



The Loombreaker

No. 18 ♦ April 2001 ♦ Free

Short Caked by Local Loony



On Monday 5th March 3 custard pies were placed on the head of International Development Secretary Clare Short after she'd given a talk at Bangor University about how great globalisation is and how it will help the world's poor! For taking part in this outrage one of your Loombreaker collective is up on a charge of violent disorder, which won't stick - unlike the pie, heh, heh, heh!

From April Fool's Day to Mayday is International month of Pie-rect Action against Capital and State - Operation Dessert Storm. Slightly misquoting Schneus; "You can't misrepresent a face full of cream. It sends a clear message to the recipient and the media that what these people are doing is ridiculous and that you are prepared to let them know - and have some fun while doing it! The pie is the great equaliser. How many times have you wanted to see whipped cream smeared on Michael "9 homes" Meacher's glasses or see Tony Blair choking on a strawberry?" See www.schnews.org.uk for more.

Ticket to Ride (part II) - 90% for 90%

In mid-March, about 25 intrepid travellers set off from Piccadilly for Blackpool. Before the journey commenced we wondered how far we should take the action - give names and addresses? get arrested if they decide to get heavy and call in the Transport Police? some people give in and pay while others refuse, or all stand together?

It turned out that none of this discussion need have taken place. Two of the group went off to find the conductor and explained to him what we were doing - "A call for a 90% cut in public transport fares... to make public transport affordable . . . to start making changes . . . that bring a 90% cut in greenhouse gases" - before he had chance to go around to ask for tickets. After a long discussion with him about the terrible state of the railways, him pointing out various problems along the route and how it is surprising that there aren't more accidents, he decided that he was not going to collect any tickets on this journey and gave us his support.

We then used the opportunity of having a captive, usually bored audience, on the train to hand out our little 'tickets' and some leaflets briefly explaining the impact of road transport as a source of carbon dioxide. The response from other rail passengers was

very good from people who had paid and people who hadn't. Everyone tends to agree when you say they should pay less, and the handing out of free chocolate cake with the leaflets may have helped!

On the return journey the next conductor wasn't so receptive, but he chose not to confront us either. He stated he would collect tickets, but if shown a 90% for 90% ticket he wouldn't try to charge them, but if other customers complained he would have to do something about it. However, once again the feedback from other passengers was very encouraging, people used the 90% for 90% tickets and others took them away to use again next time they go on a train. There was one lone dissenting voice, a man in a suit, wearing a Virgin Trains badge. Maybe he knows that we could well be hitting his trains next . . .

Hopefully, this will be the first of a number of autonomous actions to happen, and it could be a very good way to start off a day travelling to an action in other parts of the country. So if you want to take some direct action on the problems of flooding, climate chaos and the appalling state of public transport then download your ticket to a free-ish ride from www.risingtide.org.uk/

Cellnot

South Manchester residents have won their campaign against the erection of a BT/Cellnet mobile phone mast. Choriton Diving Club voted against having the mast in their grounds despite it being worth £12K plus another £4K per year, after pressure applied to them by concerned locals. 400 signatures were gathered on a petition in just a few days, such was the strength of feeling about the health risks of these masts and residents also lobbied members as they went into the club to vote. If you have any news about a campaign in your local area, please contact the Loombreaker.

In this month's Loombreaker

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Take GATS (and bin it)



March 20th saw demonstrations in Leeds and Manchester outside DTI offices in order to bring attention to the latest round of the World Trade Organisation talks where the General Agreement on Trades in Services is under discussion.

These talks are aimed at reducing what multinationals call 'barriers to trade' and would allow them unlimited access to foreign countries services sectors. Governments entering into this round of negotiations are under great pressure to liberalise their service sectors to allow foreign 'investment' and ownership of such fundamentals as provision of water, electricity and health care. Whilst these are potentially very lucrative to multinationals aiming to expand their control over the world's vital resources, what will it mean for the people of the poorer countries where they would operate?

The main concerns are that control of these essential services would be wrested from the governments of those nations, leaving them further from the control of ordinary people. GATS would effectively leave them with no power to impose

Workshops on debt, trade and the yawning international gap between rich and poor are to be organised by Friends of the Earth, the World Development Movement and People and Planet. See diary. For more info and action see www.wdm.org.uk To contact Mr WDM: 0161 225 7321

Are You Really Listening?

"We want to take our services with us wherever we choose. We believe that everyone has a right to be free regardless of cost. There is a lot of talk from politicians about listening so we are asking you to meet with us and listen... Your presence will be appreciated as will your absence be noted." Direct Action Network

As the Loombreaker goes to the Disabled people's Direct Action Network (DAN) is aiming to take politicians to task in Westminster. DAN have used tactics of non-violent civil disobedience to further their aims and are prepared to use them again if necessary. As the Election approaches they are concerned that many MP's and prospective MP's have no idea



OKay! The call is out for tat and assistance in readiness for the return of Manchester's favourite squat cafe. Call 07753 606723.

environmental or social regulations on multinationals operating in their countries.

Under the guise of promoting efficient provision of these vital services, multinational corporations and Western governments with large service sector companies stand to gain massively if developing countries sign up to the WTO GATS rules. The stark reality is however, that once committed, there would be the threat of trade sanctions for governments seeking to throw out poorly performing companies. There has been little public debate and awareness of these issues, and very little comment from the Department of Trade and Industry. Hmmm.

how some of our people from the disabled community exist today in the 21st century. They are calling for a plan to end the institutionalisation of disabled people and human rights abuses paid for by successive governments against the disabled community. The latest is that they are being singled out under the "Charging for Services" consultation to pay extra for the services they receive that give them equality. Whilst families get credit for their children, disabled people are being charged for going to the toilet and other basic assistance they need. DAN are also demanding fair, affordable and accessible housing.

To contact DAN email: slowly@whispered.screaming.net

Old LAGs in Week of Action

Genetically modified organisms in animal feed have been dropped by many big supermarket chains recently, but the mighty Cargill corporation still continues to unload tonnes of GM soya feed at the Liverpool docks. Cargill is notoriously uncaring of consumer or even government opinion and its status as one of the world's largest food handlers has often given it great political power. Therefore the newly-formed Liverpool Against Genetics group held a week of actions in the first week of March. Sainsburys supermarket (which still refuses to go GM-free) was leafleted, there were processions by various mutants through the city centre and also through the town of Bootle (nearest to the docks). A meeting between LAG delegates and Cargill PR people showed up the inability of the company to defend its policy against argument, and it all ended up with a party on Sunday night.

For more information the Corporate Watch briefing 'Cargill: Arrogance Incorporated' is excellent - and available free on-line, www.corporatewatch.org/ or ring (01865) 791391.

Breaking the Silence

On Saturday 24th March 2001, some 700 Deaf people and allies marched through Manchester City centre, accompanied by a Samba Band as part of a national campaign for the Government's recognition of British Sign Language (BSL) as an official language of the UK, finally rallying outside Manchester Town Hall.

BSL is the first language of 700,000 people and its recognition is crucial because it will elevate deaf people's status in society - who are at present seen as inferior second class citizens. Deaf education is in an appalling mess, with many pupils leaving school with a reading age of eight, as they have been denied the right to access to education in their own natural language. 90% of deaf children are educated in mainstream schools, kept away from their peers and their language. The shocking lack of information in BSL means, for instance, that deaf people are being operated on in hospitals without knowing why. To show their frustration at the Government and extreme feeling for the recognition of BSL, around 100 protesters staged a sit-down roadblock in the heart of Manchester after the official rally - and could not be moved because the police could not communicate with them! Two individuals climbed scaffolding adjacent to the roadblock, and another was arrested for wilfully obstructing the highway. Apart from this arrest, the whole protest was a peaceful, colourful display of the beauty of BSL and the passion of the deaf.

The next national BSL March is in London on 7th July. To learn BSL, or go on a Deaf awareness course, contact your nearest Adult Education Centre or Mr Deaf Centre. Contact: Federation of Deaf People, FDP, PO Box 11, Darwen, Lancs BB3 3GH Fax: 01254 708071 E mail: contact@dp@aol.com website: www.fdp.org.uk/ The person arrested on the march wishes to make a complaint to the Police Complaints Authority. If you witnessed the arrest please email robking@ewcom.net

Prisoner and Legal Support

"Any political movement that does not support it's political internees is a sham movement" Ojore Lutalo, political prisoner.

◆ On 24th March a second 'noise demo' was held outside Wakefield Prison in support of framed activist Mark Barnsley who has now been moved to a warmer cell (see *Loombreaker's 16 & 17*). All charges of 'conspiracy to burgle' against the 16 people arrested when raiding Sheffield Crown Prosecution Service in support of Mark have been dropped, suggesting the whole affair has become too much of a hot potato for the authorities to handle. Another noise demo is planned for the 22nd April, see diary for details.

◆ Lee Himlin has been on remand for six weeks for alleged criminal damage to quarrying equipment at Nine Ladies quarry.

◆ Gary Steven Lawson (known to many of us as ACAB) is on remand having been arrested, with outstanding warrants for assaulting the police, on the Smash Genetic Engineering action.

◆ In the US Lorenzo Komboa Ervin, who gave a talk in Moss Side last year (*Loombreaker 10*), has received a 6 month suspended sentence along with Damon McGee and Mikail Musa Muhammad of the 'Chattanooga 3'. The three were wrongfully convicted on January 11, 2001, of disrupting a meeting of the Chattanooga City Council in 1998 after Lorenzo read out a statement denouncing police brutality.

◆ And finally, Amnesty International have issued a report condemning police brutality following the S26 day of action against the World Bank and the IMF (see *Loombreaker 15*).

Write to: **Mark Barnsley**, WA 2897, HMP Wakefield, Love lane, Wakefield, Yorks, WF2 9AG.
Gary Steven Lawson, CV6001, Lincoln Prison, Greetwell Road, Lincoln, Lincolnshire.
Lee Himlin, EX7748, HMP Perry Road, Sherwood, Nottingham N65 3AG.
Contact: Justice For Mark Barnsley, c/o 145-149 Cardigan Rd, Leeds, LS6 1U
Further info: about Mark Barnsley www.freemarkbarnsley.com/
on the 'Chattanooga 3' <http://sf.indymedia.org/>
about political prisoners in general www.spiritoffreedom.org.uk or
www.schnews.org.uk/
on the Prague report www.amnesty.org/
on Nine Ladies <http://pages.zoom.co.uk/~nineladies/>

Gorleben - a report from the frontline

'Castor' transports are the movement of nuclear waste between nuclear power stations and reprocessing plants or storage sites such as Sellafield in the UK, La Hague in France and Gorleben and Ahaus in Germany. Gorleben itself and the Wendland area are bywords for resistance in Germany: last time a castor transport happened there 9000 people blocked the road for three days facing water cannons and extreme police violence. This time the governing coalition had drafted their toughest police, the Berlin "bone breakers", and the train was to be pushed through as fast as possible using whatever means necessary. The trepidation and excitement I felt were borne out entirely on arrival in to Luneburg train station. Lines of riot police along the platform and more police vehicles than I could count mixed with hundreds of people. It all seemed crazy like a war zone with the police tanks lined up and hundreds of punks chanting while old ladies in rainbow jumpers pointed the way to the free coaches back to camp. Children squatted their schools so activists could stay there, the farmers took their tractors and used them to block the road. The tractor blockade was started by a parade of tractors which blocked almost every major crossroads around Dannenburg, whereupon the police came to smash them up in their tanks. They didn't try to move them, just smash them. Apparently this happens every time. The police had it far from their own way though, even though they had half the police from all of Germany. They were working a without break for over 24 hours. Local people were themselves all on the street/rails blocking the police or the train. We delayed the transport by 26 hours, people locked onto the tracks, dug them up in places and just plain got their way at every turn. The amount it cost to push the transport through is estimated to be in the billions of deutschmarks and the political cost for the government has to be enormous.
Website link www.germany.indymedia.org/

DIARY

April

16 March and rally against the 'Son of Star Wars', meet Ellerbeck (A169, 8m south of Whitby), 10am - contact (01287) 660067 or email. Or contact Gr. Mcr & Dist. CND for transport details (0161) 273 8283.

21 CIA, Cambridge in April, protest against the abuse of humans, animals and the planet. See. Meet 11am, Cambridge train station.

21 World Lab Animal Day, National Demo at HLS. Phone (07931) 586826.

21 Oppose the NF march in Leicester. Contact: 07949 312668 or nahanotts@yahoo.co.uk for details or 07949 197548 for transport

22 Make Some Noise in support of Mark Barnsley, meet 12 noon at Wakefield Westgate train station. Ring 226 6814 for transport.

28 'Acting Locally: Exposing the Myth of the Global Economy', 10am - 4pm,

Mcr University Student Union, Oxford Road. Ring (0207) 737 6215

28 Save the Newchurch Guinea Pigs, national demo at Darley Oaks, Newchurch. Contact MAP (below).

29 'Big Nose Day' - vigil against economic sanctions on Iraq, contact CASWI c/o Gr. Mcr & Dist. CND (as above) or Mcr EPI 226 6814.

30 The Aldermaston Women Trash Trident trial (see *Loombreaker 17*) at Manchester Crown Court (postponed from 3rd April).

May

1 Mayday! (see article, backpage).

2 Balfour Beatty AGM. Contact the Ilisu Dam Campaign on 01865 200 550

3 BAE Systems AGM. Shareholder infiltration and demo. Contact CAAT enquiries@demon.co.uk 0207 281 0297.

4 - 6 No Star Wars: An International Conference to Keep Space for Peace, Leeds. Contact GN Conference, Yorks CND, 22 Edmund St., Bradford; email cndyorks@gn.apc.org

10 - 15 Trident Ploughshares Disarmament Camp outside Aldermarston Nuclear Bomb Factory. Ring (01639) 700680 or email coney@gn.apc.org

14 - 20 West Papua Week of Action against US oil giant Jet / Conoco.

Contact OPM SG, 43 Gardner St., Brighton; email oprmsgbrighton@yahoo.co.uk, or ring 226 6814 for local action

mid-May Maysquat, Not a doss, not a festie, just a cracking squat action with long term prospects. C/o 2 St. Paul's Road, London N1 2QN, BigMayHotSquat@excite.com

Regulars:

Last Wednesday of the month: Libertarian Socialist Discussion Group, The Vine Pub, Kennedy St. (off Fountain St.), 8pm. Ring (0161) 707 9652.

MAP meets 1st Wednesday of month at the Friends Meeting house, Mount St, city centre, 7.30 pm. Contact phone no: (07951) 228981.

The Return of the Jedi

On April 16th (Easter Monday) there will be a demo at Fylingdales early warning tracking station in North Yorkshire. The American military want to use and upgrade Fylingdales as part of their proposed National Missile Defence (NMD) system and the British Government has agreed to this. NMD is bad enough. The existing stockpile of nuclear weapons poses overwhelming problems already, and the cost of arms proliferation in all sense will be born by the poorest, not the rich. But NMD is only one part of a weapons system that the Pentagon wishes to introduce that also includes Theatre Missile Defence (TMD) and which would allow the US military to surround and attack anyone with forward deployed missile systems co-ordinated with satellite surveillance and space based laser weapons, effortlessly targeting military bases, missiles etc. in other countries. The trillion dollar cost of TMD takes some justification that goes well beyond defence against tiny 'rogue nations'. But if China, for instance, was an official enemy, then the need for TMD would be clear to all. This is in fact the main reason why the Bush administration - who are all for TMD - is trying to get so fired up about the remaining 'red peril'.

See *Loombreaker 16* for more info or contact Greater Manchester CND on 0161-273 8283 email: gmdcnd@gn.apc.org website: www.cnduk.org/

AGM News - Dirty Deals & Dodgy Dams

They supply arms to murderous western client regimes such as Turkey, Indonesia and Saudi Arabia; they furnish Trident subs and they are the UK's principal trader in depleted uranium weapons, so there are a few questions to ask of the board of directors of BAE Systems (formerly British Aerospace). The forthcoming AGM on May 3rd in London offers an opportunity to do just that, as well as create all kinds of mayhem.

See diary for details. www.caat.org.uk/

March 14th saw actions across the country in support of the day of action against the Ilisu Dam in Turkey, which will displace thousands of Kurds and will be built by Balfour Beatty. They also have an AGM soon on May 2nd. Contact the Ilisu Dam Campaign on 01865 200 550 for details.

Mayday! Mayday! Are You in a Bad State?

"Whether your wage is high, low or somewhere inbetween, unless you control the means of production you are a proletarian"

May 1st is International Workers's Day. If the day-to-day misery and despair of life under capitalism and wage slavery is getting you down then why not forget work, **phone in sick** (of it all) and do something you enjoy doing for a change. People will do the most extraordinary things for a wage. It may be boring, pointless, bad for your health or an exercise in plain cruelty, but so long as the wages get paid - and a week or a month of respite gained from penniless stress and anxiety - the job, it seems will get done.

Wage labour is an essential feature of capitalist society. Worldwide there are few who manage to live outside the wage economy, and yet it has brought us devastating social and ecological consequences. Anyone who is serious about moving on to a post-capitalist era will have to work out how we are to dispense with it. And remember, Mayday is also Beltane which pre-dates capitalism by a good few years, celebrating as it does, creation and the mother of all known living things.

Plans for Mayday actions are underway.
Contacts: 07977 760842 or 226 6814
See also www.mayday2001.org/ or www.maydaymonopoly.net/

Zapatismo - an Intuition, not an Ideology

Riotous Assembly in March included a new video from the US on the Zapatista movement in Mexico. The EZLN (Zapatista Army of National Liberation) are topical at the moment and made it on to the front covers of newspapers worldwide at the end of March when the masked guerrillas left the forests of Southern Mexico and marched to Mexico City. Greeted by 200,000 Mexicans they aimed to increase public awareness and pressure on the Mexican state to demilitarise Chiapas and recognise indigenous rights. The EZLN first appeared in Chiapas in 1994, when it occupied several of the state's major towns in opposition to the racist and economically exploitative policies of the Mexican government. The date also marked Mexican entry into the North American Free Trade Area, a US-dominated free trade alliance which further threatened land and labour rights in Mexico. The EZLN have not engaged in aggression since, yet Chiapas remains saturated with soldiers who, along with right-wing paramilitaries, carry out appalling human rights abuses. Multinational corporations from the USA, Europe and Japan also have considerable interest in Chiapas and the erosion of land rights because of the state's rich natural resources, including oil and biodiversity. The Zapatistas are a markedly internally democratic movement, having made significant improvements in the position of women within their base communities and developed inclusive methods of decision-making.

For more info see www.indymedia.org.uk/ or www.chiapaslink.ukgateway.net/



Big Nose Day

There is to be a national week of action against economic sanctions in Iraq from 23rd to 29th April, culminating in a rally in Leeds on the 28th and a Big Nose Day in London

on the 29th, which is otherwise a Robin Cook look-a-like Pinnocchio action. Bring a fake beard and huge nose. See diary.

www.voicesuk.freemove.co.uk/

Contact: gmdcnd@gn.apc.org.uk or ring 273 8283

Asylum Seekers Welcome Here

The 'Hands Off Asylum Seekers' demo in Manchester on Saturday 7th April was very well attended in spite of the pouring rain, with coaches coming from as far away as Birmingham. Over 1,500 people marched to the Peace Gardens and heard lots of speakers. There were no arrests. Our pie-deserving fiend Jack Straw seems to think that fleeing persecution and seeking asylum means you deserve locking up. There are already 330 prison places allocated for asylum seekers but that's not enough for Straw who has ordered 500 more.

Contacts: Committee to Defend Asylum Seekers at Manchester@defend-asylum.org or Immigration Aid Unit at gmiu@ein.org.uk

Colombian Cosmology

Naka Mandinga and Rosana Cuama from the Black Communities Process (PCN) came to Manchester from the Pacific region of Colombia last month as part of a European-wide tour to campaign against Plan Colombia (see Loombreaker 17), and to present their proposed alternatives. They made over 6 talks, planted a PCN tree and salsa-ed with the CEO of BP. Putting forward a philosophy similar to that of the Zapatistas, Naka explained a world view where communities are governed by horizontal structures, and power is not something to be conquered as for the armed actors on the left and right of the political spectrum. He condemned neoliberal models of development which would convert the world into a supermarket, giving the example of a farmer going out and to shoot a gua gua (Colombian equivalent of a rabbit), to then sell it in town to buy a tin of sardines. While fighting for the recognition of black rights and cultural values, Naka and Rosana also spoke about the respect for difference as one of the most important elements of their belief system. They were shocked by the lack of real participatory democracy in Europe- Rosana sustained a rubber bullet in Davos -and talked about the need to establish joint struggles with autonomous groups in the West who are opposing the same enemies. Future projects include a mobile radio station and international presence in Colombia. There is also a proposed action on 19th April. The Carrumba Collective will continue to campaign on this issue.

For more details contact p. 226 6814 or BOX 23, 22a Beswick Street, MERCI- Bride-5 Mill, Ancoats, M4 7HS



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.

Pick it up FREE from:

- Bridge 5 Mill, Beswick St., Ancoats;
- Mistys Café, Longsight District Centre, Stockport Road;
- Café Pop, Oldham Street, Piccadilly;
- Unicorn Grocery, 89 Albany Road, Chorlton;
- 8th Day Cafe, Oxford Road & Old Birley Street;
- Withington Wholefoods, Wilmslow Road;

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.

Please send your contributions, comments, campaign info, cartoons & photos or donations (cheques payable to Mcr EF1) to:

The Loombreaker
c/o Manchester EF1
Department 29,
22a, Beswick Street, Manchester M4 7HS
0161-226 6814
loombreaker@nematode.freemove.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: 08/05/01 (moved to avoid mayday clash)

Wildflower Meadow Under Threat

A wildflower meadow in Todmorden is threatened by a housing development. People needed to stay at the camp and help to save this beautiful site from destruction. Contact c/o 0161 227 9014.

NF Think Again

Over 500 people braved the appalling Oldham weather on Saturday 31st March as a show of strength against fascism. The National Front had threatened to march through mainly Asian areas under the banner of 'civil rights for whites'; but apparently had second thoughts. So much work had been done in Oldham in bringing different groups together that there were loads of speakers, sadly almost all men. The strength of feeling at the rally, coupled with an intimidating police presence later led to scuffles and broken windows in a nearby shopping centre. The NF are mobilising in Leicester on April 21st and anti fascist groups are organising to stop them. If you want to travel to Leicester phone 07949 197548.