



# The Loombreaker

No. 22 ♦ September 2001 ♦ Free

## Tub-thumping!

Around forty people disrupted the full council meeting, at which the council voted to close Gorton Tub swimming pool on 13<sup>th</sup> September. The meeting was delayed for half an hour due to noisy protests from the campaigners, who have put up a strong fight against the closure of this valuable local resource.

Councillors totally ignored the wishes of local people, who have in recent weeks stepped up their well supported campaign to keep the tub. They had presented a petition with 4,500 signatures, held public meetings, and had two fun days at the Tub attended by over 1200 adults and kids. At the end of last month, 60 pool users blockaded the entrance to the Commonwealth Games Stadium for over 2 hours, stopping traffic, and disarming the police entirely, as they did not know how to deal with the diversity of local residents involved.



Campaigners blockade Commonwealth Games Stadium

Campaigners voiced their anger during the council meeting, when before the Gorton Tub item, they had to listen to a big presentation about the Commonwealth Games, discovering that Manchester City's (that is the taxpayer's) contribution to the Games will be £45 million. Yet the Tub was to be closed for savings of only £70,000. As usual, the opinions of local people were blatantly ignored, and the meeting gave the go-ahead for immediate closure. Immediate indeed, as the pool was closed that very afternoon, after the meeting, possibly to forestall any possible protests. 15 campaigners got to the pool, but were manhandled out of the way by the police.

Tony Martin Chair of the Campaign to Save Gorton Tub said "Today the council in the face of overwhelming community opposition have chosen to close Gorton Tub. They have not mandate to do so. The real democrats in this city are the ordinary people of Gorton and their like. This council represents the interests of the rich backers of the commonwealth games and not the ordinary people of east Manchester. The closure of Gorton Tub, for a saving of £75,000 whilst hundreds of millions can be spent on the Games is an absolute disgrace. We are not going to let them get away with it."

Campaigners are meeting as Loombreaker goes to press, to decide how to take their fight forwards. In the words of Chumbawumba from their rather aptly named song 'Tub-thumping' - "we get knocked down, but we get up again"

For more details about the campaign contact Lynda Shentall 223 9814 Tony Martin 225 2253 Ian Allinson 231 5827

## DSEI Arms Fair - Manchester people samba in the face of arms dealers

The DSEI (Defence Systems & Equipment International) arms fair saw a great turnout of Manchester people ready to show arms dealers from around the world exactly what they thought of them. Around fifty activists dressed in carnival colours with a samba band, joined a crowd of around two thousand demonstrators. The government chose the right place to stage the event - the EXCEL building in the heart of London's docklands was away from public eyes, sited between a railway on one side and the Thames on the other and ringed by fencing and cops on all sides. The idea had been to blockade road entrances into the building with a mixture of tactics ranging from street partying samba bands, to sit down peace protestors to padded up 'wombles' in white overalls.

Manchester's planning was thrown in to confusion early on when police encircled our meeting point and began stopping and searching people. We scattered into the surrounding council estates but were later able to regroup around the samba band. At this point the centre's West entrance had become blocked by the majority of the crowd but the police had neutralised their effectiveness by encircling them into a tight area. Taking the initiative the Manchester band rallied a group of around 50-100 demonstrators. Avoiding police attention we headed through the council estate, and made for the centre's east entrance, our

numbers swollen by hoards of local kids! After a cat and mouse chase we settled into a superb spot, outside the centre's tube station and in front of a delegate hotel. Passing arms dealers were reminded in no uncertain terms about the despicable nature of their business and police eventually had to move in to protect them. Interestingly, of the number we saw none tried defend the sick business they profit from, preferring instead to ignore our taunts. After holding the position for over an hour we headed back to the West entrance and met up with the London 'Rhythms of Resistance' samba band to indulge in a bit of a street party before heading home.

Contacts:  
Manchester EF1  
0161 226 6814  
Samba Group, or  
Campaign Against  
Arms Trade (CAAT)  
0161 224 6042,  
email: mkavanagh  
@astor.demon.co.uk.  
More info on DSEI  
from www.disarm-  
trade.org

**Uncle Sam's chickens come home to roost.**

As the US wages hidden and open war against many countries around the world killing innocent civilians *daily* with its bombs and its foreign policies, the western leaders and media call the recent attacks on powerful symbols of US capitalism and aggression 'an attack on freedom & democracy. Hypocrites!

More in next issue perhaps...

## Anti Fascist Round-up

### Police seal off Burnley!

The National Front were due to march in Burnley on 1<sup>st</sup> Sept, & a few of us went off there to protest. At the meeting point in Colne, outside Burnley, we discovered that the police had cordoned everyone in, to prevent them going to Burnley. Ordinary people walking over to or find out what was happening, also found themselves trapped. All political activity in Burnley had been banned - including rallying and leafleting. Police were on every roundabout & motorway junction in the area, stopping any group of people in cars and minibuses to check for activists, turning them around, and even escorted one group back towards Sunderland where they had travelled from.

Despite being a beacon in our yellow minibus, we did manage to get into Burnley, but it was crawling with police. We couldn't find any other anti fascist demonstrators, or any fascists (though it was hard to tell, as this is a football-crazy town on the day of England v Germany, and we had no leaflets or info. We did gather some contacts and information for future actions. Apparently, other people succeeded in leafleting areas of Burnley despite the police.

We decided to do an action at a McDonalds to use our time fruitfully, having the van 'break down' in the drivethru, blocking it for 30 minutes. Meanwhile, two others gave out Anti Nazi League leaflets to customers in McDonalds. It shows how touchy the cops (and businesses) were in Burnley that day, as they turned up with a riot van and two cars to catch the naughty leafleters. The van was searched, and all of us were hassled. It was interesting to see quite how stupid coppers are, because they put on the documents that the van was being searched to find ANL (Anti Nazi League) leaflets, which had been given out by a BNP (British National Party) member! Duh!

### Police Protection for Nazis

A similar story emerged from Welshpool in Wales, where the BNP was holding a summer gathering. Police prevented protesters from reaching the site by stopping their transport, searching occupants, and generally hassling everyone, including ordinary shoppers by random stop and searches in Welshpool. More info on [www.geocities.com/swan\\_net/welshpool/ind](http://www.geocities.com/swan_net/welshpool/ind).

### Meanwhile in Oldham...

... more leafleting was taking place. Around 200 ANL people set about leafletting all the homes in the two constituencies where the BNP had stood in the general election. Activists from the local community were supported by groups from as far afield as North London and Bristol. People split into groups of 15-20, coordinated by locals who knew the areas. By the end of the day most

households had received a leaflet explaining that the BNP are not the respectable party they pretend to be, but are in fact Nazis led by people with a history of violence and Holocaust denial.

As well as communicating the message to most people in Oldham the activity helped boost the confidence of local activists and inspired others to organise similar activities within their communities. The days event also dealt a blow to the handful of BNP thugs, all four of them, who tried to intimidate the large group of anti-nazis but failed miserably.

Local activists are now preparing for a massive carnival to unite the people of Oldham on Saturday October 20<sup>th</sup>.

For info & to get involved in activities around Oldham call Oldham ANL: 07881 427635

## Action at McDonalds

McDogfoods are building a new 'restaurant' in Reddish, which some local people are not too happy about. The planning application was rushed through under the name of Warburtons food outlet, giving no-one any opportunity to protest about it at that stage. Early this month, a group of people took direct action by occupying the building site, stopping work there for a few hours.

16th October is International Day of action against McDonalds - contact Manchester EFL on 226 6814. For more information on why McDogfoods are so pants, look at [www.mcspotlight.org](http://www.mcspotlight.org)

## Student activism lives!

This month sees the return of many students to Manchester as the new term at university begins. This year there are a number of ways students interested in campaigning on issues can get involved in action, firstly through the pre-existing direct action group 'March 1<sup>st</sup>' at the University of Manchester. Last year their protests included several occupations of university buildings campaigning for the end of tuition fees and the return of the maintenance grant, defence of asylum seekers, and demonstrations against unethical investments by the university. They kick-start this year with a demo against student hardship on **Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> September** during 'fresher's week' (see calendar) so come along and make some noise! Contact [manchester\\_occupation@hotmail.com](mailto:manchester_occupation@hotmail.com)

If however arts are more your thing you should check out the new student group 'Short Cuts' opening both at the University of Manchester and UMIST. 'Short Cuts' is an autonomous space for people with alternative views to come along and express them. There will be workshops in web design, street theatre, radical dance, prop making as well as trips to protest camps and ecological developments. If you're interested the first workshops will take place on **Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> September**, pop along to the stalls in the fresher's fair for more details. Contact [killwto@hotmail.com](mailto:killwto@hotmail.com)

There is also a new Globalise Resistance group (a front group for the Socialist Workers Party) starting, so far a Genoa-report-back meeting has been organised with speakers from CND, the Green Party and World Development movement. (Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> 6pm, McConference in Brighton. There will inevitably be some direct action against the horrors of global capitalism in Manchester in the very near future too.

Save Free Education should perhaps change their name to Restore Free Education but none the less they are determined to end tuition fees by starting a mass non-payment arse so that perhaps the people elected by the students might do something useful to end student hardship rather than just writing to MP's.

All these groups, and no doubt many other valid causes and campaigns will have stalls at the Manchester Uni freshers fair on September 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> at the Academy. But you may have to fight your way past the corporate stalls first.....damn capitalist scum!.....

## The October Blockade

Earlier this year, 1000 people (including about 30 from Manchester) joined a blockade at Faslane nuclear submarine base, managing to close the base for over 5 hours. On Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> October there is going to be another mass blockade of the base.

Faslane is where Britain's 4 Trident nuclear subs are based. Trident is an indiscriminate weapon of mass destruction designed to destroy whole cities, and innocent civilians. Nuclear weapons are the ultimate tool with which the large countries threaten the world, and force compliance with their way of life, with globalisation. Britain and America defend their possession of nukes by claiming they are defensive, yet they say they would use them where national interests are at stake - you can bet that if push came to shove, it's the profits of their biggest companies that would count as 'national interests'.

The October blockade is being organised by CND (Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament), and by Trident Ploughshares, a group which has over the last few years, organised a concerted campaign of direct action against the nuclear system. There will be transport from Manchester going up on the Sunday in time for trainings and briefings, hopefully at least 2 minibuses, with people from CND, Earth First!, and student groups. If you would like more information contact Cath at CND on 0161 273 8283, [gmdcnd@gn.apc.org](mailto:gmdcnd@gn.apc.org), or the Earth First! Office on 226 6814.

## FLOODSAHEAD

Last month, newspaper headlines not only hid the truth of what was going on in Genoa, but kept the Bonn climate negotiations quiet. The UN's own 2,000-strong panel of scientists on climate change say we need between 60-90% reductions in carbon dioxide emissions if we are to survive - governments agreed in Germany, in effect, to under 2%.

If committing global suicide wasn't enough, the agreement included the creation of new markets for business (who create the problem in the first place!), trading 'carbon credits', building dangerous nuclear plants in far-off foreign countries to avoid any change in lifestyles 'at home' in the West. Forests have become another loophole and part of the 'market' in damaging World Bank or International Monetary Fund infrastructure projects - forests don't save us in even the medium-term from climate change. Air transport, already untaxed and about the most destructive way you or your food travels, is excluded from any agreement, and so on and so on. The Small Island States of the Pacific will be underwater within 50 years, and have warned us off 'our impending doom', if record floods, unseasonal storms and other weather chaos weren't enough of a warning.

So what action are people taking, apart from buying the odd energy-efficient lightbulb?

During the negotiations in Bonn, people climbed cranes, disrupted plenaries and press conferences during the COP 6.5 conference, visited the delegates hotels, built a lifeboat, marched, went on noise demos, and held a critical mass bike ride and a street party.

In Britain, people visited US embassies, mothers & prams marched on Esso HQ after leafletting in their town centre, and held critical masses, street theatre and workshops. The Esso HQ was hit twice more, once by Greenpeace activists locking themselves to the road in a metal container, another time by people with tripods, climbers sitting in the tops of them to blockade access to the site for 8 hours. The boardroom of the British Airport Authority was also occupied in protest at the huge expansion of air travel being pushed by government and industry in this country.

### Take Action!

On 20<sup>th</sup> September in Manchester, on World Car-Free Day, there will be a **critical mass bike ride** - meet at 5pm, Whitworth Park, next to the Whitworth Gallery, Oxford Road. Bring a bike if you have one but pedestrians are welcome. Bring flags, instruments, colour.

Later in the day, there'll be a Rising Tide Public meeting, at 7pm, Friends Meeting House, Mount Street, Manchester city centre. 7pm, Friends Meeting House, Mount Street, Manchester city centre. Rising Tide is a coalition of groups and individuals committed to a community-based approach to fighting climate change. This event will allow people interested in taking action on climate change to get some info on the issues, to meet other activists, and to think about ideas for action. Contact 0161 226 6814 or [climatechaos@yahoo.com](mailto:climatechaos@yahoo.com) for more on Manchester Rising Tide. For more on Rising Tide see [www.risingtide.org.uk](http://www.risingtide.org.uk)

On 22<sup>nd</sup> September, European Union Car Free Day, Manchester Friends of the Earth have negotiated the closure of Market Street between 9am and 4pm by Marks & Sparks. If you'd like to do a stall or do street entertainment, get in touch - 834 8221 or email [info@mcrfoe.dabsol.co.uk](mailto:info@mcrfoe.dabsol.co.uk)

And on 13-14<sup>th</sup> October, there will be a national Rising Tide Gathering in Manchester, at Bridge-5 Mill, if you are or are planning on being involved with climate change campaigning. For more info, or to book, call 01865-241097, or visit [www.risingtide.org.uk](http://www.risingtide.org.uk)

## Shell Animal Testing Fuels Protest

Mega-oil giant Shell came in for some more flak in early September when a coalition of animal liberation protesters bought their Stanlow refinery to a halt. Starting from 5:30am lines of people blocked all roads in and out of the site, locked to each other and to concrete-filled oil drums to stop the police from moving them. As well as destroying the environment with car fumes, drilling in nature reserves and waging a terrorist war against the people of the Niger Delta. Shell test plastic packaging materials at Huntingdon Life Sciences (HLS). The PVC 'plasticates' are a by-product of the petroleum industry...and the by-product of this, is that campaign against Huntingdon's animal cruelty focussed on Shell. HLS have been hard hit by the long protest campaign, which has seen many demonstrations, not only at HLS, but wherever companies support HLS.

Stanlow refinery, in Ellensborough, north Cheshire, was where the fuel protests first happened. Press attention for this event was tiny, considering that the animal liberation movement actually stopped all oil tankers coming in or out, whereas the fuel protest movement merely parked outside and offered the tanker drivers vague threats (or not, depending on who you believe).

Anyway, by the late afternoon the police were starting to drag people away and there were eventually twenty seven arrests. Again, we can compare this with how few fuel protesters were arrested. We were charged with 'secondary picketing', an offence under the anti-trade union laws brought in to prevent people acting in solidarity with strikers. In the station the desk sergeant said 'Do you wish to say anything regarding your arrest?' I thought of saying 'I blame Maggie Thatcher,' but you never know about the sense of humour of those sort of people.

For more info contact: Manchester Animal Protection. 07951 228 981 / 07931 586826

The Loombreaker

## DIARY

### September

18th - Demo against Student hardship (see article)

20th - Critical Mass, & Rising Tide Public Meeting (see article)

22nd - Car Free Day (see article)

26th - Benefit Gig for CND - see box ad on back page

29th - day of workshops at Student union - contact Shortcuts on [Kilwto@hotmail.com](mailto:Kilwto@hotmail.com)

### October

2nd - Riotous Assembly - see back page for details

11th - Stop Small Arms, meeting organised by campaign against arms trade - Friends Meetin House, 7.30pm 0161 224 6042

16th - International Day of Action against McDonalds - info - veggies 0845 4589595

20 - Anarchist Bookfair, London. Contact 226 6814 for possible transport

22nd - The Big Blockade at Faslane. Contact CND 0161 273 8283

## This time It's Desert Storm for the World Trade Organisation...

The WTO has become so worried at the massive protests that greet its annual meetings that the venue for the next one will be in Qatar, a tiny Gulf state ruled by a despotic regime. World-wide protests will still happen in the streets and fields of the world, however. They can run, but they can't hide...and they'll have to venture back into the real world eventually...

International Day of Action Against the WTO. Nov 9, 2001

A different kind of globalisation will be taking place in Cochabamba, Bolivia, this September. Peoples' Global Action is a forum for many different communities in struggle across the world and Cochabamba will this year be hosting their conference. Fittingly, since last year it was the scene of successful protests against water privatisation. The Zapatistas, anarchists, Ya Basta! and London Reclaim the Streets were involved in the setting up of PGA in 1998 to help with the co-ordination of the world-wide movement against 'free' trade and neo-liberalism.

Three women will be going from the UK and will be available for speaking at meetings and showing slides later this month. Please contact them on [pgabolivia@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:pgabolivia@yahoo.co.uk)

A leaflet with more about PGA and the WTO can be downloaded from <http://www.x21.org/pga>

## The Loombreaker

### Riotous Assembly goes luvvie

'Every Day is Like Saturday'

Theatre!!!!!!

The Next Riotous Assembly (see box for details) features this satirical look at the death of Manchester's Gay village and the commercialisation of gay culture - followed by a brief discussion, and all the usual fun-packed info and networking.

Tuesday 2nd October, 7.30pm Yard Theatre, opp Junction Pub, Royce Rd, Hulme

### The Guardian: Promoting negative attitudes towards disabled people

Two Guardian writers have offended disabled people recently, and in response the disabled people's Direct Action Network (DAN) held a protest against the Guardian at their Manchester offices on Deansgate. Simon Hoggart wrote on August 25, 2001 that he did not believe there are many disabled people around or else he would see us 'by the dozen' on every train or aeroplane that he is on. He seemed to forget that there is rarely more than a single seat available for wheelchair users, that most disabled people are not wheelchair users, and that sheer poverty also prevents many people unable to work from travelling by plane or train. But The Guardian did not let ignorance stop him having column space.

Polly Toynbee believes that disabled people should be helped to die or not be born in the first place (Aug 22, 2001 and Aug 24, 2001). This supports the idea that our lives are not worth living. Disabled people believe that women should be given accurate information and not feel pressurised into having an abortion based on misinformation and the prejudices of non-disabled people. Polly Toynbee also remarked disapprovingly that 'Disability campaigners have over-identified with other civil rights issues'. (24th August) Clearly, she believes that disabled people, unlike other civil rights campaigners should not be so 'strident'. Disabled people have a right to demand equality, alongside other groups who face discrimination and unequal treatment in society.

For more information about what disabled people are saying, go to:  
[www.johnnypops.demon.co.uk/poetry/articles/hatecampaign/index.htm](http://www.johnnypops.demon.co.uk/poetry/articles/hatecampaign/index.htm)

### MANCHESTER BANDS GO DOWN A BOMB!

HOOKER

JACKIE O

THE OBSESSION

&

VALERIE

4 BANDS COMING TOGETHER TO DO A BENEFIT GIG FOR CND (CAMPAIGN FOR NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT) 0161 273 8283

WEDNESDAY 26TH SEPTEMBER AT NIGHT & DAY CAFE, OLDHAM ST

### Asylum Seekers - Protest against forced dispersal

Protests against forced dispersal of asylum seekers are gaining momentum in the northwest. Following mass refusals from asylum seekers to get on the coaches, and a sit in by asylum seekers in a Liverpool hostel, dispersal has now been halted to Oldham and Glasgow. On Monday 20th August, twenty protesters from the Manchester Committee to Defend Asylum Seekers assembled at the dispersal point to stop the weekly coach used for forced dispersal. The bussing has now been temporarily suspended, and most asylum seekers are no longer to be dispersed outside of Greater Manchester according to a spokesperson from Refugee Action in Manchester. However some asylum seekers are still forcibly dispersed, and have their vouchers withdrawn when they refuse to be moved. One asylum seeker asked the rally, 'Why, once we live in a community and start to become settled does NASS then disperse us elsewhere?' The dispersal policy is designed to prevent asylum seekers becoming settled and so undermine building anti-deportation campaigns with local support. Sympathetic local TV coverage has encouraged campaigners to continue the protests until all forced dispersal are stopped.

More info from National Coalition of Anti-Deportation Campaigns: 0161 740 8206 or [www.ncadc.org.uk](http://www.ncadc.org.uk)

### Discussion Get-Together

A number of people who have come from the 'left' but who have battled to free themselves from its dogma and sect like organisations, have decided to hold a number of get-togethers to exchange ideas on capital and globalisation. We would very much welcome people coming from different backgrounds than ourselves at these get-togethers.

The first one will be at my house (address below) on Sunday October 14 - 11am - 4pm (with a meal in the middle). For the first session we are looking at the limitations on capital's ability to 'green' itself and the relationship between human society and nature.

Bob Myers, Movement for Socialism, 29 Demesne Road, Whalley Range, Manchester, Tel 0161 226 6796

### ..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.

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, offers of distribution help, or donations (cheques payable to Manchester EF) to:

The Loombreaker

c/o Manchester EF!  
Department 29,

22a, Beswick Street, Manchester M4 7HS  
0161-226 6814

[loombreaker@nematode.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:loombreaker@nematode.freeserve.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: 02/10/01

### Your Loombreaker needs you!

The current loombreaker collective feel the need for a new burst of energy from some new collective members. So if you either have the skills to put together a newsletter like this, or would like to learn, and especially if you can help distribute it by taking it to such as your local tenants meeting, trade union meeting, put them in your local cafe etc -- then please get in touch at the address on the back. COME ON DOWN AND BREAK SOME LOOMS!  
And don't forget to send us your stories... next issue deadline, 23<sup>rd</sup> September