

A . I . N . NEWSLETTER

Issue Number 16

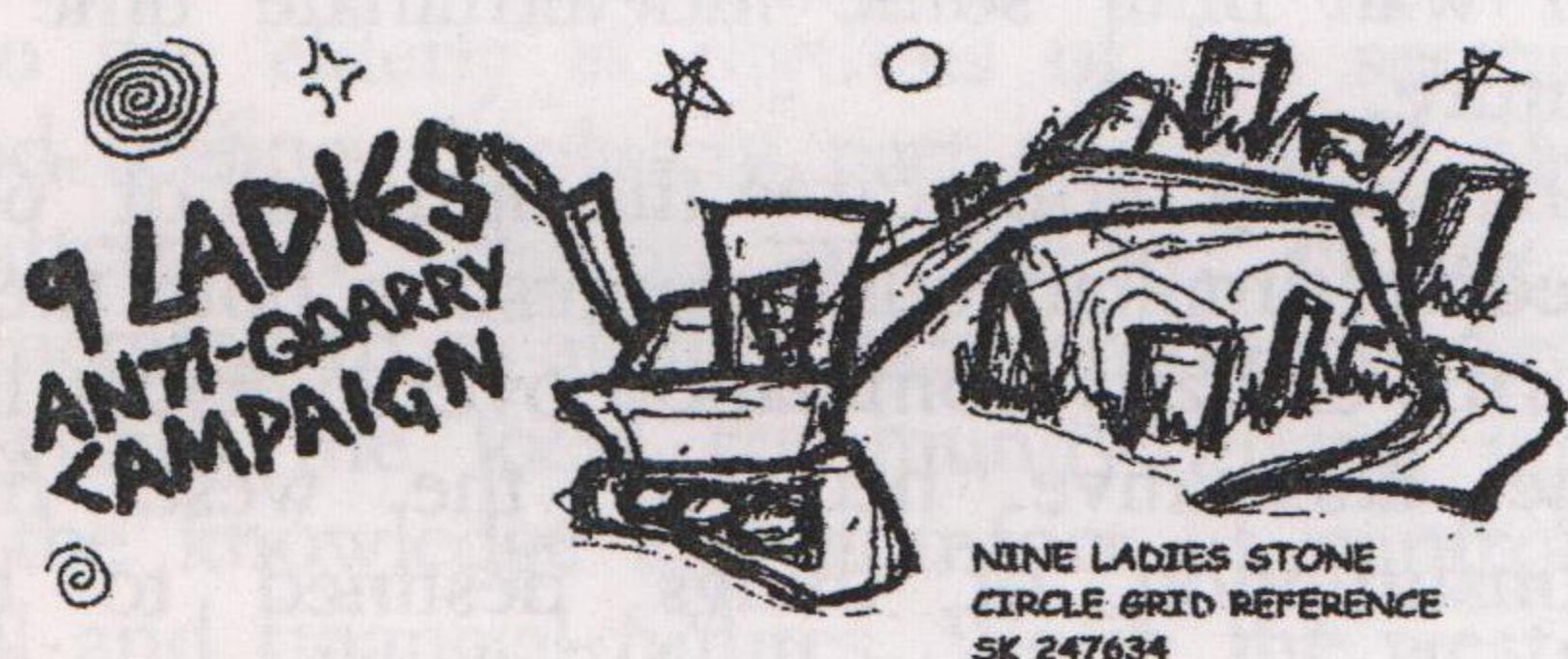
January 2002

Anarchist Information Network Newsletter Box EMAB 88 Abbey St. Derby DE22 3SQ ain@ziplip.com

Welcome!

WELCOME to the Winter edition. If you notice that there is a bit of a new look to it, that is because I hope to revive interest in the project. We need news of positive activity by Anarchists in their localities. Here in the East Midlands, some of us are still active, protesting in Nottingham on November 3rd with 500 other people opposed to the War in Afghanistan, working on our Allotments and gardens, promoting organic food via a local food co-op, working to develop alternatives to Corporate Capitalist economics by participating in our local LETS scheme. Locally a brave and hardy set of eco-protestors continue to defy Sandiccliffe Quarries at the nine ladies Circle on Stanton Moor, near Matlock. So whatever you are involved with, let us know. Send mail, articles etc to Box EMAB.

JPS



Stanton Moor under threat!

Yet again the Philistines have reared their ugly heads in pursuit of profit. This time Stancliffe Stone is the villain of the piece, casting its ardent leer onto the fair countenance of the woodland adjacent our Derbyshire 9 ladies stone circle. We will not sit by and let these morons ravish this magnificent environment.

A camp has been set up near the proposed site of industrial vandalism. At the moment (December 2001) about twenty hardy individuals inhabit the tents, tree-houses and benders. Morale is high. As is usually the case in these actions, spontaneous acts of simple altruism are very much in evidence but for all the activists' enthusiastic energy, they need more people to get involved.

So leave off the Prozac and booze, or whatever substance gets you through these long and gloomy winter months, and celebrate spring in sunny Derbyshire. She'll soon be active. Beech, birch buds all abursting, the gold of primroses smiling up at you, badgers and bats sharing our night - the blasts from the quarry getting nearer. Well, things can't be perfect!

For those of you who would join all this jollity it would be prudent to get in touch first with the camp: telephone 07984 793 128 or visit their Internet site at <http://www.nineladies.uklinux.net/>

Stanton Moor Hillside is a truly magnificent location. The quarry was excavated in the 19th century. Since that time nature has taken over with a vengeance. A riot of deciduous trees growing in the most unlikely places, from the depths of crevices, holes and shallow ledges and cliff faces. Huge gritstone moss covered wheels that never reached their destination, as flour mills converted to steel rollers. This site is rich in history and wildlife, situated as it is in the Peak District which is Britain's most visited park. As well as a Bronze Age burial site with four surviving stone circles and the Earl Grey Tower (built in the 19th century to commemorate the passing of the Reform Act), it is also a wildlife haven home to a herd of Norwegian Fallow Deer, riddled with badger sets and also a rare bats habitat. The proposed quarry to be worked by Stancliffe Stone Ltd would inevitably cause disruption on a scale that has never been experienced in this immediate vicinity before.

The inhabitants of the local village, with its narrow streets and roads, would suffer from the lorries that would travel to and from the devastated hillside. Consent for extraction of gritstone from the setting of The Nine Ladies and Stanton Moor was given in 1952, but consent is no longer appropriate with present Peak Park

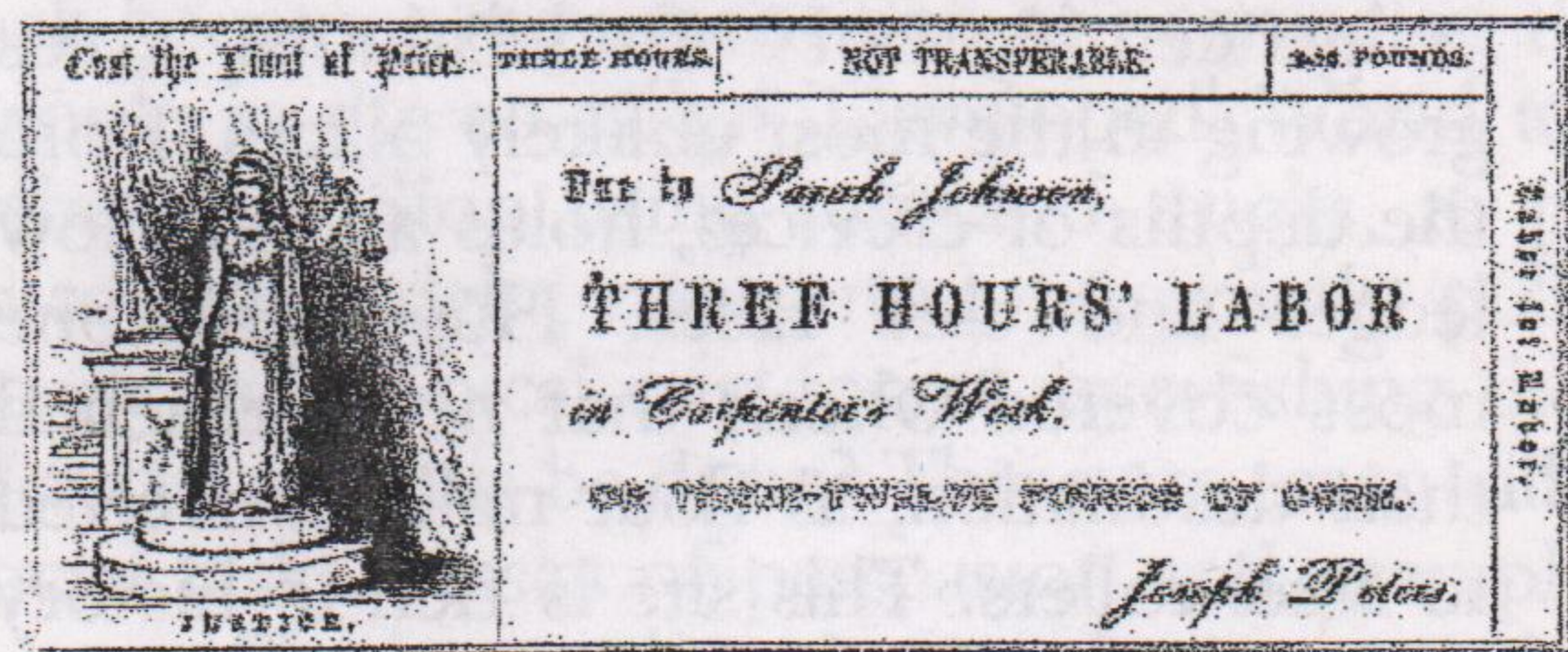
policies, especially in its relevance to tourism.

There is a threat to the local water supply and the dangers of quarrying on a geological land-slip. Heavy vehicle traffic, with associated noise and dust pollution, and the effect on tourism and wildlife are not to be underestimated.

If this quarry is blocked, jobs will not be lost because the two quarries are not operating and the surrounding area is mainly unfarmed. Some of this stone will be sold abroad because in some countries their environmental protection laws make it too awkward for them, so it's often cheaper to buy our rock than dig it up locally in their own country.

The National Grid reference is SK247634. From Nottingham and Derby catch the Transpeak, Nottingham to Manchester, stopping at Derby, or catch R61, both of which are run by Trent buses. The first one runs at 7.20am and then every two hours (9.20, 11.20, etc.) seven days a week, with slight variations on Sunday. A different bus company runs a service from Matlock, destination Wensley - Winstar-Bakewell. Get off at Stanton-in-Peak, the nearest village to Nine Ladies. This is bus number 172, coloured blue and white. When using Transpeak (or TP as it is labelled), get off at The Peacock Hotel. at Rowsley, turn left following signs for Stanton in Peak - it's up a 1 in 4 hill - and keep following this road until you reach a junction then take the first exit left (more like straight on) which is signposted Stanton Lees, carry on past the telephone box and on and on. The site entrance is on your right-hand side before you get to the barn - just shout.

Contact the camp at Nine Ladies Anti-Quarry Campaign, Bramble Dene, Stanton Lees, near Matlock, Derbyshire DE4 2LQ



BELPER LETS

WHAT IS LETS?

Local Exchange Trading is a brilliant way to exchange goods and services. Money isn't needed - services and goods are offered for sale in a LETS currency. In Belper we use 'Chevins'.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

LETS are voluntary groups, run and managed with co-operation of the members. When you join a system your offers and wants are listed in a directory. This is updated when needed and sent out to all members. It is up to members to contact others directly to discuss services or skills they need. A record is kept of all trading and you will be told of your balance from time to time.

CAN I TRADE WITHOUT ANY CHEVINS?

You don't have to earn before you can spend.. It doesn't matter if you go into debit - In fact we positively encourage it. You can start trading as soon as you join.

HOW DO I JOIN?

Send an 19p SAE to Belper LETS, 19 Windmill Avenue,

Belper, Derbys for details, and be informed of our next meeting. All are welcome! Invites to social events for enjoyment and trade.



Socially Useful Production

ALTHOUGH the simple idea of making things of social need and worth in the factories & workshops has been around as long as we have dreamt of liberation, it sadly remains buried beneath masses of other ideas like "the right to work" or "only one war, the class war". This is a great pity. Quite apart from the total stagnation of social progress towards a decentralised ecologically self managed group of communities, it also prevents the long overdue emergence of human beings enjoying their many faceted talents and skills. Many of us would have had first hand knowledge of the tremendous surge in energy and imagination being released when taking part in the old style strike situations. Books and pamphlets fill our shelves with the experiences of plant take-overs and occupations; with communist shop stewards acting as mullahs over morally infantile workers. The idea that the plant might *produce* during the occupation *things of social need and beauty* for the local community never occurred to the leadership. Their only concern was that the plant be in pristine condition when handing it back to the bosses at the end of the occupation. Dope smoking and partying on the assembly line were definitely not on the occupation agenda. We could only seek the continuation of wage slavery! Shaking off the chains that bound us would have to wait until some indeterminate time in the future.

Thankfully along came the uprisings of '68" with people simultaneously contesting both the Soviet forms of Party domination over everyday life, and the alternative here in the west: mindless consumption of things destined to become obsolete the minute you left the shops with them. But now thanks to the courage of students and workers all over the World we could once again debate and agitate for the liberation of everyday life. The slogan written on the walls of Paris "The Beach beneath the Pavement" revealed the potentiality for turning mundane everyday life into something quite extraordinary. Every day would be a holiday to be enjoyed not endured. Pressing matters about health such as care of the sick and elderly did not magically disappear, but would be part of an overall strategy within the redirecting of everyday life. Starting in the workplace, in the neighbourhood, at the health centre. Suddenly life resembled a multi-faceted mirror not fragmented into worker, shopper and lover but part of greater

whole seeking satisfaction in creative caring. Above all being part of a society based on the values of compassion, solidarity and everyone's self-worth. Competition and class based society vanished beneath an enthusiastic desire to completely re-shape our neighbourhoods and co-operate with other neighbourhoods until eventually we have in place a mosaic of ecologically self-managed communes working, loving and laughing.

Gandhi, in his struggle to replace the British occupation, designed a campaign around the notion of using hand looms to counter Western technology with its imposition of trading patterns and export led priorities. He perceptively predicted that western forms of mass production would degrade both the human and natural world and leave in its wake poverty where once there had been self-sufficient communities. Factory culture not only imposed a discipline quite alien to the rhythms of human intercourse but put unbearable stresses on the basic natural resources of a community. There was also the added threat that the technological basis of jobs in the factory could, at any time, be removed and placed in any country around the world. Corporate capitalism raises to new heights de-skilling technology designed to command and control. It causes depletion of natural resources and waste on a scale unseen in human communities throughout history. It's production techniques and goals all based upon enriching the owners and impoverishing the indigenous peoples where-ever they are in the world.

The hand loom by complete contrast was a simple technology with a simple message. That it could be constructed by local labour using local materials that it could be assembled in any village and be repaired by the villagers. It would support local production for local consumption. The basic raw materials could be grown around the village giving additional jobs to village members. The work, from seed planting to the actual sales of the finished product, would involve whole family groups inclusively engaging the very young through to the elderly in rhythms of life seemingly natural and feeling absolutely part and parcel of the overall pattern of creation and decay. Finally the income generated from all this local production would be kept within the local community giving village members the knowledge and comfort of controlling their social and financial futures. We in the west call this *sustainable living*.

This indigenous craft movement could be seen as an approximation of our own Arts & Crafts movement associated with William Morris. With its longing to return to pre-industrial times when local craft guilds protected finished goods and services. A turning back to a time when beauty and functionality were united; everyday objects both pleasing to the senses and of practical utility. A rhythm of life in tune with the seasons and the rising and falling of the sun. Craft work interrupted to help gather in the harvest. Public holidays celebrating the various stages of planting, growing and harvesting giving everyone an intimate knowledge of the changing seasons and the variety of foods you could expect to cook with.

The Amish Communities in America are still trying to live a self-sustaining and ethical life. The now famous raising of their barns involving the whole community, encapsulates the mutuality and solidarity of everyday life. Within their community they have most of the skills and knowledge necessary to conduct agricultural and food processing activities in a self-managed and ecological manner. With prairie barons going bust having switched to genetically engineered crops that no one wants to buy. The Amish Community has found a way to maintain family sized farms by growing organic food and selling it in the local farmer's markets. An excellent example of a community maintaining its core values and adapting to current practices of sustainable lifestyles. Not exactly Bookchin's lifestyle anarchos but, maybe practising what you actually preach in small [relative] face to face communities offers us all something of a signpost?

Mike Hamilton

Editor's note This article has been shortened.

MUSE

This is not a war of Democracy V Terror
that the world will be asked to believe.
It is about American missiles smashing into
Palestinian homes. US helicopters firing into a
Lebanese ambulance. Lebanese Militia
hacking-raping-murdering their way through
refugee camps

Rob Fisk 12.09.01

Flying through the open window
Into the beauty of a Manhattan Morning
Memories of childhood children & family
Given no time Given no warning
Then I awoke from the nightmare!
Alive in Stroud-not a Refugee or Palestinian!
Alive in Stroud-not dead in Kurdistan!
Alive in Stroud-not dead in some prison cell
Alive in Stroud-not dead in Afghanistan

Time to take stock. Time to reject Dollar -Wars!
Time to oppose state-terrorism & military yahoos!
Time to rediscover Tolstoy & Gandhi and Peace
Camps.
Time to support Peace and Freedom
Time to support Pacifism and Anarchism
Time to learn Ideals of Whiteway Colonists?
Time to learn Non-Violent Direct Action!
Time to Live in This MOMENT.NOW!
Time FOR DANCE & SONG & MUSIC!

Dennis Gould

Stroud 14.09.01

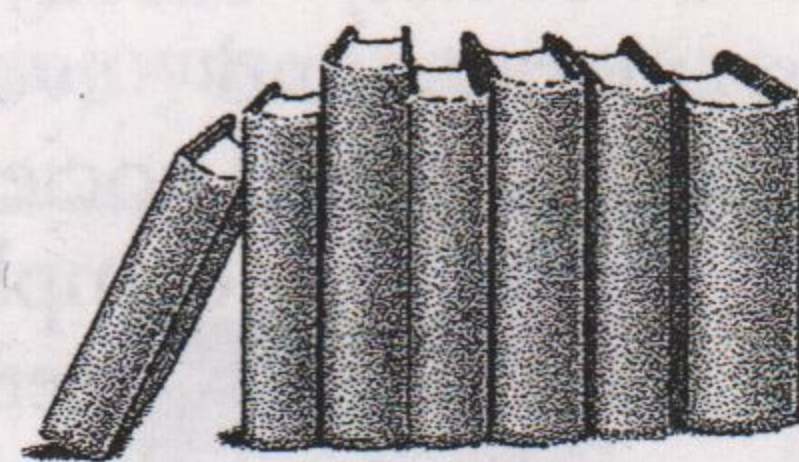
IN DEFENCE OF CLASSICAL ANARCHISM

The editorial in 'Green Anarchy' issue 6 (Summer 2001) declared classical anarchism no longer relevant. Classical anarchism is dismissed as anthropocentric, when it should be biocentric; that classical anarchism does not address the problems of overpopulation and the consumption of resources, or of biodiversity in the mass killing off of species. 'The anarchist pipe-dream utopia of a speculative, unholistic visionary future is of no relevance to our current struggle,' their editorial declares. Classical anarchists only see nature as a passive backdrop, and only had a minimal awareness of the environment, it is claimed. This planet can only sustain one tenth of its present population. 'Green Anarchy' does not see itself obliged to rescue the mass of people from the consequences of their own decisions.

Rightly, the editorial repudiates 'leftism' but although the linkage is not explicit, readers may come away with the mistaken impression that leftism and classical anarchism are connected. What I see in their editorial is an environmental apocalypticism, the belief that it is already too late, which necessarily pitches things downwards into the register of despair and pessimism.

As our experience of the December 31st 1999 'Millennium Bug' showed, nobody ever got rich betting on the end of the world (if you win your bet, you can't collect). Similarly, various cults have often foundered on that same reef, some with comic, others with tragic consequences. Two questions here - suppose the assumption that 'it is too late' is wrong? What if the assumption that today's population cannot be fed in a sustainable way is wrong? If so, then the task becomes the urgent one of persuading the majority of people in the so-called 'Developed' World to change their behaviour. Stop using cars and trucks, to put an end to third world debt, consumerism, growth, pollution, cutting down the tropical rain forest, overfishing the seas etc etc. How would this be done? These are essentially political and social tasks - tasks of persuasion and example. Along with more effective and widespread propaganda, ecologically aware people also have to demonstrate that alternative, sustainable, appropriate technology ways of living are possible.

Pessimism and despair are not persuasive. It is true that information about the environmental meltdown is needed to jolt Joe and Edna Public out of their complacency, but too far, and this will be counter-productive. Besides, events like the floods, droughts, serious storms, crop failures, food scares and satellite photographs of polar ice caps breaking up are all in their own way, persuasive. The problems are caused by the mass of people acting in the way they do, but the answer comes individual by individual, action by action, as one by one people change, and in turn convince each other to make different choices. We need to strengthen this process into a chain reaction. Unfortunately arrogant 'Ecologier that Thou' attitudes like 'We don't consider ourselves obliged to rescue the bulk of humanity from the impact of its own decisions' do not help. Where is the solidarity there? The people in the next street are still



AIN LENDING LIBRARY CLOSES DOWN

I am sorry to announce but due to an evident lack of interest, the Library project has been closed down, and the books sold off. Any funds raised have been used to help fund Total Liberty magazine. I was tired of having two boxes of books in my office which nobody borrowed, or which if they did they did not return!

our neighbours when their homes flood, we suffer too when mud slides swamp homes in Indonesia or Central America, and I even feel somehow responsible for the fact that people in North Korea are so hungry that they are eating grass, while grain rots in EEC storage hangars. Rather, if human life is to continue, then we need to start to show people near to us the consequences of their choices, build political movements to change things, and at the same time open up the practical possibility of real alternatives.

This is a serious political and social task. This is where classical anarchism comes in. As the G8 in Genoa and other places show, governments and multi-national corporations are unwilling to support anything but the status-quo. It is necessary for the people themselves to work round this. The initiative has to come from the grass-roots. Individuals, groups, campaigns and communities will be forced to take direct action. We will need non-hierarchical networks of information, skills exchanges, mutual aid and support. We have already made big inroads into this, but much more is needed. Where the protest movements have worked, and have been successful, it is because they have put into practice, within their own context, the principles of anarchism. So please don't write classical anarchism off.

Stephen Booth (Green Anarchist)

SEND news, articles, letters, rants, photos,
money to AIN Newsletter, Box EMAB, 88
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