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Issue One June 1999 Free!

There's no future in believing something can't be done. The future is in making it happen.

June 18 1999 -

Carnival Against Capital

On this day, the leaders of the 8 most powerful nations will meet for the G8 summit in Cologne, Germany, with an agenda to intensify economic growth and corporate power, while carving up our futures as they see fit. The costs of these frenzied games for profit are lives, ecosystems and entire economies. Those resisting this global torrent of devastation are joining forces, from Mexico's Zapatistas, to India's small farmers, people are taking direct action and reclaiming their lives from the insane rollercoaster of the financial markets. Resistance will converge on this day in the City of London (and financial centres across the globe) to party, protest and transform the roar of profit with the rhythms of pleasure!

Get involved! Come on June 12 at 2 or 4 to the Birch Community Centre, Brighton Grove, (just before Owens Park), Rusholme, for a day of skill sharing, info swapping and legal briefings. Return coaches from Manchester to London - £10/£7.50 conc. (subsidised by Okasional Café takings). Call 226 6814 to hear more.....

OKasional Café

If all goes to plan, you should be reading this at, or after the latest incarnation of the `Okasional Café', which will be the 5th in a line of beautiful squatted buildings, and certainly not the last.....In early 1998, a loose disorganisation of individuals who knew each other through environmental activism, initiated the idea to squat one of the many abandoned buildings in Manchester. Driven by a desire to create an autonomous space for meeting, eating and partying, the cafes inspire a collective spirit, encouraging others to participate and empowering them to envisage alternative ways of thinking and living. The Okasional Café represents many different things....mad free parties, tasty vegan food, organic beer, political meetings, artists running riot, kids spaces, the list goes on.....but it can only continue with your help. Whether as a teadrinker, washerupper, or a painter, you are part of the action and we need you, so come and help!!!

FREE INFORMATION NETWORK

Have you heard of FINs? Correct us if this is wrong, we don't know everything, this is an experiment, we'll learn as we go... FIN stands for 'Free Information Network' - coming out of the free festival scene, for decades there has been a network of newsletters like this across the country, linking people up, spreading information, provoking thought, and just being a different voice... this first edition of the 'Loombreaker' comes out of the 'Riotous Assembly', a monthly gathering/event for activists in Manchester (see over page), previously called the 'Activists Network', trying to get people together from different issues and different angles. This came out of Manchester 'Earth First!', one in a network of direct action groups, growing from an awareness of things that aren't right or of how things could be, and a determination to do something about it - So here we are, seeing something to be done, and giving it a go - if you look at this and think it should have more of this or that, say it, make it, do it - that's how it works!

Who Were the Loombreakers?

When Manchester's famous cotton mills were built, the Lancashire families who made a living with handlooms were made destitute. Skilled craftspeople were made redundant while Manchester factory workers suffered from the terrible working conditions in the mills.

By 1826 Lancashire people had had enough. Crowds of people called "The Loombreakers" smashed over a thousand powerlooms within four days, smashing the machines that were wrecking homes and the environment.

It is important to celebrate past struggles, so we have named Manchester's activist newsletter "THE LOOMBREAKER".

No More Racist Murders

The National Civil Rights Movement has been formed to bring together communities to fight racism and abuse by the police and the state. A Manchester group has come together and has so far had meetings in Moss Side and Longsight. Action, as well as meetings in other areas, will follow. Phone (07957) 777 372 / (0161) 256 1401 / (0961) 991 467

MANCHESTER RECLAIM THE STREETS

On the 30 April Brunswick St (opposite Manchester University Student Union) was reclaimed by hundreds of people as part of an ongoing campaign protesting against the University's transport policies. A sound system was set up and people danced, partied and had picnics in the street. After a couple of hours the riot cops came in and took the generator. People surrounded the sound system to protect it, and moved on to Oxford Road, and from there to the Mancunian Way where the party continued until 7pm. We thought it wouldn't be possible!! Nine people were arrested for violent disorder and the sound system was confiscated. To support these people and raise money for the sound system, a temporary Okasional Cafe will be set up 4th-6th June. (See front page). People are up in court on Monday 7th June - there will be a vigil at Crown Square magistrates at 10am.

Interested in taking action?

Come along to the Riotous Assembly (formerly the activists networking meeting).

Bring ideas, events, join in discussions.... - direct action campaigns, taking on the bosses, grassroots resistance, defending communities, earth, animals, and fun! June's meeting talked about Stop the City, & next month it'll be about NATO & Kosova. 7:30, at the Yard Theatre, opposite the Junction pub, Royce Road, Hulme, first Tuesday of each month. Next one: 6th July

To find out what direct action stuff's happening around the country, subscribe to the Earth First! Action Update, 0113-262 9365, or SchNews, 01273-685913

Holding up the Runway

Many people might think the Runway 2 campaign is over but there are still two camps protecting National Trust trees on the flightpath. Arthurs Wood camp was set up a year ago on June 22nd and Cedars Wood camp this year. Go and visit, or stay if you can. There is a party on June 21st (summer solstice). Contact 07931 931850.

Boycott Natwest

Manchester Animal Protection are running ongoing campaigns against Natwest and Co-operative Insurance Society (CIS) because they invest in Huntingdon Life Sciences. HLS are a vivisection company and already in financial difficulties so this campaign is winnable. Meetings are on the first Wednesday of every month at 7pm in the Friends Meeting House, Mount Street.

Stop the City

In the early 80s people descended on the City of London a number of times, 'cos profits were seen as the root-problem, and everyone wanted to show our diversity, and bring carnival and protest to the heart of the beast. It's interesting to note the parallels to J18. They ranged from 500 - 4,000 people, and at first the police didn't know how to deal with the lack of leaders. On the first one, 10% of protestors were nicked, though later released without charge. They'd also woken people up all the night before who'd stayed in public squats, and were waiting outside tube stations to send anyone dodgy-looking back down or be arrested. Still, the police were confused, and chaos was brought to the Square Mile. By the fourth, the police had sussed dealing with it, and less people came. Instead smaller regional ones were organised. This avoided having to get up at 6am, or face coaches being stopped on the way down as happened for the big Poll Tax demo. We've learnt many lessons since then, and with coaches going down from all over Britain, we'll see ya there!

Say No To Racism

Unity is part of a week long anti-racist event. This year's festival on Saturday July 3rd will be the biggest yet, with music, dance, performances, sport, club sounds, global

food, international play, stalls and much more. From 12.30 at Chorlton Park. Contact 881 4445.

Doin' it Up North...

is a chance for everyone around the North into direct action to get to know each other. There have been four so far with different groups organising each one. The last one was in Sheffield. We split into two groups, each with a plastic bag containing parcels and action packs. We'd open the parcel which would have a mad mission statement in it and anything else we might need. We spent the day `visiting' & closing down BP & Shell garages, McDonalds Drive-Thrus, the dentistry department of the University which tortures cats, Reed Employment for their part in the New Deal, and were chased by the police each time. A great time was had by all, and before the social, we saw an inspiring June 18th slide-show. Contact Manchester Earth First! to come on future northern events - 0161-226 6814.

Calling Longsight Activists!

LAND (Longsight - A New Direction) is a community action group looking for people to get involved. LAND has been working for over three years for community open space in central Longsight, an end to unwanted local development, and local decisions to be made by local people. Phone for a chat. Tel 2242011 or 2736736.

FREE MUMIA ABU JAMAL

Mumia Abu Jamal has been on death row for over 16 years after having been framed for the killing of a Philadelphia police officer. He has campaigned tirelessly against racism and oppression through out his prison sentence. The world wide movement to save him from execution is growing, tens of thousands of people demonstrated in Philadelphia and San Francisco on the 24 of April. There have also been protests around the world.

The next nine months will be critical for his life by the end of the year he will be in the federal courts. This will be his only chance to present the witnesses and obtain the evidence that were denied him by the Pennsylvania courts. There will be a week of action for Mumia Abu Jamal september 19-24.

Write to Mumia Abu-Jamal, AM 8335, SCI Greene,,1040 East Roy Furman Highway, Waynesburg, PA. 15370.

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