

The Loombreaker

www.loombreaker.org.uk

No. 34 ♦ February 2003 ♦ Free

Mancs Against this Phoney Oil War!



Disguised Mancunians on the Liverpool Anti-War March

Actions against the war have been breaking out all over Manchester. The Army Recruitment Office, BP and Menwith Hill are a selection of the targets hit by local anti-war activists. More and more graffiti and artwork has sprung up in recent weeks, making the links between oil and war, 'No War' is plastered on the side of the barracks in Whalley Range, and over army recruitment ads. Manchester folk travelled to Liverpool (pictured) and Bradford anti-war rallies on the global day of action on January 18th. Over fifty people at a recent forum, attended workshops on Direct Action, What next in Manchester, Subvertising, Palestine, and banner-making. Leafleting is happening in local areas

and in the city centre every Saturday, and there are regular anti-war vigils (every thurs 5-6pm Friends Meeting House, every wed 1-2pm St Peter's Chaplaincy, Oxford Rd, every Friday 5.30pm Salford Cathedral).

Around fifty coaches and a chartered train will be going travelling from all over Manchester to the biggest ever anti-war demo in London on February 15th (see below for coach info). Meanwhile on the home front, there'll be a vigil in solidarity at 4pm Piccadilly Gardens (Market St side) on the 15th, for those who really genuinely can't make it to London. Bring your own placards/banners/candles.

On the same night, there's going to be a big MAKE LOVE NOT WAR party, offering free food to everyone returning back from London. With live music, funk, hip hop, drum n bass and visuals going all the way through to breakfast, it's one not to miss. Phone 07817 313085 on the day for details of venue.

One of the best things about organising in Manchester against the war this time round is that the coalition against the war, is a genuine coalition, involving people from loads of different groups, and lots of unaffiliated individuals. Different opinions are voiced, and healthy debates had, but we're managing a real unity in our actions, with no one group dominating. Whether it's because the anti-war movement is so huge and so hopeful, or whether it's because we've had a lot of practice (aren't we permanently organising against war these days?), it seems to be working. Meetings are currently every Tuesday at 7pm at the Muslim Association office 272 Dickenson Rd. Phone CND on 0161 273 8283 www.gmdcnd.org.uk for more info on anti-war activities.

Human Shields to Iraq

Halimah Davies, of Manchester, is joining a convoy to Iraq where she will be part of a "human peace shield". Look at the Universal Kinship Society website details: www.humanshields.org

Halimah Davies (0798 482 4890, rabbbit@hotmail.com)

Coach & Train Details to Feb 15th Demo

Coaches from Manchester costs £20 Solidarity £15 waged £10 unwaged.
Train is £15, £25 or £35 contact CND 273 8283

- Central Manchester - contact CND (0161) 273 8283
- Bolton contact Paul 0780 8063 757
- Bury contact Geoff 0790 5327 690
- Chorlton (6 coaches fully booked already)
- Oldham contact Ameen 0796 6316 029
- Salford & Salford Uni contact Gary 0787 6213 776
- Manchester Uni contact James 0796 0890 758
- Manchester Met Uni contact David 0796 8118 201
- Stockport contact Anna (0161) 477 5143
- Whalley Range contact Rick or Ann (0161) 861 9152
- Withington contact John on 248 4831
- Rusholme/Fallowfield contact Nahella 07761 583 703
- Cheetham Hill/North Mcr Contact Kay (0161) 203 5064
- Longsight contact Loukas 07952 062 842
- High Peaks contact Mary (01457) 852 347
- Rochdale contact 01706 375266 or 07815 144460
- Gorton contact 07814 355106
- Tameside contact Noel 0161 308 2452
- Macclesfield contact June 01625 610 916
- Rossendale contact Jean 01706 877521
- Blackburn & Burnley - Mary 07950 486859
- Preston contact Michael 01772 462095

Coordination point either CND office 0161 273 8283 or 07760 224 580

or email: ANSWERmanchester@aol.com.

Contact local numbers for pick up points and payment arrangements

The Loombreaker is Manchester's monthly direct action round-up. Inside this issue:

- ♦ BP targeted everywhere ♦ More Menwith Capers ♦ Landrovers Trashed ♦ Anti-war art ♦ Call to Action

Serial Killer in Whalley Range

Petrol stopped flowing at BP's garage in Whalley Range when two scaffold tripods sprang up blocking the entrance and exit roads. Protestors alerted people to their neighbourhoods most prolific serial killer, BP. The oil company are trying to rebrand themselves as a cleaner, greener company, whilst their Tangguh gas project in West Papua threatens to destroy a huge area of forest and the life of tribal peoples living in seven villages. BP's massive investment also makes it profitable for Indonesia to continue their brutal occupation of West Papua. Hundreds are detained, tortured and imprisoned without trial. Tens of thousands have already been evicted from the land where they've lived for thousands of years. West Papua is one of the wildest and most precious places left on the planet - one of the great rain forests in the world, home to tens of thousands of unique species.



To get involved contact the local campaign via the loombreaker (details on the back), or attend an Earth First! meeting (see Diary). More about West Papua: www.westpapua.net

World Trade Centre Occupied

People from Manchester and Leeds had a good day at the office of ERM, BP's greenwashers and the company that put the 'con' in 'environmental consultants'. Among those conned by ERM are people living along the proposed route of the world's biggest oil pipeline, planned to run through Turkey, Georgia and Azerbaijan. The few villages that ERM bothered to consult at all weren't told about the grave threats posed by the pipeline because words like militarisation, human rights abuses, conflict and environmental catastrophe might "prejudice responses". Instead they emphasised BP's excellent track record (omitting words like militarisation, human rights abuses, conflict and environmental catastrophe). Anxious not to prejudice ERM's responses, the protestors decided against making an appointment, and simply walked into the 8th floor office in Salford Quays' World Trade Centre and made themselves at home. Some locked themselves to office furniture, others spent the afternoon talking to employees about the Baku-Ceyhan pipeline project,

conducting an environmental impact assessment of the office occupation, and on the phone to ERM's European Managing Director and BP's Regional Affairs Director for the Pipeline project. Both sent faxes expressing their concern about the allegations and agreeing to a meeting. Eventually, having got most of the staff to promise to complain (or at least enquire) about the pipeline to Head Office, and after collecting their phone numbers in order to call up and remind them, the campaigners sauntered out of the office and went home.

According to one of the occupiers: "One of the most shocking things about this destructive pipeline project is that, if it went ahead, it would be paid for by us, the British taxpayer. Our government is preparing to stump up £65 million of our money to pay for death and destruction in Eastern Europe (via the Export Credit Guarantee Dept). They can't find enough money to pay for public sector workers, but they seem to have plenty of cash for oil and war."

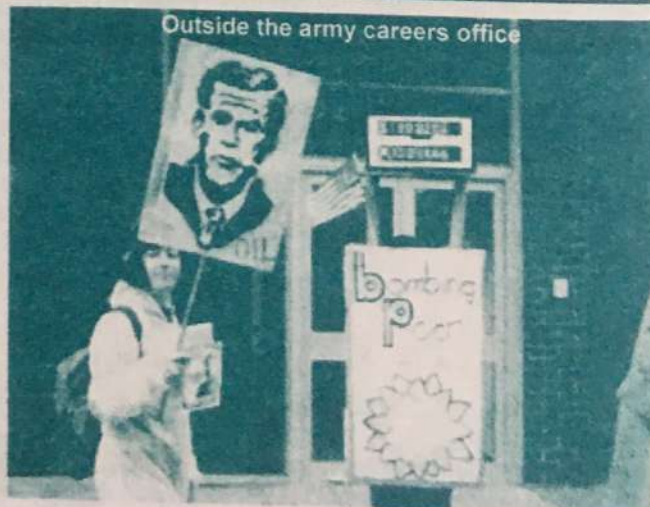
The Baku-Ceyhan Pipeline would run from Baku in Azerbaijan, through Tbilisi in Georgia to Ceyhan in Turkey. It is being run by a consortium of oil companies, headed up by the British company BP. The final decision on whether to go ahead with the proposal was scheduled for April 2003, but the growing international anti-pipeline campaign has already delayed the planning process by six months.

GET INVOLVED! To find out more, contact The Baku Ceyhan Campaign, tel: 01865 550200, Email: ilisu@qn.apc.org; or PLATFORM, 0207 4033738, Email: platform@qn.apc.org. More info: www.risingtide.org.uk. Contact Manchester Earth First! on 0161-226 6814, mancef@nematode.freeserve.co.uk

For more info on the pipeline see "Some Common Concerns", published in September 2002 by PLATFORM, The Corner House, Friends of the earth International, Campagna per la Riforma della banca Mondiale, CEE Bankwatch Network and the Kurdish Human Rights Project.

BE THE BEST!

Manchester's Armed Forces Careers Office got a helping hand when Tony Blair and George Bush attended 'in person' to help recruit suckers, accompanied by a banner reading 'Their Blood Our Oil', a walking petrol pump, a CNN newscaster and a shadowy figure in a gas mask and chemical warfare suit. The spectacle proved too stressful for one highly trained member of the armed forces who steamed out of the office raging that the banner being held in front of his car was 'touching my private property'. He then very nearly injured the banner-holders by driving off in that jerky fashion, either failing to control his car in his anger, or trying to intimidate the demonstrators. And failing. The demonstrators showed up again in Market St - Bush and Blair now clearly in love - amusing many, narking a few, and attracting tourists wanting their photo taken with the US President.



Women with Bolt Croppers

Menwith Hill US Spy Base received an unwelcome early Christmas gift when thousands of pounds of their radar equipment was destroyed. The action was carried out by Women with Bolt Croppers when on the night of 14th December, they cut a hole in the fence with bolt croppers and climb through.

"No alarms sounded, no-one challenged us. Armed with just bolt croppers and a hammer we set about causing damage to the US listening devices. Once our work was done we had a bite to eat, then left through the same hole! We were inside the base, undetected, sabotaging the war effort for over an hour! It was easy!"

"We did this because we are angry that the British state is allowing the US to use bases in the UK such as Fylingdales, Fairford & Menwith Hill in its war plans. We are angry at the hypocrisy of the US and UK governments who are willing to use their weapons of mass destruction on the Iraqi people. We are angry that our leaders are going to war in our name. We have signed petitions, we have lobbied MP's, we have marched on numerous occasions. None of these tactics are working.

Now is the time! We need to take direct action now, we need to take our protests from the streets to the insides of military bases. Our action shows it is possible to get into a military base, damage equipment, and still get away.

Imagine the power we would have if just 1% of the people on the last anti-war demo decided to take their opposition to the war a step further. It is time to turn opinion into action, time to stand up and be counted. Sabotaging the war effort is not a crime, it is a moral obligation."

See below for how you can take that step further.

Your chance to Foil Menwith

Foil the Base, on March 22nd, will be a day of peaceful creative direct action, music, speakers and a tour at at US military base Menwith Hill, Yorkshire.

Menwith Hill plays a crucial role in war on Iraq, and is only an hour and a half away from Manchester. As the largest electronic monitoring station in the world it picks up communications from satellites covering the Middle East – it even won an award for its eavesdropping in the last Gulf War. It is the 'brains' of any attack on Iraq. Menwith is also key for the Star Wars project of long-term military aggression.

To 'foil the base' – disrupt satellite signals at the base - there has to be as much foil in the air as possible. Bring foil kites, foil balloons, foil puppets – use your imagination! Let's make our demos visible at the real heart of the military machine.

This time in March is the Spring Equinox. It's the time to celebrate life's ability to regenerate – to de-legitimise the military system and transform our frustration into hope and active resistance for a better world.

For direct action training, for speakers on Star Wars and Menwith Hill, or to be a transport organiser for your area contact Neighbourhoods Opposing War (NOW) at mail@now-peace.org.uk. For more info see www.now-peace.org.uk

*** For those in the south, there will also be a 22nd March action at Fairford base, Gloucestershire - see www.gwi.org.uk ***

Menwith Hill Arrests

Two peace campaigners from Manchester (on 16th January) appeared in Harrogate magistrates court charged with going equipped intending to cause criminal damage at "RAF" (US Spy Base) Menwith Hill. The pair were arrested by MoD police on 10th January in one of the bases antenna fields. Both pleaded not guilty to the charges and have opted for a jury trial at York Crown Court. The prosecutor told the pair "you can protest against the base at the house of commons or in Harrogate".

STOP PRESS!! Three more arrested at Menwith Hill

3 Trident Ploughshares activists were arrested for criminal damage at Menwith on 3rd Feb. A pensioner, a teenager, and one other woman were cutting a hole in the perimeter fence when an MOD dog handler found them. They continued with their cutting and painted on the fence 'No War On Iraq' until armed MOD police arrived to stop them. They were released and will appear soon in Harrogate Magistrates Court

8th February - Northern Anarchist Network Winter Conference. 10.30-5.30pm Bridge 5 mill, 22a Beswick St, Ancoats. 01422 842558

8th February - Musical Social Event 8.30-10.30 The Nile Band and Dafna Douri, St John's Parish centre, Chorlton, organised by Jewish Socialists, proceeds to humanitarian causes in Palestine/Israel

12th February - EF! meeting 7.30pm The Vine pub on Kennedy St

15th February - Biggest ever anti-war demo in London (see front) and MAKE LOVE NOT WAR party

2nd March - International Women's Day Festival 12.30-4pm Manchester Town Hall 0161 234 3157

5th March - Volunteering in Palestine 7pm Friends Meeting House. Reportback and how to get involved.

Sometime in March - day of action against war in Manchester. More from www.gmdcnd.org.uk 273 8283

8 March - Women and War - event at the Pankhurst Centre

22nd March - Foil the Base (see inside)

for next *Beyond TV* see www.beyondtv.org, as venue and/or location may have to change



UK Entertainment Tax

A bill currently before parliament will have a serious impact on all branches of the performing arts, both amateur and professional. All premises in which performing arts activities take place will require a licence from the local authority, which will probably cost lots of money

Churches, schools, village halls, pubs, restaurants, even private houses will have to be licensed if used for performance events, whether they take place frequently or only occasionally. Any performance in unlicensed premises will be a criminal offence, punishable by a large fine and costs, or a prison sentence.

See <http://uk.indymedia.org> or www.musiclovers.ukart.com for more information. There is an online petition against the new laws at www.PetitionOnline.com/2inabar

Deaf activists take their protests to the roof top

Deaf protesters stormed the roof of Manchester's GMEX complex last year in a three-day demonstration against hearing implants. It actually happened last autumn, but we felt it worth reporting to raise awareness. Draped with banners declaring Better Deaf Than Dead the campaigners were targeting a conference of 800 medical experts from around the world meeting to discuss cochlear (inner ear) implants at Manchester International Convention Centre. Camping out in tents and climbing onto the roof, the Deaf Liberation Front (DLF) protesters were highlighting suspected cases of meningitis caused by the devices. According to the campaigners, several people have died from meningitis after receiving cochlear implants, including seven people in England.

More information from the DLF website www.deafpowernow.org

G8 - france, 2003

A call to create an alternative anti-capitalist village

The No Pasaran network are proposing the creation of an autonomous anti-capitalist village during this year's G8 Summit. The summit is in Evian, France, a mountainous region in the Haute-Savoie. The G8 leaders and the leading figures of the international financial institutions (IMF, World Bank etc..) arrogantly assume the right to rule our lives according to the logic, needs and desires of Capitalism.

There will be mass protests against the G8. But No Pasaran say it is important that the mobilisations go further than demonstrating in the streets: we must also open up a space in which we can hold free and open gatherings where we elaborate our ideas. We are aware of the increasingly repressive nature of the police and military apparatus which imposes increasing difficulties on how we assemble for each counter-summit.

The No Pasaran network contact : nopasaran@samizdat.net Link: <http://www.red-libertaria.net>



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.

Pick it up FREE from:

- 8th Day Cafe, Oxford Road & Old Birley Street
- Bridge 5 Mill, Beswick St., Ancoats
- Café Pop, Oldham Street, Piccadilly
- Mistys Café, Longsight District Centre, Stockport Road
- Pankhurst Centre, Nelson Road
- Unicorn Grocery, 89 Albany Road, Chorlton
- Top Cafe, Afflecks Palace, Oldham St
- Vanilla, Sackville St
- 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 information for action, contributions, comments cartoons & photos, offers of distribution help, or donations (cheques payable to Manchester EF1) to:

The Loombreaker

c/o Department 29,
22a, Beswick Street, Manchester M4 7HS
0161-226 6814 editorial@loombreaker.org.uk
<http://www.loombreaker.org.uk/>

SUBSCRIBE TO LOOMBREAKER BY E-MAIL!

Send your e-mail address to subscribe@loombreaker.org.uk to get the Loombreaker by e-mail.

Interested in taking action?
Look at the Loombreaker website or call 0161 226 6814 for details of upcoming events, actions and meetings.

New from a Manchester radical arts collective

If you're looking for inspiration for your anti-war propaganda, try looking at the UHC website

We've redesigned our home page www.uhc-collective.org.uk and site design to improve navigability. Our work now falls into six distinct categories; campaigns, collective, downloads, street art, exhibitions and UHC Army.

Cluster Bomb confetti www.uhc-collective.org.uk/campaigns/confetti2.htm UHC's latest anti-war ambient propaganda. Tiny fluorescent squares of paper confetti bearing the slogan 'I am not at war' on one side with a bomblet on the other. A twist on the all-American tradition of ticker tape parades for it heroes, the little day glow squares are popping up everywhere in Manchester.

UHC Army (http://www.uhc-collective.org.uk/army/UHC_army.html) We need help distributing the propaganda we're producing. Stickers need sticking, postcards need posting and posters need flyposting. Can you help? If so get in touch.

President Blair speaks...



Drive them Out!

Roney, a Hulme resident, was recently arrested charged with £25 criminal damage for writing "This way to fund the slaughter of Palestinians" across a sign belonging to Williams Landrover. Roney says "I did this because Landrover are selling Landrover Defenders to Israel who use them against the peoples of Palestine. As a local I object to this happening on my doorstep. I also

object to multinationals such as Landrover taking over areas in my community and peddling hardware that murders communities abroad. They'll be putting a McDonalds in Hulme next!"

Roney pleaded not guilty in the magistrates court, but before it came to trial, all charges were surprisingly dropped. Maybe they didn't want an expose in court of Landrover's involvement in Israel!

Land Rovers trashed

Earlier this week the windscreens of about twenty Land Rover vehicles were caved in, causing an estimated £25k worth of damage. The vehicles were sited at the Williams Land Rover showroom on Princess Parkway, Hulme. The action has something to do with the sale of Land Rover vehicles to the Israeli army. For evidence of the link, you can look up the page on LR Defenders as used by Israeli 'special forces' on their own web site www.isayeret.com/vehicles/rover/rover.htm