

# COUNTER INFORMATION

No.54 Spring/Summer2000 Free/Donation

## Criminalising Dissent

UNDER THE new Terrorism Bill currently going through Parliament the definition of terrorism will be changed to include acts for a political or ideological purpose involving "serious violence" to property, or which "endangers the life of any person."

This clause could include the actions of G.M. crops destroyers, or the Trident Ploughshares sabotaging nuclear weapons causing tens of thousands of pounds worth of damage. It could be also used to apply to anti-road actions: it has been alleged that tunnel fortifications can endanger the occupants and the people ejecting them. (Similar legal moves are underway in Finland & elsewhere)

Under the new bill groups concerned with "terrorism" activity may be banned by order of the Home Secretary. This would make it illegal to be a member of such a group, to wear clothing or carry any item which arouses suspicion of supporting the group, raise funds for, or promote the group.

It will not be even necessary to have committed an offence to be affected by this bill! If there is reasonable *suspicion* of you having committed a terrorist offence, you can be detained for up to 7 days, and denied access to a solicitor for up to 48 hours.

An "April Fool's Day Parade" will make a mockery of the bill in Manchester, at Queen Victoria Statue, Piccadilly Gardens on 1st April, 1pm; and on 30 April an anti bill action will see people gathering, dressed for direct action, to be photographed at Highbury Fields, London N5 for 2pm (0161 226 6814; teaparty@nematode.freemove.co.uk for both). In Brighton a temporary community centre was opened to highlight this oppressive bill (01273 298192).

## Ending the Century in Struggle

IN a world where at least 800 million people on the planet go hungry, where in the last 20 years the number of people living on under one dollar a day has risen dramatically and developing countries share of global wealth has halved, the World Trade Organisation may seem a bright idea.

Except....it is run by big business who will not be answerable to anyone. It is the conception of multinationals who will have no enforceable responsibilities to the communities they work in - it is an excuse to maximise profits, continue poverty, destroy the environment and lower workers' rights. We will not take this lying down!

Between 30 Nov and 3 Dec 1999 the WTO met in Seattle, USA and was met with voices of rage and actions of anger.

The state and national security in Seattle/USA spent over \$1.1 million on security. It imposed a curfew from 2pm! until dawn, declared the vicinity around the meeting a "No Demo Zone"

On 30 November 50-60,000 demonstrators took to the streets of Seattle against this show of decadent capitalist globalisation. Thousands blockaded the WTO conference centre, causing the opening session to be cancelled. Demonstrators were met with riot police, tear gas pepper spray, and rubber bullets. 500 people were arrested on the first day for "protesting" or breaking the curfew! Many banks were

damaged, as well as good old MacDonalds.

Longshoremen shut ports all along the west coast of North America in solidarity with the Seattle demonstrators.

Many cities and towns around the world also protested:

Mayda Pradesh, India: 300 people invade the World Bank covering it in posters, graffiti, and cow shit.

London: After a demo at Citibank, later 1,000 protesters met in Euston Station to "reclaim the railways" from privatisation.

Leeds: 100 demonstrate through the town and blockade an Esso garage, and leaflet the Hilton Hotel and British Telecom.

Geneva, Switzerland: Protesters cut the power supply to the WTO HQ plunging the building into darkness and wiping out computer links to Seattle!

Many more actions in scores of towns and cities throughout the planet prove to big business that they can't own our planet or our lives. We will always resist.

### SEATTLE QUOTES

"The solidarity here has been amazing, steelworkers supporting ecology activists supporting anarchists."

"There are over 500 people in jail, practising disobedience and jail solidarity there."

"It was one of the most hopeful and inspiring weeks of my life."

## 2000: Reclaim May Day

ALL OVER the world, people are beginning to direct their anger against the real source of their problems: capitalism. What better time to reclaim the tradition of Mayday to organise for a better world?

Since its beginnings as an ancient celebration of life, Mayday has been the peoples' day. In 1889 it became International Workers' Day to commemorate the execution of Chicago anarchists struggling for an 8-hour working day.

Now activists in London are making 1st May a Festival of Anti-Capitalist Ideas & Actions. Running from Friday 28 April to Monday, the events include all manner of speakers and workshops on revolutionary politics and practice. There will be a women's space, a creche and a kids' zone. Direct action is on for Mon 1st May in London - and in Glasgow, Manchester, Sheffield, Liverpool, Nottingham, Southampton, etc. *London: meet 11am Parliament Square.*

Internationally, independent Mayday actions are anticipated in over 50 towns and cities in 17 countries.

Contact: BM Mayday, London WC1N 3XX. Tel 020 8374 5027, or visit [www.freespeech.org/mayday2k](http://www.freespeech.org/mayday2k) For Glasgow [www.mayfirst.fsnet.co.uk](http://www.mayfirst.fsnet.co.uk)

### More future global anti capitalist action:

16/17 April Washington DC: Demos against the IMF/World Bank Meeting [www.a16.org](http://www.a16.org)

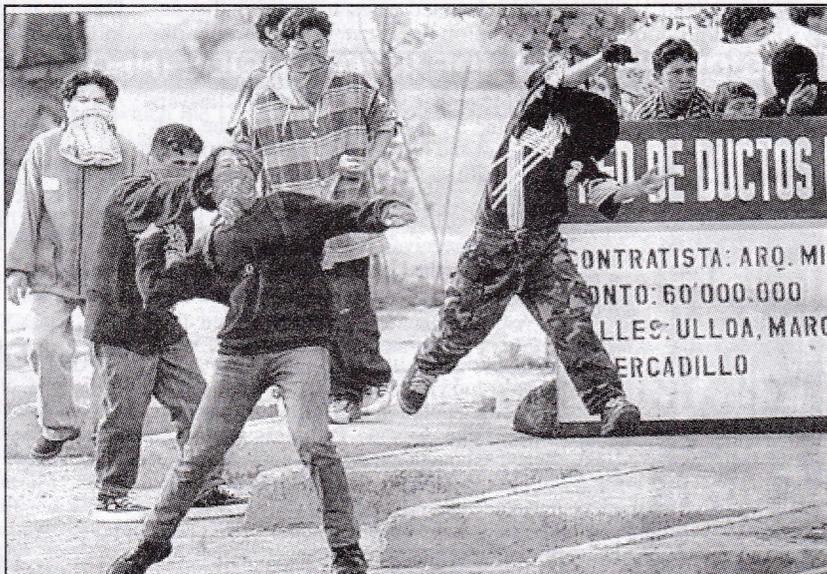
26/28 Sept. Prague, Czech Republic: Proposal for a Global Day of Action to coincide with the AGM of the IMF/World Bank. Mobilisation already underway in eastern Europe: this could be massive. CONTACT [contact@destroyimf.org](mailto:contact@destroyimf.org) [www.destroyimf.org](http://www.destroyimf.org)

## Not only a British monster

AFTER THE Shengen and Dublin conventions, and the Amsterdam treaty, the different European states have decided to set out common guidelines on immigration - seeming to find little respect for solidarity and justice. The situation in Australia is even worse - new legislation cuts significant aspects of Australia's obligation to refugees: some potential refugees will be prevented from applying for asylum, others sent home.

The immigration law in Britain represents just one of the examples of this increasing inflexibility. In the first 9 months of 1999 the numbers refused asylum and removed from Britain was

continued foot of column one, back page



Protesters fight back in Ecuador see Page 3 inside

# UNITY!

An Edinburgh postal worker writes: THE MOTTO of the Communication Workers Union is "Unity is Strength" and in two recent disputes Scottish postal workers have once again put that fine sentiment into practice.

Glasgow took unofficial strike action over Xmas overtime rates, achieving a favourable outcome. Postal workers' unwritten code to never handle scab mail from an office on strike, official or otherwise, continues, and Royal Mail have been unable to use mail diversions to break strikes.

In October 1999 a new manager in Livingston, W. Lothian decided to unnecessarily cut the delivery time for Sky/Cable TV magazines without recourse to the proper procedures. Consequently union rep Willie Colquhoun, who held fast to the existing agreement, was sacked on the preposterous charge of "wilful delay of the mail."

Livingston workers struck immediately, only to be persuaded back to work by union officials, confident he'd win his appeal. He didn't.

## ANGRY

Angry at this unjust victimisation and seen as a precursor for an offensive against a militant union branch, all of Scotland No 2 branch, 3,000 workers in east Scotland, went on strike, voting at a mass meeting for no return to work unless Willie was reinstated.

Fearing the strike would spread nationally, London talks between CWU leaders and Royal Mail directors swiftly agreed to reinstate Willie Colquhoun. This was

# FEAR OF FREEDOM

**MOVES BY** the liberal political establishment in the new Scottish Parliament to abolish the spurious Section 28 clause have been met with a reactionary backlash. *The Daily Record* ["traditional Labour"!] and Tory tabloids have created a climate of fear based on hysterical images of gay porn and role-playing in classrooms.

Even masters of 'spindoctoring' in Blair's new Labour have been taken aback by the depth of the lies spread through billboards throughout Scotland, coinciding with the Ayr by-election. Labour Ministers in the coalition Scottish Executive have been back-peddling to placate 'worried families'. The reactionary *Keep the Clause* coalition headed by Archbishop Winning and Brian Soutar of Stagecoach have not accepted the concessions.

While gay and liberal lobbyists rush to support the majority in the Scottish Parliament, direct action has highlighted a more spirited response. *Keep the Clause* billboards throughout Scotland have been splattered in paint and commentaries; tons of 'junk mail' has been delivered to their freepost address including telephone books, old newspapers and a paving slab, all addressed to *Keep the Clause* Freepost SCO 5219, Perth PH2 8BR; a boycott of Stagecoach services has spread, whilst in London a no.15 bus was halted by a woman brandishing a banner "Stop in the name of love", followed by Lesbian Avengers activists re-painting the bus pink and distributing leaflets to passengers.

**An anarchist approach to sexuality rejects homophobia and the climate of gaybashing it produces; it promotes a love of freedom and the freedom to love any mature person irrespective of gender and categorisation; and children are brought up in tolerance and to seek the truth, rather than closeted in ignorance and fear of the unknown.**

implemented, despite local management obstruction.

But workers unity has now been put at risk by CWU mandarins promoting the "Employer Agenda/Way Forward" restructure of our industry. Union leaders collaborated with management to get it voted through.

Members' access to the Union's web site mysteriously went off-line to halt dissemination of the counter-arguments, those circulating unauthorised leaflets faced disciplinary charges from management with the tacit approval of the CWU leadership. Workplace meetings were banned unless the recommendation was for acceptance. Mass meetings became sectional, atomised ones to restrict discussion to ensure yes recommenda-

tions. The CWU bureaucracy wished to divide and conquer. The result: a very narrow vote for acceptance.

Unity is not just a CWU membership card but entails an active rank and file, co-operating and co-ordinating at the grass-roots, aye ready to defend their colleagues and thwart a Royal Mail set for confrontation.

• In Bridgewater, Somerset, Royal Mail sacked Union rep Dave Chapple for "inciting an unofficial strike", also in October. But Dave got great support. Not only Bridgewater, but the major Bristol office threatened to walk out. Royal Mail backed down and Dave was reinstated on appeal in December.

## INSIDE INFO....INSIDE INFO....INSIDE INFO....INSIDE INFO



ON 26 October 99, after Mumia's lawyers presented an "Habeas Corpus" to the Federal Court and just a few days after Tom Ridge (Pennsylvania's Governor) signed a new death warrant for 2 December, the Federal Judge William John Jr. signed a stay of the execution. Since then many demonstrations, occupations, strikes and protests have happened everywhere in support of Mumia. Judge William John Jr. has already received 15,000 letters in Mumia's support. On 4 March several demos took place in the UK and Europe. (Mumia Abu Jamal, black US activist, fitted up for the murder of a cop in 82, has been on Death Row for 17 years)

Mumia Must Live! BM Haven, London WC1N 3XX TEL 020 7538 5821

## Mumia Must Live!

Police raided 20 libertarian communist activists around Bolgna on 7 December. 5 were imprisoned, charged with "subversion and association with an armed group." ti14264@Iperhole.bologna.it

On 31 Jan. Silvano Pellissero was sentenced to 6 years and 10 months for alleged sabotage against the construction of the high speed railway through the Val di Susa. His 2 co-accused, Edoardo Massari and Maria Soledad Rosas, had died in custody (see CI 51). On 5 Feb 1,500 demonstrated in Turin against Silvano's sentence, cordoned off by 1,200 riot police. (Umanita Nova)

TO DATE 8 people convicted for activity at the 18 **J18 Jailings** June 1999 Action in London have been jailed, for 6 to 21 months. Letters much appreciated. (LDMG c/o BM Haven, London WC1N 3XX. 020 7 837 7557)



# WO TO

## ROOF RESISTERS

ON 24 January 7 activists of the group Solidarios con Itoitz[Basque country] were arrested while protesting on the roof of Berlin's Brandenburg Gate. 8 activists against the destructive Itioz dam had earlier received jail terms of 5 years each.

## PUERTO REAL ERUPTS

LAST YEAR various actions happened in Puerto Real Shipyard, Cadiz (Spain). Early this year workers entered the shipyard and trashed one of the ships as a protest. Their demands are to have Union rights for all, including casual workers, respect for safety measures and permanent contracts for all.

## UNION CITY BLUES

TWO UNISON stewards sacked by Glasgow City Council for "chapping" (knocking on) a door have won their unfair dismissal claims at an employment tribunal, which also ruled they should be re-instated - though the Council have not yet done so. Unison had refused to represent the two, who were dismissed after accompanying a colleague to a disciplinary hearing. Workers in social work services want to know why they had to raise funds through benefits and workplace collections to support these 2 members who they always believed had been unfairly dismissed.

## DAMN THE DAM

4,000 OCCUPIED the Maheshwar dam site to stop the Narmada dam system and save local communities from destruction by flooding. Police arrested 1,500.(EF/AU/Jan00)

## FREE THE WATER

A RISE in water taxes resulted in thousands protesting in the streets in Cochabamba, Bolivia on 5 Feb.. Police fired rubber bullets and tear gas, and dozens were arrested. (Umanita Nova)

## SAY NO TO WAR

ANARCHISTS IN Moscow have held 5 demos against the war in Chechnya. Anarchist anti war activity has also happened in Krasnodar, Novorossysk, Kasimov, St Petersburg, and Niznii Novgorod - and more is planned.

## FOUR FREE

CHARGES AGAINST Groundzero non-violent activists in Washington State USA were thrown out on 23 December '99. The four had been accused of traffic offences by displaying a sign stating, the naval base "Bangor closed-Trident violates international law". nvrn0207-607-2302.

## PRISON REVOLT

PRISONERS REBELLED and took over part of Yanamayo prison in the Peruvian Andes for several days from 6 February. They are demanding political prisoner status, the closure of the terrible Naval Base prison near Lima, better conditions and access for Red Cross observers.

## HUNGER STRIKE

IN THE Spanish State Jaen prison, some prisoners went on hunger strike from 20 February till 20 March. On 18 March almost 100 prisoners went on hunger strike for 4 days, to coincide with an international day of action called by ABC/CNA. The prisoners demands are the end of FIES (isolation regimes), freedom for terminaly ill prisoners and the end of dispersion. (Anarchist Black Cross/CNA, Apdo 24103, 08080, BCN, Spanish State)



### WRATH TO US NAVY

A "PEOPLE Power" occupation forced the US military out of the island of Vieques off Puerto Rico after 58 years of bombardment ("military training"), leaving a toxic residue of ammunition. As the UK is the 51st State, Tony Blair invited the US Navy, led by the nuclear powered aircraft carrier SSS Dwight D. Eisenhower, to fire away at the island of Garvie and part of the north-west tip of Scotland at Cape Wrath. Rallies in Inverness and Edinburgh were held, led by Puerto Rico activists, and firing was held up by an occupation on Cape Wrath in March. Info product2000@hotmail.com.

### HOT AUTUMN

ACTIONS AGAINST the visit of President Clinton to Greece exploded in Athens and elsewhere during October and November. Many solidarity actions for anarchists arrested in previous clashes occurred. Clashes between reactionary stalinists and anarchist activists were widespread as the Communist Party tried to contain protests and protect the State. A quarterly news summary in English records actions. POB 30557-10033 Athens or (in Greek) www.anarchy.gr

### KREUZEBERG KLAMPDOWN

1,000 GERMAN police including GSG-9 anti-terrorist forces invaded a collectively owned ex-squat, the Mehring-hof centre at 6am on 19 December. Despite finding no weapons or links to the 'Revolutionary Cells' 2 volunteers were arrested including one from Frankfurt. 3 Bolivian refugees are threatened with deportation after being detained during the raid. 150 people gathered at short notice from the locality to protest against the raid which caused 10,000DM damage. The Social Democrat/Green Federal coalition sanctioned the raid Green Pepper, info burn.ucsd.edu/~ats/razzia.html

### RED CLOUD THUNDER

DIRECT ACTION activists 30 miles east of Eugene in Oregon, USA have been 'defending' woodland and wildlife from the Clark Timber sale. On platforms on giant Douglas firs between 150-260 feet above the ground the action continues redcloud@efn.org www.efn.org/~redcloud

### BUS RIDERS OF THE LA WAY

'FARE STRIKES' to improve the lot of bus commuters in Los Angeles have forced bus companies to replace antiquated coaches. Direct action methods by hispanic, black and asian activists of the *Bus Riders Union* encourage passengers "no seat no fare" and strike on Thursdays. Dressed as 'sardines' activists incited rebellion against the first fare rise in 4 years.

### SPANISH SQUATS ATTACKED

SINCE LATE last year the police have evicted several Squats. This looks like it has been planned to coincide with the run-up to the General Elections. Police and local Councils have been pressuring owners of squatted properties to carry out evictions. This cost the life of a person who died during one of the evictions in Valencia.

### FIERY DEMO IN DAVOS

THE TOP politicians and business people at the World Economic Forum in the Swiss Alps were surprised by 1,300 demonstrators who had journeyed there from France, Germany, Italy and Switzerland itself. A highlight of the 29 Jan demo in Davos came when a huge MacDonalds ad was set on fire and the smoke cloud went straight into the WEF venue! (PGA Bulletin, from RTS)

# Columbia

## State murder and people's resistance

COLOMBIA IS still living a difficult social and political situation due to the violent policies of the Colombian and US Governments, including the war against the guerilla armies, which force many people to leave their homes and, often, their home region.

Over a million Colombian citizens are "displaced". This has generated a social movement demanding solutions. 300 people of this movement occupied the International Red Cross and Solidarity Network HQ in Bogotá from 23 February.

Also an occupation of the Government Environmental Department, started last December by the Indigenous community Emberas Katios, continues. The community's demand is to stop a Hydroelectric mega dam project in Urrea (north east) where they live. This project threatens the lives of over 200

families who don't want to leave their ancestral land, due to the floods, and a similar number of families will be forced to move away.

On 23 Feb the army and police violently dispersed a protest of more than 500 people of the U'was indigenous community demonstrating against the occupation of their land by the transnational OXI Petroleum. The state forces killed 5 people and over 10 are missing, all U'was. Social Organizations called for a National and International Day of Protest on 25 Feb. to support the Embera and U'was.



ANARCHISTS and Anti fascists in Sweden have not been intimidated by the fascist murder of Bjorn Soderberg. Bjorn, an activist in the anarcho syndicalist union SAC, was shot in Stockholm on 12 Oct. 3 fascists were arrested. 40,000 demonstrated their sorrow and anger in 20 towns across Sweden on 23 Oct. (see photo). Bjorn was murdered for exposing prominent fascist Robert Vesterlund - causing Vesterlund to lose his position as shop steward and leave the union. SAC, Box 6507, 11383 Stockholm.

AUSTRIA As the far right Freedom Party joined the coalition government in Austria on 4 February, school students and workers walked out, and 10,000 demonstrated in Vienna. Protesters stormed the Social Security Ministry, where a Freedom Party member was to take office. On 18 Feb 5,000 school students struck, and next day 300,000 marched. Haider has now resigned as leader, and its Justice Minister has suffered a breakdown.

DENMARK For a year locals in Aalborg have been demonstrating - and singing! - outside a house which the Danish Nazi Party turned into their HQ. On 20 February 500 anti fascists gathered to celebrate 1 year's resistance against the Nazi house.

GERMANY Hundreds took direct action against 400 fascist NPD members marching in Berlin on 12 March - 200 anti fascists arrested.

## HANGING ON THE TELEPHONE

SWEATSHOPS, GALLEY-SHIPS, phone farms, 21st Century mills; all terms used to describe call centres. Poor training, low wages, time pressure, repetitiveness, constant monitoring - even counting toilet breaks - and tough targets are only some complaints.

In November, 4,000 British Telecom workers in 37 Call Centres decided not to put up with heavy-handed management any

longer and voted for a series of 24 hour strikes.

In January, a man was sacked from his call centre job, by Excell Multimedia LLC in Glasgow after speaking about bad working conditions. A woman has been asked to undergo "facial mapping" as the company suspects she was the employee on a critical TV interview whose face was only partly visible. Another Excell employee lost his attendance bonus after having an epileptic fit at work. *Sounds like time for Excell workers to follow BT staff's example.*

# Ecuador

## Enough is enough

IN JANUARY a revolt against the Government called by COAINE (Indigenous Nations and People) and others, ended up taking over the Parliament.

More than 200,000 people were involved in the revolt including teachers, medical staff, taxi drivers, transport workers, banana workers, informal sellers, oil Unions, students and also sectors of the regular army and a former judge. The uprising was due to the Government submitting to global markets and the plan to adopt the US dollar as the nation's currency.

The "people's parliament" decided to give the power to Ecuador's vice-president, who promised to look at people's demands. Since then, everybody involved in the uprising organization is being threatened, persecuted and jailed.

The indigenous groups are calling for a new People's Revolt on 21 May, after nothing has been changed from the previous plans of the Government. This revolt will be supported by other organizations including the largest worker's Union FUT.

(Info A INFOS www.ainfos.ca/rojo y negro(feb 00), Resistance, Gallopinto no 39 (Jan 00))

## PATRIARCHAL PILLAR TOPPLED

IN MONTREAL, Canada on 8 March, International Womens Day, a women's collective took direct action against "a pillar of patriarchy" - local HQ of the catholic church. Its altars and relics were baptised anew with maxipads, bras, condoms, women's newsletters and placards!

Then as people (the action was organised by women but men were welcome) moved down the street, police gave chase in high speed vehicles. They pursued people with batons and one man was repeatedly beaten while lying on the ground. Whilst he was taken away in an ambulance, police were surrounded by an emotionally charged crowd of passersby and retreated.

As 4 people waited outside a police station that evening for those arrested a well known anti police brutality activist was also arrested. <http://damn.tao.ca>  
• International Womens Day saw a global womens strike, with activity in over 60 countries, "for a millenium which values all women's work and all women's lives, and for an end to no pay, low pay and too much work." Now *Women's Wednesdays in Whitehall* continues this struggle with a weekly protest picket 1-2pm every Wed at Downing St. Info Wages for Housework 0207 482 2496

## GLOBAL ACTION

"WE HAVEN'T stopped opening more space for dialogue and contact with other spaces in other continents, we want to know more about how you are doing, we want to continue working with you, we want to go on strengthening our networks of communication and of course we want and are building up action." ( Zapatistas)

Zapatistas will be taking part in the Peoples Global Action Latin American meeting as part of their continuing resistance to global capitalism. Zapatista women marched in San Cristobal de las Casas on 8 March - International Womens Day - in the face of increasing militarisation. The Mexican army are building new roads and bases in the jungles. EZLN supporters detained an army patrol by stretching cord across the road whilst women blocked it.

Hundreds of Mexican university students have been imprisoned for resisting IMF and World Bank instituted reforms and are subject to human rights violations. After occupying their campus for 10 months they were arrested by 2000 police. Some students have

fled to the hills whilst parents of arrested students have taken to the streets to protest.

In West Papua the struggle for self-determination continues. On 2 December 1000 people praying for liberation in front of a church were shot at without warning by the police and military. Several hundred people were in hospital with serious injuries. Students from West Papua occupied the Dutch embassy in Jakarta demanding independence from Indonesia. On 8 February thousands of tribal people took to the streets in Sorong closing down shopping centres and businesses. Sentani airport (just one example of a colonialist, environmentally destructive business project forced on West Papua) was closed down by the Sokoy tribe saying "This is our land, not Indonesian, you need to ask us before you do anything."

Support demos saw the Indonesian president and businessmen greeted by 500 rioting demonstrators in ski masks in Switzerland and in the UK by 25 with custard pies and fake blood and a warning "Good morning suits, you are not anonymous, you are not invisible - if you invest in genocide we will target you!"



Residents picket Shettleston Police Station

AN INCREDIBLE self-organised direct action struggle by the residents of Glasgow's Gartocher Terrace continues to resist William "Rubbish Rat" Combe. Combe has been trying to move his waste disposal business into a new industrial site in quiet Gartocher Terrace.

The residents recently took on freemason Combe's chief allies - the police. On 14 December over 30 residents, including kids, invaded Shettleston police station and - singing and telling jokes - staged a 10 hour overnight sit-in. 4 days later residents, banners flying, besieged the police station, supported by Faslane Peace Camp, Edinburgh's Autonomous Centre and Glasgow anarchists.

8 residents and Faslane supporters have been charged in the course of the struggle, but only 2 convicted, of minor offences. Combe faces 4 sets of charges, including trying to run over residents and making threatening phone calls.

With community solidarity growing, residents have together bought a caravan which acts as community centre, kids' play space and meeting room. In March the caravan was used to blockade Combe's skip lorries for 2 days.

"If we hadn't done what we've done, Combe's business would be up and running," a resident told CI. "And we've done it without authority people telling us what to do. We're never going to give in."

More people needed to help the struggle. Phone 07979 836223. (See also CI53)

### ASYLUM Cont from p.1

movement in France successfully stopped the deportation of an Algerian student at Choify-Le-Roi airport on 24 Feb. They mobilised support from passengers and airport workers and stopped the student being put on the plane to Algeria. At a subsequent court appearance the judge ordered the student be liberated, though he was due in court in March.

Close Campsfield Campaign asylum@sable.ox.ac.uk Nat. Coalition of Anti Deportation Campaigns, 101 Villa Rd, Birmingham B19 www.ncadc.demon.co.uk/

2,900 more than in 1998. Over 90,000 people have been deported since Labour took office in May 1997. And now the new Immigration and Asylum Act will make refugees even worse off.

But there is resistance. Demonstrators against racist asylum policy besieged Campsfield Detention Centre in Oxfordshire on 27 November, showing solidarity with the 200 refugees jailed there. The Sans Papiers immigrants

## TALES OF RESISTANCE

People resist oppression everyday. We welcome more first-hand accounts.

### FIGHTING THE COCK UP, COVER UP CULTURE

An Edinburgh council tenant writes

CAVE IN or fight? That was the choice forced upon me when the Council cocked up my rent account then tried to evict me for arrears. I didn't even know about the eviction action - along with my rent book they had sent their legal letters to the wrong address. In the 'cock up, cover up' culture enshrouding council officials (instructed never to admit liability) I was just a statistic. To me, I was a victim. The answer was clear. I would fight.

That was two years ago. Two years of tit-for-tat struggle. When I threatened the local office with the Ombudsman their reply arrived in the shape of five warrants for £3,000 poll tax arrears, all from a time when I was on income support. It was a declaration of war. Battle was enjoined with the Housing and Finance Departments and with their notoriously punitive Legal Services Division. (Ask any Shelter worker about council lawyers!)

Working full time, my weekends were spent studying housing law and writing probing letters to the local councillor, to the local council office, to the senior housing officer, to the Directors of Housing and Finance, all ending with "I submit this as a formal complaint." Letters to the newspapers, to an ACE rights worker, and to my lawyer who advised me that the Council had no case.

But their thuggish lawyers dragged the action on and on. The Scottish Legal Aid Board demanded £800 towards my legal costs. I advised them to get it from the Council. My legal aid was suspended but my lawyer somehow got it reinstated while I continued to pick holes in the Council's conduct, culminating in a full-page article in the local newspaper that sent shock waves through the Council's Blairite hierarchy. Their lawyers were eventually forced to drop the eviction action.

As a direct result of this farrago of bullying lies a few like minds are now discussing forming a "Bin the Bill" group to combat the collection of poll tax "arrears", and publishing a news sheet and/or website searchlighting incompetence and corruption in Edinburgh City Council.

The moral of the story is clear. When bureaucratic bumbledom turns nasty there is only one way to go. Don't cave in. Fight.

But, crucially, don't fight alone.

Anyone wanting to get involved in the Bin the Bill Campaign or news-sheet should contact ACE, 17 W Montgomery Place, Edinburgh EH7 5HA

### GET INVOLVED!

- Clyde-side anarchist circle write CI[ac] c/o Transmission 28 King St., G1 5QP; first may/treason www.mayfirst.fsnet.co.uk • Autonomous Centre/Edin.Claimants/Autonomous Women c/o 17 W. Montgomery Pl., Edinburgh EH7 5HA 0131-557-6242, lothian@burn.ucsd.edu www.autonomous.org.uk OR http://burn.ucsd.edu/~lothian/ Open Tues 12-4pm & Sun 2-6pm • 5th May group POB 2474, London, N8 (Turkish/Kurdish@'s)
- Anarchist Fed. c/o 84b Whitechapel High St, London E1 7QX acf@burn.ucsd.edu www.afed.org.uk • Anarchist Trade Union Network, BOX EMAB, 88 Abbey Street, Derby, DE22 3SQ, Grp7763aol.com • Class War, PO Box 467, London E8 3QX • 56a Infoshop, 56 Crampton St., London SE17 • Earth First! Action Update, POB 1TA, Newcastle-on-Tyne NE99 1TA. 07974791841 www.eco-action.org/efau <actionupdate@gn.apc.org> • Education Worker Network, POB 29, SW PDO, Manchester M15 5HW • Federation Anarchiste, 145 Rue Amelot, 75011 Paris, France • Haringey Solidarity Group, Box 2474, London N8. 020 8374 5027 hsg@clara.net • Industrial Workers of the World, 75 Humberstone Gate, Leicester LE1 1WB • Kate Sharpley Library, BM Hurricane, London WC1 3XX • Kommunist Kranti, Majdoor Library, Autopin Jhuggi, Faridabad-121001, India • Lancaster Anarchist Group, c/o The Basement, 78A Penny Street, Lancaster • London Greenpeace, 5 Caledonian Rd., London N1 • Reclaim the Streets, PO Box 9656, London N4 4 JY, 020 7281 4621 • SchNEWS, PO Box 2600, Brighton BN2 2DX; 01273-685913 schnews@brighton.co.uk http://www.schnews.org.uk/ • S.Herts Sol.Fed PO Box 493, St. Albans, AL1 5TW Distros: • Active BM Active, London WCIN 3XX • AK PO Box 12766, Edinburgh, EH8 9YE Write for listing. Thanks to Anarchist Graphics, Box 5, 167 Fawcett Rd, Southsea, Hants PO4

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