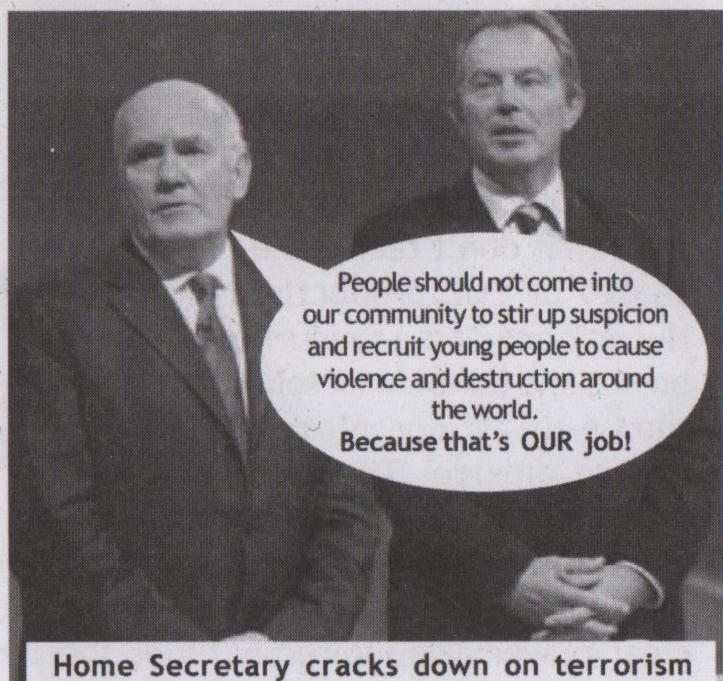
Council stages meeting for "bomber" Reid

In September, a well-known supporter of hundreds of bombing campaigns around the world was given an open platform by Waltham Forest Council at a meeting in Leyton. With Councillors present, "Doctor" John Reid," exhorted parents in Walthamstow to report children who don't support his campaign of terror, which he called a "war on terror".

Local people were shocked to hear Reid's views who is a member of an organisation known as the "Blair Government", an autocratic sect, run by a shady right-wing Christian fundamentalist, Tony Bliar. This organisation has been behind some of the most violent, indiscriminate attacks on innocent civilians around the world over the past 10 years. These attacks, well-documented by international human rights organisations, have included:

The mass bombing and occupation of Iraq. According to a report in October (1) the most recent bombing campaign, that led to the deaths of around 655,000 civilians many of whom are women and children. This is as many civilians claimed to be killed by Suddam Hussein in 25 years!

The bombings in Iraq used 2 million cluster bombs(2). These tiny bombs are deliberately designed to scatter indiscriminately over a wide area. Up to 25% don't detonate, where they sit like a land mine



until someone steps on them. 98% of casualties from these bombs are civilians, many are children who might pick up the bombs months or years later, thinking they are toys.

Join the army, travel the world, meet interesting people and bomb them

In September, Waltham Forest Council held a careers fare at the Town Hall. One of the "careers" on show for local people was to join the armed forces. As part of Walthamstow Anarchist Group's on-going campaign to give local people - especially young people - a wider amount of information about what joining the army means - we turned up and gave out copies of our leaflet "Thinking of joining up?"

We talked to people going into the fare, and also went inside and discussed with the two armed services stalls - the marines and the Navy - why they were there. A representative of the council tried to explain to us the reason for inviting them was "because they always turn up". And we must admit, their stalls did look the most exciting - lots of pictures that were

straight out of "shoot-em-up" video games. And strangely, nothing about the death and injuries being sustained in Iraq, the fact that youngsters of 16 years old had died in Iraq and that if you come back injured, the army and the Government, who have used and abused you, don't want to know.

The next stage of WAG's anti-militarist campaign will be a demonstration in the new year outside the Territorial Army barracks on Lea Bridge Road.

For copies of our anti-militarist leaflet, ring us on 07910 393 284 or drop us a line. It is mainly aimed at young people so if you want to take bulk copies for distribution in colleges or youth centres you are every welcome.

Get involved with THE UNDERDOG

The Underdog is Walthamstow's only TRULY 6 issues to you as soon as it comes out, like what you read, we always welcome this would be much appreciated. help: You may have local news, gossip, or The Underdog is produced by Walthamstow anything we have written. Or you may be who are sick of the system of capitalism able to help with distribution - perhaps in which allows the rich and the bosses to

promote working class resistance and selfindependent paper. We distribute on the just send us 6 first class stamps. We also organisation, and through this, aim to street, in community centres, pubs, cafes, pay for this ourselves so if you want to create a new society where people live together in freedom and as equals. We shops and by delivering door-to door. If you bung us a few quid towards the next issue, believe in direct action as a method by which we working class people can begin to take control of our communities and opinions, letters or comments about Anarchist Group. We are a group of people workplaces now and in doing so build a movement strong enough to challenge the your street. If you want us to post the next exploit and control the rest of us. We entire system.

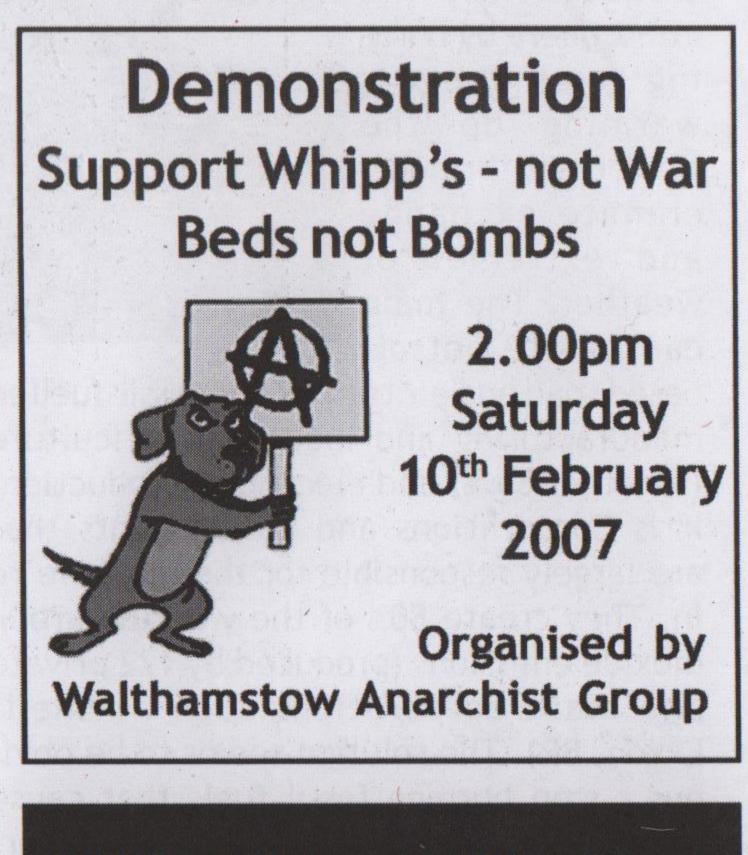
The widespread bombing by British and US forces with radioactive "dirty bombs" which have led to hundreds of serious birth defects and deaths of children and babies in Iraq.

Indoctrination

They also use the tactic of indoctrinating young, working class unemployed people in Britain - some as young as 16 - training them to kill and supplying them with weapons -and sending them abroad to kill or be killed. Over one hundred have already been sent to their deaths by Blair's Government.

The Blair Government appear to have come under pressure and influence from George Bush, leader of the US Government, recently polled as being a "greater danger to world peace" than North Korean leader, Kim Jong-il, or Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

(1) From Report by British Medical Journal, The Lancet, published in October, (2) From report by Handicap International, October 2006



Walthamstow Anarchist Group PO Box 49592 London E17 5WZ Tel: 07910 393 284 http://wag.libcom.org.uk



A 100-strong public meeting last month, held to discuss the use of the derelict Arcade Site at the top of Walthamstow market, voted almost unanimously in favour of the area being kept as public land and not sold off to private property developers.

In contrast, at a meeting at the Town Hall the following week, Councillors presided over the latest saga of what is perhaps their biggest embarrassing cock-up ever, and voted to flog the site off to the highest bidder. Obviously the temptation of making a fast buck (think of how much they can increase their own allowances next year!), was far more important than listening to the overwhelming wishes of the community.

People at the meeting, organised by Waltham Forest Civic Society and Cleveland Park Residents, in keeping with everyone else around the Borough, had clear, creative and useful ideas of their own which certainly didn't fit the "mould" being imposed by the council or property developers. Suggestions for use of the site included; turning the land into a park, play area, city farm, allotments, gym and community centre.

Caramel Quin, chairwoman of the Cleveland Park Residents Association close to the site, said: "I'm shocked We thought they were going to be sitting down next week and deciding options and ideas, not just selling it off to the highest bidder. We're outraged that they've spent millions and are now considering just selling it off, with virtually no control over what is built there. If the council thinks it can wash its hands of this public embarrassment then it is sorely mistaken."

Drawing a line Cllr Terry Wheeler, Councillor Leader gets the Borough's priorities right Cabinet member for "enterprise and investment" (whatever the hell that is) said that he wanted to "draw a line" under the Arcade. We bet he does! Politicians seem to have this habit of wanting to "draw a line" when their actions lead to complete disaster. It's a bit like Blair wanting to "draw a line" under Iraq. We prefer the term "sweeping under the carpet" or just "lying about the past."

The sad thing is that after such high hopes community. and promises when the arcade was demolished, four years later the only winners

Underdog wins monumental victory over Pizza Hut PLC

You may have read in the last issue of The Underdog that Pizza Hut on Walthamstow High Street had installed ultra violet lights in their toilets in case customers started injecting themselves with Heroin because the food was so bad.

Well, we can now reveal that Pizza Hut have bowed to our pressure, and taken out the Ultra violet lights. A few weeks after the last Underdog hit the streets, the Pizza Hut

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ARCADE FUTURE **COUNCIL IGNORES PUBLIC**

You see - we have to flogg off the arcade to the highest bidder. Otherwise, where will we get the money for my massive pay rise this year?

> are companies whose objectives are profit and exploitation - not investment in our

You can contact Cleveland Park Residents Association at clevelandpark.co.uk

area manager came down to the restaurant with a photocopy of the "offending" article in his hand, and announced that the lights had to go, due to bad publicity.

Who says you can't take on the junk-food multinational corporations and win? Today Pizza Hut, tommorow McDonalds. Whoop! A couple of anarchists* in next-door Borough Haringey have already done that. *ww.McSpotlight.org.uk

Council get jammed up with traffic

People in the streets between Hoe Street and Forest Road, and the surrounding area, have a traffic problem. Like in many urban areas up and down the country, rat-run through-traffic is increasing, its getting faster and noisier and on top of this, there's increasing road rage between drivers. Also, around nearby Winns and Greanleaf Schools the vicious cycle of the school-run leads to daily traffic jams and parking on school's zig-zag lines making it impossible for kids to cross the road into their school gates. Obviously, there's a desperate need for a serious and mature review of the traffic system, and an integrated plan that encourages walking, cycling, reduces our reliance on our cars, and prioritising the need of kids and older people, who statistically are the most likely to be killed on British roads.

So what's the response from Waltham Forest Councillors? They plan to make all the roads one-way! So now through-traffic can have complete freedom to belt down these residential roads even faster than ever, and they don't even have to worry about slowing down for someone coming the other way. O.K there's some speed bumps-but

when did they ever slow anyone down? In fact, speed bumps cause hard breaking, acceleration, more pollution, more frustration, and dangerous driving as drivers swerve to avoid them.

The Council have really not thought this through: their sole reason for their scheme is because when councillors came round at election time knocking on doors, some people told them they wanted "something doing about the traffic problem." Instead of politics distorting

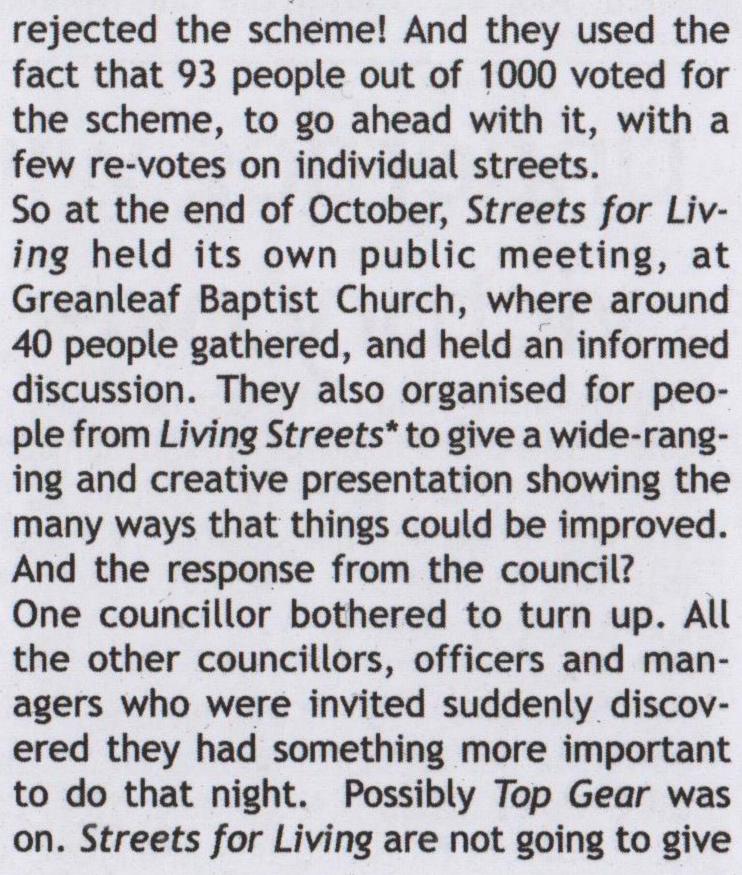
Making streets for Living

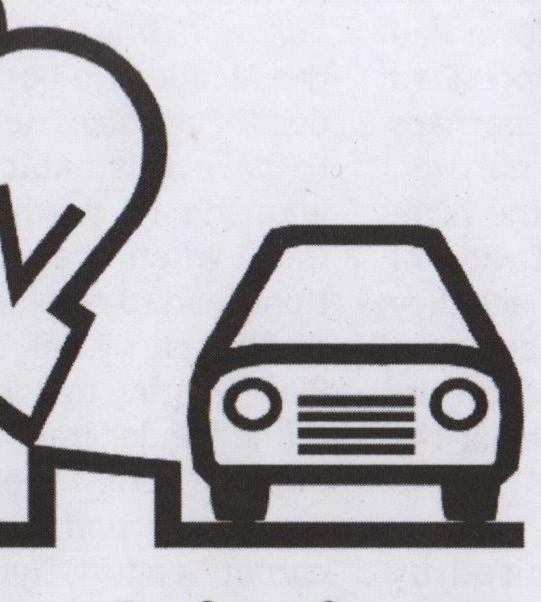
Public-spirited people in the area around Hoe Street and Forest Road have organised themselves. In August, a group met in Pearl Road, also concerned at the council turning up earlier in the month, with no warning, and chopping down most of their trees. They set up a group "Streets for Living", and organised a mass response to the council's "consultation" document proposing one-way streets.

Over 160 people replied to the council, through a Streets for Living petition saying that they rejected their proposal, and asking the council to carry out a proper consultation, and call a public meeting where everyone could have a say. So what does the Council do? Out of the 290 responses to the scheme, they chose to completely ignore the 160 responses that

this sort of issue, we need communitybased decision-making, which put the needs of the most vulnerable - kids and old people- at the forefront of any decisions. Here at Underdog Towers, we haven't any easy answers but we do know that of all anti social behaviour, getting run over is people's biggest concern.* Think about it. When you go anywhere - the shops, the doctors - what's the single most dangerous thing you have to look out for in terms of safety? And if you're old, or very young, it physically excludes you from doing things. There are plenty of positive schemes in cities in Britain and Europe where traffic has been reduced simply by re-designing roads to make them safer for pedestrians. It just needs a bit of enthusiasm and the will to do it.

Kids in working class areas are five more times likely to be knocked down and killed than those in posh areas. When most of us were young, we could play on the streets: Now the car has taken over - a disastrous trend promoted by successive Governments. And what for? Not so we can get around easier. But to serve the needs of the powerful car lobby - and Big Business





the oil companies, car manufacturers who support them - bleeding us all dry as we try and keep up with the latest models that we "must have." Because it's got a sexy advert. And meanwhile, global warming continues to threaten the planet, child obesity is higher than ever, kids stay indoors rather than play out... Need we go on?

DIY traffic calming

And finally, here's a simple practical idea. Lots of young people already just get out there anyway, playing footy, skateboarding and cycling, despite the daily risks they face from traffic, in fact, only doing what we did when we were kids -except we're leaving them at the mercy of something that adults have created. Haven't we got a responsibility to get our there with them, and make sure that any cars that come through aren't speeding? If more people got out on to the streets, then as more people talk to each other and spend more time out there, it could change the attitude we all have to our streets in a positive way. This could lead on to planting flowers, shrubs, tidying up any areas that

> the council have forgotten about, making them into places where people want to hang around. And this has the knock-on effect of reducing people's disproportionate fear of crime. It's not an earthshatteringly revolutionary idea, but it's an alternative to waiting years before politicians even start thinking about making our streets safe. And a step towards actually taking control of and responsibility for our own communities.

*British Crime Survey research

up on this, and are determined to force the Council to take this issue seriously. At the meeting, they resolved to carry on organising in the area, in order to create an environment where people feel safe to walk, and kids can play.

They state:

"There are lots of positive ideas about how we can make things better in our area. We want to develop a vision of how we can make our streets peaceful and safe -In fact, streets for living, not just for driving through."

Streets For Living can be contacted at streetsforliving@hotmail.co.uk or by phone on 07784 398376 or by post to 21 Pearl Road *For more information about Living Streets, see www.Livingstreets.co.uk

THE UNDERDOG'S Survival Guide - Bank Charges

Get free money from your bank!!

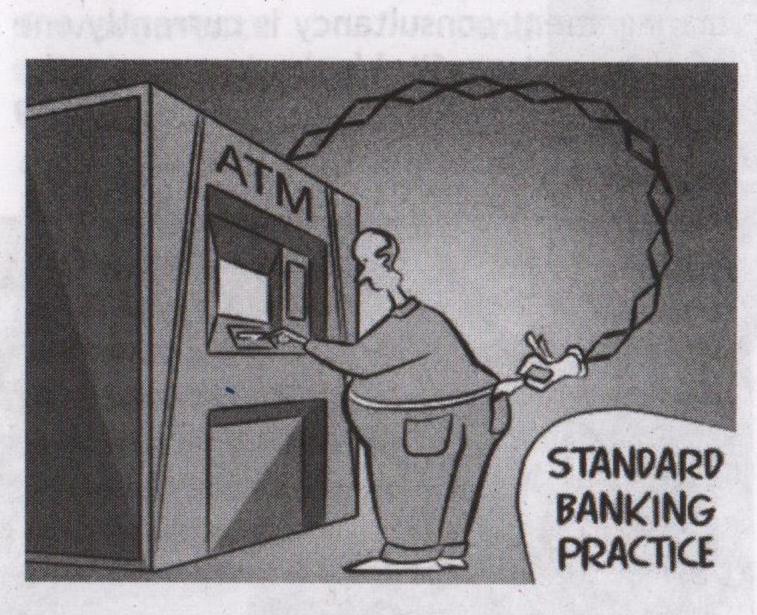
Well, that headline must have got your attention. So now you better read on. Financial institutions like to pretend that everything they provide is free: free personal current accounts, 0% interest on credit cards, free this, free that.... So how can they afford to give away its products for free? They catch us out for minor slip-ups like bouncing a cheque, and then hammering us into bankruptcy with excessive charges!

In 2003-2004, banks across the UK made £3 billion from charging customers for unauthorised overdrafts alone. Most of us just accept it as an inevitable part of big businesses being able to nick what they want off us. But the fact is you can force them -using the law- to give you your money back for every time they have fined you for stepping out of line! It won't exactly bring the wheels of capitalism crashing down around us, but it is a chance for us to get back a little bit of what's ours.

How you do it - Follow these 5 easy steps:

1. Work out what you are owed. Write to the bank and ask for a copy of your statements going back six years, including a cheque for £10. Then go through the statements and add up all of the times they have charged you for bounced cheques, unauthorised overdrafts etc. This is what they owe you.

2. Write and ask for the money back. (Again, see below for a standard copy of the letter you could send.) If the bank only offers a partial refund, refuse it and write back demanding payment in full, also stating that if you do not hear a definitive answer within 14 days you will take court action.



3. Make a claim There are two options for making a claim. One is to go to the local County Court in person - The one for this area is Bow County Court. Far simpler way is through the courts system's Money Claims online service. The Bank Action Group (see below) has two examples of claims that can be adapted to suit your needs on their website.

4. See what the bank does. The bank may now repay the money you have paid in charges. If it ignores your claim, you will

Olympics: London bankrupt and grassroots sport "sacrificed". Why are we not surprised?

Not a week goes past when you don't see headlines that announces how the cost of the Olympics has just gone up another £1 billion and that Londoners will be bled dry by massive council tax bills for the next couple of decades at least.

But who cares? Coca Cola and McDonalds (those paragons of healthy eating and living) will get their fix of two weeks in 2012 of world-wide, saturation advertising, as a back-drop to the games. And the displays of vanity by the politicians who claim responsibility for all of this, as they bask in this two weeks of world-wide attention, will be like nothing yet witnessed. Can you imagine the hateful and odious sight of a smug, self satisfied messianic, self-congratulatory Tony Blair popping out of retirement to come an lord it over us all in 2012 and tell us how fantastic he was in single-handedly bringing us the games?.

No, we agree: the image is too awful to ment would be taking money from other think about, and in itself a good reason for cancelling the Olympics right now.

Killing real sport

As we've commented before in previous Underdogs, a plan that for its centre-piece, needs to bulldoze and tarmac over Hackney marshes, where, for very little cost, literally hundreds of working class people play footy every week, doesn't seem to us to be exactly promoting sport. So it's not surprising that at a hearing, in October, Tim Lamb, Chief Executive of the Central Council for Physical Recreation, the voluntary body that brings together all sports organisations, gave a stark warning to MP's that "grassroots sport is going to be completely sacrificed." And at the same hearing, Mike O'Conner, the Lottery's Olympic "Distributor", admitted that the Govern-

win by default after 14 days. In an attempt to bluff, the bank may choose to acknowledge the claim, giving it another fortnight to enter a defence. If this deadline passes without any further action by the bank, you win by default and can demand your money back. If the bank decides to ratchet things up a step further it may enter a defence, which is often done at the last minute, in this case follow the next steps.

5. The bank's defence. You will receive a court "allocation questionnaire." Fill it in and send it back to the court within a week. This is the point where the bank will finally back down by not turning up for the court hearing, thus allowing you to win by default.

For more background information you can contact these two "Consumer" organisations:

The Bank Action Group at

www.bankchargeshell.co.uk or the

Consumer Action Group at

www.consumeractingoup.co.uk

who have excellent draft letters and advice for every stage of the process. If you haven't got access to the Internet, you can contact The Underdog directly and we'll send you the relevant stuff in the post-Some of us have had a go at this ourselves and believe it or not, have actually been successful in getting back our money!

Good luck.

lottery causes to cover the Olympics shortfall, and that this included community-based sports projects.

You heard it here first.

We don't often make claims like this, but we did predict all of this in Underdog 11, March 2005 "The Olympic Bid: Don't believe the hype". If you want to read more about the various campaigns against the worst effects of the Olympics in London, you can contact www.noLondon2012.org.

If you're a building worker, worried about conditions on one of the sites where pressure to work to time scales comes before heath and safety, you can contact us for advice, support and information and a copy of our free leaflet "Organising at work".

FEELING SICK YET? WHY WHIPPS IS GETTING CUT

It will come as no surprise that local health authorities like our own are cutting back millions in services from the NHS. As the NHS has historically always suffered from under-funding, these proposed savage cuts have sent shock waves through services. These cuts will not only threaten the lives and welfare of people who need the NHS, but also the jobs of those who work in it.

So where's the money gone?

Shocking!...But some of the reasons behind these cuts to crucial public services are even more outrageous. The cynical misuse of public funds and services by politicians simply demonstrates the widening gulf between the ruling elite and the rest of us: Those who can value a need for services, and those that see them only as a way to juggle figures and exploit financially. The fact is that the money meant for public services is in fact being syphoned off into the bank accounts of very large, wealthy companies in the field of "Management Consultancy". The scale of this government-facilitated "fraud" is truly staggering. A vast sum has been taken away from front line services and given away to these companies, that in many cases, have produced nothing but expensive failures that cost even more

money to get working, or scrapped altogether. Whilst £70 billion of public money has been given to management consultants, the actual costs of services provided has been £31 billion. The difference in these figures (£70 & £31 billion) has been pure profit for the companies involved. That's obviously why management consultancy is currently one of the most profitable businesses in the country, and with figures like these (£39 billion profit), it's easy to see how.



PFI rip-off

Whipp's under threat

This has all been possible under the guise of PFI (Private Finance Initiative), and PPP (Private-Public Partnership), which appears to allow very dodgy schemes to

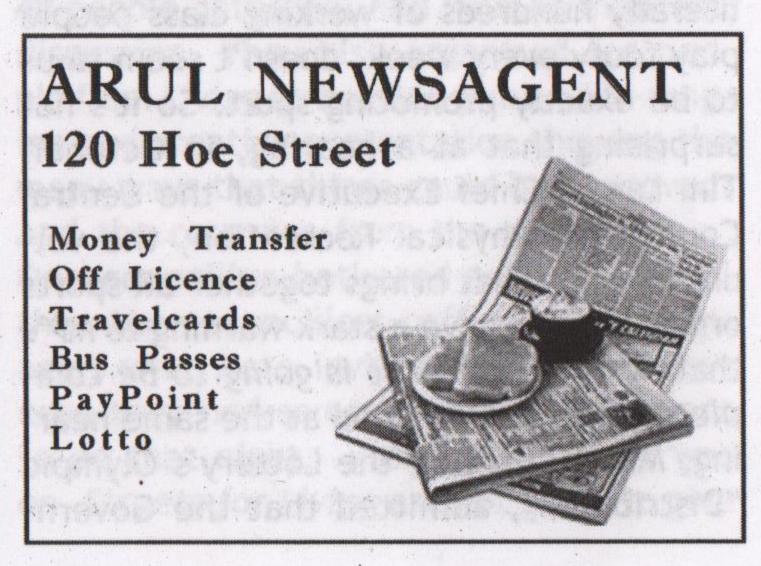
Whipp's Cross hospital could be downgraded and lose vital services for Waltham Forest. Already, cuts to administrative staff have resulted in "clinical risk" because Doctors could not access patient records. Claims are also rife that Whipp's Cross is being "wound down", as the Chief Executive of Whipp's Cross admitted plans to close the hospital had been considered.

The proposed cut backs are being considered due to a £27 million budget deficit, while the local Primary Care Trust is facing an estimated £15 million deficit.



has spent 10 years flogging everything from The situation facing elderly and vulnerable patients has been described as "very peerages to public services to the highest dangerous". Waltham Forest has one of bidder. Dismantling the NHS is just a part of this plan. Sooner or later, a united, the highest levels of population with failing health, so this will hit hard. organised, grassroots-based, working class movement needs to fight to back and take Both nationally and locally, various control of what is ours - our workplaces, our communities and our services- from campaigns have sprung up to fight these cuts. Locally, a number of meetings have the hands of politicians and bosses.

been held around the Borough where local politicians have promised everything they can. Unfortunately, it's going to take much more than this to get NHS managers to think again. The agenda for cuts goes right to the top: This corrupt Government

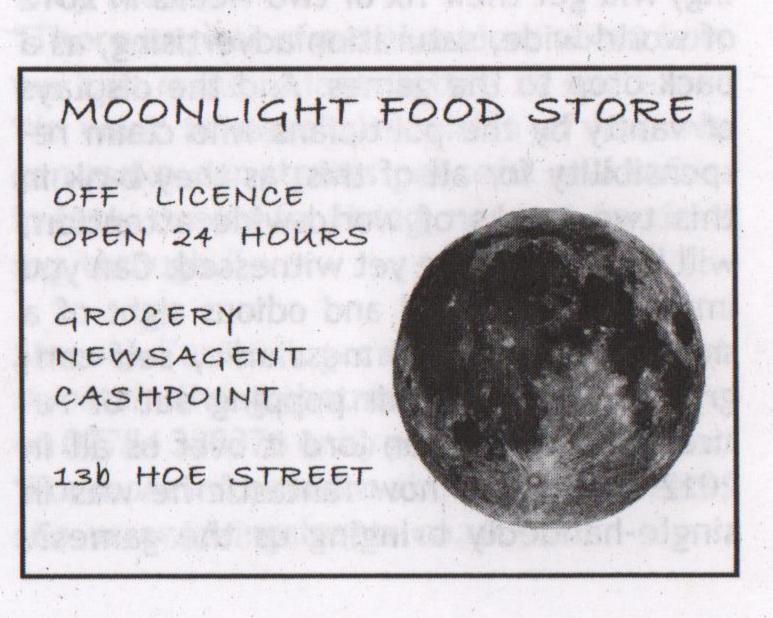


be given the go ahead with little real scrutiny from Whitehall. This is alarming because it often results in the frittering away of large amounts of public money to profit-driven companies. In the past, this has produced farcical and costly debacles like the launch of "Family Tax Credits". The computer software designed for this crashed soon after it was switched on and repeated systems failures resulted in hundreds of thousands of poor families becoming even poorer. A Parliamentary Ombudsman report said the system had caused 'considerable distress and hardship to many families'.

In total £30 billion (of the £70 billion grand total) has been taken out of frontline health services and patient care. How many hospitals, nurses, doctors, or resources could this money pay for?

So when you hear about cut-backs to public services, remember some of the very real reasons for wasting public money: Dishonest politicians, stupid civil servants and greedy consultants are the root of the problem. Will anyone be keeping score when people die as a result, will the management consultants and politicians be accountable? - Maybe that's up to us.

If you want to get involved in the local campaign to fight these cuts, contact: Keep Our NHS, Tony Philips, 0790 576 5705



Wot anarchists fink : ENVIRONMENT

These days hardly a day passes without a horror story on the news about so-called Global warming, or politicians falling over themselves to tell us to recycle and change our ways to saved the planet. When it comes to making tiny, common sense solutions towards making our communities more sustainable and less environmentally harmful though, politicians aren't so keen - see 'Council gets jammed up with traffic' in this issue.

The disastrous effects of climate change are already being felt worldwide - widespread death, homelessness and destruction caused by rising sea levels, increasing "freak weather" typhoons, storms and tornadoes causing floods and landslides and substantial droughts and desertification. As the recent Stern report concludes, if we don't begin to tackle global warming now, there'll be little left of this world for

our grandchildren. First, let's have a look at the cause of the problem. Carbon dioxide gas CO2 introduced into the atmosphere by burning fossil fuels is warming up the planet and bringing climate exchange and extremes of weather. The main causes are petrol-

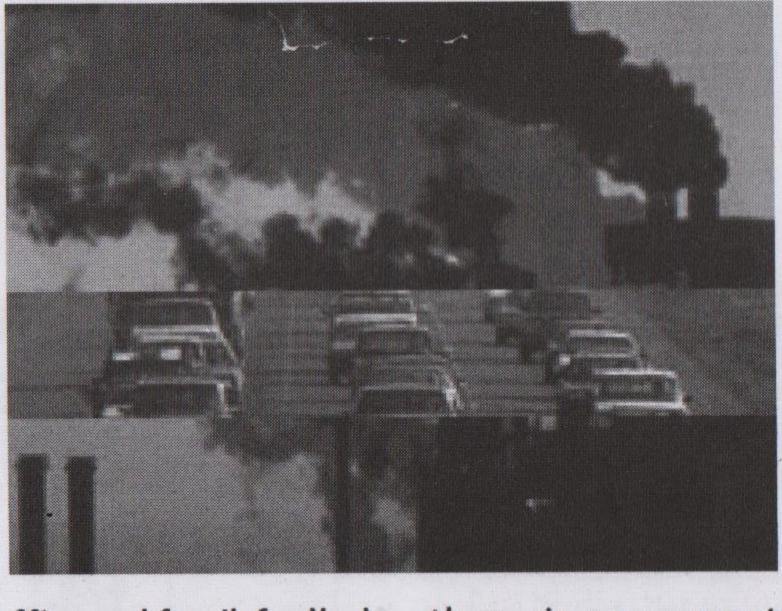
based road and air traffic, and fossil-fuelled manufacturing and industrial agriculture (together 85 %) and electricity production. It is Corporations and governments that are largely responsible for the mess we're in. They create 80% of the world's carbon dioxide emissions (produced by 122 private and state corporations such as Shell, Exxon, BP). The solution seems to be obvious - stop burning fossil fuels that cause the problem and start introducing alternative energy sources.

But governments and their business sponsors are not keen to change an economic system and way of life that is based on capitalist growth' and ever increasing consumption. Besides, most companies tend to use natural resources that should be in communal use (like water) in order to cut down their expenses and boost profit.

However much we try to ignore them, politicians seem to pop up everywhere, interfering, lying, scrounging high expenses, making dodgy deals with big business, and generally making a nuisance of themselves. And then there's the small issue of how much they make us pay them.

Waltham Forest Councillors' latest plan is

sources unless they can find a way to make money from them. The road and traffic lobby with cars and planes a massive cause of CO2 - is hugely powerful and wants to ensure alternatives are not developed. Governments and coroporations prefer technical fixes that don't tackle the real causes of CO2 production. Nuclear power is a favourite for bosses and politicians, sold with the lie that it doesn't produce carbon dioxide. The truth is, it produces deadly waste with no safe storage solution and is dangerous, as disasters like Windscale and Chernobyl show. Nuclear power also indirectly funds the production of nuclear weapons with massive

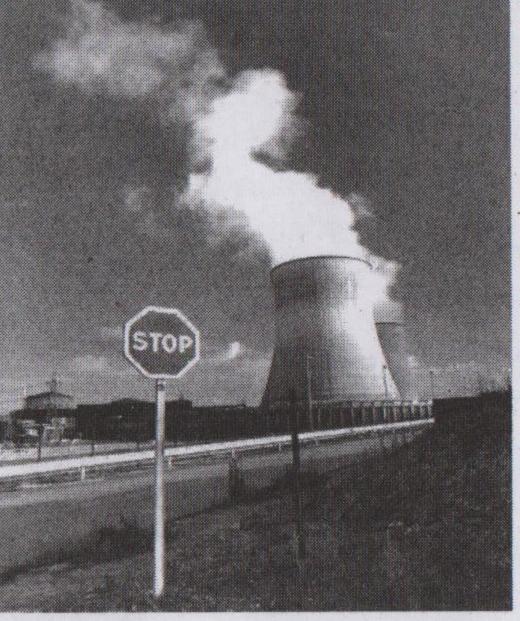


there is no guarantee that the revenue will be spent on alternatives. We think that a sensible way forward is to use renewable energy- solar, wind, biomass, tidal and hydro-electric, geothermal, etc, different resources deployed as appropriate to the locality. It should be small scale, generating electricity for local needs rather than the waste and centralization of the National Grid and genuinely community controlled. Human scale planning and free public transport would minimize the use of cars, instead of

Politicians - overpaid and generally overlooked

to help themselves to massive increases in allowances this year. For instance council leader Clyde Loakes plans to increase his "allowances" from £23,778 to £40,000 a year for a part-time job. This is on top of a basic allowance of £10,000 proposed for all councillors. Local MP's are up to the same game. For instance,

They have no interest in , renewable' re-



government subsidies (so we pay again!). 'Carbon trading' and burying CO2 under the seabed are similarly ostrichlike and avoid tackling CO2 production. Green taxes are likely to target "consumers" e.g. car drivers, rather than the big suppliers like oil companies and the crazy current situation of expensive privatised buses and trains that make a profit and force many people to rely on cars.

> What politicians and big companies want is obvious. They want us ordinary people to pay the expenses that are needed to tackle global warming through introducing all sorts of green taxes and changing our lifestyle by saying that everyone can

make a difference. Don't get us wrong we agree with the latter. As individuals we can do what we can minimize car and air travel, insulate our homes, minimize waste, maximize recycling. But ultimately this is a drop in the ocean when companies like Shell are free to carry on spewing out 80% of total carbon emissions because Governments are directly linked to them through bribes and secret deals.

We need to go further to question the whole twisted logic of capitalist growth that has chained us to work and consumption, producing increased quantities of goods while the quality of our lives deteriorates. We need oppose government plans to resurrect the Frankenstein monster of nuclear power, and defeat plans for yet more roads and new or bigger airports.

But the real impact comes when we stick together and say no to bosses and politicians, and organise to challenge the system that is the true cause of this mess.

Climate change is just one more big example of the way capitalism means short term profit for the few, and disaster for the rest of us. Only in this case, their short term gain is threatening all of us and the very planet we live on.

IT'S OUR WORLD, LET'S TAKE IT BACK!

This article was adapted from a special issue of Resistance, published by the Anarchist Federation: www.afed.org.uk

Harry Cohen, MP, gets £128,881 in addition to his basic annual salary of £59,686, a figure which leaves him as the eighth most expensive MP out of 63 in London. But the thing is, even if politicians worked for free, they still would still never be "value for money" because the fact is, WE JUST DON'T NEED 'EM!

