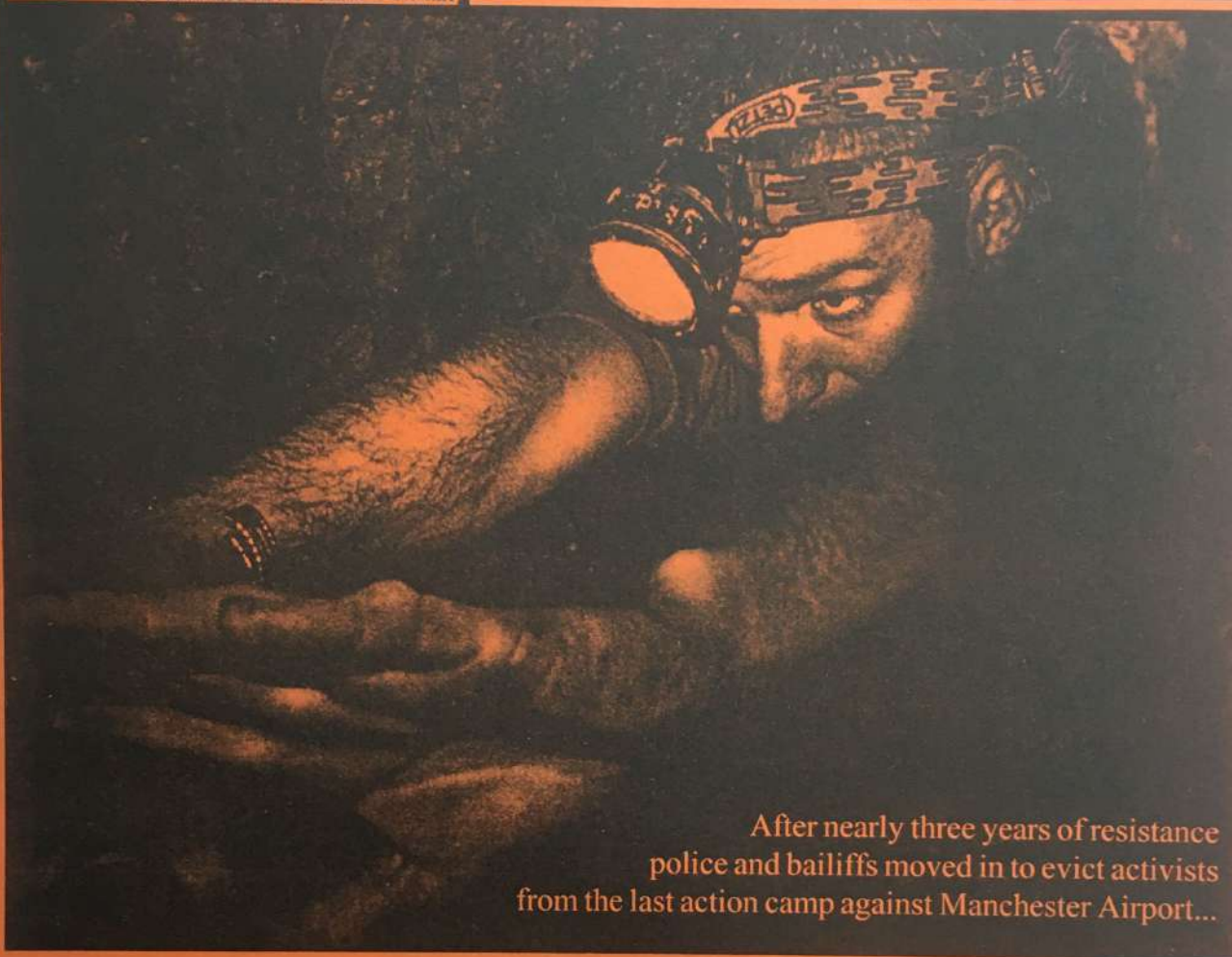


The Loombreaker

Issue 5 Mid-October '99 Free!



After nearly three years of resistance
police and bailiffs moved in to evict activists
from the last action camp against Manchester Airport...

The camps at Arthur's Wood and Cedars Wood were set up eighteen months ago to continue the protest against Manchester Airport's second runway. When bailiffs arrived on Tuesday 21st September, there were around thirty people in the trees and four down the tunnel. An exclusion zone was set up to prevent people gaining access to the site. Cedars Wood was cleared first, it was occupied by a lone female holding a naked protest. Two female climbers were flown in to bring her down.

At the beginning of the second week of the eviction there were still fifteen people on the site. The last seven people above ground were taken out of a net on Thursday 30th September, and chainsaw operators began to fell the trees.

People from Manchester Earth First! got together with some of those evicted from Arthur's Wood. Ten people and a dog had a picnic on the middle floor of Quarry Bank Mill, which is a National Trust-run museum and country park. The mill is just upstream from Arthur's Wood, where two tunnellers continued to evade the Sherriffs officers after 2 weeks underground. The aims of the action were (1) to show solidarity with the two people left underground, and (2) to raise awareness of the reckless way in which the National Trust has sold off woodland. Arthur's Wood was placed in good faith into the hands of the National Trust, to be looked after in perpetuity for the people of the area. Instead, the National Trust accepted the "30 pieces of silver" and allowed the woodland to be chopped. The wood wasn't even on the runway site - the trees are apparently too tall to be so close by.

At the time of writing, one tunneller remains underground evading capture, whilst the other has just been released from Wilmslow Police Station. Respect to everyone who has been involved in this campaign.

The Loombreaker is about the action people are taking in and around Manchester to defend & create what is important to us,
so reclaiming control of our lives

Living Wage Campaign

On Saturday 23rd October in St Ann's Square between 12.30 and 3.30pm come and join Indonesian and UK workers in demanding the right to a living wage for garment workers everywhere! Take action and send a postcard to the retailers. There will also be street drama, music, an information stall and displays. The fall in value of Indonesian workers' wages means that workers can no longer afford to buy clothes, books and adequate food.

In Nicaragua, workers in the Free Trade Zone earn 40% of what is needed to buy food for an average sized family. Also in Britain many sweatshop and home workers continue to earn as little as £2 an hour despite the introduction of a minimum wage.

At 4pm on the same day in the Friends Meeting House on Mount Street there will be a chance to hear Indonesian labour activists speak about their struggle. Come along for refreshments and informal discussion. For more information call 0161 247 1760.

Meanwhile in Manchester, a single man working in one of the many textile sweatshops could not get social security benefits that adequately topped up his exploitative wage. He left after being refused the national minimum wage, and went to the Advice & Community Resource Centre in Moss Side, who helped him win back the lost earnings from his employer. If you have any problems like this you can contact Greater Manchester Low Pay Unit on 0161 953 4078.

Dye In

On the 24th of September activists staged a "die in" in protest at Manchester University's investment in the arms trade. This took place in the Whitworth building, where students were queuing to pay their fees. The university has £25 million worth of shares in British Aerospace which until recently sold Hawk jets to Indonesia, which have been used against the people of East Timor and West Papua.

Five women activists screamed, threw red vegetable dye over themselves and fell onto the floor, while others unfurled a banner, shouted and gave out leaflets. Most of those who hadn't died were swiftly and roughly ejected. An official told students not to worry because it wasn't real blood! The protest ended in success when the university's investment manager agreed to meet students to discuss the issue.

Eugenics... You Wot?

Eugenics: the stuff the Nazis did in their experiments in concentration camps, the sterilisation the Swedes continued til 1972 to breed their stereotype of a master-race, the talk of the British Left around the Second World War and before. Targets: anyone who doesn't fit their white rich model - PROBABLY YOU.

There's a eugenics society in Britain, which once a year holds a public meeting. This year it was at the Zoological Society in London, and Mancunians were amongst those who went down to greet the fascists. They'd specially invited over two US speakers - one has links with the Klu Klux Klan, the other wrote the infamous book *The Bell Curve* ("black people have IQs of 70, therefore are mentally retarded, therefore..."). They did not get to speak. Before the first one got on stage, someone explained to the audience about the evil profiles of the next speakers, and then others burst into the hall with banner, leaflets and rants. The meeting was cancelled - assembled racists did their Nazi salutes, got all uppity about not being able to speak, and left. The police weren't too into protecting any white supremacists. One speaker made it as far as the car park before being splattered by a hail of tomatoes, and ranted at all the while. He cowered, everyone around listened and stared, the police

returned, we were gone. "Is this the most chilling scientist in the world?" asked the Daily Mail that day of the Bell Curve. You can't feel any sorrow when actually confronted by these kind of people. With 400 members of the eugenics society, there are sure to be some in the North West - watch out on your street.

If we believed anything reported in the mainstream media, we'd think that genetic engineering was on its way out, and that Monsanto was busy climbing down & doing u-turns on the unnecessary and dangerous techno-fix of genetic engineering. Well, twists and twirls aside, it's all greenwash. Monsanto have not said anything that changes their plans on the Terminator technology, designed to protect their profits in financially-poorer countries by selling farmers seeds which become sterile after a year. Nor have they, AstraZeneca, AgrEvo or any of the other profiteers changed their plans to possess, control & play God with our food.

Contact Manchester Against Genetic Engineering, c/o Dept.29, 255, Wilmslow Road, Manchester M14 5LW. Actions are planned against GM cotton and human genetics - to find out where and when, ring 224 4846.

J18 Update

On the June 18th Carnival Against Capital there were only 15 arrests made in London. Since that day the police have launched an operation to track down more of those involved and there have been about 50 arrests. The police arrested two people in Manchester for violent disorder but dropped the charges having realised that they had the wrong people - one wasn't even there! When one person was arrested they offered to make it worth his while if he would come down to the station to look through their photos of June 18th and identify anyone.

Fancy a Job?

On 8th October 3 people from Manchester EF! visited the British Aerospace stall in the careers fair at G-mex. The stall was shut down for 40 minutes by one person who locked himself to it while the rest of us gave out leaflets and talked to people about the various dodgy activities BAe are involved in. Many people asked us for careers information and got told that BAe no longer had any jobs unless you can kill people. Eventually police turned up and after some confusion in taking down part of the stall every one got chucked out.

DIARY

Friday 15-17th October. Gathering Visions Gathering Strength in Hebden Bridge West Yorkshire. A conference for those interested in non-violent social change. 07971-302412.

Saturday 16th October. Anti McDonalds international solidarity day.

Sunday 17th October. OK Cafe meeting, 7pm. Ring 2266814 for venue.

There will be an Introduction to Earth First! evening including a video showing, discussion and plans for the next OK Café. At Manchester University Student Union on **Monday the 18th October 7-9pm.**

Wednesday 20th October. RTS defendants' hearing. Meet Crown Square 9.30am.

Tuesday 2nd November. Riotous assembly 7.30pm at the Yard Theatre, Old Birley Street, Hulme.

November 8th or 9th. Monsanto appeal against Genetix Snowball's right to a full public trial. High Court, London. 0161 224 4846.

Wednesday 10th November. International day of action against Shell. Possible action - ring 2266814.

Friday 19th November. There will be a ceilidh in aid of Merci and CND at Birch Community Centre, Brighton Grove, Rusholme at 7.30pm.

Friday 12th to Saturday 20 November Festival of political song featuring Rory McLeod, Roy Bailey, Holly Near, Sheffield Socialist Choir and many more. There will also be many workshops on. For more information ring 01142495185.

Free West Papua!

October 4th was designated a national day of solidarity with the West Papuan people, who were invaded in 1963 by Indonesia. Since occupation, if they dare try to have a say in how their country is run, raise their flag, or mess with the foreign multinationals trashing their environment and way of life, they are harassed or murdered.

In South West England, Rio Tinto (an Anglo-Australian multinational mining company) had their head offices invaded twice, leafleted, and a West Papuan flag was raised. Hard to feel sorry for Rio Tinto, with the biggest destructive mining operation in West Papua. In Bougainville (a nearby country) their mine has been closed down for over 10 years by local people, who were never asked if they wanted a mine anyway. In South East England, ARCO, a US oil & gas multinational had their offices invaded, leafleted, and my, did their filing system and computers get a touch confused and 'reorganised' with all these unusual happenings! How we feel sorry for those big-time invaders and exploiters!

And here in sunny Manchester, British Gas got a visiting. They have major offshore gas projects, as well as onshore holdings covering nearly 5,000 square kilometres, together with the Indonesian state oil & gas company. This is all only possible due to the 'stability' Indonesia has brought to the island with its British Aerospace weaponry.

British Gas Trading denied having anything to do with the 'other British Gas', of course - "attempted genocide has nothing to do with us, guv". They refused to disassociate themselves from the goings-on on the other side of the world. A national action is planned before the 300,000 West Papuans already murdered turn into another East Timorese bloodbath. Contact Manchester EF! to get involved. (0161 226 6814.)

Civil Rights Movement

Over the last few months the Civil Rights Movement in Manchester has become involved in three cases of injustice all involving the police. The first is the case of a brutal police assault that nearly killed a local man two years ago; the second concerns the arrest, detention and abuse of a local youth at the Moss Side carnival; and the third is a cruel case of conspiracy, assault and abuse of a local man. All cases need your help. Contact us and let us know what you can do.

Were you at Moss Side Carnival on July 10th in Alexandra Park? Did you see a number of police arresting a young man at around 4pm, in the area of the tennis courts?

The Civil Rights Movement in Manchester need to find witnesses to this incident in order to help him defend himself in court. He has been charged with a minor theft offence, which he denies, and he was badly treated by the police. If you saw anything ring 248 5190 or 256 1401.

Also it is planned to have a series of regular Sunday afternoon discussions with members and friends of the movement. The aim is to provide a relaxed and informal atmosphere at which people can raise and discuss issues affecting the community and look at ways in which we can work together to solve them. Lunch and a creche will be provided - details will be announced shortly. There are also regular Monday meetings. Contact the above number for information.

The Loombreaker

Bury Business

When the inspector came along to the informal hearing into a controversial housing development in Bury, he saw a crowd of 30 local people opposed to the development. Immediately he decided a Public Inquiry was needed. Stately Developments plan to turn the wildlife haven which is a lodge (mill pond) into yet more houses - unfortunately for them, they need to buy a house to build an access road. Pressure is now on the owner to not renew his option to sell it to them, which would present them with something of a problem come the Inquiry. Meanwhile, the water level is rising again...

Turning the Tide

Members of the Quaker Turning the Tide programme will be holding a day long workshop on active non-violence for people who would like to make a difference. This will take place on Saturday 30 October between 10-4.30pm at the Friends Meeting House on Mount Street in Manchester. The workshop will be geared to the needs of the participants. For further information and a registration form contact Turning the Tide.

Bread not Bombs

In May 1999 three Swedish activists from the Bread Not Bombs ploughshares group were fined in Preston for conspiracy to commit criminal damage to the Vengeance nuclear submarine. After an 8 day trial and 8 hours of deliberation the jury could not find them guilty. This was despite the fact that the judge had told them not to think about any issues relating to nuclear weapons and only to decide whether or not they had conspired together - the defendants had already openly admitted to conspiring together. Their retrial starts on Wednesday the 13th October at Preston Crown Court and is expected to last a week. To offer your support or for more information contact: Swords into Ploughshares, c/o 179 Ribbleson Avenue, Preston, PR2 6AA. Tel 07930 961842.

Living La Vida Local!

Interested in Cuba? There is an active branch of the Cuba Solidarity Campaign in Manchester.

They are having their Annual General Meeting will be on Sunday 24 October from 6pm at St Augustine's Grosvenor Square, All Saints, Manchester.

Afterwards Mike Weaver of the Cuba Organic Support Group will speak about Green Havana: the community organic gardening movement.

Or go along to their meeting on every second Wednesday of the month at the Hare and Hounds pub, Shudehill at 7.30pm.

Kingswater Kapers

Over 300 people from the Reddish, Denton and Audenshaw areas came on a protest walk against the Kingswater development.

Kingswater is a scheme hatched by Tameside Council and property speculators to replace a wildlife-rich open space with yuppie housing and a business park. Opposition is huge and the campaign has been going on for years. A public inquiry starts this Tuesday 12th October where local people will be speaking in defence of the area, which is next to Debdale Park.

For more information on the campaign and upcoming action, ring 442 8635.

Birley Tree

On Friday 1st October Hulme's famous Birley tree was butchered. The 116 year old black poplar was killed under cover of darkness at 5.30am with 60 coppers and the local councillor in attendance, even though the council had promised to consult local residents before hand. A huge hotel is to be built on the site as part of the development of the whole of Birley Fields. Once local residents found out what had happened an action was organised. People pulled the fences down at the site and then after held hands around the stump (sounds like hippy crap but was very essential). People then gathered some of the branches and bags of sawdust. Next stop was the offices of the Hulme Partnership, which were occupied for over an hour. The director Barbara McGloughlin's desk was covered in sawdust. Eventually the numbers of police arriving made it impossible for the occupation to continue and everyone was ejected, some violently from the building. For more information on upcoming actions contact Birley Action Group on 226 6814.



~ Tunnel Thoughts ~

A tunneller's thoughts whilst awaiting to be evicted from the tunnel at the airport:

"As I sit here pondering on what safe but difficult obstructions to make to impede the progress of the nice men in black the tunnel rumbles as another aircraft reaches the skies. If we are to believe Manchester airport then we should experience far more vibrations than we do.

They advocate a second runway on the grounds that the present runway cannot cater for the existing and expected (hasn't happened yet) increase in air travel, such is deregulation that it allowed a prediction to destroy acres of priceless woodland. 15 airports on this small island want to expand, one of them in Liverpool is a mere 40 miles away.

How many international airports does this small island need? "We must remain competitive" cries the chief executive. Yes, but at what price to the environment? The absurd position of runway two means that only one aircraft can land or take off at any time from both runways.

With the distinct possibility that the airport is planning a third runway one wonders when this insanity will end.

Half an hour has past since I put pen to paper and there has been no rumble, no vibration of an aircraft. The candle flickers and the only sound to be heard is the steady comforting breath of air being blown into the chamber. The hardships we endure for one thing is certain, the history books will vindicate us.

We few, we happy smelly few, in the trees and tunnels and those who support us as best they can will be proved right. History will treat us kindly, of that there can be no doubt."



The Loombreakers were Lancashire weavers who, in 1826, smashed the machines that were destroying their livelihoods and communities.

The Loombreaker comes from the Free Information Network tradition, spreading non-mainstream news.

Pick it up free from: **Frontline Books**, 255 Wilmslow Road, Rusholme; **One World Centre**, Mount Street, near Central Library; **Yellow Brick Café**, 47 Old Birley Street, Hulme; **Mistys Café**, Longsight District Centre, Stockport Road; **Café Pop**, Oldham Street, Piccadilly; **Unicorn Grocery**, 89 Albany Road, Chorlton; **Pankhurst Centre**, Nelson Street, near MRI.

If you live outside Manchester, send us a stamp for each issue you want. Prisoners and local action camps get it free - just send us your address.

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The Loombreaker comes out at the beginning (very roughly) of each month, so get any news to us by then. We are particularly in need of photos, cartoons and original, non-cheesy headlines. You can hand in your materials at the Riotous Assembly, below.

Interested in taking action?

Come to the *Riotous Assembly* for direct action, campaigns, taking on the bosses, grassroots resistance, defending communities, earth, animals, and fun! It's a chance to meet & chat. Bring ideas & events each first Tuesday of the month, 7:30 pm, Yard Theatre, opposite the Junction pub, Old Birley Street, Hulme. Next date: 2.11.99