil Liberties Trust is currently running a CS spray monitoring project and would like to hear from anyone who has been subjected to the spray. Contact: The Civil Liberties Trust, 21 Tabard Street, London SE1 4LA.



Consultation Excorcise

The Asylum and Immigration Bill and associated Social Security changes

- **Amnesty International:** "[The Bill] stems directly from a secretive - and therefore undemocratic - process aimed at the creation of a common, restrictive European Union asylum policy." In addition Amnesty fears that "most EU governments seem increasingly preoccupied with reducing the number of refugees and asylum-seekers allowed to enter their territory, rather than with ensuring respect for the fundamental principles of refugee protection."
- **Refugee Council:** "If the Government wants to reduce costs, it should introduce a fair and efficient method of determining asylum applications, based on humanitarian principles."
- **Church of Scotland:** "The asylum system is permeated with harshness." The Church urges "Church members to oppose legislation that supports this system" including helping those facing deportation. It has also opened up Churches for refugees
- **Prisoners of Conscience:** "The effects of the new social security regulations are creating an emergency situation. In about October there will be an explosion of people who have made in-country applications."
- **Social Security Advisory Committee:** in its report to Social Security Secretary Peter Lilley categorically stated that the draft regulations were "arbitrary and unjust" and would have "drastic and unwelcome consequences" for "some of the most vulnerable and defenceless in our society". They advised "faster and more efficient asylum procedures" instead
- Nadir Dinshaw, **Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants:** "The Social Security Regulations and...Asylum & Immigration Bill are two particularly squalid acts of a particularly squalid Government."
- **The Bishop of Liverpool,** David Sheppard: "A major motive in introducing this bill was to run up a signal that Britain has a harsh regime which will make it difficult for asylum seekers to find refuge here; in other words, to stop them applying at all."



Lessons of the 1990
Strangeways riots were largely
heeded and, for three years,
prison began to have more
humane regimes. Then
Howard took charge...
Keith Mann talked to **Andy
Johnson** about his experiences
of the changes.

A part from the odd farmhouse, only one building disturbs the bleak but majestic countryside surrounding the city of York - Full Sutton maximum security prison.

It is a sleek, low, red-brick slab of a building, circumferenced with a perimeter wall, and home to IRA members, sex offenders and murderers.

It is here that animal rights activist Keith Mann, guilty of criminal damage, has spent the greater part of his unjust eleven year sentence. (See Squall 12 for a full account).

Over the last six months, Keith told Squall, life in Full Sutton has become "stricter and harsher all round".

The new 'austerity' measures are the work of one Michael Howard, Secretary of State for the Home Office, who now presides over the largest prison population this country has ever seen.

"No-one has escaped from here, ever," Keith told Squall. "It's a flagship prison. That's why the new austere system is happening here first."

Howard's "prison works" policy is based, as the name implies, on his belief that punishment and custodial sentences are the only ways to cut crime.

In the words of Stephen Tumin, the former Chief Inspector of Prisons, Howard's policy amounts to "being fierce to prisoners".

That the number of prisoners should rise to record levels under Howard is perhaps not surprising, considering his reputation.

What is surprising is that he alone should be responsible for the magnitude of his so called 'prison reforms'.

Only once before has the prison population breached the 50,000 mark - in 1987.

Then growing discontent behind prison walls culminated in the Strangeways riot of 1990. This led to a review of the prison system by Lord Justice Woolf and the Woolf Report, heralded by penal reformers. Its recommendations, founded on the principle that prison security rests as much on dignity and respect as locks and chains, was adopted practically in full by the Government.

Even Douglas Hurd, Home Secretary until 1989, described prisons as "an expensive way of making bad people worse". (Hurd's 1991 Criminal Justice Act was designed to keep petty offenders out of prison).

In the three years that Howard has been prison overlord all this has been undone.

While introducing austerity measures to make prisons less inviting, he has clamped down on bail, parole, cautions, home leave and early release. At the same time he has upped the number of custodial

sentences for petty offenders, such as debtors and tax dodgers.

Moves are afoot, in Howard's current white (consultation) paper to severely cut remission for good behaviour.

All this is despite his own department's research showing that prison does not cut crime (see box).

Full Sutton is a 45 minute bus ride out of York. It comes into view from the middle of nowhere and its eeriness is only augmented by the housing estate, complete with satellite dishes, that lies within its perimeter walls.

These are the homes of the prison warders who, according to Keith, have nothing to do all day except unlock locks and say "no".

Visitors are greeted by signs warning them they may have to undergo a strip search before they can enter the building. This, the signs say, is not to cast any suspicion. But visitors who refuse will only be allowed a "closed visit" which takes place in a separate room with prisoner and visitor separated by a panel of glass.

A corner stone of Howard's austere policy is to clamp down on drug use in prisons.

Ten percent of the prison population must be tested for drugs, by giving a urine sample, every month. Those who refuse receive seven days "compulsory confinement" and up to 28 days can be added to their sentence.

The results of this policy, as has been pointed out by many letters to the mainstream press by prisoners, is likely to be an increase in heroin use. Heroin remains in the blood system for two days. Cannabis for around 28 days. The odds of giving a positive sample for heroin are therefore much less.

When Squall visited Keith, who expects to serve about four more years, he said in Full Sutton there are now "dedicated search teams" - dedicated to finding illicit drugs. They wear dark blue boiler suits and carry silver briefcases.

At 7.30am one morning they threw Keith out of his cell - which is eight foot by twelve foot - and spent the next two days searching it.

"Six months ago you had to be present in your cell during a search, now they take you away," Keith said. "They have fibre optic cameras for looking down the sink and access to all your personal and legal papers. There's no way they can justify two days searching a cell except to read your papers which have been through censorship already."

It is only personal mail that goes through prison censorship, legal documents are not supposed to be seen by prison staff.

"They were supposed to be searching for drugs and instead they took all the papers away and read them in the TV lounge," Keith said.

During the search Keith was locked in a single cell for the day -

HOWARD TURNS THE SCREWS

unable to attend any education classes.

"The last occupant cut his wrists," said Keith. "He was a sex offender. When I got there there was blood in the sink. There was nothing to do all day except sit and read a book."

The search team also took down all of the pictures on Keith's wall.

"The cell was covered in pictures," he said. "Except the outside wall in case they think you're digging a hole behind the posters. Some people have lovely cells, but they don't like that," he adds.

Despite strip searches, squatting over mirrors (to check for hidden substances) and sanctions for using drugs - which include "closed visits" (an open visit is like chatting to someone in a canteen) - Keith says it isn't going to stop drug use.

"They don't like people having any quality of life," he says. "They don't like you having any home comforts. There are going to be prisons full of people who refuse to piss to order."

In a report on prison security, commissioned following the IRA escapes from Parkhurst and Whitemoor, Sir John Learmont, according to Keith, recommended that all prisoners should have televisions in their cells. Howard vetoed this idea and ordered that TVs should be removed from cells in the jails that did have them, such as Strangeways which introduced them after the riots.

Because Keith is in prison for a matter of conscience, he is kept busy answering the hundreds of letters sent to him, writing articles and has just completed a book.

"If I was in my cell for 24 hours a day I wouldn't have enough

time to do everything," he says. "TV is too much of a distraction for me. But for other people with nothing else to do it would take their minds off things. People wouldn't have to smoke or get out of their heads."

Another part of the "austere" system is a sanctions system.

Everything a prisoner needs, such as toiletries, comes from the

Ten per cent of the prison population must be tested for drugs... The result of this policy is likely to be an increase in the use of heroin.

prison "canteen" or shop. (Until 12 months ago toiletries - important in Keith's case who uses only cruelty free products - could be ordered from outside the prison. Not any more. "It's a performance every time," says Keith).

Before, says Keith, you could spend what you wanted up to £15.00 a week which is earned from work carried out in the prison.

Now there are three 'tiers'. If a prisoner's status is 'enhanced', ie their behaviour is considered good and they haven't refused to do anything, they can spend £15.00. If their status is 'standard' then they can spend £10.00, if 'basic' they can only spend £2.50 a week on essential items.

The tier system also translates

to the number of visits a prisoner is allowed each month. Enhanced prisoners are entitled to four visits a month, standard three, basic two.

"The tiers here have only just been introduced," Keith says. "It's divide and rule. I'm entitled to four visits a month, the bloke over there is only on two."

Another part of the new regime is the banning of phone cards.

"Now you have to submit 20 phone numbers maximum and they have to be cleared by security," says Keith. "They want to know who you are phoning, exactly what's happening. Some people won't use the phone now. It takes three months to change a phone number. So, for example, you can't phone somebody who's just been taken to hospital."

There are other petty annoyances visited on prisoners. Prisoners can be moved at any time without their property. "You get it six months later, if you're lucky," says Keith. They can't be sent books or magazines.

According to Keith, a book has to be ordered from the prison and normally takes six months to arrive because order forms go missing.

Everything has to be applied for, whether it's for a shelf on the cell wall or gym on Tuesdays.

"It's all about money," says Keith. "More and more money is going into security and retribution. There's satisfaction there. Nothing else matters. Education is being cut, the food is getting crap - basic and cheaper. It's a stricter, harsher, prison regime all round."

Keith isn't going back to prison. He says he's been given a "role" and a "mission". People want to listen to him now. With 14 years for a first offence he has to avoid ever being arrested again.

Prison facts

- The prison population currently stands at over 54,000 and rising. The highest figure ever.
- Since Howard became Home Secretary the prison population has risen at a rate of around 300 per month.
- Home office research shows that to cut crime by one per cent it would be necessary to raise the prison population by 26 per cent.
- Howard's current policy proposals would necessitate the building of 16 new prisons, costing £60 million each.
- The average cost of keeping someone in prison for one year is £23,000.
- The average cost of keeping a remand prisoner in a police cell is £251 per person per night.

He is also at pains to point out that conditions in prisons should not deter activists from doing what they think is right.

"If you're here for the right reasons," he says, "it's easy. It's nothing to be scared of. You can live with it. The difficult part is the decision to go there."

But he can understand how people get sucked into the prison system for good: "It (prison) makes you worse. If you can't get them inside you get them outside by being more against the system. It's so easy to get into this system and never get out. There was one guy doing three years in Strangeways for shoplifting. He got involved in the riots and is now doing 13 years for rioting."

"The punishment is loss of freedom," he adds. "That's supposed to be it. The be all and end all."



Nick Cobbing

Britain's inequitous class system is dead and poverty no longer exists. At least according to Prince Edward and Peter Lilley.

Jim Paton begs to differ...

Free advice has been plentiful lately. We've had the wisdom of Peter Lilley on poverty (it's only relative; let them watch videos), then the Arrogist Formerly Known as Prince Edward scythes through the complexity of Britain's class structure (which, he says, no longer exists), explaining the abundant opportunities available to us all.

The stunning lack of relevant experience available to these glib pontificators was pointed out, but columnists in liberal newspapers are often not familiar with the realities of living on the edge themselves, and it showed. For them, poverty is something to be researched, analysed, maybe agonised over, but never experienced. As a result, they largely conceded Lilley's delusions about relative and absolute poverty without a whimper. A person defined as poor in this country, the pundits averred, has a water supply, clothes to wear and food to eat. They probably have a clapped-out TV, or even - manna from heaven - a video! Also, when compared with a landless urban refugee in Brazil or Mozambique, or a Sahel nomad, people in Britain are only relatively poor, we were told.

So the attack on Lilley was effectively confined to his neglect of "social exclusion", ie in our affluent society, a poor person may have the essentials of life but is excluded from full participation. To quote some of the examples cited, "socially excluded persons can't pay for their children's school trips or take them to McDonalds".

What was loftily unseen by the commentators and their theories of relativity is the growing, gnawing presence of what - in anyone's book - can only be called absolute poverty. People who regularly go hungry, sometimes for days on end, so their children can eat and survive in absolute, not relative, poverty. The situation is common, but those facing it don't write many letters to The Guardian: 45 pence pays for a pound or two of spuds.

The boundaries of absolute poverty vary from one society to another, depending on factors such as climate and what you can scavenge for nothing or next to it. In Britain, discarded TVs, videos and many other consumer goods can be had from skips and tickled up. They signify very little. What can't be scavenged so easily is the fuel needed to stay warm through a British winter. Lilley's "safety net" should fool nobody. If you're old or ill as well as poor, you dread the winter and may not survive it. That's absolute poverty. A corner flat in a Newcastle tower block, or a place where the water some other people don't have is running down the walls, costs a lot more to heat than a flat in the middle of a London mansion block. That's just tough. Since the "safety net" isn't relative, the result is absolute poverty.

Then there's housing. The lack of it is both more visible and more intractable than the lack of food or fuel, yet homelessness apparently struck none of the pundits as one of the prime examples of absolute poverty. Without a

Poverty knocks

home, a video is academic. The housing deficit is spiralling, with around a million new homes needed over the next 10 years. Even the Government admits to at least 650,000, but their main response has been to organise a coterie of well-salaried housing associations to borrow more and more money from their friends in the city, whilst restricting access to homes for those who are poorest even further. This produces only a fraction of the housing needed, and some of it is not really new but simply buildings tarted up with borrowed money after the eviction of even more disadvantaged people. They also trumpet private renting as a housing provider, but this is actually a mechanism dragging people into poverty, whilst the insecurity and stress it engenders saps the spirit and breaks some people completely.

It is heading for collapse anyway. If the present pick-up in the housing “market” continues, it will once again become more advantageous to sell homes, rather than rent them, and thousands will be evicted. New Labour promises no more than minor tweaks to the same old nostrums. In a year or two, no doubt, they’ll be the ones telling us that people skipping or living on the streets are only “relatively” poor.

However, one factor is relative. It’s pointless to consider poverty without taking stock of what opportunities we have to improve our situation by our own efforts. This is where young Prince Eddie couldn’t be more wrong.

In European countries - and this one in particular - the opportunities for self-help action to improve our circumstances by our own efforts are painfully few and always meet official opposition. Not only is there a battery of planning laws and a hostile bureaucracy geared to serving the needs of business and government at the expense of homes and other needs, but self-help is being increasingly criminalised in an attempt to drive the DIY culture off the map. They’ve even set the Anti-Terrorist Squad on us now!

Contrast this with the situation in many of the countries where nobody would dispute there is absolute poverty. The very

poorest people in many cities, who have no other option but to live on the streets, often start where they are and with the little they’ve got and build their own housing on land nobody else is using. At first, it is flimsy and inadequate. Certainly, after the police have torn down their homes, but when people persist the state often sees no point in spending more and more money to prevent people providing for themselves what it cannot. From that point on, people begin improving their homes over time. A study of the creation of *barriadas* in Peru in the ’60s estimated that, on average, it took ten years to progress from little

lots of energy and ideas. At its best, squatting has enabled us to wrest more control over our circumstances and taught us how to respect and work with each other. It has done more for the common good than bucketloads of council planning, “community development”, social work or law enforcement.

This year is the 50th anniversary of probably the biggest squatting movement ever in Britain - the camp squatters of 1946 - who took over disused airfields and military bases in large numbers, improvising an organisation that forced State recognition of people’s needs and the common sense of how

many other pressing needs.

The recent Land Is Ours occupation in Wandsworth took an opportunity we’re not allowed to have in reclaiming one of these critical urban spaces and demonstrating practical ways of meeting those needs - needs which fall beneath the gaze of Peter Lilley, as he spies homelessness from distant foreign shores.

What about Lilley n’Eddie’s other pals at the levers of power and influence? The UK was not only a signatory to Agenda 21 at the 1992 Rio Earth Summit, but an apparently enthusiastic one. It says governments should have: “...an enabling approach to shelter development and improvement that is environmentally sound”. And it gets more specific: “All countries should as appropriate, support the shelter efforts of the urban and rural poor, the unemployed and the no-income group by adopting and/or adapting existing codes and regulations, to facilitate their access to land, finance and low-cost building materials and by actively promoting the regularisation and upgrading of informal settlements and urban slums as an expedient measure and pragmatic solution to the urban shelter deficit.”

Now take a deep breath. The actual point of Lilley’s “relative poverty” rant was to say the UK doesn’t need to bother about any of that! We know different and we’re getting on with it.

All we can say to Lilley n’Eddie etc. is what the Diggers said to the government when they started their pioneering occupation in 1649:

“We are made to hold forth this Declaration to you, the great Council, that you may know what we would have and what you are bound to give us by your covenants and promises, and that you may joyn with us in this work and so find peace. Or else, if you do oppose us, we have peace in our work and in declaring this report and you shall be left without excuse.”

ⓈⓆ

Picture opposite: Finishing the roof of the communal roundhouse at Wandsworth Land Occupation.

If you’re old or ill as well as poor, you dread the winter and may not survive it. That’s absolute poverty.

more than screens of matting to soundly constructed houses with electricity and sewerage. This was achieved not by the investment of money - there was hardly any - but by the investment of peoples’ time, energy, ingenuity and co-operation.

Settlements of this sort have multiplied in recent years, and millions are involved. They mean that marginalised people who would be burning their cities if they were in Europe or the USA, are building instead. Far from suffering “social exclusion”, the experience is one of intense dialogue and the forging of a strong collective spirit of justified pride as settlements are developed and administered by the people who have created them.

In this country, squatting has been a much more slender thread of DIY action down the years, well before anyone even thought of the term. People have not only solved their own housing problems but have sometimes gone on to widen their lives, and their communities in a bewildering variety of ways.

Since the ’60s, squatting has provided an almost unique meeting ground where some of the most disadvantaged people around have joined with others who’ve had - at least for now - very little money, but

they had set about meeting them. When State opposition and repression failed, all they could do was start co-operating with what was going on! Like more recent squatting movement, the 1946 squatters comprised a very wide range of people, “from tinkers to academics” as one commentator observed.

The DIY culture of the ’90s is actually in an old - and increasingly recognised - tradition. It’s as much about building what we need as stopping the DoT building what we don’t need. One of the things we need most is land to live on; homes, in other words. We know we can build them if we can prise out the chance to get on with it. We know we can do a lot more for pennies than the state can for millions. Above all, we can build communities which are good places to live, which enhance wider neighbourhoods and enrich people’s lives. Yet huge areas of vacant land in all our cities, much of it blighted in the ’80s, are now being snapped up again by developers for superstores, retail warehouses and homes which only the rich can afford - the very land which is the only hope for homes for those who don’t have them, as well as for

Thousands of acres
lie empty in our
cities waiting for
supermarkets,
luxury flats and
business parks. In
May, 500 activists
reclaimed a portion.
Pictures by
Nick Cobbing



AGGRACULTURAL TRESPASS



Almost immediately after arriving on 13.5 acres of prime but derelict urban wasteland, 500 activists began transforming the skyline.

Yurts, benders, solar showers, an octagonal wooden meeting place and a geodesic dome took their place amongst the surrounding angular architecture - and created something a little different to the earmarked supermarket and luxury flats.

In the seven years since Guinness bought the site, fronting the River Thames in Wandsworth, South London, it has lain empty.

The activists were drawing attention to the number of similarly abused sites in the country. Five per cent of London alone is wasteland - an area the size of Westminster Borough.

Meanwhile 600,000 people have no home and the green belt is eaten away.

The occupation, began on Sunday May 5, marking the fiftieth anniversary of the largest squatting movement this country has seen. In 1946 thousands of homeless demobilised servicemen reclaimed their empty barracks, moved in their families, and forced the then (Labour) government to act.

Wandsworth was not chosen by accident, although such was the organisation that, come any problems, the occupation could have ended up in any one of four alternative venues.

Key organiser Ernest Rodker, a Wandsworth resident and campaigner for 24 years, (who spent most of the first day building a compost toilet) told Squall that Wandsworth sees itself in the "vanguard of efficiency".

This, he explained, means keeping the council tax low at the expense of grants, services, open spaces and community facilities.

The flagship Tory council has raised £500 million from selling property, flats and land (including a popular city farm two years ago that still lies derelict) and pumped the lot into keeping their council tax amongst the lowest in the country.

"For a hundred years or more there were warehouses along here where local people worked but who never saw the river or had a view," he said. "The factories go and they get an area not open to the public and houses they can't afford."

For now at least, this area is open to the public and the land reclaimed.

The Essential Yes

We all want safe food, clean water, warm houses, and a sense of belonging : so let's be having them!

Paul Allen, from the Centre for Alternative Technology tells us how.

Back in the early seventies Peter Harper first coined the phrase 'alternative technology' to describe human behaviour, tools and technology working with nature rather than against it. Within a year or two, a bunch of young idealists colonised a derelict slate quarry in Mid Wales. They were inspired by the notion of building a living community to test the emerging alternative technologies, to find out which ones worked and which didn't. At the time what we now call the green movement was struggling to define itself.

In the past two decades there have been rapid developments in the environmental movement. More and more people, from all sectors of society, are saying the essential "No". We have seen some success in the global no to CFCs, the no to nuclear power, the no to unchecked road building, the no to mass whaling and the no to dumping the Brent Spar.

People are no longer content with sponsoring environmental charities to campaign on their behalf, they want a turn at it themselves. This 'solutions driven' environmental movement, has realised that it's no use simply demonstrating that the environment is under threat, without showing any practical ways to put things right.

The need to balance the essential "No" with an equal and opposite "Yes" is now gaining increasing recognition from the grass roots outwards. Of course "no" campaigns are important, but the balance gained by trying out the ideas you wish to promote lends both credibility and a sense of reality. Personal empowerment and inspiration are the vital aspects of achieving sustainability, aspects too often ignored.

With recent developments of BSE, melting ice caps, ozone depletion, global warming, acid rain, de-forestation and declining biodiversity; no one can deny the

problems are scary, especially when you consider the growing recognition that the whole planetary system is 'self-regulating'.

The conventional view of how we're affecting the world is based upon direct relationships between causes and effects. As we give out proportionately more pollution we get proportionately more damage, with perhaps some time delay.

The self-regulating or 'Gaia' theory, gives us a very different picture. Our planet does not behave with such a simple cause and effect relationship. Instead, stress placed on a 'stable' system will be absorbed in an attempt to maintain the status quo. This means the planet is actually holding off the full effects of our environmental misdoings - until we reach the point where the regulating system itself starts to collapse, then it will make a rapid and erratic series of steps until it finds another stable state. This is why after so much industrialisation and de-forestation, it has taken so long for conventional science to recognise environmental effects such as global warming and ozone depletion. So we have got to act and act now. The question is: what on earth do we do?

We must begin by allowing ourselves the breathing space to examine and take responsibility for how we live our lives and how we affect the world around us. No one else makes the rules, we make our own empowered, informed decisions of how to live 'lightly'.

The exciting thing is that many of the changes that need to be made also improve our lives, our health and our communities.

Situated in Machynlleth, Mid Wales, The Centre for Alternative Technology's unique seven-acre visitor complex acts as a bridge between those who are seeking to explore a more ecological way of living and the store of hands-on-experience gained by those who have been working with sustainable

technologies over the past two decades.

On arrival, visitors are carried up the 180ft slope to the visitor complex by a water-balanced cliff railway. The complex itself is not connected to the national grid, being powered mainly from a combination of wind, water and solar power. It contains a range of interactive educational displays which are continually updated, reflecting the ways in which society is taking seriously the need to move toward more sustainable lifestyles.

For those who wish to know more, CAT also runs a residential course programme with diverse topics ranging from small scale wind and solar power to alternative sewage systems and self build ecological housing. To compliment the courses CAT also produces a diverse range of publications, covering many aspects of energy, building and food production from a very practical perspective, combining a level headed overview with "hands on" information based on CAT's experience of living with such technologies.

The Rio Earth summit, Agenda 21 and many other events around the world have alerted governments and local communities everywhere to the need for sustainable development. What is needed most urgently for Agenda 21 to have any real effect are working models of how such development can take place. For over twenty years now, CAT has been one of a number of centres across Europe dedicated to experimenting with sustainable ways of living and passing on their experience through active display, training programmes, publications and information services.

Until now these centres have worked in relative isolation, with only informal contacts between some, but it is now proposed

to set up a formal network of Ecological Centres throughout Europe. The subsequent collaborations will serve to further increase the impact of each Centre's work in its own country and region. It is anticipated the network will initially consist of about 20 centres in France, Wales, Ireland, Switzerland, Germany, Holland, Denmark, Italy and Spain. It will then expand to include organisations in every European country from Ireland in the west, to Russia in the east, Sweden in the north, to Greece in the south.

Looking to the future CAT's director Roger Kelly sees a vital role for 'solutions driven' organisations: "Now, in 1996, the importance of showing the solutions as well as the problems is fully recognised. We all know our society needs to make important decisions on which technologies we shall use in the future. We have a crucial role in this, seeking them out, proving which ones actually work, then inspiring, informing and enabling the developed world to set new patterns... towards a more sustainable future, before the system drags the rest of the world into a consumer nightmare - which by its sheer size will finally break the back of the planetary regulating systems which are currently holding everything together."

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Hawks and Doves

**Andrea Needham
smashed up a Hawk
aircraft bound for
Indonesia. Writing
from a remand prison
cell, she describes
why she took drastic
measures to beat
swords into
ploughshares.**

We've been in prison since February 1st, after disarming - or conspiring to disarm - a Hawk ground-attack aircraft destined for Indonesia.

The first question you're asked in prison is always: "What are you in for?" The second question is often: "How did you get caught?" Our answer - that we rang a press agency from inside the hangar and asked them to notify British Aerospace (BAe) of our presence - is usually met with incredulity.

Actually using hammers to disarm the plane seems sensible enough to most of the women in here - it was going to kill people, so we stopped it - but the logic of staying around to face the consequences needs a little more explaining.

To start at the beginning: why take this action against Hawk? What's wrong with selling weapons to Indonesia? Isn't such trade good for the economy? The recently published Scott Report into the sale of arms to Iraq provides a useful starting point from which to answer these questions.

"Iraq is a highly unsavoury regime, with an established record of chemical weapons use and internal suppression (for both of which Hawks could in theory be used), although one that is rich in natural resources and potentially economically powerful." This is taken from a memo sent by George Younger (then Secretary of State for Defence) to the Cabinet Office in July 1989, when the Government was deciding whether it should sell Hawks to Iraq. The following day, Mrs Thatcher's private secretary sent her a note saying that despite the "...risk that we shall incur a great deal of trouble and odium

for no reward... the pot of gold is enticingly large."

These remarkably frank notes, never intended for the eyes of the public, came to light as a result of Judge Scott's enquiries. It is certain that similar memos have been written with regard to the sale of Hawks to Indonesia, a country which could equally well be described as a "highly unsavoury regime".

Around a million of its citizens were massacred in a purge of anyone thought to be "subversive" after President Suharto came to power in a coup in 1965. In 1975, Indonesia invaded the neighbouring country of East Timor and has remained there ever since in defiance of ten UN resolutions calling on it to withdraw.

Since that time, some 200,000 people - one third of the population - have been killed by the Indonesian military or died of disease or starvation brought on by resettlement policies. This is a per capita death rate higher than in any other country since the Holocaust. But deaf to the cries for justice in East Timor, Britain has become Indonesia's largest weapons supplier and is just starting delivery of the first of 24 Hawks, despite eyewitness evidence of Hawks from a previous deal (signed by the Labour government in 1978) having been used to attack villages in East Timor.

One doesn't have to look far to find the motivation for this deal. Substitute Indonesia for Iraq in the quote above and there it is: [Indonesia] "is rich in natural resources and potentially economically powerful". Having squandered most of their own resources, the West is turning to the developing world and competing to exploit resources there at a favourable rate. Indonesia has vast untapped reserves of oil, minerals and timber, as well as a huge supply of cheap labour,



a combination which must be every businessman's dream. In order to ensure access to these riches, Britain must take steps to ingratiate itself with the Suharto regime - hence the no-questions asked Hawk deal.

Over the last three years, Indonesia has become the ninth largest recipient of British aid, receiving more than any other non-Commonwealth country. Aid has peaked around years when major weapons sales were being negotiated in a kind of mutual back-scratching arrangement; we give Indonesia aid, Indonesia signs deals to buy British weapons, British companies exploit Indonesian resources.

Clearly the truth behind the Hawk deal would be as unpalatable to the British public as was the sale of weapons to Iraq. The Government has therefore come up with a way out: the lie that, as Archie Hamilton (then Armed Services Minister) put it: "The point of selling Hawk aircraft to Indonesia is to give jobs to people in this country."

But few people still believe the Government has any commitment to decreasing unemployment in the long term. If it had, it would be investing public money in labour-intensive areas such as health, education and the environment, which research has shown would create many more jobs than investing in high-tech military production.

Fortunately, many people can see beyond government lies to recognise the gross immorality of the Hawk deal, and thousands of people have been campaigning to stop it since it was first announced in 1992. People have written letters, signed petitions, held marches, rallies and vigils, met with BAe, lobbied MPs, talked to BAe workers, held peace camps, and carried out NVDA.

Despite this massive opposition to the deal, by early last year it was becoming increasingly clear the sale would proceed, with delivery scheduled for early 1996. We knew that once the planes left Britain there'd be little more we could do, so the obvious thing seemed to be to stop them leaving by disarming them. This kind of action, potentially involving a long jail sentence, is not something to be entered into lightly.

We met once a month for a weekend for nearly a year, and spent many long hours discussing not just the practicalities of the action, but the philosophy of it; our fears, and our coping strategies. The practicalities turned out to be the easy bit, and consisted largely of long cold days and nights lying in fields outside the site, peering through binoculars to get information about routines, security patrols, entry points, cameras. Talking about, and coming to terms with, our fears - whether of the action itself, prison, trial, being parted from our loved-ones - was very much harder. But it's vital, I believe, to consider all these issues before setting out on this kind of course, and it has paid off in terms of our ability to not only cope in prison, but to use our time here constructively and to make it a positive experience.

The first Ploughshares action took place in the United States in 1980 when eight people, inspired by the Biblical injunction of Isaiah to "beat swords into ploughshares", used hammers



Steve Cox

Youths hiding in the grounds of Santa Cruz cemetery during purges by the Indonesian military.

to disarm nose-cones for nuclear missiles. Since then, a further 55 actions have taken place in the US, Australia and Europe (ours was the third in Britain).

Activists are by no means exclusively Christian; many act out of other beliefs, ranging from Buddhism to Anarchism. They have disarmed weapons ranging from Trident submarines to automatic rifles. Almost all activists have been prosecuted and most have been jailed.

...some 200,000 people - one third of the population - have been killed by the Indonesian military or died of disease or starvation. Britain has become Indonesia's largest weapons supplier.

All Ploughshares activists take full responsibility for their acts of disarmament. I believe what we did in disarming a Hawk was lawful - we were simply acting to prevent crime - and so there was no reason to run away when we'd finished our work.

Whilst "hit and split" actions - such as those of some animal liberation groups - can be very effective in purely practical terms, they are too easily dismissed by the state as terrorism or vandalism and the real issues get ignored. By staying to claim their work, Ploughshares activists can bring the issues into the public domain and use their trial as an opportunity to expose government crimes.

On the negative side, some might say, is

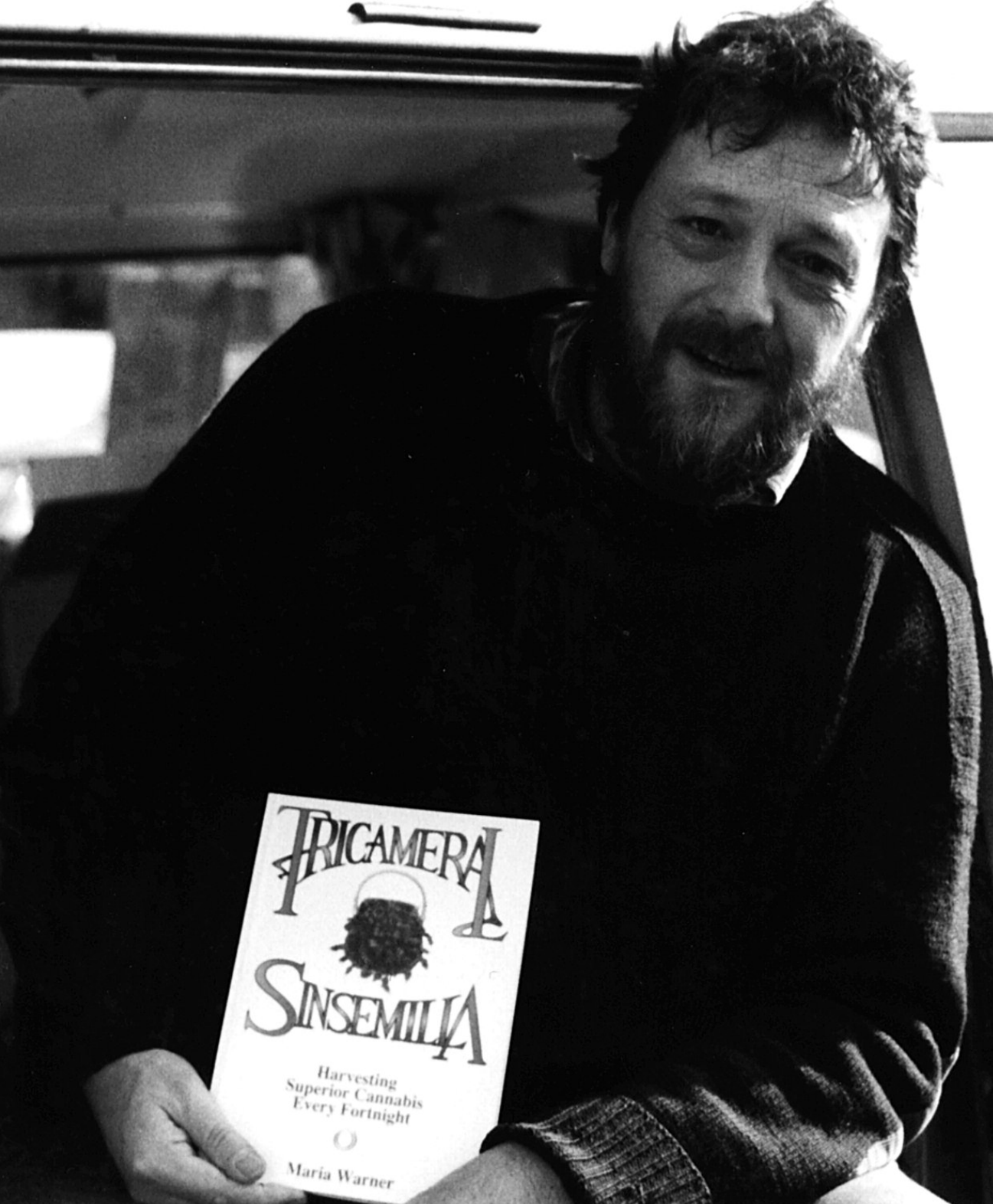
that activists end up in jail as a result and are thus unable to carry on the struggle. But this is to make the assumption not only that nothing good can come out of being in jail, but also that we are indispensable. In fact, knowing that people are in jail for their beliefs can galvanise others into action. And we are far from indispensable; the struggle against the Hawk deal continues even as the first planes leave for Indonesia.

For me, this action has been enormously empowering. I think for all of us there is an issue which catches our attention and won't let go; it's a constant nagging, a grip on our conscience which demands action. It might be nuclear weapons, roads, live exports, vivisection or any of a thousand issues. For me it was East Timor. I've never felt so strongly about anything else, and although I've been arrested many times for minor offences, I have never been prepared to risk a long jail sentence over any other issue.

It's easy to be overwhelmed by the power of the state: what can I, as an individual, do to resist? Taking this kind of action, and being prepared to face the consequences, is a very liberating experience. Once we're no longer bound by fear of the sanctions which can be employed against us, we can do anything. Paradoxically, although I'm now in jail - and am likely to be here for some time - I feel more free in many ways than I did on the outside, when my actions were often tempered by fear of the consequences. The prison may have my body, but it hasn't got my spirit.

We're sometimes asked why we choose to be martyrs for this cause. Our response is that we're not martyrs; we're just ordinary women who were able to carry out a small act of resistance to a grave injustice. We're just four people in the great history of resistance in Britain, from the Abolitionists through the Suffragettes to the Greenham women and the people in the trees at Newbury. We're no different, no better, no braver. We were just lucky enough to be in the right place at the right time, with hammers in our pockets.





Maria Warner (say it quickly out loud) is the pseudonym used by Michael Marlow for the publication of his book on cannabis cultivation, *Tricameral Sinsemilla*. The book's dedication, from Mick and his partner Ange to their five year old granddaughter, reads: For Jenna, may your times be sane and simple.

This is a fine and apposite blessing considering how unnecessarily complicated and insane the times of Mick Marlow and his family have become since the book's publication on St Patrick's day, 1994.

Mick is currently serving a 12 month prison sentence because he wrote a gardening book. The madness which led to this situation is the law surrounding the cultivation and use of the plant he was writing about. It's a madness which knows no bounds: as well as imprisoning a writer for writing, the court banned the book and ordered all remaining copies to be burnt. An appeal to reverse this decision is pending.

Mick is 52, a father and grandfather twice over. He and his wife Ange live in a beautiful spot on the edge of the Forest of Dean in a cottage they have shared for 22 years.

Early on October 6 1994 the police raided their home, confiscated 500 copies of *Tricameral Sinsemilla* along with his customer database, a copyright version of his next book "Simple Sinesmilla", discs, a number of cannabis plants and some growing equipment. Mick was arrested for production of, possession of, and incitement to others to grow marijuana.

The possession and production charges are fairly standard - standardly outrageous. Incitement is something else.

There are a vast number of books available on marijuana cultivation and consumption. Most of these differ to Mick's in that they usually contain a disclaimer to legally cover the author; most commonly suggesting they have been written just for fun and are intended to be read as such. Mick and Ange feel strongly that the cannabis debate (or the lack of one) is way beyond this. Too many people are serving time in already overburdened prisons because they grow or consume this plant for the issue to be dismissed as fun any more.

**“There's no fury like a
vested interest
masquerading as a
moral principle.”**

Mick is clear that “what seems to have upset the justices is the fact that I didn't include a disclaimer because I thought it was hypocritical.” A disclaimer is not, per se, a legal requirement but as Mick understands it: “Unless you say ‘don't break the law’ you are, in the eyes of the law, encouraging people to break it.” Instead Mick wrote a non-disclaimer, a statement of intent.

Mick Marlow undoubtedly wrote a book which the law considers to be incitement. However the reasons for the control of cannabis remain highly questionable and Mick's incarceration is beyond belief. The fact that in the 1990s a UK judge could order his work be burnt is so grotesquely reminiscent of both Iran's internationally condemned response to Rushdie's *Satanic Verses* and the treatment of intellectuals and their work in pre-war Nazi Germany that it requires no further comment here.

The book covers far more than his growing technique, dealing with the usefulness of the plant medicinally (in the treatment of MS, cancer, glaucoma) and the sustainable options offered by cannabis cultivation and the manufacture of hemp products.

Following his arrest there was an 18 month wait for the trial. “It was awful,” recalls Ange: “After they raided the place I don't think Mick ever went in the growing room again. They left such a terrible mess he just couldn't face it.”

At this time Mick was suffering regular and severe palpitations as a result of a heart condition which began when he collapsed on the day the book was published. The drugs he was prescribed for this condition, the beta-blockers Sotalol, caused depression (Mick is now addicted to the anti-depressant Seroxat which were prescribed to counter the effects of Sotalol) which increased considerably following the police raid: “He couldn't motivate himself at all. I think it was a combination of the pills he was on, what the police had done to him and the fact that he realised he was going to be imprisoned for writing.”

The stress which led to Mick's heart condition developed over the Marlows' three-year long attempt to have the book published.

Following countless refusals to print the book unless it included a disclaimer and one publisher attempting to steal the manuscript, “in the end”, says Ange “we decided to publish ourselves... We only had £1500 to put into the book - we needed that for a new van, ours was always breaking down - but we took a gamble that the book would sell. It paid off. We had 120 orders upfront. We printed 1000 copies.”

The book describes Mick's own ‘Tricameral’ (three chamber) method of cultivation: “it's basically a rotational method of growing which allows you to harvest fresh cannabis every two weeks,” explains Mick, grinning.

Making her weekly journey for a “just long enough to recharge each other” three-hour visit with Mick at the private prison, Ange explains her outrage: “Mick and I have been together since 1969. For them to do this: I just don't believe it half the time.” During the visit Ange updates Mick with news about this and that from home and abroad. They gently nag each other about their respective illnesses and smile, familiar and precious prison-visit smiles. They have the air of a couple fired up together against all the odds.

On the morning Mick was due to appear in court for sentencing the Marlows were raided again because their son, Tam, was arrested for possession. This was not a good omen: Judge Mott, presiding at Worcester Crown Court, undoubtedly heard that Mick was not able to appear as he was being held for questioning at the local nick with the rest of his family. Initially, Mott unsuccessfully attempted to have Mick's case heard in closed court because of his concern that people might learn how to grow cannabis during the course of the trial. Well it's like this M'Lud: first you get this seed and then you plant it...

In what seems to be the crux of the case Mott also refused to allow key evidence the defence intended to use: about 20 other publications on cannabis cultivation (most having been on public sale for over 20 years), the defence argument being that Mick's book was essentially no different from any of these. At the trial Judge Mott declared these books

Growing pains

inadmissible evidence and the defence’s case effectively collapsed.

The courts also objected to a request Mick included in his final chapter for people to write giving their opinions about cannabis laws and cultivation. Ange recalls: “This was interpreted to mean that he just wanted to learn about how people were getting on with their growing. That wasn’t the point at all.” Mick was in fact trying to open up the cannabis debate and provide a forum for honest discussion: “I wanted to set up a cannabis journal, a quality periodical, to show that we can do it, we’re not just doped out hippies: far from it.” He believes the socio-political analysis of the suppression of cannabis cultivation in his book and the well-reasoned suggestions he offers for moving towards decriminalisation were too close to the corporate bone. As Mick says “there’s no fury like a vested interest masquerading as a moral principle.”

Finally Mick was sentenced to 12 months for incitement and 12 months for production to run concurrently. He was not surprised by this decision: “As far as the law goes I’ve always been a fatalist because I’ve never had a good result, so I anticipated the worst.”

His biggest worry was how Ange, an insulin-dependent diabetic, would cope without him. Ange has surprised herself: “It has made me a hundred times stronger. I expected to go into the depths of gloom but it hasn’t happened. I just keep positive. I feel they can throw what they like at us and it doesn’t seem to make any difference. We’ll just keep fighting on.”

She shares Mick’s desire for an open

Maria Warner’s ‘non-disclaimer’

Almost without exception, books about cannabis start with a written disclaimer that they are providing people with the knowledge necessary to break the law by growing it. They assert that their efforts to describe in detail every aspect of cannabis culture, cultivation, genetics and plant breeding up to science degree level is intended to be merely novel or amusing.

For whatever protection the author might feel has been granted by the insertion of a disclaimer, the use of such detraction is irresponsible and the public perception of cannabis remains wrong-headed by its inclusion. It implies that the book has been magically absolved of any suggestion that it could encourage criminality and that the information therein has been rendered safe by this gesture. Such daftness must surely contribute in its own small way to the continuing illegality of cannabis for social use.

Whilst having no personal wish to deceive, and though the name Maria Warner is totally apposite to the nature of my book, it is of course, a pseudonym. Upon the reinstatement of public cannabis cultivation, possession and supply, I will gladly claim authorship in my own name. Though I and most cannabis users in my experience would be the first to stand for ‘morally just’ causes and ethical concerns, I have no disclaimer to enter. I trust that this book will reveal the reasons for its omission, also why the nonsensical, archaic laws forbidding free cannabis use should be roundly condemned by all, especially by those who write on the subject.

Whether you use this or any other guide to break the law by growing cannabis is completely irrelevant - Tricameral Sinsemilla provides a much better reason for those who would take the risk and offers at the same time, a realistic proposal for cannabis legalization in both social and industrial use.

Maria Warner, April 1991

Mick Marlow is in prison for writing a book that was ordered to be burnt. Sam Beale reports on the madness of our times and the reason of Mr and Mrs Marlow.

debate: “Unless people can actually talk about it how are we to find out how many people use it and what benefit it is or even what harm it might do? It’s used medicinally by so many people now, there is a very fine line between medicinal and recreational use because stress factors are generally so high.”

Since Mick’s conviction she has spoken to, “a number of people who have experience dealing with this issue who believe in legalisation: police and doctors. They should be allowed to say something”. Ange believes: “People are frightened to speak, and if the Government can stop people talking about it then somehow it doesn’t exist.”

Mick’s comment on his imprisonment is characteristically sharp: “What a place to put someone who’s been done for incitement: in with a load of inciteable people.” But beneath the joke and the initial outrage there are some serious questions to be asked about this case.

Tricameral Sinsemilla is likely to serve as a rather too convenient test case. Similar prosecutions brought against writers and publishers under the old obscenity laws have regularly failed. A precedent in the form of a conviction is just what is needed in order, some have said, to bear down on other pro-legalisation publications. This makes Mick’s pending appeal important in terms of freedom of information. If he loses, not only will the remaining copies of his book in this country be burnt, but the same insanity could be repeated with even less difficulty.

What seems clear enough is that Mick’s imprisonment has little to do with the subject matter of his book and rather more to do with his honesty. But as Ange stresses: “He does not want to be seen as hero, he just wants people to be able to use this plant as they want to.”


Many agree: the Marlows have received letters of support from all over the world and it has recently been confirmed that in June the book is to be published in Dutch and English in Amsterdam. French, German, Spanish and Italian versions are also planned. “For the last 18 months I’ve just been standing still. This news has made all the difference,” says Mick, “there’s a future

now, something to work for.”

After his release he and Ange will probably move abroad. Mick sees his case as indicative of “the democratic malaise” in this country: “The ship is sinking and this rat wants off. But only because I can’t work here. If that little stretch of water makes the difference I’ll cross it. I can still hit the internet, I can still write articles and get published.” Ange agrees: “I’ve never been out of this country. I love Britain, I love the hills and the greenery and the seasons so I’ll regret leaving but I won’t regret the reasons. Coming to the age we are, I’d rather we left than keep on looking over our shoulders and still not be allowed to give our opinions. Maybe the children will move with us.”

Mick believes that a paradigm shift is required to create a situation whereby, amongst other things, the decriminalisation of cannabis is possible. He does not want to be the focus of such a shift. He wants people to make the change themselves and, most immediately, he wants to take part in an intelligent and realistic debate about this plant and the possibilities offered by its cultivation. His imprisonment has stirred the debate but it looks as though he will have to leave this country to continue it without being shafted by British law. Our loss.

Mick welcomes correspondence:
MK 2057, HMP Blackenhurst, Hewell Lane, Redditch, Worcester BN7 6QS
Copies of Tricameral Sinsemilla will be available in June from: Adriaan Bronkhorst, Drugs Peace Institute, Peace House, Spuistraat, nr. 2, Amsterdam 155563, 10001 Holland.
Maria would like to point out that it is a criminal offence to import copies of this book to the UK.

Stop Press: Ange has recently been charged with cannabis production (following a questionable police raid on the house after Tam’s arrest). The Marlows have also received a letter from their landlord’s solicitor requesting that they vacate their home. No reason was given. Needless to say they will not leave without a fight. 

Radio Pirates



Justin Cooke

Seizing the airwaves for the love of music, pirate radio ducks, dives and thrives in Manchester. Ursula Wills-Jones tunes in to pirate talk.

Better than drugs! It's free, it's fun, and it's completely illegal. Usually dealt out of the inner cities, it comes in flavours to suit all tastes, has no known side-effects, and you can't be busted for possessing it. Well, not unless you get caught red-handed with all the turntables and transmitters, that is. Yup, it's a pirate radio station. Tune into local commercial radio stations anywhere and you notice they all sound remarkably similar. The same anodyne diet of chart hits, 'lite' news reporting and inane chat. They could be coming from anywhere. But tune into a pirate and you know where you are: in our case, within ten or fifteen miles of South-Central Manchester. 'South-Central', or more specifically the tower-blocks in and around Moss Side, hide half a dozen pirates. Between them they broadcast soul, reggae, R'n'B, hip-hop, jungle, and ragga.

"All these other stations, they're ALL playing the same music," moans T2Bad, station head at Soul Nation. He set up Soul Nation, one of the larger and more professional stations, in the summer of 1993. "There's a couple of soul shows at the weekend, one or two jungle shows, one or two hip-hop shows, and they reckon, well, that's enough for you niggas and everyone else who wants to listen to it. It isn't! Soul Nation's proved it. I've not got this station saying that I'm trying to entertain people with this colour skin. I'm trying to entertain people - period. Our station's brought people together." Soul Nation's program of solid soul and R'n'B might not be to everyone's taste, but it certainly is to somebody's. He reckons the station was picking up half a million listeners a week at it's peak. Soul Nation are after the holy grail of pirate radio, a legal licence. They've been busted once, losing all their equipment, but now they're up and running again. In a more reasonable world, T2Bad should hardly be the kind of guy to set terror into the hearts of the establishment. Bright, ambitious, and articulate, he shudders like a true Thatcherite at the suggestion that he might be providing a community service. "If a black man says 'the community' everyone thinks Moss Side. My community is the North-West, people like you, him, me, anybody." He says, gesturing towards the smartly dressed people in the bar where we've met.

Nevertheless, he's something of a wanted man. In fact, he believes that the station's success is what scares the official stations. "When we were taken off air, it was said to us in a very official capacity, by a high-ranking police officer to a club manager, 'tell Soul Nation they've got to downgrade their operation, because they sound too good, and it's getting noticed by the right and wrong people'. The right people are your white ABC1 middle class people. The legal stations start thinking this is traditionally our territory - these guys have gotta go."

Other stations, however, are quite happy to talk about the community. "The commercial stations aren't giving people in the community what they want to hear. We're not getting in the way, because at the end of the day they're not playing our music." Says Dee, a DJ on Love Energy, another large station mixing hip-hop, soul, ragga, and jungle.

Unlike T2Bad, Dee is shy and diffident. He says he doesn't earn anything from doing the radio shows, but it allows him to plug his work as a DJ outside the station. "Most of what we play, they won't play on the commercial stations because it's too underground. We're there to breach the gap."

Dee and Emperor from Love Energy don't exude the same air of confident prosperity as T2Bad. "We're all unemployed" says Emperor, "we've not got anything else to do. It just takes up all our time. It's what we want to do, isn't it?" Still, everyone agrees that the pirates are not just about broadcasting to the ghetto. It's about broadcasting to anyone who is into the music.

No-one at the pirate stations relishes their illegal status. On the other hand, few would be interested in going legal unless they could continue broadcasting the same styles of music. Dee says that if he was offered the chance to play what he liked on a legal station, he'd take it. "I'd go for it, yeah. I'd get paid," he says, with a long-suffering expression.

Emperor and Dee say they can remember the first pirates setting up in Manchester in the mid-80's. "I think pirate stations are always gonna be around," says Dee. "If we eventually go off the air, somebody else will come on."

If the range of music broadcast by the pirates is pretty diverse, individual stations tend to stick much more closely to one or two types of music. "We don't broadcast, we narrowcast. We know what we're good at, we know what we're capable of, and we stick to it. Everyone on my station is doing it for the love of it," says T2Bad.

In theory, the artists whose tracks are played on the pirates are losing out, because no-one receives any royalties. In practice, however, they probably benefit. A number of recent big-selling tracks like 2Pac Shakur, the Fugiz, and Mark Morrison are likely to have been receiving far heavier airplay on pirates around the country than on official stations.

Emperor and Dee say they put in their own money to keep the station going. Otherwise, pirate radio gets its funds from a variety of sources, including advertising and club nights.

No business will actually admit to paying the pirates for advertising, claiming rather unconvincingly that it's just a matter

of discounts here and there. Cari-Afro, a city centre shop selling hip-hop style clothes advertises on Love Energy. Jo from Cari-Afro admits that the adverts do bring in business. Just last week, she says, a woman who had just moved to Manchester came in, saying she had heard of them on the station. She spent more than £500. "Let's face it, the kind of people who buy this kind of gear,

up in force with the police. The police are only there to stop any breach of the peace taking place, but in our case the DTI turned up wearing flak jackets. They must have thought that some big amount of grief was gonna go down or whatever."

In 1993-4, there were 570 raids on pirate radio stations. Like many other cultural activities which

you're struck by just how normal life sounds. The world they present is not one of guns and crack, but an ordinary one of food, relationships, and malfunctioning washing machines.

In effect, it's the ghetto speaking with its own voice - but it's not saying what it's meant to say. T2Bad, for his part, is intelligent enough to realise that the reason his station is "public enemy number one", as he puts it, goes beyond the threat of competition. "There's a lot more to it than that. A few months back someone said to me what you've got to realise is, it's not the DTI you're fighting, it's the Government. Whoever controls the media, controls the people, right? The people directly react to what the media tells them. It shapes everyone's lives, it shapes people's ideas. They're not going to let somebody walk in and take a piece of it."

STOP PRESS

Four pirate stations in Manchester have gone off the air after their transmitters were confiscated in raids by the DTI. However, most stations are expected to be broadcasting again within a few weeks. Soul Nation, Frontline, Love Energy and Sting FM all lost their transmitters, which are located separate from the stations' studios. The raids follow DTI sweeps on pirate radio stations in London and Bristol. Pirate radio heads believe the raids may be linked to Euro '96: clearing the airwaves so that the legal broadcast media can gain maximum advertising impact during the competition.



"It's not the DTI you're fighting it's the Government. Whoever controls the media, controls the people, right?"

they're into a certain kind of music, and you don't get that on Piccadilly FM," says Jo. Not all the businesses advertising on the pirates are necessarily aiming at the young and hip. Love Energy carries adverts for washing machine servicing and car repairs, Soul Nation for insurance, and Frontline for Caribbean takeaways.

The number of adverts carried by the pirates is considerably fewer than those carried by commercial radio. They also tend to be for different things: instead of flaunting a consumer dreamland of fast cars, fancy holidays and financial deals they promote the ordinary and the necessary: food, clothes, music, car repairs and so on. For local black businesses, they provide an affordable and neatly targeted outlet for advertising.

The adverts are just one of the reasons why pirate stations manage to sound more human than their national or commercial equivalents. Somehow, listening to pirate radio can be remarkably comforting. It's sunk deep into a geographical space that makes sense to you. The voices that come to you are only a couple of miles away. If it's raining where you are, you know it's raining where they are. They sound ordinary and friendly, a million miles away from the slick egomaniacs who dominate stations like Radio One. Links are fluffed, records slip, presenters turn up late, but it all adds to the impression that it's a real person talking to you, not a machine.

The Department of Trade and Industry doesn't really care about any possible benefits pirates might bring. They say they interfere with emergency services' radio signals and fair broadcasting competition. T2Bad disagrees: "All I'm doing, I'm just offering fair competition. I thought that was what this Government was all about, innit?" He laughs, and describes how the station got raided. "The DTI turned

are frowned on by the authorities, the penalties for running a pirate radio station were upped by the 1994 Criminal Justice Act.

It's easy to suspect that the reasons why the authorities actually clamp down on the pirates are rather more complex than the officially stated one. For one, it's a strong and vibrant form of cultural expression which, like rave culture, doesn't conform to Major's 'warm beer and village cricket' vision of Britain. It's incomprehensible to white, middle-class, fifty-something England, and thus, deeply suspicious. Furthermore, it represents a picture of life in inner-city Britain which is a long way from the one the Daily Mail would like to depict.

Listening to any of the stations coming out of Moss Side,

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ONE LOVE

Storm in the desert

Ally Fogg meets Desert Storm, the sound system who took techno to the front-line in Bosnia.

Sound Systems do not have to seek trouble these days. Under attack from a parliament which considers them criminals, they work with the constant risk of arrest and seizure of equipment. Most party crews face all this for no more reward than seeing people dance.

While some party crews have sought a quieter life on the more hospitable Euro scene, Glasgow's 'Desert Storm' have found welcoming crowds in the unlikely venues of all; the war-torn cities of Bosnia. On a recent 'legit' tour of British venues to raise money for their fourth trip in 18 months, in Manchester's New Ardri club they shared with me a little of the World According to Desert Storm.

Although home base is still Glasgow, the five crew members I met each come from different cities. "Desert Storm isn't really a crew," explains Rob from Sheffield "it's more of a ... Thing."

"A bubbling blob," offers Danny. "Yeah, people kind of drift in and out."

At the centre of the blob is Keith, the only remaining founder member. He talks enthusiastically about the origins of Desert Storm, throwing 'after-parties' in Glasgow in early '91 against the backdrop of the Gulf War. The name was his idea, representing not only their 'beats not bullets' message, but their desire to be seen as part of an army: "It's an anti-establishment thing, we want to show them we're organised, but for our own ends not for theirs".

Desert Storm decor does not follow the usual style of techno nights, all trippy fractals and tie-dye wall hangings. Instead they prefer a mass of camouflage netting, with khaki and black the dominant colours. The effect is powerful, Desert Storm gigs feel like they are taking place in a bunker with a civil war outside. The visual impact of a Desert Storm gig drives home the concept of a revolutionary culture boiling under the surface of modern Britain. In the beginning the parties had an entrance fee, but this was attracting problems: "We were starting to get some really dodgy people hanging around, we had to hire our own shady security and it was all getting out of hand so we just knocked it on the head for six months. We went to London and met Mark from Spiral Tribe, and he persuaded us that free parties were the way forward. So we went back and built our first RDV (Rapid Deployment Vehicle) which was a camouflage Transit with a 1.5K rig on it. We could just drive in anywhere and start playing, and that's basically how we've operated ever since."

By 1994 the campaign against the Criminal Justice Bill was politicising ravers everywhere. Desert Storm were the only sound system to apply for permission in time to play on the July march, and consequently entertained an audience of some 70,000 in Trafalgar Square on a glorious summer's day. One of them, James from Nottingham, was so impressed he tracked them down in Glasgow and has been a regular DJ ever since. Three months later this

celebration of youthful freedom was overshadowed in Hyde Park by possibly the only riot in history to have been started by police determination to stop people from dancing. Keith recalls:

"Amid all the mayhem we'd broken down but we were still playing. There were riot cops everywhere and this crazy Glaswegian called Paddy stuck his head through the van window and said 'I've got to have your phone number'. A week later we were home in Glasgow and I got a phone call from the same guy asking if we wanted to go to Bosnia in three weeks. I mean, what could we say? It was definitely fated, we just had to go."

The resulting trip took them to Tusla with a Workers' Aid convoy for the most exciting New Year of their lives. James describes the events of the evening: "We started playing on the move and we had thousands of people following us through the streets in two foot of snow and

minus 10 degrees. We played one techno record with a chorus that went 'get going to the beat of a drum BANG!' and all the soldiers fired their AK-47s in the air 'kakakakaka' and it was such a fucking buzz it was incredible. We played the same record about ten times. At one point a policeman came up to tell us to turn the volume up, but to turn off some of our lights because we were attracting shellfire. The front line was only about ten kilometres away."

Three trips later and the desire to take techno to the front line is as strong as ever. The ethics of taking a party to the

most miserable man-made hell in Europe is an on-going source of debate, and not only among themselves. Danny admits: "It's something that comes up repeatedly when we're collecting money, how can we justify taking a large van all the way to Bosnia with only ourselves and a sound system. We sometimes have doubts ourselves, but then I think back to that first New Year in Tusla and I know we're doing the right thing. The reality out there now is that most people have food and the bare essentials. Everyone from UNHCR to Worker's Aid are sending convoys of lorries, and the main thing people are crying out for is any kind of entertainment at all. There's also a youth element. Most of our money is raised among young people here in the UK and most of the people who go to the parties there are young. What we do is a cultural gift from the youth of Britain to the youth of Bosnia."

While the Bosnia trips rightly dominate the legend of Desert Storm, stories abound of their adventures across Britain and Europe along the way. There was the 'Technival' in France, where a gigantic convoy from Paris led to a farm in a little town called Bresle where the farmer was overjoyed to see the ravers tramping down his field. It turned out to be a peat field and normally he had to employ people once a year to tramp down the grass before he could cut it. Shortly after the Mayor arrived atop a lorry full of water. Local by-laws required the townsfolk to show hospitality to any gathering of more than a thousand people whether invited or not. Last October the RDV went RTS as the Storm entertained 600

"At one point a policeman came up to tell us to turn the music up but to turn off some of our light because we were attracting shell-fire."

DESERTSTORM



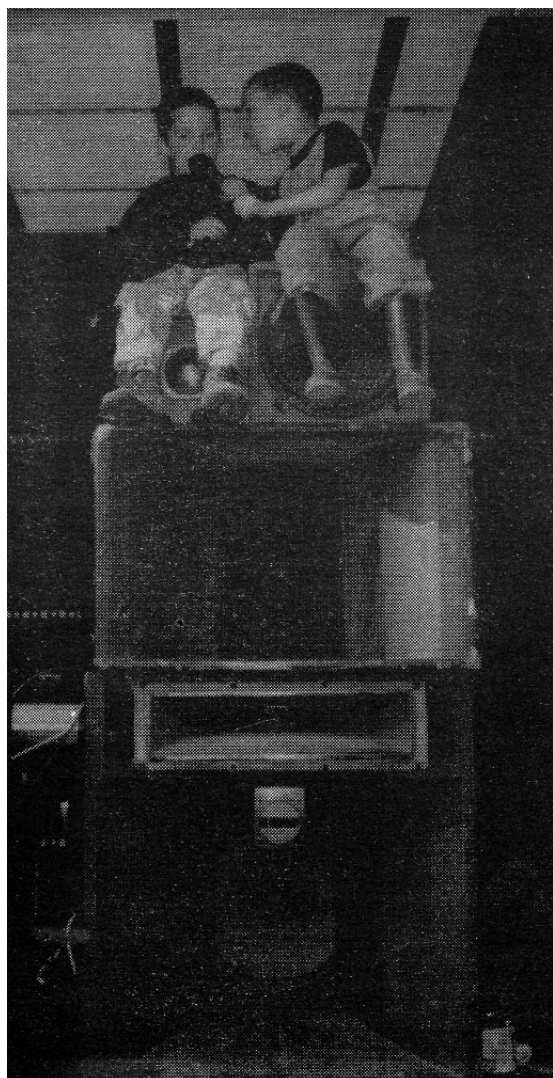
Jo Marshall travelled to Bosnia with Desert Storm, experiencing first-hand the need to dance.

party-goers at a Reclaim the Streets party in Manchester, eventually leading a dancing parade through the heart of the city to the steps of the Town Hall. "That was fucking amazing," recalls Danny, "We never thought we'd get away with playing on Deansgate. When I went to play the first record my hand was shaking so much I couldn't put the needle down. But then when we started playing this tingle came up through everybody's fingers and suddenly it was like there was an electric energy pulsing up from the crowd. I've never seen anything like it."

Desert Storm's willingness to take their chances with the CJA, the TSG or the AK-47s may seem to verge on the foolhardy, but the whole crew have the confidence that comes from knowing what they do is the right thing to do. Keith talks easily of 'fate', a suitable theme tune for Desert Storm would be a hardcore remix of 'Que Sera, Sera'. He becomes at once animated and angry when reminiscing about visiting Mostar, where a glorious medieval city has been devastated by the war. "Just about the only building that hasn't been hit by mortars or rockets is the Ganja cafe. In amongst all this misery and destruction you can still score, have a coffee and look out over the ruins. Is that fate or what?"

So what next for Desert Storm, I ask Rob. "Well I don't know about anyone else, but I fancy Chechnya myself!"

ⓈⓀ



I first went to Bosnia as a driver with the Workers' Aid convoy to Tuzla. It was a diverse convoy comprising French, Spanish and dodgy old British food trucks, a delegation of teachers and Desert Storm sound system.

There were many, both on the convoy and back home who doubted the necessity or relevance of a sound system. However, I had been part of the Demolition Sound system in Manchester and believed strongly in the political and cultural power of music and free parties. Desert Storm had joined up with Workers' Aid the previous year, had raised the money for a truck, and had driven it, with food-aid and hospital supplies and their sound system, to Tuzla in time for Christmas. Their mobile Christmas party, driven around the snowed up city, was more appreciated by the people of Tuzla, running out of their houses to dance in the streets, and remembered for longer than the food parcels they brought.

People don't realise during war, even a vicious civil war like this one, life still goes on. People try to get on with their lives as best they can. The bars are still open, people try to get to work, to school. If anything, when your backs are against the wall, the need to party together is greater.

The Bosnian people were not fighting for gain, glory or patriotism, but for their lives and their town and the lives of their families. We have all seen the fate of the unarmed civilians of Srebrenice. They felt they had been snubbed and forgotten by the rest of the world.

The youth of Tuzla were aware of the revolution in dance music that had been sweeping Europe since the start of the war. But because of a war not of their making they were unable to experience it.

For a Scottish sound system to drive 2,000 miles across Europe in a dodgy old Leyland truck, through six borders, Croat bandit territory, UN road-blocks, the front line and 'snipers alley' to play the best in bangin' British dance music, was more than appreciated for the act of friendship and solidarity that it was offered as. They didn't ask: "Why are you here?" they asked, "When are you coming back?"

We were leaving Tuzla after the summer convoy through the only route open in and out of the country, 'snipers alley'. It was a road along the bottom of a valley with Serbian gun and sniper emplacements on the top of the ridge. The convoys had to drive as fast as they could along this valley, at night with their lights off in order to avoid being hit. We were at the checkpoint at the safe area in the mountains, waiting to go through. There was a delay as the previous convoy had been hit. A Bosnian soldier came up to me, you could always tell the Bosnian soldiers, they always wore trainers, had no proper equipment or old police rifles. His eyes looked tired and resigned. More than likely most of his family had been interned and his friends and classmates killed. He said to me: "You bring food, thank you for bringing food, but we need

guns and bullets, they have tanks and planes and we have nothing. If we could defend ourselves you would not have to bring food. You go back and tell that to the people in your country."

Since the Dayton agreement, things had changed in Bosnia and we wanted to go back to celebrate with them their first Christmas of peace. The food shortages were largely over and aid was pouring in from the big, publicly financed agencies. For the first time it was possible to drive to Sarajevo, previously only accessible through a mile long, four-foot wide man-made tunnel under the airport. This was Bosnia's capital, ethnically united in the defence of their city that had been completely under siege and blockaded for two and a half years. Sarajevans had been without water, electricity, been shelled and shot at constantly, but still managed to retain some of the cosmopolitan and liberal atmosphere the city had before the war.

There is not enough space for all the stories and comedy fuck-ups that we had to go through to get there but get there we finally did, two weeks late.

It has to be said the Sarajevans we met were initially sceptical about our reasons for being there and what we were up to. Since the peace accord the city had been swarming with Christians, media types and minor celebs wanting to do something, or be filmed/photographed doing something for the poor Bosnian people. Apparently they were particularly sick of Americans trying to patronise them and give them teddy-bears.

Any doubts we may have had evaporated when we saw the club Obala throbbing on the Saturday night with hundreds of sweaty Bosnian ravers stomping and screaming for more.

Attitudes warmed further after an interview we gave on Radio Zid (Wall Radio), Sarajevo's youth, independent, and only non-government radio station (and the only one listened to by anyone under 30). The DJs played a damn fine set live on air then we explained that we were British anti-fascists (I had never defined myself as such before) and that, not having access to money or large resources, music was the only way that we could give something significant to the people of Bosnia.

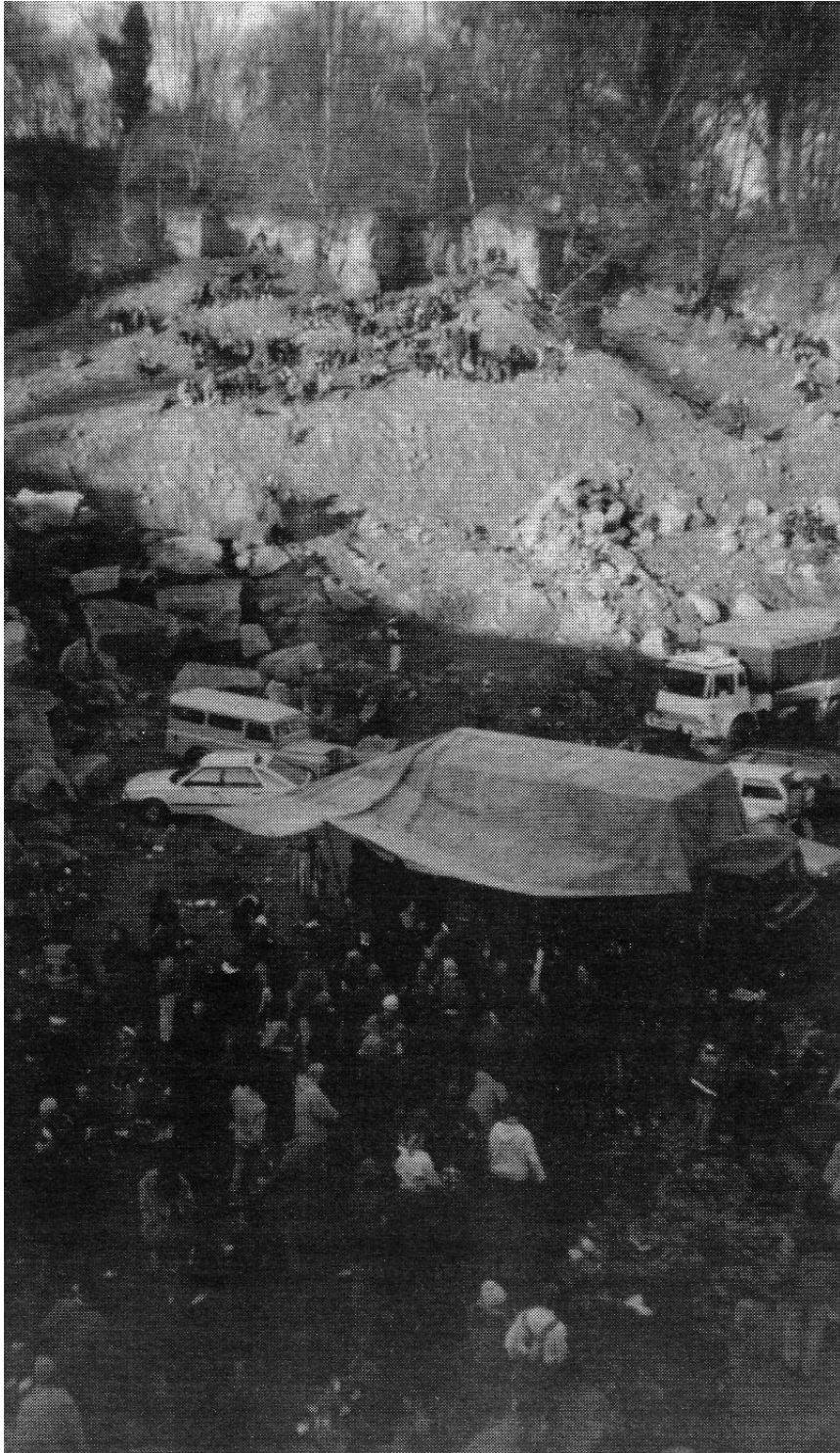
At the end of the interview the presenter asked: "Is there any message you have for the people of Sarajevo?" That completely stumped me, then, remembering the soldier at the checkpoint in the summer, blurted out: "During the war, we brought food, medicines and music, you needed guns. I wish that we could have brought guns. I'm so ashamed of my Government. I'm so sorry, I wish that we could have done more to help." And I still do.

Thanks to: Club Obala, Sarajevo, Emire and the Metelkova squat Ljubiana, Bob at Workers Aid and Keith.

To understand the Bosnian war, read Seasons in Hell by Ed Vulliamy, the first journalist to see the Serbian concentration camps.

ⓈⓀ

All systems



One Saturday night in May, in a quarry near Matlock, Derbyshire, 500 people are dancing under a full moon and clear sky. The free party scene is alive and kicking all over Britain with particular determination in the East Midlands; the spirit of the free festival lives on.

Smokescreen are the posseé hosting this specific bash. Easy techno, trance and solid house sounds bounce off the sides of the quarry, filling all space.

Smokescreen, from Sheffield, are currently hosting a free party

most weekends, usually in Derbyshire. They are also part of All Systems Go! - a collective of sound systems from Nottingham, Leicester, Sheffield and Lincoln.

All Systems' individual components are a namecheck of the more popular East Midlands dance posses; DIY, Smokescreen, Pulse, Babble, Flotation, Breeze, Rogue and Gotropo. The latest edition to the collective is Spoof (Sheffield people on one forever). Together they form a loose community alliance that is mutually supportive but flexible enough to allow each posse its own individual identity and set of priorities. The result is an

Strength comes in numbers.
So when the Criminal
Justice Act threatened
a range of East Midlands
sound systems, they
came together.
Jez Tucker looks at
their non-confrontational
approach to repetitively
beating the system.

eclectic, organic scene where community and co-operation are highly valued as fundamental to the free party ethic.

All Systems sprang to life in 1992 in response to particular clauses encompassed in the Criminal Justice Bill affecting the rights of party-goers, squatters, protestors and travellers. A meeting was initiated by members of DIY, Smokescreen and Breeze.

Rick, (DJ Digs) of DIY explains: "We met in a club, about 30 or 40 people. We just talked about what we were going to do about this new law. Awareness raising seemed to be the one and it was initially a big information campaign."

All Systems began organising benefit gigs to raise money to put into information.

Rick: "Because we had a PA and knew other people who were doing what we were doing, and had access to DJs, we paid minimum expenses, paid for the venue and the flyers, fivers in and it was a highly efficient way of making money. That crystallized the whole All Systems thing cos it was literally all systems in one room."

One member of DIY who took the information bit between his teeth was Tash. Tash is a veteran of

the '70s and '80s free festival community. His photographic work has documented the rise and fall of that community and he was one of only three independent photographers at the Battle of the Beanfield in 1985. He sees what All Systems are doing as an attempt to hold on to a vision of DIY, community and celebration: "After I heard about the Bill I realised that they meant festivals, protestors, raves and everything I was about. It was a big thing, the authorities have been trying to write a hippy act for years but they'd never been that specific before. At the meeting I showed people clippings from papers and told them that it meant them as well. A lot of people don't think they're anywhere near important or dangerous enough to warrant this attention. They might not but the establishment does. I was concerned that what we should primarily be about was publication - to tell the public at large there's something off."

A free booklet entitled 'Right to Party' was produced as well as a cartoon poster depicting Peanut Pete's explanation of the main clauses of part five of the Bill, all happening on a union jack. The booklet contained warnings of legislation to come, its affect on the

are go

current scene, historic references and affirmations of dance culture.

By June 1995 the fifth edition of the booklet had been produced and became a well-known, respected and effective tool for informing the underground dance scene of exactly what they were up against.

Tash: "We spent about £15,000 on five editions of Right to Party. And each copy, because of its nature, was probably read by four or five people. We were mainly concerned with raising awareness. It's my contention that should be our priority."

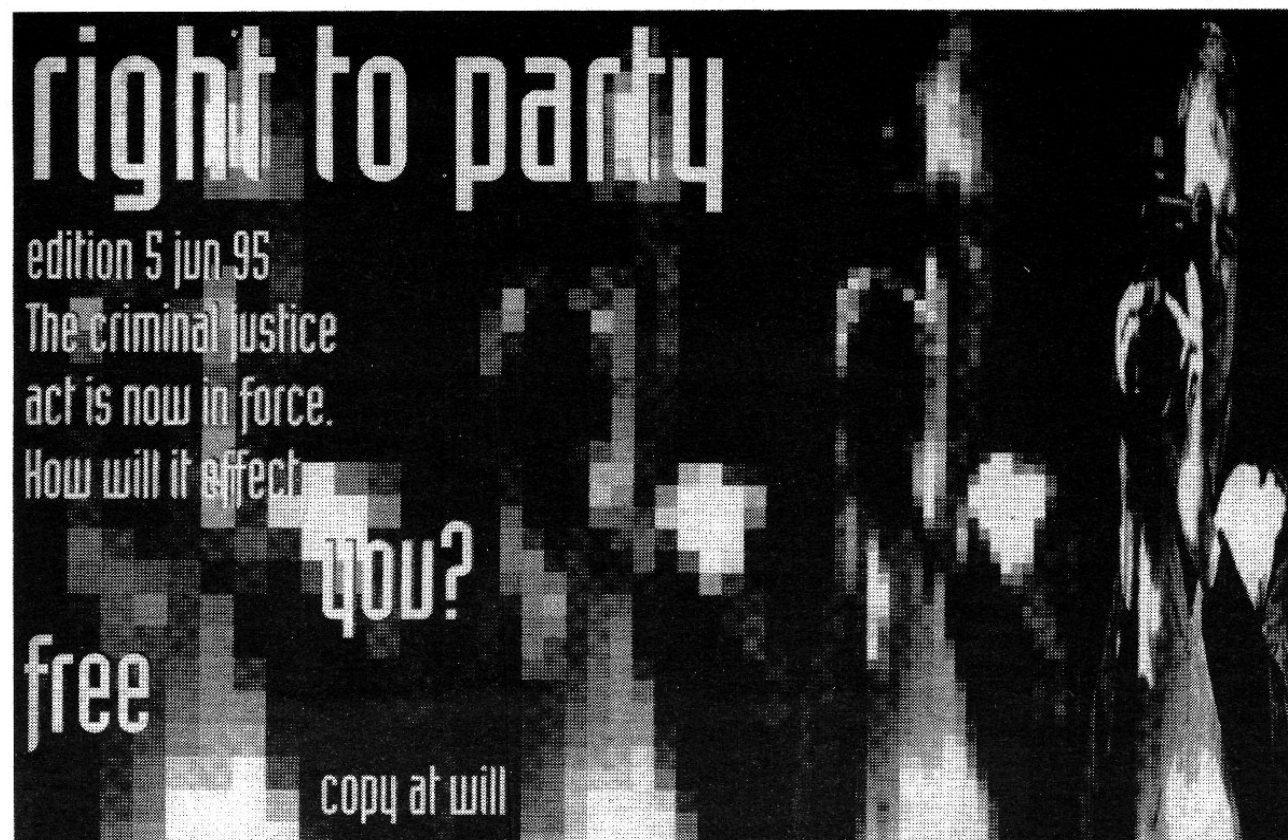
Meanwhile, money from benefit gigs was also being put into buying a communal rig. Primarily called the Party or Community Rig it soon earned the nick name 'Kamikazee'. This rig is owned by All Systems and "borrowed" by individual systems for specific free parties, usually outdoor. This way if equipment is confiscated by police then no single outfit would suffer. One reason some members of All Systems don't like the term kamikazee is that it implies disposability.

Tash: "Kamikaze rig is quite a catchy name. You can put it in situations where you are prepared to lose it but it would be nice to hang on to it and the community at large can use it. If the police were confronted by a set of boxes that they knew were called kamikaze it might imply that after confiscation the court would treat it disposably.

The All Systems ethic is of communication and co-operation to facilitate free parties and mutual support. A benefit gig in April raised money for Buxton-based Black Moon sound system, the first outfit to have their rig confiscated under the CJA.

Another benefit in Sheffield on May 31st was also successful. Money raised from that event has yet to be allocated but options include fixing the kamikaze rig, more informative publications and starting up a bust fund for systems.

Harry, an original member of DIY, is clear about what All Systems priorities should be post-CJA: "It's hard to have any direct



resistance to the CJA now that it's law. National resistance seems to have petered out. So, basically, we've got our own organisation here, we'll maintain links, keep the fundraising going, maybe set up a bust fund to support any one who might get nicked in the future."

There is a strong belief within All Systems in community and the strength that community offers. When people feel part of a larger,

specifically designed to raise funds to support party-goers and systems doing free parties. Otherwise all the individual systems involved in the project are dance entities who do weekly club nights to finance the production of records and keep them doing free parties at the weekends.

Laurence, DJ and founder member of Smokescreen explains: "We always leave saturday nights as free party nights. Maybe two or

Council. He was implying we could get a venue, find who owns it, hire it, get fire and safety, get a licence and do a party. I said we already do events and to do it that way would cost quite a bit of money. I asked why the council couldn't give us some unused land or property, then we'd get a licence and do free parties; we could pay for the licence through donations.

"It's summer now and we primarily want to do free parties outdoors, but the ideas being floated at that meeting would mean we could do free parties in the winter without threat of police harassment. The guy from the licencing committee thought we were going to charge people. We had to explain to him that we were essentially a free-outfit, we didn't want to worry about money, dress-sense and security; it's free party ethics. It took him a while to get his head round."

Police and official attitudes to the free party elements of All Systems have been varied. At Smokescreen's Quarry gig in May, Derbyshire's constabulary were notably playing a low-profile game, acting more as traffic wardens and parking attendants than potential osbstructors. "All we're really worried about is ambulances and fire engines being able to get up to the

"Just as we were pulling off site we were confronted with maybe 25 wagons of police. They pulled over to one side and let us drive off. Just one more record and we'd have blown it."

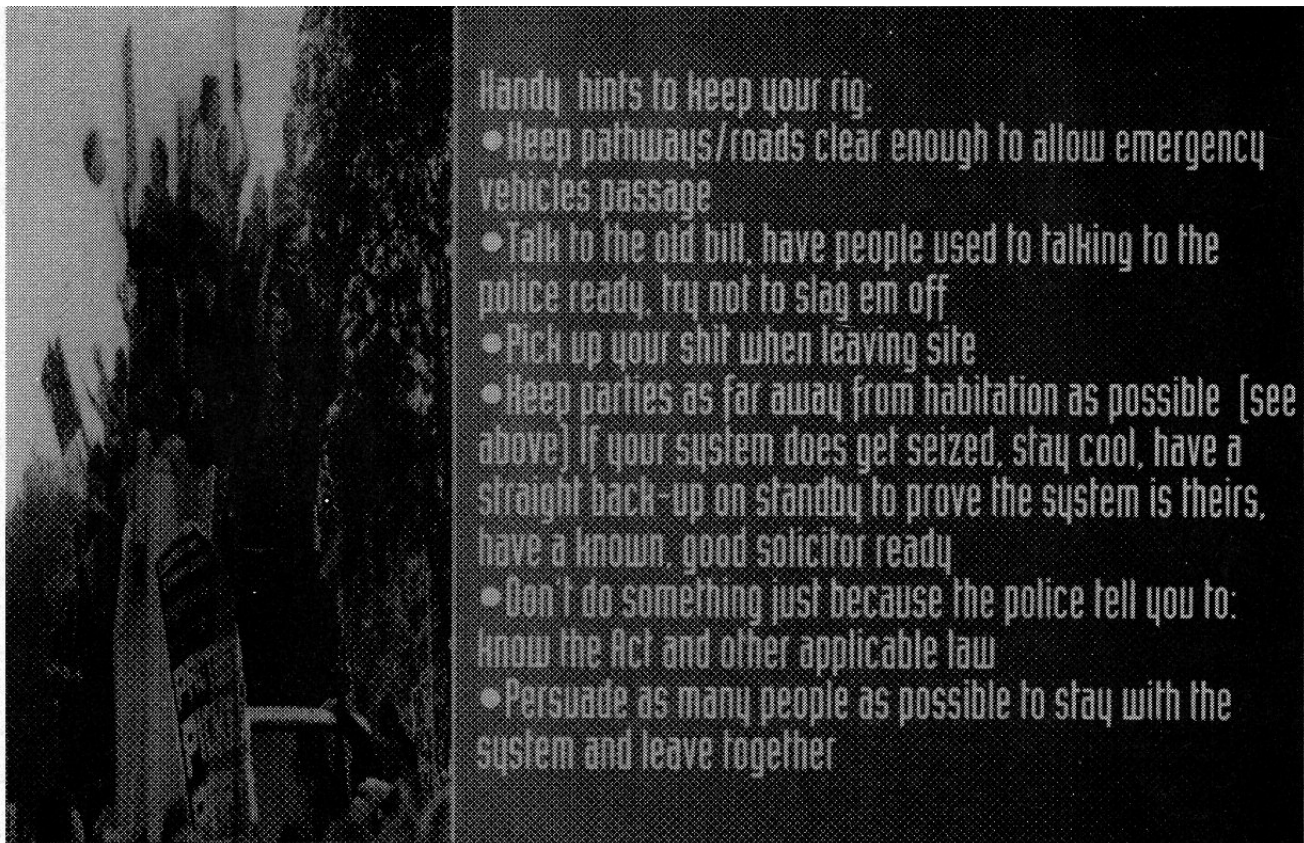
similarly-minded group then there is courage to deal with unfriendly authority or potential imprisonment.

Tash: "It's all about intimidation and the vested interests' game plan to lower people's resistance to intimidation. Our plan is to support people so they can continue."

All Systems' gigs are

more nights during the week we do clubs and try to support ourselves day to day. Free parties we do at weekends.

"We recently had a meeting with SHED, a local drug advice agency. There was a guy there from the entertainments and licencing committee, part of Sheffield



village,” said one sergeant, as his colleague directed a reversing mercedes van into a tight space.

Rick: “Mostly police pressure is words in ears and such, nothing too heavy, just intimidation. On New Year’s Eve we were doing a party and by complete coincidence it was the same weekend as someone else was trying to organise a massive party - Castlemorton-revisited style. The police took loads of information on vehicles all over but they didn’t follow it up until just before the May Bank Holiday, four months later. They traced our truck and came to the DIY office and seriously bent our ears, ‘we know who you are... what are you up to this weekend’ sort of thing.

“I know what pressure the Exodus Collective have been under but it’s a question of scale, they’re much more in the authorities’ faces. They’re dealing with thousands of kids from a small area whereas we’re dealing with a much wider area. There’s quite a substantial following for Smokescreen gigs at the moment and people come down from Leeds, Sheffield and Leicester for gigs in Derbyshire.”

Smokescreen had similar

attention from the police after they did a free party in Sheffield.

Laurence: “We did a party at an old abandoned school just a couple of hundred yards up from Sheffield’s central police station. We knew we were taking the piss a bit but it was cold and we wanted to be indoors. The police turned up and just sat outside. I went and talked to a couple of them, they said there was no problem, they were just there to watch. During the night fire officers turned up to check safety but there were plenty of fire exits and stuff so after we walked them round the building they went away.

“During the next week we heard from several people, not part of the system, who had been contacted by police asking who were the organisers, was there beer on sale, where do these people come from, how did they hear about it... just someone in the police force saying to others I want you to devote time to finding out about who these people are.”

Smokescreen, Pulse and the other free party components of All Systems have respect. Respect not only for each other but for the wider community; local towns and

villages. Party venues are carefully selected for noise minimisation and care is taken to ensure adequate and safe vehicle access; no excuse is given to the police to close them down. Maybe this is another factor in their success.

Rick: “Quarries are perfect for parties - one system is good enough for it. You can’t beat a good quarry for the ultimate party and Derbyshire is the best place for quarries - perfect.”

All systems are not interested in direct confrontation, they’re interested in the spirit and community that they are increasingly generating; a free-festival style celebration through dance.

Members of All Systems also know what they want: to continue to put on free parties and get away with it.

Laurence: “We did one party in Sherwood Forest, in April, that got a bit more attention from the police than usual. We talked with them and negotiated a time to close the party down. When that time came and we hadn’t, they got a bit heavier. We then gave everyone an hour’s notice that we were closing down. Anyway, an hour later we started packing up. We had a few punters come up and start giving us a hard time for giving in. I asked them what they wanted: to dance another couple of hours ‘til the police come wading in, we lose our rig and that’s it - or do you want another party next weekend?”

“Just as we were pulling off site we were confronted with maybe 25 wagons of police, they pulled to one side and let us drive off. Just one more record and we’d have blown it.”

All Systems are under no illusions and Laurence certainly doesn’t view what they are doing as ‘hard-core’. But they do provide an example of how to just get on with the business at hand; offering a

much needed alternative to the machinations of mainstream club culture.

Tash, also, is realistic about what is needed to effect a shift in society’s perceptions of celebration: “When ranged against the vested interests and the Home Secretary, All Systems aren’t going to crack the planet and, despite the heroic efforts of a few people, what difference is it going to make unless we can get the word out that what we’re doing here can be done all over the country?”

“There’s nothing special about the East Midlands. On a local level we have to get involved. As in most smaller towns and cities, we’re privileged to be small enough so that communication is good. That closeness is what’s needed to make a dent.”

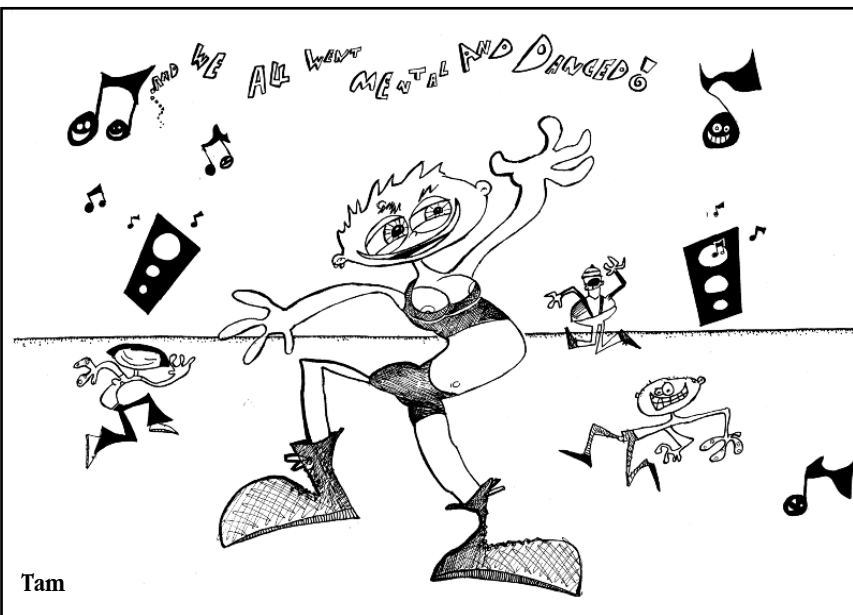
The way the police are implementing the Criminal Justice Act with respect to raves is not uniform over the country. In many places, as soon as a police officer says those three words to an assembly of more than 50 people, someone is likely to get upset. Until the CJA is more solidly set in the minds of British culture many police constabularies will be reticent about using it and will, instead, rely on the provisions of the Public Order Act 1986. This legislation has been around for 10 years and when used, means the temperature stays lower.

Harry: “When the outrage over the CJA dissipates the police will get on with implementing it. Things become accepted in the framework of things. I remember when the Public Order Act came out 10 years ago, now it’s accepted that you can’t do this but you can get away with that.”

The introduction of the CJA was never entirely meant to deal immediately with the supposed problems it was intended for; knee-jerk reactions are simply devices to appease constituency members and win extra votes. The motivation for the introduction of the CJA may be much more insidious. In the way the Public Order Act 1986 didn’t effectively destroy Britain’s travelling community until the mid-nineties, the full effects of the CJA may not be realised until after the end of the millenium, when forces across the country will have the confidence and legal precedents to implement it.

Perhaps the future of festivals and parties lies in the persistence, determination and vision of small free party possés. For sound systems to effectively continue in the face of the CJA small well thought-out parties, with local residents in mind, would seem to be essential; but imagine a future: hundreds of small systems up and down the country doing free gigs regularly. Each has a loyal following of 500 people and they’re getting away with it. Then, one day, they all come together. Maybe that day will be the Summer Solstice and maybe the venue will be Stonehenge.

SQ



Tim Malyon
investigates the
application of
licencing
sanctions to
parties and
discovers a
threat that may
be bigger than
the criminal law



Nick Cobbing

Have you got a licence?

On May 25th a small unlicensed party near Maiden Newton in Dorset was broken up mid swing. Police raided the 'do' using powers under the 1982 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act requiring a licence for public musical entertainment. PA and records were seized as evidence.

Inspector Smith from Swanage who seized the gear admitted to Squall that "there were no public order problems" and "we didn't have any complaints about the noise". There were no arrests and the owner had given his permission for the party. If licencing charges are made, equipment and records could be held up to trial.

Neither the 1994 Criminal Justice and Public Order Act (CJA) nor the 1986 Public Order Act were invoked. They don't apply to indoor events - this was in a barn. But licencing sanctions are no less painful, with a maximum penalty of £20,000 or six months imprisonment or both.

On April 8th this year West Wiltshire District Council stopped a party before it had happened by taking out an injunction against the organiser, Dennis Green, forbidding him from "organising a party to which members of the public have access." The Council claimed he needed a licence. Squall asked Sue Ritchie of West Wiltshire District Council when a public entertainment licence is required: "The question is whether or not a member of the public can gain entrance," she explained. If 'members of the public' have access, then the 'organisers' of a musical event need a licence from the local District or

Borough Council 28 days before the event, unless the building being used is licenced, like a club or some halls. The Council can impose safety and sanitation conditions, and policing. It can also charge for the licence, £500 in West Wilts' case for a 500-person over nighter. If busted for no licence, "all those who take part in the provision of musical entertainment, except those who attend for the purpose of being entertained" can be liable. As the law stands, PA and lighting people as well as DJs are like to be included under this definition, hence the seizure of records at Maiden Newton, but not MCs. But this is a deeply grey area of law.

Dennis Green insisted that his party was by invitation only, and therefore private. Ritchie disagrees "There were fliers available; we regarded that as advertising. If any 'do' is advertised, then it's public." Squall asked her specifically about the device of sending tickets to friends who pass them on to their friends and so on down the line, sometimes for free, sometimes for a nominal costs price. "Payment is not the issue," she told us "we would still regard that as a private party. Provided people are individually invited, no licence would be required." There's room for play in the grey.

Not content with the District Council's injunction Wiltshire Constabulary took out a Section 14 Public Order Act (1986) notice against Green. This can only apply to an assembly in a public place which is wholly or partly open to the air. The venue for the party was neither. The constabulary responsible for 'The Battle of The Beanfield' also invoked

the CJA 'rave' sections. These apply to unlicensed events both on private and public land, but only in the open air or in buildings partly open to the air. Undeterred, police ran a 150 officer special operation the night of the banned party threatening arrests under public order legislation. "Police are trying to push back the legal frontiers of how they can interfere with public assemblies," commented solicitor Mike Schwartz from Bindman & Partners.

Wiltshire ratepayers need have no worries about costs: this July's Green Gathering has hiked its ticket price, from £25.00 to £37.50 to afford an expected police bill of £10,000 and that's without even needing a licence. "We negotiated that down last year. They started at £32,000," explained spokesperson Anne Waterhouse. "We're not primarily a musical event, so we don't have a licence. We just have an agreement with the police and local authorities." People who witnessed officers in riot gear dragging 'misbehavers' off site last year, or the massive stop and search operation the year before that - rest assured: "The police are quite impressed by the event," Anne added. "They have a unit on site. They're pretty discrete. They don't walk about at night or anything, not officially anyway."

Two years ago Wiltshire Police wanted £50,000 in advance for a 5,000 person overnigher; the Vale of White Horse District Council wanted £5,000 for the licence. When The Exodus Collective first started parties, they tried for licences. "Telephone number size bills were put in front of us," explained Glenn

Jenkins. Exodus is no exception. Police pressure on licencing authorities has stopped attempts at licenced community parties in the Minehead area. So, outside of clubs and large commercial events, "nobody bothers with licences," says Michelle Poole from the Advance Party. "It's a waste of time, too expensive and too cumbersome. And the police have the last say." So much for a government Advisory Council recommendation two years ago that: "More legal raves be encouraged by local authorities... by involving responsible organisers of raves in the process."

Safety is crucial. But licencing can be as powerful a tool of oppression as the criminal law, and much more subtle. The Home Office has recently recommended model licencing conditions for dances such as searches and "video surveillance equipment to monitor activity" which far exceed powers under the CJA or Public Order Act. Some authorities have already gone further. Before refusing Tribal Gathering a licence Cherwell District Council stipulated that: "The organisers must demonstrate a pro-active anti-drugs policy, searches on entrance and an undertaking that anyone caught carrying drugs will be handed to the police." District Solicitor Nicholas Fardon described this conditon to Squall as "a joint initiative between police and council." You gotta giggle or gag.

Note: Case law on licencing and public order is changing fast. Contact Advance Party on 0181 450 6929 for legal advice or recommended lawyers.



MORE CRIMINAL SANCTIONS AGAINST MUSIC AND PARTIES

Private parties are to set become the latest target of cultural control, courtesy of a private members bill currently blasting its way through the parliament.

As SQUALL goes to press, the Noise Bill has just completed its passage through the House of Commons. Only a short whisk through the House of Lords and a perfunctory third and final reading in the Commons stands in the way of the creation of a new criminal offence of playing music between 11pm and 7am.

As covered in SQUALL 11, the Department of Environment Neighbour Noise Working Party published its report on noise control in March 1995. The recommendations contained within the report included the creation of an immediate criminal offence of creating too much noise and the confiscation of the offenders hi-fi equipment.

Subsequent to the report, Harry Greenway, Con MP Ealing North, authored the Noise Bill, which not only incorporates the strictest recommendations from the DoE report, but goes several steps further. Despite the news spin implicit in the name Noise Bill, the parliamentary debates surrounding it demonstrate that music is its intended target.

The Bill's author, Harry Greenway, said during the report stage debate: "All hon. Members will recognise that music systems are much louder and cheaper than they were 10 years ago, and therefore more pervasive. I remind the House that the type of music that is now most popular is very different from the music of 10 years ago. I am talking about dance music, which is characterised by a heavy, loud, repetitive bass drum beat. Not only is this music almost invariably played at an excessively loud volume, but the beat has a strong reverberation which passes easily through neighbouring walls in houses and neighbouring ceilings

in flats. Is this music a passing trend that will not be with us in a year's time? No. The music is played widely in clubs around the world and, as a genre, it is now indisputably the nation's favourite. It is so popular that different branches of the music have been developed, including jungle, handbag, hard core and techno. [laughter.] One has to have some knowledge of these things. This music and a sophisticated hi-fi operated by a selfish soul are a devastating combination." (Hansard 16/2/96 Cols 1246-1247)

What sort of democracy do we have when music that is "undisputably the nation's favourite" becomes the object of criminal sanctions? Greenway seems unaware of the significance of his own words and the measures contained in his bill are severe.

Subsequent to a 10 minute warning, a court fine of up to £1,000 or an on-the-spot fine of £100 is to be levied on the offending music makers together with the confiscation of hi-fi equipment. The sound level threshold at and above which these criminal sanctions will be used is at the discretion of the Secretary of State for Environment, though the level suggested in parliamentary debate is 35 db, about the level of a normal television set.

Full government backing has been given to the bill, so ensuring it will proceed to statute. Furthermore, Jack Straw, shadow Home Secretary, has offered Labour Party support for the measures contained within the Bill, so ensuring there was no significant parliamentary opposition to its package of severe measures.

The rhetoric upon which these measures have been both introduced and received cross party support, is best summed up by Harry Greenway's 'thank you' list delivered during the report stage of the Bill on May 10.

"I am grateful for the support of hon. members The Mail on Sunday and the Evening Standard [who] have highlighted stories of elderly ladies having to sit outside in the cold and rain, or to hide in cupboards, to escape the noise of a ghetto blaster being played upstairs or next door." (Col 561 Hansard 10/5/96)



BILL BREAKDOWN

The Noise Bill

(as amended in standing committee)
"to make provision about noise emitted from dwellings at night; about the forfeiture and confiscation of equipment used to make noise unlawfully; and for connected purposes."

Clause One: States that implementation of the bill is at the discretion of the local authority and that the authority must give prior and proper notice of the bill and its effects (including publication for two consecutive weeks in a local newspaper at least two months before commencement).

Clause Two: States that if a local authority adopts the Bill it must investigate complaints of noise. Although this clause states that for an offence the noise must exceed a permitted level by measurement made within the complainant's dwelling (between 11pm and 7am), it also states that it is up to the local authority's officer to decide whether or not to use a measuring device and where to use it. The term "would or might exceed the permitted level" is also used.

Clause Three: Warning notices may be issued in the case of excessive noise covering the period from ten minutes after issue until 7am. Excessive noise within this period is an offence. These notices may be delivered to anybody that the local authority officer considers suitable or it can be just left at the "noisy" dwelling.

Clause Four: Ignore the warning notice, and unless you've got a reasonable excuse then an offence is committed, finable up to a £1000.

Clause Five: Empowers the Secretary of State for the Environment to set the permitted decibel level and to fix "different levels" for "different circumstances".

Clause Six: The minister also determines the type of measuring device and the manner of its use. Evidence of sound levels must come from such an approved device.

Clause Seven: Covers formatting and handling of evidence. Correct conditions must apply, the evidence must be signed "by the officer" and it

must indicate the offending address. Any such evidence must be presented to the defendants at least seven days before trial and the officer must attend trial if given three days notice by the defence.

Clause Eight: Allows for the issue of an on-the-spot "fixed penalty notice" levying a £100 fine to be paid within fourteen days. Equipment cannot be confiscated if a fixed penalty notice has been issued.

Clause Nine: There is to be only one fixed penalty notice per night but other action may be taken for that night (ie a court fine and/or confiscation of equipment). The minister may raise the £100 fine and gets the cash thus collected.

Clause Ten: Details the conditions for the seizure of equipment. This may be done upon transgression of a warning notice, using a warrant issued by a Justice of the Peace (To be carried out by force if necessary). The officers must leave the premises as they found it (apart from seized equipment) but obstruction of such action is finable by up to £1000.

Clause Eleven: Covers definitions of, a) 'local authority', and b) 'dwelling' - which includes gardens and outbuildings and even unoccupied dwellings. Again the Secretary of State may make "different provisions for different circumstances"

Clause Twelve: Protects local authorities from liabilities.

Clause Thirteen: Directs costs of enactment to the public purse.

Clause Fourteen: Names the Act and states that it is not applicable in Scotland. It also lists variations for Northern Ireland.

The Schedule: Concerns seized equipment which may be retained for 28 days, until court, or until charges are dropped. The equipment may not be retained if a fixed penalty notice has been given or paid.

Charges may be levelled for the return of equipment (again rates to be set by the Secretary of State). If charges are unpaid, or the defendant is convicted then the equipment may be retained, otherwise the defendant has up to six months to reclaim the equipment if innocent of an offence. The Secretary of State decides about the disposal/sale of the equipment and how the proceeds should be spent.

top ten FREE party tunes

DJ Danny Baxter from Desert Storm

onna techno guerilla tip

DJ Kay from the Exodus Collective,

onna jungle tip

1. Phunk not Funk - Insync 11 - (Dread)
2. Space Dust by Apollo 13 - (Back 2 Basics)
3. Can't play Bass - Asend - (Second Movement)
4. Lend Me EP - Repatriation - (Kennet)
5. Junglist Warrior - Ellis Dee - (Cat)
6. Hang dem High - DJ Sparks - (JFK)
7. Dem Gun Mad [pow wow] - Hired Gun - (JFK)
8. Back to Nam EP - (Untold)
9. Flatliner 33 - (Ram)
10. Stomping Weaver - (Revbellious)

1. Edge Records No.s 8,11,13
2. Acid Fever Records all releases
3. Turtle Z - ISM - (Totem)
4. Loose Caboose - Electroliners - (Twitch)
5. Any City of Angles or Rampant releases
6. Soap - Foam and Bailout remixes - (Harthouse)
7. Neighbourhood - Space [Pissed up stomp mix] - (Gut)
8. Tracers 'Live' - DOM - (Stay Up Forever)
9. Pneumatic Hammer - Kertap Yensil - (Limite)
10. Shires - Armatage Shanks - (RTS)
11. Desert Storm EP - Desert Storm (DS1)

DJ Hazad from the Exodus Collective

onna Techno-Jungle Tip

DJ Lawrence from Smokescreen

onna dubby house tip

1. Keep Pushing - Boris Dlugsch - (Peppermint Jam)
2. I Can't Kick this Feeling - (Moddy Man)
3. The Three Million Dollar Man by Foxy Lady - (?)
4. Urban Theory EP - Mike Delgado - (King St. Sounds US)
5. Ride the Wave - Surf Dudes - (Freshly Squeezed)
6. Blue Spirit - No2 - (white label)
7. Active Extracts - (Cross Section)
8. Do it your way - Mood II Swing - (Groove On US)
9. Love you the Right Way - Byron Stingily - (Nervous US)
10. This Happy Feeling - (Back 2 Basic)

1. Global Transfer - Butch - (Global Ambitiion)
2. The Stomper - Format - (Homegrown)
3. Into the Music - jimmy J - (Labyrinth)
4. Blown Away - DJ Mystical - (Establishment)
5. Raise your Hands - DJ UFO - (Spirit)
6. Sensation - Edit V - (Impact)
7. Bongo Business - Motivator - (Homegrown)
8. Incredible Bass - Oasis - (Viscious Vinyl)
9. Trancespotter - Vinyl Blair - (Junior Boys Own)
10. Party One - Johan&Tommy Rombouts - (Two Thumbs)

DJ Seed & the bridge freelance/SQUALL events

onna funk up trip hop and jazz jungle tip

1. Dark Lady - DJ Food - (Ninja)
2. Searching (Roni Size Mix) - Nobukazu Takemura (Toy's Factory)
3. Television, The Drug of the Nation - Disposable Heroes of Hiphoprisy- (4th & Broadway)
4. Yayli (Unity Vibrations) - Loop Guru - (Nation/BMG)
5. I'll Fly Away - The Ballistic Bros - (Junior Boys Own)
6. Beatitude - The Jazz Brothers - (Brownswood/Talkin Loud)
7. Only the Strong Survive - DJ Krush - (MoWax)
8. Swank - Red Snapper - (Warp)
9. The Revolutionary Woman - Up, Bustle and Out - (Ninja)
10. . Also spake Zarathustra - Deodato - (Sony)

COMPETITION: DESERT STORM ON VINYL

The Desert Storm posse have given us 5 of their Desert Storm EPs to pass on to five sets of ears who read SQUALL. (wot? - ed)
So the first five people send in the answer to the following question get a some top guerrilla techno toons to spin on their deck/s.

In Desert Storm's Dictionary of underground terminology, what does RDV stand for?

Answers on the most unusual postcard you can find to 'Desert Storm Comp', SQUALL, PO Box 8959, London N19 5HW.

A RE-ISSUE OF DESERT STORM'S EP IS IMMINENT. COPIES CAN BE OBTAINED BY RINGING KEITH 0850 403 821



Karen Robinson

Newbury became many things. To local MP, David Rendell, it was a soap box from which to bolster re-election prospects. To Brays Detective Agency, it was the opportunity to waste another £500,000 photographing people smoking rollies or drinking cups of tea.

To the security guards it was £3.50 per hour. There were mornings when you felt that even if only one protester had turned out the contractors would still have had to lay on hundreds of security. "We've only got to be lucky once," a protestor shouted as the CB radio crackled into life. "You've got to be lucky all the time."

To the police it was undoubtedly an expensive headache (£3.6 million), though individual constables were more than happy clocking-up the over-time. Tucked inside their tunics, like a crude phrase book from some far-flung police state, each officer carried the soon to be very familiar wordings of the CJA.

For three months the so-called Newbury Sausage, a sausage-shaped exclusion zone, formed the basis for some of the most stringent bail conditions since the miners' strike. Digger-diving, that celebrated cornerstone of NVDA, was rendered virtually impossible by the new Aggravated Trespass provision. Tree-sitting became the activists' predominant tactic. There were 770 arrests. Seventy two people were arrested four times.

Only to the protestors - the locals, tree-dwellers, ground crew and office bods - was Newbury staggeringly beautiful. The following diary is dedicated to those brave souls that defied the chainsaws and exposed themselves to violence, incarceration, and severe winter conditions, and for whom the days were measured by the amount of time they could keep the trees alive...

THURSDAY 6 JULY 1995

On his last day as Transport Secretary, Brian "paint-splatt" Mawhinney gives the go-ahead for the Newbury by-pass, thereby abandoning a year long review of the scheme.

TUESDAY 9 JANUARY

The Third Battle of Newbury begins in spectacular style when campaigners blockade the security compound at Abbots Farm, Reading, with two 25 foot tripods. Work is cancelled for the day.

WEDNESDAY 10 JANUARY

Day Two. Campaigners lock-on to the Reading coach station contracted to carry Reliance Security. Horsemen Coaches cancel the contract. A solitary digger is besieged at Penn Wood for five hours. The police "recommend" that work be halted for the day.

THURSDAY 11 JANUARY

"Ragtag army devises its tactics in the pub" The Times. Red Face Day at the Department of Transport as clearance work is abandoned for a third day.

FRIDAY 12 JANUARY

Meat-wagons signal the end of police neutrality. Thirty four arrests for Aggravated Trespass, and mobile chainsaw crews tear into the first of 10,000 trees.

TUESDAY 16 JANUARY

The police and security bill tops £240,000, with 116 arrests and 300 trees felled. A group of Newbury business chiefs back the protesters. Of 140 responses to a Newbury Business Breakfast Club questionnaire sent out to local firms, asking: "If a better route could be found, would you like it examined?", 110 say yes.

WEDNESDAY 17 JANUARY

Angel: "In the spirit of Lady Godiva, I'm here to mourn the death of my mother and the 17 million people killed directly by the motorcar. A service in Coventry Cathedral commemorating 100 years of the motorcar, complete with a Coventry

Daimler chugging down the aisle, is disrupted by a nude protest.

THURSDAY 18 JANUARY

Balin's 16-day occupation of a tripod ends after repeated attacks from local vigilantes.

THURSDAY 25 JANUARY

Keith, Security Manager, Reliance Security: "Anything in the trees today you whack it, right? Thwack it with your helmet. Anything. And don't get caught." Posing as an unemployed French carpenter, with a glowing reference from "Michael Howard - Director CJA Enterprises", the Guardian's Environmental Editor, John Vidal, infiltrates Reliance Security and exposes a culture of violence: GUARD 1: "Don't forget to say good morning as you break their fingers." GUARD 2: "I'd cut the trees down with the smellies in them." GUARD 1: "Remember, a kidney punch doesn't leave bruises lads. That's how I got away with bullying at school." Keith, the security manager, is suspended pending "an immediate investigation".

FEBRUARY

Controversy surrounds the release of a Highways Agency report. The document, which formed part of 1995's final review of the scheme, estimates a saving of two minutes on off-peak journey times through Newbury once the road is completed. "We don't just build roads to save time," says the Highways Agency. "We estimate the road will save 28 lives over a 30 year period."

FRIDAY 9 FEBRUARY

A group of churchmen hold an on-site service for protestors and anger the local pro-bypass diocese. John Bickersteth, the former Bishop of Bath and Wells, asks God to "help our Government to see how feeble and two-faced they are being, like Pontius Pilate." Five security guards defect. Bemused protestors initially suspect a cunning plot to infiltrate their ranks.

"The guards grabbed a protestor by her arm even

THE NEWBURY SAUSAGE



1996 kicked off with a vengeance. The festive season finished, and it was down to Newbury. Representatives from four full-on years of road protests gathering on yet another tract of beautiful countryside for the long-awaited showdown with the Highways Agency. Neil Goodwin wrote the diary...

though it was in a sling," explains one defector. "I said 'that was out of order' and he told me to shut my mouth. Then a policeman came up and asked me if I'd seen what was going on. I said I did and could act as a witness. Then one of the guards said I was sacked. So I joined the other side."

SUNDAY 11 FEBRUARY

Snelsmore Common becomes the setting for Britain's largest ever anti-roads gathering. Six thousand people, including TV celebrities and a six foot doormouse, walk the proposed route. Seventy two year old Fred Gibson, a former private in the Essex Regiment, donates his war medals to a tree-dweller as "a mark of respect". "My wartime mates died dreaming of the English countryside," says Fred. "We can't let them destroy it without a fight."

MONDAY 12 FEBRUARY

National day of action - 150 sign up for security work at Blue Arrow, the recruitment agency, while others "renovate" the Newbury offices of Tarmac, a potential bidder for the scheme. Earlier, clearance work had to be cancelled when most of the vehicles used to ferry security guards experienced "mysterious defects".

THURSDAY 29 FEBRUARY

"We shall fight them in the beeches."

The latterday parliamentary forces of Nicholas Blandy, the Under Sheriff of Berkshire, move in to begin a full month of evictions. One hundred officers launch a pre-dawn raid on Pixie Village camp. They destroy the ground camp and "take into custody" the network of underground tunnels that run beneath the Site of Special Scientific Interest.

By nightfall, with only eight protesters remaining between six interconnected tree-houses, the campaign braces itself for humiliating defeat. However, much to the embarrassment of Thames Valley police, reinforcements manage to breach

the floodlit cordon overnight. With the element of surprise so spectacularly squandered, the camp holds out till the weekend.

MONDAY 4 MARCH

"Arresting people 70ft in the air and turning them upside down is so reckless as to quite likely constitute a criminal offence," - Alan Bridger, Solicitor. Bailiffs turn nasty at the Granny Ash eviction. Balin is shown on TV being attacked by a riot shield. One man falls 20ft from a tree. Arthur Pendragon, self-styled reincarnation of King Arthur, is arrested for possession of an offensive weapon - his broadsword. He later strips-off before mortified magistrates in protest at the banning of Excalibur from the courtroom.

TUESDAY 12 MARCH

Ben Moon, Climber: "You run up the trees, the adrenalin's really flowing. You're 70, 80 feet up, not clipped on to anything, and they're grabbing at your ankles." A posse of Sheffield climbers, including Ben Moon, one of the best free-climbers in the world, engage in aerial skirmishes with "mercenary" climbers sent in to evict Gotan camp. Sheriff Blandy takes five hours to evict one tree.

WEDNESDAY 13 MARCH

Bailiffs, security and police frogmen move in at 3am for the start of the two and a half day eviction of Kennet camp.

WEDNESDAY 20 MARCH

At Reddings Copse, an oak tree falls onto "the mother of cherry pickers", specially imported for the eviction of a 120ft Corsican Pine. A climber is injured. Sheriff Blandy barely looks up from his packed lunch.

WEDNESDAY 27 MARCH

The three-day Ricketty Bridge eviction, complete with tree-top sound system and 150 branch-bound defenders, kicks off.

THURSDAY 4 APRIL

Sheriff Blandy: "Oh dear. We seem to have a security problem." Triumphalism turns to farce and undignified retreat as Blandy's press conference is hijacked by protesters at Middle Oak. To the image of a speeding landrover flanked by red-faced rozzers, an ITN journalist utters the immortal lines: "And the sheriff was quite literally run out of town."

SUNDAY 21 APRIL

Martin Luther King: "If the world were to end tomorrow, I would still plant an apple tree today." In direct defiance to the installation of 20 miles of high security fencing around the proposed route, Phase II of the campaign begins with the setting up of a Diggers' community at Gotan camp. English Nature considers the planting of vegetables and flowers by 150 locals as having "done more damage than the road-builders". This summer, as tree-folk recover from Sheriff Blandy's sustained attack, Phase II of the campaign is set to continue with a blockade of COSTAIN, appointed as the construction contractors in June. Third Battle is urging sorted itinerants everywhere to "BLOCKADE THE BUREAUCRATS" by ringing, faxing and writing to COSTAIN and the Highways Agency to demand a little soul-searching.

HIGHWAYS AGENCY

Broadway, Broad Street,
BIRMINGHAM B15 1BL
TEL: (0121) 275 8007 (Steve Rowsell, Project Director)
TEL: (0121) 275 8000/275 8392 / 275 8237
(Switchboard)
FAX: (0121) 275 8424 / 275 8184

COSTAIN

Costain House, Nicholsons Walk,
Maidenhead, BERKSHIRE SL16 1LN
TEL: (01628) 842285 (Roger Jones, Contracts Director)
TEL: (01628) 842444 (Switchboard)
FAX: (01628) 74477



Highway hold-up: Reclaim the Streets invite you to this Summer's festival of resistance

AS PARLIAMENT prepares to shed another skin, millions will look to Blair and his New Labour for change, to turn back the clock on 17 savage years under the Tories. Transport campaigners and environmentalists will lobby the all-powerful, all new, Minister for Transport. Their voice will be but a whisper compared with the cosy roar of the billion-pound oil and car industries.

Is it possible that the new managers of the democratic market are as intrinsic to its function as the scum they may replace? Is their job to carefully keep the engine running: to maintain the status quo?

The Street Party continues the long tradition of carnivals and festivals that stand as a moment outside the dominant order, opposing and challenging it. It embodies the ideal of non-mediated political action; the belief that fundamental change will only occur when people control their own destinies.

So when we shout it's not at politicians, but to people every-

where: People angry about the car economy; people angry about attacks on the festival and party scene; people angry about destruction of the land for "development". Ours is a shout for unity, for a general uprising.

The Street Party is a human uprising not only against cars and roads but against the ever-increasing commodification of life. The sound system is not only generating sound but actively struggling for a culture in which music and dance are not attacked but embraced. The crowd not only disrupts the traffic, they disrupt the smooth surface of commodity relations: the life where people relate to things rather than each other. On a London street even laughter is subversive...

The next Street Party is on July 13th. If you want to join in the fun, party where no-one ever partied before, change the engine growl to music, the car congestion to dance, call us on 0171 281 4621 (musicians, performers, and other active contributors welcome).

"Judas rope"

THE THIRD BATTLE OF NEWBURY has prompted another battle, one of words, in the pages of climbing magazines like *Climber* and *On The Edge*.

The use of climbers, contracted by Chesterfield company Richard Turner Ltd, to evict protestors at Newbury has angered those in the climbing community who believe that as well as having developed skills "in ascending rocks and handling ropes" climbers have "entered into a bond of trust and responsibility towards the environments in which we, as climbers, move and towards the whole idea of respect for nature".

To this extent the May edition of *Climber* acknow-

ledges a deep respect for the protestors: "our church was indeed their church."

Many climbers believe that the "collaborators" being used by Richard Turner are engaged in "legalised GBH". They have been appalled by the danger many young and, prior to Newbury, completely inexperienced climbers, have been placed in at the hands of the Richard Turner mercenaries.

Jim Perrin, writing for *Climber*, is clear that most climbers share his sense of shame and asks "You who've betrayed your community, friends and fellow human beings: how long will your money last? And when it's gone, remember - when he faced what he'd done, Judas had a rope too..."

Climbers use torture tactics on M66

TWO PROTEST CAMPS established on the route of the M66 in Greater Manchester were evicted on June 5th. Both evictions were marked by vicious tactics from bailiffs and scab climbers, under the direction of Under Sheriff Andrew Wilson.

A small camp at the edge of the drained reservoir in Audenshaw was hit at dawn. Bailiffs used torture tactics to remove protestors from concrete lock-ons, one of whom, known as 'The Bishop' had a rope placed around his neck which they used to try and pull him out of the lock-on. After this failed they roped his body and attempted to pull him out using a wire-tightener to crank the rope until the Bishop's arm was being physically stretched as if by a medieval rack. It still took nearly two hours to get The Bishop out of his barrel.

Later the bailiffs closed in on 'Daisy Nook 2', a small but beautiful camp set up after the February evictions. As rumours of the terror tactics at Audenshaw filtered through to those in the tree houses, hopes of a safer approach under the gaze of television cameras were soon scotched.

Andy was locked on inside a cement filled barrel. Rather than take the time to cut him out, the climbers attempted to lower him down, head first, barrel and all. Inevitably, Andy's head was clattered on the way down, causing a frightening neck injury. Andy was eventually moved to hospital, where strained neck muscles was the relatively happy diagnosis. Undoubtedly this was due to good luck, leaving everyone asking how long it will be before the climbing psychopaths from Sheffield actually kill someone?

On a lighter note, a bulldozer became suddenly silent for a while. On closer inspection it was being sat on by Jenny, straight from a school exam, who had arrived to find the unguarded machine and simply hopped on.

Elsewhere the latest defence against the bailiffs was a shopping trolley suspended from a tree with a certain Sorted Itinerant handcuffed inside. They got it down eventually, but if anyone fancies being carried off a site in a makeshift sedan chair, shopping trolleys are definitely the way forward.

The road is not due for completion until 1999 and the fight goes on.

Roads to ruin

OVER 240 ROAD-BUILDING PROJECTS are still to go ahead despite the slashing of the Government's construction programme last year, a new report shows.

An audit published by the Council for the Protection of Rural England in April shows 246 schemes still due to begin across the country.

Split into three parts, they are made up of 38 privately-financed roads, 104 "main programme" schemes and 104 longer-term schemes.

Amongst the most damaging projects, the CPRE listed the A259 in Kent which will damage the Lympne Escarpment, an SSSI and area of cultural heritage.

A new bypass in the Lake District National Park will involve three kilometres of new dual carriageway and the A49 Hereford bypass will destroy ancient woodland and meadows.

Air campaigners expose Manchester hypocrisy

THE LABOUR PARTY'S smooth ride towards a Single Party State in Manchester has been ruffled once again by the antics of radical campaign group Fresh Air Now!

Faced with a council which continually places environmental issues at the bottom of its agenda, FAN! have been raging a local media war, focussing attention on the council's hypocrisy.

Manchester City Council has a stated aim to reduce pollution, which is unsurprising for the city which regularly tops league tables for SO₂ and other pollutants. It also has stated policies of encouraging ever greater numbers of cars into the city, supporting the construction of the M66 and a second runway at Manchester Airport, and is currently courting plans for one or more new waste incinerators.

In February the council passed (without any dissenting votes) its response to 'The Great

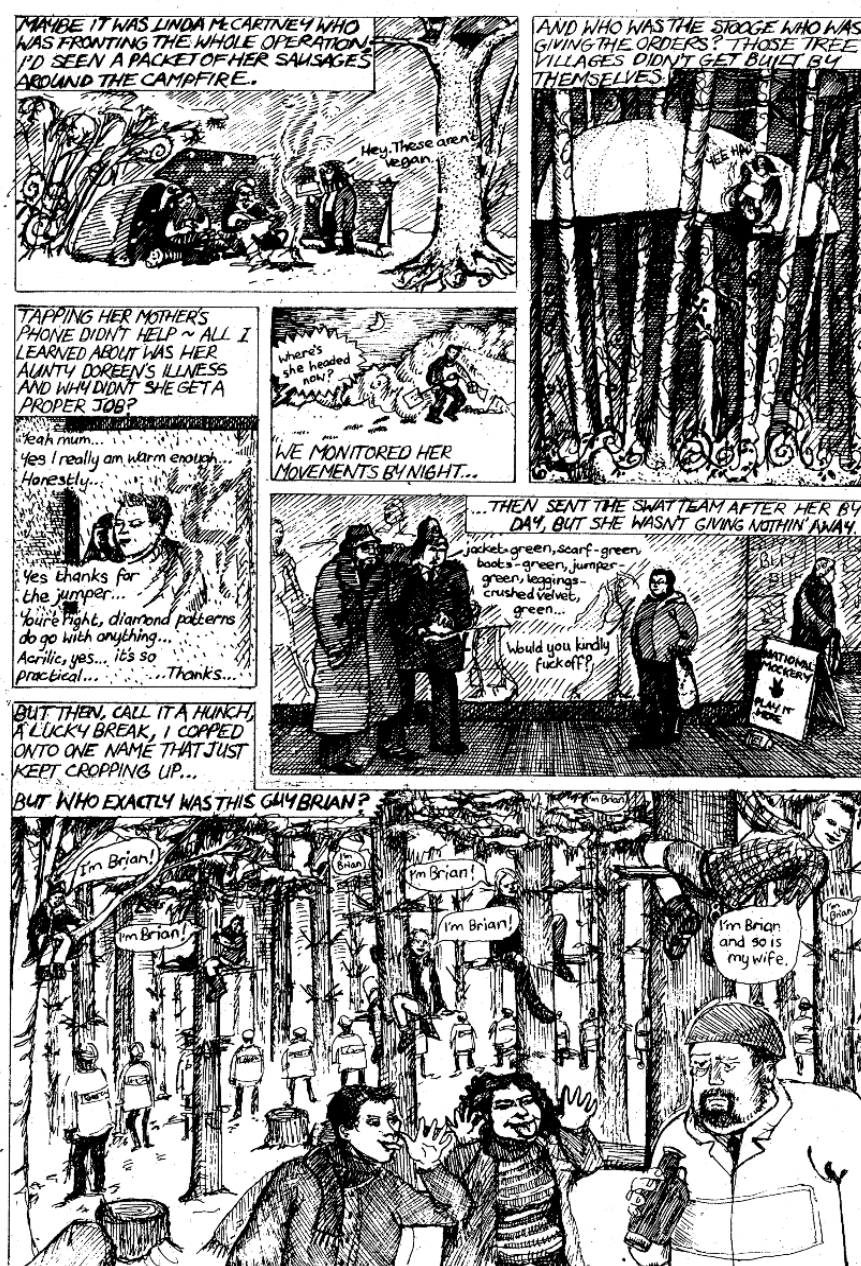
Transport Debate' in which it offered no plans to reduce road traffic and claimed, amongst other gibberish, that "cities are intrinsically sustainable".

For two weeks prior to the May local elections, FAN! staged daily stunts, protests and direct actions. Included in the events were 'Challenge Anarchy', an urban regeneration action in Moss Side which turned a wasteland into a garden and playground; an invasion of the City Hall by 'homeless badgers' from Runway 2 and the M66 (you'd be astonished how many badgers have long hair and walk on their hind legs); mobile cycle lanes and pedestrian crossings; and a visit to the home of Council Leader Graham Stringer, who refused the offer of the back seat of a tandem to get him to work.

A number of visitors' passes to the election count allowed FAN! activists to meet councillors and local MPs face to face. They were

left in no doubt that their campaign had touched some sensitive nerves. Activist Chris told Squall: "In one breath they were accusing us of being childish yobs and in the next breath shouting 'Nah nah nah nee nah nah' at the Tories who had lost their last two seats."

Graham Stringer stood down as Council Leader immediately after the election in order to pursue his long-held dream of a Westminster bench. His final television interviews showed him fighting for space with an activist wearing a T-shirt with a picture of Stringer holding two fingers aloft and bearing the legend "Reprehensible Yob", a description he once used of FAN! activists. FAN! are hopeful his replacement will at least hear the arguments of environmentalists before making policy. The new Council will be well aware that even without an opposition in the Council Chamber, the grass roots activists are watching.



Increasing oppression in Tibet



A new wave of Chinese repression is threatening not only Tibet's historic monasteries but the future of its spiritual leadership.
Tim Malyon reports.

is taking place, criminalising dissent. At a televised mobilisation rally in May a three month "people's war on crime" against "sabotage by separatists and other serious criminals" was announced. Informing is encouraged.

For the first time in 16 years pictures and photographs of the Dalai Lama are being forcibly removed from monasteries, including the Jokhang in Lhasa, as well as hotels, restaurants and houses. House to house searches have started. Street traders are displaying empty frames in a gesture of defiance alongside pictures of permitted priests.

According to the independent Tibet Information Network at least forty monks were arrested on May 7th at Ganden Monastery outside Lhasa. When officials arrived to impose the Dalai Lama picture ban they were stoned. An older monk stopped the stoning. Children were hastily evacuated before police arrived and the inevitable reprisals began. Two monks are said to have been shot dead and another so badly beaten on the base of his skull that he is having fits and can barely speak. The monastery is virtually deserted, almost all remaining monks having walked out in protest. Beijing's version is that it has been closed for "consolidation and rectification". Ganden is not the only monastery where protests and brutal reprisals have occurred, sparked by seizure of the pictures.

In a rare first-hand report, Japanese tourist Takeo Fujimoto was at the Lhasa People's No 1 Hospital on May 14th, with his sick girlfriend, when two truckloads of injured Tibetans arrived, the majority nuns, probably from nearby Garu nunnery.

"Some people were walking, some people could not walk. They were holding each other, and some were crying and screaming," he said. "I am 100 per cent sure that somebody

beat them up." Only the first truck was unloaded. "On the other truck I saw some legs hanging out from the back of the truck. They did not move."

Pictures of the seven year old child, Gendun Choekyi Nyima, recognised last May by the Dalai Lama as the reincarnation of the 10th Panchen Lama, the second most senior Tibetan cleric, have also been banned. Some 60 Tibetans are reported to have been arrested for their involvement in the Dalai Lama's choice of Panchen Lama (see SQUALL 12). This child has now disappeared and the Chinese choice moved to Beijing.

Let's be clear what is happening: As well as persecuting those who freely honour the present Dalai Lama, China is hijacking control of Tibet's future spiritual leadership.

When the present Dalai Lama dies, there will be a gap of perhaps twenty years before the next incarnation comes of age. During this period the puppet Panchen Lama will be Tibet's senior cleric, with huge political and spiritual influence. He will also wield decisive influence in the choice of the Dalai Lama's next incarnation.

In one move the Chinese are usurping the Tibetans' right to choose not only the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama, but by precedent all high priests of Tibetan Buddhism who are succeeded by reincarnations - that's by far the majority of them. Already, appointed monastery officials who burn pictures with insufficient zeal, or honour the Dalai Lama's choice of Panchen Lama, are being replaced with "patriotic" monks.

Contact:
Free Tibet Campaign (Formerly Tibet Support Group UK)
9 Islington Green
London N1 2XH
Tel: 0171 359 7573



"Political repression in Tibet has increased sharply since 1994, and there are now more political prisoners in custody there than at any time in the last six years," according to a new study published jointly by Human Rights Watch/Asia, the New York-based human rights monitoring group, and the Tibet Information Network in London.

The report lays part of the blame on "a decrease in international pressure on China to improve its human rights record." In May President Clinton renewed US 'Most Favoured Nation' trading status for China and Deputy Prime Minister Michael Heseltine led a delegation of 270 British businessmen to Beijing. He declined any guarantee that he would even raise human rights in Tibet as an issue during the visit.

More than 230 Tibetans were

detained for political offences in 1995, a fifty per cent increase on 1994, bringing the total known numbers in prison to over 600. Some monasteries and nunneries have been closed - the nuns of Shongchen Nunnery in Ngamring County were ordered last November to leave their monastery, demolish their living quarters, and not join any other nunnery. The monk who had inspired the rebuilding of the nunnery after its destruction during the Cultural Revolution, Lama Khedrup Gyatso, was taken away in a jeep and has disappeared.

Six bombings have been reported, with one person injured. It is impossible to judge whether such actions mark a new phase in what has been an entirely non-violent liberation movement since the ending of guerrilla warfare in 1974. There are rumours in Lhasa of Chinese involvement in at least some of these explosions.

Now a new wave of oppression

Famine on the roof of the world

Nomads in North Eastern Tibet, the old provinces of Kham and Amdo, are once again facing famine and destruction of their way of life, this time thanks to weather rather than enforced collectivisation by the Chinese.

Hundreds of thousands of herders face starvation - or migration to the lowlands to beg. Over a million yak and untold sheep, goats and horses have already died. With no fresh grass growing on the high plateau until June, another million may perish.

The disaster has been caused by a succession of 'freak' weather conditions - severe drought during last Summer, followed by early Autumn snowfall. A short thaw melted the surface, then the big chill arrived. Temperatures dropped to minus 45 degrees centigrade and froze the melting snow, covering the grasslands in an impenetrable layer of ice. Animals could no longer graze. Then came "severe and sustained blizzards, the worst in one hundred years," according to the London-based Tibet Foundation.

At least ninety people have died, with thousands more suffering from frostbite and snow blindness. Herders tried to keep some animals alive by feeding them their own scarce food. The meat of animals which have died of starvation is inedible, although there are reports of boiled meat from carcasses being given to yaks. "It's a human disaster, and a disaster for the economy of the region," commented Philippe De Vestele from the charity Medecins Sans Frontiers (MSF) who has visited some of the affected areas. "Thousands of people have been left with no food and no cattle."

Initial relief efforts were focussed on food relief and distributing blankets. Now money is being raised to restock the herds. A longer-term vision is also required: "Local people say these disasters are cyclic," reports Phuntsog Wangyal from The Tibet Foundation, which is carrying out relief work through a Lhasa-based Tibetan organisation, the Tibet Development Fund. "The last one was in 1985, and there was another one in 1973. They say that every ten years there is a major disaster, every five years a medium scale disaster, and every three years there is a small-scale one. Temporary

relief may not be the answer."

Long-term plans include fencing off areas of grassland during the summer, to be grazed in winter. But this would barely have alleviated the present disaster due to the thick layer of frozen snow.

Making hay might help, but is hardly practical given the huge numbers of animals involved. Growing oats for winter fodder is another idea, but the plateau is so high (3,500-5,000 metres) and the soil so meagre that yields are low. The building of low, open-fronted cattle sheds has already proved effective in providing shelter and reducing animal mortality, especially amongst younger animals. And there are debatable suggestions that nomads construct permanent houses in lower areas where they can camp during winter.

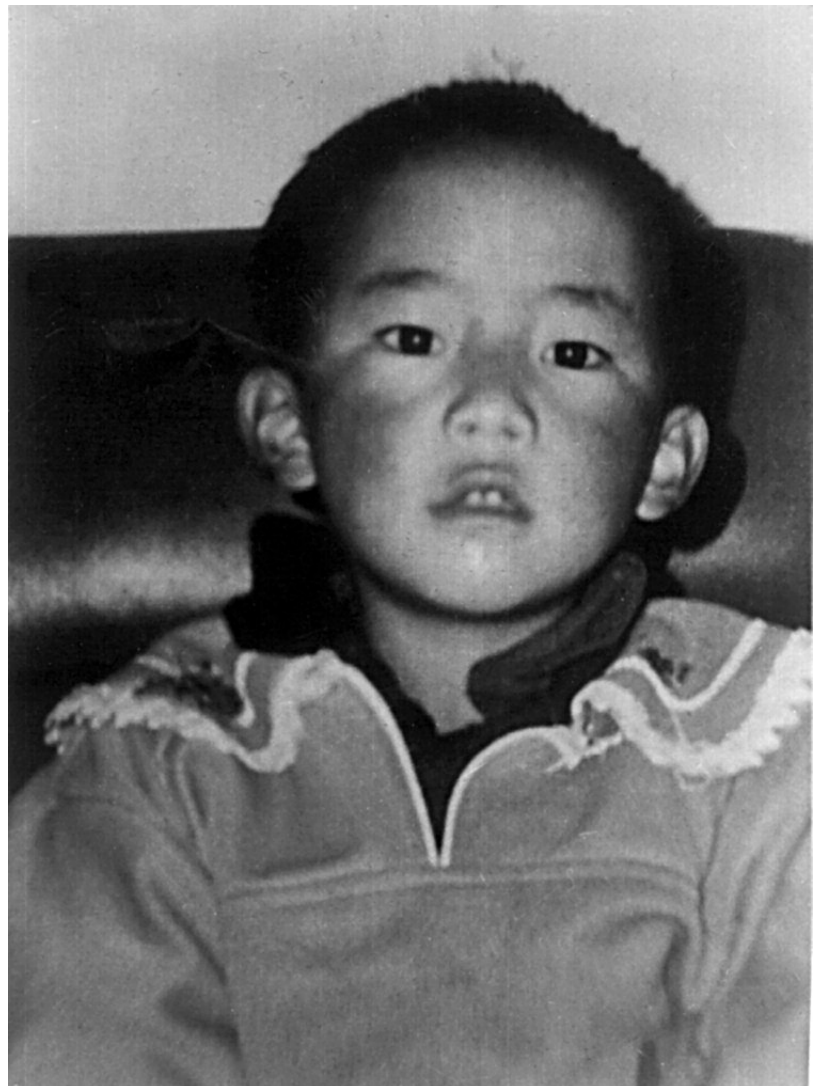
On the western, Ladakhi edge of the Tibetan plateau (see Squall 12), building emergency storage centres both for animal fodder and human food has proved effective in areas where winter camps remain within reach of the centres. Appropriate fuel-efficient stoves have improved fuel security, a major problem in the famine areas, and there's increasing indigenous medical care. In Mongolia, felt-lined 'gyers,' (yurts), made from excess wool, stay warmer and save fuel, but require more animals to transport them.

One crucial question remains: Tibetan nomads follow a lifestyle which has existed for thousands of years. It is a lifestyle on the margins of survival. Is the 1995-96 famine part of a 'normal' cycle of disasters, or are Tibetan nomads suffering global climatic change which threatens their very existence? US meteorologist Elmar Reiter has suggested that massive Chinese deforestation on the eastern edge of the Tibetan plateau may be influencing global climatic patterns as well as local changes to the Indian monsoon rains.

If you would like to help:
Tibet Foundation
10 Bloomsbury Way
London WC1A 2SH

Please make cheques payable to
Tibet Foundation Emergency Relief

With over a million of their grazing animals decimated by freak weather conditions Tibetan nomads face disaster, Tim Malyon writes.



GENDUN CHOEKYL NYIMA, aged seven, has been recognised by the Dalai Lama as the 11th incarnation of the Panchen Lama, Tibet's second most powerful ruler. He disappeared for over a year before the Chinese admitted to having put him "under the protection of the Government" in case he was "kidnapped by Tibetan separatists". The Chinese only admitted holding the child in June after a formal request from the UN Committee for The Rights of The Child which has been investigating high death rates in Chinese orphanages. A UN request to visit Gendun Choekyl Nyima has received no response as yet.

MONGOLIAN STEPPE ABLAZE

NEARLY 300 FIRES have been recorded blazing across the Mongolian steppe in the past few months. At the latest count 26 people have been killed, over 60 badly burned.

Generations of livestock have been wiped out and as much as a quarter of Mongolia's forests have been lost. The Mongolian Government estimates around \$1.9b of environmental damage.

It is estimated that hundreds of nomadic families are now homeless, having lost their traditional round-tent homes. Many are now sleeping in the open, where temperatures fall as low as -10 even in May/June.

Mr Gulgou, Commercial Attache at the Mongolian Embassy in London, told Squall: "This was a major disaster for Mongolia. There are still eight fires burning out of control; 94 are still burning but these are under control."

The fires are attributed to small camp fires being left alight in the late summer and autumn months. Mr Gulgou explains: "It is very big territory and very dry at this time so its very easy to start a fire." On the windswept steppe these quickly rage out of control.

This year the rains came too late to help put out the annual fires.

Communication systems within the steppe are generally poor and many phone lines have been brought down in the fires leaving hundreds with no way of contacting help.

Mongolia is about the size of Western Europe and it is the vast bleakness of the steppe across which fire spreads at astonishing speed which leads to similar devastation every year. Local relief operations do their best to move people and livestock to safe areas but as Mr Gulgou points out "massive mobilisation of fire-fighters and equipment is needed. 60,000 people were recruited to help fight these fires. This cannot be done without outside help."

Mr Gulgou says the Mongolian Government is "producing information warning people how to handle fire in the open air but how quickly fires spread is very dependent on weather conditions."

Ultimately environmental experts suggest that an efficient warning system to alert fire and relief services is essential if this spark of human carelessness is to be prevented from turning into an annual blaze of misery and environmental destruction.

CHINESE PRESSED TO HALT NUCLEAR TESTS

MV GREENPEACE, the ship damaged during actions against French nuclear testing, has been sent to China with a message for the Chinese Government demanding an end to nuclear testing.

China is the only remaining nuclear power which is refusing to end all testing. The Greenpeace mission is described by a spokesperson as: "non-confrontational."

China conducted two nuclear tests in 1995, let off another in June and is planning at least one other explosion to develop a new weapons system. At the current Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty talks in Geneva, China has attempted to reserve the right to set off "peaceful nuclear explosions". These are part of a scheme to construct a 500-mile long underground irrigation channel from the Yarlung Tsangpo river (the Brahmaputra) right across the Tibetan plateau to irrigate the Taklimakan desert.

Apart from creating water-shortages for millions of plain dwellers in Bangladesh and India, this mad, profoundly bad idea would contaminate vast tracts dismissed as "barren areas" by the Chinese. They are in fact inhabited by Tibetans and Uighurs, mainly nomads.

A Greenpeace spokesperson described the idea as "not very well thought-out. The Chinese also want to blast the desert for three years in order to irrigate it, then leave the area unused for 47 years. Even after this period the water would remain contaminated. There is no such thing as a peaceful nuclear test, and never any good reason for using nuclear explosions. We want the Chinese to stop testing." China has now dropped its unconditional insistence on continuing 'peaceful' testing.

Almost all China's nuclear programme, civilian and military, is located in minority areas inhabited by Uighurs, Tibetans

and Mongolians. Testing takes place at Lop Nor in the Xinjian region, home to the mainly Moslem Uighur people. There have been 43 known nuclear bomb explosions there since 1964, 23 in the atmosphere, 20 underground. No independent or outside assessment of environmental or health impacts have ever been permitted. International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War estimate the atmospheric explosions alone released approximately 43 kgs of plutonium-239. One millionth of a gram can cause cancer if inhaled. Uighurs claim to have born the brunt of illnesses caused by radioactive fallout. An Uighur activist was recently jailed for three years for writing texts calling for independence for Xinjiang, according to a recent Reuters report.

China's primary nuclear weapons research and design facility, known as the 'Ninth Academy,' was constructed on the Tibetan plateau during the sixties, in the Haibei Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, near Lake Kokonor.

In 1984 a Tibetan doctor, Tashi Dolma, conducted a blood sample survey near the Ninth Academy to prove that Tibetans were genetically linked to Chinese people. "The local Tibetans and their animals were coming down with unusual symptoms and diseases," Dr Dolma said. The samples were never tested for radioactivity and Dr Dolma was not permitted to pursue these reports.

She also worked in a hospital where children of nomads who grazed animals near the Ninth Academy were developing a cancer that caused their white blood cell count to rise uncontrollably. Seven such children aged 8-14 died during her time at the hospital. Dr Dolma, who was forced to have an abortion after her first child, fled to India with her husband when they heard he was about to be arrested.

Uranium mining, nuclear-waste dumping and the siting of nuclear weapons have all also been reliably reported in areas inhabited by Tibetans.

Everywoman magazine

in conjunction with The United Tamils Organisation (Women's Section)

presents:

An Event: The book launch of *Unbroken Chains* by Adele Ann, about the caste and dowry system in NE Sri Lanka

Date: Thursday 4th July 1996
Time: 6.00 - 8.00 pm

Venue: The Lancaster Suite,
Park Court Hotel,
75 Lancaster Gate,
London W2 3NN

- Woman Tamil speaker
- FREE wine & cheese
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admission with this advert

CHERNOBYL REVISITED?

Ten years after the world's worst nuclear calamity, **Mel Gunasena** joined an international women's vigil in Eastern Europe in memory of the victims.

Ten years after the world's worst nuclear accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant, millions of people are still suffering from the lasting effects of radiation; contaminated food, air and water.

More than 150,000 people in the Ukraine were forced to leave their homes after the accident, and approximately four million people still live in contaminated areas. Children are particularly affected: only 25 per cent of babies are born healthy and many children suffer from a condition scientists call 'Chernobyl AIDS'. Their immune systems are so weak that it can take them months to recover from even a common ailment.

When I visited Kiev in December 1995 a flu epidemic had forced all the schools to close and I saw only a couple of children on the streets during the week I spent there. In most cases no material assistance is available from the government for families with sick children. In 1990 young mothers worried about their children's health founded the organisation 'Mama 86' to provide free practical assistance and information on health and environmental issues for women and children. They run a laboratory where children are tested and monitored free of charge and given preventative healthcare based on herbal treatments and vitamins. The group also organise holiday camps for mothers and children in a non-contaminated area of the Ukraine which gives tired immune systems a chance to recover from constant exposure to radiation.

In partnership with the Women's Environmental Network in London, Mama 86 is working to set up a public information telephone helpline. The aim of the group is to empower people to take action on individual and community

levels: "In a post-totalitarian society an easy-access public information system on these issues is a new and radical step", says Anna Syomina, Director of Mama 86.

Three hundred miles away in eastern Lithuania, the Ignalina Nuclear Power Plant is of the same generation as Chernobyl with the same reactor design, causing many people to live in fear of a similar catastrophe occurring in their homeland. Local women are noticing that their whole families sometimes feel tired and lethargic. The birth of mutant farm animals is becoming common and people fear their lands and children are being poisoned by unacknowledged radioactive releases.

Last year the fire chief in Daugailiai village measured levels of radiation three times higher than those taken after the Chernobyl accident. As in the Ukraine, the plant was built by the former Soviet Union, but the environmental and health costs of an accident will have to be borne by the Lithuanian Government.

85 per cent of Lithuania's energy is produced by the INPP, making immediate closure impractical. Although the Energy Minister admits energy-conservation measures could save up to 40 per cent of output and a further 15 per cent could be replaced by renewable alternatives. However, he also claims there is not enough funding to realise these figures for forty years.

Western funding is directed towards training, radiation monitoring and safety improvements on the Eastern European nuclear reactors. Yet the crucial task of strengthening the concrete sarcophagus at Chernobyl remains an argument between governments as to who should foot the bill. Predictably the funding is



minimal when compared to the amounts BNFL and others spend on their propaganda.

On March 9th 1996 the Utena Women's Club organised a peaceful demonstration outside the Ignalina NPP to celebrate International Women's Day. Women from all over Lithuania and international supporters (including women from the Sellafield Women's Peace Camp) gathered to remember the victims of Chernobyl and to demand a nuclear-free future. Women of all ages and occupations stood silently in the freezing snow holding candles and colourful banners. Paintings by local children portraying their fears of death and contamination were also displayed.

The action ended with everybody doing a somewhat surreal hokey-cokey with the ominous red and white striped

reactor towers as a backdrop. Despite being portrayed as KGB agents and Western imperialists by a section of the press, we were welcomed warmly by the Lithuanian women and linguistic and cultural differences were celebrated in sisterhood and solidarity.

Sellafield Women's Peace Camp, Peace House, 34 Byron Street, Todmorden, West Yorks, OL14 5HS. Tel: 01706 812663.

Utenos Motery Klubas, Kurdirkos 28 - 11, 4910 Utena, Lithuania

A short film on the work of Mama 86 is available from: Women's Environmental Network, Aberdeen Studios, 22 Highbury Grove, London, N5 2EA. Tel: 0171 354 8823.

LOFTY TONES

Tony Allen, Global Village Idiot, contemplates joyriding on the information superhighway

As the information revolution fast-forwards the species into cultural Babel, intimate live performance takes on a new potency.

Live Performance

Intimate live entertainment. Direct personal communication Eh? Eye contact. There should be more of it?

I was only saying the very same thing last night to Freda colon demon-dot backslash intervid UK. Up yer modem, round yer data base, and all for the price of a local call? You seen my phone bill, talk about telephone numbers.

Are you on line? Tony Blair has pledged a future Labour Government to get everyone in the country on line. There's been no similar pledge on housing. So: "Vote Labour - Home pages for the homeless!"

I'm not on line myself, but I know a few buffs who are and I often find myself round a mate's house at four in the morning, staring into a screen perusing some esoteric document or graphic that's been down-loaded for me from the other side of the planet.

It's not exactly surfing, it's more like paddling about up the shallow end with a rubber ring, wearing an Edwardian stripey one piece and knotted hanky.

Soon Mr Blair's stake-holder society will deliver my hardware. In the meantime I'm on a serious learning curve checking the potential ramifications of his pending info-fest.

Alongside Johnny and Joanne punter every day now more and more diverse organisations have a

presence on the Net: from media archives to virtual shopping malls, most of them, if they are not pushing a product, have got an angle. The good news is that the free-range loonies - the much aligned "nerds" - got in early and have been very creative with the street plans and the architecture. Cyberspace is loop-hole city and the imaginative thwarting of interfering laws from outside has the status of art.

But it's not all high-minded pursuit on the super highway. I was schmoozing some high-tech lig recently and got introduced to the tabloid end of interactivity - America On Line. My first problem was a Name. Five letters. So I wrote "Tony A". I get a reply immediately. "Hello Tonya! What are you wearing?" Whoops! Never upper case the "A". My mate laughs and urges me to reply. I type the old Groucho Marx line..."I'm dressed to kill which is the last thing I want to do." I've not really been paying attention to what I'm getting into here, because suddenly I've attracted loads of correspondents with a wide range of very dull chat up lines the best of which is "Hi Tonya you give good interface."

But who were they? They could be the suits standing at the work station next to me or a bunch of kids crowded round a desktop PC in a 5th form physics lab in Papua New Guinea. This is fabulous technology going on here. I stop and ponder the evolution of global consciousness from the development of language to the written word, the first technological revolution of the printing press, then the discovery of electricity - telephone, photography, radio, through to the marvels of transmitting moving pictures, the talkies, television, video, computers and micro-technology and then



the convergence of all these wonders into the interactive information super highway of the late 20th Century. And here I am at the cutting edge of the whole shebang and what exactly am I doing with it? I appear to have joined "Wankers of the World Unite" and I'm role-playing a virtual cock-teaser with some nerd/nonce somewhere in cyberspace who is doubtless engaged in... well, whatever it is, it all seems very sad.

Distribution

Ever since the mass availability of the old reel to reel tape recorders we've been able to make our own home sound recordings: Interviews with Granny, comedy sketches and primitive rock albums. Cassette recorders made all this even easier. The only problem came when we tried to distribute our efforts. The record companies and BBC radio controlled the outlets and the the Government legislated against the pirates and the independents.

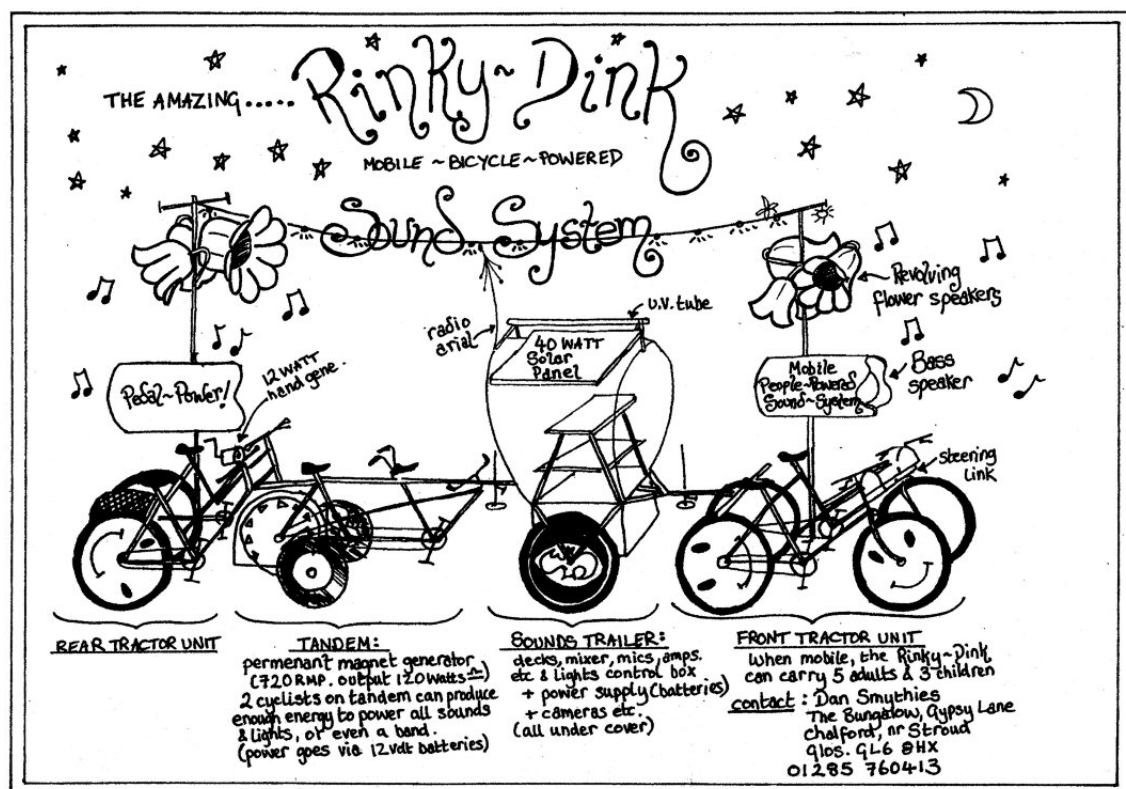
Likewise when video arrived the film and telly companies controlled distribution and were there to filter, censor and demand compromise before accepting anything. In the 80s all that home computers with their tasty printers appeared to be doing was reinventing the printing press. Desktop publishing distributed by the GPO gave us well produced junk mail. But the digital revolution went on to reinvent and synthesise all the previous media technology, and provide, gratis, a universal distribution system.

How long before your very own customised version of the News At Ten? How long before the advertising infrastructure of television crumbles? Five years? Two years? Already technoanarchists proclaim that intellectual property is theft! Soon everyone will be able to make their own movie, freely sample the vast global archive and television controllers will be two a penny.

Civilisation

And every one of us will have access to all the archive footage of any event plus all the movies made about it and stuff written, broadcast and vox-popped. Every village, town and city, every pop song, sit-com and blockbuster; every anniversary, centenary, and blip in history: all available for us to check out and then if we wish to plagiarise, edit, expand, distort and redistribute...

A lateral overview of all this musak, newsak and viewsak sees a planet of billions of busy people all doing much the same thing: all glued to their screens in a great semi-conscious conspiracy to continually rewrite the rewriting of history so that it all dovetails neatly into the ludicrous conclusion that we are now, now - what the politicians refer to as "this moment in time" - now, all of us, living at the finely-honed, cutting-edge of progress. Bollocks. When a civilisation dies its whole life flashes in front of it.



NETROGRESSIVE

TOP SITES

McSPOTLIGHT

<http://www.Mcspotlight.org>

With 1700 pages and about 30 megabytes of textual, audio and video data, this is the largest collection of material on any multinational on the Internet, according to the McLibel Support Campaign. Some of the highlights of the site include a "Real Audio" guided tour of the site by the McLibel Two (Helen Steel and Dave Morris), a thirty second clip from the "Jungleburger" video, witness statements and campaigns from fourteen countries from around the globe. There are also excellent weekly updates on events in court and out. A golden example of the future of information dispersal activism.

THE LAND IS OURS

<http://www.globalnet.co.uk/~weaver/index.html>

Focussing on the issue of derelict land in the UK and attempts to claim it back.

NEWBURY CAMPAIGN

<http://www.gn.apc.org/newbury>

Up to the minute information on the action against the bypass, with pictures, news reports and daily updates.

RECLAIM THE STREETS

<http://www.hrc.wmin.ac.uk/campaigns/rts.html>

Campaign against roadbuilding and for cheaper public transport

STONEHENGE CAMPAIGN

<http://www.kingsway.ac.uk/kiss/stonehenge/campaign.html>

Campaign fighting for solstice festivals at the Stones.

WORLD-WIDE MOO PAGE

<http://www.abdn.ac.uk/~u02pda/cows/resources/index.html>

As its name suggests this bovine brainstorm of a website is dedicated to our cud-chewing friends...What at first appears to be a bit of fun actually turns out to be academically well researched.

Censorship and the Internet

<http://dis.strath.ac.uk/people/paul/Control.html>
A wide range of censorship information including articles which discuss international electronic information laws.

Statewatch Home Page

<http://www.poptel.org.uk/statewatch/>
Maintains a database of relevant articles.

Stop Nuclear Tests! Home Page

<http://www.ijnet.or.jp/nuke/>
55,000 plus signatories have signed up to this e-mail campaign. The site has articles on this subject - sign up.

Free Mumia Abu-Jamal

<http://www.xs4all.nl/~tank/spg-1/mumia002.htm>
Campaigning for the release of the black human rights activist.

pHreak WebHub

<http://www.pHreak.co.uk/>

Main site of SQUALL's web provider, with webpages from many organisations such as the musician's network.

Zion Train @ The Dragon's Lair

<http://www.china.co.uk/china/ziontrain/>

Wide range of musical information, especially music of a conscious political/ecological nature.

Animal Rights Resource Site

<http://www.envirolink.org/arrs/>

As it says!

Spunk Press

http://www.cwi.nl/cwi/people/Jack.Jansen/spunk/Spunk_Home.html

Anarchist information resource.

Yahoo - Society and Culture: Animal Rights

http://www.yahoo.com/yahoo/Society_and_Culture/Animal_Rights/

Yahoo is one of the most popular search engines* on the web. It is worth checking their search options as they have a wide range of information of interest to SQUALL readers. To do a general search go to <http://www.yahoo.com/>

Cambridge Anti CJA

<http://www.chu.cam.ac.uk/home/tgs1001/>

Covers live exports, bloodsports, the CJAPO Act and local activism in the Cambridge area.

The Criminal Justice and Public Order Act

<http://www.bath.ac.uk/~bs2ajs/CJ.Act.html>

Under construction, this site has an array of information, including news from Critical Mass.

Footballers against the CJA

<http://www.demon.co.uk/display/ffacja/>

Discusses issues such as the national I.D. scheme and the right to protest.

Anti-Criminal Justice Act Home Page

<http://www.hyperreal.com/cjb/>

Information on the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994, human rights, animal rights.

One World

<http://www.oneworld.org>
A global resource with access to over 50 international organisations, concerned with the environment, human rights and social equality.

Justice

<http://www.mistral.co.uk/cbuzz/schnews.html>

The on-line Schnews service, with issues dating back to April 1995.

**A Search Engine is a database which is searchable on the web. Simply typing in the words Criminal Justice Act will give you a successful hit!*

SQUALL's website is viewable at

<http://www.phreak.co.uk/squall/>

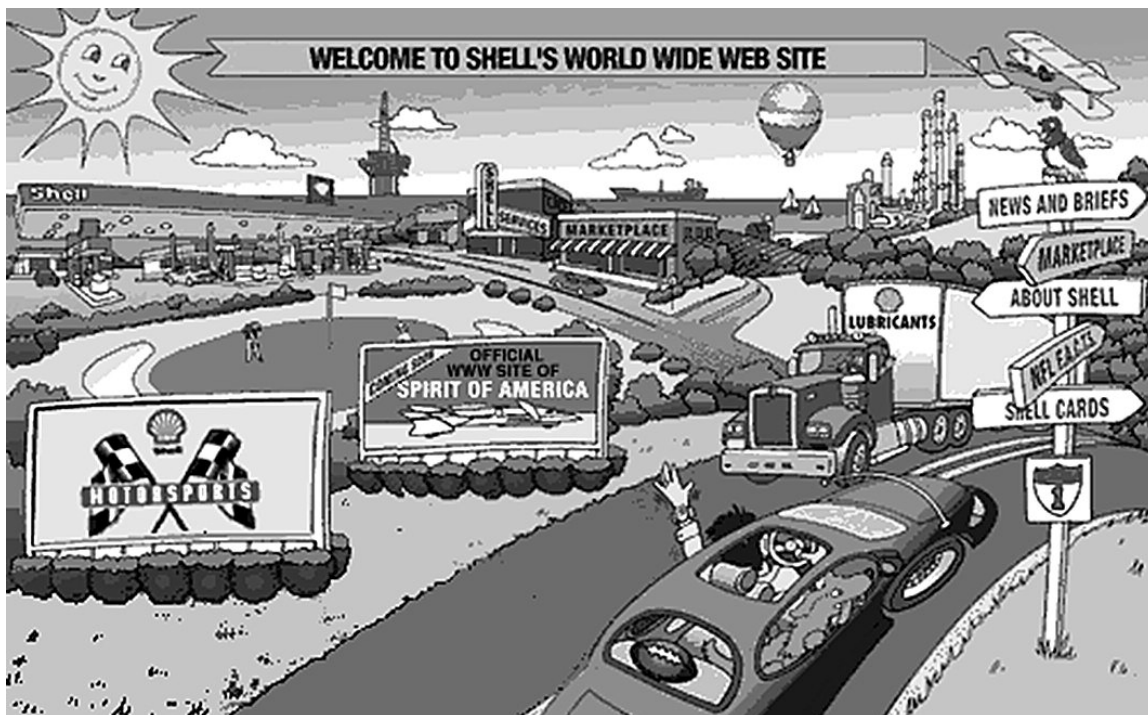
SHITE SITE

Those luvly people over at Shell have produced a website (<http://www.shellus.com>) for their American arm. On this site, the sun is always shining and its always a great day to be out for a drive in the countryside™.

Foolishly they provide an e-mail address where you can send comments:
webmaster@shellus.com

Ben Schneider

bps@dircon.co.uk



IT'S THE JEWEL IN THE MUD AWARD

Were the British Secret Service implemented in killing WPC Yvonne Fletcher outside the Libyan Embassy in 1984? A recent Channel 4 Dispatches programme presented strong evidence. **Seamus O Conner** reviews a Jewel in the Mud special.

When the excellent 'Dispatches' series on Channel Four recently turned its attention to the shooting of WPC Yvonne Fletcher, a can of secret service worms spilled across the television screens.

The expert testimonies presented by the programme included a top British Army ballistics specialist with years of experience in Northern Ireland, a top Home Office pathologist formerly involved in the crucial forensic examination in the Rosemary West trial, and a former member of British Army Intelligence with intimate contacts with the security services.

How exactly Fulcrum Productions, the programme's makers, assembled such an impressive array of unusually overt experts is a testament to their techniques of documentary film making.

On the morning of April 17 1984, an anti-Gadaffi demonstration took place outside the Libyan Embassy (The Libyan People's Bureau) at No 5 St James Square, London. It was destined to be a highly charged affair, having been called by the National Front for the Salvation of Libya to coincide with the month in which Gadaffi traditionally put extra effort in hanging his opponents at home whilst hunting his enemies abroad. The majority of Libyan people attending the demonstration were dissidents with scarves over their faces, keen to avoid the photographers inside the Embassy

collating dossiers on Gadaffi's 'enemies abroad'.

Linda Kells is an English-woman who, as an employee of the American finance company occupying No 3 St James's Square, was watching the demonstration:

"Soon after the anti-Gadaffi demonstrators arrived, Gadaffi supporters came out of the embassy to shout back at them. Then it got a bit nasty. Everyone was yelling and screaming and being quite horrid. At that time I noticed that a window on the second floor was being opened by some swarthy Egyptian-type looking man.... About 10 minutes after that some shots were fired."

Eleven anti-Gadaffi demonstrators were injured in the volley of gun fire. WPC Yvonne Fletcher was also shot, and although rushed to Westminster Hospital, died soon after arrival.

Following a ten day siege, the 22 Libyan diplomats still in the embassy were escorted to Heathrow and expelled back to Libya. The British media subsequently broadcast pictures of Gadaffi welcoming the diplomats back as heroes and the British public were led to believe that Yvonne Fletcher's murderer was among them. Three weeks later the jury at the official inquest recorded a verdict that WPC Fletcher was unlawfully killed by a bullet fired from the first floor of the Libyan embassy. In his inquest report, pathologist Dr Ian West stated: "Her injuries were entirely consistent with a shot fired from the first floor window of the Embassy, an angle of 15 degrees."

As the Dispatches programme

clearly pointed out, there is no dispute over the fact that shots were fired from the Libyan Embassy on that day. Indeed the recorded angle of bullet trajectory for the wounds inflicted on the anti-Gadaffi demonstrators was indeed consistent with a 15 degree angle. However, Dr Ian West's original post mortem report, obtained by the programme makers, states that the angle of the bullet that killed WPC Fletcher was measured at 60-70 degrees. As Hugh Thomas, former Chief Consultant Surgeon to the British Army in Northern Ireland, said on camera: "There is lots of leeway possible in determining the angle of entry into a body. But from 60 to 15 degrees is really unacceptable.....You can't match an angle of 60 degrees to a 15 degree angle. What happened in this case was that an attempt was made to marry the post mortem findings to the 15 degrees.....obviously there's pressure on the pathologist to try and match the evidence."

When the programme makers attempted to interview the pathologist, Dr Ian West, about these inconsistencies, he cancelled two appointments and then refused outright to meet at all.

The second unusual characteristic about the bullet which took Yvonne Fletcher's life was its velocity. By examining its path and the nature of the subsequent tissue damage, it is possible to determine that, by the time it travelled the 30 yards to where Yvonne Fletcher was standing, the bullet had reached terminal velocity and was slowing down. And yet the weapon used to fire the shots from the Libyan

Embassy is accepted by British Police to have been a submachine gun with a far longer range.

Lieutenant-Colonel George Styles, a member of the British army for 26 years and one of its leading ballistics experts, stated on camera: "I don't think a submachine gun killed the police lady because the bullet had gone comparatively slowly and I think from a sub-machine gun it would have gone that extra bit faster than the wounds described."

Hugh Thomas, British Army Surgeon, also stated: "The end of the range of a submachine gun certainly isn't 30 yards and any pathologist faced with this would have raised eyebrows instantly at such a concept."

Then piecing together the sound tracks from two available pieces of video footage, the programme makers asked leading sound analyst, Simon Heyworth, to examine the audio characteristics of the recorded shots. He concluded that of the twelve shots fired, only the first eleven came from the same source. Those eleven were of the same audio profile, spaced exactly a tenth of a second apart. However, the twelfth shot came two and half seconds after the eleventh, and was of a distinctly different audio quality than the others. According to Heyworth, the twelfth shot was a "separate shot entirely" from the other eleven suggesting another weapon was involved "firing a single shot".

The terminal velocity of the fatal bullet suggested either a low range weapon, such as a handgun, and/or a weapon fitted with a silencer; a device which both dulls the full sound and slows the bullet's speed.

The programme makers then took former army surgeon Hugh Thomas to St James's Square to take a look at the Embassy, one of the smallest buildings in the Square, and its neighbouring properties. "There may well have been shots fired from number Five [the Embassy]," he concluded. "But you can't say the bullet that entered her body came from that angle. It's impossible to have that occur. The bullet that caused the fatal injury certainly came from the higher building."

"Not the embassy?" asks the interviewer. "No," replies Thomas.

When asked to point out the buildings from which the fatal bullet may have come from, Thomas then points to either No 8 or No 3.

The programme's investigators discovered that the sixth floor of No 3, St James's Square was rented by the British security services for use as a surveillance vantage point on the Libyan Embassy.

Interviewed on the programme, the security guard then on duty in this multi-tenant building

related how he had no knowledge of which organisation was renting this floor, he was simply told they were watching out for petty thieves in St James’s Square. At the time he believed their story, now he doesn’t. On the day of the demonstration he noted that none of these sixth floor tenants had arrived that day. Bearing in mind that the discovered use of this floor was to conduct surveillance on the Libyans, it was highly unusual there was no one present on the day anti-Gadaffi dissidents were demonstrating on the streets outside. However, the building has a back staircase leading onto a quiet side street via which a discrete entry and exit is possible.

This unusual absence of the usual British intelligence surveillance team is rendered even more significant by the fact that the British Security had intercepted a message sent by Gadaffi to the Libyan Embassy the day before the shooting incident. Gadaffi’s communique ordered the occupants of the Embassy to shoot at the demonstrators. Despite the significance of this information, British security services failed to inform the Metropolitan Police who had the responsibility of supervising the demonstration. This fatal failure to communicate vital information leaked out into the public domain, with selected journalists being told at the time that the intercepted communique had been mislaid in the bureaucratic maze. However, as Colin Wallace, former member of British Army Intelligence, told the programme makers: “I think it’s unbelievable that an intercept of such importance, dealing with a prime target, would have been put aside casually or overlooked.”

Indeed, when the then Home Secretary, Leon Brittan, commissioned a secret report into the affair, the conclusions were highly critical of the Intelligence Services. In an attempt to head off public embarrassment, MI5 began a smear campaign on Brittan’s private life in order to discredit him.

According to Richard Ingrams, then editor of Private Eye: “I became convinced that it [stories about Brittan] were being deliberately put about and...were manufactured by MI5.”

Colin Wallace was also revealing about the use of such smear campaigns: “Most people have skeletons in the cupboard somewhere and the intelligence community have access to that and, of course, can put pressure on people when the situation arises. One doesn’t necessarily have to have a skeleton in the cupboard to be damaged by rumour, particularly when its coming from reliable sources.”

In the end, the report commissioned by Leon Brittan dealt only with the handling of the affair,

not confronting the question of who actually shot Yvonne Fletcher.

Colin Wallace also reveals in the programme that “an American agency, whether it was the CIA or one of the other organisations we don’t know” was party to the information that a shooting was to take place from the Libyan Embassy that day.

So the collated evidence strongly suggests that the bullet which killed Yvonne Fletcher was a single shot, fired not from the Libyan Embassy but from a high level nearby building consistent with the floor level hired by British Intelligence at No 3 St James’s Square. On the day of the shooting, none of the usual occupants of that floor appeared and yet both the British security services and the CIA knew the day before that there was to be a shooting incident. Eleven shots were fired from a submachine gun from the Libyan embassy, followed very closely by the single shot from elsewhere. There is a back staircase in No 3 St James’s Square which leads out into a quiet back street.

The programme of course was unable to state who exactly fired the single fatal shot, but political motivations for the killing Yvonne Fletcher were explored.

Not long after the shooting, American bombers were allowed to fly from British bases in a bombing raid which narrowly failed to assassinate Colonel Gadaffi.

According to Howard Teicher, former Libya Policy Chief at the US National Security Council, the British were not keen to enter into a scrap with Gadaffi: “The Europeans consistently wanted to do business with Libya.” Indeed as the programme revealed, British arms dealers, with the full knowledge of the British Government, had more than likely sold the Libyans the very submachine gun fired from its first floor window that day. However, with the Reagan administration ploughing a high profile, anti-Gadaffi line, the American’s needed both the public support of a European partner and the use of its air bases, before undertaking a politically risky bombing raid on Tripoli.

Vinnie Cannistraro, former CIA Chief of Counter-Terrorism, was unequivocal about the significance of the public outcry following the death of WPC Fletcher: “It was certainly a key factor leading to the British Government’s decision to provide support to the raid on Tripoli. Without that support the raid probably would not have taken place at all.”

In May this year, Labour MP Tam Dalyell, levelled the allegations contained within the Dispatches programme at David MacLean, Michael Howard’s side kick at the

Home Office. MacLean’s answer is a model of the classic cocktail of outrage and avoidance. Despite putting these allegations in eight clear and concise factual questions, MacLean failed to answer a single one of Dalyell’s questions. He expended several Hansard column inches with:

“The [Dispatches] programme asks us to believe that WPC Fletcher was murdered by, or with the connivance of, British or American intelligence officers. If it were not so offensive and obscene, it would be laughable.... If people want to sit in the bowls of some television production company and invent those feverish fantasies, that is up to them. However, I do not know what hurt they have caused the parents of WPC Fletcher and all her other relatives who must be suffering the anguish of not seeing her killers brought to justice. Clearly the programme makers do not care. However, I do care that the memory of that brave officer should not be

sullied by preposterous suggestions that she was murdered by other servants of ours or of a friendly country as part a treacherous plot.....etc etc.” (Hansard 8/5/96 Cols 208-216).

As reported only by Paul Foot in his Guardian column, Yvonne’s mother, Mrs Queenie Fletcher, was in fact sitting in the House of Commons gallery listening to this debate. She was singularly unimpressed with the fact that she didn’t get any answers and with the crocodile tears shed on her behalf by MacLean.

The investigation conducted by Fulcrum Productions undoubtedly constituted a major jewel of journalistic investigation. And yet despite its national significance, not one newspaper, magazine or television news service picked the story up. Testament once again to the Establishment’s media mud in which such rare gems find themselves.

JEWEL IN THE MUD 2

John Pilger – The quiet death of dissenting journalism

(New Statesman & Society, April 19th 1996)

“A third of British children grow up invisible in their poverty because the reasons and solutions for their predicament are heretical to a new conformity...

“The insidious modern features of poverty are for unread doctorates, not journalism...”

“Since Live Aid, journalists have invented a public affliction called ‘compassion fatigue’, which in reality, is confined to them and the conformism they serve...”

“John Vidal’s fine work on the Newbury bypass story comes to mind, along with Paul Foot on the Bridgewater Four...”

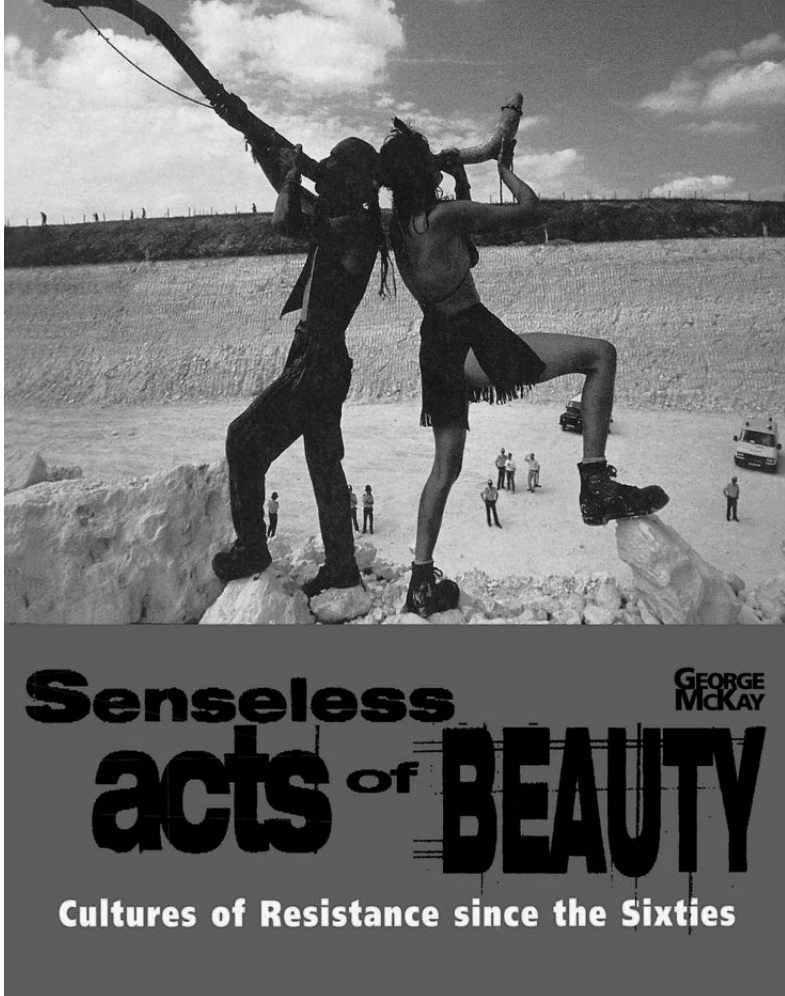
“Not any more. The ‘metropolitan’ journalist is apparently more concerned with introspection than with finding out

about others. For females this means quoting each other, spats with each other, ‘relationships’ and the assorted angst of the middle class... For males it is games with politicians, spin doctors, virtual reality (such as whether or not John Prescott is middle class) and echoing ‘media village’ gossip: or what F Scott Fitzgerald called ‘bantering inconsequence’...

“Thus, reaction is ‘reform’, capitalism is ‘democracy’ and the Deity is the ‘market’. If this sounds vaguely Orwellian, that’s because, like all cult-based language, it is: the cult these days being the fundamentalist belief that all human activity can and should be turned into a commodity ‘market’.

“This is counterfeit journalism because the surface is never disturbed. Dissent, while at times tolerated as exotic, is generally suppressed. This is done not so much by commission as by omission.”

Reviews



‘Senseless Acts of Beauty’

by George Mackay, Verso 1986

Review and Interview by Ally Fogg

“I was basically a sad, sneering, old punk who has had to rewrite my opinions about the original hippies and then rewrite my opinions about nineties style DIY culture.”

The sad, old punk is George Mackay, Senior Lecturer in Cultural Studies at the University of Central Lancashire, and his source of enlightenment was research for his book, *Senseless Acts of Beauty: Cultures of Resistance Since the 1960s*. The central argument of his book is that DIY culture is neither new nor historically unique, but is the latest stage of a process with its roots in the sixties and which began to flower with the free festivals of the early seventies. Beginning at the Windsor Free and Stonehenge festivals of the early seventies, he hitch-hikes through an alternative history of Britain. From the

mischievous and dreams of festival founders Ubi Dwyer and Wally Hope, he pays visits to the anarcho-punks of Crass, to the peace camps and convoys of the eighties, to ‘New-Age’ travellers, the rave scene, direct action politics, the campaign against the Criminal Justice Bill and beyond. He has succeeded in writing a book which not only accurately records the phenomenon of DIY politics, but puts it in a much needed perspective.

His accounts of the ‘70’s and ‘80’s and movements are inspiring and authentic, including excerpts from his own diaries. He writes throughout, but particularly about Crass, with the intelligence of an academic but the passion of a fan. To his study of contemporary events Mackay brings a level head and a clear eye, and the result is

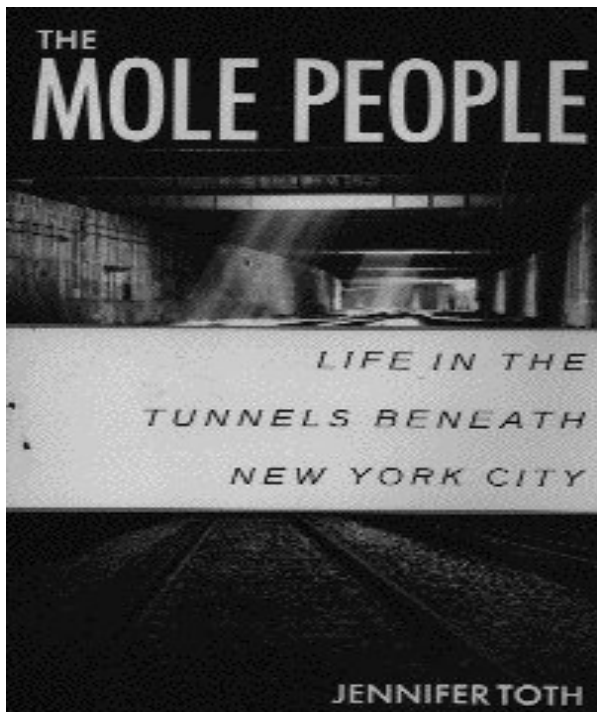
praise when it’s earned, criticism (usually) when it’s deserved. Those who have attempted to document nineties counter-culture normally fall into two camps, the sneerers (“we tried all that in the sixties and it didn’t work”) and the cheerers (“the new Diggers are on the march and the world will never be the same”). I asked George how he’d avoided both. “I hadn’t planned to study nineties culture, I’d originally wanted to write a book about Crass but it grew into this. Maybe because of that I had fewer preconceptions.” He succeeds because his sources are authentic, activists from Justice? proof-read his manuscript and he quotes first hand sources extensively, including accounts of the Exodus Collective borrowed from Squall. When he is inspired by his findings he inspires the reader in turn. Writing about the roads protests of the Dongas and at Claremont Road, Stanworth Valley and Pollock his plain narrative and eye-witness accounts do great justice to great campaigns.

The downside is that where he is less excited by his subject matter, his analysis appears shallower. In attempting to examine rave culture for instance, he holds up Californian cybernutter Douglas Rushkoff as spokesperson for the ‘E’ generation, quotes his excesses and then ridicules them, an exercise largely irrelevant to the British rave scene. Is this fair, I asked? “Well I do also talk about Castlemorton and Exodus and that side of the rave scene which is important and exciting, but I can’t get away from my belief that an awful lot of ravers just talk a good revolution. I’m not yet convinced that there is a politicization of rave culture, it still seems to me just about getting out of your head at the weekend. If I’d heard it in time I would have quoted the line in the Pulp song, Sorted for E’s and Whizz: ‘or was it just a thousand people standing in a field?’, that is how it looks to me”. I suggested that, particularly post-CJA, there has been a merging of rave culture with DIY politics, political stalls at events like Megadog and a newer more eclectic dance scene that encompassed radical politics. “I hope you’re right,” he replied,

unconvinced, “but I’ve yet to really see it. What I do see is rave culture being turned back on itself with ‘The Nine o’ Clock Service’ in Sheffield, which suggests to me there may be some kind of vacuity in the scene.” This ideological vacuity is clearly one of George’s deeper reservations about DIY culture. He is distressed at the lack of understanding of its direct predecessors, the deeds of the hippies and situationists or the ideologies of socialists and anarchists. Instead DIY prefers to court comparisons with the Diggers and the Levellers of the 17th Century. I could have argued that the rejection of recent history and ideology is what gives contemporary protest politics its strength, but I sensed that he might start talking about post-modernism and so quickly changed the subject.

Senseless Acts of Beauty has an unashamedly rural feel. One can almost smell the spliffs at Stonehenge and the trees of Solisbury Hill. Although the M11 and M77 are given due attention, one senses they are there almost by accident, an essential link between the M3 and the M65. George admits “The book is very much a celebration of rural youth, I don’t really want to write about London, there’s plenty of others doing that already. I would have liked to write more about the M77 because it was largely a working class campaign which is interesting, but also my family were from Cowcaddens in Glasgow and the house I lived in until I was seven was demolished to build the original M8. My family moved to Norfolk and I became a country boy. It wasn’t until I was writing this book that I made the connection between motorway construction and my own life-story.”

As a celebration of unruly rural youth, ‘*Senseless Acts of Beauty*’ is a pleasure to read. It is accessible to the lay reader and written in deliciously plain English, but is probably informative enough to stand as an academic work. It may not be the definitive account of the DIY movement but it should be essential reading for any activist with an interest in their own political ancestry.



The Mole People

by Jennifer Toth, Chicago Review Press (1993)

“OK. I’m going to tell you about this. It’s big. There’s a city beneath the streets...”

When Jennifer Toth began her extraordinary investigation into the ‘Mole People’; the estimated

5,000 tunnel-dwellers that live beneath the streets of New York, she encountered a conspiracy of silence amongst homeless charities. Her original article in the Los Angeles Times was met with a deluge of calls, some furious. “It doesn’t help

the homeless to be portrayed as ‘mole people’ living underground,” complained an official from New York’s largest homeless organisation. “It makes them look freakish.”

Beyond the undeniably weird characters she encounters on her subterranean journey: Mac, dreaming of “another holocaust” with his “small arsenal of guns and ammunition”; Dark Angel, a devil-like figure whose “red and glowing” eyes pierce the blackness of “Satan’s den”, the majority of tunnel-dwellers are revealed as being ordinary homeless, with the same fears, weaknesses and aspirations as their streetbound counterparts.

Within 731 “sprawling miles” of New York’s subway system, Toth discovers a network of underground communities. “Hell’s kitchen” with its terraced ledges and cave-like “cubbies”. A community of teenage runaways living in a hole on Manhattan’s West Side. “The Condos”, where, until recently, 200 people occupied a natural cavern, drawing “water from a sprinkler pipe” and using “electric wires to screw in lightbulbs”.

Despite the permanent dangers of electrocution, robbery and poisoning, the underground is considered much safer than the city’s shelters. Evicted tunnel-dwellers

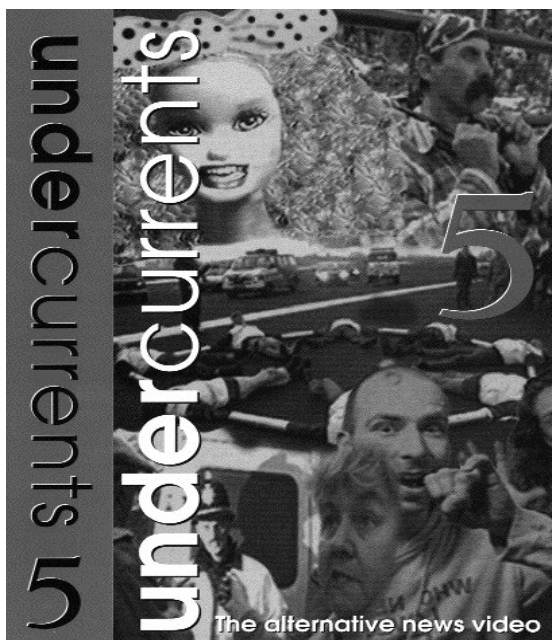
would rather take their chances on the streets than end up in a shelter like Fort Washington, known as the “Murder House”.

“I was in bed and felt something spraying across my face,” recalls one homeless man. “I was mad, killin’ mad. I was sure some guy was jerking off on me. I jumped up and was gonna kill him, only I saw it was blood that was all over me. Some guy had come over, then stabbed the guy in the next bunk to steal his shoes.”

Horror sits with wonder. On a freezing December night, Butch, Razor and Shorty pray for the safe delivery of their community’s first “tunnel baby”. Closeby, a woman’s screams succumb to a newborn’s “strong, demanding bleat”. “The men look at the ground, seemingly unmoved,” Toth observes. “They were familiar with death in the tunnels. Birth was something new.”

By journeying deep within the physical and psychological darkness of the city’s subterranean landscape, and by faithfully representing those she found there, Jennifer Toth has shown the world that mole people don’t live beneath the surface of New York City, but people do. This is undoubtedly one of the bravest acts of investigative journalism in recent years.

Neil Goodwin



Undercurrents 5

Undercurrents returns with its fifth outing into the tragicomic world of grassroots activism. Featuring: “My Favourite Places”, Sir George Young’s nightmarish shopping trip in Oxford, the Barbie Liberation Organisation’s use of “corrective surgery” to confront sexism, and video footage smuggled out from Reliance Security.

In “Bugger Off!” a video activist doorsteps MI5, demanding to see his files. “Celtic Enemy” provides a moving account of a Welsh community’s struggle to resist open-cast mining. “The Blut Geil Case”: chronicles a battle by Swiss anarchists to prevent police censorship of their home-made slasher-movie “Blut Geil”

(Cop Eaters).

With news shorts, hoax adverts, and a Newbury-rap video stitching together the central pieces, this is the niftiest little video feast so far. The sustained crash-bang-wallop that has afflicted previous offerings, where endless slogans, canners, smashings and grabbings seem to melt into one, has been avoided. Number 5 is easy with the rants, well-paced and culturally-kicking 71 minutes of pure watching pleasure.

Available at £10.50 (waged), £7.50 (unwaged) from:
Undercurrents - Box 16b, Cherwell Street, Oxford OX4 1BG.

Neil Goodwin

Hemp Museum

31-39 Redchurch Street, London E2

Drugs, Shock, Horror, Probe. Under new laws Queen Elizabeth fines farmer for not growing cannabis hemp.

The shape of the future? or limited only to Queen Elizabeth 1st and her orders that anyone farming over 60 acres of land had to devote at least one acre to cannabis hemp cultivation for the national good.

Britain’s first museum dedicated to the hemp plant opened in Shoreditch, East London on April 10th. Its existence is a testament to the increase in grass roots activism aimed at rehabilitating the much maligned and under utilised weed.

A visit to the Museum will undoubtedly increase your knowledge of the multifarious uses of the noble weed, perhaps even more than the 1994 Criminal Justice Act increased the maximum fine for possession of cannabis (five fold). The museum details the facts about the suppression of cannabis and hemp.

The main reason for cannabis hemp becoming illegal in the first place was, surprise surprise, economic pressure. In the 1930s, machinery became available which meant that farmers’ profits from hemp cultivation would increase. At the same time Dupont chemicals patented a chemical process for pulping wood into paper. As a result of an unholy alliance between the Hearst media and timber empire and

Harry Anslinger (Chief of the Federal Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs and brother in law of Dupont’s main financial backer), a ‘reefer madness’ frenzy was orchestrated, resulting in the Marijuana Tax Law of 1937. This was highly convenient for the petrochemical and timber industries which dominate the market to this day, but not so convenient for the farming families forced to sell up or change crops (many to tobacco). Neither of course is it convenient for all those people labelled criminal for smoking the weed. The Cannabis museum is a mine of information. I was shocked at the prison sentences and tactics used by American authorities, amazed by the amount of medical, fuel and industrial uses, and convinced that this is a plant which could solve so many of our environmental, social and economic problems. It was also heartening to see evidence a-plenty of the growing number of switched on hemp activists. The Museum is run by the Cannabis Hemp Information Club (CHIC), and shares space with the House of Hemp, who sell a big range of hemp products. For membership of CHIC and/or information write to them at 1st Floor, 31-39 Redchurch Street, London E2 or better still visit the museum which presently opens once a week at the same address on Wednesday between 11am and 7pm.

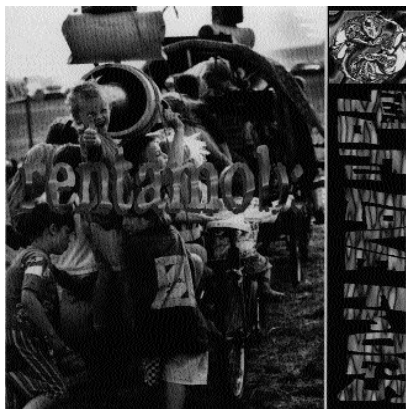
Shane Collins

Reviews

Tunes

Reviews by DJ Seed

For it is the beginning of summer and several seasoned servants to the cause of festival, are either recording or releasing new albums.



First to drop squarely on the SQUALL doormat is the new CD from the infamous Tofu Love Frogs. God knows how many times yer free festival goer will have stumbled across the Frogs. And indeed vice versa. But whether main stage or backwater blaggers, a huge rabble is always dancing the 'drunk amoeba'.

The appropriately titled 'Rentamob' captures the atmosphere of their live folk ska-riot whilst also offering a rare opportunity to hear what Paddy (Vocals) is rasping about. Can we keep up? With the aid of the enclosed lyric sheet, just about. Thus we hear 'Rooftop Anarchy' pay due fiddler's respect to those who scaled the roofs of the Houses of Parliament on the day the Criminal Justice Act came on-line.

"Up they went to sit at the top/ Five got up but one got stopped/ On top of parliament to squat/ To you I raise my hand."

We also hear the hilarious vitriol reserved for the vicar of a Stoke Newington church, a constant local critic of the late great Hackney Homeless People's Festival.

"I don't like you more than you don't like me/ I don't like you much at all"

Beware! The lyrics to 'Folk Off Reverend' come catchy and you may find yourself singing them in public. Rentamob also offers a

version of the Frog's (Trad Arr.) modern day squatting anthem 'Star of the Hackney Downs'. "I was well sped/ I was out my head/ And I gazed with a letchy stare/ Then I said to a passer by/ who's the chick with the dreadlocked hair/ He looked at me with a smile and said/ I've seen her hanging around/ That's young Rosie McAnn from the banks of the Bann/ But now she squats on Hackney Downs."

If you're ever short of the price of a can, or even if you're not, stick this tape on and feel drunk as skunk.



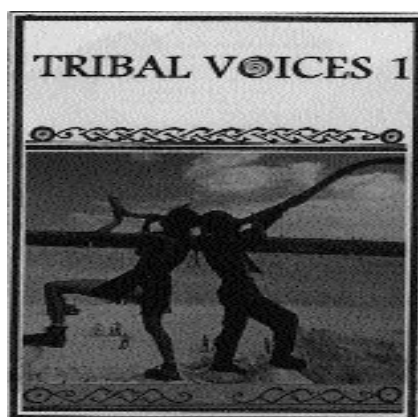
The equally legendary Tragic Roundabout are both red faced nutters and consummate musicians. If - as many do - you harbour a fond taste for the kind of Jewish music played to the accompaniment of a thousand vodka toasts, then book this band and send us an invite; previous appointments will be cancelled.

The number of late night festival bars whipped into an eastern bloc frenzy by this melodic rabble can only be measured by the number of moons which have waxed and waned over UK tarpaulins this last decade. Their cascading clarinet, amphetamine banjo and pumping squeeze-box, hit you between the hips with every cadence. But whilst we await the imminent summer release of their new Cooking Lager album, we thankfully make do with Here Comes the Lino Man; a no-over-dub recording of a band which always plays like there's no tomorrow, so making tomorrow a far more cheerful place.



On a gentler note but also to be found weaving tunes round a festival fire, the Spacegoats release their 'Thirteen moons in motion' cassette. These accomplished goblins can be found lending their musical support at most environmental direct actions, spinning webs of fine musicianship with the refreshingly unusual threads of dulcimer, balalaika and mandolin; pukka didgeridoo and djembe provide the beats.

There's plenty of lyrical references to UK road protests, venues for their most recent performances. This is a true organic folk music relevant to modern struggles.



Another recent release on the direct action tip is Tribal Voices, a collection of acoustic tunes recorded live from the fire places of road protest. These are the likes of the Donga Tribe, Rainbow Tribe and the Quercus Tribe rehabilitating leprechauns and full moons as a potent political force. It's melodic, raw and acoustically inventive, like you'd have to be to make music throughout winter, living without electricity in a bender. Diggers with attitude.



Finally for this issue's festival focus, a luscious dose of consummate musicianship with Baka Beyond's 'Beyond the Forest' live album. Baka's guitar player is a former member in the late great Outback, but is now to be found spinning intricate hi-life riffs over seductive rainforest pulses. Afro-inspired female harmonies spring off warm electric bass lines and trance dance synth.

'Beyond the Forest' features seven tracks recorded live at the 1995 Severn Revels festival courtesy of super-heroes of alternative power, Rinky Dink, an omnipresent crew of vocational nutters regularly found pumping open air dance floors with their pedal-powered electric wizardry. The sight of six peaking ravers going flat out on the static bikes at Glastonbury is a memory which can but live forever. For more mobile events, Rinky Dink mount a DJ set up on their articulated super-cycle, a device capable of spinning tunes under almost any circumstance, whilst dodging in and out of the traffic at the same time.

Which brings us neatly back to the beginning and to the front cover of the Tofu Love Frog's new album; a classic photograph of the one and only Rinky Dink pedal PA, complete with fondue of grinning children. It's a big world isn't it?

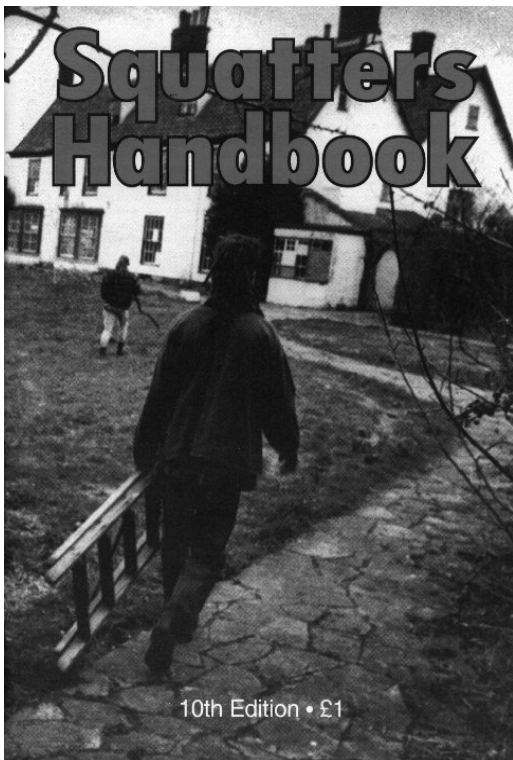
Baka 'Beyond the Forest'

(cassette) with Rinky Dink phone March Hare Music, 4 Thomas St, Bath BA1 5NW. Tel: 01225 331 636.

Tribal Voices (cassette) - send £5.50 (incl P&P) to Tribal Voices, PO Box 10614, London SW9 0181 671 5936.

Spacegoats '13 Moons in Motion' (cassette) from Mandala Records, PO Box 344, London SE19 1EQ/ **Tragic Roundabout 'Here Comes the Lino Man'** (cassette) + info+silly pictures for £5 +£1 P&P from 60 Viaduct Road, Brighton BN1 4ND. Tel: 01273 385 309.

Tofu Love Frogs 'Rentamob' CD from P. Tofu, The Lodge, Down's Park Road, London E8.



Squatters Handbook 10th Edition

“People who don’t know the law are easier to con, abuse and push around.”

So says the newest (10th) edition of the now legendary Squatters’ Handbook, produced by the Advisory Service for Squatters (ASS).

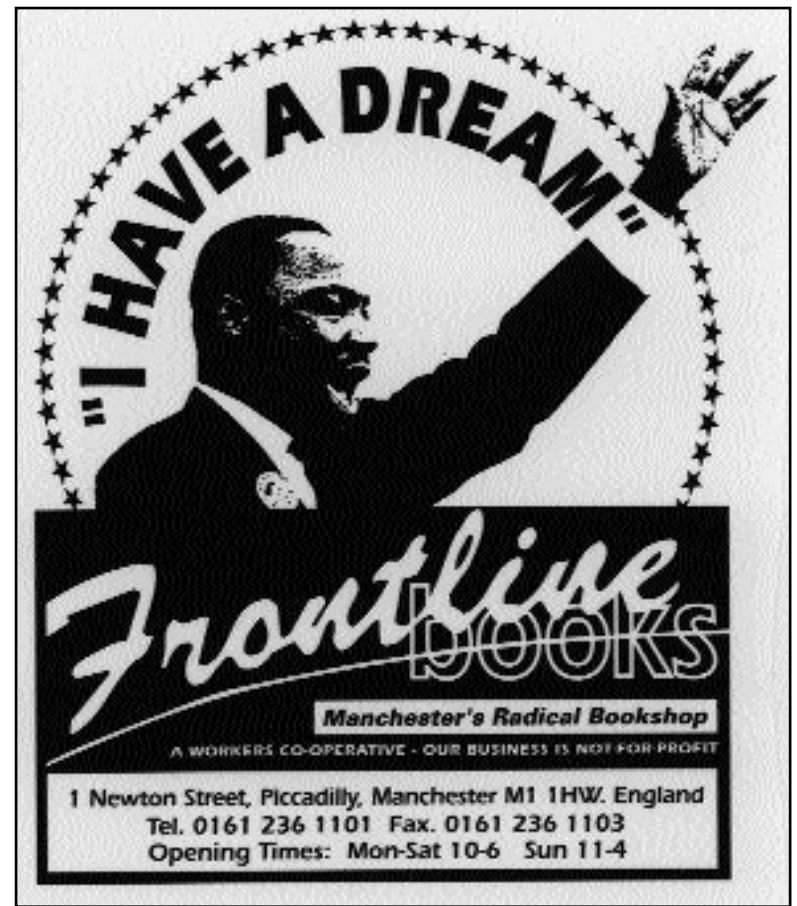
The new version includes updated information on the law regarding squatting; advice on finding a place; practical tips on moving in and securing a new squat (including a handy diagrams); and dead sensible sections on contacting owners, dealing with police and getting utilities connected. The Getting a Place Together chapter gives the soundest practical advice on initial repairs and squat-maintenance you’re likely to find.

Legal information is

presented in easy to suss boxes. There is a particularly impressive list of questions owners have to answer in the new Interim Possession Order affidavits with suggested replies, a copy of a court summons and, basically everything you need to know about the eviction process and your rights within it.

There’s a little bit of squatters’ history and an overview of the current situation stressing the need for the development of strong local squatting groups to ensure that squatters can take an effective role in the ongoing battle “for decent, accessible housing FOR ALL.”

The Squatters’ handbook is available from the ASS at the bargain price of £1. Don’t crack a home without it.



Friends & Families of Travellers have produced two new publications for travellers.

Confined, Constrained and Condemned: Civil Rights and Travellers (£5.00+50p p&p) looks at the depletion of traditional sites; the ways in which travellers are misrepresented by the media, excluded from the planning system, harassed, demonised and denied basic respect.

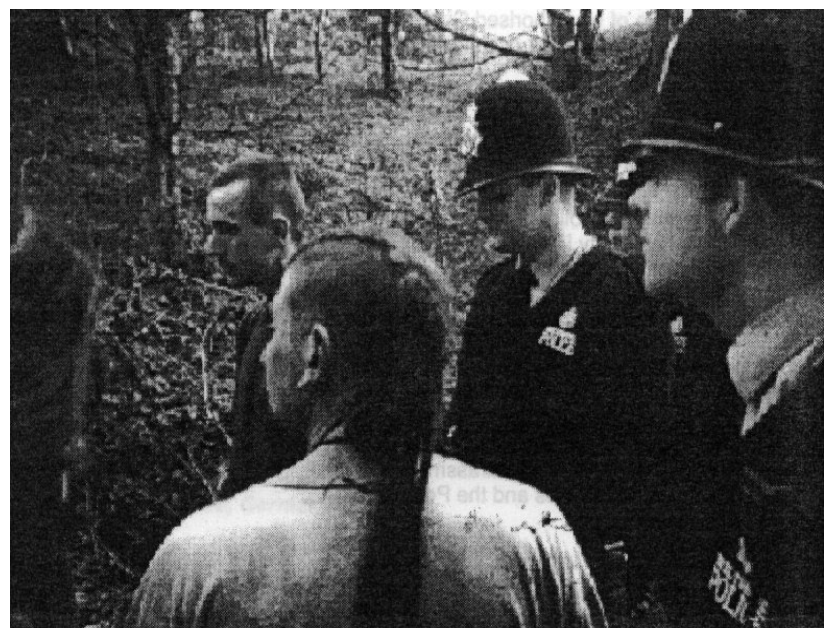
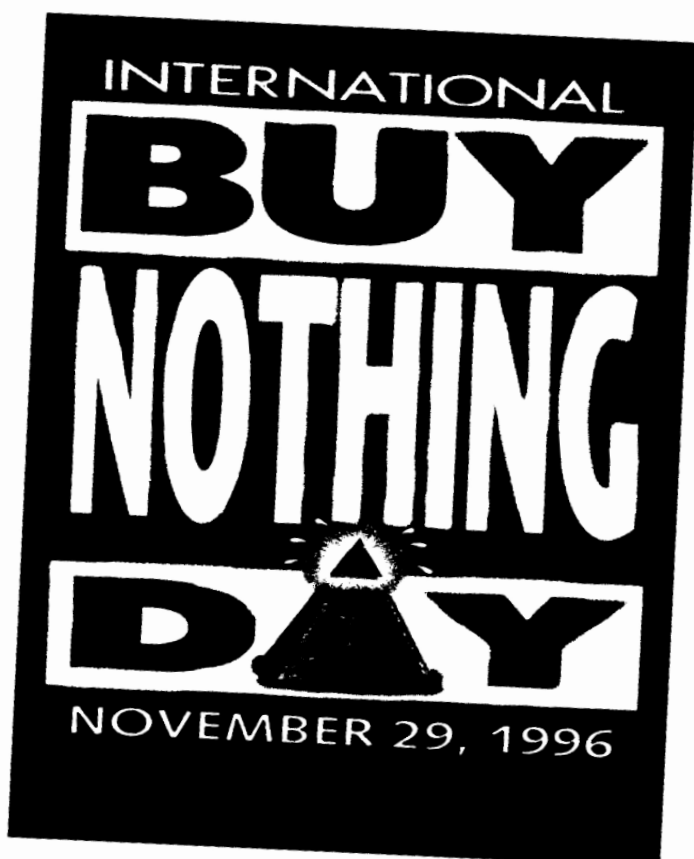
A chapter on local authority policies includes spot-on research on the cost of policies designed to ‘solve’ the traveller ‘problem’ via eviction rather than through long-term sustainable solutions. As a taster: Avon County Council estimate that in 1994/95 the total cost of evictions including service costs and compensation to aggrieved

landowners was in excess of £700,000.

There are also sections on the effects of the CJA, police surveillance and the role of security firms in dealing with the unauthorised occupation of land. An excellently researched study of attempts to legislate, bully and news-manufacture away nomadic lifestyles.

A Travellers’ Guide (£3.00+50p p&p) offers straightforward practical and legal advice for travellers. From finding your way around the benefit system to making a planning application and appeal (if it’s turned down), finding a doctor, solicitor or a school whilst on the road the guide is packed with essential facts and handy tips. Includes an excellent contacts section for travellers’ support and a really comprehensive nationwide list of appropriate solicitors. Buy a copy.

Both publications are available from *Friends, Families and Travellers, Nomad, 50 Benedict Street, Glastonbury.*





The Post Bag

Letters to SQUALL

If you have any comments on the content of the magazine or wish to add a few of your own write to:
SQUALL, PO Box 8959, London. N19 5HW

To rave or riot - Exodus reply

Dear Squall

The most love and respect going out to all JAH soldiers at Squall, and to JAH soldiers everywhere from The Exodus Collective.

This is a reply to the letter written by Emile Henry published in the last issue under the heading 'To Rave or Riot?'

We are chuffed at Emile's raising of this issue, so would like to make these points, with a view to hopefully fuelling the debate.

There is a massive difference between police "approaching community leaders for help in diffusing a situation" and what happened in Luton. We had absolutely no contact at all with police, but we believed then and believe now that the police chiefs chose to apply the paramilitary tactics they did at Marsh Farm as part of a wider exercise.

Beds police dealt with the original incident, a burning car and thirty kids, by advancing a column of riot police, and flying a helicopter shining a massive beam of light, which brought

people from all over Luton into the area. The first night's incidents were followed the next day by Luton's newly-appointed divisional commander appearing on television hourly, in an amazingly provocative way, saying police had reclaimed the area. A mass media circus arrived, and police stopped vehicles everywhere for 'checks'. Now the months of petty week raids on Marsh Farm prior to the riot make more sense. The estate was tense and it felt horribly like that was how police command wanted it.

We believe the Marsh Farm riots were a result of a national change in the policing methods used in Britain which are more recognisable in British colonies such as Hong Kong. (read of 'Shooting in the Dark' by Gerry Northam). We believe that Marsh Farm was used as a proving ground for these new police tactics which are high profile and all about BEING SEEN to control.

We could have cancelled the dance and joined the riots if we had believed that to be right. But we are part of a movement that firmly believes in the power of being 'massive but passive'. We are confident that recently appointed 'new-style' police chiefs in Bedfordshire and beyond,

were gutted by the fact that a real community dance has been PROVEN to be more effective than any strong-arm stormtrooper approach. This was clearly obvious when many young people preferred a radical dance to a riot when given the option. After the disturbances, the police publicly denied the dance had any effect, claiming it was down to their policing methods.

When you read Gerry Northam's book and become aware of the secret changes in British police strategies, You realise the fact that police command is fully aware of the consequences of its actions. In Luton they seem to be creating a sponge to soak up rebellious and angry members of our community.

Exodus is not just about criticising the old Babylonian way, but is also deeply serious about building an example of a better way for the future. To believe in the 'right' to be violent whilst building that way means more of the same old shit. If you 'gain freedom' through violence, then you should expect to have to defend it by the same means. We believe in the triumph of reason over will, good over evil. In other words, that our culture, based on sharing and co-operation, is so right and they're culture, based on

self-interest and competition is so wrong, there will come a time when we just need to force debate and they will be unable to argue against such obvious truths.

Something deep inside of most people says that violence is wrong. We believe in the building of a non-violent society that values all life, and which has respect not force as its police. So surely you should begin as you mean to go on.

All of this would just be talk if we didn't have another positive means of resistance in place of riots, which have rightly been described in the past as the voice of the people. We believe in "collective security for surety" as written in Bob Marley's 'Rat Race', and have demonstrated this on many occasions. This firmness of purpose is the reason our dances continue to this day.

In the face of such opposition to our culture, we believe it is our duty to be constructive not destructive, because we are confident that the construction of a new way always signals the destruction of an old one, and that DIY culture is the roots of the new one.

The Exodus dances are the heart to a movement that is not on the Babylon terms and not of their timing. The ARK Community and Activity Centre proposal

will give this movement a permanent home and a means whereby people who have no voice at present can speak. No longer will they need to smash the few facilities people can use.

The massive gatherings that are community dances are in total contrast to the paramilitary vision of Britain (Howard's Way), where any large crowds need controlling by armies of police and security. Our dances show this to be bollocks, so undermining their reason for being - the people are more responsible than they are, so people question their worth. This has been repeatedly shown in the many mass confrontations we have had with their riot police, and we're sure that 4,000 people peacefully demonstrating outside Luton nick makes them think twice about so readily opting for violence over dialogue. Hence their opposition to The Ark and all our other activities.

We know where we're going, and we know where we're from. We're leaving babylon, we're going to our Father's land...

Exodus, Movement of JAH People...Robert Nesta Marley (still alive).
Bouncer, Glenn, Bruce, Mandy, Nobby and Jonny B Exodus Collective, Luton

Lessons of violence vs non-violence

Dear Squall,

Issue 12 is generally excellent, as usual. But I am distressed to find your leader perpetuating the violence myth about how the Poll Tax was beaten. It was in fact beaten by the largest wave of civil disobedience this country has every known.

The Great British people were given the chance to defy the authorities in a righteous cause by doing nothing - and they took the chance in millions. They filled in registration forms slowly or not at-all, answered no doors to Poll Tax inspectors, and paid no Poll Tax when their bills arrived. Non-violent Direct Inaction won the day - because it involved millions of people, millions of hours of bureaucrat time, and hundreds of millions of pounds Sterling.

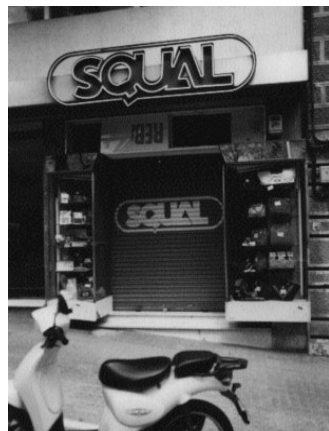
Minor rioting in places like Tunbridge Wells certainly alarmed the authorities - not just in this country, as I have been informed by Mr Social Control (aka David Holloway). Governments in Australia and Japan had been considering introducing a Poll Tax in their countries, but were frightened off.

Some people believe that the Trafalgar Square riot tipped the balance in this country. But if the Poll Tax had been defeated because that great peaceful assembly ended in bloodshed and mayhem, it would have been a victory for the police tactics of entrapment and intimidation which so blatantly came into play as we came up Whitehall that day. In fact, the resultant violence just gave a good cause a bad name, and the tabloids a chance for a particularly gruesome witchhunt. Front-line casualties are of no account to the powers that be, there is an infinite supply so long as control over the flow of money which maintains that power is safe.

As with the anti-roads

campaigns, so with the Poll Tax: hits to the exchequer are what really hurt.

Respect and solidarity,
Dinah Murray
London



Dear Squall,

Imagine our surprise when on a recent package tour of "the historic CNT themepark of Catalonia" we came across a handbag shop called 'Squal'. If you add another 'L' it makes 'LSqual'! But if you put an 'L' on the end it says 'Squall'!!

Are the two in any way connected?

Is this the birth of 'Luggage Libertarians'? Are you secretly 'Baggage Brigands'? Or is it just a case (geddit?) of mistaken identity?

I think we should be told.

Viva Squall!

Viva CNT!

Viva Espana!

Yours

Ben E. Dorm
Dorking

NOTA

Dear Squall,

NOTA stands for Non Of The Above, and it is the way I hope many people will vote in the next General Election.

I think voting NOTA is better than not voting at all because abstaining you just become a kind of non-person in the system. I also think it's better than voting for the smaller parties basically because they are just not going to get voted in.

The reasons for not voting for any of the three stooges are obvious, particularly as the only time

they care about the voters is at election time.

Voting NOTA is a vote for big changes, as opposed to minor re-shufflings. It is a vote for the ending of party politics. It is a vote for representation by real people. It is a vote for de-centralisation.

Many people have had enough of politics & political parties. I think the best way to bring this home to them is to vote NOTA. With less people voting for them their 'democratic' power-base will be weakened.

If 100s of 1,000s vote NOTA it will be a severe kick in the arse for this state's politicians.

I don't know exactly what will happen, but I do know that a NOTA vote will be a positive step in the right direction.

Everything must change,

Martin

Please send feedback to Martin at:
Swansea Freedom Collective
PO Box 235
Mumbles
Swansea

Survival vs Ideals

Dear Squall,

I've been involved to some extent in a successful attempt to get planning permission for a small (new) traveller site. I won't be specific 'cos I can be honest then. But the score is this: we were on a disused caravan site with water, toilet block and hard-standing. When, just before the CJA got passed, the local authority started fining the landowner for not evicting us (he was alright) we got about £140 together and paid for a planning application. We needed the landowner's signature to say he was aware of what was going on (but not his actual approval).

It took a year for the first decision - a refusal - and another six months to get a successful appeal decision (we stayed on the site all this time).

As soon as we put the

application in we had to abide by our own terms - what we'd applied for. The initial application was drawn up without legal advice, which in retrospect was a pity.

We got loads of help from Friends & Families of Travellers plus the Childrens' Society and other people who sorted us out with legal advice for the initial hearing and the appeal hearing.

You can't get legal aid for planning permission applications (as far as I know) and we'd have been buggered without the help we were given.

So, sometimes when people come to visit with their homes they get fucked off straight away, or if no-one could be arsed to get stropky they'd get to stay for a bit before having to move again, 'cos we couldn't go over the applied-for number of plots.

It's a big, nasty compromise to make. To anyone wanting to get judgemental I say this: risks become harder to take the more you risk losing. The practicals of dealing with authority are (to me) the same as negotiating with a victorious army.

When you begin to negotiate you are accepting defeat: the battle for a life controlled by the person living it is in some ways lost when you decide you need to deal with planning authorities. Having set the aim of a long-term park up, then all considerations have to come second to that aim if you really want to achieve it.

As a rent-paying traveller you (I) become by a greater or lesser amount different to a squatting traveller. My experience is that you have to encourage those who can swing the decision of the planning authorities to think well of you as a bunch of non-individuals.

When the bigots started to stick their oar in it was important that they had no real shock-horror stories to wave in the face of the locals. This made it possible for them to believe their own bullshit ideas about who or what we are: 'cos no way are they gonna be happy with the idea that we're a load of individual weirdos doing what we want

with our lives and fuck authority if it objects.

But there's nothing very fuck authority about getting planning permission: it's a lot less obvious than that. There's a lot of people who really are Nazis thru' and thru', and all planning does is rob them of the chance to fuck you off one more time.

But they will keep trying, and by using law and authority to frustrate them you can be more successful than by being up front and telling them to fuck themselves. There is a cost, and it is a big BUT: you have to make a major compromise to the eyes and ears of authority by appearing to conform totally, I think it's inevitable that to some degree the appearance becomes reality. If you can live with that, and can find a suitable site and landlord, go for it and good luck.

Further legal information from Friends & Families of Travellers and the Children's Society.

John
Wokingham

Home education

My Dear Squall,

Emma Jackson makes some cogent points about homeschooling (page 54, 55, Spring '96) but I think it's worth mentioning that the most ardent advocates of homeschooling in America are loony, right-wing, born-again, gun-toting, fundamentalists.

However, Emma is undoubtedly correct when she blames school for crushing children's individuality and creativity. Most schools are too big, too noisy, too impersonal and the teachers are not inspiring role models. They are egregiously inefficient in imparting brainskills. What schools take seven hours a day to teach can be assimilated by any child in less than an hour if he/she is taught individually or in a small group.

Michael Masson

The Post Bag

Wally Hope: man or martyr?

Dear Squall,

Neil Goodwin's article "Wally Hope - A Victim of Ignorance" in Squall 11 contains a number of factual errors.

The bands Hawkwind and Gong were not spawned by the Stonehenge rock Festival, they were going strong years before it got going. Hawkwind's one and only hit single "Silver Machine" was in the charts years beforehand.

I knew Phil Russell aka Wally Hope and was present at many of the events described in the article. The drugs that destroyed his brain were as likely the acid and speed supplied by his "friends" in the "movement" as anything prescribed by the psychiatric system.

He was a classic rich kid acid casualty who would ramble on for hours about Jesus being re-incarnated in Cyprus in 1960, to anyone who would listen. The people who made a hero of him once he was dead couldn't stand him when he was alive. What was interesting and very ironic is that the name "Wally" was intended to be a name that could be used by anyone, to destroy the cult of personality. Now that name is being used to create a martyr for that very cult. This is very sad!

Reverence for the dead is one of the hallmarks of an

authoritarian patriarchy. Let the dead bury the dead. No more sacrifice!
All the best,
Nigel Ayers

Penny Rimbaud replies:

For me, Phil Russell, aka Wally Hope, was neither a hero nor a martyr, but a personal friend, yes, tiresome at times, particularly when he was on his Jesus of Cyprus soap box, but he was also a poet and a visionary. Without Wally Hope, for better or worse, there would never have been a Stonehenge Festival. I regard that as a fairly important legacy. When he was alive I loved him, when he was dead I missed him.

To claim that the drugs that destroyed him were given to him by friends is as insulting as it is untrue; what's more it stinks of Thatcherite moralism. I have never taken acid or speed and neither have I ever encouraged others to do so. Further, I am not altogether sure that those who supply drugs can truly be defined as friends, but maybe that's my hang-up. For his part, Wally believed acid to be a holy sacrament which he used in great moderation and with enormous care, indeed he was critical of the social use of drugs, including alcohol and nicotine. To dismiss him as just another acid casualty is to play into the hands of a tabloid mentality that once surrounded acid and now surrounds ecstasy, ie state propaganda.

Whatever the actual cause of Wally's death (natural,

suicide, assassination, take your choice, they're all equally provable), there is no question that his brain was seriously if not terminally damaged by the treatment to which he was subjected firstly in Winchester jail and then in the Old Manor Hospital, Salisbury.

The recommended dose of Largactil (chemical cosh) is 75mg per day. During his two weeks incarceration in jail, Wally was prescribed an unbelievable 2,000mg per day, plus weekly injections of Modecate (a similarly powerful brain inhibitor). The above information was supplied by the CID shortly after Wally's death. Equally, in an interview with the consultant responsible for Wally's treatment in the Old Manor, I was casually informed that he had been prescribed Modecate "in doses considerably above the maximum recommended by its manufacturers". I have reason to believe that he was prescribed further psychotropic drugs, Haloperidol and Stelazine, in what amounted to a bizarre experiment in chemical cocktails. By the time of his release from the Old Manor (two days after the last festival-goer had left the site of the second Stonehenge Free), Wally had been reduced to little more than a cabbage. A common side-effect of large doses of psychotropic drugs is a condition somewhat akin to Parkinson's Disease called 'dyskinesia'. Wally's guardians, both doctors, felt that he could be suffering it in its chronic, incurable form. The affects of acid? I think not.

Following Wally's death and the deceptive manner in which the authorities had dealt with it I spent over a year making my own investigations and writing a book based on my findings. Having suffered intimidation by the police and death threats from persons unknown, in a fit of cowardice I later destroyed most of that work. However, some of the documentation that I had compiled was not destroyed and I used it several years later when I wrote 'The Last of the Hippies', a short essay on Wally that was included in one of Crass' albums. It is that essay, as CJ Stone points out in his book 'Fierce Dancing', that has given rise to many of the conceits that now surround Wally's life and death. However, for all that, I do not feel responsible for having created a myth; that is in the minds of those who need them, not mine. No, I wrote 'The Last of The

Hippies' because I wanted people to be aware of the lengths to which the State will go to silence those who it perceives as its enemies. I wanted to be certain that I had done everything in my power to ensure that such a pointless death didn't happen again (of course I knew that I wouldn't succeed, but at least I tried).

To dismiss those who revere the dead with glib rhetoric about authoritarian patriarchy is (on a considerably more crucial level) to dismiss those who continue to act as witnesses to the holocaust. The dead cannot be truly buried until we acknowledge our complicity in their deaths. Of course there should be 'no more sacrifice' but rather than reeling out tired, 'alternative' abstractions or confirmations of status-quo cynicism, let us act to ensure that there are none.

Penny Rimbaud June '96

AVAILABLE SQUALL BACK ISSUES

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

graphic by Hugh d'Andrade



CONTACTS

Advisory Service for Squatters (ASS) - Gurus of the squatting world. Open for advice, practical and legal at 2 *St. Pauls Rd, London N1 2QN* from 2-6pm every week day. Tel: 0171 359 8814.

Advance Party - “sound advice” Representing ravers, party-goers, festies and organisers. Campaigning against the CJA. Information, actions, party info, meetings, networked all over UK; call for a group near you. *Advance Party, PO Box 3290, London NW2 3UJ.* Tel: 0181 450 6929. e-mail: *jimone@sypte.co.uk*

Alarm UK - networking over 100 community anti-roads groups nationwide. Information, opposing CJA, lobbying and media. *Alarm UK, 13 Stockwell Rd, London SW9 9AU.* Tel: 0171 737 6641.

Camcorder Action Network - centre for alternative media. Help produce the excellent Undercurrents news video. Tel: 01865 203 663.

Campaign Against The Arms Trade (CAAT) - publishes information and co-ordinates vigils and demonstrations against arms sales and the secrecy of who’s buying: *11, Goodwin Street, London N4 3HQ.* Tel: 0171 281 0297.

Campaign for Freedom of Information - upholding the rights of all to freely access information which affects their lives. Working for legislative changes, public accountability and against dodgy official secrecy. *88 Old Street, London EC1 9AX.* Tel: 0171 253 2445. Fax: 0171608 1279.

Centre for Alternative Technology - “tools and devices which work with nature rather than against it”. Seven acre visitor complex where you can see sustainable technologies and practices in action. *Machynlleth, Powys, Wales SY20 9AZ.* Tel: 01654 702400. Fax: 01654 702782. email: *cat@gn.apc.org* *http://www.foe.co.uk/CAT*

Compassion in World Farming - lobby group for humane farming practises. *Eve Hodson, 23 Dulverton Mansions, Grays Inn Road, London WC1.* Tel: 0171 837 0284.

Conscious Cinema - Monthly video round-up of protests and related social justice campaigns. *PO Box 2679, Brighton BN2 1UJ.* E-mail: *Cinema@Phreak.Intermedia.Co.UK.*

Contraflow - Part of the European Counter Culture Network. Radical mag about justice, campaigns, occasional articles on squatting. . *Available from the 56A Info Shop (address below).*

Conviction - Campaigning group, support and help for prisoners falsely accused/imprisoned. Produce news-letter, 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 DownsEF! Prior House, Tilbury Place, Brighton, E. Sussex.*

Earth First! - “No Compromise in Defence of Mother Earth.” Autonomous direct action eco collectives. Seriously committed. Growing numbers of groups appearing all over the country. Their “Action Update” contains information on actions and local groups. *Earth First! PO Box 9656, London N4 4JY.* Tel: 0171 561 9146.

Endangered Species - Socially and environmentally active group in Mid Wales. Anti-CJA, pro justice. Meetings, networking, raising local awareness. *14 Great Oak Street, Llanidloes, Powys, Mid Wales.*

Exodus Collective - ‘A movement of Jah People’. Seriously active collective creating community, housing and regularly putting on top dos. Bringing life back to Luton. *Long Meadow Community Farm, Chalton Cross, Sundown Rd, Luton Beds.* Tel: 01582 508 936.

Faslane Peace Camp - Permanent peace camp outside Clyde submarine base, home of Trident submarines. Produce newsheet Faslane Focus, land rights, actions and anti-nuclear information. Donationto:*Faslane Peace Camp, Shandon, Helensburgh, Dumbartonshire, Scotland.* Tel: 01436 820901.

Festival Eye - An excellent mag that keeps on running. The latest issue contains news on travellers, Scottish festivals, road protests, Stonehenge. Lots of good pics, letters and comment and the festival listing. A must at £2.00 (plus A4 SAE) from: *BCM Box 2002, London WC1N 3XX.*

FIN - Free Information Network. Local activists, motivators and information gatherers. Newsheets published as and when containing up to date information, festival and party news, events, meetings, campaigns etc. SAE and donation to your local branch.

AberdeenFIN - *36 Buchan Rd, Torry, Aberdeen AB1 3SW.*

CamFIN - *c/o Arjuna, 12 Mill Road Cambridge CB1 2AD.*

EFFIN - *c/o York, The Coffee Bar Grassroots, 58 Charles Street, Cardiff.*

GuilFIN - *PO Box 217, Guildford, Surrey.*

MaidstoneFIN - *PO Box 263, Maidstone, Kent.*

MerseyFIN - *PO Box 110, Liverpool L69 6AU.*

MotherClan - *29 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 Magdalen Rd, Oxford.*

RatFINK - *c/o RSI, 30 Silver Street, Reading.*

SheffFIN - *The Ecology Co, 199 Crookes Valley Rd, Sheffield.*

SouthWestFIN - *c/o Wild Pear Court, Combe Martin, North Devon.*

WalsallFIN - *c/o 17 Newhall House, Newhall Street, Cladmore, Walsall WS1 3DY.*

Children’sFIN - *c/o Brambles Housing Co-op, 82 Andover Street, Burngreave, Sheffield S3 9EH.*

Free Tibet Campaign (Formerly Tibet Support Group) - *9 Islington Green, London N1 2XH.* Tel: 0171 359 7573.

Freedom Network - Dishes out info on NVDA actions and events. Main Tel: 0171 582 3474. Action line: 0171 793 7343

Friends, Families and Traveller’s Support Group - FFTSG “All citizens of a free society should have the right to travel and the right to stop without fear of persecution because of their lifestyle.” Monitoring CJA, legal observation, advice and information. SAE and money to this on-the-case and vital group: *7 Benedict Street, Glastonbury, Somerset BA6 9NE.* Tel: 01458 832371.

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. Currently being sued by Copex donations gratefully accepted: *PO Box 5, Lostwithiel, Cornwall, PL22 OYT.* 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@phreak.intermedia.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 1, Carlton PDO, Nottingham.* Tel: 01159 590 357.

Institute of Race Relations (IRR) - educational charity. Collects and disseminates information about racism throughout the world and publishes the excellent European Race Audit quarterly: *2-6 Leake Street, Kings Cross Road, London WC1 9HS.* Tel: 0171 837 0041.

Justice? - committed activist networking group and producers of ‘Schnews’, wikid weekly newsheet keeping us all up to date with happenings as they happen. *c/o On The Fiddle, PO Box 2600, Brighton, E. Sussex.* Tel: 01273 685913. e-mail: *Justice@intermedia.co.uk*

Labour Campaign for Traveller’s Rights - Fighting for traveller’s rights and particular emphasis on right to sites, wider definitions of travellers, grants and release of unused Govt land. *84 Bankside Street, Leeds LS8 5AD.* Tel: Jenny Smith 01275 838 910. Paul Winter 01132 486746.

League Against Cruel Sports - Campaigning against hunting, shooting and other unspeakable pursuits. Publish

Wildlife Guardian quarterly. 83-87 *Union Street, London SE1 1SG.* Tel: 0171 403 6155. Fax: 0171 403 4532.

Legal Defence & Monitoring Group - provide legal observers whomonitor police actions on demos and attend related court cases. Offer training and support. Essential service always in need of volunteers and funds. *BM Box HAVEN, London WC1X 3NN.* Tel: 0181 802 9804.

Letslink UK - a network of Local Exchange Trading Systems based on the barter of locally available skills and services for non-currency based credits. Local group contacts, workshops, literature and advice available. *61 Woodstock Road, Warminster, Wiltshire BA12 9DH.* Tel: 01985 217871.

Liberty - National Council for Civil Liberties. Mainly media and lobbying. *Liberty, 21 Tabard Street, London SE1 4LA.* Tel: 0171 403 3888.

London Animal Action - campaigning on local animal rights issues. Organise actions against fur trade, animal circuses etc, Tel: 0171 837 7557.

Manchester Freedom Network - 9 *Otterburn Close, Hulme, Manchester M15.* Tel: 0161 232 1598

McLibel Support Campaign - Supports one of the stances of the century. Information dispersal to the wider jury. *c/o London Greenpeace, 5, Caledonian Road, London N1 9DX.* Tel: 0171 713 1269.

Monolith News - Magazine for travellers of the new age and all interested. No. 19, modern Arthurian theories, Watt Tyler & what do the Masons have to do with Stonehenge? To find out send donation and A5 SAE to *Monolith Publications, PO Box 4, Syston, Leicester LE7 4RD.*

No M11 Link Road Campaign - NVDA against the M11 extension. *C/O Wanstead Environmental Centre, The High Street, London E11.* Tel: 0181 518 8222.

Ploughshares Support Network - committing acts of disarmament using household hammers. Inspired to fulfill the prophecy of Isaiah (2:4): “They shall beat their swords into ploughshares”, Ploughshares women have carried out over 50 disarming actions on warheads/planes world-wide.*Box X, 111 Magdalen Road, Oxford OX4 1RQ.*

Public Law Project - national charity aiming to improve access to public law remedies like judicial reviews for those who can’t afford them/are discriminated against. Recent cases include Kingshill and the precedential Wealden District Council decision. *17 Russell Square, London WC1B 5DR.* Tel: 0171 467 9800

Road Alert - Co-ordinating anti-roads protests across the country. Direct action arm of Alarm UK. Seriously excellent newsletter, seriously active NVDA organisation. Information, latest news, actions, networking - get involved. *PO Box 5544, Newbury RG14 5FB.* Tel: 01635 521770.

Reclaim The Streets - Highway hold-ups 90s-stylee. Street parties and anti-car culture actions planned for the summer. *RTS, PO Box 9656, Finsbury Park, London N4 4JY.* Tel: 0171 281 4621. email: *rts@gn.apc.org*

Release - offer confidential advice and carry out research on drugs and the law. 10 - 6 Mon-Fri *advice line: 0171 729 9904.* At other times: 0171 603 8654.

SQUASH, Squatters Action for Secure Homes - Voluntary group opposing squatting aspects of CJA. Actions, lobbying, meetings. *SQUASH, 2 St. Pauls Rd, London N1 2QN.* Tel: 0171 226 8938.

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 OLR.* 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 classroom and distance learning for home-educated travelling children. £5 ‘friend’ subscriptions, newsletters and details of available resources from: *TSC PO Box 36, Grantham, Lincs NG31 6EW.*

Undercurrents - quarterly alternative video magazine. Features, direct action, anti-roads, campaigns, topical eco-issues. Back copies and Undercurrents 5 now available from *Undercurrents Productions, 16b Cherwell Street, Oxford OX4 1BG.* Tel: 01865 203663. Fax 01865 243562. email: *underc@gn.apc.org*

56A Info Shop - News action and meeting place, books, teashop, records, comics. Squatting, counter culture and lots of small press stuff and all of it behind a wonderful community wholefood store - check it out. Open Mon, Thurs, Fri 3-7pm. *56 Crampton Street, London SE17.*

121 Centre - Cafe, bookshop, meeting place, advice for all those interested in squatting, women’s issues, unemployment and the state of the nation. Run by squatters at *121 Railton Rd, Brixton, London SE24.* Tel: 0171 274 6655.



**“Politics on its own is deadly dull.
Entertainment on its own is deadly
irrelevant.”**

Pieter-Dirk Uys