

European counter network
LONDON

contraFLOW



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FREE

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CARNIVAL OF THE OPPRESSED



Despite a concerted attack by the state and media, the Liverpool Dockers/March for Social Justice/Reclaim the Streets event of April 12/13 stands out as another successful step in coming together and reclaiming our lives.

The march was reclaimed as a carnival bringing together diverse elements of our class, of our humanity. Despite the crap in the papers, all the organisations and groups stuck together before, during and after. And Trafalgar Square was reclaimed as a Festival, with the Sound System breaking in through police lines, with smaller mobile systems, picnic space and the usual demo olympic games. Three large groups of people managed to break through the police cordon back into the Square. And despite the small turn-out for the Sunday gathering, the debate was a definite step toward the future.

But the state can also claim the weekend as a great success. First they managed to confiscate the vast majority of the 20,000 copies of Evading Standards that could have got the message out of the activist and party ghettos and evaded the domination of the media. (an updated version did get out two weeks later) Secondly they succeeded not only in militarising the event, in reclaiming space in paramilitary formation, and through this in stopping Plan A and in splitting us up, stopping hundreds of people from rejoining their friends and the festivities, They also managed to create public justification for this militarisation on the day, and for the future.

MEDIA STUNTS

The state showed how much better they are at using the media than we can ever be. The most obvious was the creation of the 'attempted murder' charges, or lack of charges, but its clear they were ready to present the media with a 'riot' by any means necessary.

However much fighting back is necessary, set-piece confrontations with superior fire-power are a failure both because we get battered and nicked, and because the cop/media circus can portray rioting as a hopeless minority and ideological act instead of as a necessary part of our resistance and reclamation of our lives and space. The Torygraph even managed to get an RTS 'spokesperson' to blame 'tanked-up yobbos', so that this time and next time they can use them (whoever they might be) as an excuse to control and batter all our events, all of us.

GETTING IT TOGETHER

The great success of RTS has been the imagination and guts in taking space and enjoying it, in posing a real alternative. But Trafalgar Square exposed a massive lack of imagination from nearly everyone. Those who only want to dance, to wave placards, or to chuck things at well-protected cops (particularly those stupid enough to hit demonstrators instead) don't need RTS to keep up with their hobbies. RTS have succeeded in bringing us together but we still need to come together to develop more imaginative ways to work together and to respond to changing conditions. When most people failed to get back into the Square we should have regrouped outside, and hanging around while paramilitary forces sweep up the left-overs is like banging our heads against police truncheons.

The conference on the Sunday was interesting because most people avoided the separate workshops for a general discussion on the events and the future, and because despite obviously strongly-held views, divisive arguments were quickly superseded. Unfortunately the creative chaos of RTS has meant that the decisions have not been acted on. Of course, if Plan A, the taking of the empty Department of the Environment building had succeeded there would have been more time for discussion and dance, for developing ways to defend the common ground we have taken and go forward. Instead the process will take a bit more time, but its happening.

MICHAEL PORTILLO HA HA HA! NEW FLAVOUR SAME SHIT TASTE



Its hard not to feel happy at the end of the 18 year reich, to see Bastards like Portillo dumped and watch the computer graphics of tory strongholds blown up. But its not so much a change of government, more a genetic modification. Labour have spent the last five years promising that they would change nothing. If anything they've come out more for police powers, workfare and other attacks than the Tories.

We have seen how New Labour have acted in power in their Town Halls, selling services, housing, jobs to the highest (or lowest) bidder, jumping into bed with business and business-dominated quangos, attacking and smearing their own dissidents, turning their powers on local people who can't or won't pay up and play along.

But many have voted for them in the hope of change, of feeling at least that we can get rid of the Tory bastards even if only to replace them with a smarmy git. And many in the lower levels of the Labour Party, unions, local government, voluntary sector have been keeping quiet, digging in in the belief that Blair's version of the party can be pushed aside once in power. The hopes on which Blair has come to power have to find space and openings, or soon whatever belief voters had in the system will begin to wilt. and then what?

To many, the lack of choice, the sameness of the main contenders has been seen as a sign of the power of the state, of their lack of any need to offer any real concessions. But the reality is that its a sign of fear and weakness. They are scared of offering us anything, because they know that like before we will take it and use it to demand more. They are scared to step back from increasing the domination of the market, because if some parts of our lives can be free of it, why not all?

Last time Labour lost at the last minute because business got cold feet at the idea that people still had expectations of them. This time they managed to convince them that nobody should have any expectations, while their fear of keeping things the same, of the desperate response to another Tory win, made Labour a safer bet.



HARD WORK and FUN!

ContraFlow is brought to you by a wierd collection of activists who completely disagree on everything, except that; If we want to make a world worth living in, we have to make it ourselves. And the same goes for ContraFlow. We need you...

- to send us your news, views, events, graffiti...
- to help distribute ContraFlow at demos, parties, workplaces, tube stations (bundles from 56a, 121, Brownswood library)...
- to help our finances with donations, stamps, benefits etc. to keep ContraFlow free and bubbly,
- to join us - come along to one of our monthly discussion meetings or contact us and we'll let you know when the next collective meeting is,
- or to make the revolution so we don't have to do it any more.



COPS IN GENETIC CLONING SHOCK

(Right) a shopper has a hard time distinguishing the real pig from the genetically cloned one
(the genetically engineered food article was lost during the layout, maybe next issue)



BRITAIN IS BOOING LET'S BLOW IT!

Despite various fun and interesting things happening round the country, Britain really is becoming a backwater, crushed under years of monetarism and isolated by an island mentality. In other areas struggles and victories are happening that here seem lost in the mists of time.

In France, while various sections of workers have taken to winning demands by blocking transport on roads, rail and at ports, refugees and immigrants made 'illegal' by recent legislation have been making their struggles public and solid by occupying churches and other buildings, and by public hunger strikes. The Sans Papier (without documents) movement has brought together people of numerous nationalities, some of whom have lived in France for more than ten years, as an autonomous force and as an inspiring focus for other anti-racist work, and for the other Sans, those without housing, an income etc.

Belgian car workers struck in anger at plans to close the Renault factory and move it to Spain where they expected bigger EC handouts. The workers demonstrated and fought riot cops en masse and won at least a court decision that the plan was illegal without consultation.

In Germany a hospital occupation at the Hamburg Havenkrankhaus has won an agreement for a hospital to remain on the site, though arguments about the level of resources remain. Also unlike here, coal miners striking and besieging the capital forced the government to back down on massive cuts and destruction of the industry. meanwhile thousands continued to block the transport of nuclear waste from the Gorleben powerplant, fluffy and spiky together.

In Albania the revolt against capitalism and the destruction of people's savings has created a workers takeover in the south. The people are governing them-

selves through mass assemblies, autonomous municipal committees and revocable delegates. The west have responded by sending in troops to 'protect aid'.

In Siberia there have been 'salvation committees' set up in response to a lack of wages for miners and others for years, but news is sketchy.

In Korea massive strikes occurred as the government tried to imitate Britain and bring in anti-worker legislation. Israel and other countries have seen strikes by various sections of workers together against government attacks, while an 8 day strike by Colombian public sector workers beat plans to keep pay rises well below inflation.

Dutch Squatters took over a large hotel at the resort of Noordijk, 500 metres from the hotel where the EuroSummit will be held in June. Unfortunately riot cops removed them, but plenty more action is in store.

The point is not to glory in the struggles happening elsewhere, or to think that here all is hopeless. Our defeat is our isolation and if we're going to get anywhere on our home turf we've got to start getting together with our sisters and brothers everywhere.

Amsterdam June 14/15

As Holland ends its term of running the EC and government leaders gather to plot, the Euromarches meet up for a weekend of demos, counter summits and fun.

News Shorts

TESCOS PITTA SLAVES

65 workers at the Arnaouti Bakery, West Road, Tottenham have walked out on strike against appalling conditions. The company produce pitta bread, mainly for Tesco's, as well as for Safeways and British Bakeries.

Most of the workers are refugees, mainly Somali and some Turkish and have been working for £3.37 an hour on 12 hour shifts, 6 days a week, with practically no notice of which shift they're on. The bakery does not have a hygiene certificate, but was recently cleaned up specially for a 'surprise' visit from Tesco's.

There are pickets every morning at 9 and there's leaflets to give out at Tesco's etc, and of course donations will help.

For up to date info contact Paddy Hill of the Bakers Food & Allied Workers Union at Sinclair House, Unit 9, 66 Willoughby Lane, London N17 or phone 0181 801 0980.

NORTH LONDON SOLIDARITY

People in Camden and in Islington are trying to set up local solidarity groups, with the help of Haringey Solidarity Group. If you live or work in these areas and want to join in, or want help setting something up in your own area, contact HSG @ PO Box 2474, London N8

NO CEASE-FIRE IN THE CLASS WAR

Apart from a rump of the London group, Class War have decided to produce a special (final?) issue analysing their history, strengths and weaknesses, and calling a series of discussions for everyone interested, to take the struggle forward. If you can't find a copy, send a donation/SAE to Class War, BM Box 5538, London WC1N 3XX.

McLibel Judgement

The final judgement on the McLibel trial is likely to happen sometime in June. There'll be picketing at the High Court on the day, as well as a Victory Day of Action the following Saturday. McLibel Support group: 0171 713 1269

VICTORY TO THE BOUGAINVILLE REVOLUTIONARY ARMY!

Bougainville is a small tropical island in the South Pacific, given to Australia after the first World War to be administered as part of Papua & New Guinea. The islanders made a good subsistence living from vegetable plots and fishing, until the discovery of mineral deposits in the '60s. In 1966, CRA (An Australian mining subsidiary of RTZ; freshly reincorporated into the company's new name, Rio Tinto, this year) forced local people off their land in order to dig the biggest copper mine in the world. There was widespread resistance to the plans; the islanders protested in the most direct way they could; they stood on the beaches and refused to let the company men come ashore. The riot police were sent in. Eventually the mine was built. When PNG was given 'independence' from colonial rule in 1975, the island was part of the package, despite being geographically and culturally part of the much-closer Solomon Islands.

By 1988, the mine had grown to 1/2km deep, with a circumference of 7km. It had produced an estimated one billion tonnes of waste, which was allowed to pollute the rivers and so destroy the islanders' traditional lifestyle. Their protests about health, environmental damage and their livelihoods were ignored. RTZ has a long history of putting profits way above people, and in this case they were turning over quite a tidy sum. In 17 years of operation, the mine produced US\$6bn of copper and represented a substantial 45 percent of PNG's export earnings. Realising that change was unlikely without radical action, a group of islanders used company explosives to shut the Panguna mine down.

The PNG Government - with full Australian backing (Australia's involvement extends not just to a massive aid budget, but also supplying Iriquois helicopters and advice/training) - responded to this by sending in first the riot police, and then the army, to reopen the mine and protect their revenue. Bougainville declared independence, and the Bougainville Revolutionary Army was formed to defend the islanders against PNG's terroristic onslaught.

The PNG Defence Force has destroyed many villages and health facilities, attacked

Bougainvilleans and herded them into euphemistically-termed "care centres" (where the biggest killers have been malnutrition and relatively preventable diseases). Summary execution, rape, torture, indiscriminate killings are all now common experiences. A total blockade was imposed in 1990, cutting communication and preventing imports of essential humanitarian relief and medical supplies. Gun-ships now operate a shoot-to-kill policy in the waters around Bougainville. Running the blockade is risky and many have died in the attempt.

The result of all the military activity and associated human rights abuses has been to make



the resistance stronger. The BRA has held its ground against the PNGDF without any external support. They've been using antique and home-made guns (wood & recycled water piping from the mine), and coconut fuel to power their few old vehicles. They've set up their own schools and clinics. They're growing their own food and plenty of coconuts! Behind the blockade there's no use for currency and no need to pander to the whims of the IMF/World Bank. They've been forging an autonomous, sustainable, low-impact society.

In February it was announced that 150 mercenaries had been contracted, at the cost of A\$35m, from Sandline International (based in the UK) and Executive Outcomes (South Africa

- past record: Angola, Sierra Leone etc.) in a bid to finish off the BRA for once and for all. A week later, the news came through that the PNG soldiers had welcomed the mercenaries by taking them hostage! The sight of fully-equipped, well-paid mercenaries being hired in from abroad sparked off a revolt within an army often forced to go without adequate rations and pay for months at a time. Riots followed in Port Moresby (PNG capital), and the Government was forced to resign over the issue.

"We don't want another Bougainville in Queensland" - CRA spokesman.

Despite eight years of armed struggle, there's been predictably scant media coverage of the war in Bougainville. CRA's activities there are mirrored across the world. If news of the Bougainvillean people's resistance to corporate exploitation were to leak out to other indigenous groups, it might inspire them to take the same sort of action.

This is not the full story... there wasn't space for everything! If you want more information/ to get involved in solidarity actions in the UK, contact:

Bougainville Freedom Movement, c/o FN, PO Box 9384, Brixton, London SW9 7ZB. Tel: c/o 0171 978 8214.

Things worth reading include 'Do or Die' (issue 5) - available from South Downs EFL, Prior House, Tilbury Place, Brighton BN2 2GY. Also a book about RTZ: 'Plunder' by Roger Moody, available from Partizans - 0171 700 6189.

Other useful numbers include: Minewatch 0171 277 4852; Corporate Watch 01865 791 391. Web-site: <http://www.magna.com.au/~sashab/>

SWEDISH FEMINISTS ASSAULTED BY POLICE

An anarchy-feminist demo on 8th March 1997 was brutally broken up by cops in Stockholm. The 70-strong women only march under the banner of 'Reclaim The Night' started at 9pm, and was a women's protest against the fact that they do not feel safe to walk their own streets at night.

As every year the demo made stops outside porn shops, and one of these had a window smashed. Then near the Golden Rose porn shop owned by super-rich porn magnate and underworld figure Carl Serung, the police mounted an ambush against the demo. Mounted police, anti-terrorist cops and 27 police vehicles blocked off both ends of the street, and then without warning charged the demonstrators, injuring many and hospitalising at least three (others did not seek medical care for fear of police repression). An 18 year old needed 6 stitches on her head, and a 16 year old had her arm broken and her shoulder dislocated.

To add insult to injury, many women were frisked by male policemen (illegal according to Swedish law) and violated in the process.

The women have made formal charges against the police for assault, as have residents of the area who witnessed the attack. There are even rumours that certain policemen have brought charges against their own because of the excessive use of force. In a communique, Stockholms Anarchists said: 'That the unprovoked attack on International Women's Day is an example of the sexist tendencies and ébacklashí of macho police and men in general is quite clear. That it occurred outside Serungís éGolden Roseí (where a non-violent picket line was brutally dispersed last winter) leads one to conspiracy thoughts of pay-offs within the police force.' In response to this violent repression the anarchy-feminists called a demo against police violence for the 15th March, when about 500 people marched to the police station in the working-class area of Sodermalm (considered a large turn-out for a Swedish anarchist demo).

Contact Stockholms Anarkister (ksvensson@hotmail.com)

HANDS OFF SATPAL RAM

Meanwhile, back in the good old UK, Satpal Ram, in prison for killing a racist attacker in self-defence has been forcibly moved from Gartree to Wandsworth Prison. Satpal is on hunger strike to be returned to Gartree and against continued harassment, which has included beatings, isolation, strip-searches and the planting of drugs. The latest move is

obviously designed to mess up his preparations for his forthcoming parole hearing. The Free Satpal Campaign can be contacted on 0121 331 1511.

For more prisoners news, read Taking Liberties, 20p + stamp from **ABC, 121 Railton Road, London SE24.**

ROADS, AIRPORTS, WHO NEEDS 'EM? (capitalists do, that's who!)

The rest of us need a second runway at Manchester Airport like we need a hole in the head. Just as vital to us is the straightening/widening of the A320 at Guildford (not!! Actually it's vital for the construction of a waste incinerator on the nearby industrial estate, which is vital for keeping the local population suitably polluted/alienated.)

At Guildford (Stringer's Common) 221 trees are going to be cut down, aquatic life will be destroyed, wet grassland will be bulldozed, bats and lizards will suffer...in the name of progress. And Surrey County Council are going to spend £2,651,000 doing it.

At Manchester, Earth rapists Tarmac and AMEC are going to trash beautiful Bollin valley, (600 acres of greenbelt, 42 ponds, 15km of hedgerow, mature woodland..), just so that people can escape their alienated urban nightmare for a two weeks brain-dead consumer extravaganza at some alienating concrete nightmare by the sea, so that rich wankers can fly all over the world, and so that the economy can import/export superfluous consumer products to chain ourselves to as a substitute to living. The previous leader of the council, Graham Stringer, pledges that "£1 million a week will be spent between now and 2005 on tarmac and terminals".

Did I hear someone cough? Aircraft emit 35-65% more Carbon Dioxide



More Hassles For Mumia

Mumia Abu-Jamal, US radical black journalist and supporter of MOVE, on death row for a killing he didn't commit, has been getting more shit off the state and prison authorities.

In February he was ordered to cut off his dreadlocks, which he had previously refused along with MOVE members and been thrown in the 'hole' for. They then refused visits from his attorney and from a prison rights campaigner, and interfered with and defaced his legal defence post.

Then a regular radio broadcast by him was cancelled at the last minute by Temple University Radio (thus messing up 8 other stations due to relay the broadcast). The prison authorities have brought in special rules to stop Mumia's words being broadcast or printed, as part of their continued campaign to stop black political prisoners defend themselves.

Letters of protest should be sent to;

Acting Superintendent Vaughn,
State Correctional Institution at Greene,
1030E. Roy Furman Hwy.
Waynesburg, PA 15370-8089 USA
fax; 001 412 852 2909

copies, messages of solidarity and enquiries to;

INTERNATIONAL CONCERNED FAMILY & FRIENDS OF MUMIA ABUJAMAL PO Box 19709,
Philadelphia PA 19143 USA

GENERAL ELECTION CANCELLED

A slightly updated version of 'Evading Standards' was printed and distributed before the election, even if after the weekend of resistance. Looking remarkably like the London 'Evening Standard' and with the front page headline 'General Election Cancelled', nearly 20,000 were handed out to commuters. The original 20,000 are still being held by the cops as 'evidence'.

Responses varied, most people being amused and quite a few saying 'I wish' (though not necessarily taking a copy) but so many people are so used to crap being handed out at stations, it seemed a bit like another gimmick.

An inspiring front page, but the insides of the paper were less inspiring, with a lot of stuff about 'direct action' but reduced to the green-type actions you'd expect, roads protests, DIY media, Lets schemes..... Little or nothing about the direct action people have to take in their daily lives, strikes, squatting, skiving, shoplifting, occupying nurseries to keep them open..... If the actions we take don't create and inspire space for direct action in everyday life, rather than posing marginal activity for the few, we'll be disappearing up our own arses again. But it got to loads of people who've never even heard of ContraFlow and as someone was saying, things can only get better.

By the way, what happened to the Anti Election Alliance?

than even motor cars per passenger mile. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) says we must reduce Carbon Dioxide emissions by 90% in the UK to "avoid potentially catastrophic consequences from climate change". Well, the Government aren't going to do fuck-all about it (that's a lie, they're going to make it much worse), so it looks like it's up to you and me..

Up for direct action? To get to the camps (and discover the wonderful world of tree-house and bender building): for directions to the Manchester Airport camps ring Coalition Against Runway 2 (car2) on 0161 834 8221. For directions to Stringer's Common, Guildford, ring 01483 32167. Other camps against modern progress (ie senseless destruction) have been going on at Rye Loaf, Bingley, Yorkshire (Bingley South Bog is an SSSI to be trashed by a road), and at Teddy Bear Woods, Weymouth (yet another road to ruin).

Wish list from Zion Tree Camp, Manchester Airport: large tarpaulins, 10mm polyprop rope, climbing rope, sand, cement and granite chippings, reinforcing bar/ metal tubing for arm tubes, climbing equipment, fresh veg, vegan marg, tunnel door; fabrication offers, scaffolding (long), scaff planks 2"x4" timber, floor joists, 3/4" plywood sheets, netting, barbed wire, p.i.r. detectors, 12 volt halogen lamps, people and money!

Late News: On Monday 12th, the road-widening at Stringer's Common was cancelled!

Similarly at Manchester Airport, eviction imminent after appeal hearing, don't wait any longer, get there!!



155 SQUATTERS ARRESTED IN VIOLENT MADRID EVICTION

The violent repression of the squatting movement by the Spanish State continues, with the latest eviction of the La Guindalera social centre in Madrid. The eviction was set for the 10th of March, and the squatters decided the best form of defence is attack, with 50 hooded people attacking local banks at 7.30am, and putting up barricades in the streets around the squatted centre to try and stop the police. The barricades were defended against heavy attacks by the first riot police units on the scene, until police won control and cut off all access to the squat, with street battles now being fought out in the surrounding areas, while the police tried to gain access to the squatted building where 100 people were passively resisting on the rooftop. The cops fired rubber bullets and tear-gas at the squatters, and at 1pm finally managed to get into the building via a nearby roof and tear down the barricaded door with a digger, evicting and arresting almost everyone inside. 155 people were arrested (65 in the streets and 90 in the building) and a total of 55 banks were attacked in that one morning. In the police stations the squatters were beaten and abused, and kept up to 36 hours in cells, with up to 15 people to a cell. All the women were forced to take their clothes off in front of male policemen, and many were not given any food for more than 13 hours. Relatives and friends protested outside the police stations, and were violently dispersed by police at 11.30pm. Two 'Habeas Corpus' requests were turned down by judges, and 65 people spent 72 hours in the police station. All the people arrested were charged with usurpation -ie squatting (including the people arrested outside the building) and public order offences and criminal damage (including the people arrested inside the building!). On the 15th of March between 4000 and 5000 people marched through central Madrid on a demo in defence of squatted social centres and against the eviction of La Guindalera, with many relatives attending and carrying the head banner of the demo.

LATEST NEWS...

- on the 19th of April 100 people squatted 3 buildings in Madrid (10,000 sq. m), to set up new social centres and provide space for autonomous collectives and all kind of initiatives.
- Luis Vicente G. was sentenced to 4 years in prison as a result of the eviction of the Barcelona cinema; 14 other people were tried and got sentences of 1 and 2 years.
- Six buildings were squatted in Catalonia in a coordinated response to the repression on the weekend of the 5th and 6th of April; two were evicted almost immediately, but the other 4 were still going.
- La Casa del riu, squatted living space and social centre in Valencia was evicted at the beginning of May; 15 people were arrested and charged with "usurping"...

5th ST. SQUATS DEMOLISHED

Squatters were again under attack in New York's Lower East Side. On Sunday February 9th a small fire broke out at 537-535 5th Street in an abandoned City building squatted for over 13 years, the fire affected only a small part of the building yet within 5 minutes (and with no official going inside) the Mayors office and the HPD declared the building as "in imminent danger of collapse" and threw a cordon around the building, despite this police and fire officers were seen throughout the night wandering the building and ransacking the squatters possessions. The next morning the squatters were told they couldn't re-enter the building and city workers brought out a few token boxes of clothes and blankets and the City started the demolition. A stay of demolition was awarded from the court but was ignored by the Mayors office and the cops who continued the destruction of part of Lower East Sides vibrant community. This is just the latest in a long line of attacks on the L.E.S. squatters in the City's profit drive to Gentrify the area at any cost. The squatters lost all their possessions and a squatter was almost killed as he hid out in the building...the 5th Street squatters are now taking the city to court.

For more information on the demolition and other attacks on the Lower East Side squatters and to send donations for the legal fund write to: **Brixton Squatters Aid, 121 Railton Road, Brixton, SE24**

WORK FREE ZONE

In a shock decision, the National Trust have decided to ban working on their land, after research showed that work is dangerous, degrading and unnecessary. "Workers do have feelings", said the shock report, "and would not have to suffer this level of stress in their natural environment".

Old MacDonald, a leading supporter of working (by others) responded angrily. "This is complete garbage", he said, "workers enjoy being treated like shit and made to do pointless degrading things. Why, I don't even have to pay them, hardly".

But the decision was welcomed by Ellen Still of the Work Sabs organisation. "Its taken decades of direct action by workers and their supporters to get to this decision, and we've got a long way to go yet" she said. She also expressed fears that the pro-work lobby might react to the decision by starting a war as an excuse to cull workers.

