



# The Loombreaker

No. 15 ♦ December 2000 ♦ Free

## Bill Posters will not be prosecuted!

Adverts and the culture of commerce invade our lives daily. Well don't just sit there! All you need is access to a photocopier and some wall paper paste. Pick up a brush and strike a blow for freedom! November 25<sup>th</sup> was NO SHOP DAY in the UK. As morning broke it became increasingly obvious that every single bill board in town had been altered. Health warning signs appeared: 'let's all ignore global warming'; 'you're never too poor to buy more.' Remember my friends, for all their astronomical advertising budgets, 'ye are many, they are few.'

### Global Warming - FINAL WARNING!

#### Killing the Planet for Money & Greed - action at KPMG

While the Hague conference was busy collapsing (see last loombreaker & over page) climate-change actions were happening in Manchester. People working through the Earth First! network targeted one of the companies responsible for no progress being made in reducing CO2 emissions. The idea of carbon trading is now being put forward; this sleight of hand allows a polluting nation to trade credits with a country which has reduced its projected pollution output. So, for instance the US pays Mexico to build a nuclear power station, which doesn't emit CO2. Mexico receives carbon reduction certificates for not increasing carbon emission, which the US then buys. Voila! The US has reduced greenhouse gases and has the certificates to prove it... Moreover the stage is set for wealthier countries to buy credits assisted by the collapse of weaker economies now producing less pollution because they've had to shut down all the factories! And a collapsing economy isn't necessarily more eco-friendly, as the cyanide spills into Romanian rivers have shown.

Any real move to cut pollution will be slowed, because for every green development, there's a smoke-belching hell-hole which it is now subsidising. KMG, an accounting and management consultancy firm, supports the development of a 'Stock Exchange' for carbon trading and is part of the International Emissions Trading Association which lobbies governments to adopt carbon trading. This exchange is already set up and premises in London have been acquired. One of the companies involved in this venture is, surprise, surprise! KPMG. Well, they've got a nice big office in Manchester (on John Dalton Street).

While an invasion of Rentamob eco-protestors distracted reception staff and security with handouts of cream cake, PixieTemp staff made their way around the building, re-filing documents, losing some wires from the back of computers, locking filing cabinets and then losing the keys... No arrests were made and indeed no one even had their name or address taken (after all, pixies don't steal). However, some customers of KPMG may find inexplicable irregularities in their accounts, and when one executive gets back from holiday, he won't be able to recognise his office...

#### Lock-in at the DETR

Over 100 new roads and bypasses have been proposed as Labour shows that environmental destruction is just its cup of tea. In response,

activists including from Manchester, mobilised to show that a new road programme equals a new roads protest. On the 1<sup>st</sup> Dec the first door on my advent calendar was opened showing - a festive pile of arm-tubes and D-locks! These blasts from the past were accompanied by newer methods. Besuited protesters stormed into the Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions in London, causing organisational chaos before occupying the offices of Michael Meacher (Environment) and Lord McDonald (Transport). As one copper said, 'how did you guys get so smart?!' Really dahling, dreadlocks are so 1996! Meanwhile their car park was blocked by a group linked with arm tubes; and a D-locked security door. Prescott would have had a hard time parking either of his two jags that day. No one elected our Minister of Transport - by appointing them to the Lords, Blair can put anyone into government. Meacher's office had a big fridge full of wines and champagne..... In a conscious attempt to avoid returning to the bad old days the DETR has couched the road programme in the language of ecological and social responsibility; the pink and green-wash emphasising 'benefits' for local communities and environments. Well, veterans and novice road protestors proved that the government won't be able to avoid more costly battles for the trees.



Events in the Hague ♦ Prison and Court News ♦ Sanctions against Iraq ♦ David Shayler ♦ Two Student Demos! ♦ Burma and The Lonely Planet ♦ Anti-Deportation Campaign ♦ Depleted Uranium ♦ A New Rail Campaign and more.

## Cycles Not Cyclones

Called to coincide with the Climate Conference, around 30 cyclists gathered by the Fashion Museum at Platt Fields park at the ungodly hour of 8am on Thursday 24th November for a Critical Mass. Tabards proclaimed "One Less Car" and "Pedal power to the people", cyclists made their way through the log jam of traffic on Upper Brook Street. The police turned up late at Deansgate, and the poor souls were completely taken aback by the amazing ability of the bikes to completely ignore them and cycle around them.

Hundreds of leaflets were given out and we all enjoyed an energetic start to the day!

*If people want more info on how to organise a Critical Mass get in touch with the Manchester Radical Cyclists' Collective at: [radicalbikes@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:radicalbikes@yahoo.co.uk)*

*or for info on future similar actions or on cycling contact EFi on 226 6814, or GM Cycle Campaign, One World Centre, 6 Mount St, M2 5NS*

## Actions in the Hague

A few Manchester people have recently returned from the international climate conference in the Hague. This was a United Nations meeting supposedly to limit carbon emissions to lessen the chaos associated with climate change.

Under the title of a "Rising Tide for Climate Justice" people from all over Europe did a number of events and actions. This included surrounding the centre with a sand bag dyke, occupying one of the delegates meetings, leafleting inside the centre, bicycles rides, street theatre, cream pie in the face of the head of the US delegation and plenty of parties. A lot of British people felt inspired by our ability to get a good action together at short notice and to tell the conference that we rejected their pathetic company sponsored attempt to hide the real crisis. Massive cuts in carbon emissions are needed now and the proposed agreement would have done nothing to halt climate chaos. In fact the whole process was turning into a trade fair in carbon emissions to allow the multinationals that cause the problem to make more money. Hopefully more actions soon.

Contact: Rising Tide, [risingtide@post.com](mailto:risingtide@post.com), 0031 (0)20 6831021  
see [www.climareconference.org](http://www.climareconference.org) or [www.risingtide.nl](http://www.risingtide.nl)

## BRITISH JUSTICE. NO JUSTICE!

On November 13<sup>th</sup> a ludicrous travesty of justice took place at Manchester Magistrates Court. Ben and Graham were arrested at the Mayday protests in Manchester and charged with Section 4 of the Public Order Act, that is "Threatening, abusive or insulting words or behaviour with intent to provoke unlawful violence or whereby it is likely that unlawful violence will be provoked."

Your Loombreaker reporter has seen many power crazed, violent coppers lying through their teeth in the witness box and being "believed" by magistrates and sadly this occasion was no different. Explaining why the case against them was proven the magistrate said that one of them "may" have pushed a police officer and that the other had been waving his arms around in an aggressive manner!

The trial of Rene Thomas, also arrested on Mayday under Section 5 of the Public Order Act, will take place in Manchester Magistrates on January 29<sup>th</sup>, most likely starting at 9.45a.m. Please come along and give your support if you can.

### Support the prisoners!

Come along for a hot vegan meal and a social letter writing evening on Tues 12th Dec to cheer-up a political prisoner.  
Ring 226 6814

### Court Support Alert!

Two Manchester peace activists, River (Keith Wright) and Sylvia Boyes are on trial in Manchester Crown Court early next year for attempting to disarm a nuclear submarine (see Loombreaker 14). The trial starts on Jan 8<sup>th</sup>. Please come down to the court, even if you can only manage an hour or so - it is always very much appreciated.  
More details from Manchester CND on 834 8301

## Secret state shenanigans and stumbling spooks

On Nov 23<sup>rd</sup> MI5 whistleblower David Shayler spoke at the Mechanics Institute, Manchester, alongside an organiser from the National Union of Journalists and editor of *Free Press*. Press freedom was the main topic. 'Freedom of Information?' Jack Cunningham reportedly said in a cabinet meeting, 'Isn't that something we talk about in opposition?' The Labour government has proved to support the secret state just as carefully as the Tories. With the election of Labour in 1997 Shayler and his partner Anne Machon thought they would welcome info on corruption in the security services. Shayler revealed firstly that the security services had sponsored a plot to kill Colonel Gadaffi in 1995, which went wrong, with people killed in the crossfire. He also reported that MI5 (or 'The Office') had harassed and bugged journalists on tenuous grounds. Robin Cook immediately went on TV to deny the allegations.

The general impression I got was of two naive young toffs, prompted to speak out by ethics, patriotism - and a desire for personal recognition. Coming from the same comfortable upper-class culture which they condemn, they seek to reform the State in the name of English fair play. Still, Shayler and Machon must be thanked for their bravery in choosing to turn traitor to the British elite which once recruited them so eagerly. Otherwise we wouldn't know that our spies are murderers and our politicians are liars.

Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom: 8 Cynthia St, London N1 9Jf; 020 7278 4430; <[www.cpbf.org.uk](http://www.cpbf.org.uk)>; <[freepress@cpbf.demon.co.uk](mailto:freepress@cpbf.demon.co.uk)>

## GM5 Guilty (..but only in the eyes of the law)

The ongoing trial of the 5 local genetics activists charged with criminal damage to an Aventis crop in Yorkshire concluded on December 4<sup>th</sup>. The magistrate found them guilty, but went on to describe them as intelligent, positive, honest and an exception to the cases he normally dealt with!

Flying in the face of convention he didn't award any compensation to Aventis or any fine. The sentence was a mere conditional discharge and court costs. The trial has produced a lot of positive publicity, raising awareness within the courtroom too. The prosecution barrister said that her personal beliefs were on our side and the farmer told one of the defendants he would now burn the land to remove any GM residue after discovering the dangers of genetic pollution.

## Solidarity Not Pity

Campaigns continue to grow in Greater Manchester in support of Asylum Seekers and those threatened with deportation. The Lata and Devesha Defence campaign has been set up to support Lata and her daughter Devesha in their resistance to Britain's immigration laws. Lata is, at present, caring for her niece, Arati, who has been disabled since birth as result of medical negligence. Because Lata came to the UK on holiday and then became Arati's carer, the immigration rules do not allow her to stay, however much she is needed. Bury Social Services agree it is in Arati's interest to be cared for by another family member.

For more info and to find out how you can support the campaign contact:  
The Lata and Devesha Defence Campaign,  
c/o 400 Cheetham Hill Road, Mcr, M8 9LE.  
Tel: (0161) 740 8206

## A Refugee Economy

*'It is better to break sanctions than to break international law'* Hans von Sponeck, former UN humanitarian coordinator for Iraq.

Campaigners from around the country gathered in Manchester in early December to discuss the situation in Iraq. A focus was the sanctions imposed by the UN, which are continuing to have a cruel and devastating effect upon the Iraqi people. The conference included workshops on the sanctions regimes, the effects of NATO armaments including Depleted Uranium and eye-witness accounts from delegations that have recently visited the country. Hans Von Sponeck, former UN Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq was particularly inspiring, as key note speaker.

It is 10 years since sanctions were imposed on Iraq, and the beginning of Operation Desert Storm. Since then around 1,500,000 people have died as a result of from chronic malnutrition, illnesses such as cancer and dysentery and the widespread poisoning of the environment following military bombardments.

One of the greatest problems for the Iraqi people is the massive deterioration in basic infrastructure and the total collapse of the economy and the value of the Dinar. In this situation the 'oil for food' programme is little more than an attempt to run an entire country on the basis of a refugee economy. Over 60% of Iraqis are now unemployed and the average working wage is \$1 a month. Consequently belongings and food rations have to be sold to meet other essential requirements.

In terms of the sanctions regime there is little prospect for change as within the UN the US and UK governments still insist on a link between weapons inspection and an end to sanctions regime, so prolonging the agony. As delegates reported, the Iraqi people desperately need the sanctions to end immediately.

Planned Actions: National petition and blockade of parliament on January 18th, the tenth anniversary of Operation Desert Storm. contact CND or Earth First! plus - for this or other sanctions busting actions - Voices in the Wilderness, 16b Cherwell Street, Oxford OX4 1BG, (01865) 243 232, voices@vuw.freereserve.co.uk More info from www.casi.org.uk

## International Conference Against Depleted Uranium

Last month, Manchester was host to a variety of renowned scientists, campaigners, investigative journalists, and gulf war veterans, who came together to discuss how to fight for the abolition of weapons containing depleted uranium. Briefly, DU is a waste product of the nuclear industry which is recycled into deadly weapons. On impact, the DU burns into tiny ceramic particles which are insoluble and lodge in the body when inhaled causing cancers,

leukaemia, birth malformities, and other illnesses. It was first used on a large scale in the Gulf war of 1991 and more recently in the Balkans conflict last year. The conference brought together scientists from Iraq, Serbia, Albania, the US and Britain, as well as activists from places such as Korea, Japan and Puerto Rico, where DU is tested, and suffers from DU poisoning.

More information from the Campaign Against Depleted Uranium, on 0161 834 8176, or email gmdcnd@gm.apc.org.uk

## Is Hough End to Disappear?

Residents in South Manchester are reported to be furious about plans to build a new rugby complex on Hough End playing fields. The council have approved plans for the development in spite of the fact that the playing fields are supposedly protected by a covenant made in 1930 in which they were bequeathed to the people of Manchester. Local residents are against the scheme, which will mean the loss of a sizeable green space within the city and the loss of a number of amateur league football pitches, but have been refused access to the covenant by the council. The development plans were put forward by Broughton Park Rugby Club in partnership with Manchester Leisure, English Rugby and our old friends Bellway Homes.

For more info. Contact: *Arca News* (0161) 272 7711

## A Queer Sight indeed

For the first time in what must be ages a student group has taken its grievances to the heart of Manchester. About a hundred lesbian, gay and bisexuals from a number of local colleges took to the city centre in late November to present an alternative view to straight norms and values. Demanding the scrapping of Section 28 and an equal legal age of consent, the highly visible demo unashamedly cross-crossed its way from Oxford Road to the Ardials and back.

Just one thing darling, next time can we have less of the placards and some music please.

Contact: NUSLGB, c/o Mcr Metropolitan Students Union, Oxford Road, Mcr.

## DIARY

### December

9 Stop the Killing! National anti-meat Day of Action, with demos outside high street burger bars, butchers and supermarkets.

Contact: Viva! (01273) 777688.

info@viva.org.uk

12 Writing to Prisoners Social,

venue tbc, ring 226 6814

16 Burma Lonely Planet leafletting

see article

26 & every Saturday

Hunt Sabotage

Contact: 0961 113084 or

info@nwisa.org.uk

www.nwisa.org.uk

### January

1 Hunt Sabotage, see above

3 Mcr Animal Protection meeting

7.30pm, Friends Meeting House,

Mount Street, Mcr.

8 Trident Trial, Manchester Crown Court,

9.30am, see article

16 Stop the genocide of the Iraqi people,

anti-sanctions action,

Meet 12.30pm, Westminster Abbey

London, see article

Every Tuesday

Picket at Newchurch guinea pig breeders

for vivisection

Contact: MAP on 07931 586826

## MERCI becomes Reality

MERCI is a four year old project to establish a Centre for Sustainable Development in the heart of Manchester. Now to be known as Bridge 5 Mill, the centre is a focus and tool for those working to make Manchester a more sustainable, green and safe city to enjoy. The Centre is accessible and welcoming to all. Due to open completely in March 2001 it will incorporate environmentally friendly businesses, a cafe, exhibition space, voluntary groups and accommodation.

The whole building is to be an example of environmental design with high energy efficiency, renewable energy and built with nontoxic and recycled materials.

So if you want to find out about green construction; want to hire a solar powered meeting room, want to borrow our camcorders or van; want to look around our exhibition of sustainable development; want to take part in our welding courses, then get in touch. To find out more about Bridge 5 Mill or our work to towards positive social change contact us on 0161 273 1736 or on [merci@gn.apc.org](mailto:merci@gn.apc.org)

## Railworkers Get Back on Track

The latest tragedy at Hatfield has underlined the desperately parlous state of the national network lately, and the inevitable long term effects of cost-cutting and underinvestment. Of course some may not be too bothered about the impact of privatisation. Railtrack's recently announced profits of £150m should be enough to keep the City happy, although the future viability of the industry is surely being called into question.

Meantime it is rail workers and passengers whose lives are put at risk, who have to live with delays and cancelled services, rising fares, casualised working conditions, a mountain of bureaucracy and a continuous dribble of pitiful excuses from rail management, subcontractors and the government.

Some workers in the industry have had enough and are launching a campaign to renationalise the railways. Now for us at Loombreaker we don't quite see the point of swapping one bunch of bureaucrats for another, but we do agree that private ownership is now a proven failure. We understand the campaign is in its infancy and we do reckon it makes much better sense to bring the transport industry back into some form of public or common ownership, and for workers and passengers to have control within such a framework. And the sooner the better!

Contact the Loombreaker for more details.

## The One World Centre is on the move!

The One World Centre (OWC), based currently in the basement of the Friends Meeting House, will soon be packing up and moving to the new Bridge 5 Mill (see opp.). OWC has existed in various venues as an info centre and base for radical and campaigning groups for many years. Now, however, with the advent of Bridge 5 mill, the groups remaining decided to close the OWC in its current form, as the function of resource and information centre will be performed by Bridge 5 Mill. Omega, Manchester Wildlife, Agitprop, CND, and the CADU, plus the postal addresses for Networking Newsletter, Mcr Greenpeace, Chemobyl Children's Project, CADRI, Mcr CAAT, Stop the Hawk Deal or GM Cycle Campaign will all move from the OWC to Bridge 5 Mill just before Christmas. Loombreakers will be available in Bridge 5 Mill, but we also hope to have them stocked at the Little Bookshop, which will remain in the basement of the Friends Meeting House.

Bridge 5 Mill, 22a Beswick Street,  
Ancoats, Manchester, M4 7HR

## Dying For A Holiday

The Burma Campaign UK is calling for a boycott of Lonely Planet Guides, who have recently produced a new edition of their guide to Burma, thus encouraging more people to visit the country. They've done this even though they know that tourism helps prop up one of the world's most brutal dictatorships.

Tourism developments in Burma are causing severe human rights abuses and tourist dollars are boosting the coffers of Burma's vicious military regime. The democratically elected party, the National League for Democracy, has asked all tourists not to visit the country while the dictatorship is in power.

In Burma today there are: around 1500 political prisoners, 1.5 million refugees and over 2 million men, women and children in forced labour.

There will be a demo/leafletting at Waterstone's on Deansgate on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> Dec starting at 2pm, both to raise awareness about Burma and to ask customers to join the boycott.

For more info and postcards to send to Lonely Planet, contact: The Burma Campaign UK, Bickerton House, 25/27 Bickerton Road, London N19 5JT. Tel: 020 7281 7377 or [www.burmacampaign.org.uk](http://www.burmacampaign.org.uk)

## Students Launch Fight Against Fees

Students from across the country, including Manchester, held a demonstration on the 15<sup>th</sup> November organised by the National Union of

..IT'S THE EDITORIAL  
- LISTEN TO THIS!



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 news the mainstream media won't print. It is @nticopyright to non-commercial uses.

Pick it up FREE from:

- One World Centre, Central Street, near Central Library;
- Mistys Café, Longsight District Centre, Stockport Road;
- Café Pop, Oldham Street, Piccadilly;
- Unicorn Grocery, 89 Albany Road, Chorlton;
- Withington Wholefoods, Wilmslow Road;
- Wesley Cafe, Royce Road, Hulme;

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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0161-226 6814  
[loombreaker@nematode.freesserve.co.uk](mailto:loombreaker@nematode.freesserve.co.uk)

### 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 Junction pub) 41, Old Birley Street, Hulme. Next date: 9/1/01

Students. The call for Grants, Not Fees is in response to the tuition fees legislation brought through by New Labour. The event took place one day after 400 fuel price protestors held a rally in Central London, yet a march of 15,000 was not thought worth reporting by the press or TV media. A procession a mile long marched the University of London to Kennington Park.

Contact: Manchester Students Union, Oxford Road.