

# THE SPUN

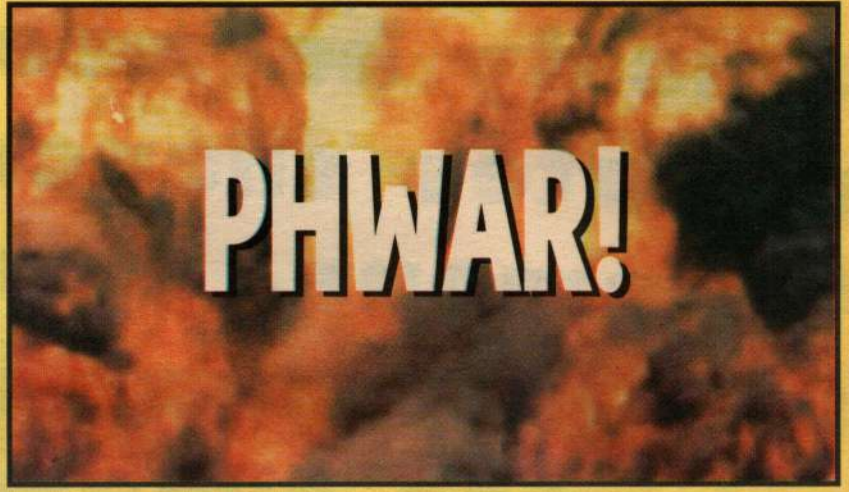
Friday, November 9, 2001

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IT'S DAY 60 OF OUR WAR - MORE  
ALL-ACTION COVERAGE INSIDE!



# SHOP 'TIL THEY DROP

**EXCLUSIVE** by Pamela Cluster in QATAR

In an exclusive interview, plucky PM Tony Blair has revealed that next week his war cabinet will unleash 'Shop for Freedom!' Glowing with pride, he outlined a bumper package of measures to win the war on terrorism once and for all. 'I urge each and every Spun reader to get out and spend, spend, spend for freedom!' he said.

He then summarised 'Shop for Freedom!'s key BULLET points:

- Chancellor Gordon Brown will launch the 'Half a Pound for Freedom' scheme, where 50p in every pound you spend on British goods and services will go to top UK defence company BAe Systems. BAe will use your cash to build bigger, better Bin Laden-bashing weaponry.

- Pukka patriots will be able to 'Sponsor a Smart Bomb' to keep our boys flying high and packing a full payload. Anyone pitching in with £1000 or more will have their own

personal message written on a bomb. Top brands will pay a special rate to have video footage of their bombs raining down on their targets transmitted live on primetime TV.

#### **Radiant**

*Our radiant leader, taking time out to speak to us direct from pal George Bush's underground chapel, told us 'When the economy grows, freedom grows, so let's fight terrorism with trade. Praise the Lord and pass the ammunition!'*

- Further plans include Police chiefs joining forces with The Spun to launch 'Shop a terrorist for

Freedom'. We can all do our bit by reporting suspicious individuals. The Spun will be running mugshot centre-spreads and offering BIG CASH PRIZES for any subversives nobbled by readers.

Last night anti-capitalist whinger Charlene Zoellick slammed the plans: "This is madness!" she shrieked. "Statistics show that as world trade grows, so does the gulf between rich and poor." Fellow wobbly peacenik Mike Supachai added that "waging war on terrorism is like trying to put out a fire with petrol."



**Awesome payload... now all Spun readers can do their bit for our boys**

**The television cameras switched quickly between scenes. Three minutes silence in the House of Commons, three minutes silence in Parliament Square, three minutes silence at the BBC. MP's, pedestrians and television staff, stood shock still in remembrance.**

**Then the picture flicked to the London Stock Exchange. Closest to the camera, a trader, standing like the others but with his head cocked at an odd angle. Remembering the dead? Praying for bereaved families? No. His head was skewed towards a computer monitor, his eyes fixed on the flickering financial information. Keen not to lose a single dollar for the dead.**



You can't separate peace  
from freedom because no  
one can be at peace  
unless they have  
freedom

# Hope over Hate

How the 'movement of movements' embraces radical diversity and rejects both economic and religious fundamentalism

## An editorial

Two small yellow packets lie on the drought-dried soil, beckoning brightly against the mute colours of Afghanistan's ravaged landscape, a child hobbles towards them, eyes open wide, small hands reaching out in excited anticipation. The child hesitates, her eyes sweep nervously left to right, which one to pick up first?

If she chooses the one on the right, the "aid" drop, she will stem her seemingly perpetual hunger for a few hours with the alien taste of crackers and peanut butter. If she chooses the one on the left, the cluster bomblet, she will be blinded by a flash, her hands will be blown off and bang - she will join the invisible ranks of 40,000 children that die everyday, somewhere in the world, mostly from hunger and curable diseases.. In that moment she has two choices, but neither will alleviate the humiliation of poverty that has blighted her life.

Meanwhile, Bush and Blair, speaking from the carpeted rooms of power and privilege, give us another choice: "Either you are with us or you are with the terrorists". A choice mirrored in bin Laden's stark video messages "these events have divided the world into two camps, the camp of the faithful and the camp of infidels". So here we have it - two false choices, that's what this phoney "war" seems to be about and that's what our world system thrives on, the choice between good and evil, barbarism and civilisation, the "free" market or protectionism, the economic fundamentalism of "McWorld" or the religious fundamentalism of "jihad".

US and British foreign policy is not aimed at giving anybody any real choice. Nor does it seek world peace: it is intended to enforce a particular kind of capitalism. A system that forces everywhere to look and feel like everywhere else, the same food, the same insecurities, the same clothes, the same suffering. War is one way of achieving this. The World Trade Organisation, which forces countries to "open" their markets to "competition" and imposes the rules of the market into every aspect of our lives, is another.

The last time the World Trade Organisation had a ministerial meeting, in Seattle, two years ago, thousands took to the streets and shut it down. Since then every economic summit, from Chiang Mai to Prague, Quebec to Davos, has resembled a medieval siege as the growing number of protesters, (in Seattle there were 50,000, in Genoa over 200,000), have surrounded the walled and fenced conference centres, and declared their demands for another choice, the choice of life over profit, real democracy over the dictatorship of the markets.

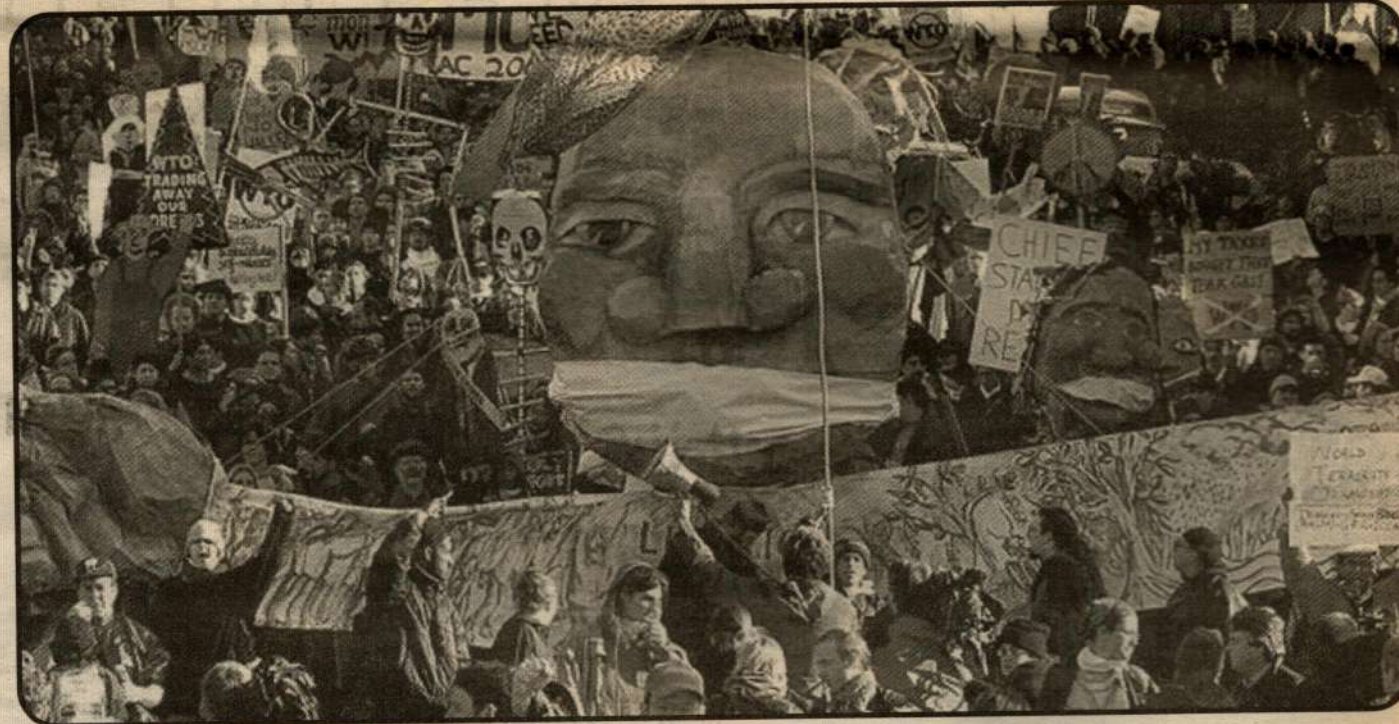
A movement of movements has sprung up on every continent in the last decade. The depressing notion of the end of history has been challenged with a new sense of hope, hope that history could be extracted from the realm of the stock exchanges and be grasped in our own hands. Against the monoculture of economic globalisation, people have been demanding and creating worlds which thrived on diversity, worlds where local people took back control from corporations and distant bureaucrats. The Hope was contagious, it was a young punk spraying "We are winning" on a wall in Seattle as her friends were being sprayed by pepper gas; it was the Korean activist demonstrating on the same day in front of a Seoul government building announcing "We are receiving news from Seattle...and are greatly motivated and moved by them. Our struggle is your Struggle!".

Hope was seeing a movement made up of so many different peoples and cultures grow so fast, so quickly, so irresistibly. In under 600 days we had helped name the

global problem as capitalism and had begun to develop extraordinary international networks of inspiration to begin the slow process of imagining and constructing worlds beyond greed and competition. Then history did what it is best at - it surprised us all - September the 11th happened.

Since then our minds have become filled with images of ruins and death as stories of anthrax attacks and potential nuclear strikes fill our screens. Repressive legislation targeting dissent and difference are hurried through parliaments. Many of us have become paralysed with fear, despair has taken over; it seems hope is rationed in times of war. When hope is extinguished hate is liberated, because without hate, wars are very hard to legitimise.

Yet at the same time, what happened on September 11th made many people in the privileged global North question everything. It made many of us reassess our lives. We heard bankers and financiers doubt the value of their work, we saw the compulsion to compete being momentarily replaced by community and co-



operation, as many of us were propelled into searching for renewed meaning in our lives. Somewhere among the ruins of the World Trade centre and the shifting rubble of Afghanistan there lies a sense that perhaps this crisis is an opportunity, perhaps the tension between hope and despair, between laughter and tears, will open up a creative space for radical change..

There is little doubt that we have come to the pivotal point of a unique historical period, a period of great transition. The whole system is in crisis and when systems reach such points of disequilibrium, small gestures can have big effects. Radical change becomes easier and more likely. A space has opened up, either we fill it with competing forms of fundamentalism - the handmaidens of fear - or we fill it with diverse forms of co-operation, coexistence and creativity, the fruits of hope.

With the collapse of certainty, there also lies a great sense of clarity, a realisation that everything is connected, an understanding that attempts to force life

everywhere into a single mould are bound to fuel perpetual conflict and insecurity. Commentators have been saying that the global movements for life, autonomy, land, dignity and justice, are dead, that to be against capitalism is unacceptable in a post September the 11th world. But these movements aren't going to go away, far from it - they are the only viable alternative to a world so fixated on dualities, so obsessed with the imposition of singular ideologies, so addicted to the big - big office blocks, big money, big solutions, big bombs, big wars, big mistakes.

This week, unwilling to risk a re-run of Seattle, the WTO will meet in the inaccessible Middle Eastern autocracy of Qatar, where all forms of protest are banned. There they will continue on their mission where inevitably we will be given another meaningless choice - either we are for more "free" trade, more privatisation and less regulations on corporations or we are for terrorism, US, Trade Representative Robert Zoellick has already stated that "Trade ... promotes the values at the heart of this protracted struggle."

As they meet, hundreds of thousands of people across the world will be taking local decentralised actions. This will include teach-ins taking place in 100 town squares across Italy as well as in Lebanon, Thailand, Japan, Tunisia, Bangladesh and China, In Canada the Raging Grannies will be singing their catchy tunes, while strikes will occur in Nigeria, popular education caravans will travel across Turkey and the Philippines, Indian farmers are planning to commandeer government grain stocks and distribute it to the poor, in Australia several thousand metal workers will march, in New York the offices of corporate offenders will be visited in a special evening tour, something will take place on every continent.

Perhaps this war is the swan song of global capitalism, the unravelling of the empire. One seemingly

Thousands successfully blockaded the last WTO ministerial in Seattle, November 30th 1999

impregnable empire began its decade of unravelling with a war in Afghanistan, perhaps this is the next one to end there. What will we be proud to tell our children, in years to come? That our desire for revenge led us to bomb one of the poorest countries in the world, which resulted in the starvation of several million people and took us to the brink of a third world war? Or will it be easier to look them in the eye and tell them that we stopped the world from tearing itself apart, that we used this opportunity, this moment in history where "everything changed", to actually change things, to build a safer world, a world made up of many worlds, a world of one no and many yesses.

The Spun editorial collective - November 5th 2001

This paper was produced by London Reclaim the Streets and friends. Thanks to everyone who contributed time, ideas, words and wisdom.

# Five reasons to oppose the 'War on Terrorism'

**1 Look who's dying now.** As usual it's some of the poorest people in the world who are being targeted for bombing. So-called 'smart' bombs are about as smart as Bush, and Afghans are already pulling the bodies of their children - or their parents - from the rubble. Meanwhile, the UN estimates that November will see 3-4 million Afghans facing death from starvation because aid packages can't get through until the bombing stops. Bush's answer? Dropping food parcels as well as bombs. Assuming people could retrieve food parcels from one of the most heavily landmined areas on earth, they would still be nowhere near enough to feed the starving refugees for even one day. Afghans have endured years of continuous civil warfare and a vicious, oppressive regime. Let's bomb 'em.

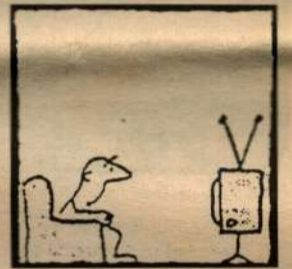
**2 Most terrorists don't live in caves.** They live in big houses where they've been co-ordinating their worldwide terrorist networks for years. Western governments have been sponsoring death squads and terrorist regimes all over the world. Terror is an essential part of the continuation and expansion of global capitalism. Everyday, people die in their thousands because of lack of food, adequate shelter or healthcare. Countless others lead hollow lives of drudgery and boredom, all hope of real happiness and freedom crushed by work. If bin Laden is a terrorist - and he is - then so are Bush, Blair and the other members of the coalition.

**3 Osama bin framed?** It turns out that George and Tony aren't even really sure who was behind the September 11th attack. The published dossier of 'incontrovertible evidence' has been called 'almost worthless from a legal point of view' (Guardian, 5.10.01). All the evidence appears to hinge on the fact that the terrorists responsible were 'associates' of Osama bin Laden. Associates? What does that mean? The Taliban actually agreed to extradite bin Laden to Pakistan, where he could have faced a court to determine whether he would've been sent to the USA. But, hey, we're not going to let minor details like truth and justice get in the way of the war against an abstract noun.

**4 We are all terrorists now.** The sad fact is that governments all around the globe have been jumping up and down with glee at the opportunities for repression that the war on terrorism represents. Wanna get rid of that annoying dissident who's been telling people some of your dirty little secrets? Easy, call him or her a terrorist and almost everyone will cheer as you crush the evil menace. Witness how eagerly Israeli PM Sharon (himself responsible for the massacre of Palestinian refugees in Beirut, amongst other career highlights) rushed to compare Palestinian leader Arafat with Bin Laden. Marvel at how Italian PM Berlusconi and MP Claire Short have linked fundamentalist terrorists with the anti-capitalism movement. Internal security departments in England and the US have already been given new powers to monitor phone calls, faxes and e-mails. There's talk of the introduction of ID cards, and it looks like they're going to start with asylum seekers. The September 11th atrocity is being cynically manipulated by governments to justify further reductions of our basic rights and liberties.

**5 Oil be damned!** This war is not about an attack on our 'democracy'. It's not about an attack on our 'freedom'. Like most wars, it's about greed and expansion. Afghanistan lies on the proposed route of a pipeline that would transport oil from the resource rich countries of Central Asia (which have a combined, untapped oil reserve estimated at \$2,000 billion) to the energy hungry Asian Pacific economies. And who do you think are the major investors in this endeavour? Bush's chums in the oil industry, of course. Companies like Unocal, Total, Chevron, Pennzoil, BP and Exxon - the same people who have spent the last twenty years telling us that climate change is a myth while blocking any moves to wean ourselves from our fossil fuel habit. It's all connected... if you know where to look.

We need to remind ourselves of the fact that there was a before capitalism and that there will without doubt be an after capitalism



## Five dodgy things about the World Trade Organisation (WTO) you definitely don't want to know

Before we get started, what the hell is it? Well as far as we can make out, the WTO is an international body made of 148 countries (with many more like China and Russia queuing to join). It meets in secret to make deals about trade, which can range from bananas to the right to own patents on human tissue. Its decisions override the laws made by national governments, and its 'free trade will save the world' agenda is firmly dictated by multitudes of eager corporate lobbyists. Its 3rd major meeting takes (or took) place in Qatar in early November, and plans to launch a new 'trade round' to supercharge privatisation and calm jittery world markets still reeling from the events of September 11th.

**1 Look who's dying now** - As the WTO enters another round of handing over the sources of life, health and well-being to the multinationals, we can be sure the basic rule of the market will be vigorously applied - if you can't pay, you go without. Whether it's the crops you grow being exported while you starve, dying of AIDS because you can't pay for the drugs, or you're attacked by the state for drinking water out of your own well... Capitalism constantly needs new markets to feed on, and peoples' health and survival are about as tasty as it gets.

**2 Most WTO delegates don't live in caves.** They spend much of their time in luxurious hotels. But now they plan to allow corporations to put the squeeze on even tighter, with - watch out, here comes another dodgy acronym - GATS, or the General Agreement on Trade Services. If passed, GATS will allow companies free access to previously off-limits public services like hospitals, schools and public transport. And it's these same companies who will grab the big contracts when 'freedom' 'finally' arrives in Afghanistan. For more on GATS, see page 15

**3 Flimsy evidence** - WTO boss Mike Moore and 'our own' Clare Short insist that anyone who dares to oppose their 'free trade' agenda is a wealthy, naive westerner stealing prosperity from the mouths of the southern poor. Actually, it was southern resistance movements that were carrying the anti-capitalist torch long before the western media heard its own people shouting 'Enough!'

**4 We are all free traders now?** Capitalism's advocates would have us believe anyone fighting the WTO and the rest of their rackets (IMF, World Bank etc.) are the same as the dreaded Islamic fundamentalists. The fact is that the fundamentalists, exactly like the West's rulers, are capitalists. They all believe that ordinary people are there to be exploited if possible, and killed if necessary. Anti-capitalists, on the other hand, are working to end exploitation and war.

**5 It's all so damn connected...** The WTO signs trade treaties that put prices on everything: the natural world, human lives and human bodies. Then they're sold off to the highest bidder with the lowest standards. In the same way, a treaty supposed to deal with the effect of fossil fuel abuse on the planet (Kyoto) becomes a deal which enshrines the right of polluters to buy and sell the carbon they themselves pumped into the atmosphere.

# Strawberry Jam and Silent Genocide

Even before September 11th, things were looking grim in Afghanistan. Then there were approximately 6 million people dependent on international aid for their survival; now that figure is closer to 7.5 million. On September 16th, the US kindly demanded that Pakistan halt the truck convoys that were providing food and other supplies to the Afghans.

The withdrawal of many of the aid vehicles, combined with the bombing campaign, means that only about half of the necessary aid is now getting through. It doesn't take Einstein to work out that 3-4 million people are probably going to die in the very near future.

In response to this, the US dropped 37,000 individually wrapped food packages, each bearing the American flag and containing, among other things,

peanut butter, strawberry jam and a serviette. So, putting aside the intense cultural ineptitude that this cruel PR exercise demonstrates, what we are left with is enough food to feed 37,000 people for one day in a place where literally millions of people are starving to death.

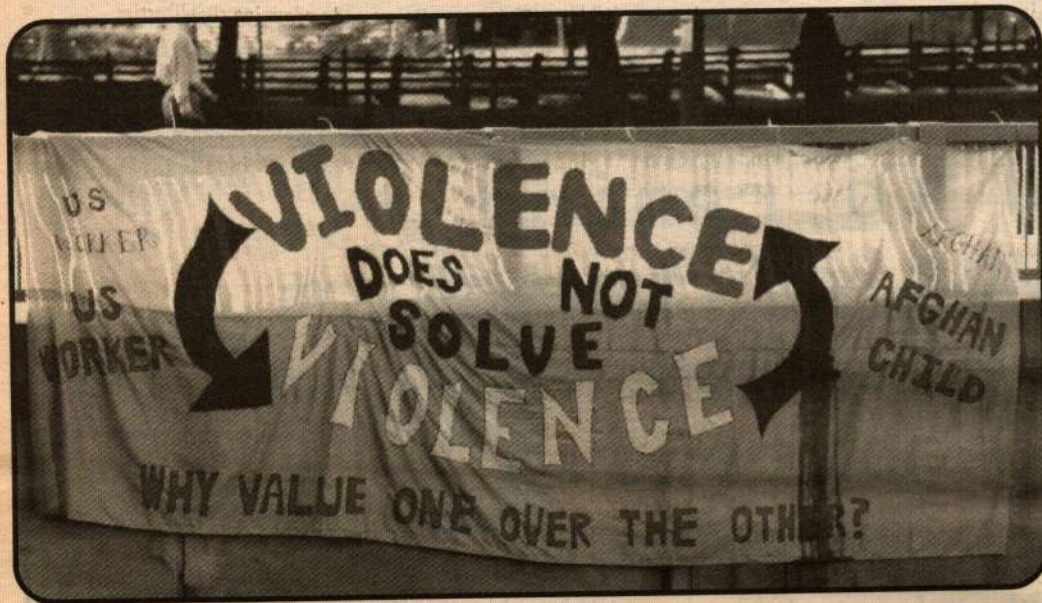
When you add to these figures the fact that Afghanistan has the highest concentration of unexploded landmines in the world, the true absurdity of the food drop becomes apparent.

Many major aid agencies (including OXFAM and Christian Aid) have pleaded with the British and American governments to stop the bombing, at least temporarily, so that food can get through before the harsh winter makes many areas totally inaccessible. The

plea was rejected. Clare Short's response is particularly quote-worthy.

"There are some agencies who quite frankly want to raise money and therefore want to be in the news" (Telegraph, 19th Oct., p.11)

Noam Chomsky has called what is happening a 'silent genocide'. Without much of a fuss it appears that we are prepared to accept what is effectively the murder of millions of innocent people in the name of a war that we can never win.



Why do people  
kill people  
who kill people  
to show that  
killing people  
is wrong?

## The Hidden agenda

A war for peace, women's lib and the starving kids in Afghanistan? Not likely when there's \$5 trillion of oil at stake.

At first this was simply a war on terror. Osama bin Laden, we were told, was behind the attacks and so he and his network must be destroyed. Then the Taliban were accused of sheltering him so they too must be eliminated.

It was not long before additional justification for taking action against Afghanistan was thrown in. Soon western leaders began talking about the need to overthrow tyranny, to counter the evils of fundamentalism and help a long suffering people build for a better future.

Even the suppression of women's rights has become a fashionable topic - the plight of Afghani girls denied an education or the brutal enforcement of strict codes of dress are now often raised issues by those supporting the offensive.

The idea that western leaders have the interests of the people of Afghanistan at heart, as they pound them with cluster bombs, is plainly ridiculous. As any observer with a memory that stretches back before September 11th could point out, the country has quite a history of being used and abused by the west. After all it was the Americans and the British who, during the Soviet occupation, did not hesitate to arm, aid and abet a host of extremists that can now be found within the ranks of the Taliban and Al'Qaida. After that they have by for over a decade while Afghans were subjected to further war, banditry and oppression.

Western leaders remained muted as both the Northern Alliance and the Taliban swept to power and began subjecting women to draconian diktats. Now they want to be thought of as the would be saviors of the Afghan people. The Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan (RAWA), whose members risk their lives demanding equal rights, are not buying any statements of concern - they have said that the bombing only leads to more suffering of innocent people.

In fact it is not simply Osama bin Laden or the Taliban which makes Afghanistan a target. Since long before September 11th major western oil companies have had their eyes on the country as the most favourable route for a new pipeline transporting the \$5 trillion worth of oil believed to be in the Casbian sea. However, as the oil giant Unocol pointed out "construction of the pipeline cannot begin until a recognised government is in place in Kabul that has the confidence of governments, lenders, and our company".

It seems this is precisely what Bush and Blair have set about achieving. Once again the great capitalist establishment is embarking upon a scheme to secure their control of the earth's resources. Once again it will be innocent civilians who suffer the consequences.

## IF ORDINARY PEOPLE BEHAVED LIKE- BRITISH AEROSPACE



# Symbols

**Business.** "This war will be long", announced the president of the planet. Bad news for the civilians who have died and will die. Good news for arms manufacturers, though.

The usefulness of going to war is irrelevant. What is relevant is the profitability of war. Since September 11 business has been in a steady boom for General Dynamics, Lockheed, Northrop Grumman, Raytheon, and other companies in the war industry. The market loves them.

Television rarely shows the victims. Like it did in the bombings of Iraq and Yugoslavia, TV is focused instead on showing the shopping cart of the latest models of weapons. In the world of the market, war isn't a tragedy - it's an international trade fair. Arms manufacturers need war like coat manufacturers need winter.

**Hollywood.** Reality imitates film. Kids get missiles from the film 'Atlantis' in their McDonald's Happy Meals and it gets harder and harder to tell blood from ketchup.

The Pentagon has invited a number of screenwriters and special effects experts to help guess at new terrorist threats and ways of defending America. According to Variety magazine, one of these was the screenwriter of the action movie 'Die Hard'.

**Wardrobe.** In one of the most widely seen images, the Hard to Kill Osama bin Laden wears a turban over his head, but he's also sporting US-military issue gear and wearing a Timex Watch-- made in the USA.

He too is made in the USA, like the other Muslim fundamentalists the CIA recruited and armed and brought to Afghanistan from 40 countries to fight Communism there. When the US celebrated their victory in that war, the president of Pakistan, Benazir Bhutto, warned Bush Senior: 'You have created a Frankenstein's Monster'. Her warning was in vain.

Two weeks before the towers fell, the world economy was falling. The Economist suggested to its readers that they 'find a parachute'. In the event, those who didn't have a parachute had, at least, a ready villain to strike at.

**Panic.** Humanity is feeling the symptoms of anthrax: headaches, skin rashes, shakes. We're all afraid to open our mail, and not because it's a huge electricity bill or the letter that says 'we regret to inform you that we are forced to cut off your services...'

Ukraine's military was still in service when an SA-5 missile struck a passenger plane and killed 78 people. Was it a mistake or did those 'smart bombs' know that passenger planes can be weapons? Will smart bombs next be attacking post offices?

**Weapons.** A US aircraft carrier, the Nimitz, spent a day in Uruguayan waters. The visit worried me. In my neighbourhood there is a building that looks a lot like a mosque. With smart bombs, you never know.

Luckily, nothing happened. Well, almost nothing: some Uruguayan politicians were invited to visit the carrier, the floating city of death, and it almost killed them. The plane that took them there landed badly and ended up with a wing in the water.

Thanks to the visit, we learned that the carrier costs \$4.5 billion dollars. According to UNICEF and other UN agencies, for the cost of three carriers like the Nimitz they could provide food and medicine for a year to every single hungry and sick child in the world-children who are dying at a pace of 40,000 a day.

**Pitching in to the effort.** It's not just Islamic terrorism that uses 'sleepers', but also state terrorism. One of the protagonists of Plan Condor in the years of South American military dictatorships, the Uruguayan colonel Manuel Cordero, has declared that the 'dirty war' is 'the only way' to fight terrorism, and that kidnappings, torture, assassination and disappearance are necessary. He has experience and is offering to pitch in to the effort.

The colonel says he listened to the speeches of President Bush and that he sees the speeches as the announcement of the Third World War. Unfortunately, he listened well.

**Precedents.** Like the colonel, the ambassador also has experience. John Negroponte, the US representative in the UN, threatens to take the war 'to other countries', and he knows what he's talking about.

A few years ago he took war to Central America. Negroponte was the patron of the terrorism of the Contras in Nicaragua and of the paramilitaries in Honduras. Reagan, the president at the time, said the same thing that today is said by Bush and his enemy bin Laden: it is all worth it.

**Victims.** This new war-is it against the Taliban dictatorship or the people who suffer it? How many civilians will die in the bombings?

Four Afghanis, who worked for the United Nations, were some of the first 'collateral damage' we received news of. All so symbolic: their work was deactivating landmines.

## Making a killing

We've all heard about how economies around the world are in recession, but while the Dow Jones average fell by 14 % after September 11th, stocks in US 'defence companies' soared by up to 39%. One of the many companies standing to make a tidy profit post-September 11th is Lockheed Martin. Lockheed Martin is a 'defence company', which in everyday language means they design and

manufacture killing machines for sale to the highest bidder. Like the rest of the arms trade they're good capitalists, and don't let inconveniences like human life get in the way of 'free trade'. Lockheed Martin has just won a big fat contract worth \$200 billion from the US military to supply the next-generation of stealth 'joint strike' F-35 fighter jets. Just an eighth of that \$200

billion would ease world hunger, but maybe that would be flaunting market forces. Lest all this paints a negative picture of Lockheed Martin, rest assured they're good guys really, as they're running a fund for victims of September 11th. Whether they'll do the same for the victims of their bloody products remains to be seen - they haven't yet for all their other victims - so don't hold your breath.

## Osama bin Bush vs George W Laden

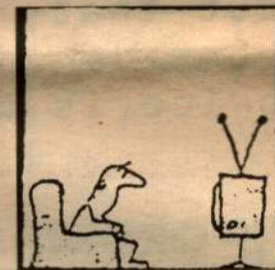
- is the spoiled son of a powerful businessman, from extremely wealthy construction family
- has declared a holy war ("Jihad") against his "enemies"; believes any nation not with him is against him; believes God is on his side, and that any means are justified
- supported by extreme fundamentalist religious leaders who preach hatred, intolerance, subjugation of women, mistreatment and worse of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered people, and persecution of non-believers
- was not elected by a majority of people in a free and fair democratic election
- operates through clandestine organisation (CIA) with agents in many countries; uses bombing, assassination, other terrorist tactics
- using war as pretext to clamp down on dissent and undermine civil liberties

- is the spoiled son of a powerful politician, from extremely wealthy oil family
- has declared a holy war ("crusade") against his "enemies"; believes any nation not with him is against him, believes God is on his side, and that any means are justified
- supported by extreme fundamentalist religious leaders who preach hatred, intolerance, subjugation of women, mistreatment and worse of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered people, and persecution of non-believers
- was not elected by a majority of people in a free and fair democratic election
- operates through clandestine organisation (al Qaeda) with agents in many countries; uses bombing, assassination, other terrorist tactics
- using war as pretext to clamp down on dissent and undermine civil liberties

Afghanistan is the most landmined country in the world. Under its earth are 10 million mines, ready to kill or mutilate whoever steps on them. Many were placed by the Russians, when they invaded. Many were placed against the Russians, by donation of the US, by the mujahaddin.

Afghanistan has never accepted the international agreement prohibiting antipersonnel mines. Neither has the US. Today the caravans of refugees try to escape, by foot or by donkey, the missiles that are raining from the sky above and the mines that explode from the ground below.

**Tears.** Rigoberta Menchu, daughter of the Mayan people, a people of weavers, warns that we are poised 'with hope balancing on a needle.' And that's how it is. On a needle. In the global insane asylum. Between a man who thinks he's Mohammad and another who thinks he's Buffalo Bill. Between the terrorism of attacks and the terrorism of war. Violence is unravelling us. (by Eduardo Galeano - Oct 18th)



## A FIESTA FOR LIFE AGAINST DEATH

For some of us September 11th had significance months before hand, as we planned and plotted to bring down the capitalist trade in death and destruction, with an action on that day.

The British government holds the Defence System Equipment International (DSEi) arms fair every two years. It is an MOD & DTI affair where domestic and international weapons manufacturers get to display all their dirt of the day: big guns, bombs, planes and boats. The lot. And they are in fine company as countries from all over the world come to make their latest procurements.

Traditionally protest and direct action against this event have been the preserve of established disarmament NGOs and peace groups. This year a new collective called Disarm DSEi decided to get

in on the act. Composed of activists from London Reclaim the Streets, Wombles, Campaign Against the Arms Trade and Earth First!, Disarm DSEi sought to bring the arms trade out of single issuedness and bring a focus to the post capitalist movement.

Entrance to this event is by strict invitation only, but many of us had positive experiences of gate crashing; the City of London on June 18th 1999 for instance. The 'Fiesta for Life against death' was to bring the bright, colourful, noisy, celebratory having-it-ness of street parties to Canning Town and the ExCeL Centre. We wanted to close the event in a positive way.

**Best laid plans.** It was undoubtedly one of the most visual mass actions for some time. The verve

of everybody in their pink and silver costumes, the giant puppets and props and the samba music certainly brought the spirit of the fiesta to the ExCeL Centre. For one brief but predestined moment there was a push for the main gate but not even the Wombles or Tactical Frivolity could change the balance of the day. We had been from the start totally pigged out.

Away from the fiesta, and on succeeding days, there were numerous interventions by affinity groups which hindered and harassed the event further; but on a day when war broke out, the only significantly uplifting movements in Canning Town were those of the share prices of mercenary capitalists protected behind ever present and large numbers of police. **So who are the terrorists?**

# Bridges not bombs

The thousands of murders of September 11th WERE a major crime against humanity. But it is important that we understand the political and economic aims of the hijackers and their accomplices. This will give us a better understanding of what has happened and why.

I will attempt to contemplate the events from three points of view: the military Islamic fundamentalists, the capitalist globalisers and 'us'.

## The Islamic point of view.

On a certain level, the attacks can be traced back to an accelerating process of globalization that started in Saudi Arabia in the late 1990s. Other very important factors have been the hegemonic role of the US in the region and

the building of US bases right in Saudi Arabia.

It all started when the Saudi government ratified a new foreign investment law, under which "Wholly owned foreign businesses will have the right to own land..." This land, effectively offered to US and European oil companies, is Islam's most sacred land.

Perhaps certain elements hoped that if enough turmoil could be generated by the attacks in the US, they would generate a strategic US retreat from the Arabian Peninsula just as the bombing in Lebanon in 1983 led to the US pull out there.

On the basis of this analysis, then, the September 11 attacks on New York City and Washington DC were the "collateral damage" of a struggle over the fate of oil politics in its heartland.

## The Bush and corporations point of view:

According to a US oil magnate, "The energy reserves in or adjacent to the Caspian region are in fact many times greater than those of the North Sea...". As with all wars in which USA gets involved, oil is an important aspect. In the Caspian case, many members of the Bush administration have direct involvement in the oil companies that are heavily invested in this area.

More embarrassing and endangering for many people in the US government and in the governments of the Middle East is the fact that they have financed and trained the very generation of dissidents who are now hunted under the banner of "terrorism."

## How all this affects us.

The events of September 11 and their consequences have given governments the opportunity to close public spaces and to repress dissent from whatever source in the interests of "public safety."

But fortunately, the overwhelming majority of people

on this planet do not fit into the "us" versus "them" model that Bush's war configuration of September 11 requires.

## What can we do in this situation?

Our first task is obviously to mobilize against a US-led war on Afghanistan or any other country the Bush administration picks to be a target for its "war" on "terrorism."

We also need to build solidarity within our communities, but especially with and within the Arab and immigrant communities. These people are now under attack on all fronts, in the media and on the streets.

To begin to move again we must re-see our own past in order to understand our future in this context.

Let us remember our own story. From Seattle in November 1999 to Genoa in July 2001, the anti-capitalist movement expressed in the First World the recognition that the supranational agencies (IMF, World Bank, WTO, G8) are illegitimate on two counts: they have failed to solve these problems and they have no democratic responsibility to humanity.

The anti-capitalist movement, which had started in the mid-1980s with the resistance against structural adjustment in the countries of the Third World, had finally surfaced in the streets of the First. The antiglobalization movement challenged these supranational agencies.

It took the interests of the poor and dispossessed of Asia, Africa and the Americas seriously. Hundreds of thousands of people worldwide were willing to risk arrest, beatings and torture to project these struggles as well as their own into the precincts of the powerful.

At the very least, these demonstrations were able to stop or disrupt their meetings, and to take them out of a conveniently designed anonymity. The economic and political crises caused by globalization have intensified in the last two years. Naturally, the official response to the movement has become increasingly violent and repressive.

In this context, the priority of the anti-capitalist movement is to offer valid alternatives to the deadly politics of both the capitalist and the Islamic fundamentalists.

It is crucial that the anti-capitalist movement begin to build connections with the Middle East. We must address their more urgent demands. This making of connections will present many difficulties, logistic, cultural and otherwise; but a starting point is to make connections with the immigrant Middle Eastern and West Asian communities in our own countries.

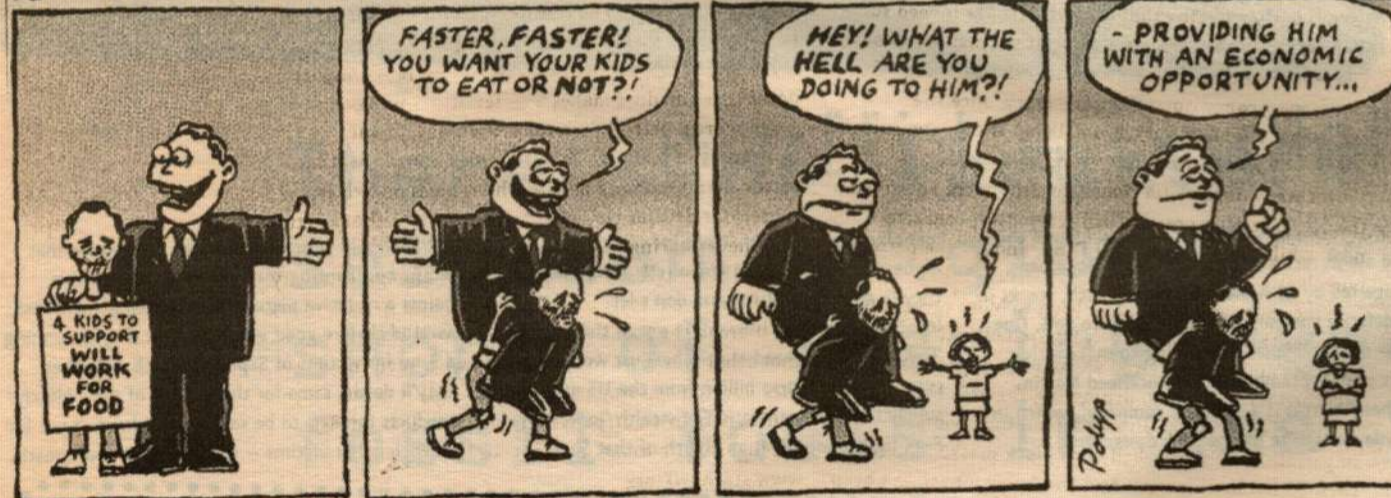
The power of the anti-capitalist movement is in our potential to build a real, not simply ideological, political struggle against globalizing capitalism.)

*This article is a very edited version of an essay (www.thecommoner.org) written on 10/6/2001 by George Caffentzis.*

*The original aim was to classify and explain some facts and immediate consequences of the killings of September 11. We hope that in trying to make his essay more accessible and easier to read we haven't betrayed the honest intentions of its author.*

In 1996, Madeline Albright, the then US secretary of state, was asked on national television what she felt about the fact that 500,000 Iraqi children had died and are still dying as a result of US and UK economic sanctions. She replied that it was a 'very hard choice', but that, 'all things considered, we think the price is worth it.'

## IF ORDINARY PEOPLE BEHAVED LIKE-



## RESISTANCE TO WAR

In the weeks since September 11th, over half a million people have demonstrated in over 550 actions and rallies around the world...and that's just the ones reported on the internet... there is a frequently updated list of protests worldwide at:

[http://pax.protest.net/Peace/protest\\_numbers.html](http://pax.protest.net/Peace/protest_numbers.html)  
for actions, check out [www.indymedia.org.uk](http://www.indymedia.org.uk) and follow the links...

While hundreds and thousands have marched all over Japan, Belgium, England, Germany, Sweden, Pakistan, Greece, Italy, Canada, USA, Spain, Indonesia, Holland, France, Australia, and Scotland to name a just a few, some of the direct actions and smaller protests are listed on these pages...

**Faslane Peace Camp, Scotland** The Sunday the bombing happened 3 people occupied a crane with banners saying 'Welfare not Warfare' for 12 hours. The next day 800-1000 folk came to a rally ... across town activists locked onto the roof of the MOD building holding signs saying 'what do the dead eat?' in response to the dropping of food after bombs. The Big Blockade, took place on October 22nd. 500 people came from all around, effectively shutting down the Faslane nuclear base - just under 150 nicked

Over 400 high-school students went on strike on 26th October in Lille (France). They marched behind the banner "NEITHER WARS, NOR BORDERS" Together with the students from 3 universities, ongoing actions are planned

**In Turkey** On November 1st, Anarchist Platform demonstrated against war, poverty, and capitalism in

Istanbul. With bread (symbolizing poverty) and black flags in their hands, anarchists burned American and Mc Donald's flags. Police attacked the anarchists violently and 58 anarchists were arrested.

**Brighton and Bristol** October 11th, about 20 people occupied the armed forces recruitment office in Brighton, as a protest against the war. Despite uniformed squaddies on the door, the protesters barged their way in, shutting down the office for 2 hours.. [nwbtcw@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:nwbtcw@yahoo.co.uk)

**Anarchists in Bristol** In early October, the windows of the armed forces recruitment offices in the centre were graffitied with glass etching fluid; "War of Lies", accompanied by a paint bomb and glued locks... and for a fluffy tail end ;-), a world record attempt at the most people hugging was held at Wollongong's South beach, Oz, on the October 1st.



# Why act now?

'All Gods and systems have a secret vulnerability, they cease to exist when people no longer believe in them'

The days are short and cold, the streets are uninviting. The political climate seems as chilly as the winter winds, and everybody is saying that 9/11 changed everything. Why take action now? The government, the media, even some of our own allies warn us that public opinion is no longer with us, that repression will be high, that any action we take will be too costly both personally and politically, that we should hold back and wait. But The WTO, the IMF, the World Bank, and the other institutions of corporate capitalism are not waiting. They continue to meet, to argue for a new round of trade negotiations, to impose policies that result in a widening gap between rich and poor, and a staggering global death toll. And as winter nears, the potential rises for massive starvation in Afghanistan if relief trucks cannot deliver supplies because of our bombs.

And so on bad days we hear our own inner voices murmuring, 'It's hopeless. We've lost. The forces we face are too strong for us. Give up.' These voices seem reasonable, sensible. But any Witch can recognize a spell being cast. A spell is a story we tell ourselves that shapes our emotional and psychic world. The media, the authorities tell a story so pervasive that most people mistake it for reality. We're fighting a righteous war against the Source of All Evil, and everyone supports Bush, and corporate control is the only way to be safe and to provide what we need, and to question is Evil, too.

The counterspell is simple: tell a different story. Pull back the curtain: expose their story for the false tale it is. Act 'as if'.

Act as if we weren't doomed, as if what we did in the next weeks and months could shift the balance of fate.

Act as if the movement were coming back stronger than ever, attracting thousands and hundreds of thousands who have had their eyes opened by the war.

Act as if this movement were the most creative, visionary, inspiring, funny, welcoming, transforming and truly revolutionary movement that had ever been. As if we had new language, new tactics, new ways of communicating that could waken the dormant dissent and the sleeping visions in every heart.

Act as if a whole new public dialogue was beginning outside the boxes drawn by our traditional political lines and our TV sets.

Act as if all the different factions in our movement were learning how to support each other, how to work in true coalition and act with true solidarity. As if all who should be allies were able to come together and work for our common goals.

Act as if we were going to win. November, two years after Seattle, will see the WTO meeting in Qatar November 9-13. Imagine hundreds of Seattles springing up in the many local and regional actions being planned, opposition rising up all over the world.

The IMF and the World Bank have rescheduled their meeting for Ottawa on November 17 and 18. Imagine the demonstrations now being called against them and against the war astounding the world, confounding the police, shutting down the meetings and revitalizing the movement.

The School of the Americas Watch is having its annual action that same weekend in Fort Benning, Georgia. Imagine that action getting the attention it deserves, awakening the conscience of the people of the United States to the role our government has played in training state terrorists around the globe.

But won't these actions alienate and polarize people? Maybe, if they're ill conceived, gratuitously violent, or simply a matter of screaming the old slogans of the sixties over bullhorns. Or if they're timid, apologetic, whining, they may simply leave people bored and yawning. But our silence will not change public opinion, will not educate people or get them thinking again about larger issues. Actions that are creative, vibrant, confident and visionary, actions that directly and clearly confront the institutions we oppose and pose alternatives can be empowering both to those who take part and to those who hear of them.

We need to advance, not retreat, to take the political space we want and claim it. If we silence ourselves, we're tacitly agreeing that our protests are indeed some distant kin to the terrorists' acts. If we insist that our voices be heard, that open dissent is not terrorism, but the deepest commitment to democracy, once the inevitable vitriol wears off, we'll find that we've gained legitimacy and shifted the ground of the dialogue. The longer we wait to claim that space, the more rigidified the patterns of oppression will grow. We need to act now, while the future is still fluid, and set the pattern ourselves.

Since September 11th, I've been to more rallies and marches than I can count. I've marched with Gandhian pacifists and white-haired women in wheelchairs. I've marched with dancing, drumming Pagans. I've marched with Socialists and militants screaming about imperialism. I've marched with black masked anarchists surrounded by riot cops. And you know what? It's been



okay. The police have behaved like police behave, sometimes restrained, sometimes provocative, occasionally vicious-but that's not new. At times we met counter demonstrators, but never been more than a handful. And we often received unexpected support. I've seen construction workers flash peace signs at the Black Bloc. Of course, our fears aren't just based on fictions. The authorities command real force, real tear gas, real clubs, real guns, real jails. Real people do die, go to prison, suffer. So might we. But fear makes things worse than they are. Fear limits our vision and our ability to take in information, makes the power holders seem omnipotent, and leads to our suppressing ourselves, saving the authorities the cost and trouble of doing it. And despair leads to paralysis.

The counterspell for fear is courage: facing the possibility of the worst and then going ahead with what you know is right. The counterspell for despair is action in service of a vision. The counterspell for paralysis is stubborn, persistent passion. Even if we're wrong, if nothing we do does makes a difference, courage and passion are a better place to be than hopelessness, cynicism and fear. If the authorities repress us, that's better than becoming people who repress ourselves. If we see our dreams ripped out of our hands, that's better than never daring to dream at all.

And if we tell our own stories with enough intensity and focus, we'll start to believe them, and so will others. We'll break the spells that bind us. We'll start to want that other world we say is possible with such intensity that nothing can stop us or deny us. All it takes is our willingness to act from vision, not from fear, to risk hoping, to dare to act for what we love.

[www.starhawk.org](http://www.starhawk.org)

Reclaim the Streets occupy a motorway and turn the tarmac into a beach - London July 1996.



## WOMEN SPEAK OUT

Women and children are 90% of those killed and maimed in armed conflict, and 80% of refugees worldwide... Throughout history, women have been crossing geographical, cultural and ideological borders in search of peace.

Women have been prominent in active opposition to the war and vocal in declaring it 'Not in our name' - many of the vigils, pickets and Women in Black events have not been reported anywhere... but they've been happening everywhere... from Kosovo to Korea, India to Indiana. In some places, just standing together carries a risk.

**National Garments Workers Federation** organized an **Anti War Women Workers Rally** in Dhaka, Bangladesh on 19th October. More than 500 participated in the rally. The main slogan was "Stop War - Save our workplaces - Save our workers" - making the link between war, recession and globalised capitalism.

**Faslane:** On September 23rd the convoy support vehicle was stopped as it accompanied a warhead vehicle into Faslane, Scotland. Three women dressed in pink & silver walked hand in hand, stopped the vehicle and climbed on top, stopping the convoy. It was a call for women to take action and to demand no-one bombed Afghanistan.

**The Philippines - Women in Purple & Black GABRIELA Network (GABNet)**, a women's solidarity organization, held a silent, candlelight vigil on October 29. GABNet calls on all women to protest the US's war of aggression. Philippine support for the US will lead to increased prostitution and trafficking of Filipinas at military bases in the Philippines. The current war could also mean the use of sexual violence against the women in Afghanistan.

**Uganda:** Kaabong Women's group, Karamoja District, have been holding public silent prayers for the victims of New York, Washington and Afghanistan -

Anti-war pickets have been held weekly in London, Sheffield, Manchester, and a call has gone out for 9,000 to surround the Base (Menwith Hill satellite tracking station spy base, Yorks) on December 12th [FlossieMintballs@aol.com](mailto:FlossieMintballs@aol.com)

A network of women all over the world, will start taking the message that they oppose this war, and that there are other visions and paradigms that need to be shared in the next few weeks. If the leaders and the media refuse to listen, they will start passing the message, just among women - across all borders, to the other side of the world. Start listening now.

# Operation 'injuring freedom'

The all-new anti-terror laws  
and what they mean to you.

"Returning from Genoa and the G8 summit I was stopped by a copper at Dover and questioned under the Terrorism Act. I find it a bit worrying that a nurse carrying a Unison banner is now deemed a threat to the state!"

*Anti-globalisation protester from the UK.*

As the government's Terrorism Act hit the statute books earlier this year, over twenty overseas political groups with bases in the UK found themselves outlawed. In one stroke, the criminalisation of immigrant communities reached new levels.

But it's not only aimed at them. There's no doubt the new "anti-terrorist" proposals are not simply aimed at political refugees from abroad. Already police can "demand the removal of facial covering or gloves", clearly targeting anti-capitalist and anti-GMO activists.

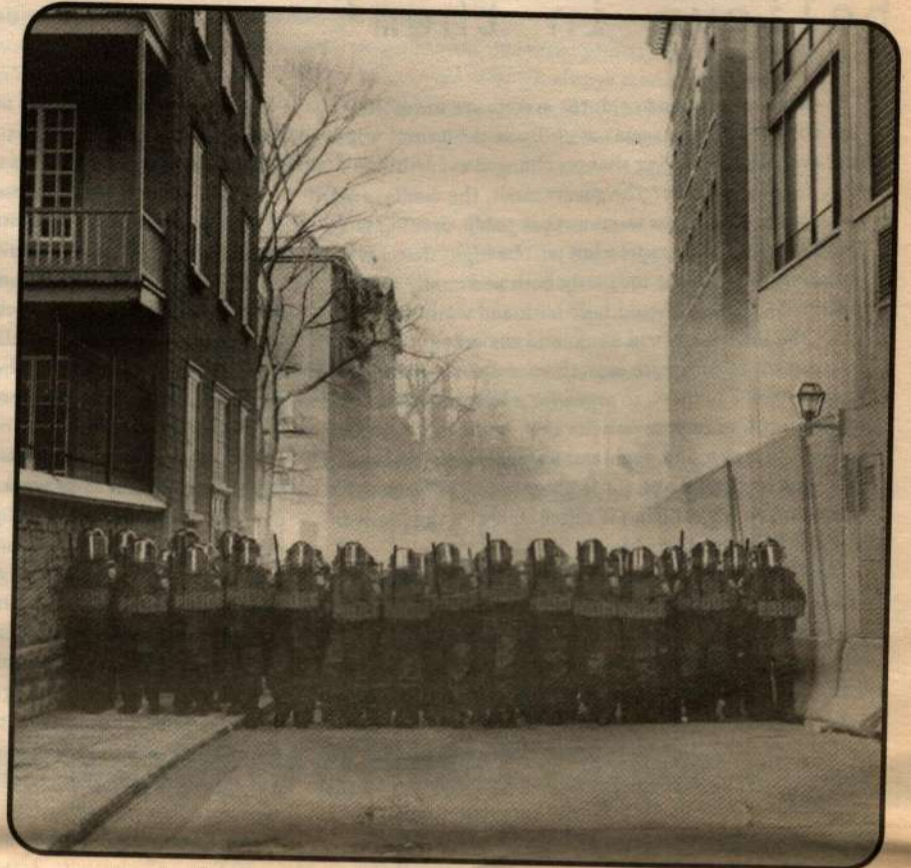
The Act has also already widened the definition of terrorism to include "interfering with an electronic system" or causing "serious damage to property" if it's "for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause". So if you smash a McDonald's window because you're drunk, you're just a drunk. If you do it because McDonald's are, well, the personification of everything that's worst about today's world, you're a terrorist...

But those tireless warriors for freedom in the Cabinet aren't content with that. Also on the big scary table are new powers for the police and other agencies

of the state to monitor bank accounts and financial transactions, as well as our communications data including e-mails, faxes, Internet usage and mobile phone calls.

Hidden in the small print of these proposals is a new definition of "terrorist" that has received surprisingly little publicity. The new terrorist will be someone who aims to "seriously alter the political, economic or social structure". Sure, all terrorists want to do that, but so does every person involved in politics, from Tories who want to reform the EU, to anti-capitalists who want to create a world that does not reward and encourage greed.

Within days of the September 11 attack, ministers were clamouring for the introduction of ID cards and increased police surveillance powers. All these laws pose a genuine and immediate threat to the very freedoms they claim to defend. But there are campaigns underway to reverse this corrosive legislation, often run by the outlawed groups themselves. It could be time for the direct action movement to work out how far to extend solidarity to outlawed groups.



## Something rotten on the home front

On September 26th, whilst most Americans were nervously eyeing suspicious envelopes, the police officer who shot 19 year old Timothy Thomas was acquitted of reduced manslaughter charges by a municipal judge. Timothy was shot in the US, but for observers of the Noble Defenders of Democracy in this country, the scene is depressingly familiar. A young unarmed black man is shot dead with little or no justification and the agencies of the state, including the justice system, close ranks to protect the murderers.

In the past 30 years there have been 1000 deaths in British police custody. Not one officer has been convicted.

These include Gambian asylum seeker Ibrahima Sey, who was forced to the ground, sprayed repeatedly with

CS gas and held face down for 15 minutes, by which time he was dead. And Joy Gardner who died of suffocation after police officers wrapped 13 feet of medical tape round her head.

After a lot of hard work by families and friends, an inquest ruled that the death of Shiji Lapite in custody was an "unlawful killing". The Crown Prosecution Service, however, declined to prosecute the officers responsible. The list goes on. And on.

The claim that police are here for the protection of us, the people, is revealed by this list as the absurd and offensive lie that it is. The remit of the police force is to keep things exactly the way they are, to keep power firmly in the hands of the rich and powerful and away from the poor and oppressed.

Let's challenge this. Next time you see someone being harassed, or unjustly arrested, ask the cops for their numbers, and for their reasons. Just imagine you were stopped on the streets for no other reason than your looks. Wouldn't you like passers-by to do something more than to see how the police car takes you away?

To find out more, see the film "Injustice". Police have been extremely successful in preventing people from seeing it, by threatening libel cases that nobody except them can afford to take on - regardless of whether they'd win in the end....

Or visit their website: [www.injusticefilm.co.uk](http://www.injusticefilm.co.uk)

## Does your photofit?

**Now who else can we suspect?** Everyone's favourite scapegoats, asylum seekers, are also at the sharp end of the stick as usual. New draconian measures were revealed by David Blunkett on 29th October 2001, targeting some of the most vulnerable members of UK society. And this terrorising of innocent, disadvantaged and often bewildered refugees and asylum seekers is taking place under the umbrella of the "War on Terror"!

The new "reforms" include the introduction of smart cards containing fingerprint and photographic details in January 2002, which by September will replace the voucher system, allowing the Home Office to determine the location of any asylum seeker wherever they use it. And use it they must if they wish to eat. Various high security centres are being established to ensure that asylum seekers can be arrested, isolated and deported as

quickly and efficiently as possible. Those even suspected of terrorism will have their application for asylum automatically rejected. This can include any form of radical dissent - under new laws both Nelson Mandela and Mahatma Gandhi would be classified as terrorists.

Most of these people are direct victims of our foreign policy and consumption-centred lifestyles; forced to leave their homeland because their way of life and their independence has been destroyed. When they try and seek a safer place to live here, we arrest and process them as if they were electric goods on a conveyor belt. They may well suffer abuse, beatings, detention, and isolation before they're sent straight back to the misery - or the death they were trying to escape. That's if they are not murdered by some random act of racism, as happened in Glasgow in August, to a young man who had

been here for two weeks.

In a global economy, based on free movement of capital, where businesses can move where they like, preventing the free movement of people not only doesn't work, but it is also hypocritical. Trying to stop refugees seeking asylum and demonising those that try, fuels the fires of prejudice, instead of facing the real enemy. But no borders will ever stop people when they have absolutely nothing left to lose. And the more that ordinary people come to see things that happen to other people, can also happen to themselves, the more we will see what we have in common.

# PGA conference in Bolivia

## A global resistance movement comes to the home of the Water Wars

Peoples' Global Action (PGA) is a world wide network for communication and co-ordination between grassroots social movements and all those fighting the destruction of humanity and planet by the present world order. The PGA network has been a key force behind the Global Days of Action and 'anti-globalisation' events in recent years.

PGA has no members or constituted legal identity, no central funds or spokespeople, and instead relies on grassroots groups for its continued existence.

Internationally and regionally, the conferences are organised by different groups on a rota basis.

Since its origins, and early focus on opposing 'free trade', PGA has expanded to oppose all forms of domination, and to propose local alternatives based on autonomy, direct action and self-organisation.

Between the 16th and the 23rd of November 2001 PGA held its 3rd Conference, in Cochabamba, Bolivia. Many of us first heard about the city when it emerged as a key symbol of the global struggle against privatisation. In

late 1999, the water supply was privatised, the prices increased by 300% and it became illegal to form autonomous water co-operatives. Tens of thousands took to the streets, and through taking direct action now control the city's supply, an event ignored by the corporate media.

As the conference was held a few days after the September 11th, many delegates with valid visas were detained at the airport, one was sent back. Many of them were released after pressure from human rights organisations and the leader of Movement towards Socialism (MAS). MAS is a union of Bolivian cocaleros who have chosen to form a political party.

There were participants from Asia, the Pacific, Australasia, South Africa, Europe and the Americas (stretching between Alaska and Patagonia).

**Cultural differences and political contradictions.** How people organise and participate in discussions is culturally specific: reflected in styles of presentation, decision making processes, and language.

An example of this at the most basic level is the word non-violence: in India it means respect for life, in the West it means also respect for private property.

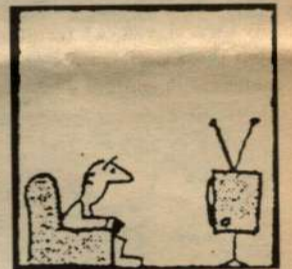
These differences reflect deeper perceived power relations between 'North' and 'South' and how colonial history affects how we work together. Some of the problems highlight the fact that some people are closer to power than others due to their class, race, place of birth and gender.

**Gender** - For the first time it was openly recognised that sexism still exists even within the spaces of PGA. This and further discussion on gender resulted in a specific gender declaration, and the creation of an environment where sexism and sexual harassment are made unacceptable.

In some way we bring contradictions into our networks, or rather the contradictions between how the world is now, how we would like it to be and how to get there. But these contradictions are what fuels our desire for change, by facing them we move forward.

The third PGA conference showed another important shift: previously northern groups were seen primarily as acting in solidarity with southern struggles, in a one way direction. Now there is an understanding that northern groups have their own struggles, highlighted recently in Seattle, Prague, Gothenburg and Genoa, and the repression 'northern' groups have been going through.

**The future** - The conference agreed that we need further regionalise and localise the network. We need to move beyond Global Days of Action; to take action in our local areas, rather than travel to large protests, and to get involved in sustained campaigns like popular education campaigns and local discussions and consultations, and in the construction of grassroots alternatives to the capitalist system.



## Declaracion de Cochabamba

On a day of September in year 2001, solstice of spring in the continental territory of Abya Yala (Latin America), women and men from various cultures gathered in Cochabamba. We address the peoples of the world thus. In these days of uncertainty and tension, war announcements and witch hunting, we want to talk to you about hope and affection, about fear and sorrow.

We have seen the horror and desperation in the faces of ordinary people affected at random in the attacks on New York and Washington. We know this pain; we have daily experience and memory of terror and unnecessary violence.

Minute after minute, hour after hour, day after day, millions of innocent and anonymous victims wear the same look of horror in their own suffering

of the irrational violence in the middle of silence and indifference.

Since the beginnings of humankind, the struggle for power and dominance by a few has immersed peoples in bloody and cruel battles. We see with pain that they haven't learnt to live in peace, justice and mutual respect, and they go on spilling innocent blood on the soil.

The historical memory of our dominated peoples helps us understand the intensity of sorrow, horror and anxiety these families of innocent victims feel: we express our deepest solidarity.

We hope that the experience of horror that our North American brothers and sisters went through helps them understand how cruel and absurd the abuse of military power is, and extends their

solidarity against any type of attacks on civil populations.

It is for this reason that we condemn crimes such as the strikes announced by the US government and their allies on civil populations. These rushed reactions only feed hatred, violence and terror, speeding the systematic destruction of the planet.

Our philosophy is opposed to militarism and domination. We love freedom and equilibrium between all peoples: the vital strength of our struggle is to defend lives and life, so we will oppose the absurd war announced by the United State through global actions.

Cochabamba, 23rd of September 2001

## Call to action against the WTO in Qatar

THEY CAN RUN BUT THEY CAN'T HIDE:  
WE ARE EVERYWHERE!  
RESIST THE WTO THROUGHOUT THE WORLD  
THROUGH DIRECT ACTION AND CIVIL  
DISOBEDIENCE WHEREVER COMMUNITIES ARE  
DESTROYED AND ECOSYSTEMS SACRIFICED FOR  
THE SAKE OF FREE TRADE!

Peoples Global Action calls on all grassroots social movements, community based organisations, trade unions, student organisations, indigenous peoples, farmers organisations, autonomous collectives and everyone who wishes to participate around the world, to carry out actions against the World Trade Organisation (WTO) during the next ministerial summit in Doha, Qatar, November 9th-13th, 2001.

The WTO's aim is very simple: to remove anything that gets in the way of big business and free trade, upholding the freedom for multinational companies to act as they please. The WTO polices international trade and continues to set an agenda that places profit above people and the planet.

Faced with a rapidly expanding grassroots resistance to capitalist globalisation, the WTO has fled to an isolated desert dictatorship for its next meeting.

Already built into the agenda are three immensely destructive trade agreements: the Agreement on Agriculture (AoA), the General Agreement on Trade

and Services (GATS) and the Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS). Between them, they cover issues like: the privatisation of health, education and water, forcing GMO foods and seeds on member countries and patents on life forms.

Regardless of whether the WTO meetings continue or not, we will be in the streets, because the streets are ours. Grassroots organisations all over the world are organising the following kinds of actions and call on others to do the same:

- Awareness-raising campaigns against WTO and the effect of their policies on a global and local level: community based consultations, counter-meetings, public debates, publications.
- Maximum disruption of the work of the trade ministers attending the conference: demands for the publication of national positions, blocking of communications or of departures of delegations, etc.
- Mass coordinated actions on a national and international level: work stoppages, road blocks, occupation of stock exchanges and other financial institutions (New York, San Francisco, Sao Paolo...), liberation of grain stocks (India) on Nov. 9th.
- Decentralised local action: land occupations, creative demonstrations of grassroots alternatives...

## Can we choose a different future?

**Yes - by acting together!** - People are already taking action against privatisation in millions of ways across the world. By linking up globally we make our separate struggles stronger and we can act together to challenge capitalism at its very foundations - our everyday lives!

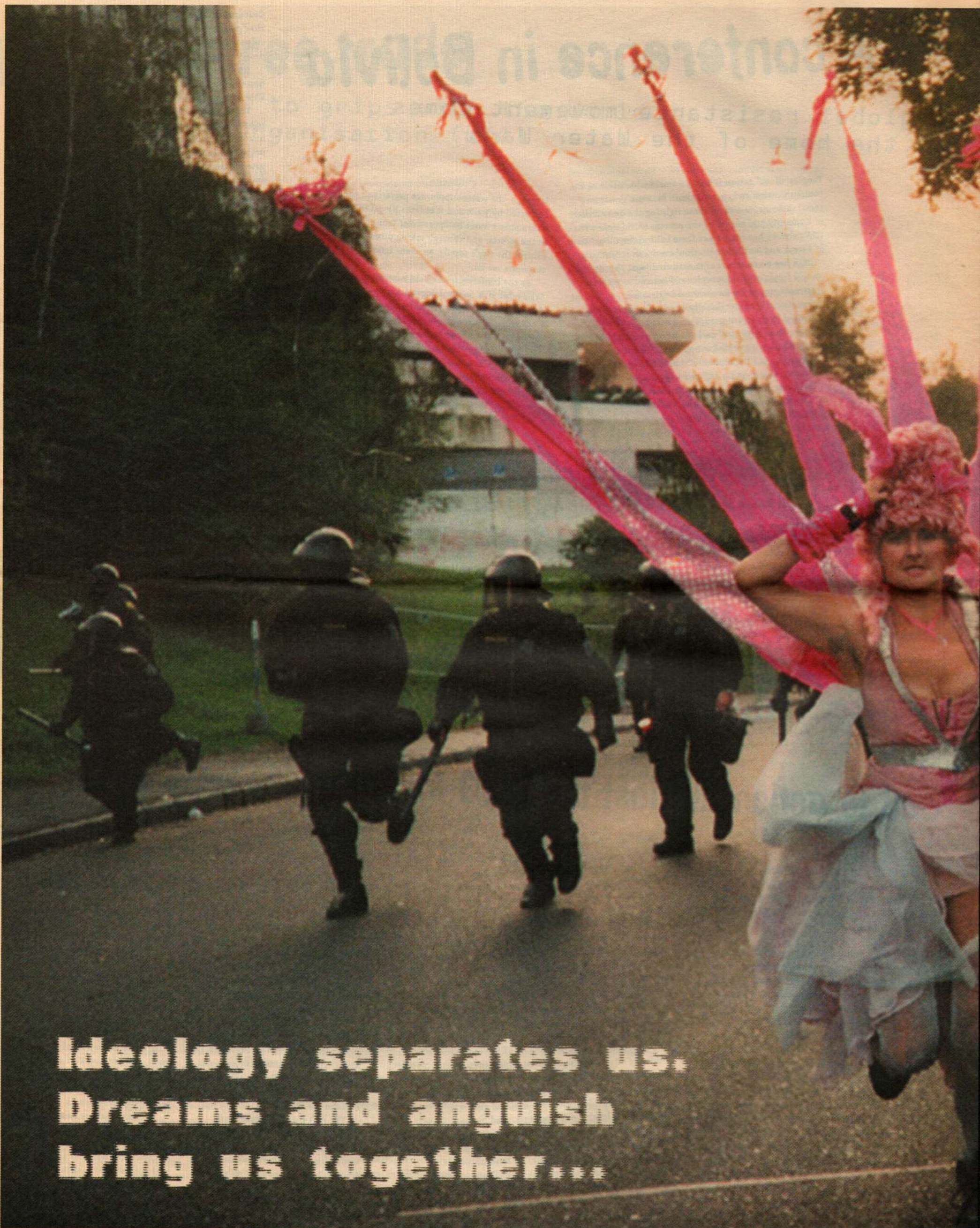
Peoples' Global Action is a network, formed in 1998 from a meeting of groups from both the global North and South, including Mexico's Zapatistas, Indian farmers, Colombia's U'wa indigenous people, and London Reclaim the Streets.

The PGA network has helped publicise and co-ordinate some of the recent global days of action against capitalism and its various institutions; financial centres on June 18th 1999, which included a Carnival Against Capitalism in the City of London; the

WTO in Seattle on November 30th 1999; and the IMF & World Bank in Prague on September 26th 2000. These days were made up of demonstrations, actions and meetings across the globe - 110 cities on September 26th - of which the media reported only a handful.

The 3rd PGA international conference was held in September 2001. Three women from the UK were there, and are now available for speaking and showing slides at meetings etc. Please contact them on [pgabolivia@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:pgabolivia@yahoo.co.uk)

It's time to share more information about our many movements and actions for positive social and ecological change, and a world without political parties or leaders. PGA website: [www.pga.org](http://www.pga.org)



**Ideology separates us.  
Dreams and anguish  
bring us together...**



# Enduring free trade

## Getting to grips with the World Trade Organisation (WTO)

**Purpose** The WTO was established in 1995 as part of the Uruguay Round of trade negotiations. It is the only international organisation charged with enforcing a set of rules to govern international trade, including the Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS), the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), and the Agreement on Agriculture, (AoA) among others.

**Membership** The WTO is made up of 142 member countries and 32 nations with observer status. The WTO Director-General is currently Mike Moore of New Zealand but he will be replaced by Supachai Panitchpakdi from Thailand in September 2002.

**Secretariat** The WTO Secretariat is made up of over 500 staff in a Geneva office. Like civil servants, they carry out work on behalf of the WTO members. The Secretariat's budget for 2000 was approximately £35 million.

**Ministerial meetings** The WTO's ministerial conference, which includes all member nations and meets every two years, is the WTO's highest authority. The last (3rd) ministerial took place in Seattle and this one (4th) is taking place in Doha, Qatar November 9-13th.

**Democracy** Officially, decisions in the WTO are made by voting or consensus. In practice, they are dominated by rich countries, especially the G7 countries (US, Canada, Japan and the European Union) who have repeatedly made key decisions in closed meetings. Also, some 30 WTO member countries cannot afford an office in Geneva, and few developing countries are able to attend the 40 to 50 ongoing trade meetings held in an average week.

**Trade rounds** A trade round refers to the linking together of trade negotiations on different issues over a period of years, in order that member countries can make trade-offs between different agreements. The EU is pushing for a new round of negotiations to be agreed in Qatar, which would include new issues (such as investment). Expanding the WTO's remit to cover yet more issues will worsen the capacity problem experienced by developing countries and will extend the WTO's rules into more sensitive areas of government policy.

**Rule enforcement** WTO rules are enforced via the Dispute Settlement Process. Countries are allowed to challenge each others' laws and regulations if they violate WTO rules. Cases are then decided by a panel of three trade bureaucrats, who often have little

appreciation of government responsibility to protect workers, the environment or human rights. Poor countries do not have the political or economic clout to challenge rich nations when they flout their commitments.

The Tricks of the Trade -

**How trade rules are loaded against the poor** International trade in goods and services is worth over £11.5bn a day, but it is rich countries and their multinationals who reap the vast majority of the benefits. The rules that currently govern world trade currently discriminate against the poor - the poorest 49 countries account for only 0.4% of world trade. Trade rules also favour big business, with 70% of world trade being controlled by multinational corporations.

Two years ago, cracks in the world trading system and its governing body, the WTO, were spectacularly revealed.

International trade talks collapsed - amidst mass protests and in full view of the world's media - at the WTO meeting in Seattle, in November 1999. This followed continues attempts by rich countries to push their agenda forward without regard to the concerns of developing countries or the environment and democracy.

At those talks, developing countries had pointed to the hypocrisy of rich nations pushing for more 'free trade' agreements whilst maintaining high import taxes on agriculture and textiles - products which poor countries are keen to export. They were also angry at being excluded from key discussions at meetings. Shocked by the way developing countries were marginalised at the talks, Secretary of State for Trade & Industry, Stephen Byers, acknowledged that "the WTO will not be able to continue in its present form. There has to be fundamental and radical change in order for it to meet the needs and aspirations of all 134 of its members."

'The UN estimates that poor countries lose a massive £1.3bn a day because of unjust trade rules - some 14 times the amount they receive in aid. Within these countries, it is often the poorest communities who lose out the most.'

Qatar: delegates in their gas masks  
(activists stay in their communities)

The powers-that-be are hoping against hope that Qatar will mark the start of a new global trade round. In a nice safe (they hope!) dictatorship, free from the stench of tear gas and shouts of dissent, the delegates will attempt to safeguard their own brand of freedom. The corporate lobbyists will be swept through security like visiting royalty, and into closed meetings to pour their sweet poison into the willing ears of national governments. Or maybe it'll be the other scenario, with delegates and lobbyists sheltering inside their air-con hotel rooms, switching nervously between CNN, Al-Jazeera (its Arabic equivalent), the Dow Jones and the gas mask lying on the bed?

This time, as always, trade barriers are planned to go under the knife. The conflict is between rich states keeping up their barriers in spite of previous agreements and poor states not wanting to lose any more of

theirs. This ties in very nicely with advancing General Agreement on Trade and Services, or GATS, which translated means handing over any surviving public services - water, power, hospitals, schools, public transport - to the ever-famished corporations. Of course, poor people can't afford all this, so they'll die in droves, but hey - this is states talking to each other. You can be sure the one thing they'll agree on, wherever they live, is staying fat by screwing the rest of us, all the while mouthing greasy platitudes about 'free trade feeding the poor'. No chance of the people who do the actual work and the actual starving to decide a solution that's in their interests of course...

The EU has bottled out of raising environmental issues in Qatar because the so-called Less Developed Countries' (LDC's) governments see it as 'protectionism'.

(Environmental regulations would mean workers in LDC's wouldn't be allowed to be paid peanuts and get poisoned.) Pressure is building to force LDC's into an even greater takeover of their markets by foreign companies which would wipe out their local businesses (communities?). And this in spite of the fact that 50% of WTO members are saying NO WAY.

It's the same story with public health - LDC governments want to be able to maintain their own public health systems. The US wants the opposite. The story is that the US is prepared to concede on HIV, but nothing else. (So why are they fighting Brazil and others to stop them producing generic HIV drugs?) This comes under so-called Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights, the scam by which a company claims ownership of anything from Basmati rice to bits of the

human genome by registering a patent on it. And agricultural markets are set to be priced open in a three-way tussle between various vested interests.

At this distance, it looks as if delegates are under such monumental pressure from the US to agree a new round that any clause with a whiff of controversy will be left out. What they want above all, are satellite news pictures of gritty delegates shaking hands in the desert, sending a 'steady as she goes' message to world markets as they prepare to batten down the hatches. Because deep down they know damn well there's a hell of a storm whipping up.

It's scary, it's full of jargon, and it's coming to a community near you...

## GAT'S all folks?

**What is GATS?** The General Agreement on Trade and Services was originally agreed by the WTO in 1994. The aim of this agreement is to remove any restrictions including internal government regulations which act as 'barriers to trade in the area of service delivery.'

Services have been defined as anything you can't drop on your foot! Our libraries, schools, hospitals, banks, rubbish collection and even the water that we clean our teeth with are all services that feed our daily lives.

**In whose service?** The service industry is big business and heavily dominated by western corporations. These companies want to operate freely within the service sector, but much of it is owned and regulated by governments. Freeing up the trade in services will benefit business and the GATS is designed to do this.

Unsurprisingly, corporations have been the driving force behind the agreement.

**GATS negotiations** Negotiations are now underway which aim to extend the 1994 agreement. Governments are under pressure to drastically reorganise the ownership and delivery of services within their countries, and subject them to even tighter 'free trade' rules.

At the same time, negotiators from the world's richest countries are pushing for this liberalisation process to speed up. But the GATS negotiations are extremely complex and technical, putting many developing countries at a serious negotiating disadvantage, lacking the necessary capacity and/or technical expertise.

**The poor lose out** The GATS liberalisation agenda threatens basic service delivery. If multinationals are seeking to make a profit out of water, health and education, those without purchasing power are likely to lose out. Recent water privatisation in Puerto Rico has meant that poor communities have gone without water while US military bases and tourist resorts enjoy an unlimited supply. A system governed by people's ability

to pay will not bring desperately needed services to the world's poorest people.

**No going back** Moreover, the irreversibility of GATS will ensure that once governments have opened up particular service sectors to WTO rules, there's no going back. The decision of how to organise service delivery is effectively right to decide whether or not services should be regulated.

**Time to take a stand** If GATS comes into force, what are now 'only' partly privatised hospitals, schools and London Underground would be likely to become 100% corporate entities, even if we had a government that opposed such a move. And though the GATS will have a profound impact on people all over the world, few people have even heard of it. (Their secret weapon - the more devastating the plan, the more deadly boring and acronym'ed they make it sound.) But it's not too late to change this creeping privatisation by the back door. GATS negotiations have only just begun; there's a huge amount of public anger surrounding the whole issue, and workers right across the public sector - eg. the RMT on London's Underground - are standing firm on this one. Those of us who believe in community-run services can find more than enough in common with those who are passionate about government ownership of essential services to make contact and maybe take action. It may be old language, but yet again it's solidarity and diversity that we need more than ever right now.

## Songs of Resistance from Soweto

On a crisp morning at the beginning of June, the tape of South Africa's history appears to have been rewound to the time when the community protests that began to topple the apartheid regime were at their height. The Soweto Electricity Crisis Committee (SECC) is on the march, led by veteran activist Trevor Ngwane, lifting his feet in the ritual dance of protest, through dusty streets.

The poor in the townships that have outstanding bills owing to the electricity utility Eskom being cut off. Before partial privatisation Eskom must become more profitable and lower the numbers in its debtors book. According to Ngwane: 'Our belief is that electricity is a right. We cannot afford to pay rates much higher than big business does. The system's in a mess.'

Ngwane has gone door to door, collecting information about conditions in Soweto, to help bolster the call to end electricity cut-offs. What he has seen is shocking. Most households in this metropolitan township earn less than R 800 (\$100) a month; almost half the households surveyed survive on an old-age pensioner's payment of R 540 a month.

For Trevor Ngwane, electricity cut-offs in Soweto are easily located in the global economic diktat that services are better run on profit lines. As speculator George Soros admits: 'South Africa is in the hands of global capital. That's why it can't meet the legitimate demands of its people.'

For this reason, Ngwane has also brought his toyi toyi to Washington protests against the World Bank, the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre, Brazil, and the World Economic Forum meeting on South African soil in June 2001. Though at heart he is a community activist, he takes hope from a new wave of international protest against economic globalisation.

'Through international solidarity we were able to get rid

of the apartheid regime. But now our freedom is coming to nought because of neoliberal policies of these institutions which undermine our freedom. We need solidarity to oppose these policies.'

And about the growing resistance on the home front, he explains: 'The point has been reached in South Africa where people have been pushed to struggle in defence of their standard of living. It happened under apartheid. When people are under pressure, they have no choice but to fight back.'

He adds: 'Organizations like the Soweto Electricity Crisis Committee are small beginnings - of this we are under no illusions. But I am also aware that history can move in leaps and bounds.'

Soweto, the township that is a symbol of the struggle against apartheid, is the heart of the country - the real South Africa. It's dusty and mostly treeless, except for forlorn attempts at 'greening' - a ragged tree, a patch of grass dotted here and there.

A veteran anti-apartheid activist born and bred in Soweto, Ngwane was disciplined after he objected to the Government's World Bank-influenced development model for Johannesburg which involved privatisation (known here as 'corporatisation') of public services like electricity, water, parks and even the Zoo.

For the ANC has changed course and character from the liberation movement which took power on a wave of euphoria in 1994. The Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) began with a radical social-democratic policy. Its goals were one million houses, universal and affordable electricity, a national health scheme and social security.

But in 1996 the ANC was forced by powerful investors and the IMF to adapt itself to the 'realities' of the global economy.

Since then, health, welfare, education, electrification and housing budgets have been slashed. Income disparity has actually increased since the end of apartheid, and around one in four South Africans are unemployed.

'There's been a shift in policy from a redistributive policy to a trickle-down policy,' says Ngwane. In a nutshell - if you can't pay, you can't have it. So he has moved from the inside of power, back to the outside, back to challenge, back to protest.

The struggle against apartheid is so recent that a proud culture of resistance is still latent in the townships, and it is this that is feeding the rumbling at the grassroots. Ngwane says: 'It's just like the old days. There's a defiance campaign, where people themselves reconnect electricity that's been cut off. It balances the power between Eskom and us, we contest their power to switch on and off.'

What strikes me now about all these protests is that we're so fresh out of political independence and it's amazing that people have shaken off the nationalist honeymoon so quickly,' he continues.

Trevor Ngwane is seeing that in every community the issues sparking people to march and to organise are different but the same. Different in detail, but they reflect the same needs. Many are allied to the Anti-Privatization Forum, of which Ngwane is secretary, a national forum that links a range of organisations which oppose various forms of privatisation and which assist with community struggles.

The new movement is nascent but has potential. Many were heavily involved in the protests against the global pharmaceutical giants and for affordable AIDS drugs, for example. In the port city of Durban, ANC veteran Fatima Meer helps to organise poor communities faced with evictions. She and other former ANC supporters have organised 'defenders of communities' - mobile groups who forcibly stop evictions. In April last year, for example, older women in the Chatsworth community surrounded and defended their homes against eviction - this became known as the Auntie's Revolt.

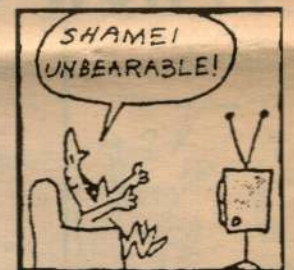
As an APF poem says: 'And the people shall continue shouting and fighting, Coz their daily reality is dominated by adversities.'

From an article by Ferial Haffajee. Reprinted from New Internationalist magazine -

<http://www.oneworld.org/ni/index4.html>

APF: <http://www.cosatu.org.za/samwu/apf.htm>

Contact details: c/o AIDC, 3rd floor Cosatu House, cnr Leyds and Biccard Streets, Braamfontein, Johannesburg, SA.



## NEWS FROM ELSEWHERE...

The grassroots Indian farmers movement has probably never been stronger. This new dynamic basically started in 1999 and is at least in part due to the InterContinental Caravan, an inter-continental journey born out of People's Global Action

In fact, the farmers hadn't worked at a national level at all since the campaign against GMOs that took place in 1996, and didn't really know about each other's situations. But the Caravan "brought a wider vision". Out of this, a thriving national network was set up. The first big national action took place in September 2000 in Bangalore. This year they have organised huge actions almost every month by rotation: 50000 ox carts blocking the import of foreign grains in Bombay, 50,000 people encircled in

barbed wire and arrested in New Delhi for civil disobedience. Other huge demos have been in Lucknow, Madras, Kerala and 250 to 300,000 people on October 2nd in Bangalore.

For the Qatar WTO ministerial they are expecting 500,000 people in New Delhi, on November 6 (and maybe another demo in the south), with the civil disobedience starting with free trains all across the continent...some farmers groups intend to liberate grain from the silos and redistribute it.

The aim is to take Indian agriculture, indeed all agriculture back out of WTO... and then the land, the air, the water, the goods and the services...

# There goes the family silver

'Hospitals built under the Private Finance Initiative could be a disaster, says the head of the government's own advisory board Sir Stuart Lipton... Whether patients recover or die makes no difference to the PFI contract to design and build. "There is not enough attention to detail, not enough care, not enough commitment."'

'Workers at the UK's first hospital to be built under the controversial private finance initiative have voted in favour of industrial action.'

From 1979 on, the Thatcher counter-revolution pioneered the massive cut-price sale of public services from housing, water, power, education, healthcare, all the way to dustbins and street cleaning. Ex- (whoops! - New) Labour has taken the Public Finance Initiative (PFI) to heart and is trying to impose it on all public services. What this really means is a combination of taxes and private money, with private investors naturally skimming their cut off the top.

Under planned WTO regulations, once any private funding has been introduced into a public service, that service loses its protection and can be sold to the highest bidder. Nor is a government allowed to change its mind.

Council housing - the first target of Thatcherism - has been virtually exterminated by ex-Labour. Now ruled by housing associations, there is no pretence of any accountability. Meanwhile even housing co-ops are being forced to raise their rents to private sector levels. And

most of us know someone who's been evicted because the Council takes months to sort out housing benefit.

But tenants and communities are fighting back. Tenants like those in Glasgow have so far successfully campaigned to stay in the public sector. And buildings are not only for housing. Just as developers take schools and turn them into loft living opportunities, we take empty buildings and put them to our own uses. And just as they take our nurseries and sell them for fortress housing for the rich, we reclaim them as community spaces.

Meanwhile - where not sold off - schools and hospitals are allowed to run down to justify yet more PFI projects. Old buildings are sold and new ones erected by private companies, leased back to the NHS over 30 years, and then the NHS gets the option to buy it! This accounting fiddle means it looks like less public money is being used; already NHS Trusts look more like market-driven businesses than public services. And there's talk of handing failing (i.e. multi-ethnic working class) schools over to companies like Sodexo (also running many UK prisons) and 3E's (named as a toadying nod to Tony B's 'education, education, education' soundbite). What will be their next 'it's not privatisation - honest! scam..?'

Every traveller is familiar with the killing fields of rail privatisation, nowhere more shockingly than at Paddington and Hatfield. Even the business-loving politicians of Ex-Labour have given up on Railtrack, but

still profess blind faith in the never-on-time train companies. But they are still planning the same chaotic break-up of services on London Underground, regardless of what the users want.

Of course the media (and most rabidly the London Evening Standard) are going to say principled strikes about safety and working conditions are just the actions of greedy, lazy workers - that's their job. They don't want us to recognise that increased profits for companies like Balfour Beatty and their ilk always mean lay-offs, delays and sometimes even death. And they certainly don't want workers and users standing together, or alliances like that of London Reclaim the Streets and tubeworkers...

Finally there are all those day-to-day services like street cleaning. Here privatisation has become synonymous with cheap labour, huge workloads, crap services and the kind of chaos that frequently ends up with councils sacking the contracting firms. And here too there are still fierce and sometimes successful struggles to return services to the public sector.

1: [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/english/health/newsid\\_1615000/1615004.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/english/health/newsid_1615000/1615004.stm)  
2: [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/english/health/newsid\\_1556000/1556186.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/english/health/newsid_1556000/1556186.stm)

## A new quality service for our most valued customers

London Underground is pleased to announce a new level of service for our most valued customers. We are now piloting a new Business Class service.

If you are entitled to this service, you know who you are. We know you as one of the movers and shakers who make London not just a capital city but a vibrant centre of capital. Some of you will make the Public Private Partnership work for yourselves and your shareholders. We're making the Tube work for you too.

### What will it mean?

You know the problems with the Tube. Decades of under-funding by government have left stations crumbling and trains unreliable. But above all the problem facing

you, our special customers, is overcrowding. And the people you get crowded with.

The Public Private Partnership will bring all the flair and social consciousness of corporations to bear on the task of running trains on time and safely whenever this is profitable. Corporations like Bechtel, famous for its safety record in running nuclear plants, and Balfour Beatty, which has never bribed government officials nor conspired to wipe out the centre of Kurdish culture. Corporations that will brook no nonsense from trades unions about outdated safety rules or working hours.

This will take time. So we're solving your biggest problem now. We want to bring you, our really important customers, back to the Tube. So we're giving you your own carriages - **Business Class Tube.**

### What next?

Over time, we will introduce new features to Business Class Tube. Your carriages will be carpeted. In our long-term vision, attendants will serve complimentary refreshments to you in your club-style armchair seat. The Business Class section of station platforms will be patrolled to ensure that you are not inconvenienced by meeting common people. We will introduce special direct-to-platform lifts at the stations you use most.

We may at some point need to increase Business Class fares as these improvements come on line. But, in the spirit of the Public Private Partnership, we will finance their introduction by making savings elsewhere. We will for example take the seats out of Cattle Class carriages so they can be cleaned

with high-pressure hoses once a month. Look at where those people live: will they mind? And who listens to them anyway?

Some of them may start talking to each other. Some may take the day off work and occupy trains. Some may hold Tube Parties spontaneously demanding the return of an unprofitably safe and accountable public service.

### Welcome to your Tube!

But if we can get the public to hand their Tube over to you, you will no longer face the nightmare of being squashed with the unwashed!

[www.new-tube.co.uk](http://www.new-tube.co.uk)

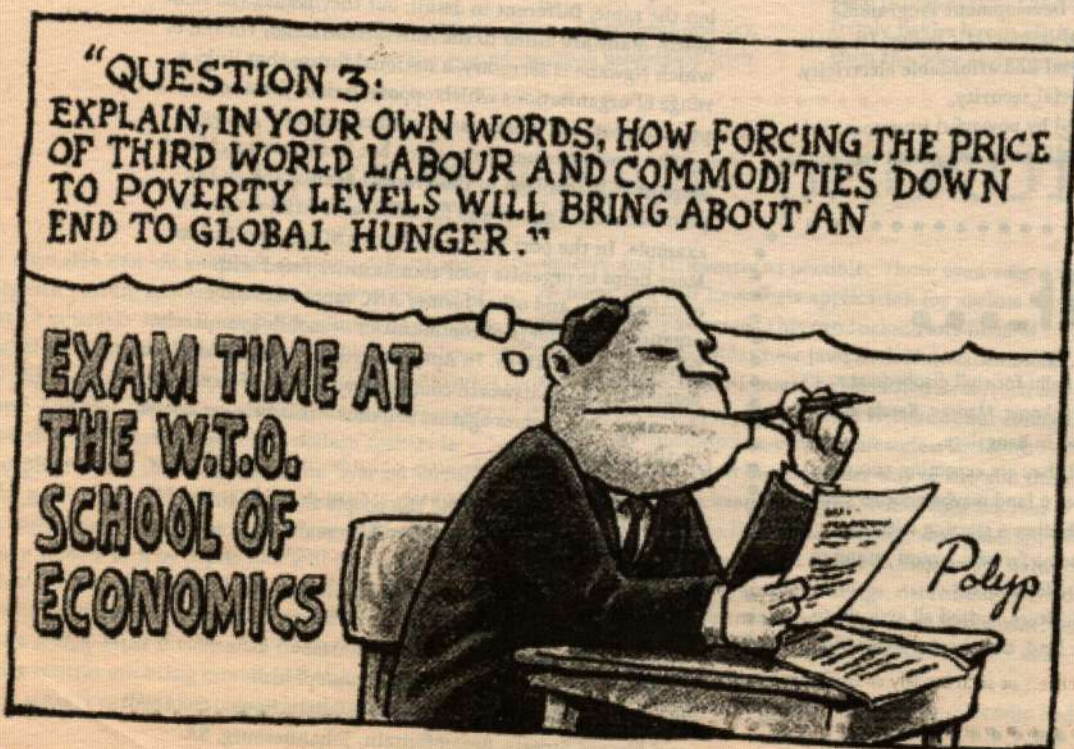
## Looked-in Profits

Private prison building is one of several projects being run under the Government's Private Finance Initiative (PFI). The current prison system in the UK is imported from America, one of the few countries with a higher proportion of its population behind bars than the UK. Many of the same companies are involved. These companies are paid per inmate per day, so the more people are locked up, the more money they make. Private prisons hold people for longer than state prisons, fund right-wing 'law and order' politicians and lobby the Government for harsher sentences.

In the UK more people are being sent to prison and sentences are getting longer. The prison population has been rising since 1993, when it was 45,000, to its current figure of around 65,000. At the same time, a massive prison building programme is underway involving three prisons currently under construction, three more planned, and extensions to existing prisons.

The Government has estimated that the most recent draconian legislation, for example, the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, will cause the prison population to rise to between up to 80,000 by 2007. In January 2000, Prison Privatisation Report International noted that "[the Crime and Disorder Act] could create the need for more prisons. Since all new prisons in England and Wales are to be privately financed, designed, built and run this could allay the private sector's fears about future prison contracts."

One of the largest growth areas in the private incarceration business is the banging up of asylum seekers. Home Secretary Blunkett announced in October 2001 a whole new raft of measures on asylum seekers, including many 'mini-Oakington' detention (or is it 'reception?') centres. Thus another privatised industry benefits from the inevitable by-product of another dirty war: fleeing human beings.





The WTO's privatisation agenda comes home to roost in one of London's poorest boroughs, but local voices can be heard squawking...

# Hackney's not for sale!

Community activists in Hackney are fighting vested interests and a deafening press silence in an attempt to stop the debt-ridden and notoriously corrupt council from destroying the fabric of the borough.

The council is selling off hundreds of properties in response to government demands to sort out its finances. They range from houses and flats to community centres, playgrounds and green spaces, nurseries and shops. A school was also originally included on the list, but was withdrawn after the council discovered they had no right to sell it.

The properties on sale are expected to be snapped up by developers keen to cash in on Hackney's ongoing gentrification, while the local community will lose vital services.

Cuts are also being made in other areas - attacks on council workers' pay and conditions have been intense, with pay cuts of up to £1500 per year and reductions in overtime, shift allowances and flexibility payments.

So how do we get out of this mess?

Hackney serves as an experimental laboratory for the New Labour agenda of privatising local government services. Central government argues that privatisation is the only solution to notorious corruption and mismanagement. But privatisation has not served the people of Hackney any better than bureaucratic rule. We all remember the disastrous privatisation of Housing Benefits Services under ITNET, which cost the council taxpayer over £25 million and many private sector residents their homes.

We have no nostalgia for the bad old days of

bureaucratic state control. What we need, as workers and as local people, is direct control over how resources are allocated and how services are provided in our community. It is not about electing Socialists or other representatives to put pressure on the government to assign more funds. We need to develop new ways to relate to each other, in order to challenge a capitalist system that puts the greed of a few above the well-being of our communities and planet. We need to take direct action on the ground to stop the powerful enrich themselves at our expense.

## Grassroots action against the cuts

The campaign against the cuts and sell-offs is gathering pace. Activists began by squatting an empty shop and setting up a spoof estate agent with information on the properties being sold off. This was followed, on 12th October, by an occupation of the offices of Nelson Bakewell, the real estate agent dealing with the sales, calling for them to withdraw all Hackney Council properties from the auction on the 15th.

The auction went ahead, but with paranoid-level security and a lively demo outside. Inside, the auction was disrupted by local residents. The disruption focused on the sale of Atherden Road Nursery, which was closed earlier this year, occupied and re-opened first by protesting parents (Hackney is currently short of around 1,000 nursery places) and then by other locals who turned it into a community centre.

When the bidding finally started, the price was

pushed up wildly by two campaigners bidding against each other. However, once the auctioneers twigged they nevertheless accepted the highest genuine bid (considerably higher than the site had been expected to fetch).

## Morale down the tube

Meanwhile, council gardeners and estate cleaners objected to the cuts in wages and jobs by staging a one-day wildcat strike on October 12th, coinciding with the occupation of Nelson Bakewell estate agents. One worker said, 'People don't know how much they're earning or how long they're going to have a job,' - hardly surprising that morale's down the tube, then. The same worker said there was a feeling that Hackney want to run an experiment in having a council with no in-house services.

In the coming months there will be strikes and actions by Hackney workers and there will be occupations and protests by Hackney Community Groups. We need to act together to support each other. The struggle here in Hackney is one part of a struggle of people and communities around the world against the privatisation and enclosure of communal resources.

Contact: Hackney not for Sale!

Email: [hackneynot4sale@yahoo.com](mailto:hackneynot4sale@yahoo.com) Tel: 07950 539 254  
Hackney Indymedia subsection: <http://uk.indymedia.org>

9 November: Day of local actions against Privatisation whilst the WTO meets in Qatar. Join us at the Town Hall Square 12.30pm.

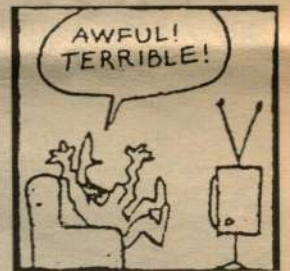
13 December: Action at next Nelson Bakewell auction where more Hackney community buildings will be sold off. Contact [hackneynot4sale@yahoo.com](mailto:hackneynot4sale@yahoo.com)

A Hackney Community Conference is planned for the new year - contact Unison on 020 8985 7134.

Taken in part from <http://www.corporatewatch.org.uk/>



A squatted estate agents displays some of the jewels in Hackney's public service crown - yours for a princely sum



## Refusing collection

### Brighton bin workers show the way in the fight against privatised services.

In the week between the 11th and the 15th of June a workers' struggle of a kind not experienced in the UK for a long time took place in the refuse collection depot in Brighton. The bin workers took collective action and occupied the depot after being sacked for refusing newly imposed work

routines brought in by the private firm taking over the refuse collection contract in Brighton and Hove. After 4 days in occupation of the depot, the workers managed to win their struggle and to force the Council to terminate the private contract, while re-instating all the workers who had been sacked.

The response of the bin workers shows how it is possible to fight privatisation and the new 'flexible' low-wage temp work economy that we

are always being told is 'inevitable'. By forming alliances with local anti-capitalist activists, using direct action, sabotage and not being afraid to break the law, the bin workers won all their major demands in a mere 4 days. And they got paid for the time they spent occupying their own depot!

This piece is based on an article in the forthcoming issue of Undercurrent magazine. Email: [undercurrentoo@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:undercurrentoo@yahoo.co.uk)

## PRANKSTERS IMPERSONATE WTO REP

Since November 1999 a pseudo-official World Trade Organisation web site - [www.gatt.org](http://www.gatt.org) - created by the anonymous masters of the political prank and parody @TMark - has been extraordinarily successful in duping conference organisers and mainstream media, into inviting fake WTO spokespeople to address them. Last year a group of slow-thinking Austrian lawyers stumbled on the [gatt.org](http://www.gatt.org) site and wanted Mike Moore head of the WTO to come pep up their meeting in Salzburg. "Mike Moore" declined, but sent two substitutes - later revealed to be the "Yes Men" the impostors' umbrella group. (<http://theyesmen.org>) who stood before the unwitting lawyers to explain a vast but rather shocking program for the extension of free trade. Earlier this year the Anti-WTO impostors struck again, delivering a lecture about the wonders of slavery, the stupidity of Gandhi, and the supremacy of free trade to an enthusiastic crowd of scientists, engineers, and marketing professionals--all of whom thought they were watching a slick official WTO representative, at the "Textiles of the Future" conference in Tampere, Finland.

The 150 experts heard one Hank Hardy Unruh explain that Gandhi's "self-sufficiency" movement was entirely misguided, because it centred around protectionism, and that Lincoln, by outlawing slavery, had criminally interfered with the trade freedom of the South, as well as with slavery's own freedom to develop naturally. Had slavery never been abolished, Unruh said, today's much cheaper system of sweatshops would have eventually replaced it anyhow; following this free-market logic to the end, Unruh declared the Civil War just a big waste of money.

Finally, to applause from the highly educated audience, Unruh's business suit was ripped off to reveal a golden leotard with a three-foot-long phallus. The purpose of the "Management Leisure Suit", he explained, was to allow managers, no matter where they were, to monitor their distant, impoverished workforces and to administer shocks to encourage productivity--assuring that no "Gandhi-type situation" develop again.

"If a group of Ph.D.s cheers at such crudely crazy things, just because

it's the WTO saying them, what else can the WTO get away with?" said Andy Bichlbaum of the Yes Men. During the protests in Genoa this July, a "yes man" popped up again, this time on a major TV network show about protest's effect on the market. Passing as a representative of the WTO, this time speaking live from Paris, he spoke about how protesters ideas are based too much in reality and that the WTO knew Free Trade was working because they had read the theory, some of which he proudly stated was written in the 18th Century, he then went on to praise the privatisation of education which "will naturally eliminate "unproductive" thinkers from the high-school classroom, a long-term solution to the problem of protest."

Reeling from the pranksters successes the WTO has now published a warning on the front page of its official web site "Warning: Fake WTO web site - <http://www.gatt.org> - deceitful and a nuisance to serious users", meanwhile the yes men are laughing all the way to the bank.

## Denial and the psychology of climate apathy

# Does climate chaos do your head in? Read this

Most of us are worried about climate change. All the world's scientific institutions and most of the living Nobel prize winners have signed letters calling for action. Every head of government (except George W Bush) makes regular pious speeches warning of imminent disaster.

Yet our actions constantly undermine our concern. Newspapers regularly carry dire climatic warnings in the same issue as articles that breathlessly promote weekend breaks in Rio. Individuals, including my friends and family, express grave concern, and then just as quickly block it out, buy a new car, turn up the air conditioning or fly across the world for a holiday.

Psychologists call this process denial - we deny the existence of information that creates internal conflict. In the case of climate change, we find it extremely hard to accept our responsibility for a crime of such enormity. Even the words - "climate change", "global warming" "human impacts" "adaptation" are scientific euphemisms. They suggest that the problem originates in universal natural forces. They deny the moral implications for our role as the perpetrator.

When we are confronted by our grandchildren demanding to know why we did so little, we will deny our part in it ("I didn't do it"), deny our personal power

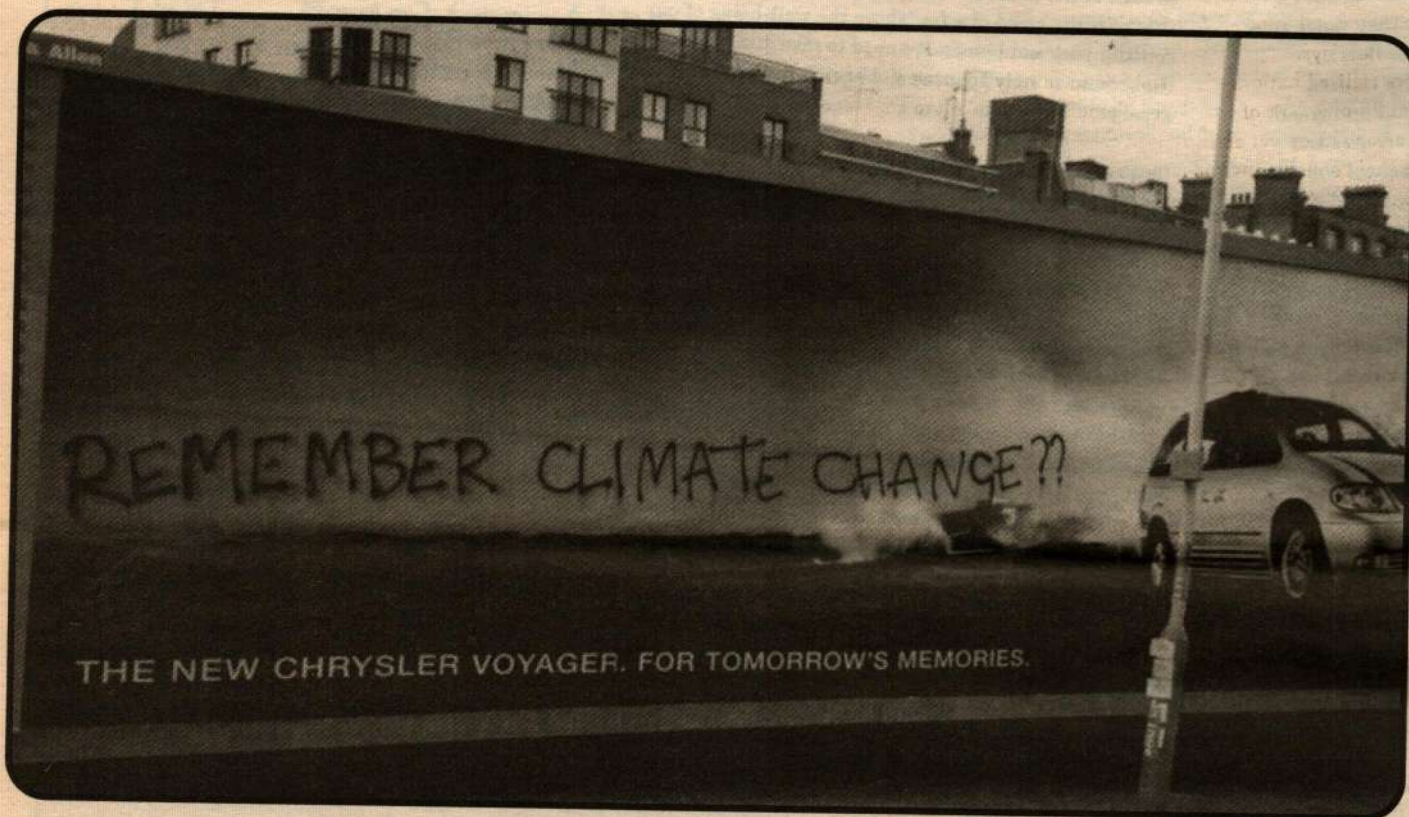
('I couldn't do anything'), and blame others ("it was the people with the big cars, the Americans, the corporations"). But we won't be able to deny our knowledge.

So, information alone is patently not working - there are plentiful signs that it is only intensifying people's denial.

Clearly we are also seeing what psychologists call "diffusion of responsibility". Everyone feels powerless to act because they are waiting for someone else to act. In the case of climate change, the lack of visible public response is part of the self-justifying pattern of behaviour that feeds this "diffusion". People will never spontaneously take action themselves unless they receive social support and the validation of others. In other words, people will not accept the reality of the problem unless they see that others are engaging in activities that reflect its seriousness. Activities like debate, protest, and 'meaningful visible alternatives'. Simply asking people to change their lightbulbs, plant a tree, boil less water in their kettle, or send in a donation, however desirable in themselves, will not a social movement build. Our participation in resisting climate change must be Active not Passive!

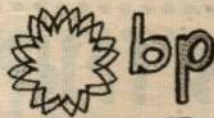
Anyone concerned about this issue faces a unique historical opportunity to break the cycle of denial, and join the handful of people who have already decided to stop being passive bystanders.

From a piece by George Marshall



## There's no long-term technical solution to global warming short of leaving remaining fossil fuels in the ground

### IF ORDINARY PEOPLE BEHAVED LIKE-



#### Hottest October on record

Although it's hardly surprising, it is still extremely worrying to report that it has just been confirmed that this has been the warmest October in the UK since records began in 1659. There have been no cold snaps or frost, which is extremely rare. The average temperature for October in the UK is 10.4C (50.7F) whilst this year the temperatures averaged 14.1C (57.4F). This is warmer than the previous record of 13C (55.4F) in 1969.

The 3rd PGA conference in Bolivia agreed to add a climate change text to its manifesto: 'The 'global commons' is being appropriated... this now includes the atmosphere. Climate change is a result of capitalist resource exploitation. It reinforces existing global inequalities initiated by colonialism. As the climate warms, essential resources will further become the privilege of the elite, who will use increasingly militarised force to acquire them...'

When in July 2001 many countries signed the Kyoto Protocol in Bonn, they were effectively creating a new commodity: air. As you read this, pollution is being bought and sold for profit on the open market.

# Who's winning the air war?

## How did we get into this situation?

It would be hard to deny that social and economic 'development' in the industrialised world of the 'west' has taken place at the expense of the colonised world of the 'global south'. The centuries long exploitative relationship between the colonisers and the colonised continues today, but often in less obvious ways.

Industrialised nations account for only 20% of the world's population yet emit 80% of greenhouse gases from human sources, mainly from burning fossil fuels. The subsequent atmospheric pollution has led to unprecedented rapid increases in average global temperatures, which have led in turn to climate chaos.

But human-made climate disasters don't effect us all equally. So far, people living in the countries of the global south – Asia, Africa, and South America, have been worst hit, experiencing an almost endless series of catastrophic floods, droughts, and the famine, disease, and displacement that inevitably follow.

Such (un)natural disasters were responsible for 105,000 deaths in 1999 (Financial Times 28/04/00), and according to the British Red Cross, the creation of

25 million refugees in 1998 – more than the number made homeless by war that year.

This pattern is being relentlessly repeated around the world. Afghanistan, a country torn apart by two decades of war, is experiencing its worst drought on record – an

unnatural disaster inflicted upon one of the world's poorest countries by the world's richest countries – an undeclared war where daily luxuries in the West mean more than people's lives in the global south. Compounding this climate injustice is the desire of multinational energy corporations to exploit Central Asian fossil fuel 'resources' – a hidden, yet key factor behind the current bombings.

## Selling your soul.

The few seemingly genuine attempts the world's governments have taken to address climate change, have been sabotaged by lobbyists acting for the interests of multinationals who make huge profits from a society trapped in over-consumption of, and reliance upon, fossil fuels.

International treaties devised to combat our malign interference with climate have achieved the opposite. The infamous Kyoto Protocol – which represents the sum total of all governmental international action on climate change to date – is worse than useless.

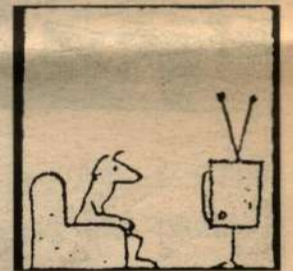
The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) – the world's biggest ever collaborative research project – has concluded that carbon emissions have to be reduced by 60 – 90% over the coming decades, before we make any meaningful inroads into averting a future climate nightmare. Even then, our pollution of the atmosphere so far has set unavoidable change in motion. So what targets have been set by the Kyoto Protocol for reducing carbon emissions? The answer is not enough. Industrialised countries signed up to Kyoto have to achieve reductions in their carbon emissions of only a few percent by 2012 against 1990 levels. In other words, they now have a license to pollute at over 90% of 1990 levels.

The Kyoto Protocol doesn't stop there. It's created a new market for 'emissions trading'. This means that carbon can be bought and sold for profit, in the belief that there is a market solution to climate change, (when it's markets that got us into this mess in the first place). This commodification of carbon – a key element of the air we breathe – makes a business opportunity out of climate change. Low emission targets mean that many countries will end up with a surplus 'carbon quota' and thus lots to sell on. Countries which can afford to buy that surplus, can add it to their reduction targets, and so won't have to stop polluting at all. Rich countries will buy the right to operate air conditioners, sports cars or

jet fleets from the governments of people who will sell their right to using firewood or farming rice in methane-emitting paddies. Colonialism alive and well.

Another component of this new market is the concept of carbon sinks. It exploits the fact that plants absorb CO<sub>2</sub>. Northern countries are encouraged to set up tree plantations in the South. According to the July 2001 Bonn agreement, the North can use these plantations to compensate for 1% of their 1990 emissions above their ceiling. This seems a small percentage but bearing in mind that UK's carbon emissions are as high as the whole of Africa's, it turns out that the amount of extra carbon emissions allowed is massive, thanks only to planting trees in someone else's lands. So where is the voice of the peasant, kicked off his smallholding in Costa Rica or Indonesia by a foreign car company wanting to build a fast-growth GM forest, in all this? Lost in the 'get rich quick, never mind the science or the justice' jargon of the traders, the 'advisers' (like PricewaterhouseCoopers with their CO<sub>2</sub>e.com project), the ministers. And many green groups, anxious not to rock the (sinking) boat and knock Kyoto, are keeping quiet about the injustice at the heart of a shiny new commodity called the atmosphere.

- We can't talk about climate change without linking it to social justice.
- We need to acknowledge that a liveable planet is incompatible with endless growth and to endorse a reduction of carbon emissions by 90%, if we are to avoid an extreme environmental catastrophe that could wipe out the human race.
- And we need also to realise that a reduction of carbon emissions means a reduction in energy consumption, and that this involves a fast, far-reaching transformation of society – a revolution no less. Are you coming too?



## Actions to dream

- **Thin blue line** – find out the sea-level rise or flood level predictions for your area (Met office, Environment agency) and paint/chalk this level in blue around town, on council buildings, petrol stations, etc. Accompany this with posters/leaflets explaining the line and forecasted impacts of extreme weather
- **Street Theatre**: a marriage between the atmosphere and big business, future news and weather report, a carbon auction or carbon casino
- **Declare Anytown a car-free zone**: have street parties reclaiming space normally consumed by cars, make 'wanted' posters in car parks for 'crimes against the biosphere' with pictures of cars, take over streets with masses of people on bikes
- Put pressure on the local branches of international accountancy firms like PricewaterhouseCoopers, KPMG and Arthur Andersen
- **Do a 90% for 90% action** – see [www.risingtide.org.uk](http://www.risingtide.org.uk)
- **Fix up some bikes** (universities and stations are good places to ask for leftovers) and set up a local free bike scheme
- **Paint cycle lanes** or 'think bike' signs on the road
- **Focus on the aviation industry** – the fastest growing source of carbon emissions and currently exploiting the post-September 11th chill by laying off 1000's of workers
- **Plough up a motorway** and create a park!
- **Campaign** for not-for profit public transport
- **Floods on the news?** Set hosepipes on offices of oil and airline companies
- **Create** virtual reality images of climate chaos future in your region/town
- **Flyer cars** with 'violation' tickets explaining their environmental costs, or with fish containing messages/website addresses
- **'Climate chaos ahead'** road signs on all rush-hour approaches to town

Rising Tide UK and friends are planning a national climate action for April 2002., set to coincide with the launch of the UK's very own carbon trading system. Part of the action will use the 90% for 90% idea, that is, people will be encouraged to get to it by train, demanding as they go a 90% cut in emissions alongside a 90% cut in the cost of public transport and offering to pay 10% of their fare. (It's been done many times before during 2001 and has been surprisingly successful, although it's less successful when you do it alone!) You can download special tickets at [www.risingtide.org.uk](http://www.risingtide.org.uk), where you can also receive updates about the action and find out how to get involved.

**Rising Tide UK:** 16b Cherwell St, Oxford OX4 1BG;  
Tel: 01865 241097 Email: [info@risingtide.org.uk](mailto:info@risingtide.org.uk)  
[www.risingtide.org.uk](http://www.risingtide.org.uk) – for regular updates.

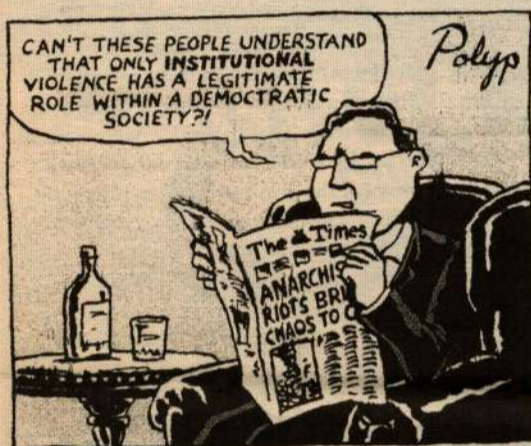
See also [www.risingtide.nl](http://www.risingtide.nl) and read the excellent Cornerhouse briefing *Democracy or Carbocracy? Intellectual Corruption and the Future of the Climate Debate*, downloadable from <http://cornerhouse.icaap.org>

# Help us Break Barriers

## Words of a Gothenburg survivor

Since the so-called "war on terror" began, there has been much discussion in the media and indeed amongst many Muslims as to whether this is in fact a war on Islam. Both the media and various "Islamist" groups such as Al-Muhajiroun will sing the same chorus, fuelling the fires of a new ideological conflict between Islam and the West. Nevertheless many ordinary Muslims do feel that it is an attack on Islam in the sense that it is an attack on Afghanistan, a Muslim country. However as Afghanistan is being pummelled by US cruise missiles, religion in many ways becomes irrelevant as all ordinary Afghans are suffering no matter who or what they are, whilst Bin Laden and the Taliban seem to be sitting pretty. The "war on terror" is in fact a war for oil, namely in Central Asia, and much like the Gulf War it will benefit the interest of the Oil corporations which backed George Bush Jr's coup de tat of the US elections.

Since September 11th, an atmosphere has been created trying to make Muslims feel guilty and responsible in some way. It also seems that both Bush and Blair have



suddenly become experts on Islam, telling people that it is peaceful religion and forcing Muslim leaders to come out and condemn the attacks whilst a country like Iraq experiences an equivalent of the September 11th attacks every month for the past 11 years, yet this is not considered to be terrorism or genocide. Furthermore Muslims in the West are experiencing a racist backlash, which is receiving no media coverage at all. Nazi activity has increased in East London, Slough and Luton in the aftermath of the recent rebellions in the North.

In reaction to this dire situation it is necessary for the anti-capitalist movement to perhaps broaden its coalition to include all examples of revolutionary difference. Therefore contrary to various hegemonic leftist assumptions, the problems of patriarchy, homophobia and conservatism are not solely products of static Islamic culture or indeed religion in general for that matter, as capitalism is universal. The reality reflects that the forces of progression and change exist in all contexts, as do the forces of conservatism and reaction. We must stop separating the world, or we will simply be speaking the language of the Orientalists, which is exactly what the powerful wants.

I am currently involved with a group of progressive Muslims who are seeking to establish an anti-capitalist organisation with a Muslim identity. It is necessary to establish strong links so as to help promote one another and indeed to help create new examples of anti-capitalist struggle. If anyone is interested in helping, Muslim or non-Muslim, please contact Adam at [zapatasguns@hotmail.com](mailto:zapatasguns@hotmail.com) or Naima at [nbout@voila.fr](mailto:nbout@voila.fr). The Zapatistas have shown that one can be revolutionary, whilst retaining and re-defining ones culture, identity or religion without prescribing to any pure proletarian idea. We seriously need to challenge ignorance and chauvinism wherever it exists, be it from the reactionary right or the revolutionary left.

A message to these who think a riot shield or prison sentence will protect them: The anger doesn't fade believe me, not for a moment, not by a long way. Some of us fight to keep alive, some of us are alive because we fight, either way the battle is one and the same. As one riot cop said in court when justifying the need to get his gun out and start shooting people, "they kept coming, we couldn't stop them". Remind me again why we do this, remind me again why all this is fucking worth it.

**The creative urge is an indestructible urge – we know what our anger means.**

We are dangerous people not simply because we desire freedom, but because we desire it together. These are the criminal activities of the working class, these are the crimes that we live by. In the words of Bobby TBS "a troublemaker's what you made me" (anything else would be a crime). If we're not causing trouble, we're not doing it right. This is everything we are. This is all we have.

And I'm proud as fuck to be a part of it – the travelling circus, the whispering conspiracies, the deafening global roar, all the chaos and wonder, courage and warmth, never once, in the face of brutality and murder, doubting itself, the madness and togetherness, the desire and danger and damage done. The fearlessness with which we continue to grab at life. When you dare the world to be special, the world will respond... They kept coming, we couldn't stop them. THIS is what our anger means.

Humanity is not the future you try and create, the future is the humanity you refuse to let go of. We hold it all in our hands..." - Paul Robinson, Gothenburg Prisoner

## The Surveillance Camera Players speak

Unlike other groups - such as the Ruckus Society, the Sierra Club and others, especially in the American environmental and anti-globalization movements - the New York SCP will not be scaling back its actions against surveillance cameras and face recognition software, its vocal opposition to the policies of George W. Bush, or its very visible public and Internet presences, in response to the "attack on America" that took place on 11 September 2001 and to the subsequent calls for unity and "war" against terrorism.

At a time like this - when the FBI's Carnivore sniffer programs are being let loose on the Internet without probable cause or proper search warrants, when the media and the American government speak of increasing America's use of spies and global surveillance, when others are afraid to speak up against jingoism, war-mongering and racial/religious hatred - it is incumbent upon us to remain active, even if it is inconvenient or "dangerous" to do so.

Our walking tours will go on as scheduled, as will our plans to make use of the growing international network of activists that we worked so hard to create on 7 September 2001, because what is truly "dangerous" at such a time is for freedom-loving people to back down or soften their demands upon this increasingly totalitarian society.

## A post-Taliban Afghanistan must heed women

For 20 years, an inspiring group of women called The Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan, RAWA, have resisted first the Soviet invaders, then the Jehadi, then the Taliban. They have operated in deepest secrecy inside Afghanistan, running mobile health units, income-generating craft workshops for destitute women and clandestine schools for girls. From behind their smothering burqas, they have summoned the almost inconceivable courage to photograph the vile public executions carried out weekly by the Taliban.

"We are terrified that the Western coalition will put the Northern Alliance into power," Tahmeena of RAWA "These are the people who ruled Afghanistan once before, and they are just as much terrorists as Osama bin Laden and the Taliban. They smashed the capital, Kabul, to rubble in which 90,000 people were killed in the rocketing and shelling. They looted everything and just like the Taliban, their first target was women.

"We don't want the Taliban to be toppled by force," Tahmeena continued. "No more war! Only the Afghan people will be the victims. The way for peace is for the allies to stop those who are funding the fundamentalists."

"Only an overall uprising can prevent the repetition and recurrence of the catastrophe that has befallen our country before and with or even without the presence of the UN peace-keeping force this uprising can pave the way for the establishment of an interim government and preparation for

election. Perhaps with UN peacekeepers supervising an election in the same way as they did in East Timor. We believe that once there is no foreign investment, especially of a fundamentalist type, all ethnic groups of all regions, with no regard to the devilish designs of the fundamentalists, will prove their solidarity for achieving the most sacred national interests for the sake of a proud and free Afghanistan."

"Whatever happens", said Sally Armstrong, a Canadian journalist, "remember that since 1996, only the women have spoken up against the Taliban, desperately trying to warn the world about these terrorists. Nobody listened, except other women. Now that the Taliban might be overthrown - and most of the Afghan groups hope that there will be a coalition of parties around the king - there must be women at the negotiating table."

"If the women are not at the table," Armstrong insisted, "Afghanistan will remain a pariah state." Misogynists love to sneer at the thought that women might bring a different perspective to peace talks. Had we heeded the courageous voices of the Afghan women, however, and not dismissed them as marginal, the U.S.-created Afghan terrorocracy would not have held. When the time comes to rebuild Afghanistan, let's not lose sight of the incredibly brave women who fought the Taliban before, during and after.

Adapted from a statement and interview on [www.rawa.org](http://www.rawa.org)

## MARCH AGAINST THE MASSACRES: ANTI-CAPITALIST BLOC

Stop the War demonstration  
Sunday, 18 November 2001  
Meet 12 pm sharp at Speakers Corner,  
Hyde Park; Tube: Marble Arch

With the civilian death toll mounting in Afghanistan we are now at a point when we have to step up opposition and take the anti-war message to the streets. Why anti-Capitalist? Since 18 June 1999, we have witnessed the growth of an

international movement directed against the capitalist system - the cause of war, famine and environmental destruction. We are calling for an anti-capitalist bloc to enable a broad alliance of non-hierarchical groups and individuals to participate in a mass action in solidarity with the victims.

The aim of the action will emerge from its organisational form. The drumming will act as a

focus for mobilising, but responsibility for decision making rests with the whole bloc via the direct democracy of a public assembly.

War lays bare the horrors of capitalism, so the campaign for peace is identical with the campaign to end capitalist oppression.

Bring your mates, your costumes, flags, banners, props and refreshments.

Contact us: [info@rhythmsofresistance.co.uk](mailto:info@rhythmsofresistance.co.uk)





**The most  
powerful  
weapon in the  
hands of the  
oppressor is  
the mind of  
the oppressed**

When we do and think and feel certain things privately and in secret, even when thousands of people are doing, thinking, whispering these things privately and in secret, there is still no general, collective understanding from which to move. Each takes her or his own risks in isolation. We may think of ourselves as individual rebels, and individual rebels can easily be shot down. The relationship among so many feelings remains unclear. But these thoughts and feelings, suppressed and stored up and whispered, have an incendiary component. You cannot tell where or how they will connect, spreading underground from rootlet to rootlet till every blade of grass is afire from every other. This is the 'spontaneity' that party 'leaders', secret governments, and closed systems dread'



# CAUTION



# WEAPONS OF MASS DISTRACTION

