

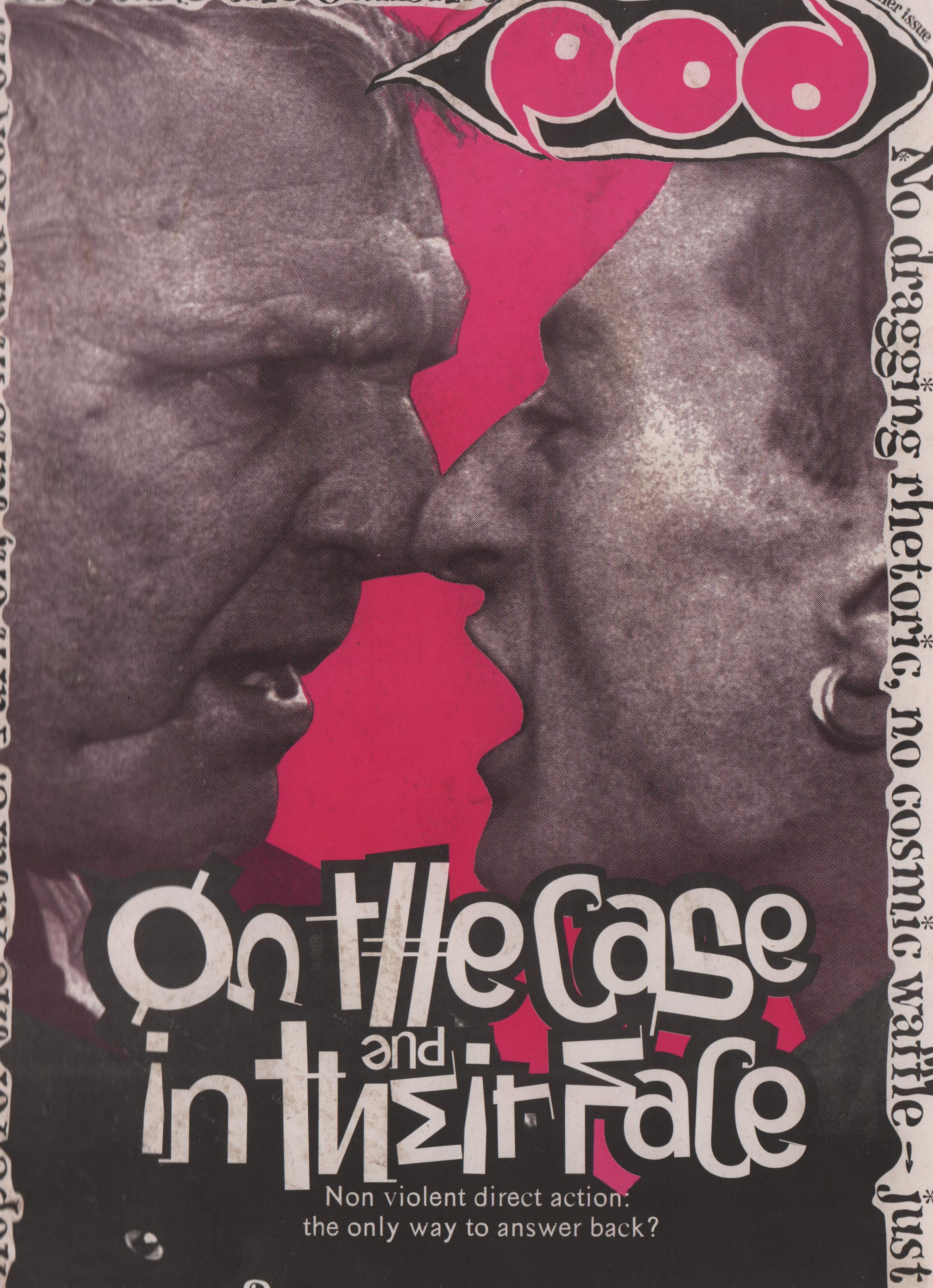


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COKTEKTS

4. FOCUS:

Alternative news from here and there

6. THE BIGGER PICTURE:

After the Criminal Justice Act - Where Do We Go From Here?

Miss Pod takes a look at the direct action movement and tackles some of the key issues debated since the hated Criminal Justice Act became law.

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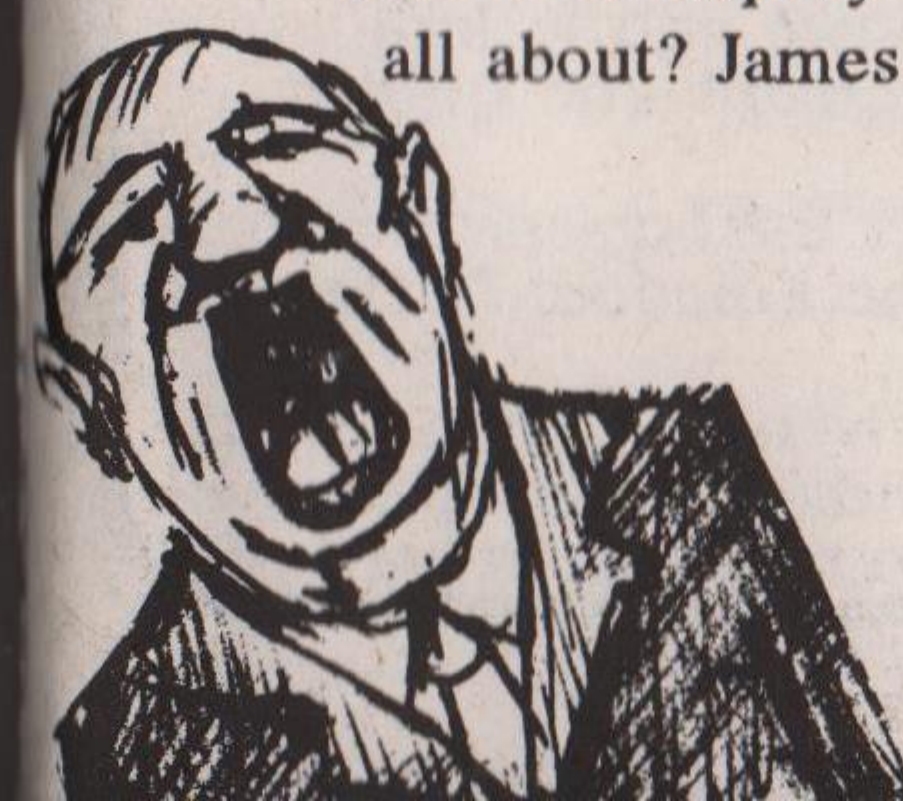
Ursula Wills-Jones follows the progress of a special European gathering of NVDA activists in Berlin.

50. BLOOD AND OIL

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54. GUNS, LIES AND SOUNDBITES

The Scott Inquiry continues to hit the headlines. But what's it all about? James McIvor reveals the frightening truth behind the bullshit.



WHERE POD'S COMING FROM:



This year has been dominated by various anniversaries marking the end of the Second World War. In other words, it's 50 years since mankind dreamed of burying the spectre of Fascism for good. Fat chance.

I'm sure I'm not alone in thinking that in 1995, we've gone full circle. For Fascism, read Supercapitalism. Perhaps the manifestations are not so extreme but from where I'm sitting, I'm watching the erosion of everything that the brave people of the post-war world struggled to create.

The rights of the ordinary person and the rights of the community are being replaced by the rights of multinational companies to trash and exploit. How much more can we take? Where will it end?

The answer is by no means black and white but more and more people are realising that as individuals and communities we have to take the power back. Many are taking the first step by challenging the suits and the uniforms - sometimes with remarkable success.

DIY Culture and non-violent direct action have proven to be effective tools both in empowering people and raising issues that would otherwise be buried. It's given purpose back to many people's lives. But to be really effective, many more active people are needed.

So what do you want? Are you happy to join the treadmill, get a McJob and say goodbye to your future? Or do you care enough to stand up and defend our dying democracy?

The message is clear: we can only depend on ourselves. The walls can't be torn down in one stroke, it requires constant chipping away - courage and tenacity - but the 'people power' potential is enormous.

Many have dismissed the direct action movement as 'those green people.' But the environment is much wider than trees and fields. It's about community. It's about social justice and respect for ourselves and our fellow beings. It's time for us to come together.

Deeds not words.

IT CAN BE DONE, IT CAN BE FUN! - DIY.



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MOBILE CULT?

Heard about the Aym Amo Torist cult? Apparently the cult is so big across Europe that many people are members without even realising it. Cult activities include ritual suicide by mutual asphyxiation. These take place in mass gatherings called 'drives'. Members meet on major roads in ceremonial coffins which they call 'Mymo Torka'. Each coffin emits poisonous gasses which progressively pollute both the occupants and the people in the surrounding area. To prevent being seduced into the cult, try chanting 'Theemo Torka is crap' and get on your bike!

RED ARREST

Weirdest arrest of the year: On hearing that China had restarted its nuclear testing programme, members of Youth CND responded by holding a demo outside the Chinese Embassy in London. Several managed to get through the Embassy gates and paint Hiroshima shadows onto the steps. The cops moved in and the demonstrators were fairly swiftly arrested for, resisting arrest, criminal damage and would you believe, 'Trespassing in China.'

Nothing to do with Us

Anyone worried about promoting events that are likely to contravene the Criminal Justice Act, should take a tip from SHEFFIN, Sheffield's free information network newsletter. It goes like this: 'CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PUBLIC ORDER ACT 1994 DISCLAIMER - All events listed in SHEFFIN are fictitious and do not represent anything living or dead. Any suggestive phrases or information in SHEFFIN is for entertainment only and should not be acted upon as (attendance or intention to attend) an event may constitute a criminal offence. SHEFFIN recommends readers remain at home (if you have one) and watch TV. SHEFFIN cannot be held responsible if readers take control of their lives and fight back.'

LOG-IN - PHREAK OUT

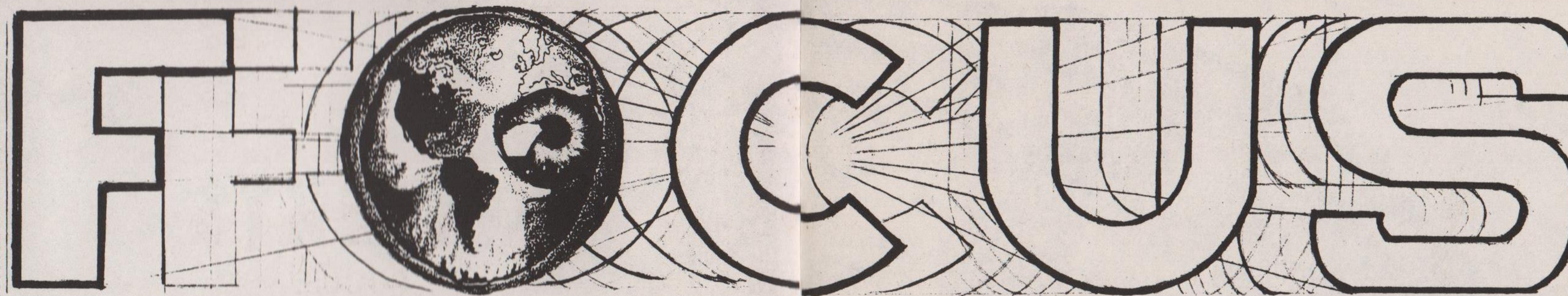
Good news for mouse-freaks and PC people who want to link up to the underground. pHreak is a new computer bulletin board which specialises in all things alternative. And says the press release, that doesn't just mean, 'gurning ravers and hardcore techno.' The idea is based around the exchange of information and ideas. There are loads of different areas including Kulture, 'Out There', Sounds (that you can actually listen to), Fight For Your Rights and loads of stuff from the Internet from sex wizards to zippies and net zines. Being a complete technophobe, it's taken Miss Pod ages to get to grips with the whole concept (it took her a year to work out how to download - honestly!) but pHreak people are always willing to talk you through the process on that trusty old bit of hardware, the telephone. See ad for more details.

INFO ALERT!

Several alternative publications have been carrying a certain list. The list shows a column of journalists which is opposite a column of police/secret service organisations. Unsuspecting readers may make the natural conclusion that the named journos are somehow connected to the organisations. This is in fact serious misinformation. The list comes from Larry O'Hara's book Turning Up The Heat - M15 after the Cold War. The journos listed are in fact those whose research into the secret service/police O'Hara found very useful. Now you know.

KEWS FROM THE DIRTY TRICKS DEPARTMENT

Just who is the 'anonymous source' who is making a career out of rubbishing activists? Last summer, the Sunday Times ran a story on the new breed of 'Eco-terrorists' who were, it claimed, using Vietnam-style booby-traps to injure security men. The only evidence the story could produce was a bundle of farriers' files (rasps with pointed ends) that had been found at the Solsbury Hill anti-bypass campaign outside Bath. The Bath protesters insisted that it was they who handed the files over to police after finding them on site. All the quotes from police/intelligence sources were anonymous. Then, just after Christmas another article appeared, this time in The Independent. The writer quoted a 'intelligence officer' and implied that M15 and Special Branch were homing in on animal rights activists. It also mentioned the Freedom Network although oddly, the reference was in a different paragraph and with no real connection to the rest of the story. Finally in May, The Sun, wrote, 'Nine months after IRA guns fell silent, taxpayers are still forking our millions on combating terrorism.' It then pointed the finger at animal rights movement and quoted a 'leading counter-intelligence source'. 'This is the nutter fringe,' said the source. 'Green terrorism has replaced the IRA as the biggest threat to the safety of people in public life.' It also fired an extremely libelous shot at the Freedom Network, which it accused of using the 'outcry' over the CJA to 'launch riots.' What's going on? One thing we can be sure of. The suits must be taking the effectiveness of grassroots campaigning very seriously indeed if they're going to the trouble of planting such ridiculous crap in the papers. You can also be sure that the campaigns will have the last laugh in their own non-violent way!



more news and views from here and there

MICHAEL HOWARD: STILL AT LARGE

Andy Walley, a BR worker and member of the Cheshire Freedom Network was recently thwarted in his attempts to bring the Home Secretary to book - but only just.

Andy got wind that Michael Howard was paying a visit to the county and decided to go along with some friends. Posing as a reporter, he managed to catch Howard on the steps of Nantwich Conservative Club. Andy asked Howard about a House of Lords ruling that the Home Secretary had acted illegally in trying to change the levels of compensation for victims of crime. 'As the man in charge of administering criminal justice in the country,' Andy began. 'Could you explain your position now that the House of Lords has ruled that you acted illegally and you therefore now appear to me to be a criminal?'

Shocked by such close contact with an ordinary member of the public, Howard shuffled to his car, muttering something along the lines of, 'I don't wish to comment on that. Frankly, it's not a criminal matter.'

Andy had the last laugh. The local press took up the story and put it on the front page. 'To be told by the Home Secretary that acting illegally is not a criminal matter is a classic,' says Andy before warning readers, 'Michael Howard is still at large, he is a Tory and dangerous. A reward will be given to anyone who can use a citizen's arrest to bring him to justice.'

WELL, I'LL BE GARGOYLED

It'll be hard to forget the sight of five anti-CJA protesters sitting on the roof of the Houses of Parliament the day after the Criminal Justice Act became law. Now rumour has it that the five have been given a memento of their protest by none other than the Metropolitan Police. Originally, the five were arrested and charged with damaging one of the stone gargoyles that sit frowning above MPs as they make their way into the house. While in custody, the roof-sitters' clothes were taken away for forensic inspection and they were given white overalls to wear instead.

Weeks later, the five were suddenly told that charges had been dropped and that their clothes were available for collection. This they duly did. But back home, they discovered that they had one extra bag. Inside was, yes, the very same gargoyle they'd been accused of damaging. It has now been adopted as their unofficial mascot.



OXEN, MAYPOLES AND LOTS OF JIGGLING

The pagan ceremony of 'hand fasting' is becoming an increasingly popular alternative to the traditional idea of getting married. Paul and Becky (pictured) were hand fasted during Beltane celebrations earlier this year - complete with maypoles and ox and cart. The couple's hands were ceremonially tied with gold silk and they were united for a year and a day. Says Paul, 'It was great. We managed to get through the whole ceremony without making any promises to each other!' I'm told the Beltane festivities the evening before were so good that 30 or so people stripped off and jiggled around a fire in naked abandon until dawn. These roads-protesters - any excuse to get their kit off.

WPC OR NOT WPC

It's often said that policewomen have a much nastier streak in them than their male colleagues. But after reading a survey on women in the force, Pod's beginning to see why. A survey carried out by Dr Jennifer Brown, head of research at Hampshire Constabulary, found that 99% of those questioned said they'd experienced sexually explicit comments or jokes at work. One of the interviewees summed up her male counterparts as, 'The most sexist, homophobic and racist section of society that I have ever encountered.'

CAMCORDERS TO THE RESCUE

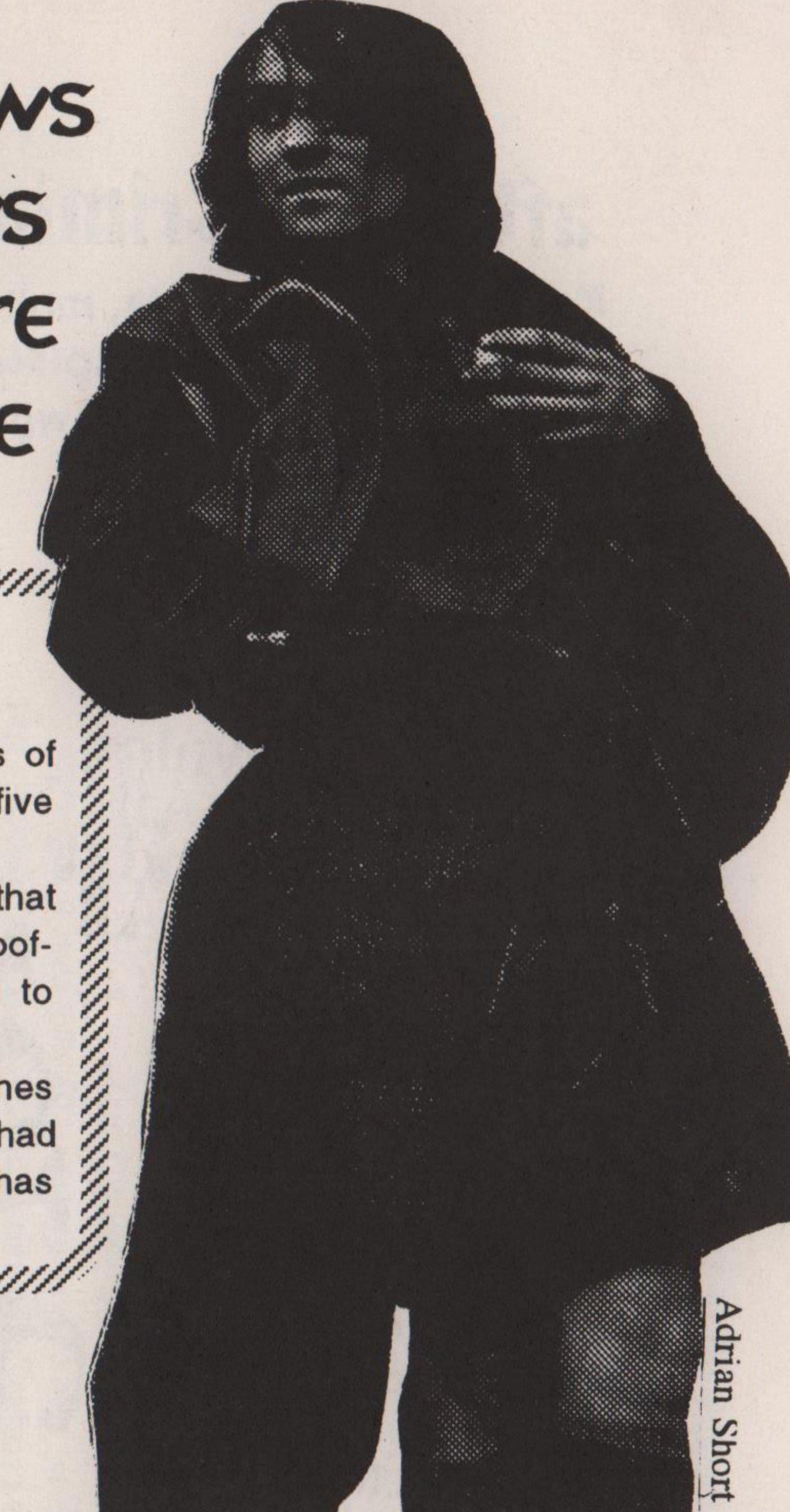
Proof of how useful camcorders can be. An assault trial was abandoned recently after the judge was shown footage of a police officer punching his alleged assailant. The original incident happened at Hackney Town Hall where a group of protesters disrupted a council meeting last year to protest against the Criminal Justice (then) Bill. The Tactical Support Group was called in and protesters were 'removed'. Two protesters, Jacob Secker and Simon Barlow were charged with assaulting PC Terence Moore. But the court was shown video footage taken by another protester with PC Moore punching Secker three times. The judge ruled that PC Moore's force was not 'reasonable'. PC Moore denied fabricating evidence or saying to Secker, 'Don't bleed on my handcuffs, they're a new set.'

LISTEN OUT

Keep an eye out for Charter 88's 'youth wing', Activ88. Activ has taken on the task of trying to convince 'young people' that registering to vote is a good idea. An uphill struggle, you might think. Their logic seems to be that if all the unregistered voters under 25 suddenly appeared on the electoral roll, it would add up to something like 2.5 million people. The three mainstream parties know the next election is going to be tight and they'll need every vote they can get. Here's a potential block of voters that might make the difference between win or lose, politicians will have to listen to young people. If nothing else, it will almost certainly ensure that young people's views are included in the debate in the run-up to the next election. To promote this idea, Activ are working on some very interesting projects including their own month-long radio station - in the middle of the Thames!

DIRTY, SMELLY AND DISHONEST

Oh dear. It seems that among students at least, information on the dangers of the Criminal Justice Act still isn't getting through. In a letter to Epigram, the independent paper for students at Bristol University, one student took the trouble to write in and point out why he thinks the Act is a good idea. After a brief introduction, the writer quickly got onto the topic of travellers who he describes as, 'Dirty, smelly and dishonest - and decent people should not have to put up with them.' He then turned to hunt saboteurs. 'These city-travellers with half-baked animal welfare ideas who don't even know what they're protesting about half the time, come out and disrupt a perfectly legal day's sport.' He finished by taking a snipe at anti live export campaigners with, 'If we let these hooligans change the law they will stop at nothing - forced veganism, no leather, whatever next!' Bristol University should take comfort in the fact that among their number, they have a student with all the makings of a future Tory Home Secretary.



Adrian Short

MORE BOLLOCKS FROM POLLOK

All power to John Livingston, one of the protesters trying to stop the construction of the M77 up on the Pollok estate in Glasgow. John is a well-known face on the campaign and cuts a dashing figure in his kilt and traditional Scots garb (Miss Pod thinks so anyway). The story goes that John was arrested after a site invasion earlier this year but much to the campaign's anger was refused bail by Magistrates. While on remand in HMP Greenock, John was told that he would have to surrender his kilt and wear prison clothes instead. This naturally got John's Celtic blood boiling and he refused to take it off. The kilt was finally confiscated but John got his own back - by refusing to wear any clothes at all.

after the Criminal Justice Act

Reclaiming our rights, multinational monsters, the fluffy v. spiky debate and Agenda 21 - the answer to all our problems?

'So!' the cynics cried. 'All that protesting and it got you nowhere! All those months of marches, actions, benefit parties and stunts and you didn't change a thing.' Maybe. Maybe not.

Just a few hours after the Criminal Justice Act was given Royal Assent last November, five activists set the tone for the months ahead. Dodging around cops and closed-circuit TV, they scaled the walls of the Houses of Parliament and sat on the roof under Big Ben. You can imagine the grins on their faces as they unfurled a huge banner saying DEFY THE CJA and settled down to build a spliff. It said it all.

Well, winter set in and quite a few campaigners slowed down. But others, despite the enormous efforts put into the campaign all through 1994, somehow struggled on to create colourful flashes in the post-CJA gloom. The Freedom Network joined forces with other direct action groups to organise a 'Stop The Criminal Injustice Act' week which saw a wave of 'defiance actions' around the country - including a mass trespass picnic on the lawn of Michael Howard's country home.

During the same week Taking Liberties, a compilation album including The Orb, Orbital and Galliano was launched at the House of Commons to raise funds for anti-CJA campaigns. Suited MPs and their wives enjoyed wine and cheese in one room, while next door a non-conformist collection of musicians and campaigners listened to an 'outlawed' succession of repetitive beats including Dread Zone's single Fight The Power!

The following months saw the spectacular week-long battle to save Claremont Rd from the M11 link road in east London (See feature on page), a mass trespass at Windsor Castle and hunt saboteurs continuing to save foxes despite arrests totalling 151 by the end of the hunting season. Barely had the new year come in, than Middle England suddenly rose up at Shoreham, Brightlingsea and other live-animal export ports, followed by the wonderful story of school kids bunking off school to join the No M77 campaign on Glasgow's Pollok Estate. (The story goes that the kids decided to join the road-protesters after watching an episode of Grange Hill, in which several of the cast try to save a house from being demolished for a road scheme.)

By Spring, a metamorphosis was happening. People's spirits began to warm up and soon everyone was asking the same question: 'Where do we go from here?' Yes, some campaigns could continue to defy the CJA and show that it is unworkable but others felt it was time to change tack. Despite lack of funds and ridiculous allegations of 'eco-terrorism' in some of the national newspapers, many people were prepared to carry on campaigning. But deep down most knew that a new approach was needed.

Where does it go from here? *

Proactive not reactive

Lasting change doesn't happen until protesters start making policy, setting the agenda to force the government into substantial and lasting political change. In other words, we need to start saying what we do want, rather than what we don't want.

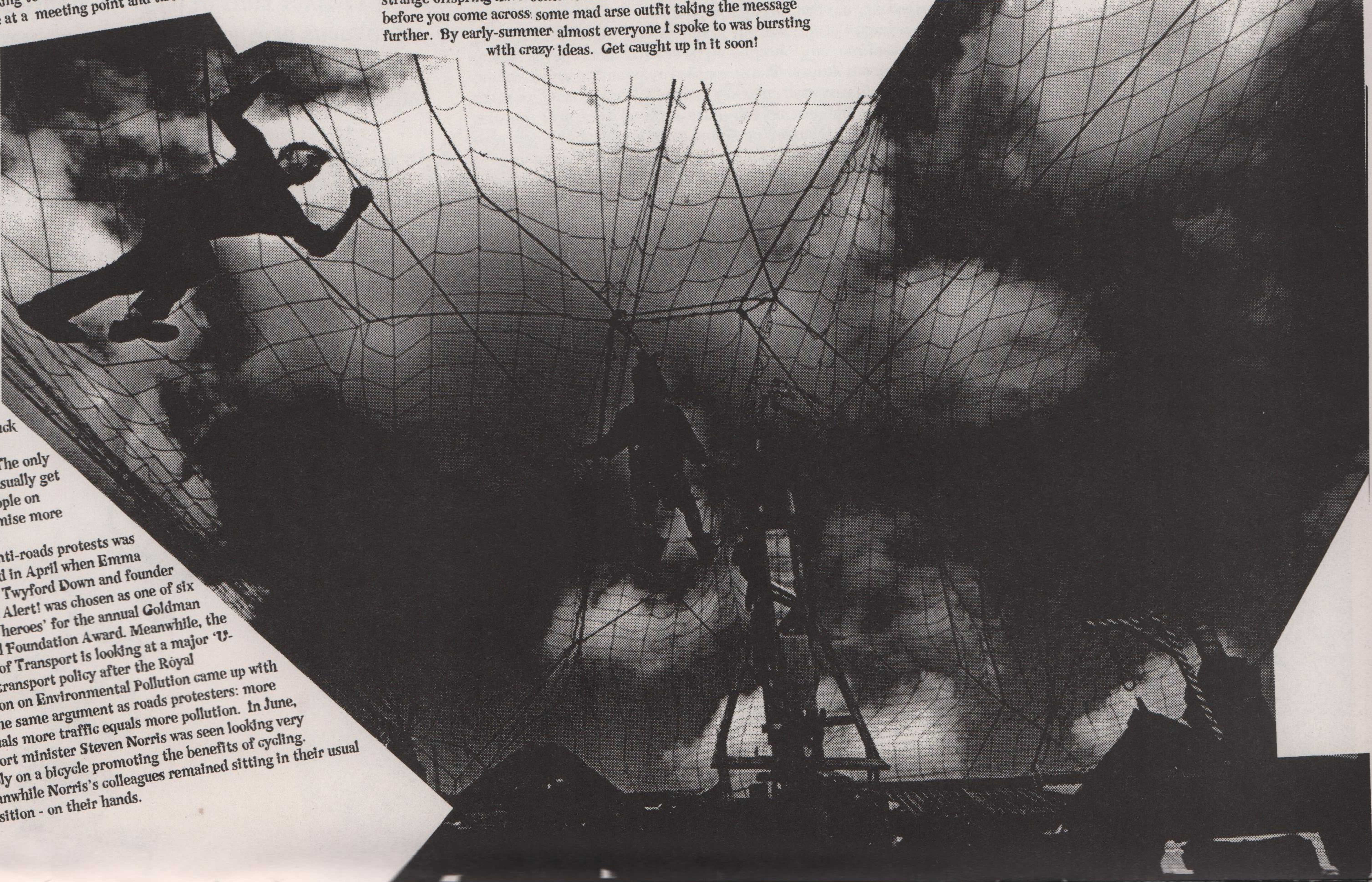
Then, back in March, George Monbiot, an unusual mixture of Oxford academic and grassroots activist organised two talks on 'Land Rights'. He opened the first talk with the following words: 'Direct action is the most potent political force of the 1990s. It has grown to signify the re-democratisation of the political process. But there is one fatal flaw. So far, it has been largely reactive, responding to injustice. Lasting change doesn't happen until protesters start making policy, setting the agenda to force the government into substantial and lasting political change. In other words, we need to start saying what we do want, rather than what we don't want.' - That talk made a lot of people think. In fact, many groups were already moving towards a 'proactive' approach but by discussing it together, ideas began to become reality. To date, the campaign metamorphosis is still continuing. But there are some interesting signs. The roots laid down by last year's anti-CJB campaigns are beginning to produce strong, healthy shoots. Don't believe those who tell you that it was all for nothing. The 'movement' is spreading. The web is widening. The effects of the new tide of protest are often too slow to be seen clearly. But have no doubt, in the long run, the politicians won't know what's hit them. - On the legal side, Liberty, (National Council for Civil Liberties) has set up a public order monitoring project to ensure that every stage of CJA enforcement is kept under close scrutiny. It is also on the lookout for test cases which they can use to challenge the CJA in the European court. If you ever see or experience misuse or abuse of the CJA, it's vital you contact them and give an account. Every incident, however small you might think it is, adds weight to their campaign. - Throughout the winter and spring, Liberty also joined forces with Advance Party to organise a series of legal briefings for activists around the country. The first briefing coincided with the first national DIY gathering of activists at the end of last year. More than 250 activists from all over the country spent a weekend discussing the way forward in an empty school in Sheffield which had been squatted for the event.

DIY, DIY AND MORE DIY
 In fact, The DIY media in general is flourishing. Provided you know the right places to look, there's no excuse for not being fully-up-to-date on who's doing what and where. The SchNews (see feature on 'Justice?' pag 24) is a weekly news bulletin on different actions and events all over the country. Numerous publication including Squall and The Levellers' mag On The Fiddle are providing very professional alternative news and culture on a sort-of-regular basis. And then there's Pod! - which is now officially an 'annual' but will have smaller quarterly bulletins for people on the mailing list. There's no shortage of alternative news to cover either. On the anti-roads front, the focus is rapidly broadening out the whole area of cars, traffic, pollution and quarrying. A growing number of people are taking to their bikes for the monthly Critical Mass meetings in which cyclists merge at a meeting point and take over the roads for an afternoon. Critical Masses are happening all over the country and are attracting more and more support. The London events brings in up to 500 cyclists a month. Reclaim The Streets, is up to all sorts too. Back in the Spring, the London-based group 'reclaimed' Camden High Street by blocking the road with two crashed cars and putting on a huge street party. Within minutes hundreds of people had joined in to experience the pleasure of a street that isn't dominated by the car. Meanwhile, most of the motorists stuck in the jam behind the party were remarkably cool. 'It's not really different from being stuck in traffic on any other day in London,' said one driver. 'The only difference is that I don't usually get served sandwiches by people on rollerskates.' RTS promise more actions soon.

The success of the anti-roads protests was finally acknowledged in April when Emma Must, a veteran of Twyford Down and founder member of Road Alert! was chosen as one of six 'environmental heroes' for the annual Goldman Environmental Foundation Award. Meanwhile, the Department of Transport is looking at a major 'U-turn' in its transport policy after the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution came up with exactly the same argument as roads protesters: more cars equals more traffic equals more pollution. In June, transport minister Steven Norris was seen looking very wobbly on a bicycle promoting the benefits of cycling. Meanwhile Norris's colleagues remained sitting in their usual position - on their hands.

DIY TECHNOVALS
 And then there's the party scene. Last autumn some of the best of DIY culture joined forces with Charter 88's youth wing Activ88 to create the Velvet Revolution, a touring indoor festival like no other. The aim was to highlight the horrors of the CJB with the pleasures of music from the likes of L.S. Diesel, DIY, Tribal Drift, Tofu Love Frogs, Billy Bragg and the Space Goats; weird visuals were mixed the horrific footage of the Battle of the Beanfield and combined with mad sculptures. The whole thing was topped off with a mock police-raid to give people a feel of what was to come. Missed it? Well, you didn't. Out of the Velvet Revolution, all sorts of strange offspring have come about. You won't have to look far before you come across some mad arse outfit taking the message further. By early-summer almost everyone I spoke to was bursting with crazy ideas. Get caught up in it soon!

DIY MEDIA
 Obviously information is vital in any process of awareness building and it looks like camcorders are fast becoming one of the key tools of the direct action movement. Camcorders are useful for several reasons: their presence often subdues volatile cops and private security guards and can also be used as independent evidence in court. C.A.N. (Camcorder Action Network), a network of camcorder-users has been set up by Small World (the makers of the quarterly video magazine Undercurrents) to try and cover actions all over the country. The Brighton-based Conscious Cinema is busy setting up a monthly alternative news video which they hope will be put on at special DIY film nights all over the country.



WATCH OUT, THERE'S A MULTINATIONAL ABOUT -

While many groups are still focussing on the issues on our collective doorstep, there is a growing re-awareness that the real threat to our future lies with unethical and unscrupulous multinational companies. There has been much talk of how, if we cannot put checks on these huge entities, that they will become the new superpowers. While the government continues to sell off all our national assets and multinationals continue to destroy everything in their path, we are left with two choices: unemployment or wage-slavery.

To quote The Observer's view on Tory tactics, 'Labour costs have tumbled and employee protection has been undermined, but at the cost of rising crime, social instability and a rift with traditional Tory values. The ruthless logic.. is that benefits must be further squeezed until the unemployed are forced to take low-paid, unskilled jobs.' And who would be the main providers of such crap deals we wonder?

In his essay on Supercapitalism, a writer by the name of Captain Swing put it like this, '...Those with real power will be sitting in overseas boardrooms - it will be a dictatorship via the Internet. ...You only have to look at the rise of 'economic democracy' in east Asian states, state which are characterised by one party systems, emphatic nationalism, militarism, a disciplinary society with severe punishment for dissenters. This is a society of pure capital. This is what we will experience if our opposition to it is unformed or over-run.'

In response to this growing fear, more and more people are beginning to use direct action on multinationals. The international sense of frustration, anger and impatience characterised by young people (but surely a reflection of a wider feeling) was brought home sharply to delegates attending the Berlin summit on global warming back in the spring.

While suits from over 150 countries spent a week achieving

Labour costs have tumbled and employee protection has been undermined, but at the cost of rising crime, social instability and a rift with traditional Tory values. The ruthless logic.. is that benefits must be further squeezed until the unemployed are forced to take low-paid, unskilled jobs.' And who would be the main providers of such crap deals we wonder?

very little, activists from all over Europe took part in a series of actions ending in the blockading of the summit conference centre itself. Armed with banners saying, 'NO MORE BLAH,BLAH,BLAH' the protesters told the delegates they would not be allowed to leave the building until they did something constructive! Read the full story on page 46.

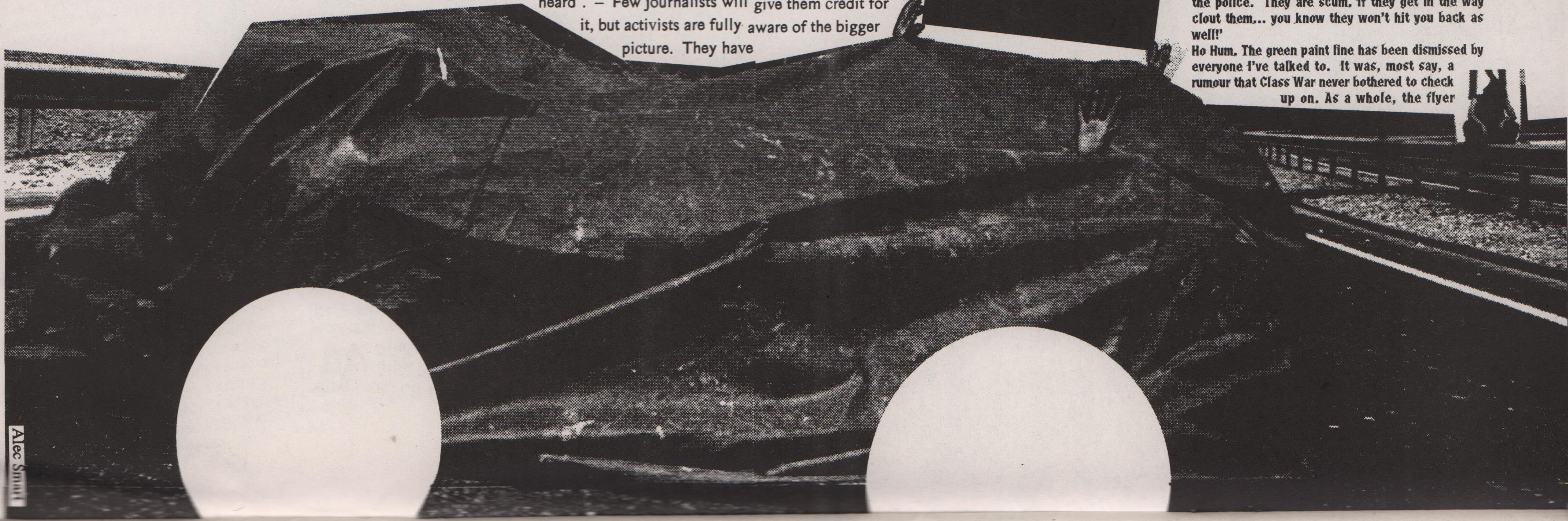
Back in the UK, the oil giant Shell was the first to feel the force. First, a new group SHELL OUT staged a big demo outside Shell's annual general meetings to protest against the company's handling of the Ogoni issue in southern Nigeria - see feature on page 50. The entrances were blockaded and a huge banner with the words 'Murderers' on it was hung from the row of flag poles at the entrance.

Just a few weeks earlier, members of Greenpeace were busy winching themselves down from a helicopter onto Shell's Brent Spar oil platform in a bid to stop its toxic contents being sunk into the Atlantic. Within weeks, the issue had gone international. Two Shell stations were burned down in Berlin and hundreds of activists urged car-users not to buy Shell petrol. When Greenpeace called for a boycott in England, reports indicated that the day's income from some petrol stations dropped by 50%.

Then, on the eve of the summer solstice, came the spectacular news that Shell was backing down to public pressure - just hours after John Major had publicly backed its decision to sink the Spar! Campaigners were gobsmacked. Greenpeace described Shell's decision as a major triumph for the environmental movement. It was also the morale-booster everyone had been waiting for. The saga of the Brent Spa is set to run and run. Many feel it could be the key to opening the box of delights!

while the mainstream media moans.....

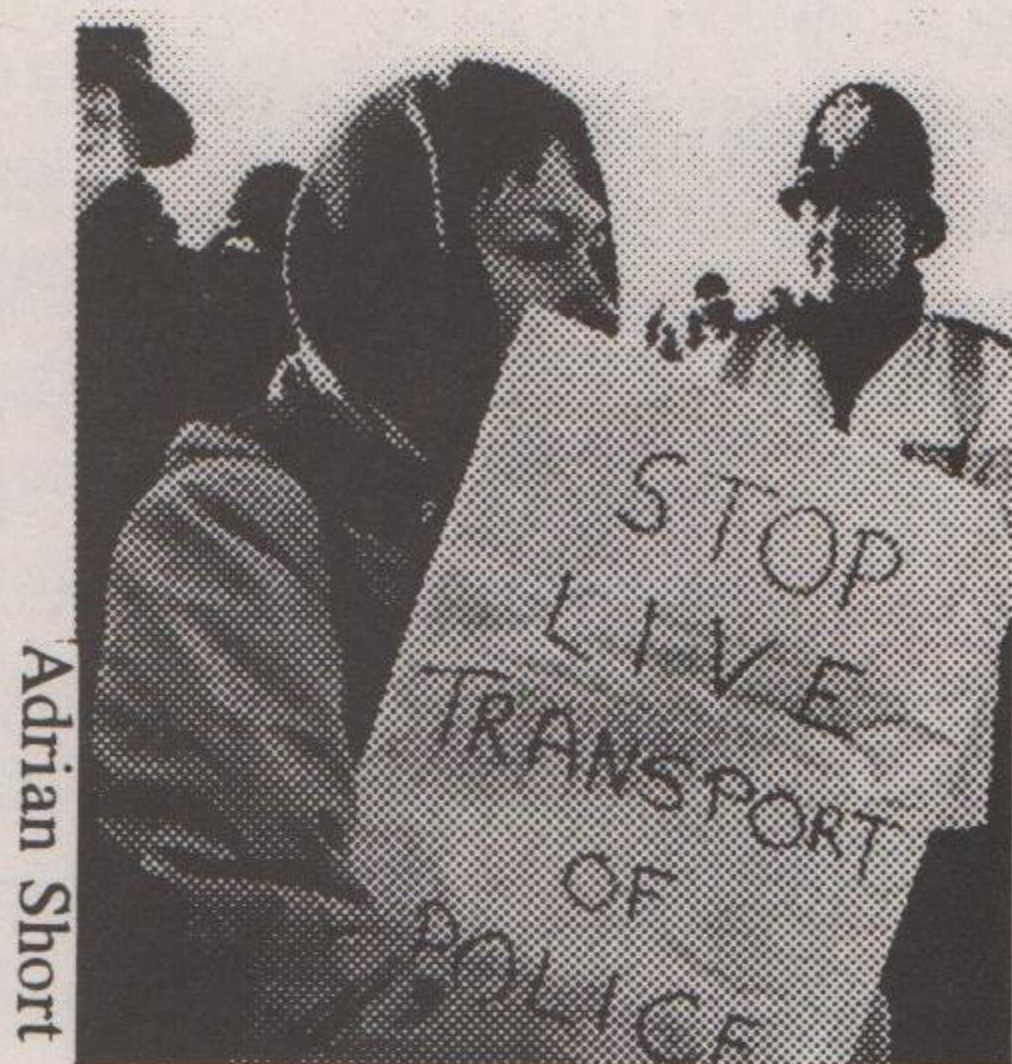
Apart from the usual scare stories in the tabloids, some of the more respected newspapers have been critical of the path activists are walking. The movement has been accused of having no answers to its own questions. Some writers have concluded that activists will have little effect in the long run because they don't have the cohesion to form a political party or work under a unified manifesto. One of the most scathing comments about the movement ironically came from The Guardian who referred to George Monbiot as 'One of its only thinkers.' - The problem is, many activists say, that too many of their critics can only see politics 'vertically.' If they'd taken the time to talk to activists, they might understand how they see things not vertically but 'laterally.' - Phil Pritchard, a member of one of the most respected campaigns, Road Alert!, puts it like this: 'People with a manifesto are basically people who want power. What we want to do is empower. The idea is help everyone understand that they have the power within themselves to create a positive future.' He adds, 'I see real politics happening on a one to one level all the time. Party politics is basically people playing games and point-scoring instead of getting together and solving problems.' - The same Guardian journalist accused activists of only being interested in having fun. 'Unfair,' says Pritchard. 'There is a lot of research and hard graft going on at different levels all the way through society. A lot of us come from more conventional pressure groups. Our experience is that we've been excluded from the decision making process, however hard we've tried. Direct action was the only way of getting our voices heard.' - Few journalists will give them credit for it, but activists are fully aware of the bigger picture. They have



THE FLUFFY v. SPIKY DEBATE
Over the last year, there have been a few mutterings of discontent from certain groups on the fringes of alternative England. These mutterings started when the word 'Fluffy' was added to the activists' vocabulary. As far as I know, the word came from a feature in The Guardian about the Solsbury Hill protest camp. The journalist noted that there was one protester called 'Fluffy' who reflected the general behaviour of the camp i.e. lots of hugging, dancing, woolly cardigans etc. The word was then taken up by some activists as a tongue-in-cheek reference to non-violent direct action (NVDA). Unfortunately, the joke was lost on some people. The issue flared up after the anti-CJB march last July. Among the flyers handed out was one with the words, 'KEEP IT FLUFFY'. On the back, the flyer listed rather strange ways of trying to diffuse confrontational situations. I don't believe I'm alone in thinking that the advice was rather naive. On the whole though the sentiment was fair. I think the majority of people who had come to march wanted to do so peacefully. However, the flyer made Class War and several other 'cells' spit blood. By the time the October march came round, Class War was putting out a flyer calling for people to 'Keep it Spikey (sic)'. It called for a 'RIOT GOOD LAUGH' and went on, 'Demos are a good opportunity for letting off a bit of steam and having a pop at the bill.' But it reserved special vitriol for the 'Fluffies'. 'These tossers were even considering spraying 'trouble causers' with green paint to identify them to the police. They are scum. If they get in the way clout them... you know they won't hit you back as well!' Ho Hum. The green paint line has been dismissed by everyone I've talked to. It was, most say, a rumour that Class War never bothered to check up on. As a whole, the flyer

the message from the front line is clear: we're not going away so sooner or later you're going to have to take us seriously.

been labelled as single issue groups but in fact, they are simply targeting examples of the age-old problem: the inability of governments to respond to the need for change. - Activists see themselves as part of a rolling process; that politics is cyclical, and within every generation, there are the young, the energetic and the tenacious whose role it is to kick the older generation up the arse and highlight issues and prejudices that are being ignored. - The difference now is that this generation feels that we have been given a global ultimatum. Time is running out. The CJA signifies the remorseless roll towards a total State clamp-down on any efforts to disrupt the status quo. Doubtless the CJA model will be used in other countries too. - But the key is hope. Kevin, a mobile networker reflected the defiant spirit, 'The more they try to clamp down the stronger and more ingenious we'll become. They say Freedom comes with a cost and that cost is individual responsibility.' - Many activists look to the successes of the anti-roads campaigns for inspiration. The way to change is not, many say, through lobbying politicians but through the media. Although only a few road developments have been stopped, there has been a dramatic shift in public opinion. Thatcher's dream of a car-based economy is sure to be a vote-loser at the next election and the Department of Transport is finally waking up to that fact. - The logic behind a media-based campaign is the same as it's always been: Why play by the rules of party politics when the odds are so overwhelmingly stacked against you? Why not take up the issues on your own ground where you know you can be far more effective? - Experience shows that the media's initial reaction is to rubbish anything challenging. But the more in-touch journalists will start to discuss the underlying issues and then public debate begins. Even readers of the Daily Mail must be beginning to doubt the paper's interpretation of all those 'dole-scrounging, trouble-makers' - the message from the front line is clear: we're not going away so sooner or later you're going to have to take us seriously. - So why don't all these groups get together and draw up a common agenda? Ally, from the Freedom Network's Manchester group says the general feeling is reflected in the unofficial slogan, 'Unity Through Diversity.' 'The Freedom Network brought a lot of different kinds of people together. We've taken a lot of strength from each other by swapping experiences and motivation but that doesn't mean we all want to be the same or do the same things.' - Sarah, another Networker points to the experiences of the growing number of 'DIY community centres' around the country. 'What's good for one community isn't necessarily good for another,' she says. The attitude of say, CoolTan in Brixton, is very different from the Rainbow Centre in Kentish Town. Different people, different environment. I'd assume that must be the same for other communities too.' - This will all seem very loose and woolly to those who live by ideology and dogma but sometimes it's better to let things develop at their own speed. Once you try to force, to order, to discipline, the creativity, the spontaneity and excitement disappears and you're left grey faces in grey rooms talking about grey ideas.



Adrian Short

seemed to interpret the idea of nonviolence as complete pacifism: weak, timid and I assume cowardly. The whole Fluffy/Spikey debate was seen by most activists as a fuss about nothing. Some on the rainbow side of the spectrum thought the term fluffy was fitting, others thought it demeaned the real essence of direct action. But more than anything, it showed the huge gap in communications between some factions of the far left and those involved in NVDA campaigns. While most simply got on with campaigning, Class War and aligned sympathisers reeled off bitter rants about the 'Fluffies' - such bitterness as to almost smack of sour grapes. The problem really seem to boil down to interpretation of what 'nonviolence' actually is and the fact that the ethos of NVDA hasn't been laid down in black and white. This would be pretty impossible to do because every situation is different. But to try and shed some light on the matter, both sides give their opinion on page 38.

A lot of NVDA activists can't see why some factions feel the need to spend so much time rubbishing the movement. Why such a total intolerance of anyone who doesn't conform to their own ethos? Why the refusal to see things from different points of view? It's very easy to criticise. In all the rants I've come across, I've never seen any constructive or realistic answers. Personally, I think most people have had enough of being told what to think from the Tories. At the end of the day, more and more people are seeing the sense in NVDA. The logic behind it is overwhelmingly clear: you can make a much bigger impact by hitting 'wrongdoers' in the pocket than you can by hitting them over the head any day. A quote from George Bernard Shaw, 'This is the true joy of life: the 'being' used for a purpose recognised by yourself as a mighty one. The being as a force of nature instead of a feverish little clod of ailments and grievances complaining that the world will not devote itself to making you happy.'

Back to home turf.....George Monbiot's Land Rights

idea is getting people thinking. Monbiot has been studying land rights internationally for the past eight years but to be honest, when I first heard about the talks, I wasn't really taken by the theme. After all, most of us (approx 80%) live in urban areas and we're lucky if we've got a back yard. The talks he organised were very interesting but although my understanding of the history of the erosion of our land rights was becoming clearer, I still couldn't see how it would grab the majority of people.

What has 'Land Rights' got to do with unemployment, the housing crisis, crime, pollution, things that people are being affected by directly? 'Look at any issue,' Monbiot explained to me later on. 'By and large, most things boil down to the fact that people have little or no say in how their environment is used. We're looking at the fundamental underlying cause of social injustice. Between 50-75% of land is owned by 1% of population. The last land census was in 1875. Landowners have resisted it ever since. That's why it's such a broad estimate.' I still wasn't convinced. What about people's rights?

'Look at how our green spaces are being used,' he went on. 'Playgrounds are being trashed for superstores, communities trashed for new roads, playing fields covered in car parks... We've got to make people realise what they're losing.' - I thought of the people in my area who tried in vain to stop a Tesco being built next to the High Street. When people do object to development, they rarely succeed. What's going to change? 'We're calling for the public enquiry system to be radically restructured,' Monbiot replied. 'It's never a case of the community being asked, what do you want? Developers put in a proposal and you're given a choice of say, Plan A or Plan B. Those who don't want the proposal at all, find themselves outside the terms of reference. They're simply seen as disrupting the process.' He gave some figures: Of 143 roads schemes proposed in recent years, only five were rejected by inspectors and three of those were overturned by the Secretary of State.

'It doesn't stop there either,' Monbiot went on. 'If a planning application is turned down, the developers can reapply with very minor alterations. Slowly the opposers are worn down and the planning slips through.' - I understood. But still, I had the feeling that most people are more concerned about having a roof over their head than anything else. Monbiot moved onto the subject of housing. He believes that 'brown field sites' (former industrial sites) should be used for 'innovative housing and communal projects' - instead of allowing them to be handed over to profiteers.

'It would be far better to give these sites back to



community groups to build/renovate for their own use or turn them into community spaces. In Oxford there are 350 families in bed and breakfast accommodation but they want to build yet another superstore on the site of the old Cowley car plant.' I could see the cynics saying, idealist - 'innovative community projects' don't pay mortgages do they? But then I got to thinking, well OK they don't, but it might provide an alternative to a mortgage in the future. Low-rent, co-operative housing might seem much more attractive to the next generation which has grown shy of the debt-for-life/negative-equity nightmare.

Monbiot thinks that businesses should also plough back part of their profits in the form of a community ground rent. 'Developers who benefit from public services, roads, hospitals, etc should pay community rent in proportion to the benefits they have received. They should have to give something back to the community.'

What about employment? Monbiot shrugs. 'We're living off the prosperity of the last century. Then, we were able to make the simple exchange of land for jobs. People had some means of keeping themselves alive, even if the jobs were pretty grim.'

'Today we haven't got the land and jobs are running out fast. We've come to the stage where a growing section of the population is unable to supply or sustain its own livelihood. This will be made worse by the gradual disbanding of the welfare state. This destroys people's sense of self-worth. The alternative would be for people to live off their own labours, labours that are dignified.' - Mmm, I thought, back to the land, toiling in the mud and cold - can't see it somehow. 'I'm not looking at a massive return to the land,' Monbiot countered. 'But in the long term, we've got to start looking at ways in which people can survive without relying on the state because that's not going to be an option for much longer. The message is: There are no jobs, so give us our land back.'

He went on: 'It could mean the great revitalisation of cities. If we started using urban land properly, we'd see cities blooming. Common spaces, buildings built by people who are going to live in them, once you see that happening people aren't going to want to flood into the countryside.'

I thought of my nextdoor neighbour who runs his own toy-making workshop in his back garden; our back alley with its mechanics, printers, the foundry; I thought about the local group who had reclaimed some derelict allotments and the community down the road who managed to stop their local park being turned into a £12million sports complex. Just in my area alone, people from all background are quietly but busily

By and large, most things boil down to the fact that people have little or no say in how their environment is used. We're looking at the fundamental underlying cause of social injustice. Between 50-75% of land is owned by 1% of population.

DIYing it.

And so to the countryside. Monbiot's main concern seemed to be intensive agriculture. 'People talk about townies going into the country and trashing the land but have you seen what the landowners are doing,' he said. 'In 1990 they destroyed 18,000 kms of hedgerow through negligence or field expansion. They have ploughed through our land records, the barrows, hill forts etc. Since the war, 50% of our ancient woodlands has gone. This century alone, we've lost 70-80% of our chalk downland, one of the best habitats of all - Britain's natural playground. It looks to me as if landowners are calling for a completely monopoly on destroying the countryside!'

The alternative, he says, is to shift farming subsidies away from intensive agriculture and towards 'small-scale, low-impact, high-employment, preferably organic production.' - 'That way it would give smallholders a fighting chance of surviving. At the moment, 10,000 agricultural jobs are lost every year. We have the lowest proportion of agricultural workers in the world. Farmers now respond to subsidies rather than the customers.' Monbiot is not too impressed by the Country Landowners Association either: 'They subsidised to the teeth and

they complain about dole scroungers!'

One worry that many people have raised is the idea of universal access to the land; they've interpreted it as hordes of people marching onto a farmer's land and saying This Land is Ours. - 'What we're trying to address is the fact that we have no access to the countryside to see what's going on and even if we do, we have no access to the decision making process as to how that land is used,' Monbiot explains.

'In Sweden they have the Allemansrätten, a law giving right of everyone to walk anywhere apart from crops and young trees. It doesn't cause conflict. It's not a privilege, it's a right.' But this is Britain, a small, overpopulated island. 'If people have a stake in something, they respect it,' he replied.

In June, Monbiot went over the South Africa, met Nelson Mandela briefly and came back with a big grin on his face. 'It's amazing,' he said. 'We're talking about land rights in Britain. They're actually doing it out there. There are posters everywhere telling people to take up their rights of communal land, to share and develop their common spaces. I kept on thinking I was talking to activists but they were government officials!' - On his return, Monbiot received some good news. Oxfordshire County Council had agreed to adopt the Land Rights manifesto. It was a good start but I wondered how he is going to get legislators to follow when there are so many landowners both in the House of Lords and in the Commons? 'Look at history,' Monbiot replied. 'Look at the Suffragettes, the Chartists. People have shown that if governments don't bend, they break.'

THE ANSWER TO ALL OUR PROBLEMS?
 So how are we going to go about getting any real change in this country? How do we get more people empowered, a broader cross-section involved. One criticism of the new direct action movement is that in general, it's too middle class. But there is a growing understanding that if we really want to change things for the better, all sectors of the community have to come together. The problem is, how do we do it?

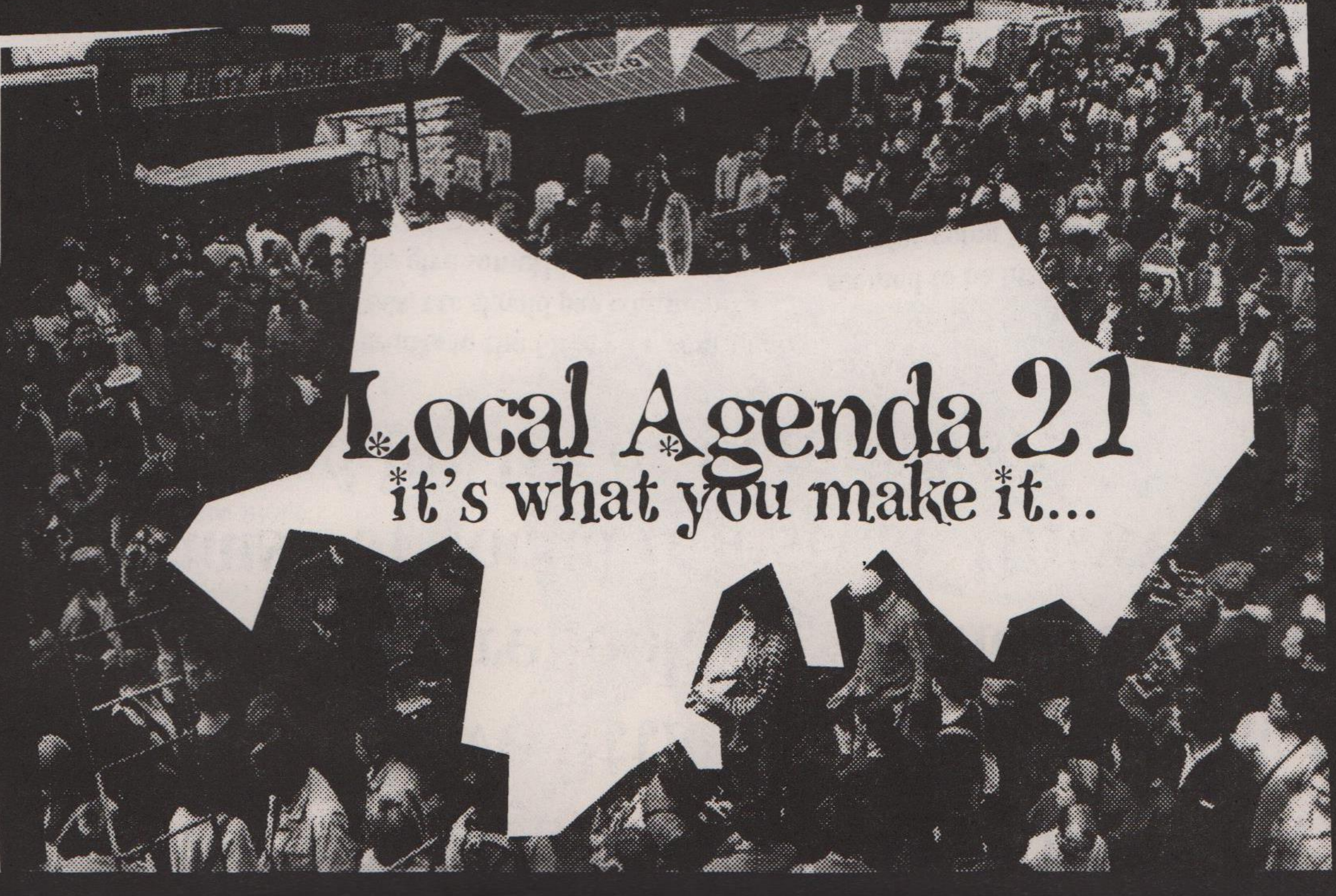
One thing that is fundamental for change is communication. At the moment, our communities are fragmented, we're polarised, cut off from each other and the gulf is growing wider all the time. We've got to come together before the gulf becomes too wide to bridge.

What we really have to come to terms with is the fact that we all have prejudices, however right-on we think we are. By coming together and talking we can begin to break down those barriers and understand each other better. Tolerance and respect are vital if we are going to find common ground. Only then can we address the problems our communities face as a whole and work towards finding solutions. Incredibly enough, one of the possible answers came out of the Rio Earth Summit back in 1992.

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LOCAL AGENDA 21. Now, a lot of people think that very little of any worth came out of the Earth Summit. It was the usual case of a lot of hot air and impossible promises. But it's certainly worth looking at a weighty document called Agenda 21. Agenda 21 calls for a radical change in attitude in order to achieve a sustainable future into the 21st century. Sustainable is defined as, 'The economic progress which meets all of our needs without leaving future generations with fewer resources than those we enjoy. A way of living from

nature's income rather than its capital account.' Typical of the suits to look at it in economic terms. But it could mean quite a lot more. Agenda 21 was set up primarily to ease the plight of third world countries. But obviously as outrageous over-consumers, we've got to shake our ideas up



community will have different approaches to its problems. It's early days yet but local Agenda 21 groups are popping up all over the country. It has been used successfully on Brickhurst Farm, the permaculture centre mentioned in the last issue. An application to have a caravan permanently on site was granted on appeal to the Department of the Environment which made direct reference to Agenda 21 and the fact that the farm was designed for sustainability. Nobody's saying it's going to be easy but even the

big time too. At a local level, Agenda 21 calls for local authorities to start a process of awareness about sustainability. It requires councils to bring the community and local businesses together so that the immediate problems can be studied and locals skills and resources used to try and resolve them. Every local authority in the country must have an Agenda 21 officer and a programme drawn up by 1996. Before you yawn and say no way am I going to waste my life in boring council meetings, think again. Your Local Agenda 21 will only be as good as the people who get involved in it. Obviously, the big problem will be interpretation. What exactly is sustainable? Surely bringing loads of different people together will simply result in major disagreements. Who knows. Personally, I thought that's how the whole idea of democracy started. To be successful it will need people who know what they're doing and how to present their ideas.

The potential beauty of Local Agenda 21 is that it could legitimise almost everything that has been stomped on by the CJA. Squatters, demonised as 'home stealers' could become 'developers of empty properties for sustainable housing.' The Friends and Families of Travellers' support group has used Agenda 21 in their new planning policy document to show how travelling is a sustainable way of life. FFT's Tony Thompson says, 'It recognises that indigenous people, like travellers, have a vital role to play in passing on traditional knowledge about how to conserve the land. It also says the land of people who are oppressed should be protected.' FFT's Steve Staines adds, 'As it stands, between 60 and 90% of traditional sites have disappeared over the past ten years. It's a constant process of denial. We're proposing a network of sites which can be used on a rotational basis. There are

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currently five planning cases coming up where we are presenting this document. You never know, miracles might happen.' Section 1 of the Agenda 21 document calls for the need to establish: "A network of community-based learning centres for capacity-building and sustainable development." Such places already exist in some form or other including the growing number of DIY community centres around the country. For 'squat centre' read 'Agenda 21 centre'!

Section 1 also includes the need for the following, 'Activities that will contribute to the integrated promotion of sustainable livelihoods and environmental protection...' Well, isn't that just another way of describing direct action? For 'eco-terrorists' read 'environmental protectors'! And of course, what better way of getting the message across to people than with a stonking good party! I know this all sound incredibly optimistic. Theoretically, Local Agenda 21 has no more bite than the UN Declaration of Human Rights. But you never know. If you word things in the right way, something may come out of it. Don't forget, there's loads of EC funding just lying there in Brussels.....

If your local council tries to tell you that they are going to make all the decisions and then pass them onto to the community to carry out, they've got it wrong. The whole idea is that the community that must be 'empowered' to come together and make its own decisions. The council is there as a facilitator, an equal partner only - along with local business. Many councils are trying to tell their communities differently and that is why it is vital that people get involved in their local Agenda 21 group in the early stages. Chris Church from the UN's Sustainable Communities Project puts it like this: 'People all over the country are saying, "This place is a mess and we're not going to take it any more. Something's got to be done and we want to be involved in doing it. Agenda 21 is a tool for making it happen.'"

One of the most interesting parts of Agenda 21 is that it could well be the way to broaden the environmental focus. A lot of communities still aren't making the connection between the environment around them and their everyday lives. But what is clear is that our social environment and our ecological environment are intrinsically linked. Poverty, crime, homelessness, drug-addiction, transport, lack of accountability, and many other factors all play a part in our overall environment and these too must be addressed when looking at the aims of Agenda 21.

But one of the best things about Agenda 21 that it simply brings people together. I really don't believe that any one political party can say YES! we have the answers to all the problems. Every community is different and every

Agenda 21 literature reflects the growing sense of urgency: a final recognition that we're out of control. It's pretty clear that both central and local government are being too slow to see the enormous 'people-power' potential of Agenda 21. But this could be a way of boosting what's left of our beleaguered democracy. Ah yes, you might be thinking. That's all very well but what about the national perspective. We still need people in central government to make the big decisions. Accepted. But who's going to make the real changes - the politicians or the people? Even if Labour wins the next election, it's unlikely they will have the courage to make any significant shifts in policy. But if we had really strong voices as communities - and if needs be, well-sorted direct action campaigns - perhaps we would have a better chance of shaming the suits into making some intelligent decisions for once.

Even if Labour wins the next election, it's unlikely they will have the courage to make any significant shifts in policy. But if we had really strong voices as communities - and if needs be, well-sorted direct action campaigns - perhaps we would have a better chance of shaming the suits into making some intelligent decisions for once.



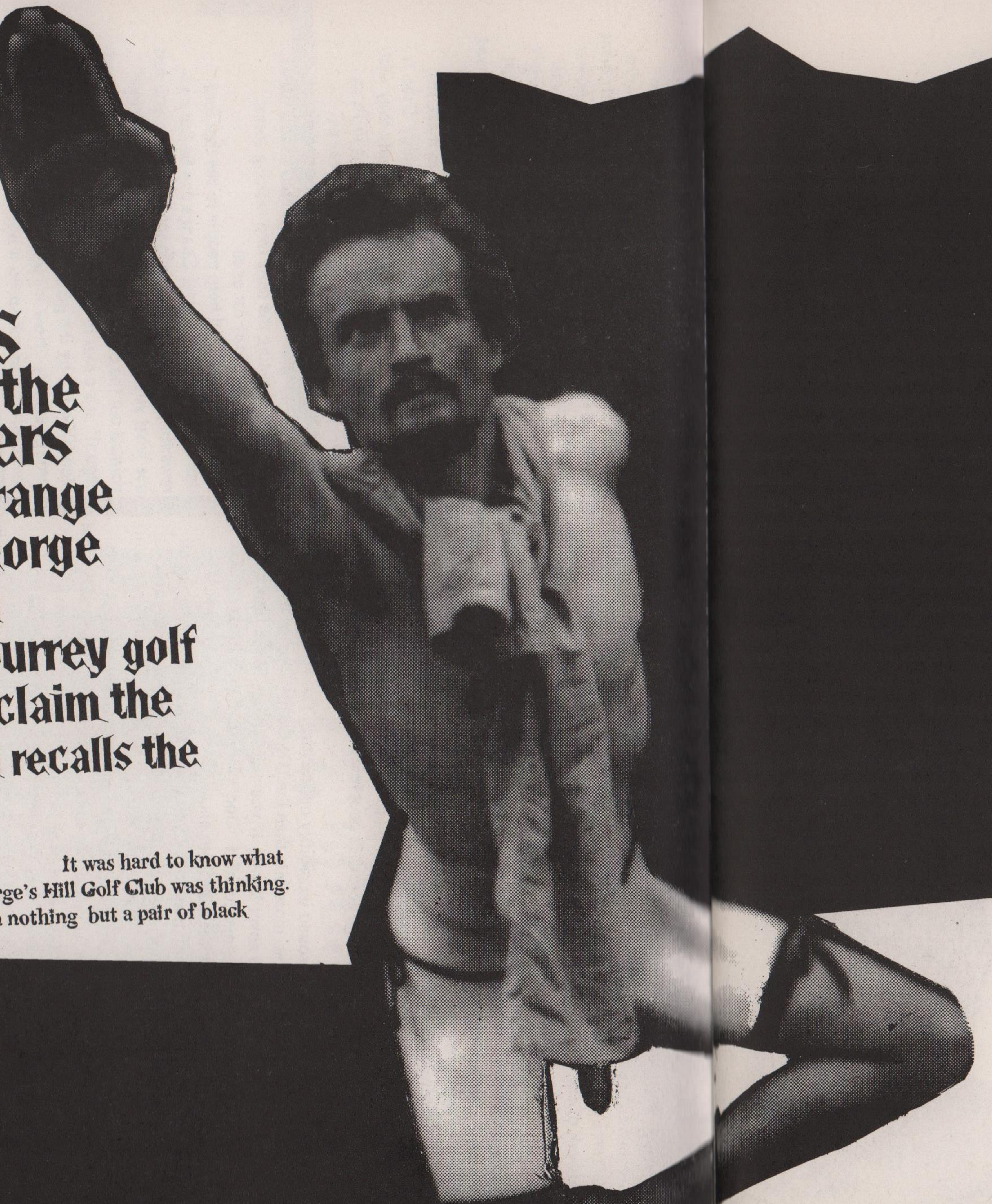
On St. George's day 1995, the New Diggers and a pretty strange looking St George arrived on an exclusive Surrey golf course to reclaim the land. Miss Pod recalls the experience



It was hard to know what the Club Secretary of St. George's Hill Golf Club was thinking.

His face certainly cracked into a smile as a man dressed in nothing but a pair of black stockings skipped around the fairway in merry abandon. The figure was in fact St. George, at least he was a protester playing St. George, in a very alternative version of St. George and the Dragon. - In this story, first told by the Dongas Tribe on Twyford Down, the Dragon is slain by St George but she comes back to life and turns St. George's away from domination and destruction and teaches him about nurturing and other such gentle things.

As a handful of locals sat with a larger handful of cops and about 50 protesters to watch the play, the Club Secretary's thoughts seem to be somewhere else. Maybe he was remembering an afternoon a month or so before when two young people claiming to be history students visited the club house of St. George's Hill Golf Course, Surrey, looking for information on the



Digger community that had briefly settled there back in 1649.

One thing was for sure. If John Robinson didn't know much about the Diggers beforehand, he certainly did after the 'New Diggers' arrived. Five days before the play, more than 300 people had swarmed onto the golf course. It was April 23rd, St. George's Day. The gathering marked the first symbolic attempt to reclaim the hill since the Digger: asserted that 'freedom lies in the unrestricted right to use the earth.'

As the colourful band of activists tried to ignore the rain and the police dotted around the fairway, the original Diggers' story was told by Oxford don and activist George Monbiot, who is rapidly being dubbed as the new Gerrard Winstanley. The original Diggers' declaration was read out before a sapling was planted to the chant of: 'We are the old people, we are the new people, we are the same people, stronger than before.'

In 1649, St. George's Hill was common land. Today it is part of an exclusive golf course and private housing estate. 'It's a symbol of what has happened to this country,' explains 32-year-old Monbiot. 'Our common land has been taken away from us. The ordinary people of this country have no real say in the decision making process for the use of what should be our common treasury.'

Monbiot hopes that the 'Land Is Ours' action will be a catalyst for similar events all over the country. His original plan was to organise a week-long protest camp on one of the wooded areas between the fairways on St. George's Hill. But in an 11th hour change, it was suddenly decided that the risks were too great. An alternative site was found on a



Luck seemed to be on the protesters' side all the way. After a few words of reassurance from Monbiot (who in his tweed suit looked more country squire than activist) 59-year-old tenant farmer John Malkdem agreed to allow the camp to stay on his land for a week. 'You haven't chosen a very good spot though,' he pointed out. 'This lot's covered in pig manure.'

Undaunted, the New Diggers began setting up in a grove by the side of the runway. By mid-afternoon there were murmurs of discontent from both the assorted members of the press and many of the activists. 'We thought we were going to occupy St. George's,' one young woman pointed out.

A hasty 'talking circle' was formed in the centre of a ring of trees and I'm almost sure I witnessed real democracy in action. Ideas were thrashed out, opinions heard and even the Chief Inspector was asked for his views. 'We mustn't just accept a bit of waste ground,' said an anti-roads campaigner. 'That's what we're always given. We must take what we really want.'

In the end, it was decided that as it was St. George's Day, there should be a symbolic march onto the hill. The talking circle was followed by much activity. Sheets were turned into banners, paints and needle and thread appeared from nowhere, folk band Heathens All began to beat out rhythms and the procession set off down the

set-aside field at the end of the derelict Wisley airstrip a few miles down the road.

Any worries about the how the police would react were soon calmed. When Surrey's Chief Inspector Kevin Morris pulled up at the end of the Wisley airstrip, he was quick to point out, 'We are in Surrey and this is a place where we like to talk rather than confront.' Surrey's softly-softly policing methods were confirmed by several hunt saboteurs in the crowd who are on such good terms with C. I. Morris, they refer to him as 'Uncle Kev.'

The undertones of 'what could have been' were still there though. A helicopter followed the convoy of coaches and assorted vehicles most of the way from the rendezvous in south London to the camping site. A police roadblock was set up briefly to stop a second convoy coming from Hampshire. A prison van and numerous riot vans lined the roads as we walked to St. George's Hill and several thuggy-looking types with earpieces (who could only be Special Branch) followed at a discreet distance.

airstrip for the three mile walk to St. George's Hill. No everyone was happy. 'It's the same old faces,' said Jay, a veteran of the Twyford Down campaign. 'The only

THE WORLD TURNED UPSIDE DOWN
In sixteen forty-nine, to St. George's Hill,
A ragged band they called the Diggers came to show the people's will,
They defied the landlords, they defied the laws,
They were the dispossessed reclaiming what was theirs.
We come in peace, they said, to dig and sow,
We come to work the lands in common and to make the waste ground grow,
This earth divide, we will make whole
So it will be a common treasury for all.

C. Leon Rosselson 1974.

stream and a fire built underneath it. It was covered in camouflage and bushes and represented one of the few luxuries on site. The only trouble was that the bottom of the bath was so hot, you had to balance on a plank of wood and then persuade it to stay in one place. Not easy.

Only the end meeting on the last Saturday made me a bit sad. Only a few of the original group were left and some of those in the circle had a lot to learn about democracy. One guy suddenly stood up and objected to Small World filming the meeting. I wouldn't have minded if it had been discussed properly first but he insisted that the crew shouldn't film without allowing the others to have a say. His only real reason after ranting for ages was that the camera, 'Might frighten the fairies'!

When I talked to a friend about the occupation a few weeks later, he summed up what I think, in retrospect, was the general feeling. 'It didn't push the boundaries far enough,' he said. 'The cops led us on a bloody long walk there and then left us to find our way back in the dark. When we got to the golf course, we should have stayed there - had a sit-out. We were far too compliant for my liking.'

However, all in all, the results were good. The message has been taken on board by a good range of people and Oxfordshire County Council has told Monbiot it intends to adopt the Land Is Ours manifesto as policy. Clive a member of travelling bards the Space Goats, gave his interpretation of the camp's spirit. 'The way I see it you've got to do things gently. We're sort of fluffing up the machine. The big difference is that fluff can go anywhere, the machine can only go in one direction.'

Word spread around the area quickly. The local vicar appeared on Monday afternoon and returned a few evenings later for a sing-song. Several women in wax jackets appeared and admired the 'shit-pits' and Billy Bragg paid a flying visit midweek.

One of those strange ironies that always seem to crop up on actions came on day two. Monbiot decided to take a bunch of people on a nature trail. As a couple of dozen people set off up the hill, a police helicopter appeared from nowhere and followed the group as it wandered into a nearby wood. 'They think we're going back to the golf course,' someone shouted. Simultaneously, everyone looked up with big smirks on their faces and waved. - For me the best bit was the outdoor bath. An old cast-iron bath had been set up by the



SEHN

THE DIGGERS

- A POTTED HISTORY BY TONY GOSLING

The Diggers emerged on a wave of disappointment. The English Civil War had ended but the promised relief from the feudal system failed to materialise. Charles I was executed in Whitehall on January 30th 1649 but his hated land laws were as strong as ever. The green light went out to landlords to continue enclosing the traditional common land for their own use, evicting ordinary people from the land that had been theirs for generations.

Cromwell and his roundheads had taken the king on because he was failing to help the growing business class. Charles totally underestimated the power of these new traders and merchants.

Cromwell was master of propaganda. He tricked the ordinary people into supporting him, selling them a dream that they were fighting for a 'common-wealth' and that the bounty of the land would be shared amongst the people.

At the end of the war, politically aware soldiers were livid. They realised they had given up their livelihoods and risked life and limb just to replace one tyrant with another. They felt robbed and cheated.

These were the Levellers, led by John Lilburne, and now Cromwell had them on the run. Lilburne was locked up in the Tower of London and the mutinous core of Levellers soldiers were surrounded.

Just when it seemed the hopes for an end to the feudal system were dead, Gerrard Winstanley and the Diggers appeared. On April 1st 1649, with a commitment to non-violence, they moved onto common land on St. George's Hill in Surrey and set up makeshift homes. Thus Levellers ideas, far from being dead, were

forcefully put into practice.

Eyebrows were raised. Would Cromwell's administration support the Diggers who talked about, 'The old world.. running up like a parchment in the fire'? And who warned the rich to: 'Take notice, that England is not a Free People, till the poor that have no land, have a free allowance to dig and labour the commons and so live as comfortably as the landlords that live in their enclosures.'

The local gentry were worried. 'They invite all in to come and help them and promise them meat, drink and clothes. They give out that they will be four or five thousand within ten days.'

Corn, parsnips, carrots and beans were planted on St. George's Hill and huts were made more permanent. But all were under threat as the settlers who were 'The talk of the whole land...' became the target of organised raids.

A steady trickle of new Diggers were arriving and other colonies sprang up in at least nine sites around the country but St. George's Hill was the focus and it was becoming clear that if attacks by local landowners and their hired men were to be resisted, the Diggers would need legal redress.

Winstanley contacted Lord Fairfax, commander of the army, who effectively was the law. He rode down from London in late May to see the notorious community for himself. He listened with an apparently sympathetic ear as they told him how their crops and huts had been destroyed, their people beaten up and horses killed. But appeals to the ultimate enforcer proved fruitless.

Fairfax's inaction amounted to a nod and a wink to local landlords and in June, The Diggers found themselves in Kingston Court charged with trespass. The jury consisted of rich freeholders who agreed with the judge the Winstanley would have to hire a lawyer, which he couldn't afford. The Diggers were sentenced to pay damaged of £10 per man which they blatantly couldn't pay.

Two days later, Bailiffs visited Winstanley's house and then arrived on the hill. They imprisoned men who couldn't pay the fine and took everything of value they could find, including livestock. 'They took away the Cows which were my livelihood, and beat them with their clubs, that the Cows heads and sides did swell, which grieved tender hearts to see: and yet these Cows never were on St. George's Hill, nor never digged upon the ground.'

But there was local sympathy; the cows disappeared and were returned to Winstanley. The disgruntled bailiff returned illegally two weeks later to try again but this time, he took a neighbour's cows by mistake.

By August, the Diggers were suffering such official and unofficial harassment at St. George's Hill that they had to move to common land on nearby Cobham Heath, part of a royalist estate confiscated by Cromwell's new parliament.

Troops were called in to 'uphold the law' but many proved sympathetic. Some even give money to the destitute Diggers. Soon the raids began afresh. While the troops looked on, cottages were pulled down, tools and implements destroyed, corn trampled, men beaten and imprisoned. By winter, they were penniless and on the verge of starvation.

In April 1650, the remaining huts and furniture were burned down. The community was ejected and finally disbanded.

Several days later, the heath was sold off privately by the impoverished parliament to raise cash. Cromwell blatantly ignored the Diggers' non-violent principles

when he boasted: 'I am by birth a gentleman: You must cut these people in pieces or they will cut you in pieces.'

The Diggers had acted on a fundamental concept: if a society is to be at peace it must be fair. Land must be shared out amongst the whole population, not just hoarded by a few. Land is nature's fundamental source of sustenance. No one can be truly independent without a share.

Winstanley had done all he could: 'And here I end, having put up my Arms as far as my strength will go to advance Righteousness: I have Writ, I have Acted, I have Peace: and now I must wait to see the spirit to do his own work in the hearts of others, and whether England shall be the first land or some others, wherein Truth shall sit down in triumph.'

Although the Digger movement was squashed, it's widely believed that many of Winstanley's ideas were taken on both by those involved in the French revolution and those fighting for American independence.

They hang the Thief who Steals the Goose from off the Common. But Let the Thief go free Who Steals the Common from the Goose

DIARY OF AN ACTIVIST:

Tom Sunnyside explains how he became politicised by the outrage over the Criminal Justice Bill, graduated from a roof to a crane and ended up living in a tree.

I've always known what's been going on with travellers because of my old man. He lives in a bow-top caravan, horse-drawn. He's been doing that for the last 15 years. He's 70 now, he got his horse-drawn after leaving his job with Greater Manchester council. All his life he's been going to traditional fairs and we'd always had gypsies at the bottom field on the farm. I suppose he was into it because basically he's an old hippy!! He was really into the free festival-scene in the 70s. Even before he went on the road full-time, we used to go off with the horses in the bow-top during the holidays.

I remember reading in papers about plans for new powers in relation to travellers and during that summer I began to follow the developments of the proposed Criminal Justice Bill. I'd worked as a film editor after leaving college and teamed up with a production company who wanted to make a film about the CJB.

Being concerned about the environment and into making films, I had a chance meeting with Emma Must from Alarm UK and she told me about what had been going on with the No M11 Link campaign in Leytonstone. Two days later I got a phone call saying an eviction was due the next morning at Wanstonia, and the next thing I knew I was on top of a roof with a camera. I'd never experienced anything quite like it - the sense of empowering yourself, just going out and doing it and saying, 'Fuck you. If you ain't going to listen you're going to have to watch us.' Hardly anyone seemed to know anyone else at the start but by the end there was a kind of bonding between the protesters like nothing I'd ever experienced before. The last time I'd been on a roof was as a builder in Italy, tiling roofs and drinking wine. Big difference.

I FOUGHT THE LAW AND THE LAW LOST

In March 1994, I found myself on top of a crane during Operation Roadblock - a month of daily actions on M11 works sites. Along with three others, I was arrested and charged with violent and threatening behaviour. There were three of us on one crane and another girl, Judy, locked onto a pile driver nearby. We decided to stay up in the crane until Judy came down - to make sure she was safe.

An ambulance and the fire brigade turned up and after a couple of hours and Judy came down. Seeing her safely on the ground, we came down too. Next thing, we were being bundled into a riot van with Judy. At the station, we were put in cells and left to wait.

Before we had a chance to speak to a solicitor, we were taken from the station to the Magistrates' Court. We told the custody officer we still hadn't spoken to a solicitor but he just put us into another cell. After another hour or so, we were led out of the cell, along all these corridors to what we thought was going to be a solicitor.

But at the end of the corridor the door opened and we found ourselves in the dock of the court! It was mad, I was stood there listening to this guy reading out my particulars and asking me how I was going to plead. All I



TOM: BEFORE..... AND AFTER!

could think was what the fuck's going on????!! I said I'd like to speak to a solicitor first. Thankfully, it was adjourned. A couple of months later, I had to go back to make my plea. The charges had been reduced to breach of the peace. As this charge is a civil matter, I decided to represent myself. Although I'd never been in court before, I reckoned I'd know better than a solicitor what had happened on the day. DIY culture in action! I wasn't alone though. All four of us decided to represent ourselves. We'd also been briefed by Mike Schwartz of Bindman Solicitors who told us about the workings of the court. On the day of the case, the prosecution had nine policemen as witnesses. We had one. The charge was reduced again to: "On the balance of probabilities I was likely to cause a breach of the peace." During questioning, it came out that I was unemployed. After grilling me about the events of the day, the prosecutor returned to the fact that I was unemployed. She suggested that 'Perhaps I was stopping work out of spite because they had a job and I didn't'!

"One person's story against nine cops and who did they believe!"

By lunchtime, we'd seen clearly how the prosecution was building their case. If anyone has ever been in the position of having nine policemen stood in front of them and being able to ask them any question, in any tone of voice, they'll know how satisfying it is! What we had to prove was that our being up in the crane was at no point likely to cause a fracas between protesters and security. The cops didn't seem to be at all clear about the events of the day - to the point where one had to consult his notes to find out if he was in uniform or not. The funny thing was, we all got right into being lawyers. At the end of the day, we knew at worst we'd be given a 'bind over' but as we were all regularly going on actions, we didn't want to be barred from returning. At the same time, refusing a bind over can result in a short period in jail even though you leave with a clear name! Finally we all stood to be given the verdict. It was not guilty. We were all so dazed we were just stood there and the clerk had to tell us again that we were free to go. One person's story against nine cops and who did they believe!

Back home in Bristol, I went to the first meeting of the campaign to save Solsbury Hill from the Bath-easton-Swainswick bypass just outside Bath. About 100 people turned up one sunny Sunday. I went back after a friend called and asked me to come down and help her build a treehouse. She was local and they had been going to the hill on a regular basis. Some of the people who had been evicted from the trees in the water meadows, moved up the hill to Whitecroft (a beautiful house in secluded wooded grounds on the side of the hill). News had come through that an eviction was likely the next day and people were frantically building tree houses. A couple of us went down to help out and by the end of the day, had erected a platform about 70 foot up a maple tree. There was nobody to live in it

because it was hard to get to. It was a 'free-climb' i.e. you had to climb up rather than use ropes. I managed to get up and didn't think I'd be able to get down again until the cherry-picker platforms came for me. I went for the day and I ended up 'protecting' my maple tree for the next three months! At the start there were maybe ten of us, some experienced climbers some with no experience at all. I'd done a little rock climbing. The group there became very tight knit. I didn't have a roof but I had a hammock, a gas stove, a kitchen cupboard with enough baked beans to last a month, a car seat and 30 litres of water.

Later, I built a bender roof, had a shit bucket hanging underneath and a line going down to the ground with a bucket for hauling things up. I had my accordion and sometimes the conga drums were hoisted up too. There would be people at one end of trees playing penny-whistles and us at the other end playing drums.

Most of the trees were linked with wire or rope walkways - some more precarious than others. Other people lived on platforms, some in cargo nets (big hammocks) and the trusty ground-support had the old farrier's stables about 20 yards away.

The ground crew were essential. When we weren't expecting evictions, we carried on working on the defences - (rigging new walkways, aerial toilets and stuff. Most toilets were just plastic bags which were recycled and returned to security guards from a great height!!)

While people were up in trees working, almost every day the ground support went out for supplies, skip and water runs and cooked the evening meal. They also built an earth oven and occasionally, fresh bread was made on site!

At first, there was an avenue of predominately beech trees with maybe six dwellings. At Whitecroft it was like nothing mattered but your tree. In all the time I was there, I only left on two or three occasions. I could only stay one night away because we never knew when the bulldozers were going to come.

There was also a camp further up the hill with a communal bender, two pigs, two geese, and a horse. We had air horns to warn them of danger. We also had a little PA so that we could shout across the trees and down onto the ground and tell people what's happening.

THE FIRST PUSH

The first time they tried to evict the site, they totally decimated the surrounding area except for the trees that were being defended. The house was knocked down. The line of trees was a vital defence because they divided the construction site at the bottom of the hill from the site on the upper slopes. The construction people couldn't take heavy machinery down the main road because they were too big. The only way down the hill was through the defended trees!

What we were left with was an avenue of trees in a rubble-filled clearing. To stop machines getting near the trees we built barricades with rubble and knocked down trees. At one point we even built a tunnel. Once people were inside the tunnel, the heavy machinery couldn't risk coming too near. The first time time, they came in big time. But there were loads of people digger-diving. We had some very fine digger-divers. When you're diving, you've got to come from nowhere. You need to know how to get onto the machine quickly and as high as possible. Blue hats (security) don't particularly like climbing machinery.

The second time they came in was the day Martin fell. Nobody is quite sure what happened but Martin fell and broke his back. He was in Stoke Mandeville hospital for months. The guy is an absolute wonder. The last I heard he was back up a tree at Stanworth Valley.

The construction people got the machinery through the barricades this time and started thinning out the branches with

chain-saws. All the time we were there, the fences were slowly moving on either side to isolate us from our ground support. By this time, there were roughly about 20 of us up in the trees full-time.

We were still there when Glastonbury came around. That weekend, only about ten people were left on the hill. Everyone was expecting the demolition crew to come in. That Saturday night a few of us were sat around the fire shitting ourselves. Everyone was very quiet. Then someone started singing 'Don't Worry About A Thing, 'Cos Every Little Thing's Going To Be All Right.' Within a couple of bars, we were all singing as loud as we could. Kind of 'Up Yours' to the security around us. We were even more determined to stand our ground. It was a special moment. Looking back I remember noise became a problem. The machines started up at 7am every morning bar Sundays and the noise would continue through to dusk when the generators would be turned on to power the spotlights. The whole thing made it very difficult to sleep.

"When you've got someone coming at you with a chainsaw, you'll do anything to defend your tree."

When the final day of attack came, I'd gone to Bristol and arrived back around midnight. I'd just got into my hammock when the lookout came up to my platform saying he could see more than the usual number of blue hats milling around the site. A couple of days before, a huge articulated lorry had arrived and parked under the trees. No one knew what was in it.

The next thing we knew, what seemed like a fleet of Land Rovers raced onto the site and scores of blokes with yellow jackets got out, pulled back the sides of the lorry to uncover thousands of flattened cardboard boxes. Apparently, the contractors had been advised by stunt men that should the unspeakable happen and someone else fall out of the trees, they would be cushioned by the boxes!

By about 7am, most of the tree trunks were surrounded by huge piles of boxes. First they came for the chestnut tree by the side of the road at the top. Four cherry-pickers came in at once, two from each side, each with an operator and a bloke with a chainsaw.

We had just enough people so that each platform or net had someone defending it, plus people on the wire walkways between trees and the few spare to go to the cherry pickers. When you've got someone coming at you with a chainsaw, you'll do anything to defend your tree. I'm amazed there weren't a few missing feet by the end.

By this time, more people were gathering outside the fences, giving support, drumming, dancing and there was a lot of angry shouting. When you're looking at people hanging off branches 80-90ft up with chainsaws inches away from them, people's emotions run high.

Basically it was into the following evening before the last tree fell. The first day, as the cherry-pickers moved towards my tree, I climbed higher and out along the branches to about 80-90 foot. I was trying to fend off the chainsaw. I leaned out a bit too far and saw my spectacles fall down beneath the picker. I can't even cross the road without my glasses. I sat down next to a bird's nest and thought about what to do. After about half an hour, I managed to negotiate my way back to my platform - carefully! - and had a cup of tea and a spliff. In the end we decided I was no use up a tree without my glasses and like it or not after three months I had to give up and climbed down. I was gutted. (Next installment in Pod 7.)

Stanworth Valley

(To the men in yellow jackets but more to the men in suits)

Stupid men!
Standing up there
In your yellow jackets
Laughing, belching
Bellies bulging
Sneering at us down here
But you won't see our fear.
You can't. You're too blind.

Stupid men!
Come to trash some more land
Have you?
Come to sink your diggers
Into some more unprotected
unsuspecting virgin earth?
Yeh, you've come to gouge
Come to pump and punch
'Cos that's all you're good for.

Stupid men!
You're always out in force
when things are bad.
Shootin', lootin', re-routin'
generally putting the boot in.
Just can't leave things alone,
can you?

Stupid men!
I feel your sense of triumph
As the diggers move
Towards our valley
Our quiet place
Where the only roar
Is the roar or river.
Where another type of man
Stands by his sister and
Calls strange calls from
houses in the trees.

Stupid men!
You hide behind
your machines so loud
And you drown all that comes.
Til the silence is gone forever
- A silence that was so deep
You could hear
The pulse in your ears.

Stupid men!
Your time for regret will come
Have no doubts.
Maybe not for many years
But it will come.
And one day you will wonder
What it was all for
When your children ask:
'What did you do in the eco-war?'

Nancy

Sing a song of direct action

Solsbury reunion

katevans '95.

It did come to pass that on the fourteenth day of the third month of the year that was 1995, there was a great anniversary gathering of many people who never quite made it to Solsbury Hill when it was all happening, but fancied the party a year later.

And there did come together a multitude of hippies and they did stand and stare in amazement at the muddied, fucked up stretch of desolation which cut a swathe through Solsbury Hill.



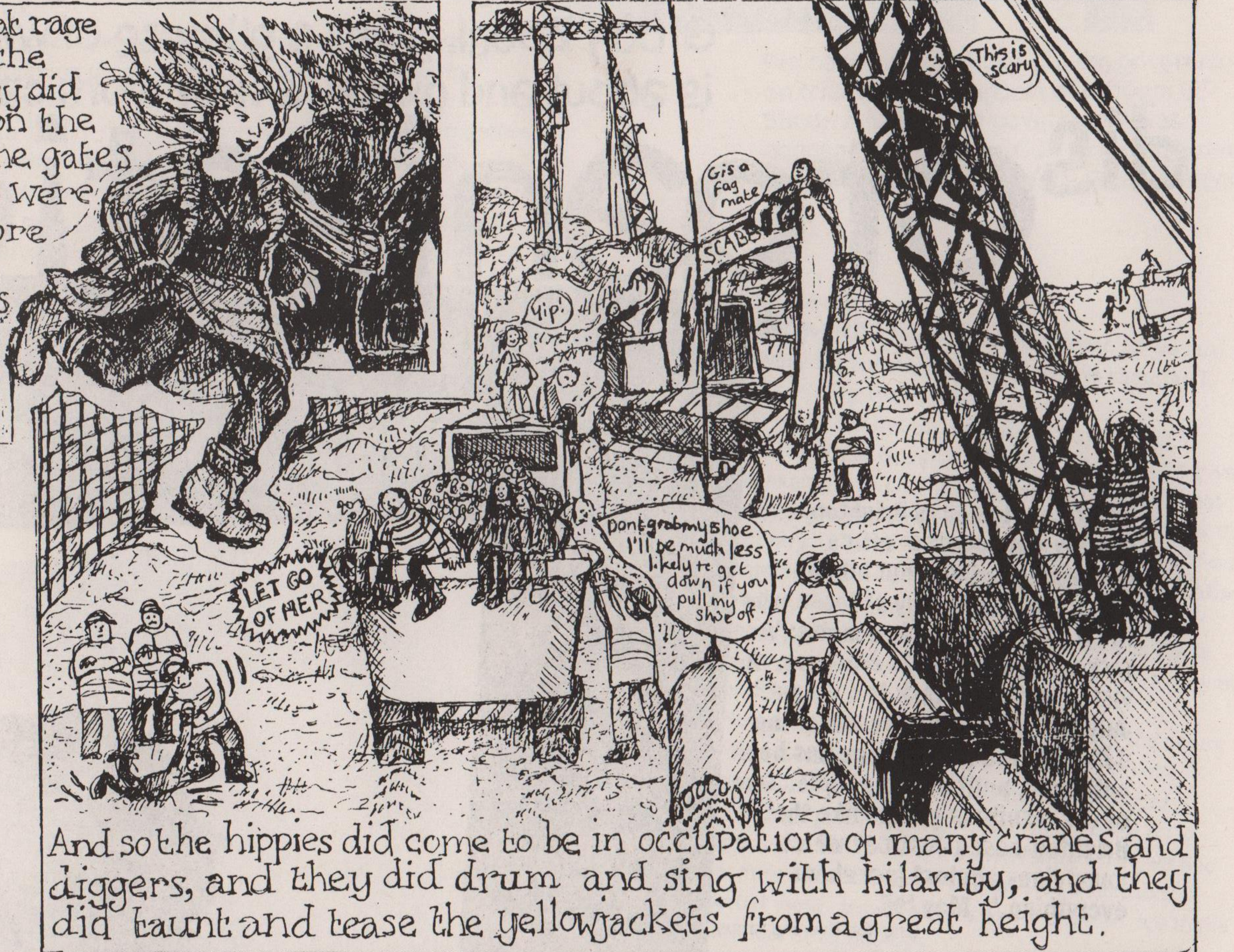
And so the hippies did join together in an encampment and there was much drumming and singing and much was drunk and smoked.

Then fersooth, in the morning the hippies did rise up, up to the top of Solsbury Hill, and they listened with patience to rallies and to speeches. And then (this is the good bit) they did with one accord clasp the hands of each other, and spread out into a ring, and there were happy smiling hippies as far as the eye could see.

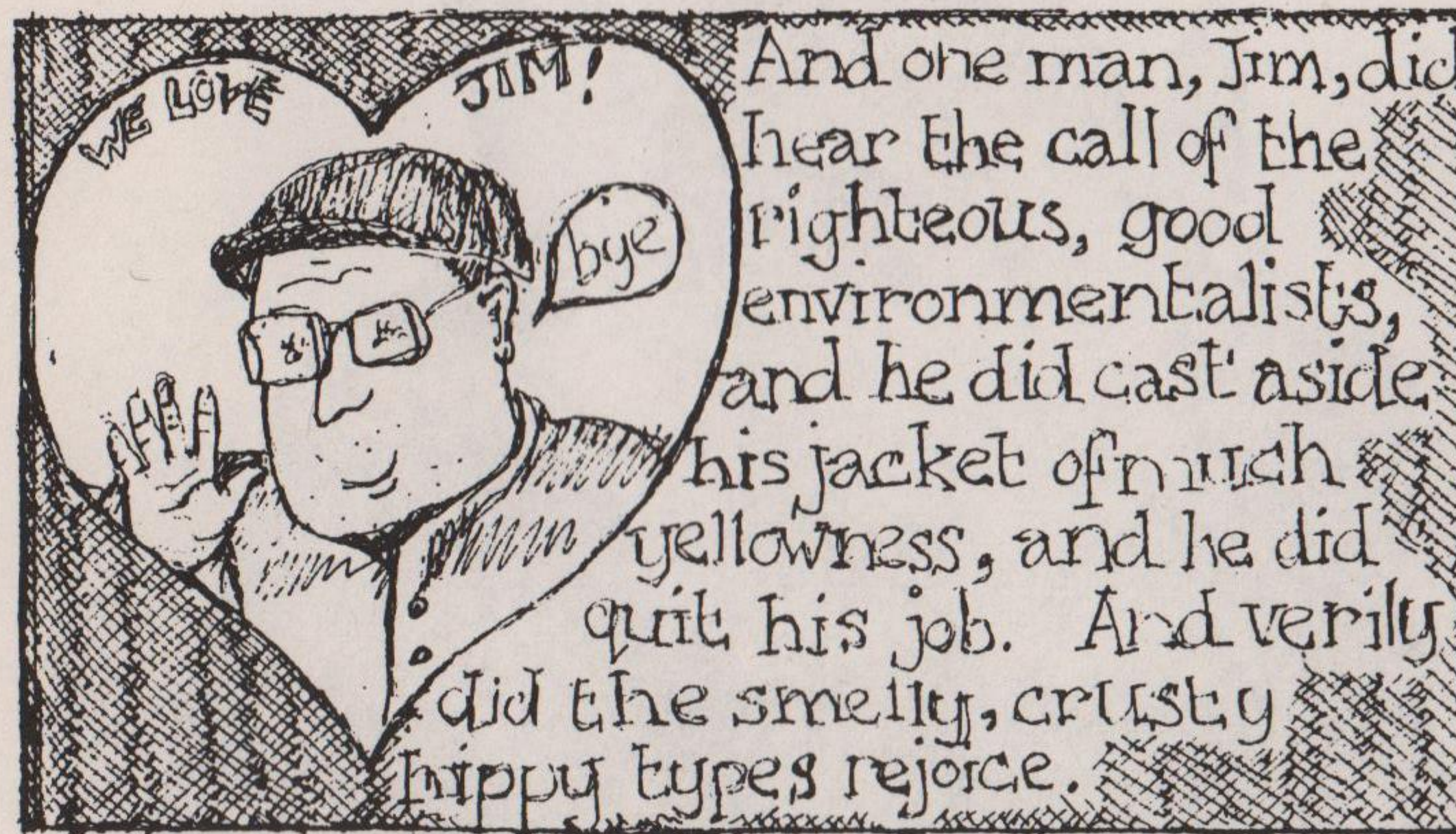


I'm not a hippy either. I'm a professional working person who cares about the environment. BUT I am happy + smiling though.

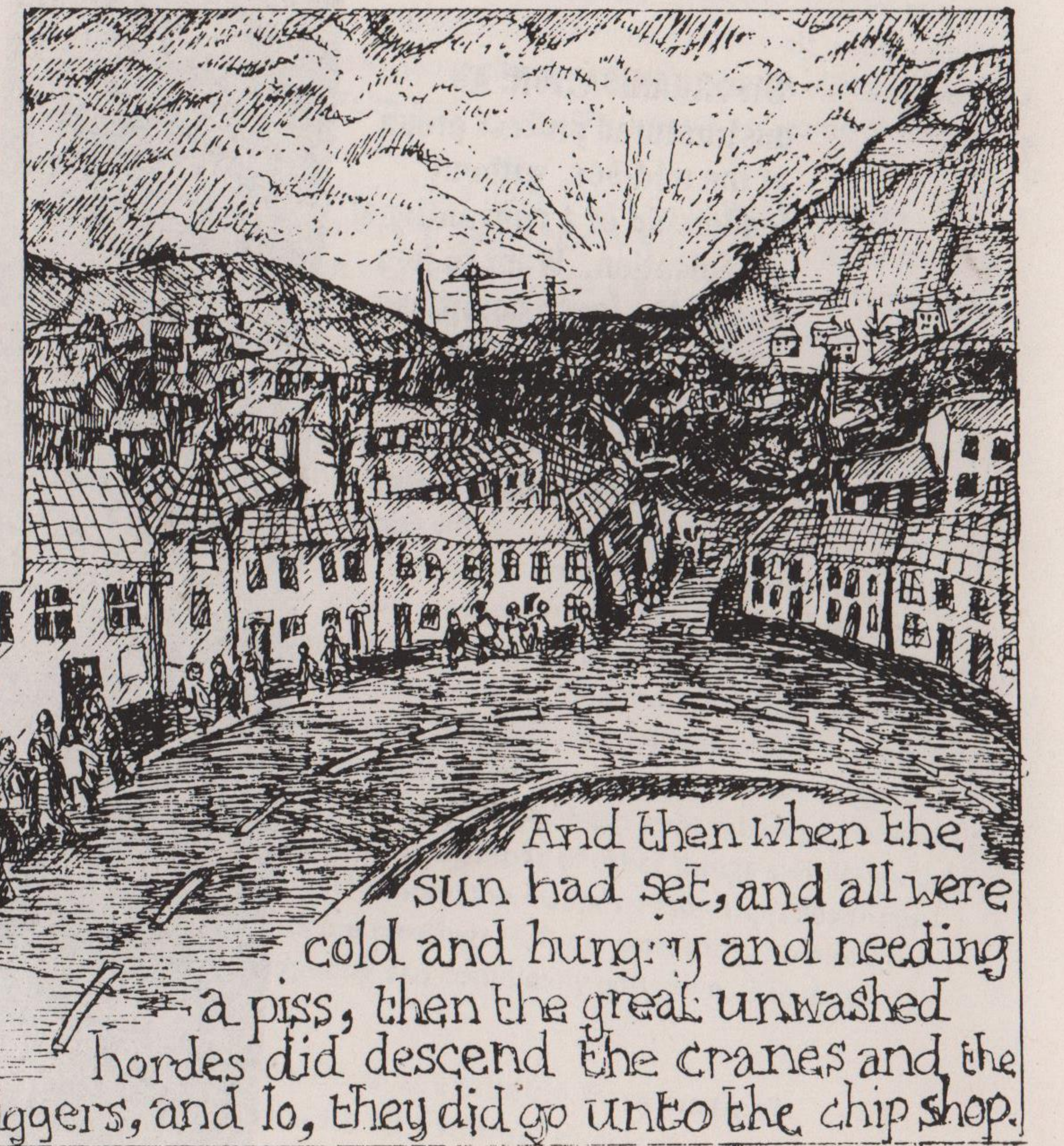
And then a great rage did come upon the hippies and they did swoop down upon the roadsite, and the gates and the fences were as butter before them, and the utmost efforts of the yellowjackets were in vain.



And so the hippies did come to be in occupation of many cranes and diggers, and they did drum and sing with hilarity, and they did taunt and tease the yellowjackets from a great height.



And one man, Jim, did hear the call of the righteous, good environmentalists, and he did cast aside his jacket of much yellowness, and he did quit his job. And verily did the smelly, crusty hippy types rejoice.



And then when the sun had set, and all were cold and hungry and needing a piss, then the great unwashed hordes did descend the cranes and the diggers, and lo, they did go unto the chip shop.

Brighton's 'Justice?' collective has become one of the most active and inspiring DIY groups to have emerged in the last few years. Like many others, Justice? is not so much an organisation as a 'disorganisation'. Here one of its members, Gibby Zobel, gives a glimpse of what Justice? is about and explains how work can be fun!

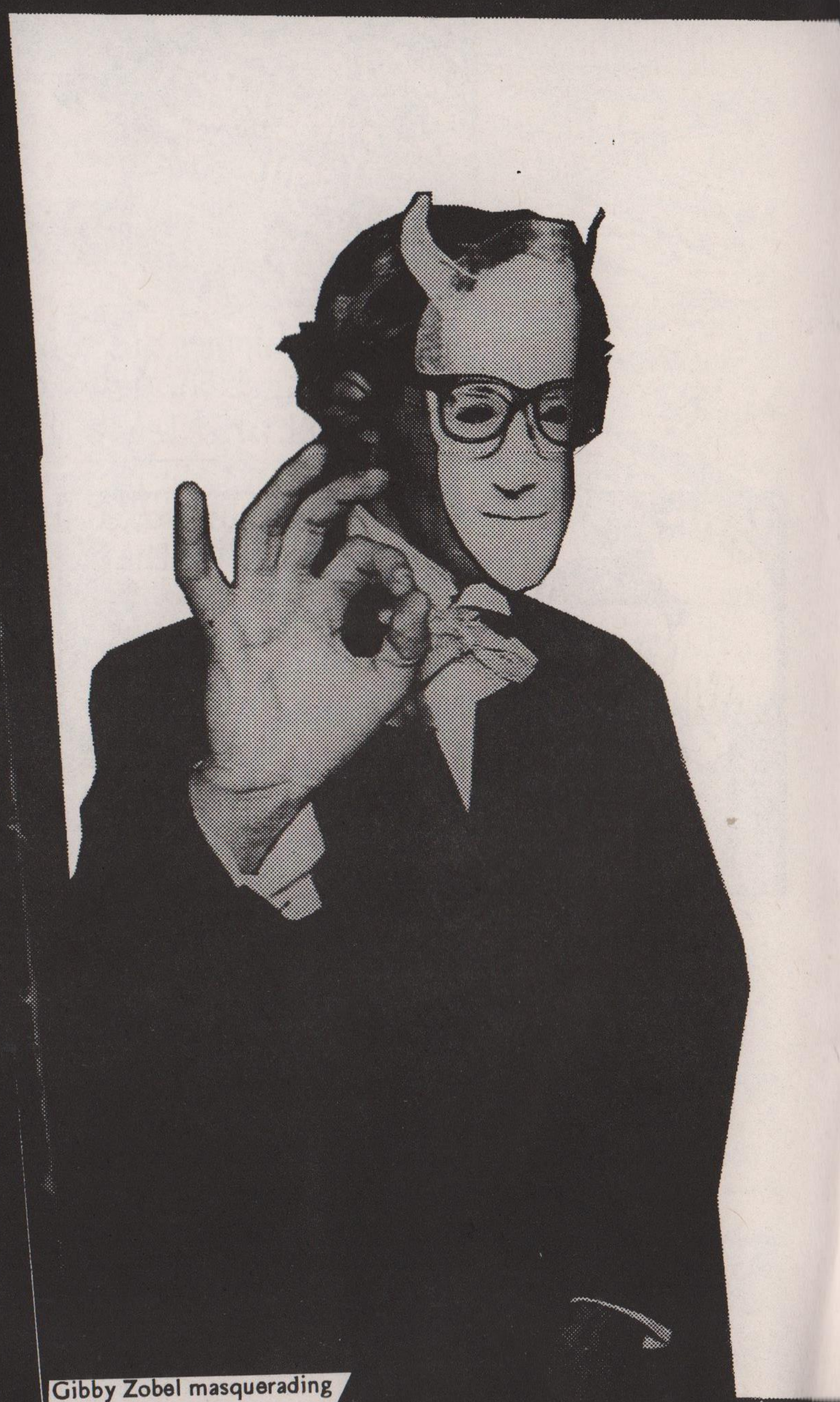
disorganisation

"Justice?, based in Brighton, is a quickly-put-together office containing nothing but lots of paper and the energy of those who run it. On the desk is a motto: 'A task without vision is drudgery. A vision without a task is a dream.' July '94 AND 'As a result of the CJA, the free-party scene has been outlawed, politicising people. One of the results is groups like the Brighton-based Justice? which campaigns against just about everything.' May '95

Brighton Evening Argus:

'DISORGANISATION: An unstructured protest group of the mid-90s, without leadership of a conventional organisation. Want to join one of the loose coalitions such as Justice?, fighting road-building and criminal-justice laws? Don't expect to fill in an application form.'

The Guardian:



Gibby Zobel masquerading as Michael Howard

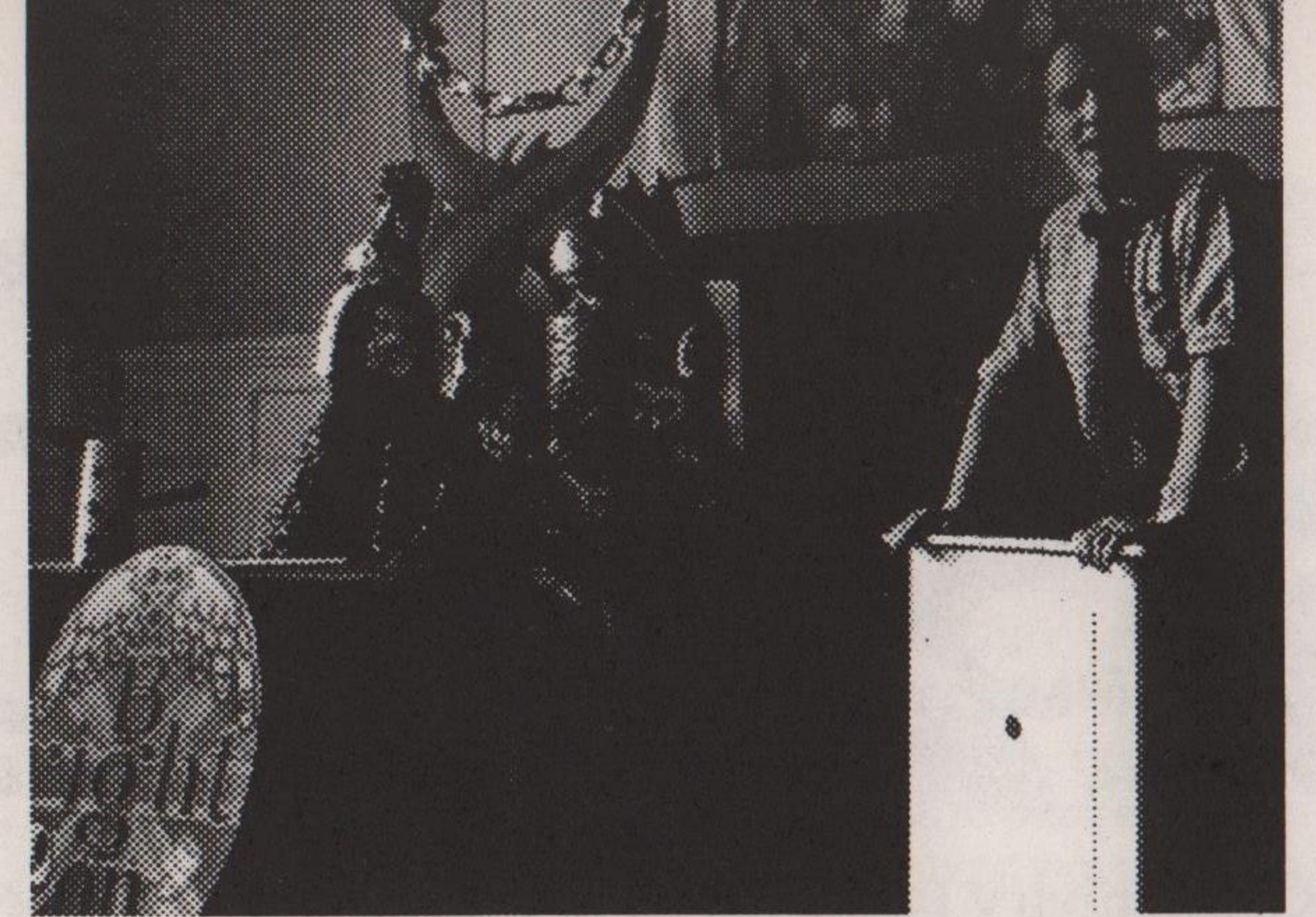
What happens when a huge bunch of people who don't know each other, spontaneously renovate, run and maintain an entertainment and information centre 24 hours a day, seven days a week?

The Courthouse, a 100-year-old building opposite the Royal Pavilion in Brighton, was derelict for five years before Justice? decided to reclaim it. The aim was to raise awareness of the dangers of the Criminal Justice Act and the waste of empty spaces in a town which has the highest percentage of street homeless in the UK.

This rotting, unloved space was rapidly turned into a community centre, complete with cafe, exhibition room, meditation classes and space for people to express themselves.

The experience was a 51-day rush. It was a real focus, a coming together of the people. Looking back, the full-on roller coaster of the year that Justice? has been together, is a mad blur of incredible experiences. What was refreshing was that most people involved had never been politicised before. Many were naive, others felt frustrated. Now we have split into a myriad of different plots and schemes but are closer than ever. Those who play together stay together.

One of the most successful projects to come out of Justice? is the SchNEWS. One day, we sat down and typed up all we knew of the Government's plans, not just over the CJA but other equally dark schemes. We suddenly realised connections and got scared! The SchNEWS is now a weekly news sheet that keep people up-to-date on the news you won't get from the mainstream media. It's organic, evolving, filling a gap. At first, it was just a way to avoid photocopying loads of bits of info and



Pic captions: Justice? put the government on trial with the support of LibDem MP Simon Hughes. The government was accused of using the CJA to violate human rights and was found 'Very Guilty Indeed'.

spreading it around the Courthouse.

After the eviction, the SchNEWS was even more vital, so we read it out in our local pub every Friday evening. Now we are shouting it from the rooftops and reaching thousands.

Another project that has come out of Justice? is 'The Book, Formerly Known As The White Book'. This is a directory that gives an example of DIY production and lists different campaign groups, publications etc from all over the country. It also reflected the highs and lows of an enterprise run on humour, trust, honesty, adrenaline and seriously small amounts of money. What money we had was spent on phone calls to Loch Ness and some of the worst posters in the history of printing.

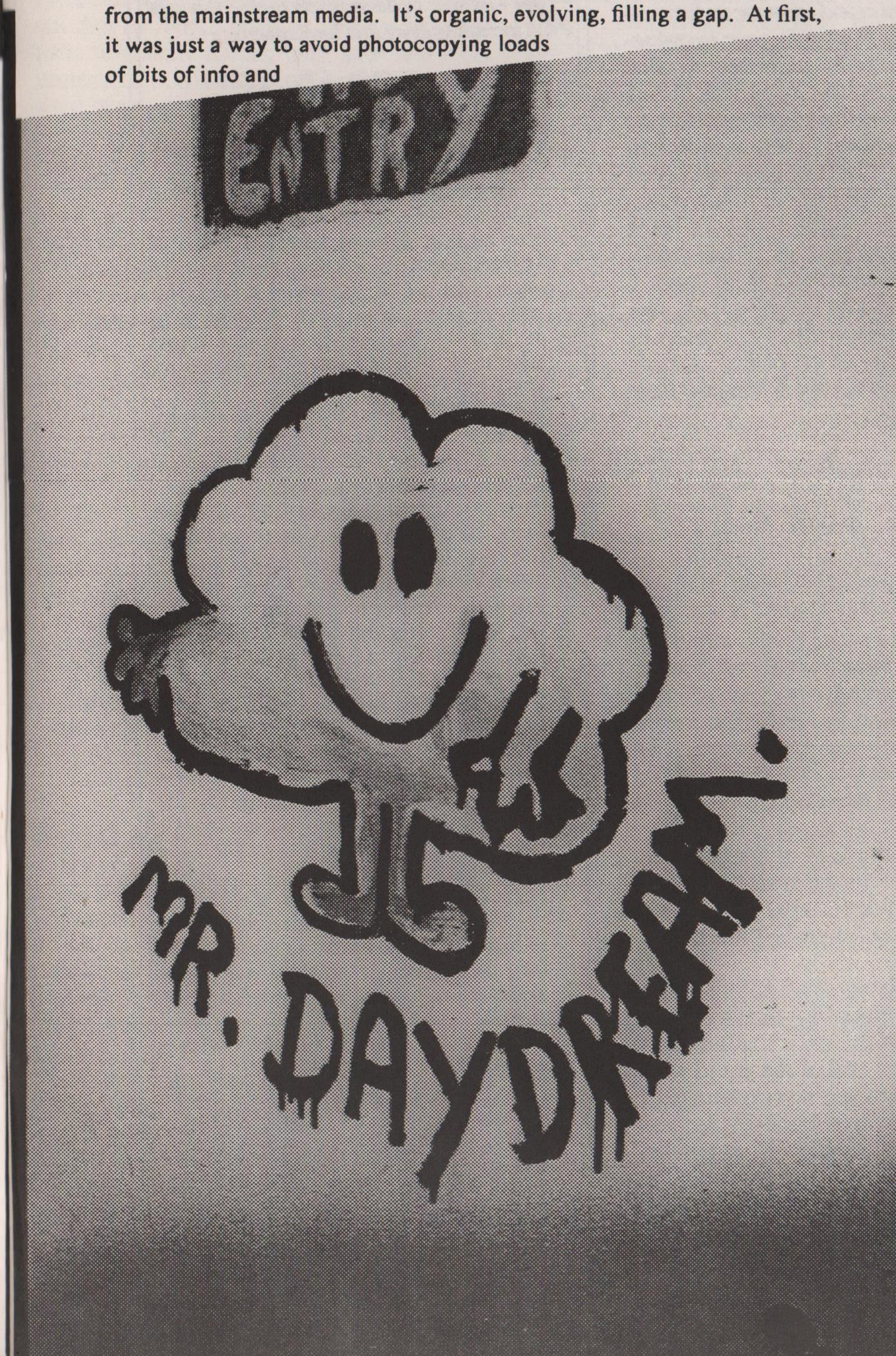
However, in spite, or perhaps because of the nature of its conception, The Book exists. While the intention was to produce a definitive listing of campaign groups brought together by their opposition to the CJA, the interesting times we live in, means that this book can only be a snapshot, a partial view. However, it is easily updated due to the wonders of technology.

We should marvel at our diversity and the purity of our intentions. We must exist on all levels - put our head above the parapet and scream out that we exist. We're mad as hell and we are not going to take it any more.

Justice? is a fluid, organic, conscious energy. We believe in Deeds Not Words. Ours is not a struggle but a celebration. We are all saying the same thing - arm yourself with information, empower yourself with positive direct action and grasp the future with practical solutions. Pragma not Dogma. Do It Yourself! Viva la conscious revolution! And finally a word from God (God is a Justice? volunteer)

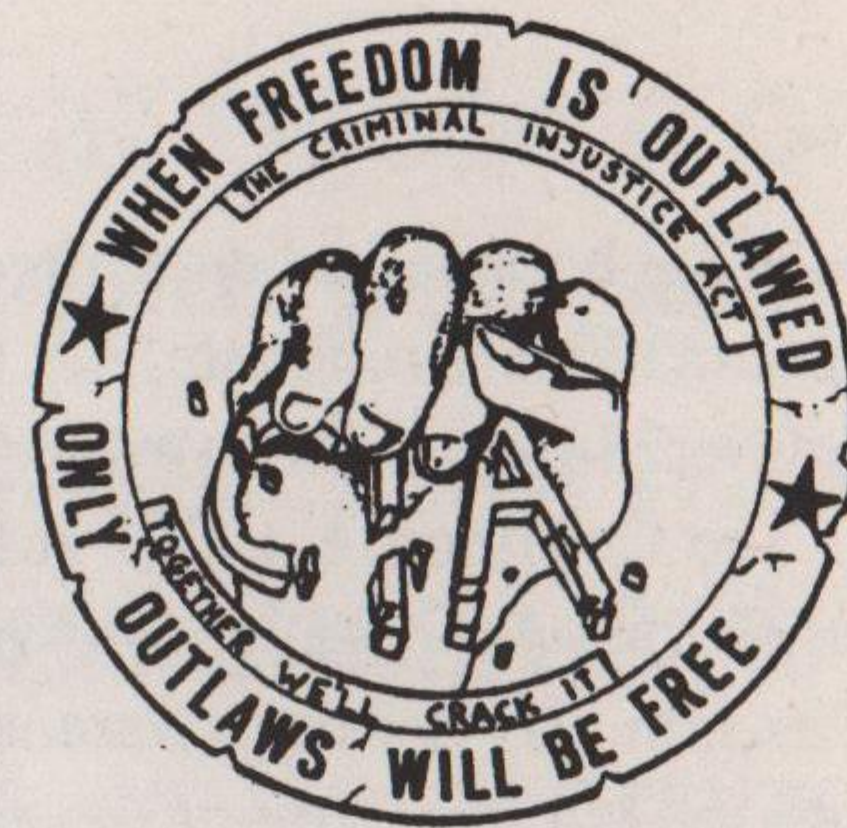
Justice? defies not only the CJA but also any definition. Justice? means turning up to the first meeting and being swept up in a completely chaotic totally in-your-face group that, in a way, breaks all known laws of organisational theory and manages by some miracle, to produce such a diverse range of things on time. It goes from hunt sabbing to a weekly newspaper to millions of other things simultaneously. Justice? is non-stop madness, late-night deadlines, hardcore meetings, full-on protesting, no money budgeting and completely addictive. I love it.

The Book is available from Justice? price £3.50 - address overleaf.



Weekly SchNEWS

Published in Brighton



ARRESTOMETER ROUND-UP

Eight months into the first season of the Criminal Justice Act and Hunt Sabs have made a flying start to top the Arrestometer. However with only nine convictions (most subject to appeal) and over 60 cases dropped, one commented "The CJA is simply not working and we anticipate there will be more acquittals, more charges dropped, and that those police forces who seek to use the act in an aggressive and oppressive way such as Kent and Northamptonshire will be facing a hefty bill for damages with precious little to show in the way of convictions."

Road Protestors take second spot with 53 - most of these thanks to the keenness of the Kent Police. They've charged 35 people with "aggravated trespass" in a bid to stop the protests against the Thanet Way extension in its tracks.

Somewhat surprisingly Football Fans are third with 45. Footie fans have always had a bum deal when it comes to the police but it seems they are perhaps some of the more unlikely victims of legislation that the powers that be would have us believe only affects travellers, ravers, hunt sabs and road protestors. A coachload of Cardiff City Fans were stopped, searched and arrested - under Section 60 which wasn't even law at the time - then released without charge after seven and a half hours in police cells. Eric Cantona's tormentor Matthew Simmons was charged under Section 154 which states that if you verbally or visibly "insult or abuse" (ie shout or gesture) within sight or hearing of a person likely to be caused "alarm or distress" you will commit an offence punishable by up to six months in prison. While we might not shed tears for Simmons, like a lot of the CJA this clause is incredibly vague, especially applied to footie fans who spend the whole game shouting, gesturing and winding up players and other spectators! Lastly, eight lucky fans have been nicked under another clause that makes it an offence to sell on a match ticket even at face value!

Travellers and Tree Defenders are neck and neck with 11. Two people at Huddersfield trying to stop trees being felled for road-widening have had their charges dropped while in Surrey charges have been changed to breaking local traffic regulations!

Gathering any statistics on travellers is always incredibly hard but we know the authorities are using the threat of the CJA to move people on as the eviction merry-go-round picks up full steam and places to park up become fewer and fewer.

At the bottom of the table No Live Exports demonstrators are struggling with just 3 arrests, although they're being nicked under the Public Order Act as if its going out of fashion.

Statistics are crap - how do we measure the abolition of the right to silence, the setting up of the world's first national DNA da-

tabase, the new stop and search clause, restrictive new police bail conditions, children's prisons, the threats and intimidation of use of the Act? The Arrestometer just gives a rough idea of whats going on round the country.

In some respects more worrying than all of this is the widespread use of the 1986 Public Order Act. After the end of the year long Miners Strike and the Battle of the Beanfield spirits were low and this Act passed without much opposition and is now being used as an arrest catch-all, especially at the ports taking live animal exports. Crap arrests abound, hundreds at Brightonlingsea and Shoreham alone where at the latter a women was jailed for seven days for breaking her bail conditions and at Essex the police have threatened to arrest anybody under the Act for demonstrating without permission. We can't sit back and let the powers-that-be get away with it.

CARRY ON DEFYING!

BYE BYE DOLE?

While cronies in big business get huge pay rises, the government is planning another squeeze on the unemployed. Unemployment Benefit and Income Support are to be replaced by a single unified benefit to be known as the Job Seekers Allowance.

The Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) will impose stricter conditions for the receipt of benefits. Claimants will be obliged to sign a 'contract' setting out the steps they intend to take to find work. The employment service will have new discretionary powers to compel claimants to take specific actions to 'make themselves more employable.' Such actions may include having to attend a course or join various 'training' or workfare schemes where claimants will have to work for their benefits, or they even may go as far as directing claimants to have a haircut to make themselves "more presentable to prospective employers." Failure to comply with such directives could mean a complete withdrawal of benefit leaving people with nothing to live on. This can only lead to a dramatic increase in the numbers of people becoming homeless and destitute.

With 26 people chasing every vacancy in Brighton alone the JSA is simply another vindictive measure to blame the unemployed for the government's own economic failures. It would also seem yet another attempt to scapegoat and harass those people, who facing mass unemployment, have sought to develop alternative and diverse lifestyles that are not dependent on endless work and consumption. After government attempts to criminalise us with the CJA they now want to take away our meagre benefits unless we conform!

With people desperate to find any work, whatever the pay or conditions, employers will be able to put the pressure on. Its up to all groups campaigning against the CJA to forge links with workers and claimants and stop the JSA in its tracks.

BAIL NIGHTMARE

Police are increasingly using draconian new powers under the Criminal Justice Act to stop people protesting.

Two weeks ago (2/6/95) in Essex Isla Humphreys was bailed not to go to any live export protests or meetings - anywhere in the country! Her crime? Sitting in front of the lorries at Brightonlingsea, breaking her previous bail conditions in the process.

Up in Yorkshire nineteen protestors trying to stop work at an open cast mine have been bailed not to go within one mile of any open cast site in the country. They have also been given a residential order which means they must sleep at the same address they gave the police each night until their court case!

Not since the 1984/85 Miners Strike have such restrictive bail conditions been used as more and more people get off their arses, on the case and fight back.

PRISON FOR KIDS

Thanks to the CJA, plans to build five 'Secure Training Centres' for 200 children aged between 12 and 14 have been given the go-ahead.

The prisons have been condemned by almost everyone involved in juvenile justice as doing nothing to stop crime and inevitably leading to more crime and child abuse. But hey, if Michael Howard can get a few votes from mind-numbed bigots then its worth it.

Local authorities and social workers have refused to have anything to do with the new prisons so they are to be run, for a profit, by private security firms - Group 4 are keen to make some cash out of it.

Under the proposed guidelines the children will have none of the protections against abuse they have in children's homes. They can be forcibly strip-searched by a single member of staff with no one else present during the search. All mail can be read and censored. Family visits can be stopped at any time. And just to make sure no one finds out too much about what's going on in these places the Home Secretary has to give permission for a child to communicate with anyone - or for any outsider to visit these centres. Inevitably bullying, abuse, self-mutilation and suicides will be common in these institutions. The children who survive their time inside will come out more abused and embittered and more likely to reoffend then ever.

The CJA is going to put lots of people in prison for dancing, protesting, staying silent and lots more. The fact that the politicians, Tory and Labour, are even prepared to scapegoat children for society's problems shows just how sick they are. We must defend and support anyone put in prison under the CJA - and that includes the children.

and Finally

Home Office thumbs up for Group 4 Riot Squads at immigration detention centres and Group 4 have already made representations to take over the running of what they term "police custody suites". That means police cells to you and me - see you all in the nick!

Special Glastonbury Issue

June 1995

Free/Donation

McPolice on the way?

"Well with the new Act basically the world's yours oyster, you could sponsor us for anything at all - its only limited by your imagination."

AVON AND SOMERSET POLICE

Imagine the scene - a road traffic accident on the A4. A drink-driver has knocked down and seriously injured a pedestrian. A forensic examination vehicle arrives to take evidence. The victim, blood streaming down their face, peers up and can faintly make out a logo on the side of the police van - "Threshers, Your Number One Off-Licence."

Threshers became the first commercial company to sponsor the police service under a new Act which will change the public face of policing. Section 23 of the Police and Magistrates Courts Act 1994 states "A police authority may, in connection with the discharge of any of its functions, accept gifts and money (including commercial sponsorship."

Threshers have calculated that the controversy about sponsorship would be good for business! Eagle Star and RMI are interested in doing business and Nuclear Electric have followed up with a joint deal on a communications centre for the use of Avon & Somerset police (it's empty at present on standby for a nuclear emergency).

SchNEWS contacted Avon and Somerset Police to see just how far they are selling out. The switchboard was enthusiastic - "oh we are always looking for sponsorship" - and put us through to Inspector Bob Lewis (Community Liaison). Bob's field is car crime which he admitted "isn't very sexy" but added: "this is an aside but we have a very good relationship with the press and if we send out a press release it usually ends up as a story if you follow what I mean." He put us through to a very helpful Penny Hallett (sponsorship committee) on the promise of a very good deal to cover the South-West. "We are looking for £50,000 for a radio advertising campaign on crime prevention using a 60's song" explained Penny, who on prompting started singing the sad jingle: "let's hang on to what we've got...don't let go...you've got a lot."

SchNEWS explained that they were look-

ing for something a little more tasty. "Well with the new Act basically the world's your oyster" spouted Penny. "You could sponsor us for anything at all - its only limited by your imagination." Would it be possible to sponsor a police operation, say "Operation Coca-Cola?" "yes but I suppose it depends on what it was. Maybe not an armed operation" There is a code of conduct, of course. The only hard rule is that gifts loans and sponsorship should not exceed a maximum equivalent value of 1% of force budget. The rest of the carefully-worded guideline tries to tip-toe through the obvious paradox of police accepting money from business - like it "will not be accepted where there is a risk of offending the integrity of the police." I think most people would agree Avon & Somerset have exceeded that already....

D.N... Eh?

The world's first national DNA database is here in Britain - thanks to the Criminal Justice Act! The new laws give the police powers to forcibly take hair or a mouth swab from anyone arrested wherever they are charged or not. The information obtained from samples can be kept indefinitely, even if suspects are found to be innocent. This applies not just to rapists and murderers but also to those suspected of petty offences.

Section 59 of the CJA redefines non-intimacy to include mouth searches. Most people would consider having a police superintendent poking about in their mouth pretty intimate.

Police hope to have about 135,000 tests on computer at a cost of £5 million in the first year alone, and extend it to all recordable offences by the end of the century.

Seen with the introduction of compulsory ID card and the growth of blanket video surveillance, the DNA database is yet another attempt to log, document and control. The Government is steadily eroding the rights of each and every one of us, using the pretext of the fight against crime to push through increasingly restrictive laws.

CJA ARRESTOMETER

Hunt Sabs	151
Road Protestors	53
Footie Fans	45
Environmentalists	25
Travellers#	11
Tree Defenders	11
No Live Exports*	3
Fascist Printers	2
Peace Campaigners	1

* 1000+ animal rights activists nicked this year # not including grief and harassment

The best of crap arrest of the week

- Criminal damage to a tape measure (three for this one - cost of tape £4.40)
- For sitting on your own garden wall (those ever vigilant Met. Police told a man watching the Shoreham fiasco to get off his own garden wall. He told them to fuck off, was bundled over, arrested and then...eh, oh sorry it was your wall.....)
- At Coventry airport two women dressed up for red nose day wearing joke plastic police helmets were nicked for "impersonating a police officer"!
- For throwing orange peel at a live export lorry. For this Diane Pullen was bound over for six months and fined £60.
- A motorist giving a supportive hoot to Shoreham demonstrators, was stopped by the police, dragged out of his vehicle, handcuffed, shoved in a police car and driven off.
- A ten year old footie fan has been reported to the police for touting after he sold his match ticket! Lee Jewess was given a complimentary ticket by Stoke City after doing a soccer course at the club. He didn't want to go the game on his own, so thought he'd earn himself a little extra pocket money by selling the ticket through the local paper at £7 (it was worth £11). His dad then received a phone call from the secretary of Stoke City informing him that this was illegal under the CJA and his son would be reported to the police!
- For striking a police officer - with a woolly hat!
- One clueless copper admitted he quoted the sections of the Act relating to illegal rave parties when arresting some Kent Hunt Sabs!

The SchNEWS team are always eager to hear your crap arrests. Give us a ring and make us laugh.

e-SchNEWS

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GROUP CYCLES

A Guide to How Groups Evolve - From Dreaming the Dark

By Miriam Simos

A healthy group is never stable it is always changing, growing, reforming. There are many theories about the stages of group formation but in my experience with groups, several stages are generally occurring at once. Nevertheless, a broad movement can usually be discerned and knowing something of its pattern can, at least, reassure us that we are not the only group who ever went through these particular conflicts and survived. I prefer to conceive of the cycle as following the magic circle of four elements.

AIR

The group being s with a common vision and common perception. Often, members are excited when they meet others who think as they do, who share common goals. This is usually the honeymoon period, during which members feel close to each other and admire each other - because they don't really know each other. Energy is generated.

FIRE

The group struggles to discover how to use its energy. In hierarchical groups, members struggle for power-over. In non-hierarchical groups, members struggle more subtly, or struggle to define structures and processes that will empower individuals and allow them to share power equally. The groups begins to discover its will and deep feelings are generated.

WATER

The group struggles with the feelings members have for each other. Now that members know each other they love each other and rage at each other. People in the group both want and resist more intimacy. They fight about closeness or distance. Somebody's feelings are being continually hurt. Sometimes group members become lovers - or worse, fall in love with each other's lovers. This stage once drove me to formulate Starhawk's Three laws of Small Groups:

- 1) In any small group in which people are involved sexually, sooner or later there will be grave conflicts.
- 2) In any small group in which people are involved, sooner or later, they will be involved sexually, even if only in fantasy.
- 3) Small groups tend to break up.

EARTH

If the group survives its emotional conflicts, it tends to crystallise, defining itself and its boundaries more clearly. As its purpose and character emerge, the group can begin to undertake serious work. During this phase, some members usually leave the group (if they haven't left before), new members join. The group functions in the wider world. Its success, failures and continued growth lead eventually to a new vision and the cycle begins again.

In each stage, conflicts arise about the very areas which are potential sources of new growth. Conflict can be creative if we look upon it as telling us what tasks we need to accomplish. Some guidelines for each of the stages follow:

AIR

Conflicts arise about goals, perceptions and differences. Visions and goals need to be expressed. Accept that people will have differing perceptions. Discuss people's differences in background, including class, race, culture, education and conditional to sex roles. Also discuss differences in people's present situation, including their special needs, the resources of time and money available to each and their personal goals. Differing levels of experiences should also be acknowledged. Create a bonding ritual.

FIRE

Conflicts arise about power. Use all the processes described above that encourage the sharing of power. Exchange roles, train replacements, encourage silent people to speak up and talkative people to occasionally shut up. Practice consensus. Competition is always present in groups. Acknowledge it, it can be used creatively. Create situations, such as rituals, in which people can show off and be admired. Work directly with group energy through breathing, chanting, dancing and grounding.

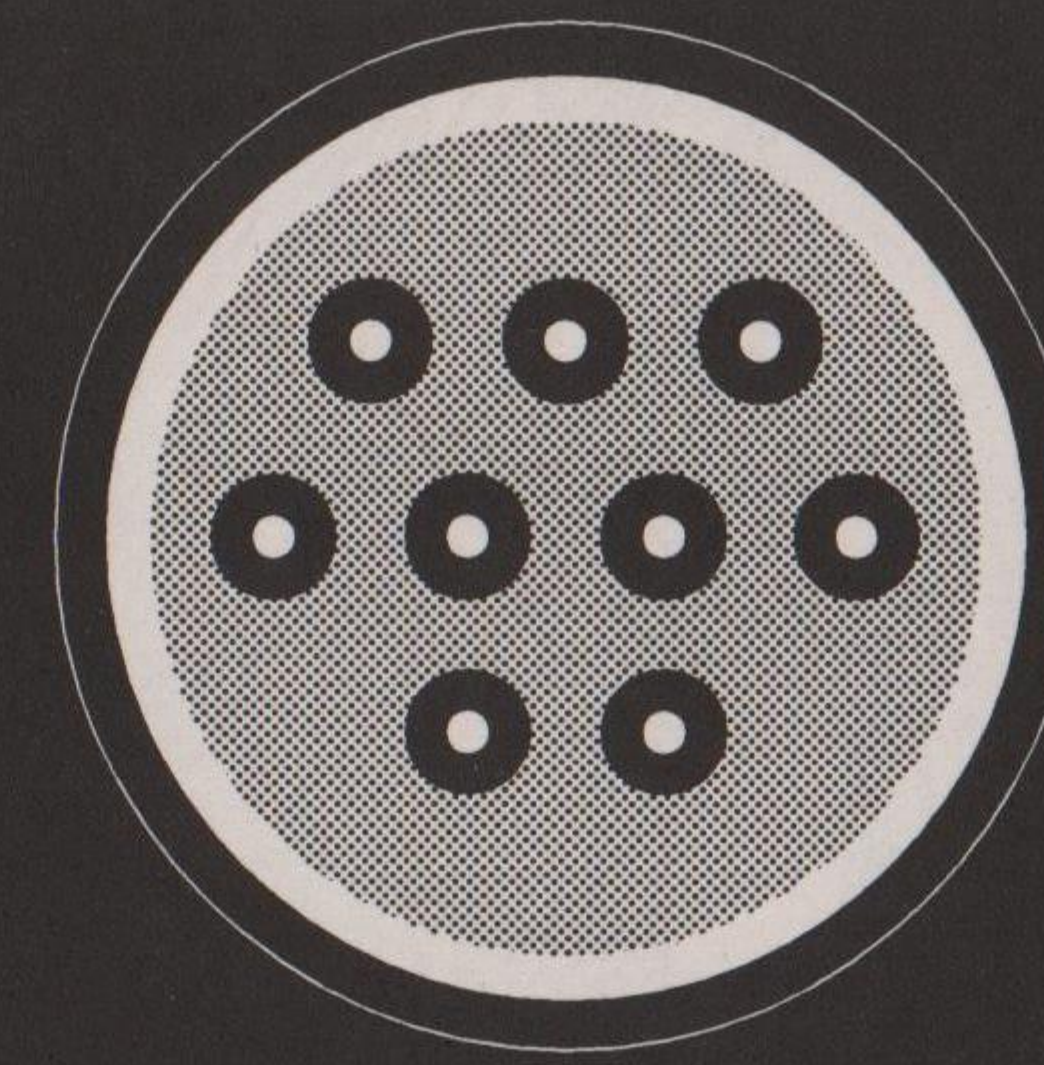
WATER

What are people feeling? Express the negatives: speak the unspeakable. Name the group's unspoken rules. Be aware of how much time, energy and attention each member asks for and receives. Give the group, and individuals, praise and appreciation as well as criticism - and encourage members to accept praise. Share food. Have fun. When couples or coalitions develop, take care that those involved also strengthen ties with other group members - perhaps by working together on projects.

EARTH

Clarify the organisational structure and its boundaries: who is in and who is out. Wish those who leave well but don't try to keep them if they want to go. Take on new people. Get the work done. Reflect on the experiences that grow from the work. Arrive at new visions, perceptions, goals, differences. Start a new cycle.

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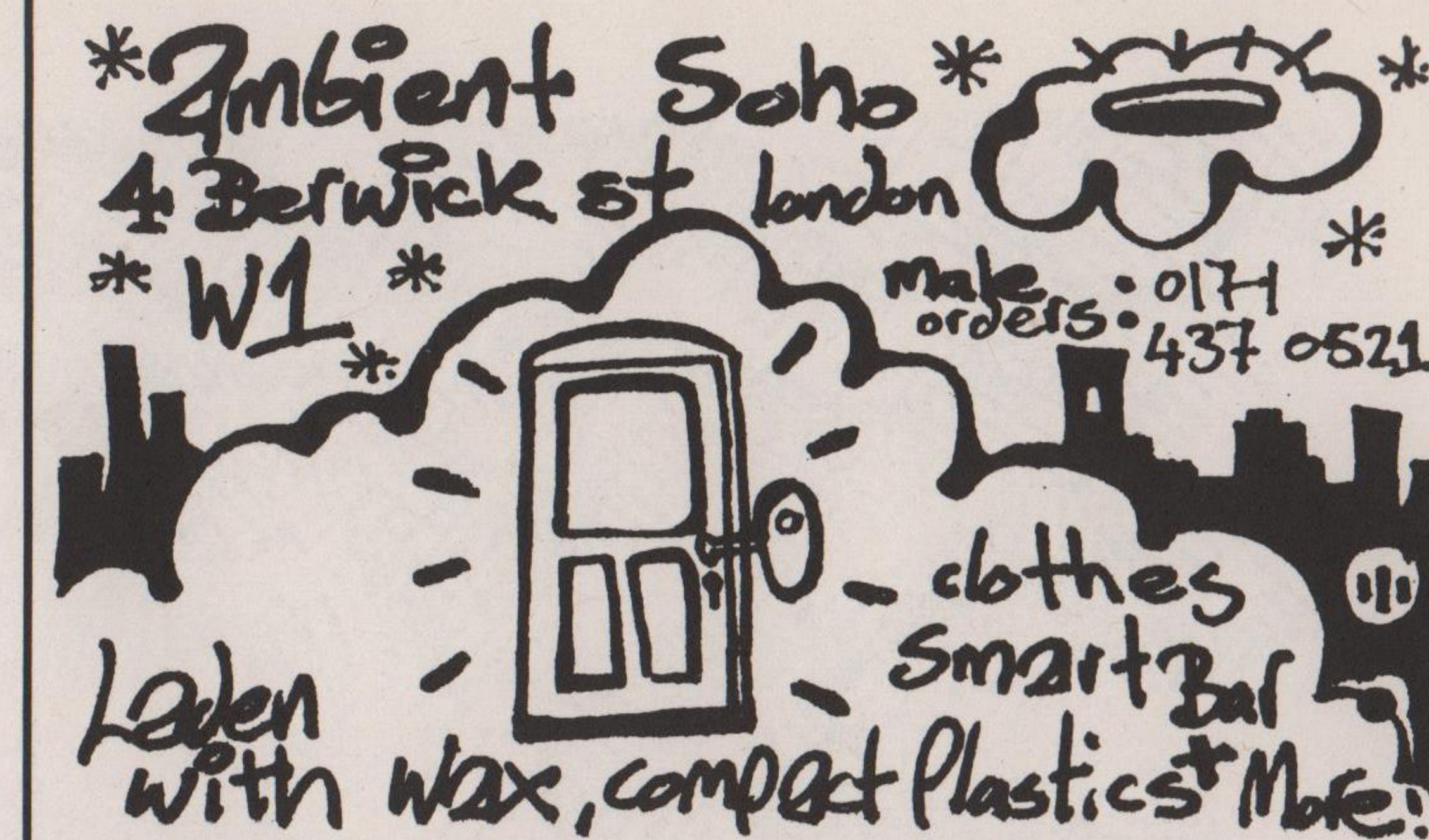
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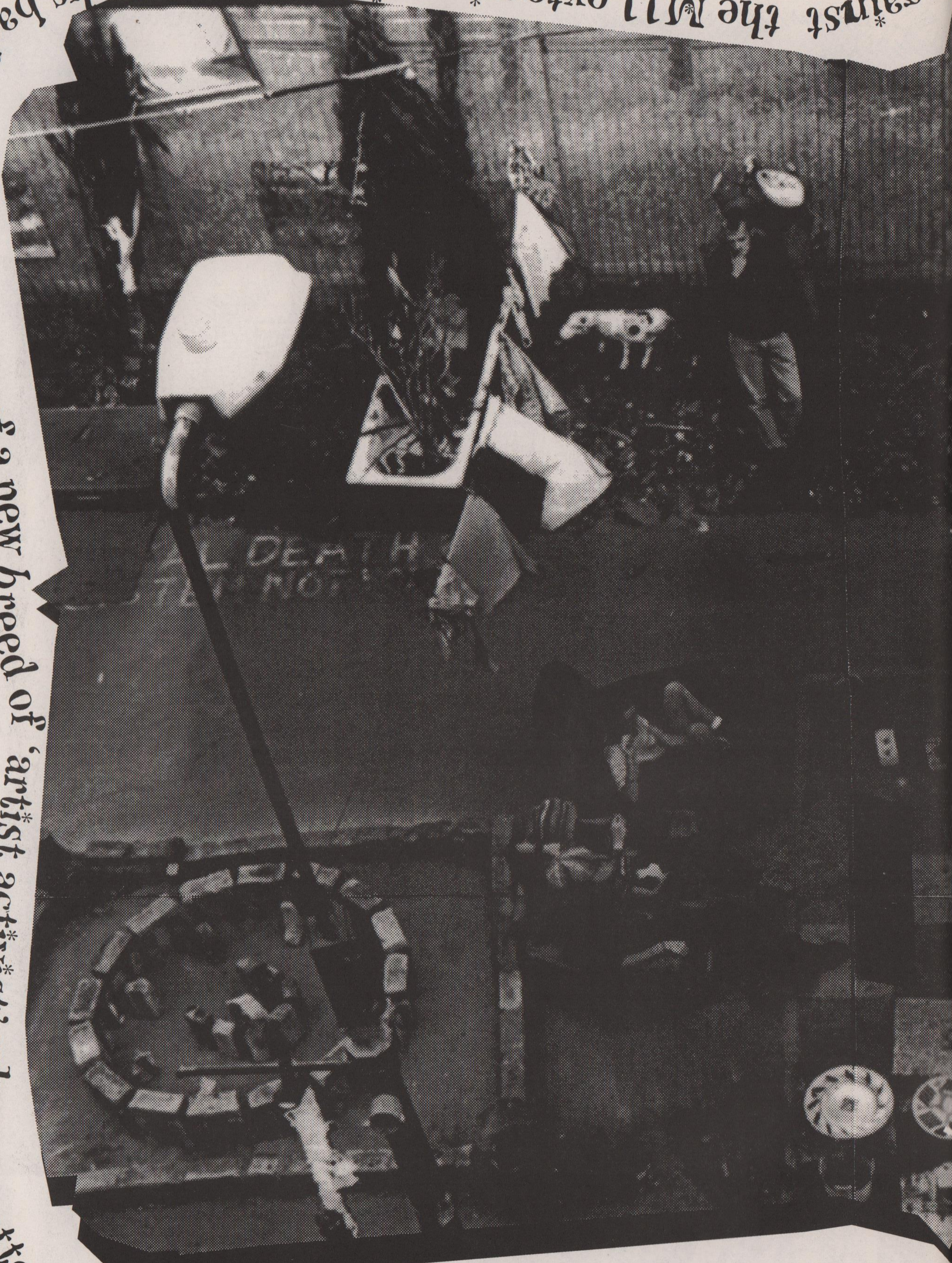


Kate Evans '94

PROTEST AND SURVIVE

A selection of Kate Evans' cartoons is available in her booklet *Criminal Element*, Cartoons of peaceable sedition. £1.50 (+ 30p postage) from Justice? PO Box 2600, Brighton East Sussex. Please make cheques payable to Justice? All money goes to the campaign against the Criminal Justice Act.

against the M11 extension. John Jordan looks back at the evolution of a new breed of 'artist activist' whose motto is,



The art of creative resistance.....
'Creativity, Courage and Cheek.'.....

For four cold days last November, Claremont Road in East London became the setting for the last major battle



For four cold days last November, Claremont Road in East London became the setting for the last major battle

Gideon Mendl

..... 'We have to reach an agreement about what is political in relation to art. Is it not just the contents that are political. Perhaps Godard formulated it best - the task is not to make political movies but to make movies political.' Heiner Müller: Germany.
What I want to talk about is something very close to home, something that has been a life-changing experience for me and many others. It's something

which has begun to answer the urgent question that I think has become central to our culture, a question being asked by a lot of us involved in the arts and in politics at the moment.
That question is: 'The process of social change is in desperate need of creativity. The art world is becoming more and more divorced from society. How do we bring these two forces together?'

creativity, courage, cheek

In a corner of East London, residents and activists spent a year creating an inspirational model of creative resistance. Using elements of performance art, sculpture and installation (and armed with faxes, modems, computers and video cameras) the campaign managed to inject its radical ideas and images into the bloodstream of society. It was a skilful use and manipulation of the media. It was also a fundamental rethinking of creative and critical models. A new breed of 'artist activist' has emerged whose motto is, 'Creativity, Courage and Cheek.'

So much so-called political art has been about representing issues: images of war, famine, ecological catastrophe. It is not about using creative strategies to deal with the issues themselves.

What we have at present is art about politics and politics about despair. It has led to too many negative images.

Representations of despondency are everywhere in the art world. Political campaigning and media messages litter our culture with spectacular pictures of burning rain forests, starving children and colourful pollution! So much so-called creativity illustrating one thing - the apocalypse.

But there is another kind of art. An art that is not about presenting images of a desperate reality but hopeful new visions of alternative futures. Within the imagination of such activist art, the message comes across

loud and clear, 'Anything Is Possible.'

If you want to stop a chainsaw destroying an ancient tree you put your body in the way. If you want to stop a home being torn down to make way for a motorway, you bury yourself inside it. If you want to climb onto the Houses of Parliament to make a statement about the Criminal Justice Bill (which criminalises most of this creativity) you climb it. The situationist may have asked us to 'Be realistic, demand the impossible.'

The No M11 Link campaign was not just demanding it, it was doing it.

Such optimism is crucial in a post-modern world where it is radical to say nothing, to have no hope and to be neutral. Medical research has established that hope and positive attitudes are potent factors in healing, just as despair and

depression can play a part in weakening the immune system. Taken to planetary proportions, any attempt to heal the social and ecological wounds of our culture has to begin with a cry of hope rising from the ruins. The precondition to any human effort is optimism.

For a year the No-M11 Link campaign has been a non-stop performance. Every day people invaded work sites and used non-violent direct action as tools of resistance against the cold steel of pile drivers, cranes and bulldozers. Often these acts of courage are accompanied by the sound of drums, penny whistles and singing. In the days when there was no action, the campaigners designed and built the most incredible sculptural barricades and installations along Claremont Road in order to hold up the final eviction.

Unlike the courageous yet futile gestures of so many performance artists who have used their bodies in acts of endurance and

danger - Chris Burden nailing himself to a car, Linda Montana handcuffed to her lover for three days, Stelarc hanging from a crane by hooks embedded into his skin, non-violent direct action is performance where the poetic and the pragmatic join hands. The sight of a fragile figure silhouetted against a blue sky, perched dangerously high on a crane in order to stop it working, is both beautiful and functional. Non-violent direct action is by nature deeply theatrical and fundamentally political.

The performance of climbing a crane on a building site has many different layers of function:

1) Pragmatically, it stops work on the roads and holds the contractors up. This can cost vast amounts of money (it's rumoured that a whole day of work stopped on one of the major sites can cost in the region of £50,000.)

The extra security needed to keep activists off the machinery adds to this cost as does the policing bill. This all leads to delays and hits the road builders where it hurts,

A member of Brighton's Justice Collective on the roof of the squatted courthouse in Brighton



for art, they were homes, places which could have been renovated and used to rehouse some of the thousands of homeless people who end up on the streets of London each year.

The 1970s saw artists like Gordon Matta Clarke cut a hole through the side of a house and Walter de la Maria fill a whole room with earth. last year, Rachel Whiteread cast an abandoned terrace house in concrete. In Claremont Road, a hole was cut in every single wall of the row of thirty houses to create a stunning tunnel that linked every home. It was a strategy to evade the Bailiffs but also a metaphor for communal living an intervention the cuts the isolation of individual domestic units.

In some houses, rooms were filled with earth, often lit by the eerie brightness of a single hanging light bulb. These earth filled rooms disguised entrances to bunkers which held campaigners

Within the imagination of such activist art the message comes

in their pockets.

2) It provides powerful news images, images that have enormous audiences and can educate and inform about the issues. The campaign has had images on the front page of national newspapers several times and has frequently been brought into people's living rooms on TV.

3) This crafting of the media is fundamental to cultural activism. Its theatrical function is that it is enacted in front of and for an audience. This is not just the media but the passers-by who are often awe-struck by what they see and are thus brought into dialogue about the issues behind it.

4) Its ritual function is that the inherent risk, excitement and danger of the action creates a magically focussed moment, a peak experience where real time suddenly stand still and a certain shift in consciousness can occur. Many people involved have felt incredibly empowered by these feelings.

Non violent direct action is so much rolled into one. Unlike the personality cults of the art world, direct action is collective and anonymous. Unlike the rationality and objectivity of most politics, direct action distrusts reason and champions intuition.

When the performances were not happening on building sites, campaigners were busy creating the most extraordinary and effective installations in the houses and trees. Claremont was a road which had been cut off to traffic for months and returned to the dignity and community of a street.

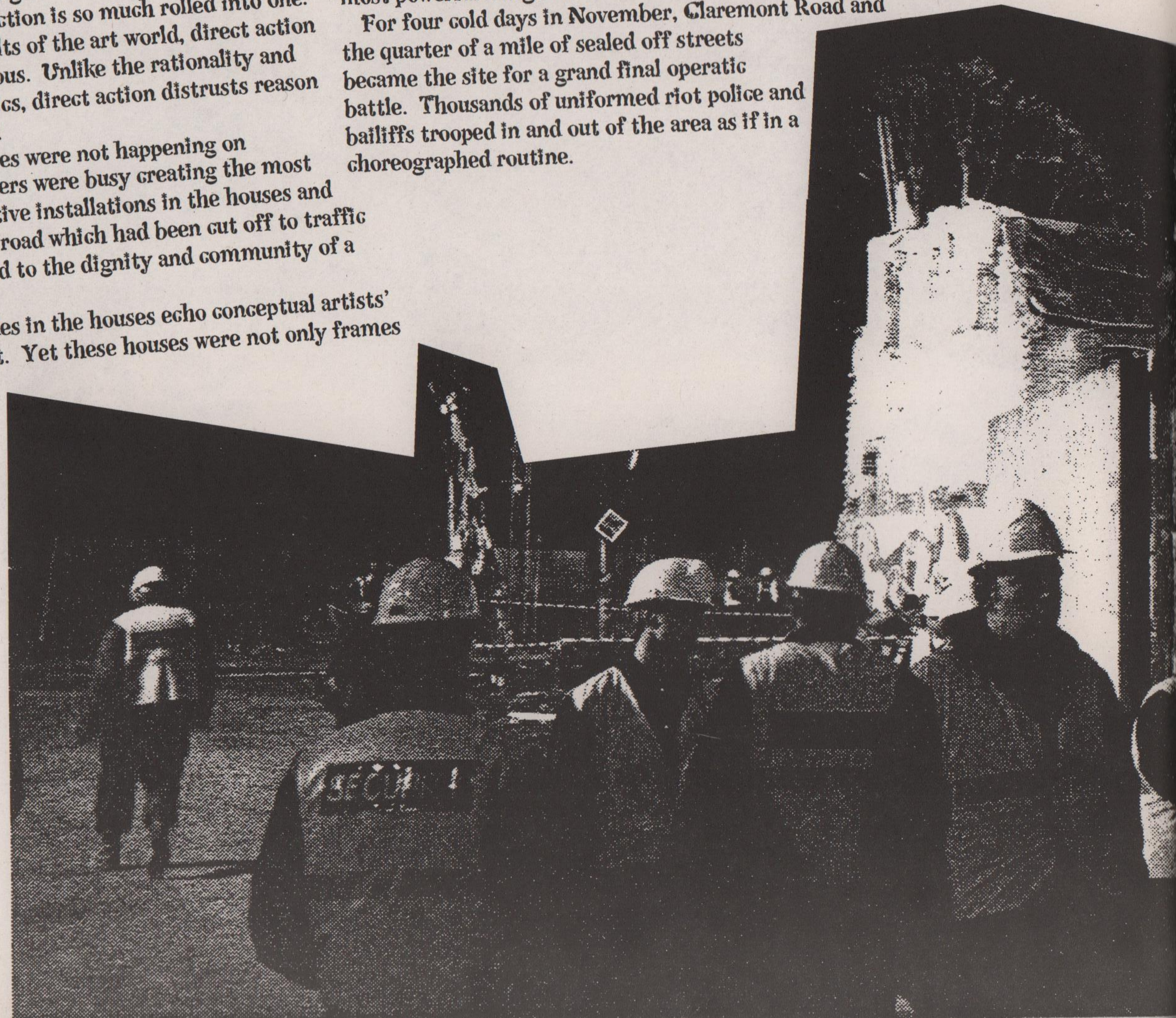
Many of the barricades in the houses echo conceptual artists' installations of the past. Yet these houses were not only frames

during the eviction. Not knowing the whereabouts of the bunkers, the Bailiffs were forced to search with shovels instead of tearing through the houses with a bulldozer.

Other houses were packed, not with concrete but rubbish - the detritus of urban decay - washing machines, old mattresses, broken furniture - crammed into every nook and cranny. These barricades were accompanied by slogans hastily daubed in bright paint and colourful murals - horses galloping, a daisy chain across the front of every house. From the defended trees were all sorts of objects from shop dummies to old televisions - each hung purposefully as statement and obstacle for the tree surgeons!

A final symbol of contempt for the Department of Transport's plans to evict Claremont was the 70 foot tower breaking out through the roof of one of the houses. It could be seen for miles and for its short life became a local landmark. This extraordinary piece of crazed scaffold not only provided the most effective defence against the bailiffs but also became the most powerful image for the final show down.

For four cold days in November, Claremont Road and the quarter of a mile of sealed off streets became the site for a grand final operatic battle. Thousands of uniformed riot police and bailiffs trooped in and out of the area as if in a choreographed routine.



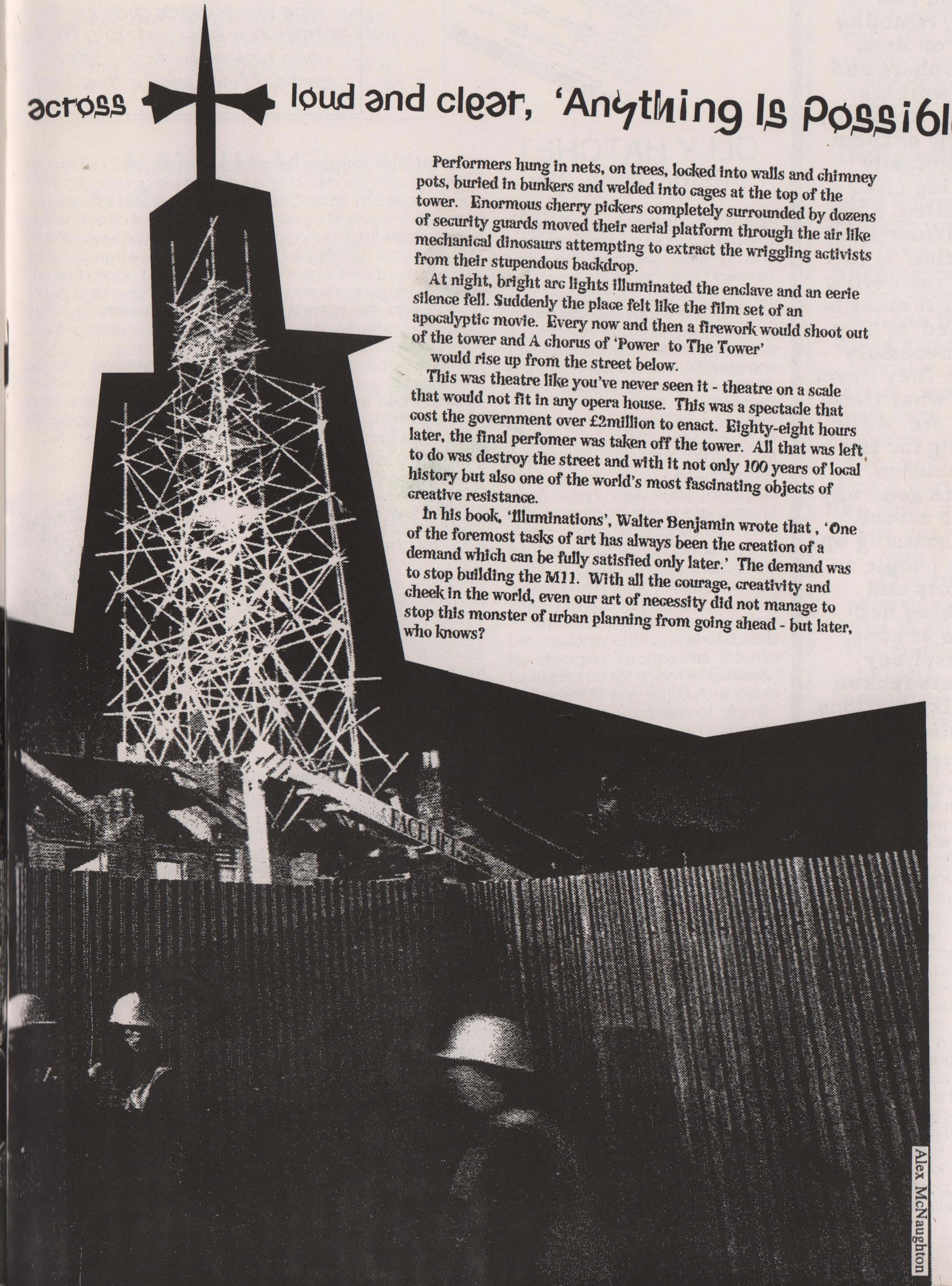
across loud and clear, 'Anything is possible.'

Performers hung in nets, on trees, locked into walls and chimney pots, buried in bunkers and welded into cages at the top of the tower. Enormous cherry pickers completely surrounded by dozens of security guards moved their aerial platform through the air like mechanical dinosaurs attempting to extract the wriggling activists from their stupendous backdrop.

At night, bright arc lights illuminated the enclave and an eerie silence fell. Suddenly the place felt like the film set of an apocalyptic movie. Every now and then a firework would shoot out of the tower and a chorus of 'Power to The Tower' would rise up from the street below.

This was theatre like you've never seen it - theatre on a scale that would not fit in any opera house. This was a spectacle that cost the government over £2million to enact. Eighty-eight hours later, the final performer was taken off the tower. All that was left to do was destroy the street and with it not only 100 years of local history but also one of the world's most fascinating objects of creative resistance.

In his book, 'Illuminations', Walter Benjamin wrote that, 'One of the foremost tasks of art has always been the creation of a demand which can be fully satisfied only later.' The demand was to stop building the M11. With all the courage, creativity and cheek in the world, even our art of necessity did not manage to stop this monster of urban planning from going ahead - but later, who knows?



THE STEREOTYPE:

The Spiky Model (from the fluffy viewpoint):

Intellectual thugs. Publish lots of dense, rambling rant on dead philosophers and the 'workers' struggle'. Ironically very few of them are actually working class themselves. They are convinced the 'revolution' is just around the corner and that it must be achieved 'by any means necessary' - although they never explain what these means are. While waiting for the revolution, activities generally don't extend beyond messing up other people's events and chucking half-bricks at cops. Conspiracy theorists reckon most spiky factions are funded by MI5.

KEEP IT SPIKEY
The Communist Party is going through a reformation. As a result, they don't want to be seen as a party that is not taking a hard line. They are out to show the world that they are a party that is not taking a hard line. They are out to show the world that they are a party that is not taking a hard line. They are out to show the world that they are a party that is not taking a hard line.

SPIKY

The stereotypes may be easy to laugh at but the whole fluffy/spiky debate has opened up a more serious issue: should campaigners stick to non-violence at all costs or should they see it simply as one of many tactics? Pod asks both a 'Spiky'

OLLY HATCHET Bristol Class War

There is nothing particularly pleasant or glorious in violence. The joy of inflicting pain, the sound of nasal bone crunching under the force of a steel toe capped Doc Marten or perhaps the screams of a helpless torture victim, is probably really only savoured by the sadistic, the power-hungry or those with specific mental health problems. Images of violence are thrown at us daily, unless we happen to live in parts of the Southern Hemisphere, or in some fake hippie or New Age idyll. Such images are rarely balanced and even less frequently have a cause or explained consequence; take the vulture-like reporting of child torture, sexual abuse, NATO troops in Bosnia, Yankee troops wherever you care to mention and so on. This distortion of the causes and effects of various aspects of 'violence' is made for a number of reasons. A prime one of these is simply to reinforce a huge, yet unspoken moral value; that violence is only acceptable when it is done by our elders and

If we are in a struggle for a better world, and not simply posturing with the mixed and jumbled paraphernalia from various, possibly misunderstood cultures and ideologies, then surely we must accept that non-violent direct action is sometimes the most appropriate tool to use - a creative one that has a definite place, especially when we can make a point and when the forces ranged against us are well tooled up and likely to arrest us all and give us a good kicking into the bargain. We are in a relatively lucky position - currently. We are unlikely to be tortured or shot. No problem there. But to reject the constructive use of aggression, people power, and, yes, violence, is both short-sighted and an insult to those who have struggled for a better world using all the tools they feel necessary. From Nicaragua to South Africa, via North America, and the Middle East, back to Ireland, England, Scotland and Wales, peoples suffering invasion, exploitation, injustice and suffering have fought back using their culture, their creativity, songs, families communities and their violent force to repel their oppressors. Surely it is a powerful mixture of solidarity, consciousness, skills, hopes and dreams in conjunction with our preparedness to fight back, that could and should turn things around for us. It is a huge romantic and dead-ended mistake to reject the very tool that can liberate us. Being prepared and trained to use violent struggle when we accept that it is necessary, is one of these tools. It is not nice, not fluffy and cuddly but when our future, our world, OUR families, lovers and friends are at stake, who dares to say, 'No, we'll have a quick dance a whoop a bit...that'll show those bastards with their truncheons and guns!' The state will never listen to our reason. It depends on our compliance to function. Neither John Major, Paddy Ashdown (an ex-SAS man himself) or Tony Blair will listen to our reasons why we must fundamentally change the way society is organised. It is not in their interests. If mainland Britain was fortunate to see mass, organised uprisings, the political parties would be the first to run for the hills, after having ordered troops onto the streets to gun us down, imprison us without trial and torture us for information.



This happens in Northern Ireland. It would happen here if the idea of freedom and revolution became a real threat to the state. Better to arm ourselves now than be beaten to shit while we try to put our ideas into action - if you really want peace, prepare for war.

FLUFFY

to laugh at but the whole fluffy/spiky serious issue: should campaigners stick to non-violence at all costs or should they see it simply as one of many and some 'Fluffies' to state their case.

MARSHA MELLOW Fluffy Action Force (F.A.F.)

The problem with the whole fluffy/spiky thing is that everyone's perception of what's fluffy and what's spiky is different. I thought and thought about how I would explain the ideas of non-violence. I thought about how, as a method of campaigning it has been a great way of empowering people. Spikies spit out the word pacifist at us but they don't seem to understand the basic concept of direct action. I thought of trying to explain how non-violent direct action is not an ideology but an instinct. But then I thought, well, a much better way of explaining it would be to ask around and see what other people felt. That way, I could give a much better feel of the concept of 'Unity Through Diversity.' I just hope you don't end up more confused than you were in the beginning!



CLAIRE:
The best bit of non-violent direct action I've come across is by Noel Godin, a Belgian anarchist who goes around chucking these custard flans at dull intellectuals and politicians who take themselves too seriously. He goes by the name of George Le Gloupier and he's written an autobiography called *Cream and Punishment*. He has promised to 'flan' Jacques Chirac and is coming over to this country soon. Making people laugh is a much better way of getting your message across than exhorting them to prepare for war.

JIM:
'I was on the anti-CJB march last October and got talking to this bloke about violence. "The thing is," I was saying. "Most activists want to get a message across to people. They want to challenge the way people see things. Violence cuts off communication and once that stops, it's a downward spiral." The bloke wasn't having any of it. Half way through the conversation, I suddenly shoved him hard on the shoulder. He looked shocked. "You tosser," he said. "That's the trouble with you fluffies, you say one thing and do another." I tried to explain to him why I'd done it but he kept pushing me away. In the end he disappeared back into the crowd shaking his head. - Point made.'

TINA:
There is no desire to comply to a set ideology or doctrine. It's just loads of different people with different (but often quite similar) views trying to do everything in their power to sensibly show the suits up for the idiots they are. If you can't see that then what can you see?'

TUNNIE:
'We all feel angry. We all feel fucked off with what's going on around us. The question is, what's the best way of using that anger productively?'



KEEP IT FLUFFY!



PHIL:
'NVDA is about being bold, putting yourself on the line, using your imagination and making it fun. It's about trying to get people to think about what they are doing.'

CATH:
You've got to be responsible for your actions. When we were being evicted from Munstonia (the last house to fall on the M11 site) I was on the roof. There was one geezer who was really slagging off the police down below. In the end, someone went up to him and said, 'If you're going to wind them up then lock-on or shut up.' See, people get mouthy but when the cops come, they scarper. Instead the cops take it out on some poor bod who is locked-on to a chimney and can't get away.'

LEON:
They say riots happen when a community is pressured too much. Real riots have got nothing to do with Class War or any other faction. At the New Cross riots that lot got up and started going on about the workers and the revolution. Everyone ignored the pigs and started chucking stuff at them!

GEE:
'Some people are too bogged down with isms and schisms. I'd rather deal with here and now.'

LINDSEY:
'I think the real problem is how the whole system has interpreted non-violence. They assume that it means passive resistance. At Stanworth Valley (the campaign to stop the M65) the Under Sheriff complained bitterly that his men had to face active resistance to the eviction rather than the passive resistance that he expected.'

KEVIN:
'You cannot reach a peaceful solution using violent means. You can't get rid of something by using the same thing. That's merely increasing the level of violence. If you want a peaceful future you have to use your brains and not your fists. But what's equally important is that self-defence is a very valid weapon and if someone comes up to hit me, I'll hit them first!'

ALLY:
'I'm not a radical fluffyist. I can understand why some people dream of an ultimate revolution where we can create a world we all want to live in. But we have to look at the situation we are in now. We will never win with violence because they will always have more force and more weapons than us. What we can threaten them with is good example - showing them up for what they are and showing the people what the alternatives can be.'

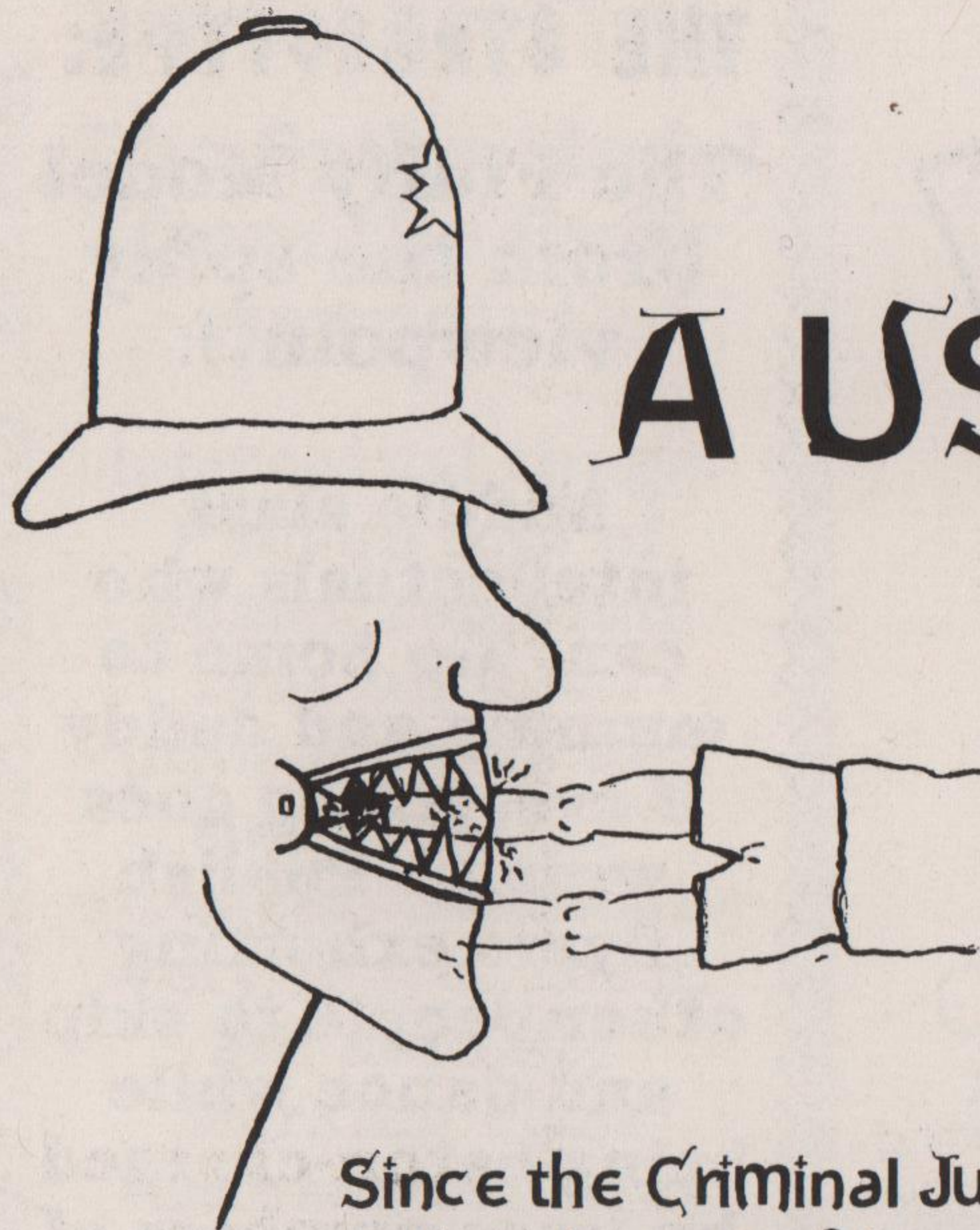
JON:
'I get the feeling that the Class War lot are always hiding: hiding behind balaclavas, hiding in the crowd, hiding behind words. It takes a lot more balls to confront someone face to face than to lob a brick from 50 yards away.'

DEBBIE:
Violence is a difficult thing to define. I don't agree with violence against people but I have no worries about violence against property. I think economic sabotage is a valid form of campaigning if all else fails.

MARK:
'The whole thing is really stupid. We should all be on the same side, not sniping at each other. If we all spit on the Tories, we'll drown the bastards.'

THE STEREOTYPE:
The Fluffy Model (from the spiky viewpoint):

Middle class intellectuals who can, 'Go home to mummy and daddy if everything goes wrong.' Publish flyers exhorting other people to skip and dance while being baton-charged by large numbers of riot cops. Too busy hugging each other to get down to the serious issues of class struggle and anyway, they're scum - not butch and hard like us - and they suck up to the media - and they'll turn out just like their parents in ten years time you'll see. Conspiracy theorists reckon M15 is already on the fluffies' case because its got nothing better to do.



A USER'S GUIDE TO TRESPASS

By Ally Fogg

Since the Criminal Justice Act became law, everyone has been taking up the new national sport of 'aggravated trespass'. This is described as trespass in the open air with intent of intimidating, obstructing or disrupting people for engaging in lawful activities (such as trashing ancient woodlands or poisoning rivers). This is all very well, but what about those of us who fancy a bit of trespass but aren't too sure if they want to dive straight into aggravation? For their benefit, we are proud to present our alternative trespass guide. Get in there quick though, if Michael Howard gets his way, these could be coming to a statute book near you soon.....

Accidental Trespass:

Trespassing on land which has no environmental or political significance whatsoever carried out by activists with the intention of disrupting lawful activity somewhere else but with a criminally poor sense of direction. Max. penalty three months of map-reading.

Irritated Trespass:

Trespassing with the intention of informing someone that their safety helmet really clashes with their overalls. Max. penalty a black eye.

Elevated Trespass:

Like aggravated trespass but occurring on stilts. Max penalty six months for being a smart arse.

Animated Trespass:

Like aggravated trespass but wearing Mickey Mouse ears. Max penalty two weeks in EuroDisney.

Deregulated Trespass:

Trespass by several groups who are all going to the same place and keep you waiting for two hours before all turn up at the same time. Max Penalty being taken over by Slowcoach Ltd.

Introverted Trespass:

Staring at your feet on someone else's property and then muttering, 'I don't know why I'm here, no-one will notice me anyway.' Max penalty being made to sing 'My Way' in a tutu outside a Leeds United match.

Extroverted Trespass:

Staring at everyone else's feet on someone else's property and then telling them about your first sexual experience. Max penalty not being allowed to sing 'My Way' in a tutu outside a Leeds United match.

Perforated Trespass:

Illegal occupation of a derelict factory (roofless). Max penalty three months inside a Group 4 security van (lets the ravers flood out).

Carbonated Trespass:

Like agg. trespass only fizzier. Max penalty three months antisocial flatulence.

Terminated Trespass:

Stretching a thin joke beyond the editor's patience. Maximum penalty some brutal editing. (There were originally 101 of these).

Advertisement

61 held as protesters gatecrash atom plant

climbed on top of Oxide Reprocessing (Thorp) while themselves to a security staff and and dragged



all the agreed in safeguards. Thorp is a civil ing plant and th and plutonium from its operation. able energy source plant is under con

By JOHN HAMSHIRE

DOZENS of protesters were arrested yesterday after more than 100 Greenpeace activists invaded the Sellafield nuclear reprocessing plant.

HJACKED

GREENPEACE hijacked a disused North Sea oil platform yesterday. In a daring daylight raid, four activists scaled the terminal's giant 70-foot legs. They were filmed by a helicopter hovering above the 14,500-tonne installation. It's thought Greenpeace plan to broadcast live coverage of the "raid" around the world. They've hired satellite dish gear used to broadcast from the slopes of Everest. The raid was made on Shell's Brent Spar loading terminal, 118 miles north-east of Liverpool, Shetland. Greenpeace claim more than 4000 people are in the area. They've been told to speak to the police. Spoke to the police. Spoke to the police. Spoke to the police.



24 YEARS

OF NON-VIOLENT DIRECT ACTION

GREENPEACE

is investigating the idea of an

ACTION NETWORK

This network will enable ANYONE to take part in more actions through the interactive exchange of information and will create a regional and national pool of activists and skills. This network will be independent. Anyone can use it, no one will own it.

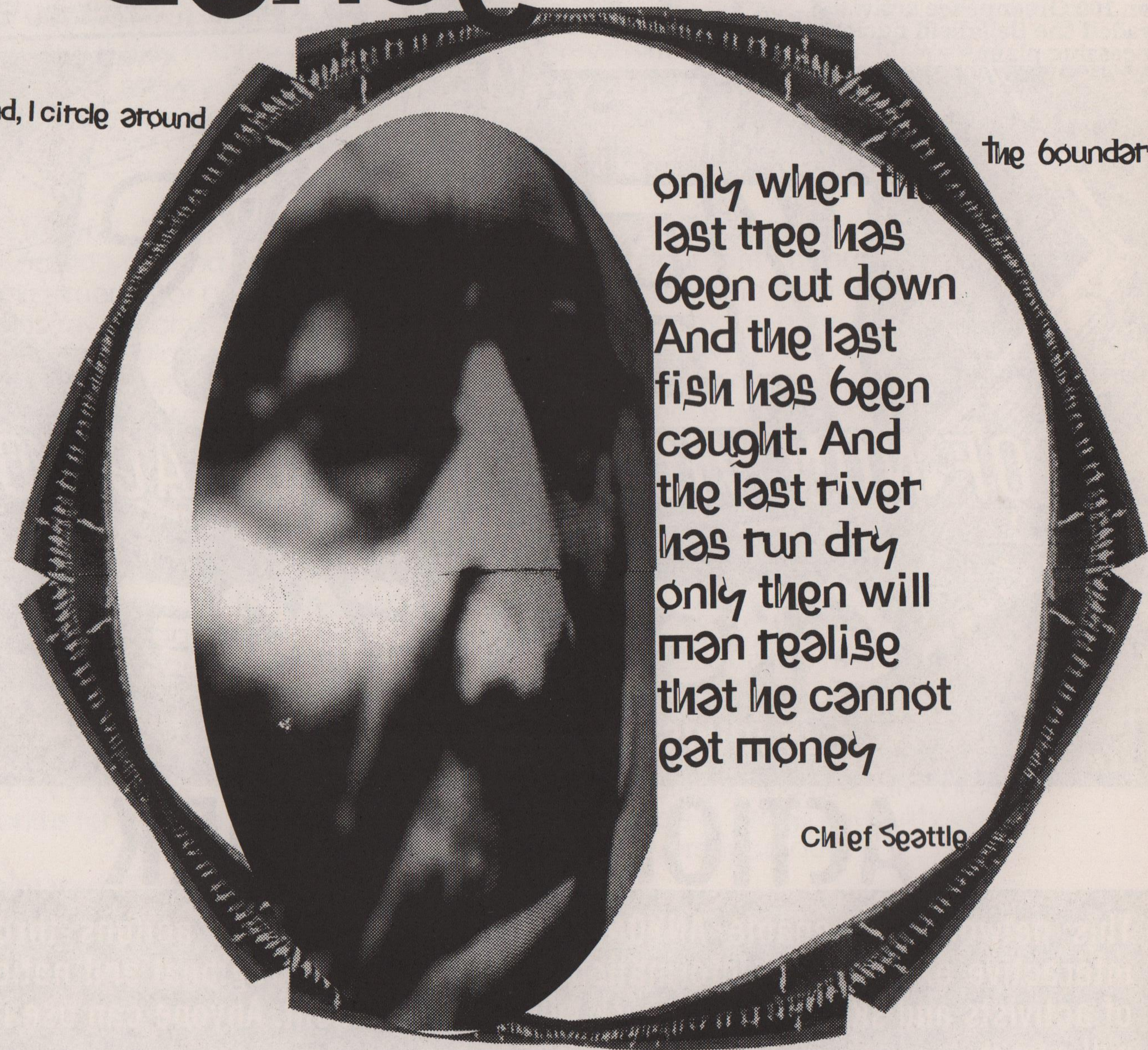
WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

PHONE 0171 354 5100 for more information

This year is the 10th anniversary of the Battle of the Beanfield. Jim Thomas compares the resistance of the American Indians with the struggles of today's nomads and eco-tribes

The tale of the ghost dance

'I circle around, I circle around



the boundaries

only when the last tree has been cut down. And the last fish has been caught. And the last river has run dry only then will man realise that he cannot eat money

Chief Seattle

of the earth (rpt) Heya Heya Heya Heya, wearing my long wing feather as I fly.. wearing my long wing feather as I fly..

TURN OFF THE TV, put down the newspapers and settle around the fire, tribespeople. Take a rest, hear a tale. Mythologies and histories of violence, domination and repression are the stuff of our modern cultural heritage. In the spirit of finding new mythologies to celebrate, histories appropriate to DIY Culture, I offer you the Ghost Dance. This is a true story. It happened one hundred and five years ago, many historians and other storytellers say so. Circles go round and round. Is it happening again?

A Paiute Indian, named Wovoka, went up to heaven. The sun had died and taken him there. He walked in a new and beautiful land. It was like the old one, the one the white man had destroyed. It was full of game, antelope and buffalo. The grass was green and high and though long-dead people from other tribes also lived in this new land, there was peace. The tribes were one tribe and could understand each other. God told Wovoka he must go back and tell his people to be good and to love one another. He expressed it in a creed of non-violence. "You must not hurt anyone or do harm to anyone. You must not fight. Do right always. it will give you satisfaction in life."

Warriors were to put down their guns and start dancing. A new dance, a new song, a new prayer. To dance all night until the morning, to dance together until the present world, with all the bad white man's stuff, its fences and iron horses, its slaughterhouses and mines just rolled up like a blanket. Underneath would be the young Indian earth, in harmony. They would be returned to the land they had been excluded from.

The words of Wovoka were to reach far...they were read amongst others by a young Mahatma Gandhi, the modern father of non-violent direct action. And have you dreamed as Wovoka did? Have you visited a woodland, climbed a mountain, sat with the tribes on Twyford Down, Salisbury Plain or even Claremont Road and heard Wovoka's words? Have you danced in these places or other places to a rhythm so powerful it could bring the tribes together in rolling back the white man's bad

stuff: the barbed wire and the motorways with their iron horses, the open cast mines and the slaughterhouses? Could we return to the excluded land... now as then?

Wovoka brought back the dance and the creed of non-violence to share among the tribes. It was known as the Ghost Dance, bringing back the ghost of the world that was and the wisdom of the ancestors who lived in it. The ghost dancers put aside their weapons and made a circle: 'People were holding each other by the hand, singing, whirling around, looking at the sun. They had a little spruce tree in the middle of

the dance circle. They wore special shirts painted with the sun, the moon, the stars and magpies. They whirled around, they didn't stop dancing.'

Historically, Indians have always lived in circles. They had kept their circles complete, holding the earth together in their travels along its sacred ways. They lived in comparative harmony with the natural world, following the cycles of nature and developing a subtle and profound understanding of their surrounding and were true conservationists. They realised that life depended on the wellbeing of the earth.

The earth was considered a goddess and was worshipped for her fertility and abundance. They believed all nature is an interconnected living organism. 'In the circle of life every being is no more, or less, than any other. We are all sisters and brothers. Life is shared with the bird, bear, insect, plants, mountains clouds, stars, sun. To be in harmony with the natural world one must live within the cycles of life' (Steiner). The art, music and spirituality of these tribal peoples were intimately connected with the environment, with freedom and with celebration - like our own modern-day 'tribes'.

American Indians were notable for their respect for the individual yet retaining a strong sense of community. They were diverse and colourful and as nomadic people travelled free across the prairies. When the white man began to enclose the land and appropriate it as property, the red man expressed bewilderment. 'One does not sell the earth upon which the people walk' (Tashunka Witko - Crazy Horse).

The white man had no respect for the cycles and circles of the indigenous people. Ever since the

arrival of Columbus in the New World, 500 years ago, the story of contact between Europeans and Indigenous Indians has been of conquest and devastation. The same is true of the land itself. The pioneering spirit of the American frontier was of taming and exploiting both wilderness and the people who lived there. Land was 'discovered', appropriated, cleared and fenced - buffalo and Indians likewise.

If ever there was a classic case of the social effects of excluding people from the land, the story of the Sioux would be it. They lived as nomadic communities roaming an area larger than western Europe. There were millions of buffalo to feed them, thousands of horses and hundreds of miles of free range, all of which made the Sioux the most prosperous, proudest and perhaps the wildest of all the tribes on the plains.

In 1868 however, as the US government attempted to bring the plains under its control, the Sioux found themselves restricted to a reservation and put under government agents - all on the promise of government rations, cows and 'other good things'. They also agreed to allow the railroad and military posts to be built on the reservations. At one stroke, they were reduced from a free nation to dependent wards of the government.

Later, when gold was discovered on the reservation, people swarmed in. In 1876, after the numerous battles against the Indians led by Custer, a new agreement took a third of their reservation away, including their last remaining hunting ground. Within the next decade, the buffalo had gone and the Sioux were left with nothing but arid land and government rations. Suddenly, they were expected to settle down to the pursuit of agriculture in a land largely unfit for such use.

Not surprisingly, there was unrest. In response, ecocide was extended to genocide. General Sherman launched the 'Campaign of Extermination' - ethnic cleansing American-style. He made no secret of his prejudices, writing that 'These Indians... all have to be killed or maintained as a species of pauper'. He later added, 'The only good Indians I ever saw were dead.'

Echoes of these same prejudices can be heard around us today. John Carlisle MP for Luton believes that today's nomadic traveller tribes must be 'banished into the wilderness', while Earth First!, Road Alert! the Dongas Tribe and many of the new generation of eco-tribes are trying to protect what little wilderness we have left.

In 1992 John Major proclaimed, 'New Age travellers? Not in this age... not in any age.' Is the only good 'New Age traveller' a dead New Age traveller?

The introduction of the Criminal Justice Act denies a

nomadic lifestyle, restricting travellers to a few remaining 'reservations' - much smaller and more infrequent than those of the Sioux. It is the final exclusion from the land. It encourages travelling people 'to adopt a settled way of life' to 'become white' as it were.

Even to dance is a crime: a crime to come together and dance to a tribal rhythm, in the open air, in circles; as if coming together and dancing was dangerous; as if it was powerful enough to change ideas, to roll up the white man's world and peacefully bring about something altogether better - which incidentally, it is.

In 1890, suddenly the world was coming back for the North American Indians. The dance travelled like fire across the prairies, igniting the imagination of the tribes. Each one that took it up adopted their own version of the dance, their own songs. Within the dance, individuals would fall into trance states and bring back visions. They would bring back ceremonies and rituals that had been forgotten by the tribes or that nobody had bothered to learn since their communities had begun to break up.

The dance remade communities, it was a rekindling of their culture and ignited their morale. In the circle, all held hands and faced each other. The space in the middle was their space. Some wore white 'Ghost shirts' that it was believed would resist the white man's bullets as long as the creed of non-violence was kept. The circles were growing larger. The agents of the government were growing scared. They believed an insurrection was coming. Some of the more notorious troublemakers had taken to dancing the dance - it was obviously some sort of war dance. Troops were brought into the reservations.....

.....Police were brought into raves, festivals, protests, campsites.....

On Pine Ridge Reservation, over half the 6,000 Indians were dancing the Ghost Dance and 'defied control'. Troops were sent in to arrest Chief Sitting Bull. A fight ensued and he was killed. 1800 of his people fled in panic into the badlands and joined up with Chief Bigfoot's tribe who were also dancing the dance. More troops were called in. At Wounded Knee Creek, about 300 Ghost Dancers found themselves surrounded by machine guns and cannons. There to dance, not fight, they gave themselves up and were in the process of handing over what weapons they had when a lone voice preached resistance. A lone warrior became excited and shot into the air. Cannons let rip into the peaceful encampment of tepees. The code of non-violence had been broken. So too were the Ghost Shirts. The total massacre at Wounded Knee did not discriminate between warrior and medicine man, man and woman, woman and child.

.....At Hyde Park in October 1994, peaceful dancers found themselves surrounded by lines of police. A few leaflets preached violent resistance. It only took a few stones thrown to bring violent police charges against protesters. They did not discriminate either.



'I did not know then how much was ended. When I looked back now from this high hill of my old age, I can still see the butchered women and children lying heaped and scattered all along the crooked gulch. And I can see that something else died there in the bloody mud and was buried in the blizzard. A people's dream died there. The nation's hoop is broken and scattered. There is no centre any longer and the sacred tree is dead.'

Ghost shirt

On the field of Wounded Knee.....in Hyde Park... the ghost dancers dancing for a return to freedom and the land...tribespeople, environmentalists, ravers....stopped dancing.

Said Black Elk:

'I did not know then how much was ended. When I looked back now from this high hill of my old age, I can still see the butchered women and children lying heaped and scattered all along the crooked gulch. And I can see that something else died there in the bloody mud and was buried in the blizzard. A people's dream died there. The nation's hoop is broken and scattered. There is no centre any longer and the sacred tree is dead.'

Did a people's dream die there or did a people stop dreaming when they stopped dancing. For a long time, Indigenous Americans lived increasingly cowed by the government. Then in the 1970s the Red Power movement arose. Young, angry, educated Indians fired up by books such as 'Custer Died For Your Sins' and 'Bury My Heart At Wounded Knee' began what was initially a very creative and effective non-violent direct action movement. Activists occupied Alcatraz Island and claimed their 'Right of Discovery' and drew attention to a 'Trail of Broken Treaties' through land occupations.

Then the movement turned violent.

In 1974, Wounded Knee was reoccupied by Red Power activists who held several rangers hostage. They danced the Ghost Dance but solemnly in memory and anger, not hope. Indians were again killed. Violence crushes the life and energy and hope of a dance. The fun was gone. They never really danced away from Wounded Knee.

THERE THEN IS THE TALE. When we dance, even in the middle of York, the police leave us alone. I've met interesting people through the dance and it provides a good media-friendly new perspective on the Criminal Justice Act. - The power of the dance was its non-violence. Without raising a gun, it made a lot of noise. It demonstrated what Indian life was about: circles, celebration, the land and the community - in a way that threw the authorities. It was creative, positive and believed in itself. Violence divided all that. - The authorities knew how to respond to violence. They've done it for thousands of years. They have little experience of non-violence, certainly not dancing for freedom. Too many movements for change have got caught up in being serious, predictable and aggressive in their means and these means have become part of their ends...

The American anarchist Emma Goldman once said: 'If I can't dance I don't want to be part of your revolution'. Revolution means turning a circle. Will the circle be unbroken? Make a dancing circle and don't let it stop turning!

NO MORE

Remember the Rio Earth Summit? Three years after not much was achieved in Brazil, not much more was achieved at a special summit on global warming held in Berlin. Ursula Wills-Jones went to listen in, got hot under the collar and found some relief with an alternative gathering of European activists.

Help! I've been kidnapped by aliens! I'm trapped in a vast space station full of strange beings that speak in a bizarre language like this: FCCC/1.3(ii)para5/7.4/(iv)/xyz... and I can't understand a word of it! I can't live on this processed air much longer and I can't find the exit! What's more, dear reader, I have discovered a terrifying conspiracy. These strange beings actually **RUN YOUR PLANET.**

Geez, these kind of places are inclined to make me paranoid. Welcome to the weird world of the United Nations Conference. (United Nations??!! The only thing that unites these people is their co-dependence on their mobile phones.) Specifically, to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Berlin - that's the global warming summit to you and me. Now, the delegates are supposed to be here to protect us from the possible ravages of global warming.

To sum it up very briefly, the effects of global warming could be something like this: rising temperatures, polar meltdown and rising sea levels, increasingly frequent storms, tornadoes and flood, the spread of tropical disease, plagues of pests and increasingly frequent droughts. One researcher has estimate that by 2030 (ie within the next 35 years) up to 1,803,140,000 people could die from the effects of global warming - famine, storms, floods and the spread of tropical diseases, not to mention the legacy of millions of environmental refugees.

It's because of possibilities like these that the delegates at the summit are supposed to be finding some kind of international agreement which will prevent the threat of global warming occurring. This would mean that governments would set a legally binding target for reducing the gases such as carbon dioxide which cause the problem in the first place. Carbon dioxide is produced by any process which uses fossil fuels, mainly electricity power stations and vehicles. The destruction of forests, which absorb carbon dioxide exacerbates the problem. The main culprits of the problem are indisputably the first world countries and every year we produce more of the stuff. But don't worry. The delegates aren't going to let any of the alarmist predictions floating around cause them to panic. In fact, many

of them have so firmly resolved not to panic, that they have committed themselves utterly to what they believe is the only sensible course - to do nothing at all.

To help them along, a lot of very well-paid scientists employed by petrol companies, the mining industry and other well-known polluters have published glossy brochures trying to undermine the scientific basis of the global warming theories. A spokeswoman for Greenpeace International, interestingly, described these scientific claims as, 'Bollocks.' And just in case any of the delegates get too concerned about their ecological responsibilities there are people around like Don Pearlman. Pearlman works for a New York law firm but nobody knows who really employs him. What's fairly certain is that his sole responsibility is preventing any agreement on global warming. Far from being some slick Public Relations type, Pearlman is actually a runty little geezer in a shabby suit who chain smokes constantly. He won't talk to the press. The most I can get him to say into my tape recorder is 'no comment' twice. What's clear however, is that he knows everybody who matters. Thankfully, there are a few sane delegates in the place. People like Rex Horoi, hapless ambassador of the Solomon Islands in the South Pacific. The Solomon Islands have only 350,000 inhabitants but as many as 80 languages. Rex is the

BLAH BLAH BLAH!

spokesman for the AOSIS group of small island states. They are pushing for the conference to make a really radical agreement (a 20% cut on 1990 carbon dioxide emissions) on global warming. Rex is here because he is afraid that his country, much of which is only six feet above sea level, is going to start sinking under a global warming-induced rise in tides. Despite being dressed in a smart suit like the rest of the delegates, Rex somehow looks like he would be more at home lounging on some peeling tropical veranda with a beer.

Rex is not a happy man. 'It's been very frustrating,' he grumbles. 'If we don't make a decision now, then complacency could create disaster. Any scientific proof will entail the destruction of these islands. These very rich cultures will disappear into the water. Already we have visible characteristics of climate change - frequency of storms, erosion of the beaches, erosion of the sea shore.' No one in AOSIS has any time for the sceptical scientists employed, so coincidentally, by all the petrol companies. 'People who talk like that only want to create employment for scientists who are doubters. Those who are concerned for the future of the planet don't think that way,' Rex points out. Most of the people who don't think that way are in fact ensconced in

the somewhat less plush surrounding of a sports centre in the old east Berlin, where an alternative gathering, 'The Climate Is Right For Change' is taking place. The event is intended to bring together activists from across Europe who are working on the issues surrounding global warming such as road-building and open-cast mining. The participants at the gathering are probably a good indication of the state of activism (or perhaps the level of the problem) country by country.

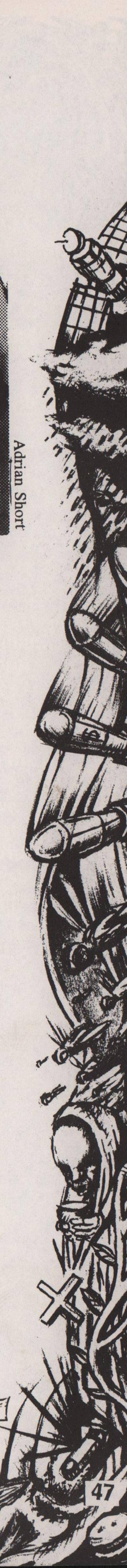
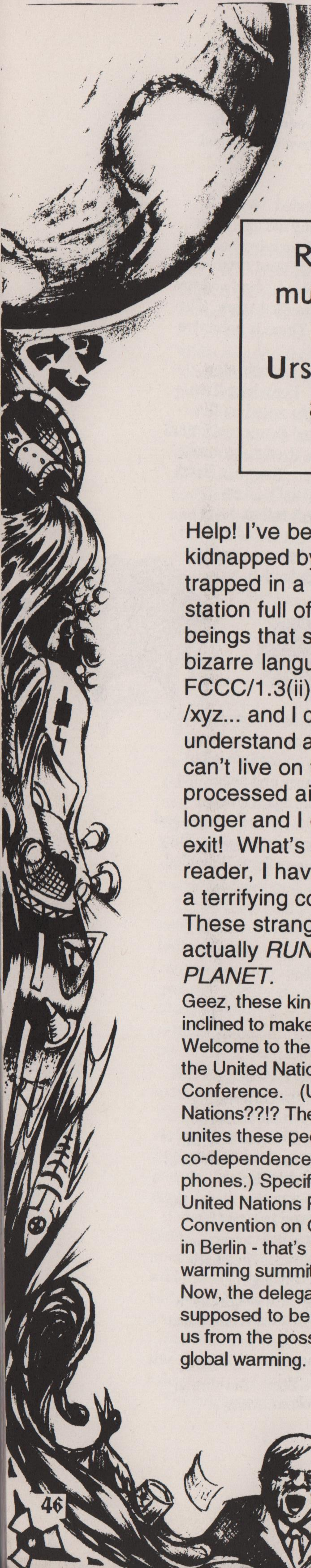
I'm accompanied by a giant cardboard steamroller and lots of activists who are pretending to be delegates, symbolised by their hats which bear the words, 'Blah, Blah, Blah'.

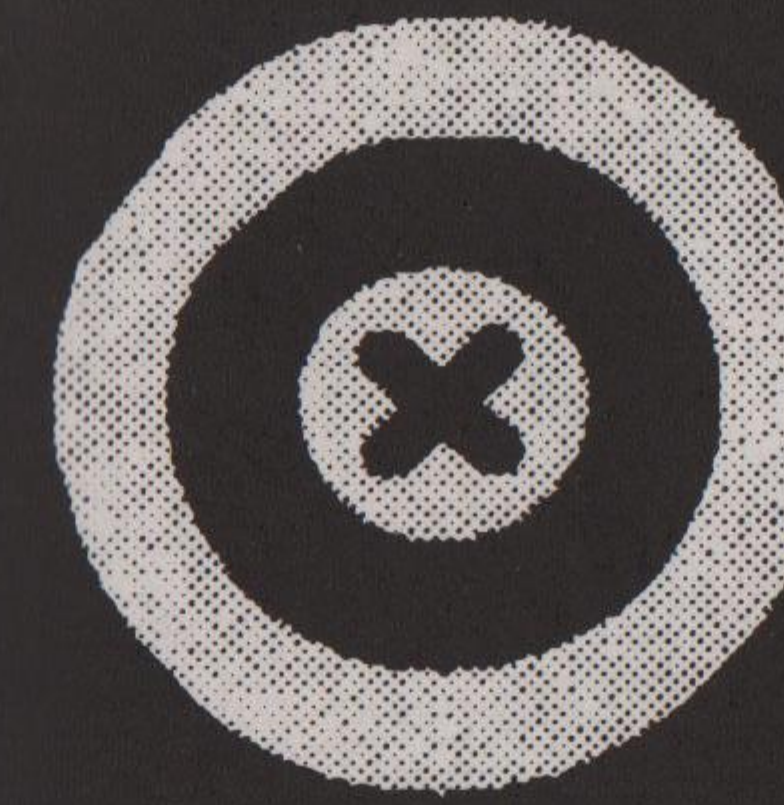
France and Italy haven't turned out a single participant between them. But that well-known hotbed of radicalism and alternative culture - Luxembourg - has somehow managed a whole minibus. Eastern Europe, from Lithuania down to Croatia, seems well-represented. There's a bus-load of teenage Norwegians and a small gaggle of Spanish anarchists who seem a bit disappointed that they haven't got the chance to throw anything at

anyone. There's even a single brave soul from Egypt - not to mention the obligatory British contingent which is remarkably large. Now this may come as something of a surprise but judging by this conference, Britain is probably the eco-activism capital of Europe at the moment. In fact, the British activists manage to put a few people's backs up by ignoring all the workshops that the Germans have carefully arranged and insisting that everyone should go and do non-stop actions. At one point, world war three was about to break out in the computer room over who got to use the equipment for what purpose and an international mediator (someone from the Dutch office) had to be sent in. For many people, the alternative gathering is something of a reunion. 'Ooh, the last time I saw you, you were being dragged off by the Spanish police...' etc. Apart from seeing old friends, all the usual facilities are there. Workshops, meetings, gratuitously fibrous veggie food, not to mention the deluxe experience in sleep deprivation. The organisers wake everyone up at 7am to clear everything out by nine. You can go to bed as early as you like but you do have to contend with the band playing in the next room until about 2am and of course the people falling over you as they



Adrian Short





M-POWER

young voter registration campaign 1995

Each year an underpublicised process takes place which determines whether, individually, we can enjoy our one guaranteed democratic right - the electoral register is compiled and published.

"Altogether 11 million did not vote in 1987, and the figure in 1992 was closer to 13 million."
Godfrey Hodgson journalist & historian.

"More than 2.5 million people aged 25 and under failed to vote in the 1992 General Election non-registration in this age group is four times higher than the rest of the population"
"The 1992 election was won by majorities totalling 2,500 in 11 marginal constituencies"
British Youth Council.

M-POWER is the voter registration campaign of '95 aimed primarily at the young.

Voting often seems like a pointless act.

But M-POWER isn't purely about voting - it's about registering *the right* to vote and therefore adding the threat of electoral strength to our arguments for sustainability and rights - it will add electoral strength to our NVDA and lobbying campaigns. Registration will avoid the prospect of your voice being excluded from the electoral process

As things stand, whoever wins the next election will have absolute power to pass laws like the CJA.

But, as well as defiance, we have the numbers to use *their* system to make *our* point. The above figures show we potentially have millions of new voices to add to the political debate, voices not easily ignored by scared or excited politicians come election time. The next election is almost certain to be closely fought, with a lot of marginal seats. If, all of a sudden, there were 2 million or so freshly registered under 26's, it's also fairly certain there will be a lot of candidates running around for young people's votes.

With mass registration we can flood the electoral system and create a big noise.

Remember... 'Politics is too important to be left to the politicians'.

For more information contact:

The British Youth Council
 57 Chalton St.
 London NW1 1HU
 T: 0171 387 7559

Activ88
 3 - 11 Pine St
 London EC1R 0JH
 T: 0171 833 1988

search drunkenly for their sleeping bag.

Tuesday and Thursday have been set aside for actions. So on Thursday we all dutifully file off to clog a road junction in Kreuzberg, the city's anarcho-district.

The message is sent inside that delegates have been locked in and won't be allowed out until they do something useful.

However, first we have to get there by tube which turns out to be quite amusing because there's about 400 people but only three who actually know the way.

This results in lots of confused stampedes in and out of u-bahn stations until we finally reach our secret destination.

Surprisingly, we get away with blocking a busy junction for a good ten minutes - presumably because the police get stuck in the congestion we've caused. Anyway, the whole thing passes without mishap.

Thursday and it's off to the UN Conference. I'm accompanied by a giant cardboard steamroller and lots of activists who are pretending to be delegates, symbolised by their hats which bear the words, 'Blah, Blah, Blah'. Others dressed as trees duly get steamrollered. It's all been cleared with the police earlier and it all goes very quiet. Despite this dozens of desperate journos, dying from the lack of air and dearth of news value inside the conference, steam outside to cover it.

Something else odd happens Thursday: an outbreak of religious fervour hits the high priest of carbon, Don Pearlman. He's acquired four new followers, dressed in monks' robes, who are showing their new-found devotion by following him around and hanging on his every word. They only become separated when Pearlman scuttles onto the delegates floor to escape. Interesting, because Pearlman isn't a delegate. Security can't find a suitable rule to discipline these over-enthusiastic worshippers of the Free Market so in the end they

tell them off for wearing inappropriate apparel in the conference. Somewhat surprisingly, The World Council of Churches, who have been running services inside the conference, appreciate the joke and file an official complaint about infringement of religious freedom! Friday however has been set aside for a few - er - unscheduled actions. Outside the conference hall, several hundred activists turn up, lock the main entrance doors from outside and sit down in front of them. The message is sent inside that delegates have been locked in and won't be allowed out until they do something useful.

Some of the more pessimistic of us have been expecting a massacre but it doesn't happen. The police don't even try to shift people. Either there's too many TV cameras around or they feel a bit outnumbered. In fact, they let it go on so long that people get bored and the action disintegrates into mad folk dancing on one side and a meditation workshop on the other.

Rex Horoi is adamant that it is very important that environmentalists in the West come to conferences like these and keep putting on the pressure.

Inside, a number of activists who have obtained dubious press and NGO (non-governmental organisation) passes are waiting for their moment to storm the stage. Legendary UN incompetence means that the security is so lax they actually make it, unfurl a banner and get about 30 seconds ranting time over the PA system before the mics are turned off. Quite what the simultaneous translation system (English, French, German, Spanish, Russian, Arabic and Chinese) made of it is anyone's guess. Needless to say, they have their passes confiscated and get turfed out. Amazingly, no one gets arrested all week. Anyway, it's the end of the week and as expected, the UN delegates

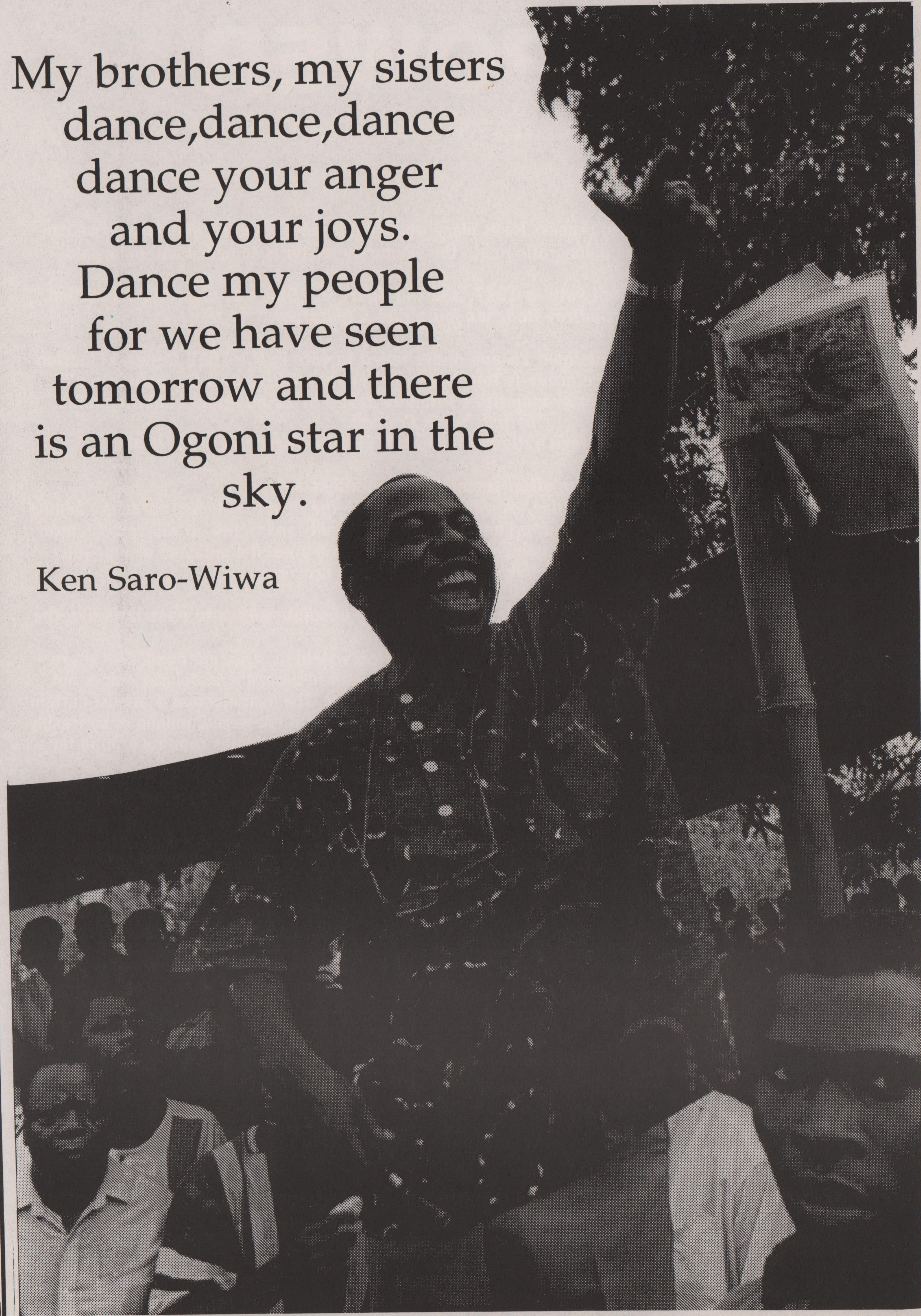
have failed to come to any agreement at all. Instead, they're going to waste more time and money by having another conference in a couple of years time. So off they go in their chauffeured Mercs, back to their first-class flights to their nice air conditioned offices. Meanwhile, the activist contingent, in need of some serious sleep and some good solid junk food, slope off on their old buses, cheap train tickets or cross-continental hitches back to

Instead, they're going to waste more time and money by having another conference in a couple of years time.

their road camps, campaigns, squats and student unions. As for me, I stumble home via a catalogue of travel mishaps. When I've finally made it back, I sit down and start sorting through the mountain of press releases I picked up at the conference. Half way through, I come across some tourist brochures about the Solomon Islands which Rex Horoi gave me. 'The eco-tourism destination of the Pacific,' it says, is for people 'Who can survive two weeks without commercial television or McDonalds.' Two weeks?! Sounds more like an incentive to get a one-way ticket. The booklet is full of pictures of colourful tribal people and verdant tropical scenery. Unfortunately, in the eyes of greedy multinationals and cowardly politicians, this kind of thing has no value. Rex Horoi is adamant that it is very important that environmentalists in the West come to conferences like these and keep putting on the pressure. Despite their best efforts, however, the politicians seem to agree that the Solomon Islands and their 80 languages, palm-fringed lagoons and coral reefs can safely be sacrificed in order that the, 'Competitiveness of European industry should not be damaged.' Looks like Rex and his eco-tourism schemes are going to start sinking - soon.

My brothers, my sisters
 dance,dance,dance
 dance your anger
 and your joys.
 Dance my people
 for we have seen
 tomorrow and there
 is an Ogoni star in the
 sky.

Ken Saro-Wiwa



Oil is the Ogoni's curse. Ogoniland in the Niger Delta, was once the 'food basket of the state'. The Niger Delta as a whole has been described as one of the most fragile ecosystems in the world. Now, pollution from oil production has infected land and rivers to such a degree that the Ogoni are forced to import their food.

In 1993, an oil spill was left flowing onto farmland for 40 days. Gas flares have covered Ogoni villages in black soot and rain has washed the soot down into the soil, poisoning water supplies and crops. Ogoni land has become Shell's land. Ogoni oil has become Shell's oil but Shell's problems are now the Ogoni's. The company has taken what it wanted and left.

Peaceful protests against Shell have been met with horrific force from the Nigerian police and military.

Nigeria has known little stability since it gained independence from Britain in 1960. In 1967, the eastern region seceded as the Republic of Biafra, leading to a fierce civil war lasting three years and ending with the Biafrans' defeat. As Nigeria edged towards democracy with free election in 1993, General Sani Abacha seized power in a military coup.

A year later, when pro-democracy campaigners demanded that the military hand over power to Moshood Abiola, the winner of the presidential elections, they and Abiola were arrested and charged with treason. Newspapers critical of the government were closed down and their staff arrested. In the protests that followed, 200 pro-democracy campaigners were killed by troops. Abiola and the others are still in prison.

Shell started extracting oil in Nigeria in 1958 and has so far taken over 900 million barrels. Today, oil production in Nigeria as a whole counts for 80% of its revenue. Nigerian oil counts for almost 14% of Shell's production - the biggest percentage outside the USA. Shell withdrew from Ogoniland in early 1993 pending the resolution of what

Shell's 1994 annual report describes in passing as 'community problems'. Greenpeace claims that when Shell and other oil companies negotiated land settlements, villagers did not have the necessary legal and technical backup to ensure proper terms and conditions. The farmers who have been affected most by the drilling have received little or no compensation. Inevitably, Shell's operations led to resentment amongst the Ogoni who feared that the scale of environmental damage and disruption to their community threatened their very existence. In 1990 the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP) was formed, led by Ken Saro-Wiwa, a charismatic Ogoni writer and campaigner.

There are at least eight different communities which have been blighted by oil production in the Delta but it was the Ogoni which made international impact largely because of their adherence to non-violent protest and their high-profile and respected leader. Saro-Wiwa has been awarded several international environmental awards and this year was one of the recipients of the Goldman Environmental Foundation award. He was chosen as one of six 'environmental heroes' around the world. The prize is the largest annual award for grassroots activists.

In a country ruled by an illegal military government, MOSOP's campaign is necessarily political and dangerously controversial. Peaceful protests against Shell have been met with horrific force from the Nigerian police and military. The government fears that the protests will cause disruption to oil production and thus to its income and that successful protests will be emulated elsewhere in Nigeria leading to widespread civil unrest and possibly the collapse of the government itself.

Amnesty International believes that the ethnic clashes were orchestrated by the military. The result, say the Ogoni, has been more than 1800 deaths and the destruction of many Ogoni villages

In 1990, a peaceful protest at Umuechem, near Ogoniland resulted in tragedy. Nigerian police opened fire on the crowd, killing 80 people. This

BLOOD AND OIL :

FROM NIGERIA TO YOUR PETROL TANK

The courage of the Ogoni people and their commitment to non-violent direct action has won them worldwide support. Adrian Short reports on the devastation that oil production has brought to the Ogoni and other communities in the Niger Delta, southern Nigeria, and asks can you be sure of Shell?

was no an isolated incident. A similar protests against Shell at Bonny, resulted in one person being killed, 30 shot and 150 beaten.

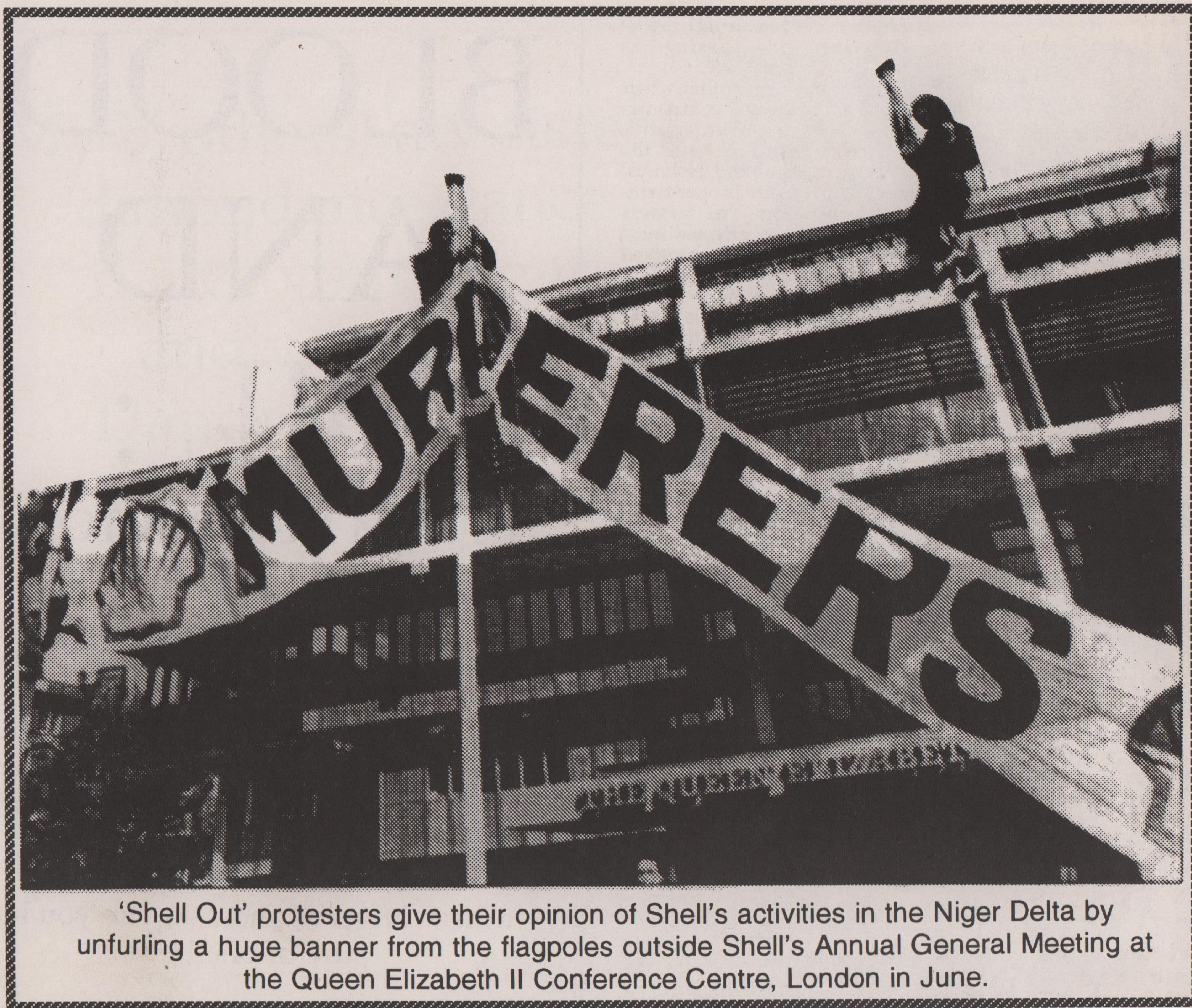
In April 1994, the military took the initiative. Seemingly groundless ethnic clashes between the Ogoni and the neighbouring Ndoki led to the arrival of the Internal Security Task Force in the region. Amnesty International believes that the ethnic clashes were orchestrated by the military who used them as a pretext for moving a large force into the area. The result of this operation, say the Ogoni, has been more than 1800 deaths and the destruction of many Ogoni villages.

In a further attempt to neutralise MOSOP, Ken Saro-Wiwa was arrested in May 1994 and is now on trial for allegedly inciting the murder of four moderate Ogoni leaders. He maintains his innocence. Amnesty consider him a prisoner of conscience and links his detention directly to his campaign against Shell. The British pressure group Shell Out claims that he has been refused medical treatment,

despite having suffered two heart attacks and has reported that several prosecution witnesses have dropped out of the trial, 'One alleging that he was paid by Shell and the military to testify against Saro-Wiwa.'

Shell has demonstrated its willingness and ability to intervene in local politics despite its stated policy to the contrary

Shell Out believes that the violent repression of Ogoni protests and the detention of Ken Saro-Wiwa was not just the standard response of the Nigerian paramilitary police and army but the result of collusion between Shell and the Nigerian authorities in defence of their joint interests. As evidence of such collusion, Shell Out points to a memo leaked from the Nigerian High Commission in London recording a meeting in march



'Shell Out' protesters give their opinion of Shell's activities in the Niger Delta by unfurling a huge banner from the flagpoles outside Shell's Annual General Meeting at the Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre, London in June.

collusion between Shell and the Nigerian authorities in defence of their joint interests. As evidence of such collusion, Shell Out points to a memo leaked from the Nigerian High Commission in London recording a meeting in March between the Nigerian High Commissioner, four senior Shell officials and representatives of the Nigerian army and police. The meeting discussed the publicity about Saro-Wiwa's detention put out by the Body Shop chain.

Confronted by a peaceful demonstration of 10,000 Ogoni, the troops opened fire killing one man and injuring many more.

Shell reported that it had been 'Inundated with hundreds of letters of protest and abuse regarding their operations in Nigeria' from pressure groups, individuals and even Shell

shareholders. The memo records Shell and the Nigerian officials formulating a joint strategy for dealing with the bad publicity resulting from pressure group campaigns and media coverage of the Ogoni situation.

Though much of the evidence of Shell's collusion in military operations is anecdotal or disputed, it is misleading for Shell to argue that it is not a major player in the political and economic affairs of a country where its business accounts for such a large proportion of public revenue. Shell has demonstrated its willingness and ability to intervene in local politics despite its stated policy to the contrary and has even reported the fact in a public briefing called 'The Ogoni Issue.' 'Though our policy is to avoid any involvement in politics,' it states, 'We believe we have a right and responsibility to make its views known on matters affecting the company, its employees and the communities with which we work.'

Whether funding for the violent military suppression

of the Ogoni comes directly from Shell or from the taxes and royalties which are largely generated by oil extraction, it is clear that Shell and the government are highly interdependent.

The Ogoni have seen their traditional way of life swept away despite the huge amounts of revenue generated from their oil

For this reason, and while Shell publicly voices its 'concern about the actions of both sides in the dispute' by which it refers to MOSOP and the government, not itself, it cannot wholly distance itself from the actions of a government which came to power through the violence of a military coup and according to Amnesty maintains its rule by the violent suppression of any opposition. Shell is aware of these activities and

claims to deplore them, yet states that its 'most effective contribution to Nigeria is through the taxes and royalties we pay.'

The situation in Britain and in other oil-consuming countries is very different from that in Nigeria. When Shell proposed a pipeline from Cheshire to Scotland, it prepared 17 detailed surveys known as Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) and diverted the route of the pipe where it considered the impact to be excessive. Once the pipe was buried, the land was restored to its former state and Shell trumpeted its achievement in a television advertisement. The customers were reassured: Shell cared.

When Shell laid a pipeline in Nigeria in April 1993, its contractors were escorted by troops. Confronted by a peaceful demonstration of 10,000 Ogoni, the troops opened fire killing one man and injuring many more. There were no EIAs or consultations, just brute force and indifference. Thus, Shell is able to maintain an environmentally concerned image here simply because it

profits so greatly from its cheaper, less responsibly operations like those in the Ogoni region.

Though the Ogoni face problems other than Shell's activities, oil production has been the major agent of change in the country and where this business has not been carried out responsibly, it has escalated existing problems as well as caused its own. The Ogoni have seen their traditional way of life swept away and despite the huge amounts of revenue generated from their oil and the assistance of Shell's community programmes, they have not achieved anything like a reasonable standard of living or development. In 1990, a BP engineer remarked of Oloibiri, a town in the same state as the Ogoni region, 'I have explored for oil in Venezuela, I have explored for oil in Kuwait, I have never seen an oil-rich town as completely impoverished as Oloibiri.' Clearly, little of the oil money has trickled down to ordinary people.

While the Ogoni's own campaign for justice has effectively been subdued by force for the present, their cause has been taken up by campaigners in Britain. Shell's activities in Africa have led to vociferous protests here on its own

doorstep. Shell Out launched its campaign by blockading Shell's annual general meeting in London on 17th May. They were not alone. Several other pressure groups were also present including the Transport and General Workers Union who complained that Shell ignored workers' rights and wildlife groups protesting against Shell's British operations.

MORE ARMS TO NIGERIA

Despite an arms embargo on Nigeria, more than 30 consignments of military equipment has been delivered to the regime since sanctions were imposed in 1993.

Opposition MPs and human rights campaigners are calling for a tightening of the embargo after learning that British military hardware worth at least £9million has been sold to the dictatorship.

The government claims the hardware is described as 'non-lethal' and that it is exempt from the European Union embargo. Who knows what the government's definition of non-lethal is - probably along the lines that a gun is non-lethal as long as you don't pull the trigger.

The London protests also coincided with the occupation of the Brent Spar, the disused Shell oil rig in the North Sea. Shell's spectacular decision not to sink the Spar after the wave of protest across Europe, gave Ogoni supporters fresh hope that the awareness of Shell's double-standards could be spread to the Niger Delta.

There is undoubtedly growing

evidence that Shell's activities worldwide are causing increasing concern. Greenpeace calls Shell's business in Ogoniland 'A microcosm of what we are doing to the entire earth, just less visibly.' Certainly, there is little to stop multinational companies acting as they choose in poor, unstable regions where they are able to profit from the need for export

earnings and their lack of regulations.

Where such companies are not conducting a principled business, local populations are often in a poor position to complain or take effective action and when they do, it often leads to situations like that in the Ogoni region. Yet, the very strength of the multinationals is also their weakness: though they can

produce with ease in the third world, they have to sell their products first. It is here that they are most vulnerable to pressure. Campaigns and product boycotts are increasingly being taken up in the consuming countries of Europe and North America as more people start making connections between the devastation of communities and the environment in the third world and the products in their own homes.

The growing awareness of the situation in Ogoni may have come too late for Ken Saro-Wiwa. In a recent letter smuggled out of the military hospital where he was being held, he wrote: 'It seems like I have been taken to military hospital to die... For two nights I have not slept a wink, I am being intimidated, harassed and dehumanised, even though I am supposed to be receiving medical attention... I am like Ogoni - battered, bruised, brutalised, bloodied and almost buried.' Despite pressure from consumers and shareholders for Shell to intervene in Saro-Wiwa's behalf, it has declined to do so. Though Shell says that it would, 'Wish Mr Saro-Wiwa to be correctly treated and have access to proper legal and healthcare facilities,' it will take more than sentiment to save Ken Saro-Wiwa and the rest of the Ogoni people.

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Baffled by the Scott Enquiry? James McIvor gets to the bottom of Britain's arms trade and reveals what horrors may lie ahead...

Don't fall asleep just yet. This is just one example of how politics is nothing to do democracy. It has been called the biggest inquiry into abuse of political power this country has seen. The Scott Inquiry was set up in the wake of the collapsed

information that would save the Matrix Churchill defendants from jail.

Hoping to buy time, Major granted Sir Richard Scott extremely open terms of reference and unprecedented powers to subpoena documents and hear evidence in public. However, Scott's unconcealed impatience with Whitehall's culture of closed government and the obstruction and evasion of even the most 'distinguished' witnesses, soon dashed all hopes of an establishment whitewash. Instead we have been permitted a glimpse into the workings of the British secret state, reminiscent of the Iran-Contra hearings in Washington.

When Iraq attacked Iran in September 1980 and initiated an horrific and pointless eight-year border war in which over a million people died, the Foreign Office pledge that British companies would not be allowed to sell 'lethal equipment' to either side. In fact, like their American and

guidelines stating that 'we should not in future approve orders for any defence equipment which in our view would significantly enhance the

We have been permitted a glimpse into the workings of the British secret state, reminiscent of the Iran-Contra hearings in Washington

capability of either side to prolong or exacerbate the conflict.' Nevertheless, Alan Clark, Minister for Trade from 1986 to 1989, admitted that he had 'regarded the guidelines as being so imprecise and so obviously drafted with the object of flexibility in either direction....as to make them fair game. His attitude was shared by the MoD Working Group, dominated by the notoriously 'gung-ho' Defence Export Sales organisation, charged with granting export licences on the basis of the guidelines. Applications were referred up to an Inter-Departmental Committee

and a market to be won. Through generous export credit arrangements, trade rose from £2.9 billion to £31.5 billion, despite the fact that Hussein had now begun using chemical weaponry against his own citizens. In February of that year, he gassed 5,000 Kurdish civilians in a single air raid. The Iran-Iraq ceasefire in August offered the prospect of a lucrative 'post-war reconstruction' but Foreign secretary Geoffrey Howe worried that, 'It could look very cynical if, so soon after expressing outrage about the treatment of Kurds, we adopt a more flexible approach to arms sales.' So, when Clark (DTI), Lord Trefgarne (MoD) and William Waldegrave (FO) loosened the guidelines further in December, Parliament and public were repeatedly assured that policy had not changed. Meanwhile, new military equipment flooded into one of the world's most dangerous flashpoints - radar systems from Marconi and Plessey, local assembly communications kits from Racal,

wink' to machine tool manufacturers in advice on how to 'couch' export licence applications. In a phrase that sheds light on many dark, 'deniable' corners of the affair, Clark later confessed, 'I had to indulge in a fiction, and invite them to participate in a fiction.'

One in ten manufacturing jobs in Britain is now defence related, making the economy more reliant on arms production than any other country in Europe

When Customs wouldn't be deterred, government lawyers prepared Public Interest Immunity Certificates denying the defence access to internal documents which proved their innocence. These were signed by seven ministers, among them Peter Lilley, Malcolm Rifkind and Kenneth Clarke on the advice of Attorney General, Sir Nicholas Lyell. In fact, the only 'intelligence source'

John Pilger has called, 'The hidden legacy of the Thatcher era.' While Britain's manufacturing sector was abandoned to market forces, the arms industry has been cosseted at home and promoted abroad. Thatcher's obsession led her all over the globe personally negotiating contracts on its behalf, including the massive 'Al-Yamamah' deal with Saudi Arabia, reputed to be worth around £30 billion in oil. Almost half of all research and development funding is allocated to 'defence'. One in ten manufacturing jobs in Britain are now defence related, making the economy more reliant on arms production than any other in Europe. We cater for 20% of the world market, placing us second only to the US. Weapons exports have increased fourfold since 1979. About 80% of this went to the developing world, mostly Asia and the Middle East. Our regular customers include such 'friendly' regimes as Malaysia, who

GUNS, LIES AND SOUNDBITES

Matrix Churchill trial in November 1992. Executives of the Coventry machine tool company were cleared of breaking the embargo on arms export to Iraq during the 1980s when evidence emerged showing that the government had prior knowledge of the trade.

Prime Minister John Major was engulfed in his greatest political crisis to date. It appeared that ministers and officials at the Foreign Office, Ministry of Defence and Department of Trade and Industry had colluded in the illegal supply of military equipment to Saddam Hussein right up to and even after his invasion of Kuwait in August 1990.

Moreover, it now seemed that they had tried to cover up the affair by suppressing

Saudi allies, they viewed the Ayatollah's radical Islam as the prime threat to 'stability' in the Middle East and secretly supported Iraq despite the brutally repressive character of the Ba'athist regime. Bush and the US National Security establishment saw Hussein as 'The West's policeman in the region' on account of his anti-communist stance. Thatcher was also eager to 'exploit Iraq's promising market for arms' and the ban was privately interpreted 'as flexibly as possible.' A weapons complex built by the MoD's own arms sales company, International Military Services, was defined as 'non-lethal' while a blind eye was turned to intelligence reports warning that 'NBC' (nuclear, biological and chemical) equipment supplied to Jordan was ending up in Iraq. One ex-minister told the Inquiry that 'something like ten times as much defence equipment had been exported to Iraq than to Iran since the outbreak of the war.'

In 1984, in an effort to reinforce its public stance of strict neutrality, the Foreign Office instituted tighter

comprising the MoD and DTI who thought arms should be sold to anyone who could pay for them and the FO, concerned with 'presentational' difficulties. The roles and agendas of the intelligence services remain shrouded in official secrecy. In closed evidence to Scott, officers of MI6, GCHQ and the Defence Intelligence staff admitted they had

This was less 'cock-up' or 'conspiracy' than 'cocked-up conspiracy'

been proactive in maintaining 'grey market' supply lines to preserve the flow of information about Iraqi procurement activities - an 'absurd paradox' exhibiting 'total circularity' according to Clark. Ministers complained that intelligence reports detailing Hussein's use of British 'dual-use' machine tools to build up to his own arms industry had never reached them.

In 1988 Iraq was emerging as the dominant superpower in the region and was known in Whitehall as 'The Big Prize' - an ally to be nurtured

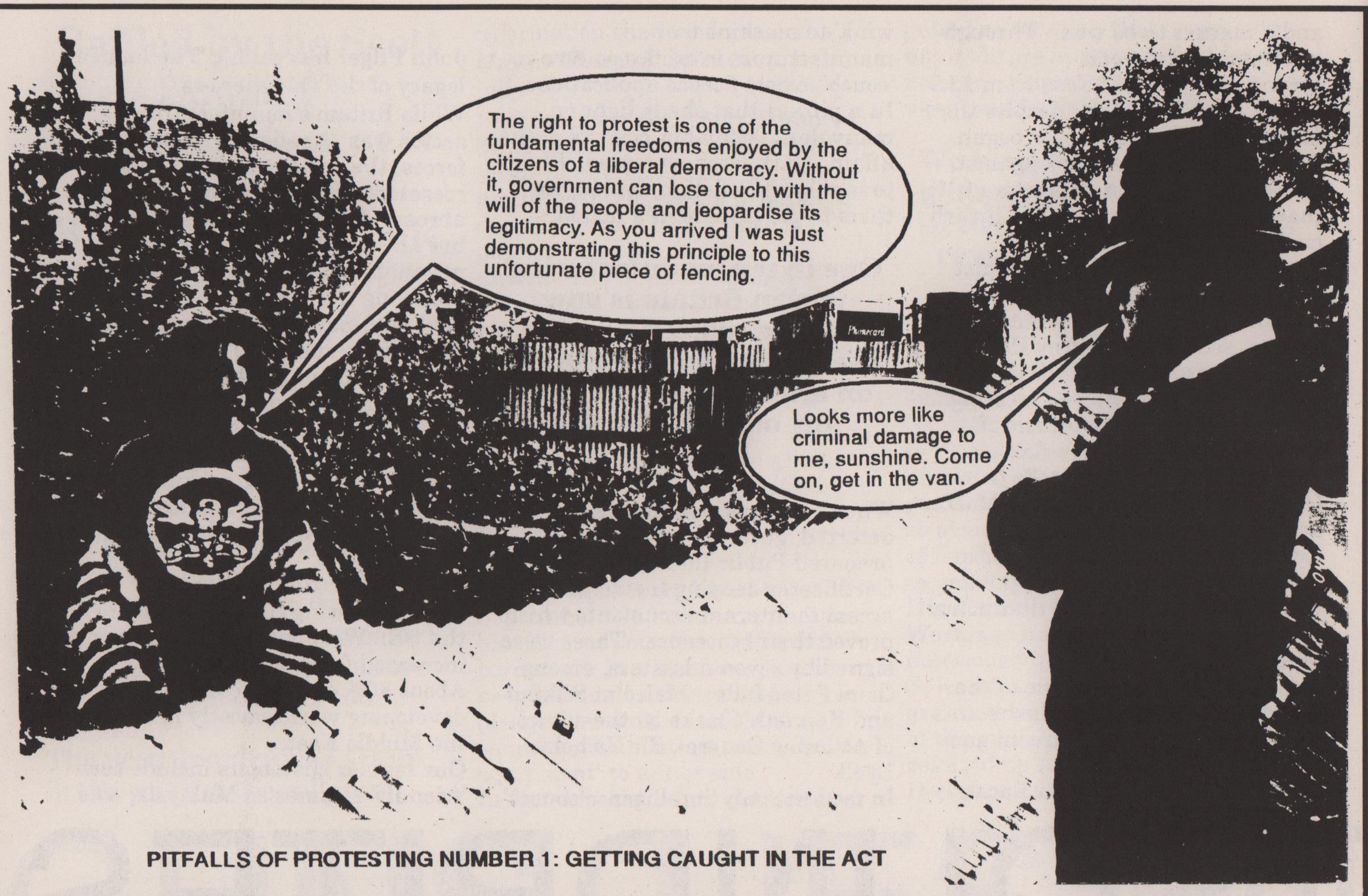
and of course, artillery lathes from Matrix Churchill. The scandal was set in motion, however, when parts for a 'supergun' were seized from Sheffield Forgemasters and Walter Somers in April 1990 by HM Customs, who operate as an independent investigation authority. They were forced to drop their prosecution after a backbench Tory MP warned he would take evidence of official involvement to court. He told Scott: 'I was seriously concerned for these people. To my knowledge they had done nothing wrong at all, and they had given every cooperation and every assistance and people were just asking their hands and letting them go to jail. This is Britain.....' Customs officers, reportedly furious at having been 'stabbed in the back' by the government (whose sanctions they were trying to enforce) determined to secure convictions in the Matrix Churchill case. However, this trial held even more scope for government embarrassment, amid stories that Alan Clark had given a 'nod and

at risk of exposure was the company's own managing director, whom MI6 had recruited in 1988 and 'dumped' once he was arrested in 1991. The bubble burst when these 'gagging orders' were overruled by the trial judge and Clark lost interest in maintaining the facade of innocence. Scott concluded his hearings last July. It revealed damning criticism, dishonesty, buck-passing and contempt for democratic accountability, not to mention grave interferences in a criminal trial. Particularly in the firing line were Lyell, Waldegrave and Kenneth Clarke, although Thatcher and Major remain well insulated. It must be remembered, however, that it was only a curious twist of history (less 'cock-up' or 'conspiracy' than 'cocked-up conspiracy') that placed British boys at the wrong end of British gun-barrels and brought the entire business to light. Malpractices isolated by Scott can be fully understood only against the background of increasing interpenetration between government and the arms business and the 'militarised economy' that

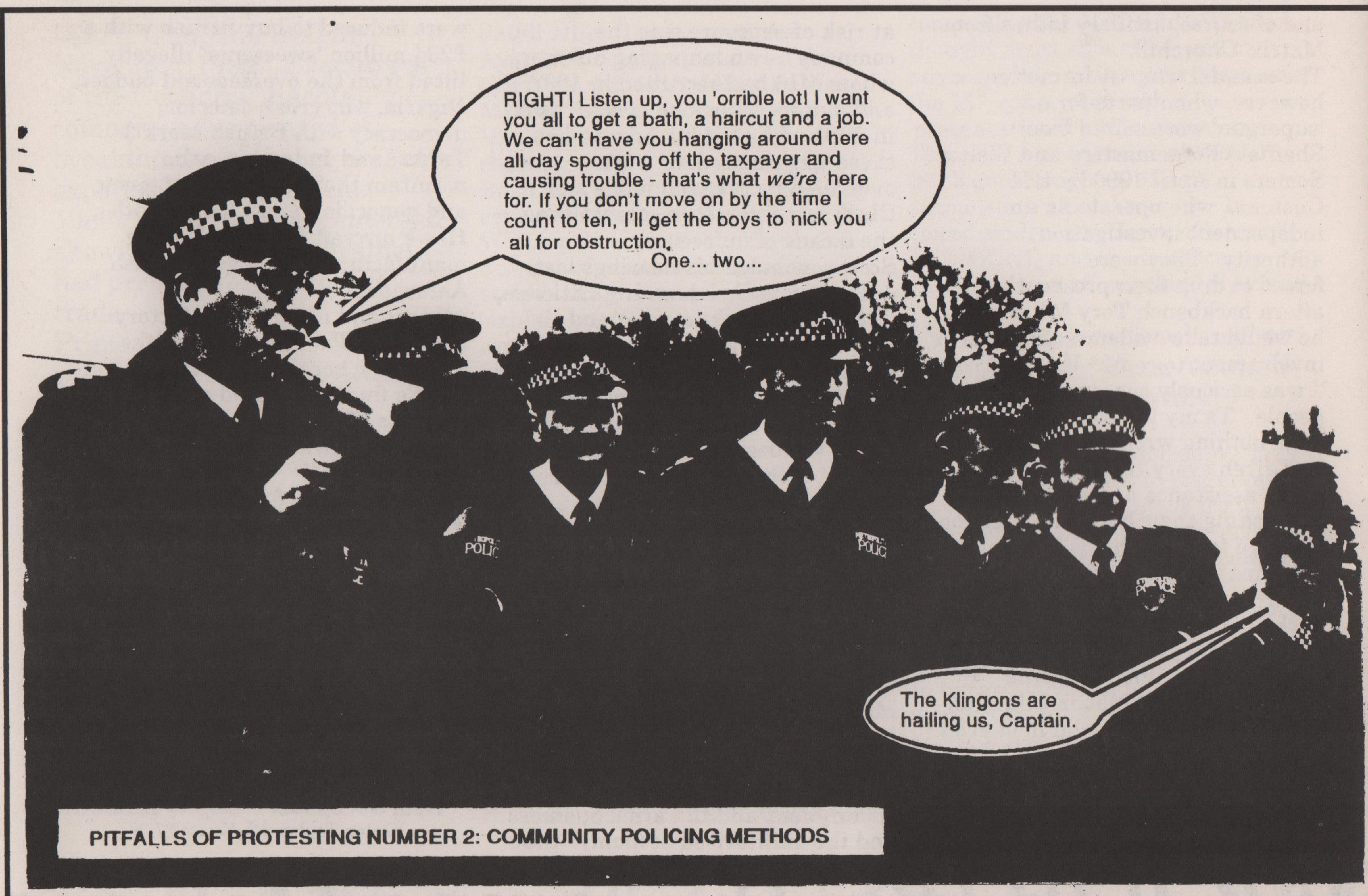
were induced to buy British with a £234 million 'sweetener' illegally lifted from the overseas aid budget: Nigeria, who crush calls for democracy with British Mark 3 Tanks; and Indonesia, who maintain their campaign of terror and genocide in east Timor with Hawk aircraft from our leading manufacturing company, British Aerospace. All this and more from a factory near you. The 'workshop of the world' has become its armoury. Scott's findings should come as no surprise 35 years after President Eisenhower warned America and the world: 'In the councils of government, we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist.'

For more info:
Campaign Against the Arms Trade 11
Goodwin St, London N4 3HQ (0171) 281-0297
Not The Scott Report: A Private Eye Special
available from CATT £1.50 +p+p
Truth Is A Difficult Concept by Richard
Norton-Taylor, 4th Estate £7.99

FEEDBACK



PITFALLS OF PROTESTING NUMBER 1: GETTING CAUGHT IN THE ACT



PITFALLS OF PROTESTING NUMBER 2: COMMUNITY POLICING METHODS

HERESY?

Dear Miss Pod
 I'm of the generation that fucked up the planet but as an ordained priest, I feel a responsibility to do what I can to make things better. I worked for many years as a TV producer/director and became involved in the events of Stoney Cross in 1986. This totally changed my view of the benevolent nature of the establishment. I've since been in touch with friends who were part of the 'old' New Tribe before the movement became discredited by proto-anarchists, chaotics and the brew-crew. I moved to France as a refugee from Thatcher. I firmly believed that the 'tribe' had been smashed but lo, it has reemerged in several guises. Good!

Welcome your commitment to NVDA as I see one of the greatest problems facing the eco-movement to be the activities of such dangerous fringe groups as Class War. The establishment is to be beaten, it will not be with stones and bottles - as we all found out at Stonehenge in 1988. The Police will simply be better equipped and will be supported by the worried voters of 'middle England' rooted to their fireside chairs. I will remember a conversation with one of the Stonehenge Campaign's organisers a few years ago. We were discussing our basic right to have access to the Stones. But what if anarchist groups start a riot and provide the excuse for the police to use unreasonable force?

My friend was of the view that we did not have the right to intervene but I felt that the eco-movement will ultimately have to consider policing itself. Heresy? Perhaps. This was done under certain circumstances in the past when hard drug dealers were 'persuaded' to leave sites. Class War may well be funded by the Tory Party for all I know, it's certainly one of the Tories most effective weapons! Blessed Be!
 The Rev. Anthony Kemp, Courgeac, S-W France.

MESSAGE TO THE NO M11 LINK CAMPAIGN

(via Pod)
 The whole nation owes you a debt of gratitude. You all have succeeded where committees and mere slogans have failed. We salute you. I had the privilege of meeting some of you at the M11 Mass Trespass last year. For my own part, I must try to learn how your direct action can be mobilized to ensure decent health, housing and education policies. With all good wishes for your future work.
 Ron Faulkner, Herts.

HOPEFULLY

(Found on the back of an envelope)
 A time will come soon
 maybe this moment hence
 When dull madness is usurped
 By outrageous common sense.

ALL'S IN THE RIVER

Dear Miss Pod
 A point concerning the Criminal Injustice Act. The disadvantages of the Anti-Poll Tax campaign was that it had no direct political (personal/spiritual) 'channel' through which energies could flow once the Poll Tax (and Mrs Thatcher) had gone. The CJA has more potential for a real groundswell of people/community movement to grow into, through and beyond - across the socio-economic, cultural and ethnic 'spectrum'. All's in the river and the river is all flow - energy, contact, effect, energy, contact, effect... Well anything's possible (probably).... Peace is love is just.
 Bruce MacKenzie, London.

A SLAP ON THE WRIST

Dear Miss Pod
 In the intro to the last issue, you say we have some formidable weapons. I agree but please don't exclude those of us that do not come into the 'youth' category. I am in my 40s with two grown-up children. There are many of us who oppose the way things are going too. Many of my generation are the parents of the 'young' and many of us have been on the same 'path' since the late 60s and early 70s. It was *me* who motivated my children and others to march against the Bill before it became law and it is *me* who was on the phone tree for the M11 campaign. Age is in our heads (and maybe looks!) but we should be all together and not divided - otherwise all is lost. There are many, many young people who can't or won't take on board what they could be doing to keep what freedom there is left. Many are too caught up in the media hype of designer clothes, clubs and drugs. If only we can get *them* motivated to look further and be aware!! So, please don't think it's only youth that has the energy or interest to give support and time to protest.
 Yours sincerely
 Sue Peplow, Kent.

SPOT ON?

Dear Pod
 I'm sure you are aware that many types of people who are seen as 'outsiders' are being subjected to increasing victimisation at the moment. But I wondered if you knew what a shocking deal trainspotters are getting. So far both Euston and King's Cross stations have banned trainspotters from using their platforms (although you can still get onto platforms 8 and 16 without the station guards noticing as long as it's before 8am and after 7pm on Monday and Sundays.) Rumours are also flying about that once the railways are privatized it will be the end of the line for 'spotting' as we know it.

I am writing to Pod because I and a friend have started a direct-action campaign called S.P.O.T. (Stop Picking On Trainspotters) and we desperately need more members. Recently, we had a sit-in at Euston and superglued our anoraks to Platform 9. Our only problem was that there were only two of us and it wasn't long before we were ejected. (The police told we could have been arrested under the CJA if there had been more of us.) However when I went back a few days later to peruse the platform, to my surprise, I found pieces of our anoraks were still glued defiantly to the ground!
 Yours sticking to the S.P.O.T!
 Adrian, Surrey.

WHO'S WHO:

DIRECT ACTION NETWORKS AND DISORGANISATIONS

FREEDOM NETWORK

Alliance of approx 80 groups opposing the CJA. London office information point and referral for general enquiries. Produces events list of actions, parties and festies plus info-line giving up-to-the minute info. Motto of London office: Freedom Network Girls Wear No Knickers.

For your nearest group call (0171) 738-6721.

Info-line (0171) 501-9253. For events list send A4 see to: Freedom Network, The Old Dolehouse, 372 Coldharbour Lane, London SW9. E-mail: Freedomnet@gn.apc.org

ADVANCE PARTY

Network of sound systems and party/festie organisers. London office acts as advice and networking centre. Also involved in promoting 'responsible partying' and awareness of legal rights and procedure. Has worked closely with Liberty. Up for mass action against Babylon, on all fronts. CJA? No Way!

Advance Party: (0181) 450-6929.

UNITED SYSTEMS

Spiral Tribe-based network of sound systems. Part of International Free Party Network. Gives legal advice and access to legal representation. All together: you've got to fight for your right...United Systems:

(0181) 959-7525 (0181) 889-5214 (0171) 652-4602.

E-mail: clubs@sunshyne.demon.co.uk

c/o 19 Thirleby Road, Burnt Oak, Middlesex, HA8 0HF.

ROAD ALERT!

Information network for NVDA protests against road building. Produce excellent weekly news updates and irregular 16-page magazine. Also publish 'The Complete Anti-Road Protester' - 70+ pages of practical inspiration. Veterans of Twyford Down. Two jailed for breaking high court injunction. PO Box 5544, Newbury RG14 5FB. (01635) 521770. E-mail: roadalert@gn.apc.org

EARTH FIRST!

Network of over 40 autonomous direct action eco-campaigners linked by the motto: 'No Compromise In Defence Of Mother Earth.' Has newsletter on actions all over UK. Plus Corporate Watch which gives advice on how to access info on companies. Linked with Toxic Alert!.

Earth First! Action Update available with donation from: EFAU, c/o Dead Trees EF1, Box 25, 82 Colston Street, Bristol, BS1 5BB.

Toxic Alert!: PO Pox 29, Ellesmere Port, South Wirral, L66 3TX. (01978) 820819 or (0151) 339-5473. E-mail: cats@gn.apc.org

Corporate Watch: Box CW, 111 Magdalen Road, Oxford, OX4 1RQ (01865) 245016.

CRITICAL MASS

Non-organisation - a monthly coincidence in which hundreds of cyclists converge at one point and take over the roads in towns and cities all over the country. Held every last Friday in the month. On yer bike.

PO Box 3738, London E8 2BA.

E-mail: mccx4pch@fs2.ee.umist.ac.uk

RECLAIM THE STREETS

Newly re-formed direct action network committed to ending the rule of the car. Key exponents of putting the fun back into politics. RTS's news update is well worth subscribing to - packed with info and forthcoming actions. Not linked to the Revolutionary Pedestrians Front.

RTS: 2 Crossway, London N16 8HX. Tel: (0171) 254-2290.

L.A.M.B.

Lloyds and Midland Boycott: to persuade both banks to cancel the crippling debts owed to them by third world countries and to promote ethical finance. Have invaded annual (or should that be anal) general meetings of both banks and other 'Major corporate scumbags.' (0161) 274-4665. c/o Grassroots MUSU, Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9PR. E-mail: mfejjp@mh1.mcc.ac.uk

S.Q.U.A.S.H.

Squatters Action For Secure Homes: Campaign to put across the many positive aspects of squatting and to highlight the real issue - 868,000 empty buildings in this country. The biggest culprit is the Ministry of Defence! SQUASH: 2 St. Paul's Road, London N1 2QN. (0171) 226-8938.

HUNT SABOTEURS ASSOCIATION

Network of groups committed to saving wildlife by obstructing hunts and shoots. Spend winter running about in driving wind and rain following hounds and putting them off the scent using harmless lemon spray and confusing horn calls. An extremely alternative way of keeping fit. PO Box 1, Nottingham, NG4 2JY. (0115) 959 0357. E-mail: hsa@gn.apc.org

DIRECT ACTION NETWORK

Network for disabled rights. Have organised series of actions: Outside Houses of Parliament over Disabled Rights Bill, at Harrods over wheelchair ban, at the Telethon to highlight their slogan: 'Rights Not Charity' and at actions all over the country. Empowerment on wheels. Tel: (0181) 889-1361

OUTRAGE

Lesbian and gay direct action group. Specialise in 'zapping' targets that are seen to be homophobic. Held numerous occupations/disruptions includes ones at the General Synod, the Crown Prosecution Service and Royal Mail. Also linked to the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, the most sinful nuns you're ever likely to meet. Tel: (0171) 439-2381.

LESBIAN AVENGERS

New direct action group to promote lesbian visibility and rights. Made a name for themselves when 'invaded' offices of the Sunday Times and handcuffed themselves to the filing cabinets after paper wrote a scathing article on lesbians.

(0181) 852-3956 PO Box 501, London SE21 7DS.

THE LAND IS OURS

See feature on 'Stocking, Dicks and Diggers.' Box E, 111 Magdalen Road, Oxford, OX4 1RQ.

DEFEND DIVERSITY DEFEND DISSENT

The Criminal Justice and Public Order Act is the most wide-ranging attack on human rights in the UK in recent years. Liberty believe it violates international human rights law, and rather than preventing crime, it is more likely to increase discrimination against already marginalised groups.

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