

PEACE PRISONER SUPPORT continued

What hope for her when she next appears, probably in February, for again obstructing the highway at Mildenhall?

Better news is that Helen John was released from Durham on 29th November after serving a sentence for her protests at Menwith. But Kate Witham will be on trial in York Crown Court in February accused of causing £21,540 criminal damage at Menwith. She allegedly painted 'PEACE TRUTH JUSTICE FREEDOM' on one of the radomes. She did use red hammerite paint, but £21K seems rather an expensive way of wiping it off!

Cards, donations or any other form of support for these women can be sent to: **PEACE PRISONER SUPPORT, C/O 16 SHOLEBROKE AVE LEEDS LS7 3HB. PHONE 0113 262 9365. E-MAIL: cornerstone@gn.apc.org**

H.S.

IN BRIEF

The Number of people working excessive hours has grown significantly over the past decade, with one-in-five now working a fifty hour week according to a TUC report.

'Comrade of the Month' award for December goes to Michael Howard. On RADIO 4 on December 14 he declared 'There is no way you can pass a law that will prevent a crime from occurring'. Just what anarchists have been saying for the last hundred years!

Any readers living in the South, or who fancy a trip down that way, could check out the Libertarian Archaeology and History Network. They visit sites of archaeological and historical interest, with an emphasis on socializing. Contact Peter Neville on 0181-847-0203.

Dales Red Rambles

A Series of Free Guided Walks in the Yorkshire Dales for Anarchists, Greens, Socialists, and Libertarians.

All walks are on a Sunday unless otherwise stated. Bring walking boots, water-proofs, food and drink.

Feb 18th - Airedale

March 17th - Lower Wharfedale

April 21st - Bishopdale

May 19th - Airedale
For further details ring
01756 799002

YORKSHIRE ANARCHISTS c/o BOX EMAB, 88 ABBEY STREET, DERBY

SHEFFIELD ANARCHISTS - PO BOX 446, SHEFFIELD S1 1NY

LEEDS ANARCHIST GROUP - c/o 145-149 CARDIGAN ROAD, LEEDS LS6 1LJ

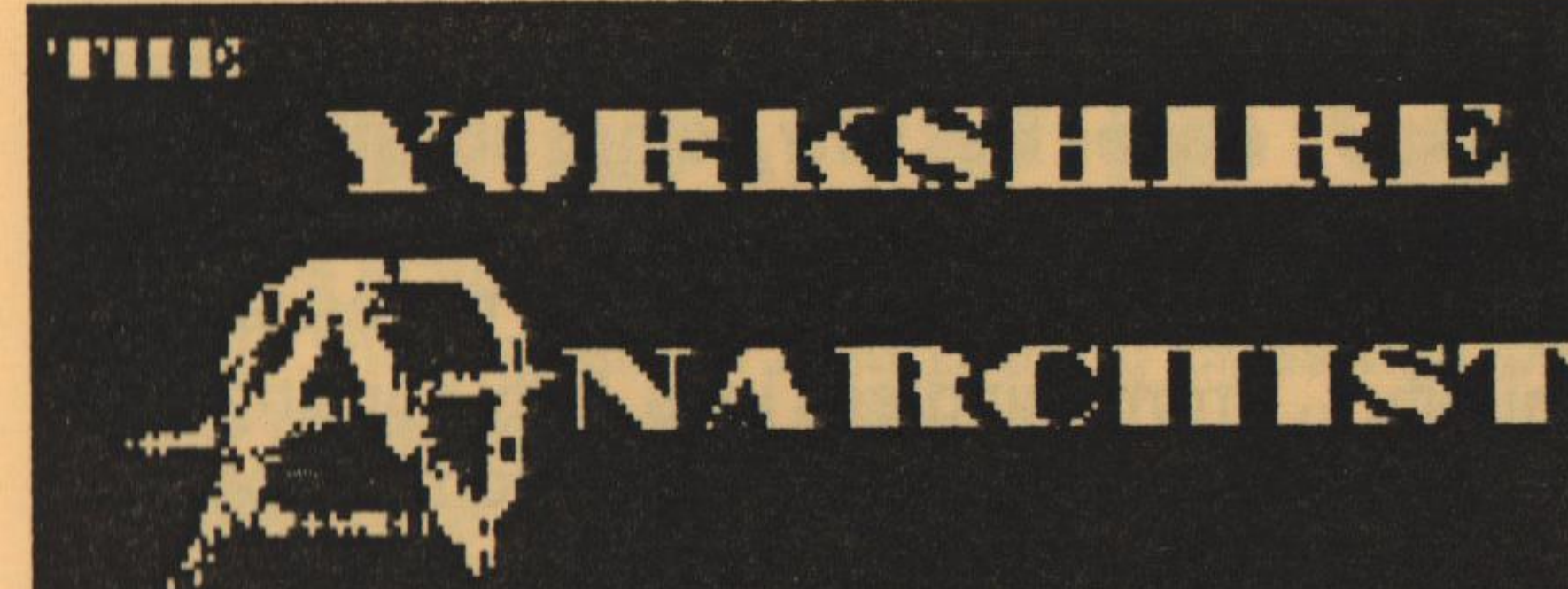
TYNESIDE ANARCHIST GROUP - PO BOX 1TA, NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE NE99 1TA

EAST MIDLANDS ANARCHISTS - BOX EMAB, 88 ABBEY STREET, DERBY

COUNTER INFORMATION - PO BOX HP171, LEEDS LS6 1XX

FLUX COLLECTIVE - BOX A, RAINBOW CENTRE, 180 MANSFIELD ROAD, NOTTINGHAM

NORTHERN ANARCHIST NETWORK - c/o PO BOX 446, SHEFFIELD S1 1NY



Issue 4

Winter 1996

Free/Donation

FORGET IT ALL...

Saturday 6 January 1996, and National Lottery fever reached new heights with an estimated 90% of the population spending £127.8m in an effort to win a share of the £42m prize. On top of this, a further £20 m was spent on "Instants" scratch-cards; £60m was spent on the Saturday alone.

The National Lottery has proved to be, without doubt, extremely popular. Millions of pounds have been raised for "good causes", Joe and Jean Public have the chance to become wealthy and Camelot, the company chosen to run the enterprise have been coining it in (around £7m on this weekend alone). The Government have hailed the whole thing as a great success and only a few dissenting voices - mainly from the Church been heard before being drowned by a chorus of "spoilsports".

In spite of this, there has been genuine concern about the social effects of this new national sport. It has been claimed that the lottery is turning some people into pathological gamblers addicted by the buzz, that the poor are playing beyond their means, and that many youngsters are becoming hooked with more than 60% of children between 10 and 15 having bought lottery tickets.

Let's face it, the Lottery has given the nation something besides the weather, Coronation St. and the Royal Family to fill those barren moments in the conversation; on the 31 bus, at work or waiting in the Co-op. To be truthful, this writer spent the best part of the Friday night before the big day discussing how to spend the loot. Despite the fact



INSIDE: THE LAND IS OURS, PEACE PRISONER NEWS, CJA INFO, REVIEWS AND COMMENT PLUS LOCAL EVENTS...

that neither myself nor my companion of the evening actually play the Lottery, by 11pm we'd renovated a section of canal, bought a new centre-half for the Wolves, set up a community centre, bought a farm to keep rare breeds and a potato bank and done countless other worthy things!

To be honest, I have no puritanical distaste for gambling. The fact that someone may enjoy a fantastic lifestyle through the luck of picking the right numbers is no more repugnant (and probably less so) than going to the right school, inheriting wealth or exploiting your workforce; in fact any number of other ways of 'getting on'. Somehow the whole thing has become something of a metaphor for a society that rewards and condemns in an equally arbitrary manner.

Yes, the National Lottery is nothing more than an extension of an afternoon at the bookies or a day at the Stock Exchange and it's become rather a leveller. At my local outlet, the 'Kwik-Savers' stand shoulder to rain-coated shoulder with the 'Marks and Spencers' all eager to find a better life whilst having a "bit of fun" and helping all the "good causes". My mistrust of the Lottery comes from something less tangible than a dislike for gambling and can be best summed-up by that wonderful slogan for the Lottery Scratch-cards; "Forget it all in an Instant..."

"Forget it all"; absolutely. For whilst there is the possibility, no matter how remote, that perhaps you may just be the lucky one, that just maybe you will

be able to take yourself away to a better life, why bother about changing the world into a better place for everyone? Individual wealth; the escape from mindless jobs, tatty housing, dangerous streets, boredom, repetition, rain and just about everything else that makes our lives miserable and so long as we hand over our pound coins to the woman at the terminal we can "forget it all". We're being sold a dream of a better life, not for humanity, but for our own selves. We're being soothed in our frustrations by the chance of escape. "Ah well, perhaps next week".

In summing-up, I can do little better than quote George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* where the main character, Winston Smith, goes in search of revolutionary potential amongst the proles:

The Lottery, with its weekly pay-out of enormous prizes, was the one public event to which the proles paid serious attention. It was probable that there were some millions of proles for whom the Lottery was the principle if not the only reason for remaining alive. It was their delight, their folly, their anodyne, their intellectual stimulant.

Whilst the people are wooed with the possibility of personal release from drudgery, no matter how unrealistic, what chance have we of real change?
Nick W.

Nineteen Eighty-Four is published by Penguin Books. ISBN 0 14 00. 0972 8

THE LAND IS OURS!

Land is in the news: who uses it, and how, who owns it and even who can walk on it. The traditional land owning class and perhaps even the City financiers who invest in it are beginning to feel the pressure for change. Some exaggeration here perhaps, but things are beginning to happen. Not least when some 600 people set off from London on 23 April this year, St. George's Day, to carry out a surprise symbolic occupation of land near St. George's Hill in Surrey. This was where, in 1649, Gerrard Winstanley and the Diggers occupied and cultivated Common Land for a year, calling for an end to enclosure for access to the land for all the people.

This year the occupation, involving a disused airfield, some 30 acres of set-aside land and a copse, was carried out in a blaze of media publicity with journalists scribbling every word and cameras recording every action. They 'created' a village and a garden, performed a play, distributed

Nottingham, Manchester, Birmingham and Oxford.

This land reform movement is a loose coalition of people and organisations, decentralised, non-hierarchical and non-membership, which campaigns against the exclusive nature of the



information in neighbouring towns and at the end of the week, left the land in better condition than they found it.

Since then, the media has lost interest but the occupations have continued with the Ninth Earl of Macclesfield finding his closely guarded Shirburn Hill in Oxfordshire, some 4,000 acres of beautiful chalk downland with views over the Thames Valley, invaded for a 30 hour picnic. There have also been symbolic occupations in

private ownership of the land. It's initial programme calls for:

1. A universal right of access to the countryside;
2. Restitution of common spaces in towns;
3. Planning permission for agricultural change;
4. planning presumption in favour of low impact development so that settlers can live on their own land.

continued on page 6

WHAT IS TO BE DONE ABOUT CONSUMERISM?

Why should anarchists be concerned with consumerism as an issue in itself? Surely consumerism is just the ideology of individual accumulation - to aspire to the 'good life' - that was created in the post world war two economic boom, and needs no more analysis than that it's part of the same big bad system? Well maybe, but... and there are an awful lot of "buts".

Historically, it has been very easy for anarchists to posit a view of 'the revolution' serving to distribute all resources equally, using the highest standard of living experienced in a particular country or geographical area as some kind of benchmark. More often than not, technology is seen as being a useful means of achieving this, through automated factories and so on. This view, shared by many socialists, suggests that come the glorious day, everyone will share out the spoils and have a nice cosy right-on lifestyle, with decent TV, hi-fi, fridge-freezer, washing machine, car etc. and more importantly, that everyone in the world can too.

Sorry, they can't! Apart from the fairytale illusion of this nineteenth century European insurrectionary model, this belief is based on profoundly naive ecological assumptions. Since the early 1970's, there have been a number of studies which have questioned the sustainability of the lifestyles enjoyed by all but the very poorest people in the rich countries of the world. Computer projections of the drain on raw materials, land usage that primarily supports the western lifestyle, the ability of the Earth to soak up pollution and so forth, suggests that ecological and social catastrophe on a global scale are only a matter of

time unless major changes are made. Such claims used to be called alarmist, but particularly since the Earth Summit in Rio in 1992, theorists and commentators are waking up to the uncomfortable fact that to save the planet, the rich countries will have to reduce their levels of consumption. No one wants to say this because it amounts to political suicide. As well as it being hard to decide 'how much is enough?', it is also difficult in a relative sense because many of the countries who historically the West has plundered are now developing consumer 'demands', and it seems hypocritical of us to point the finger. But, given that **something** should be done, what **should** we do? Although it's very easy to blame big companies who pollute and exploit people, somebody buys the stuff they make, and it's not the residents of Cardboard City!

The matter of individuals taking responsibility for what is done in the name of consumerism appear sanctimonious and potentially divisive (nobody wants a reversal of keeping up with the Jones's!), but it makes perfect sense both in terms of anarchist analysis and anarchist principles. In the former instance, we can see a huge variety of injustices built into

manufacturing goods which most of the time we don't need and certainly don't make us happy: cash crop economics and poverty in the Third World plundering raw materials from sensitive eco-systems, huge amounts of energy involved in the transportation of products, crap jobs and poor wages at every stage, sexist advertising, competitiveness at over-kill times like Christmas... and so on. Increasingly, Western economies are

becoming leisure and lifestyle based, and the traditional anarchist focus on production related issues requires revision. It matters how we live our lives outside work (for those who have or want it) as much as how we do our work. It follows then, that according to the principle of living consistently in terms of one's beliefs and one's lifestyle (e.g. no sexist or racist behaviour, wanton accumulation of profits etc) that 'living more lightly on the Earth' is something we can do to reduce exploitation and suffering in the world as we struggle to make it a better place.

Capitalism, according to Marx, was capable of revolutionising the productive and technological processes of a society, thus making a communistic society all the feasible. Whilst there is a lesson to be drawn from this, it is important not to be seduced by the 'technological fix' view of change. We have all to some degree absorbed the philosophy of 'more is better', and regardless of the political or economic system we live in or hope to live in, it needs addressing.

The traditional anarchist focus on production related issues requires revision

Changing consumerism means changing lifestyles including work patterns. Interestingly, many more sustainable lifestyles advocated by organisations such as the World Watch Institute tend to involve local labour intensive self-sufficiency and co-operation anyway, such as sharing consumer durables, growing your own food and the wholesale recycling of all materials. Here is a prime example of the potential for develop-

ment within anarchist theory and practice, and since these days many anarchists do see the importance of placing their concerns in a global and ecological context, it is vital that our praxis evolves accordingly.

Useful reading matter... Alan Durning's 'How much is Enough?' Earthscan London 1992 is an excellent readable view of the problems. Also the booklet 'Never Enough?' is a comprehensive primer for these issues. Price £1.50 from 'Enough' c/o One World Centre, 6 Mount St, Manchester M2 5NS.

JON

YORKSHIRE WATER...

Yorkshire Water have failed to find any oil to pour on their troubles since we last went to print. At the end of last year they increased the rumpus over water shortages by announcing a 50% rise in profits to £100m. Shareholders, many of whom we feel sure read YA, can expect increases in payouts of 10%. The company has spent millions taking water by tanker to the worst affected areas. Capitalism, efficient?

THE TIME IS NOT YET RIPE BUT IT IS TOO

DANGEROUS TO WAIT...

Traps to some are not necessarily traps to others. The ways out of them are not always obvious. One thing I guarantee; once free of them, you begin a long and difficult journey.

You must prepare to enter territory full of surprise and the unexpected. Marked by boundaries made messy through contact with official and unofficial worlds, the way is infinitely long. You do not know if rest will be possible on the way, nor indeed, where it will be possible. Be prepared for unexpectedness. Take all the necessities for the journey with you. Afterwards it will be too late, for there will be no time to turn back and rectify mistakes.

Weigh up your strengths. Are they sufficient for the journey? How soon can you start? Every minute is precious. Once having decided to go, there is little point in wasting time. Do not reckon on trying to come back. This journey may cost you very dear. Anarchism only undertakes to nudge you into the direction of your entry point. It is under no obligation to return with you. You will be left to yourself. Woe to you if you weaken or forget the way. You will never get back. And even if you remember the way, the question remains - will you return in a non-fragmented state?

Do not be waylaid by those life is spent at the complaint counter. These distractions are merely parts of the same trap. Time is vital and should not be wasted on matters bearing no relation to your journey. How soon can you start? How soon can you start? How soon can you start?

Doreen Frampton SRN

The land is Ours cont...

On the lighter side, they have organised a competition for Britain's best and worst landowners with suitable prizes. Nominations for the worst include the Duke of Westminster, the Queen, Prince Philip, the National Trust and of course Lord Macclesfield. The winners will be announced at a ceremony on 2 January 1996.

A reaction was inevitable and it came on 16 November with the launch of the Countryside Movement, backed by a full page advertisement

in the Guardian and no doubt elsewhere, and financed by some of the richest people in the country. With nothing to pay and published aims vague and anodyne, it is designed to appeal to Middle England's love of the countryside. But its secret agenda is to counteract the successes achieved by animal welfare and animal rights and walkers' access campaigners and to protect the vested interests of the fox hunting, game shooting fraternity and of course the large landowners in general. We await their next move with interest.

H.S.

MONITORING THE ACT

Now that the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act has become law, Liberty (formerly the National Council for Civil Liberties) has launched a Public Order Monitoring Project, to subject the use of the new public order powers to the closest possible scrutiny.

If you are stopped, searched, detained, evicted, ordered to leave land, banned from organising an event or prevented from attending one, or if you have your property confiscated or your home destroyed or are in any other way affected by the Act, Liberty would like to know.

They need to know:

1. Exact date and time of incident.
2. Precisely what happened in as much detail as you can remember.
3. What you were doing immediately before the incident took place.
4. Numbers of the police officers involved, or descriptions of private security personnel.
5. Names and phone numbers of any witnesses, and any photographers press or independent video makers who were there.
6. Reasons for any arrests and/or charges.
7. Your own address and phone number.
8. The name, address and phone number of your solicitor.



Liberty hopes that by exposing human rights abuses and keeping them in the spotlight of public attention, they may be able to have some restraining influence over the way the new measures are used in practice. Standard forms are available to make information collection easier and these can be obtained by ringing Liberty on **0171 357 8689**.

Those whose job it is to justify the unjustifiable society have shared in it's catastrophic decline, to the point where they can no longer manage to even to justify themselves... Their specialisms are in ruins; they admit it freely, but in their modesty they aspire to build new specialisms from these ruins. Now they suggest to us democratically that, as they put it, we should "search together" for a new medicine, a new economics, a new journalism etc - that is, under their direction as specialists in ignorance..."

JAIME SEMPRUN - 'PRECIS DE RECUPERATION'

POLITICAL DUTY: A Confession of Skepticism

By Theo Perkins. Anarchist Essays Series No. 4, Owl Press (no date).

This essay was originally published in Benjamin Tucker's paper *Liberty* in 1892. Perkins has one clear question in mind:

Is there sufficient reason why the people of this country should always obey the lawful commands of their official rulers?

He starts by criticizing the inequity that results from what he calls 'property customs', but soon concludes that *'back of all the customs respecting property...stand the lawmaker, the policeman, the judge, and the soldier; and back of these men is an idea, the idea that duly qualified officials have a particular right to do all that they do lawfully.'*

Having posed the question, and set-up the framework for his analysis, he launches into an attack on what he sees as the irrationality and inconsistency of the requirement to obey the law. He looks into the possible reasons why the State should be omnipotent, but is able to find nothing in it's nature that justifies this - neither it's status as a divine institution or as a representative of the will of the people are able to survive his critique. The State is, he concludes, *'simply a corporation like any other, having, of course, no objective reality...'* and as such does not appear to warrant obedience. He then gives up on trying to find a reason for obedience within the meaning of 'State' itself, and turns his attention to other possible justifications - 'government by consent', which he dismisses as clearly not reflecting the reality of State domination; and the 'right of the majority to control the minority', which he feels is nearer the heart of the matter, but still a ridiculous justification:

'Does any deep moral significance attach to numbers?... Can he who makes the approval of the multitude his criterion of wisdom truthfully claim any higher sanction for his decision that if he had selected a few counsellors and adopted theirs?...No, the thing is absurd, on the face of it and in the depths of it, and only goes to show what a wonderful variety of foolishness is proclaimed from time time as sacred and binding upon all.'

Perkins then turns to the common conservative argument of the desirability of custom', and wonders why, whereas in any other field of life innovation would be welcomed, in the issue of social and political organization, ancestor worship is seen as desirable.

Having thus dismissed all arguments in favour of the State, Perkins concludes that Government is an unnecessary evil, flawed not only in practice but as an

idea:

The evils of habitual government, instead of arising, as some think, from imperfect administration of a body of substantially perfect laws...probably spring from the unfitness of the institution itself for human needs.

He ends by answering his original question with the opinion that the obligation to obey the laws of the official class is 'political fiction.'

Perkins writes eloquently and his directness is refreshing - I enjoyed reading a demolition of the State and the idea of political obligation in less than twenty-five pages. The editor comments in the introduction that today's anarchists could do worse than read this essay, and I have to agree. The more material like this available the better.

Steve

This pamphlet is available from East Midlands Anarchists (address on back page) price £1.25 including P&P.

SWINGIN' WITH RAYMOND

CHUMBAWAMBA

One Little Indian TPLP 66CD

It's over a decade since Chumbawamba were first brought to my attention. *History Luddite* was a revelation and it put the band at the forefront of the anarcho music scene.

They've continued to produce albums of the finest quality, both musically and lyrically, combining anger and wit with an originality so often missing from their contemporaries. *Swingin' With Raymond* the Leeds outfit's latest offering finds the Chumba's at their unconventional best.

We're actually presented with two separate recordings in one package; the *Lovin' It* record and the *Loathin' It* record. Both discs were recorded at different locations and are in extreme contrast to one another. The





anarchist discussion forum

in conjunction with Yorkshire Anarchists



Agenda 21 and Community Politics

a debate on self-help initiatives in the North with
guest speakers

Hebden Bridge - Saturday 24th February 1996
For further details, please tel: 01422 842658

Hate It! disc is filled with venom and bile whilst the Love It! disc is a collection of mainly accoustic songs as sweet as you could imagine.

Swingin' With Raymond like 1994's *Anarchy*, is more a collection of songs than some of Chumba's earlier recordings which utilised the whole LP to explore particular issues such as charity and democracy. The Hate It! disc, especially, whips from one subject to another and it's the band's own distinctive and wry approach rather than any particular theme that holds it all together.

This Dress Kills, explores the constant pressure almost all women feel under to have the 'perfect body'. *Frockanoia*, we learn, is a feeling of being constantly figure watched; "knowing the feminist theory and the easy lines about self-acceptance wasn't enough to make me feel good about my body". It's a song laced with bitterness. *Ugh! Your Ugly Houses*, by contrast is wicked and to the point, poking fun at pop stars who adorn themselves with the trappings of the aristocracy, living in mansions whilst

one quarter of the world's population are either homeless or living in unfit shelter conditions. Just who would live in a house like this...?

The *Lovin' it!* disc is almost, and one would suspect deliberately, a musical cliché. The riffs are all familiar, the format easy on the ear. But beneath the simplistic exterior there are some real love songs. Not the "baby, baby" type that litter rock 'n' roll history but songs from the heart and the guts. In amongst the sleeve notes we find a quote from Emma Goldman, a real lover of life and liberty. Here is a disc to share with someone close, "Ice on the windows, let's thaw it away, so much time to waste, so much to say. Nowhere to go, nothing to do but move just a little bit closer to you" (*The Morning After*). This is definitely a departure for the Chumba's, but nonetheless worthwhile. Love, as they sing, can indeed "knock you over".

Fred

Chumbawamba can be contacted at:
PO Box TR666, Armley, Leeds. E-Mail
chumba@chumba.demon.co.uk

PEACE PRISONER SUPPORT

There are many women from or associated with Yorkshire who are currently in prison, likely to go there or facing court appearances in the near future as a result of their peace activities.

Sylvia Boyes appeared at York Crown Court on 10th November in an appeal against conviction and a fine of £2,000 for criminal damage at Fylingdales in July of this year. The fine was dropped but she still faces costs and, if these are not paid, will be in prison soon after Christmas.

A group of women from among those who obstructed the highway at Menwith spy base earlier this year appeared in Harrogate Magistrates Court on 28th November. Tracy, Bub, Naomi and Helen were fined £75 each with £30 costs and given 28 days to pay. This means that they too will be in prison "for a few days" as Tracy put it

if, as is likely, they choose not to pay up.

Lindis Percy, well-known peace protestor at Menwith and other strategic sites, and frequent prisoner of the State, was also in court on 28th November and is now in Holloway Prison for 29 days, for aggravated trespass at Mildenhall USAF base. She is already under a six month sentence, suspended for two years, for similar activity, when the Crown Court judge in sentencing her said that he would send her to prison if conditions were broken, even if this were after the two years, and said he wished to preside over her case on a continuous basis.

