

If I can't dance it's not my revolution

You latch on to struggles, you're like a leach
You've got nothing to learn, but everything to teach
Eight words sum up the case for the prosecution
"If I can't dance, it's not my revolution"

Your party is like a religious sect
You quote Marx and Lenin, like they were sacred texts
You want me down on my knees begging for absolution
But if I can't dance, it's not my revolution

You turn up to meetings and talk for hours
About the need to smash the capitalist powers
Try telling us something we don't know
A more creative contribution
Coz if I can't dance it's not my revolution

Your answer to all questions, past and present
Is to build soviets of soldiers, workers and peasants
Can't you change the record, find another solution
Coz if I can't dance it's not my revolution

You never shut up about Trotsky
Is there something wrong with yer
Your speeches sound like a cure for insomnia
Someone turn up the music, drown out this noise pollution
Coz if I can't dance it's not my revolution

You're like a dysfunctional yellow pages directory
Only there for the nasty things, misery's mandatory
But the gulag doesn't sound like my kind of institution
And if I can't dance it's not my revolution

Try listening for once, it will make you feel clean
Try finishing a sentence without mentioning 1917
Try talking like a human instead of a machine
- Whose only mode is tedious convulsion
Coz if I can't dance it's not my revolution

So shut your mouth and move your feet
Stop trying to sell that paper and dance to the beat
Forget for just on moment about distribution
Coz if I can't dance it's not my revolution

Put up with difference, it'll make you stronger,
Put up your barriers to the rest
of humanity no longer.
And put this amendment in your constitution
"If I can't dance, it's not my revolution"

Steve Rooney

Government to deport long-time Leicester resident

Jadranka Kresteska has been in the UK for over eleven years. Yet the government has recently signalled its intention to deport her. So much for recent promises to deal with asylum seekers cases quickly and efficiently!

Upheavals

Jadranka originally came from Macedonia but has spent the last eleven years living, working, paying tax and National Insurance in the UK. As anyone who knows anything about the Balkans will realise the region has undergone major upheavals in the last eleven years. There is no way that Jadranka could return to the Macedonia that she left over a decade ago. Her close family now live in the UK along with all of her friends and colleagues.

Fear

Jadranka says "I have no friends, no means to support myself and no place to go in Macedonia. I fear for my safety, my welfare and my health. My life has been here in the UK. I have given myself to this country. This is the place I call home, but I may be forced to return to a country where I have no life and no friends."

Concern

If you would like to help Jadranka then write to your MP expressing concern about her case. Alternatively contact the Leicester Civil

Rights Movement, c/o Highfields Youth and Community Centre, 96 Melbourne Road, Leicester and ask to be kept informed about her case and the cases of others like her.

Tristram Hooley



Ecorobics

Fancy burning off some of those Xmas calories? Well conservation work uses up to a third more calories than step aerobics.

A new programme jointly organized by Environ and the Charnwood GP referral scheme will allow people who have been told to take some more exercise to choose from a programme of activities which includes conservation work on one of Environ's six nature reserves. So put the leg warmers and crap disco music away and get your wellies on. Ring Mark Graham 0116 222 0236 for more info.

Leicester Radical Alliance would like to thank Leicester Socialist Party for their generous donation of a printer. Now all we've got to do is get it working! If there is anyone reading this who knows how to mend 1980s offset litho printers and cares about keeping Leicester's top radical newsletter going, please get in touch.

Prevent crime - blockade Trident

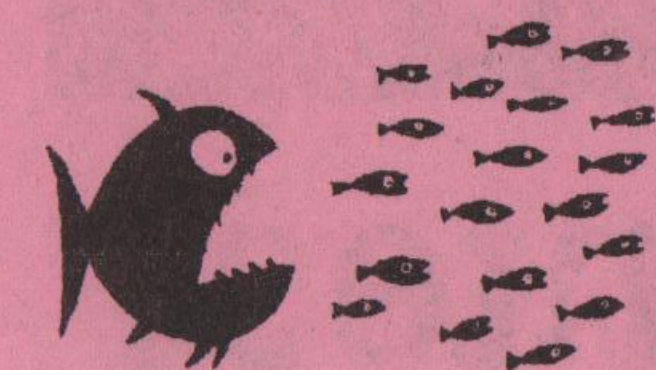
Feb 12th sees Trident Ploughshare's Big Blockade of the Faslane Nuclear submarine base on the Clyde near Glasgow. Last February over 400 people blockaded the base, closing it for several hours. This year we should have enough activists to close it down for the whole day. Come along to carry out non-violent action and uphold international law!

The Trident system is an indiscriminate weapon of mass destruction in line with NATO's first strike policy - and it costs British

taxpayers 4 million quid a DAY. Trident has been ruled illegal under international humanitarian law by the World Court and a Scottish court. It is especially important now for people to demand greater scrutiny of this and other nuclear weapons policy with speculation of a costly Trident upgrade and the threat of the US National Missile Defence project (see Bruce Gagnon article).

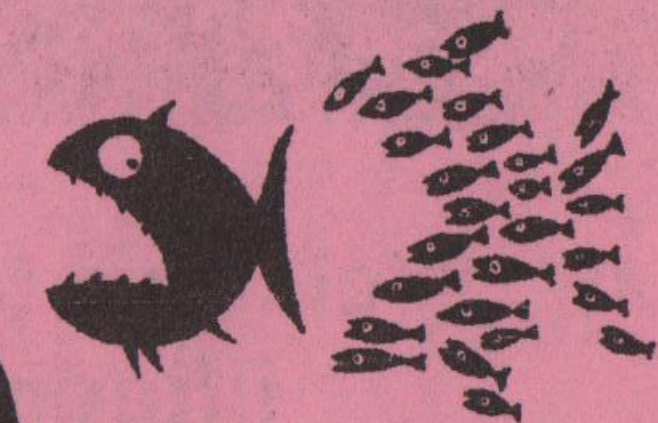
Recent health-scares about the effects of Depleted Uranium weapons in the Balkans

show the lack of firm knowledge about side-effects and the dangers of allowing military use and dumping of nuclear waste from power stations. We cannot trust Government or the military with this responsibility.



GrassRoots

Leicester's FREE radical voice



Feb 2001

GrassRoots is Leicester's only independent radical campaigning magazine.

GrassRoots is printed by the Leicester Radical Alliance.

We welcome contributions from anyone. Send information, articles, letters, and donations to:

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Books, Humberstone Gate, Leicester.

<http://radical.members.beeb.net/>

inside...

Leicester In Deprivation Top 20!

But, asks Highfields resident **Tristram Hooley**, if we're deprived, who's depriving us?

Tony Blair recently announced yet another assault on deprivation in the inner cities. Obviously as all of us inner city dwellers know this is unlikely to come to much if we measure his "assault" in terms of any of those Old Labour indicators like "money", "equality" or "employment prospects". I suspect that Mr Blair is worried about Labour's core vote (new word for the working class - see also 'socially deprived, workshy pie eating scum' - oh no that one's what they call us in private).

Most deprived

The government's 'Indices of Deprivation' do, however, make quite interesting reading. I checked out what it had to say about Leicester and found that 47.1% of people in the city live in areas that rank amongst the 10% most deprived in the country. This puts our fair city at number 18 in

the deprivation rankings. So at least we made top twenty!

A number of notable areas in Leicester boast a "deprivation ranking" that reveals decades of government and

150th most deprived area in the country. While all of those posh types in **Spinney** (Highfields) live in the luxurious surroundings of an area that is only the 371st most deprived in the country.

Also-rans

As for the rest of Leicester, you lot are not even trying. Although Saffron, New Parks, West Humberstone, Mowmacre, Belgrave, Eyres Monsell, Coleman, Beaumont Leys, Latimer and Charnwood all rank within the top 1000 most deprived wards in the country. I suggest that all of us who live the areas that topped this chart give our councillors, MPs and MEPs a ring and ask them what they are doing about it.

Their numbers are all in the GrassRoots Directory. Get ringing! Alternatively we could always vote them all out at the next election and give all those Socialists and Greens a go on the levers of power. Might be worth a try?



All Leicester's figures are on <http://radical.members.beeb.net>

Free Speech? Not in the Deep South: Ervin found guilty

In January, US black activist Lorenzo Komboa Ervin, who spoke in Leicester last year as part of a speaking tour of Europe, was found guilty of 'disruption' in a Tennessee court.

The trial judge, who had earlier described him as a 'red anarchist' and a 'terrorist', still claimed to be a neutral arbiter.

Lawyers muzzled

As Lorenzo put it: "Our attorneys were told that they could not mention a word about the First Amendment or Free Speech in their court presentation or as a defense to the charge. This cut the heart out of the defense, and my court-appointed lawyer then asked Judge Stern how he was supposed to conduct a defense at all, and she just smiled."

So much for the land of the free.

Police protest

Lorenzo and his two co-defendants were charged with disrupting a city council meeting when they turned up to protest at the police involvement in the killings of black people in Chatanooga. This state law targets anyone who 'interrupts an official meeting'. It has only been invoked three times - and Lorenzo has been the target in two of these cases. After the trial, he said: "We will continue to speak out against racism and police brutality. We'll fight as long as it takes."

Lorenzo plans to appeal. Messages of support are welcome at kombao@hotmail.com.

Credits, socialist election challenge, mental health rights
Star wars, birmingham other 6
Poem, trident, anti-deportation
Diary, merchandise

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pullout

Welcome to issue fifteen of *GrassRoots*

Editor: Chris Williams

Contributors: Tristram Hooley, Steve Score, Caroline Moles, Christina Goodwin, Steve Rooney, Steve Vallance.

Distribution/WWW: Len Burch

Treasurer: Alan Stanley

• *GrassRoots* is mainly written by people called Steve, but printed and published by the Leicester Radical Alliance. The next Radical Alliance meeting is a discussion (see Diary) on Feb 13th at 7.30pm, upstairs in The Ale Wagon, Charles St, Leicester. Next monthly meeting is 7.30pm Tues Feb 27th, Secular Hall, Hummerstone Gate, Leicester.

• *GrassRoots* editorial meetings happen every week, between 5pm and 6pm on Sundays at Secular Hall.

• The LRA is a non-sectarian alliance of a whole bunch of people who want to change the world. Some want to change it a little, some a lot. Rather than bicker with each other, we prefer to turn our ire on the real enemies: authoritarianism, capitalism, oppression, environmental destruction, and Anne Robinson.

• LRA - Red in politics, red in finances. Please send us cheques to 'Leicester Radical Alliance'. We crave stamps, envelopes, help, and pre-election government handouts.

• Send us your photographs, diary dates, useful bits of local news, etc, and we'll print them. Email us stuff for our website, too.

Socialists to contest Leicester West

The next general election is nearly upon us. The millions of pounds flooding into the Labour campaign fund from big businessmen just reinforce the fact that there is no fundamental difference between the major parties. They are all in the pockets of the rich.

Crisis

Recent political events such as the movement around the fuel protests and the crisis on the railways have highlighted the increasing disillusionment with Blair and New Labour by many working class people. We have also seen the growing numbers of people involved in "anti-capitalist" protests.

As a Socialist Party member, I will be standing in Leicester West against Blairite Patricia Hewitt. It will be under the banner of Socialist Alliance, as agreed by the national network. There has been a national effort to unite as many left candidates as possible.

Community Campaigns

The Socialist Party has experience of standing independent socialist candidates in Leicester West, in 5 council elections and the last general election itself. Through the members we have in these areas we have been involved in numerous community campaigns such as campaigning for community facilities in Kirby Frith and the Wycliffe Action Group's long fight against school closures.



Target for tonight: P. Hewitt MP. Does anyone else remember her calling Kinnock a 'class traitor'?

We know full well that this is only a beginning: socialists are not about to storm to power in this election. The key aims are to show there is an alternative and to widen the layer of activists trying to change things.

Help

During the campaign and the build up, it should be possible to organise joint events including socialists, the LRA and others in "extra-parliamentary" campaigns.

If you want to help in the campaign (or even prepared to give us a donation towards the costs!), please get in touch with me on Leicester 223 0534 or stephen.score@ntlworld.com.

Steve Score

Although the LRA is affiliated to the Socialist Alliance, we're big-hearted enough to want to cover all local progressive challenges to the current system. So we welcome news and appeals for support from the Socialist Labour Party and the Green Party. And from people who've decided that the vote changes nothing, and would rather do something more useful on the day.

1 in 4 people have no right to trial

Christina Goodwin explores the implications of the government's new mental health legislation.

The left has tended to leave mental health issues to specialist organisations like Mind and Asylum. This is surprising since 1 in 4 people suffer mental illness.

On 20th December 2000 the government published a White Paper which threatens to change the Mental Health Act and infringe civil liberties. Firstly, it will empower the detention of people with personality disorders if they are judged to be a "significant risk" to the public.

Personality disorders are disproportionately applied to women - in particular women who have eating disorders or have been sexually abused. These women often tend to challenge societal norms. The fact that they will be detainable without having done anything wrong smacks of internment.

Black people are also likely to be disproportionately affected. Civil liberties campaigners believe it will be in breach of the Human Rights Act.

Secondly, it will enable compulsory treatment if patients refuse medication. Yet, there are already powers to detain people if they are a

risk to themselves or other people. This new proposal will deprive people of their autonomy with the only clear benefit being that it will save money. Most people experiment with rejecting medication because the side effects are awful. Some of them are successful. It is likely that all of these problems will actually lead to more suicides.

A coach load of people from Leicester Lamp (Leicester Action for Mental health Project) joined an effective lobby of the House of Commons in the summer which deterred the government from promoting forcible treatment in the home. Look out for a future event.

Which group will they pick on next?

May the Force avoid you!

US campaigner Bruce Gagnon warns of Star(t) Wars

Bruce is co-ordinator of the Global Network Against Nuclear Power in Space - he spoke to Leicester CND on Dec 11th 2000.

He lived briefly in Aylestone, Leicester, as his staunchly Republican family were in the US Army. Having faked a medical to do his bit in Vietnam, he found himself sharing a room with a soldier who opposed the war, and converted him into a peace campaigner. As part of the Florida Campaign for Peace and Justice, he began to take an interest in the Kennedy Space Centre and the USAF base at Cape Canaveral, which led him to the Global Network Against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space.

Space War

The Gulf War was the first space war, as it was controlled with intelligence from space. 90% of targets were hit with little loss of life to US troops. The military have seen this as a lesson in the effectiveness of controlling war from space. During the Balkan war, US Space Command took charge of the attacks on Serbia's computer systems. Currently, there are no actual weapons in

space, but the US National Missile Defence programme (son of Star Wars) plans to use space based laser weapons based on satellites.

When outgoing US Secretary of State Cohen was asked 'who could stop this?' he admitted that the US needs the permission of other

countries. Central to this programme are earth based receiving stations: Fylingdales and Menwith Hill in Yorkshire. Thus in England we are closely linked to this US military project.

Menwith Hill is a listening and information gathering station that does industrial and military espionage, as well as spying on the emails, phonecalls and faxes of UK citizens. Fylingdales is an early warning system. Currently the US is working on Theatre Missile Defense, with a view to managing future potential adversaries, especially China. Thus the US are keeping their forces in the far east, and selling modern weapons to Taiwan.

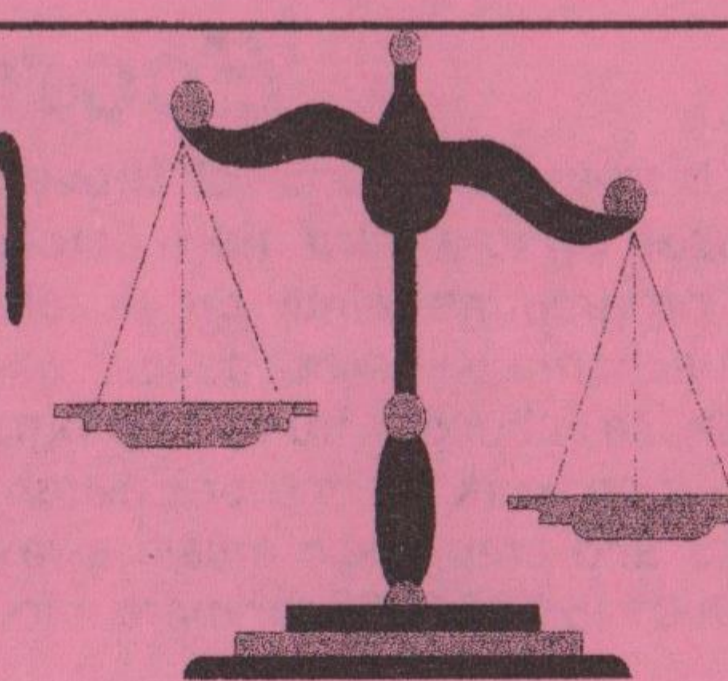
Selling the Moon

US companies want exclusive rights to mining the Moon and Mars. It costs a fortune to send missions to Mars and the US taxpayer pays (probably around \$100 billion for a Mars mission). The cost is paid by the US poor through cuts to welfare. The US Congress and Senate are massively behind these space programmes, chiefly because many US aerospace companies are big spenders in their constituencies.

The other part of this picture is the use of nuclear reactors to power rockets because (so they say) 'nuclear reactors are the only known long-lived and compact source of energy'. We now have more than 110,000 bits of space junk orbiting the earth. 34 of these have nuclear reactor cores. Luckily there have been few accidents so far, but potentially these could collide, fall, and pose a radiation hazard. The US military want to nuclearise and weaponise space, with 20-30 satellites powered by nuclear reactors orbiting the earth to provide space-based laser guns - the US military dream.

Caroline Moles

New Birmingham Six are freed



The trial of 6 anti-capitalist protesters for public order offences ended on December 13th with all defendants found not guilty. The six were among the 22 arrested on the Birmingham Reclaim The Streets demo on June 3rd, when West Midlands Police shut down central Brum themselves in order to keep out 'evil anarchists'.

The case against them ended when the version of events given by the police and backed up by scare stories in the local media - that they were acting violently and threatened city-centre shoppers - was contradicted by eyewitness

reports and the police's own CCTV evidence.

The arrest and trial fits into the suppression of anti-globalisation protests by the government and police after last year's MayDay. As well as the cost to the taxpayer of the court case, the police response to 70 Reclaim The Streets protesters on June 3rd was a major 'Section 60' public order operation involving 500 police and costing £20,000. Maybe the court case was needed to justify these costs and the attempts to suppress voices critical of rampant and destructive global capitalism?

Steve Vallance

dot.community Top websites:

Crass - the best band ever to have existed have a whole bunch of stuff on line here:

<http://www.southern.net/southern/band/CRASS/>

Save Vauxhall Jobs - Site campaigning to keep making cars in Luton:

<http://www.savevauxhalljobs.org.uk/>

Government Indices of Deprivation - leafy or whiffy? Find out where the other half live:

<http://www.regeneration.detr.gov.uk/rs/03100/index.htm>

Leicester Radical Alliance. Different URL, same brilliant website. Local links, diary, more news than you get here: <http://radical.members.beeb.net/>

A 'Blue Streak' missile - latest attraction in Leicester's Space 'Science' Centre