

FINANCIAL CRIMES

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Tuesday September 26 2000

free



Stop free trade rolling
Understand the IMF, World Bank
page 4



Head in the clouds
Corporate control of weather and
more free trade to solve
climate chaos
Dream on: turn to page 3



Dismantling Capitalism
Your guide to creating a free
and ecological society based on co-
operation and community
More information pages 1-16

BUSINESS AS USUAL

World Bank debt to multinationals
A World Bank problem: "We did things for the clients out there in the developing world, but it was more driven by an internally cloned system of thinking rather than a more open, market-oriented approach," says Human Resources manager Pauline Ramprasad. Solution: borrow 57 corporate employees under a new program enabling employee sharing between multinational corporations and the World Bank.

Weatherman sacked for prediction
A Californian weather forecaster was sacked from a radio station for predicting rain on the day of the corporation's annual picnic. The company sacked their employee after ten years of service for 'failing to predict a sunny day'. It rained.

Covert employment for SAS
The SAS are being used to train the Benefits Agency fraud squad. Now the Northern Ireland ceasefire is in place, the search for new terrorists seems to be on. Will the benefits fraud squad also be trained to 'shoot to kill'?

Children on death row
Kids in the US apparently bored of dolls that just wet their nappy and cry now have a new option: Death Row Marv, a 6 inch doll that can be strapped to an electric chair and then she realistically convulses as she is electrocuted to death.

Unpleasant endings
A Company in San Francisco have discovered a gap in the market – the clean-up of homicide, suicide and accidental death. Crime Scene Cleaner's owner Neal Smithers, 33, said: 'Look, if you come home and find the grandma's been rotting on the floor for a month,

GENERAL UPRISING

Global action on September 26

Action sparked by this week's IMF/World Bank meeting reaches far beyond Prague. All over the world people are answering a call to action from Peoples' Global Action, an international network of grassroots social movements.

Siege in Bangladesh

The Garment Workers Unity Forum have "decided to lay siege to the premises of the World Bank in Dhaka on 26 September, ...organising students, youths, women, peasants (and) workers."

Action in Aotorea/New Zealand
Maoris from the Foundation for an Independent Aotorea call on "all organisations and people of the Pacific to unite ... in order to send a powerful message of resistance to global colonisation."

Ecuador peasants rise-up

The Ecuadorean farmers movement plans mass actions "born of dignity and of the long history of rebellion of our peoples..."

Mobilisation in Russia

The Moscow S26 Collective is planning events across the country, with the 'Citizens Network for the Abolition of External Debt' using Prague as a focus for their campaigning.

Zimbabwe coalition tackle debt

The Zimbabwe Coalition on Debt and Development have declared, "We will not relent in our demands for the creation of a socially, economically and ecologically just world order."

Indian groups converge over IMF

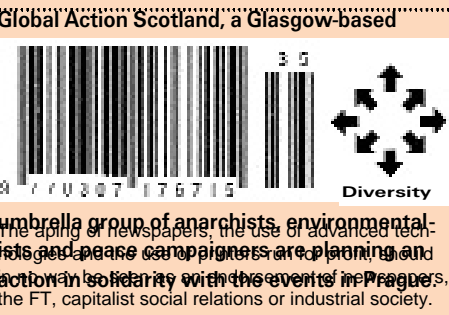
The National Alliance of People's Movements will act "for the people's rule, resources in the hands of communities, equality and freedom from exploitation".

Brazilians target McDonald's

'Local action for global justice' will "distribute good local food at a McDonald's restaurant", with "direct action during the morning and a mass demo at the stock market at noon."

Scottish solidarity actions

visit the PGA website at www.agp.org



PRAGUE MEETING OF THE WORLD BANK AND IMF

World Bank terrorism – more evidence

By Horst Wolfenson and James Kohler

This week 20,000 economists and their followers converge in the Czech capital of Prague, for the 55th annual meeting of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF). The meetings are taking place behind closed doors, amid thousands of riot-ready police and army battalions. Outside tens of thousands take to the streets incensed at the effects of World Bank and IMF policies on the environment and those outside the global elite.

The World Bank acts along side NATO to pursue Western powers' interests - the former through loans, the latter through bombs. For example, in 1990, the IMF and World Bank used "shock therapy" to introduce Western-style capitalism to Yugoslavia which led to massive job losses and a rise in ethnic nationalism. The institutions lost control and an alternative was required.

Economics had failed so a military option was chosen. Of the

institutions on offer NATO was selected. The Serb leaders were offered a deal called the 'Rambouillet terms', which according to Lord Gilbert, defence minister during the Kosovo war, speaking in the House of Commons last month was "absolutely intolerable" and designed to provoke war.

The truth behind many of the recent events in the Balkans remains obscure. What is clear is that the media was heavily used to manufacture sympathy for the Kosovan Albanians. This was then used to justify the NATO bombings and legitimise the military action necessary to restore business as usual.

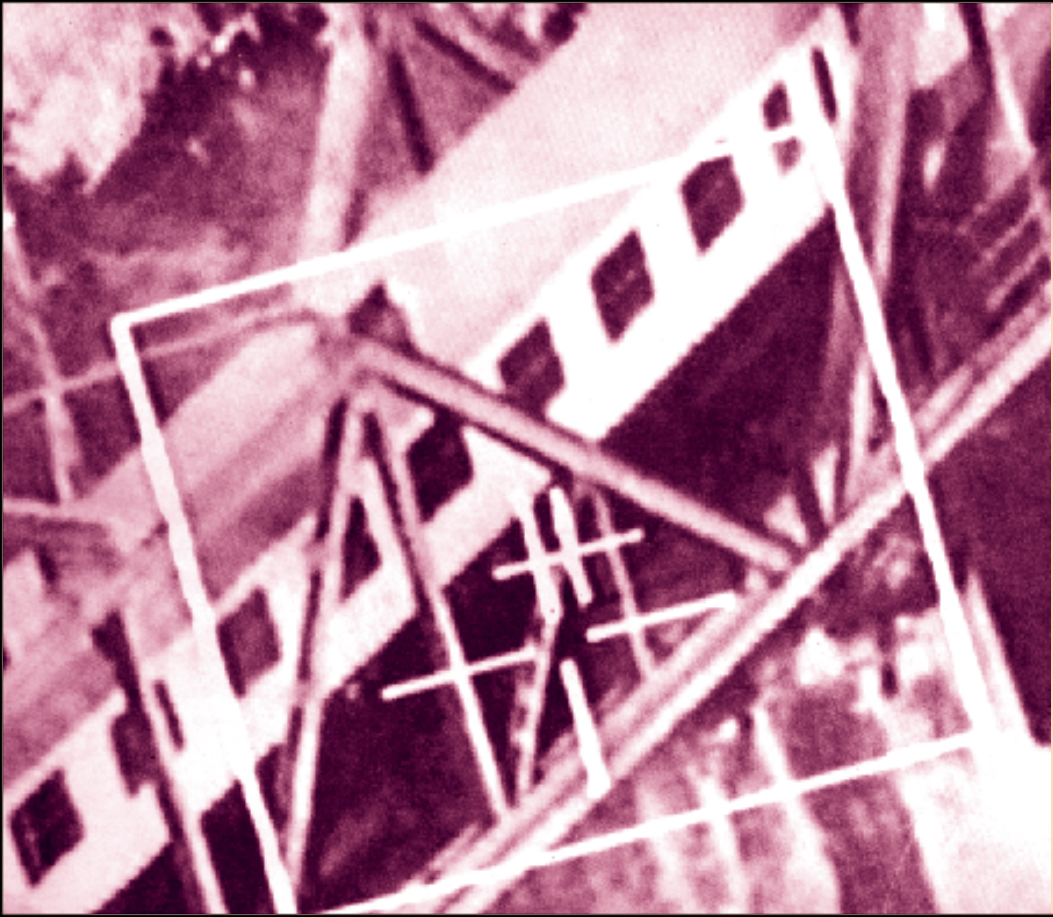
Now the institutional baton has been passed back by NATO to the IMF and World Bank to rebuild Kosovo and create "a thriving, open and transparent market economy", as one of their brochures states.

Disastrous 'unforeseen' effects of IMF and World Bank policies are the norm. Almost all so-called Third World and former Eastern Bloc countries have loans from the

IMF. In return, countries agree to let the IMF decide their major economic policies. These 'structural adjustment policies' (SAPs) are designed to promote economic growth by cutting government spending in areas such as health and education, privatising state utilities such as water, increasing exports like tropical timber, coffee, and out-of-season mange tout.

The 'unforeseen' results are, almost without exception, increased unemployment, inequality and ecological destruction. Or in terms of real peoples lives, not enough to eat, ill health and nowhere safe to sleep at night. When people react, it is often in one of two ways; resistance through collective action such as Brazil's landless workers movement and Mexico's Zapatista indigenous peoples, or the scapegoating of marginalised groups who are considered 'different' as was the case in Rwanda and Kosovo.

Stating that the World Bank and IMF are involved in 'terrorism' seems more like an eye-catching headline than a serious accusation. However, compare their



NATO 'smart bomb' targets train full of passengers during Kosovo war.

behaviour to this year's new Terrorism Act definition: "terrorism" means the use or threat of action designed to influence the government or intimidate the public for advancing a political, religious or ideological cause. As long as it also involves serious violence against the person or damage to property; endangers a persons life; creates serious risk to the health and safety of the public; or is designed to seriously disrupt an electronic system." Still only an eye-catching headline?

Is it any wonder that tens of

thousands of ordinary people have travelled to Prague to 'intervene on humanitarian grounds,' to paraphrase NATO. This is despite knowing that the media will at best dismiss them as eccentric 'inchoate herbivores' as *The Guardian's* leader writer Hugo Young called the UK's anti-capitalists or 'evil scum' in the front-page words of *The Sun*.

Many people are looking beyond single issues and calls for reform. Reform assumes institutions, such the IMF or World Bank are fundamentally beneficial,

needing only slight tinkering to iron out a few injustices. Yet if the institutions are designed to protect an inherently socially and ecologically flawed system then it is the system itself that needs to be dismantled. Groups and individuals are linking up with exactly this aim. As the Canadian Security Intelligence Service concludes, "the philosophy of capitalism also is under attack, facing charges that it is ignoring the social welfare of individuals, and destroying cultures and the ecology in the quest for growth and profit."

Reclaim the Streets editorial

Don't be fooled by the 'spoof' format of this newspaper. Despite the humour running through most pages the articles and quotes are all factual.

But who went to such trouble and why? As small group of people from Reclaim the Streets in London formed an editorial collective to produce this newspaper. Reclaim the Streets, London, is an open non-hierarchical group that takes direct action to tackle the root causes of social and ecological ills. The editors are from a diversity of backgrounds and all contributed freely with none possessing 'professional' skills for the tasks we undertook (so bear with us on grammar).

Our reasons for producing a newspaper are myriad. We want to contribute to the growth of alternatives non-corporate media. We want to present other sides of debates, demonstrate the links between issues and disseminate the information that for many reasons never makes the pages of daily newspapers or television news bulletins.

Another major reason is to show you - the reader - the acts of resistance, the strikes, the blockades and the personal stories from around the world that inspired us to become involved in the continuing development of a diverse global movement against capitalism. We hope that this inspiration pollinates others to become actively involved in moving towards new societies in hundreds of different ways.

We do not, and make no claim to, have all the answers to our social and ecological problems. Indeed, we do not even all agree on all the contents of this newspaper. Developing alternatives must be a collective endeavour. Publishing this newspaper is only part of that process.

Further fuel blockades in the pipeline

By Johnathon Monbiot and George Porritt

Oil refineries shut-down, petrol stations empty, motorways blocked; ordinary people taking 'direct action' to effect change. No, not 'eco-protesters' highlighting the damaging impact of a car and oil-based economy again but road hauliers and farmers taking radical action seemingly for cheaper petrol.

These two groups of activists, while sharing some working methods, would seem to have mutually exclusive objectives. Arguably though, the ultimate aims are not so far apart.

As it stands the petrol protesters, understandably enough, blame government tax increases,

the government blames the oil cartels, and the oil cartels blame the need to get the most profit out of the oil. The answer from governments - oblivious to environmental commitments - is to pressure the oil countries to increase cheap oil production.

The ecological effects of such growth logic are increasingly clear. Many environmentalists have been keen to distance themselves from the blockades. Their calls for eco-taxes are precisely what the petrol protesters are fighting against. This green analysis does not question the institutional structures of the system itself, which lead to the conclusion that the only way to cut pollution is through higher prices and state enforcement. Of course, it isn't the ministers or oil barons (or most

environmental 'experts' for that matter) who then suffer the effects of price-hikes and job losses.

However, the petrol protests are less about supporting cars and oil-use than about defending the livelihoods of people threatened by the workings of the present economic system.

This is the same economic system that is presently being targeted by radical environmental activists in Prague and elsewhere this week as the dominant cause of a many-sided social and ecological crisis. The road hauliers, farmers and Prague protesters are all ultimately concerned with survival: of human livelihoods and of life itself.

Placed in the context of the looming ecological crisis the demand for cheaper petrol and the

continuation of present practices is an inadequate response to the scale of our current problems.

While the blockades and shut-downs are an inspiring expression of the power of self-organisation and leaderless collective action they remain essentially indirect action by virtue of simply calling for the government to do something about high fuel costs.

The fuel protesters' demand is to return to the world of a few weeks ago. This is firstly not possible, given the new global economic conditions requiring job flexibility and lower wages continue. Secondly, it is suicidal given climate change and other environmental crises.

If the fuel protesters achieve their demand of lower fuel taxes, the intertwined social and envi-

ronmental crisis will continue to deteriorate anyway. They will be blockading again. However, if collectively with many groups in society we target the root causes we may avert environmental crises and come up with more fulfilling and creative things than work for others' profits all day.

At best, this paper - and the related protests against the WTO, IMF and World Bank - point ultimately to the only answer able to transcend the presented 'jobs vs environment' trade-off: the replacing of the underlying institutional structures and related values of capitalism and the state, with alternatives securing a free and ecological society. Overall, the action of the fuel protesters is exemplary - but next time they must demand more.

Coca Cola-sponsored school suspends boy over Pepsi t-shirt

By Theresa Blunkett and David May

When Greenbriar High School decided to call an official Coke Day they didn't count on one thing: the disruptive influence of Pepsi. The school participated in a competition to win US\$500 on offer to the school that could come up with the best strategy for distributing Coca Cola coupons to students.

The school certainly took the competition seriously. For Coke Day, all pupils were to come to school in Coca Cola t-shirts. They posed for a photograph arranging themselves to form the word "coke". All lessons were Coke related. One student, Mike Cameron defiantly but quietly was spotted in a Pepsi t-shirt. He

was promptly suspended.

The School principal Gloria Hamilton was unrepentant. "I know it sounds bad - 'Child suspended for wearing Pepsi shirt on Coke Day' she conceded. "It really would have been acceptable ... if it had just been in-house, but we had the regional president ... flying in from Atlanta to do us the honour of being resource speaker."

Couldn't happen in Britain? Yes, given current trends. New Labour's 'Education Action Zones' have allowed businesses further into schools. The idea is that business helps poorly performing schools. Companies involved so far include Shell, Yorkshire Water and McDonalds.

What's in it for the company? 'Caring' publicity and, of course,

profit. Take this extract from McDonalds' secret Operations Manual: "Schools offer excellent opportunities. Not only are they a high traffic [sales] generator, but students are some of the best customers you could have."

Meanwhile a judge ruled that McDonalds' marketing strategy 'exploits children', following Britain's longest running libel trial, dubbed 'McLibel'.

Of course, people are not happy about these developments. Recently 500 children from Kingsland's school, London, walked out in disgust at their school being turned into an Education Action Zone. Some children took control of the tannoy system in the headteachers office: that's what you call a proper action zone!

Don't believe the hype – bypass the corporate media and make up your own mind.

If you can't make it to Prague for the Global Day of Action against the IMF and World Bank on September 26th, then read the news as it is reported



from the street by those involved – check out Independent Media Centre at www.indymedia.org.uk or Schnews at www.schnews.org.uk



Alternatively for the Schnews weekly newsletter send 1st class stamps (ie. 20 for the next 20 issues) to: Po Box 2600, Brighton, East Sussex, BN2 2DX

WORLD MARKETS

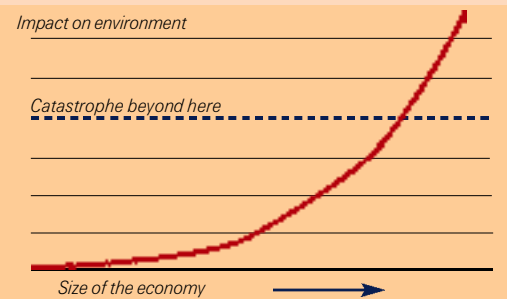
FINANCIAL MARKET

Long-term outlook: Gains from speculation on financial markets rather than goods and services continues. More people take larger bets. Inherent volatility and herd-like behaviour of speculators leads to global financial break down.

LABOUR MARKET

Long-term outlook: Relocation to pay less wages continues but the world runs out of new people to be brought into the global economy. Worldwide bargaining power and wages of workers increase. Mutual solidarity ends wage labour.

ENVIRONMENTAL MARKET



DISCONTENTS

Indigenous people
Peasants
Unemployed
Workers
Environmentalists
Women
Students
The landless

US ‘Plan’ deaths in Colombia

Earlier this year the United States announced a \$1.3 billion 'aid package' that will put even more arms in the hands of one of the world's worst human rights abusers. Each year the Colombian military kills some 3,000 people and drives 300,000 from their homes, with numerous atrocities reported by human rights groups. Despite this history, 'Plan Colombia' is being hailed by its supporters as a bold step in the fight against drugs.

Colombia is notorious as a source of cocaine. The country has been in a state of civil war for many years, with a number of armed leftwing groups, notably the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), controlling large parts of the country. These groups are accused of funding their activities through the production and sale of cocaine, hence the massive increase in military aid to the government.

This story does not stand up to much scrutiny, however. While coca is grown on land in FARC territory, and the group is known to tax the coca industry there, its direct involvement in the trade is far less clear cut than that of the pro-government paramilitaries. The DEA, America's own drug enforcement agency, acknowledges that Carlos Castano, leader of the paramilitary death squads, is a trafficker linked to a powerful cartel. Castano himself admitted in a television interview that most of the paramilitaries funding comes through the drug trade. Yet the US seems somewhat reluctant to discuss action against these groups.

There is a long history of human rights abuse by the Colombian army: in recent years their ferocity has been overtaken by the paramilitaries who are responsible for over 75% of rights violations in the country. Both Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch have documented many examples of collaboration between army units and the paramilitaries. Human Rights Watch have stated bluntly that the Colombian Army contracts out 'dirty work' to paramilitaries, who routinely murder people they suspect of being guerrilla sympathisers. Trade unionists have also been the targets of these death squads, with some 2,500 being killed since 1986, according to the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions.

Hand in hand with this history of atrocity and murder is a long history of US involvement. Through the 1990s, Colombia has been the leading recipient of American military aid in Latin America. 'Plan Colombia' takes this support to new heights. The idea of the US supporting such a government seems horrifying. However, rather than being an exception to the rule, this complicity is merely part of a long pattern of support for murderous regimes.

US military support for Turkey increased to keep up with the country's assault on its Kurdish population throughout the 1980s and 1990s. By 1999 there were between two and three million refugees, 3,500 villages destroyed and tens of thousands killed.

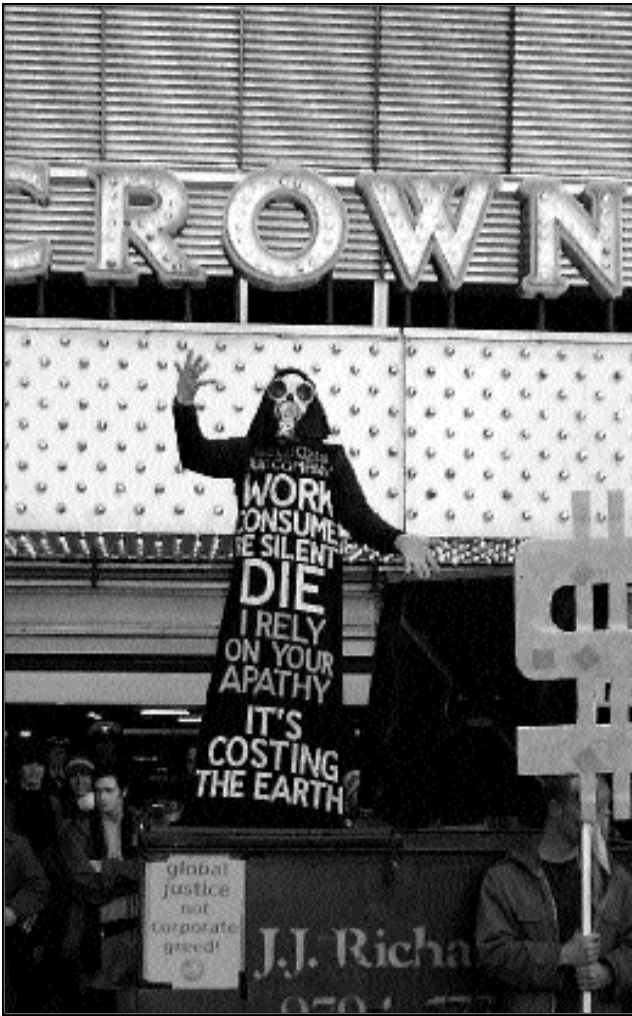
The full extent of America's involvement in Colombia is nothing short of staggering. Some 500 US advisers will provide military training, according to United Press International. Eighty helicopters are already earmarked for the armed forces.

The attack on the people in the rebel-held territories also involves an attack on their agriculture. An important element of Plan Colombia is crop eradication. Original plans to use a biological herbicide that threatened plants relied upon for food have been blocked, as they would contravene Colombian law. Chemical herbicides however, are hardly less harmful to the environment and human beings.

For many peasants, coca production is simply a means of survival. Colombia was once a major wheat and coffee grower. The wheat industry collapsed following the US 'Food for Peace' programme in the 1950s, which subsidised domestic agriculture. Similar aid was provided for American allies, mostly for arms dealers rather than farmers.

Coffee prices fell by more than 40% after an international coffee agreement was suspended following US pressure over fair trade violations. Colombia's leading export industry was decimated overnight. Rich countries routinely subsidise their agriculture, destabilising markets. Poor farmers will naturally seek a stable crop, which in Colombia is coca.

Crop eradication is an extremely inefficient method of tackling the 'drugs problem'. In 1994 the White House



The ridiculous Australian costume says it all - get involved!

and US Army commissioned a study by the Rand Institute on different strategies for reducing levels of drug consumption. They found treatment of drug-users to be 23 times more cost effective than crop destruction.

Given this knowledge, the official justification for Plan Colombia has been called into serious question. Why are over a billion dollars being given to a gross abuser of human rights, when the US government is aware the money can be better spent at home?

One key objective must be the destruction of FARC and similar groupings. The US has a bloody history of intervention against left-wing move-

ments in Latin America, supporting death squads throughout the 1980s, most notoriously in El Salvador. Some see this as a desire for stability, others as a fear of 'the threat of a good example.'

Economic interests are just as important. British arms sales to Colombia have been linked to the presence of former BP chairman Lord Simon in the Labour government. BP's involvement in the country has been such that an ITV report alleged collusion with paramilitaries.

Companies that lobbied in favour of Plan Colombia include: Colgate-Palmolive, BP Amoco, Occidental Petroleum, and Bell Helicopter

Textron Inc. Bell can send huge orders for military helicopters. The oil companies have long been the target of guerrillas angry at the deals brokered between them and the government.

The net result of Plan Colombia is clearly going to be a massive increase in the number of people murdered and tortured by the Colombian Army and paramilitaries. The effect on the drugs problem in the West will be negligible at best. The only way this entirely predictable humanitarian disaster can be averted is by popular resistance both within Columbia and the countries supporting the killers, largely the US and the EU.

Gold medal for Olympic protesters

Protesters at the Olympics? It may sound odd, but behind the sweat and the hype of the event lurks an environmental and social catastrophe. While the world's elite athletes have been training intensively for years, the community and environment of Sydney has been increasingly under threat. This is not the image seen in the media around the world, however, as the gravy train which is the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and their cohorts of multinational companies work frantically to sell us their products.

Even before the 'Green

Olympics' had begun, they had been dogged by controversy ranging from the illegal removal of aboriginal land to the creation of draconian laws aimed at peaceful protests providing the security forces with shoot-to-kill powers.

This all comes in the wake of a damning United Nations report criticising the human rights record of Australia and in particular the treatment of the aboriginal population.

The arrival of a major sports event is supposed to help local people, but in reality it has the opposite effect and the community suffers. In the lead-up to

the games rent prices in Sydney have soared, as have homeless figures. In the past year high rents, evictions and gentrification have forced homeless numbers up to 35,000 in Sydney, a fourfold increase since the city was awarded the Olympics in 1993. An Aboriginal community who lived near the new stadium site were evicted and found themselves on the outskirts of the city.

The olympic ideal of sport for sport's sake has been long buried. The Sydney Olympics are the most commercialised yet. Companies kind enough to

lend their money and name to the Games this year include: McDonald's, Coca-Cola, IBM, Murdoch's News Ltd, General Motors, Nike, and Shell.

An Aboriginal-led march arrived at the Olympic stadium to coincide with the opening ceremony. Part of the 'Protest 2000' campaign, this march was intended to bring to the attention of the world's media the plight of indigenous people worldwide with 500 Aboriginal groups, plus guests from other peoples including Maoris, Zulus and Canadian-American Cree and Mohawks. For the duration of the games there will

be a camp as near to the action as possible with space for thousands.

A set of laws specific to the Olympics have been brought in, making activities such as public assembly, busking, or giving out flyers, stickers or other unauthorised material forbidden within certain areas. Sound systems including PAs or even megaphones are banned. CCTV cameras have been erected across the city utilising controversial face recognition software.

There is a 25,000 plus security force in place for the games including all types of police and

some 'legally empowered' civilians (Temporary Enforcement Officers) who have virtually as much power as a police officer and are alleged to comprise a strong far-right element amongst their numbers.

Meanwhile a senior Sydney policeman has warned protesters from the Olympic Impact Coalition, a group campaigning against the social costs of the games, that 'silence is a form of violence' and that police officers '...due to minimal exposure to command situations involving non-violent activists, may act inappropriately...!'

A new brand of factory worker

Twenty-seven million people worldwide, almost exclusively young women, now work in the world's Export Processing Zones (EPZs). These are areas where companies manufacture goods for export while paying no tax. Nike, Gap, IBM and Adidas pay wages as little as 10p an hour in these zones. In the words of the International Labour Organisation EPZ's represent "to the foreign investor what the package holiday is to the cautious tourist".

Conditions inside the Zones include: no contracts, no unions, no benefits, constant surveillance, 16 hour shifts and forced overtime. Dormitories are often so overcrowded they have white lines painted on the floor to mark sleeping spaces - "they look like car parks" commented one journalist.

In China, there are documented cases of three-day shifts when workers are forced

to sleep under their machines. Meanwhile in Honduras, factory managers have been reported to have injected workers with amphetamines to keep them going on forty-eight hour marathon shift to make delivery dates according to *The Guardian*.

The corporations involved defend themselves against the accusation that they are orchestrating a 'race to the bottom' by claiming that their presence helps raise living standards in what they call 'under-developed' countries.

"My concern", said famed Harvard economist Jeffrey D. Sachs, "is not that there are too many sweatshops but that there are too few... those are the jobs that have to come to Africa to get them out of back-breaking rural poverty". Sachs's colleague Paul Krugman concurred; "The overwhelming mainstream view among economists is that the growth of this kind of employment is tremendously good news for the world's poor".

Global resistance to GM foods

It is almost unreported in the press that significant damage has been done to ten UK farm-scale trials of genetically modified crops. Several smaller sugar beet sites and the UK's only GM wheat trial have also been destroyed. This is one practical part, alongside activities such as consumer boycotts and local schemes linking farmers directly to consumers, of an all-embracing rejection of genetic engineering around the world.

In May the UK government released news that thousands of acres of spring oilseed rape planted across northern Europe were actually unapproved GM crops. The French minister for the Environment

then publicly questioned whether contaminated seed had been deliberately released in Europe to grind down opposition. Meanwhile, Norway ordered all its potentially fields to be ploughed up.

Europe appears to be turning its back on GM crops. One irate British farmer who had planted contaminated seed decided not to wait for the government to act - he ploughed up his own field!

Italy has declared whole regions GM-free. While France, Germany and Greece have all ordered the destruction of various crops this summer, when they too were found to have been contaminated.

While genetic engineered crops have mostly been planted in the West industry claims that GE is needed to feed the

Third World. However in both the urban and rural communities in India, Bangladesh and Thailand there have been major demonstrations by the poor, including the burning of GM fields.

In a crushing blow to the biotechnology industry, a confidential internal report leaked to GeneWatch UK reveals the way Monsanto is perverting the 'objective' deliberations of the scientific community. This is done by influencing which experts sit on international scientific committees and promoting its views via scientists

described as independent but in the pay of Monsanto, hence buying clout with key decision-makers in developing countries' governments.

The ten page leaked report, headed 'company confidential', summarises the activities of its Regulatory Affairs and Scientific Outreach teams for May and June 2000. The report describes developments in GM crop policy and Monsanto's painstaking efforts to reduce regulation in Japan, Bulgaria, Thailand, Mexico, Brazil and Korea as well as the USA and the European Union.

Meanwhile, ordinary people everywhere, everyday are sending a clear message to the biotechnology industry: "No matter how much money you spend, or how much influence you exert, I will not swallow your GM products".



“The struggle of people against power is the struggle of memory against forgetting”

- Give a present unexpectedly
- Sabotage a corporation

Casino capitalists capitulate

It's 2pm Monday September 11 and it appears that the S11 blockade of the World Economic Forum at Crown Casino in Melbourne has been a success. About half of the 800 delegates to the conference have been prevented from entering the building, and inside the feeling is a little tense. Apparently some delegates have refused to leave their hotel rooms to avoid facing the blockade. Protesters are claiming victory in their efforts to close down the WEF.

The World Economic Forum exists to allow business leaders and politicians to meet and plan global economic policy free from the constraints of democratic input.

Inside the Casino, Australian Treasurer Peter Costello was visibly shaken as he opened the conference to only a third of intended delegates. More arrived later, brought in by helicopter to the roof of the casino or ferried in by barge down the river. Two busloads of dignitaries drove around the entire complex, repeatedly attempting to broach protester lines. At last count, they had been in the

buses in excess of six hours.

Earlier in the day protesters surrounded the car carrying Richard Court, premier of Western Australia, a state infamous for its draconian laws relating to Aboriginals, refugees and the environment. Mandatory sentencing, a law that unfairly targets young Aboriginal males, has been judged as racist by the UN, Amnesty International and human rights groups.

Up to 500 protesters surrounded the premier's car chanting "This is what democracy looks like" and old favourites like "the people united will never be defeated". Mr Court sat stony-faced as one Aboriginal man, who came from Western Australia, repeatedly demanded that the premier repeal mandatory sentencing. The crowd held the car up for over an hour. Eventually police baton-charged protesters in an attempt to clear a path for the car to leave. At least one protester was hospitalised when police charged.

Footage appears to show the man falling to the ground before being hit a number of times by police. When he man-

ages to get to his feet his face is covered in blood. A number of other people were treated by medical staff at the site for a variety of injuries. Police continued to baton-charge protesters after the car had left, eventually forcing their way out of the crowd.

Later in the day delegates attempted to access the casino via the Yarra River, but protesters successfully prevented them from boarding their boat. Later attempts were hampered when the Yarra, a tidal river, rose, making access impossible due to low bridges. Eventually a bargeload of delegates was transported downriver to the site. However, according to reports from inside the forum, the first load got so wet in the open barge that the rest refused to go.

Despite ugly scenes in the morning, the afternoon was more sedate. Bands and speakers entertained protesters and police alike at the main stage located at the city end of the casino. An impromptu dance party broke out when a truck with a portable sound system turned up. A fitting end to an amazing day.

NEWS DIGESTED FOR YOU

Colombia's U'wa refuse to back down

The indigenous U'wa tribe of Colombia are currently threatened by oil development - a situation exacerbated by international debt, US military interests in Colombia, violation of indigenous rights, civil war, and the uncontrolled dash for profit by multinationals unconcerned with global threats such as climate change.

However, the U'wa are fast becoming a precedent case: they have gained support and solidarity from an extremely diverse range of allies, from international NGOs, politicians, lawyers, artists, Hollywood stars, activists, anthropologists, indigenous peoples, Colombian campesinos, church groups and many more. Their case has created extraordinary unity and gathered tremendous momentum. Perhaps this is because the U'wa Indians have taken an unusually clear stance. Or perhaps it is because as they call to the international community for respect, life, love and peace, we recognise in them the voice of humanity.

Behind baa's again

Jose Bove, sheepfarmer and activist was given a 3 months jail sentence for attacking a McDonald's last year. 'Prison ?...I've been there before and I'll go back if I have to. They obviously understood nothing of our movement.' He is just one of 1,000s involved in France's protest movement against globalisation and junk food.

Living democracy

A new movement, Jaiv Panchayat - living democracy - is spreading across India. It is a local consensus process championed by poor communities who are usually the last to be consulted. Its popularity is greatest among women, who are taking an active part in decisions affecting their community.

Defender of the Faith

Alberto Korda, 72 year old photographer whose 1960s picture of Che Guevara has been used worldwide on posters and T-shirts is suing Smirnoff. The ad, featuring Che, with a background of chillis and vodka bottles for 'hot, fiery, bloody, Smirnoff' has incensed the Cuban. For him the iconic image cannot be used as an advert - he is suing them purely as a matter of principle.

Neem tree patent revoked

In May, three women won a six-year battle against US company W. Grace, when the European Patent office rejected the company's claim that extracts from the neem tree, used for thousands of years in India as a medicine and pesticide, were a novel discovery: The patent was revoked.

Still here, still fighting

In July, Patrick Bonyoma, a Congolese refugee claimed asylum on arrival at Dover. He was detained and sent to Haslar detention centre. Anti-deportation activists campaigned vigorously, and public support led to his solicitors obtaining a judicial review. His bail application was successful - he is now staying with a family while he awaits his review.

WAKE UP! WAKE UP! our estate is under attack

An estate in Manchester has been repeatedly targeted as the council becomes more and more impatient to sell it off. 'We got up today to find a convoy of police and council workers on the estate, "to empty our bins". Instead, they cleared out communal resources, bolt cropped bikes from the stairs and towed 'scruffy' vehicles away. If someone intervenes they get surrounded by cops. There's been 3 arrests. They've already closed the underground cinema and bulldozed the playground, with the help of van-loads of cops.' A vibrant, diverse community has put a lot of work into a community garden, and other projects have turned a neglected estate into a thriving place to live.

GLOBAL REVOLUTION: THE ONLY OPTION

Climate to be privatised in November

Hurricanes in Hull in August, devastating storms in France last year, tragic floods in Mozambique. Our weather is getting more extreme. This is because humans are increasing the level of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere - mainly through fossil fuel use - which is trapping the sun's heat in the same way as a greenhouse. As a panel of several thousand scientists conclude, "there has been a discernible human influence on climate".

The human cost of this is enormous. The Financial Times reported that natural and man-made disasters claimed more than 105,000 lives in 1999. The British Red Cross states that in 1998, environmental catastrophes created 25 million refugees, more than the number created by war. This is expected to increase as more carbon pours into the atmosphere.

In an apparent attempt to address this crisis, a United Nations conference will take place this November in The Hague, the Dutch capital. This will be the 6th in a series of climate change summits, attended by the usual flotsam of diplomats, bureaucrats, green non-governmental organisations, journalists, corporate lobbyists, solar capitalists and, it is hoped, widespread protests. Here scientists will repeat that to stabilise global temperatures, carbon emissions must be immediately reduced by 60-90%. In 1997 in Kyoto, Japan, industrialised countries agreed to a 5.2% cut by 2012 from a 1990 'baseline'.

With few countries likely to

meet their targets, a huge mobilisation is underway by a combination of the world's richest governments, fossil fuel corporations and even some 'green' NGO's, to turn The Hague conference into one big trade fair to buy and sell stakes in the planet's newest market: the carbon market.

If unopposed, this would be the privatisation - the exclusive ownership to generate private profit - of our climate. A massive ecological problem is being transformed into a new source of capital under cover of concern for the planet. It is crucial that we scrape away this thick layer of public relations. These mechanisms will deny climate justice to the world's population and pay mere lip service to meaningful carbon reductions. Crystallising the outrage many feel at putting a price on - and presuming ownership of - the collective commons that is our climate could well be the last chance we get to achieve fairness and sustainability.

The proposed carbon market consists of three components. Firstly, carbon trading between nations. Those countries that emit less than their quota of carbon can sell the notionally 'saved' carbon to another country. The rational, yet insane, response is for all countries to negotiate small reductions in emissions. Then low-emitting countries can sell lots of 'saved' carbon, and high-emitting countries overshoot their targets by only small amounts and have to purchase less 'saved' carbon from the market.

So-called clean development mechanisms are the second part of the plan. The idea is that rich countries pay to reduce carbon emissions in poorer countries by developing solar power or highly contentious dam projects. Again the powerful countries will carry on as before.

The final component of carbon trading is the concept of 'carbon sinks'. This is a clever conceit exploiting the fact that growing plants and soils absorb carbon dioxide. At its simplest it is 'conserve forests' and 'plant trees'. The problem is that exhuming carbon stored over millions of years by burning fossil fuels and attempting to store millions of years worth of carbon in overripe woodlands cannot work for long.

The clever spin-off for those that dreamt this up is that the well-off can pollute on the condition that they seize and control forever vast tracts of land needed for all these trees. Ironically, the community evicted today by a company drilling oil to feed cars and planes may find itself displaced again tomorrow - by tree plantations intended by the drivers of those cars to compensate for the burning of that oil.

Very much like our DNA and the genetic make-up of plants and animals all around us, the weather itself is in danger of being commodified and passed into private ownership. So colonialism is alive and well, as integral a part of modern commerce as it ever was. The UN plays a key role here, using peoples' perception of its fairness and concern for



Catastrophic floods in Mozambique: There is now no such thing as an entirely natural weather event.

humanity as a cloak to smuggle in the changes.

For a century and a half, industrial societies have been moving carbon from underground reserves of coal and oil into the air. At least six billion tonnes are being added every year, a transfer that can't go on indefinitely. Some 4,000 billion tonnes of carbon in fossil fuels await recovery in the ground. To carry on is suicidal.

A livable planet with less dangerous weather where peo-

ple have common ownership over common heritage such as our climate, is incompatible with endless growth. However, climate change is merely a specific case of a more general problem: as the size of the economy becomes increasingly large compared to the size of the planet's recycling systems, fundamental environmental problems will emerge. Growth in that direction cannot continue without increasing the probability of catastrophe.

To reduce carbon emissions by 90% requires some sort of fast far-reaching transformation of society - a revolution no less - or environmental collapse may well deliver a transformation so extreme that humankind simply wouldn't make it. Yet a future of climate justice could be in our hands, and it's going to take more than boiling less water in your kettle to get there!

On November 11th there will be a preparation day for

those going to The Hague summit (Nov. 13-24). Contact info@risingtide.org for details, or write to 16b Cherwell St, Oxford OX4 1BG.

Grassroots protests and a counter-summit taking place in The Hague are being co-ordinated by Risingtide: CIA Office, Overtoom 301, 1054 HW Amsterdam, The Netherlands
www.antenna.nl/aseed/climate
Email: climate@europe.com

Bolivians beat water sell-off

In June 1999, the World Bank issued a report on Bolivia, one of the world's poorest nations, in which it discussed the water situation in Cochabamba, the 3rd largest city. The Bank recommended "no public subsidies" to hold down water price hikes and recommended that the city privatise its water system. The Bolivian government imposed the World Bank plan.

For many Bolivian families who earn as little as \$100 per month, the resulting increases were catastrophic. Over the next few months, an amazing coalition from *campesinos* to business people grew out of the public outrage.

By April, there was week of protests and general strikes. Transportation blockages left major areas of the country at a virtual standstill. A public meeting found itself locked in a building for 4 hours by government forces. Demonstrations turned to riots by the police opening fire on unarmed people. Soon after martial law was declared.

Local radio stations were taken over by military forces or forced off the air. Reporters were arrested. The neighbourhood where most of the city's broadcast antennas are located had its power shut off. Police searched homes for organisers of the widely-backed protests, arresting as many as twenty. The local police chief was installed by the president as governor of the state.

As the situation deteriorated, suddenly the water company consortium disappeared, lock stock and barrel. The memo that the government ultimately signed said that, given that the company had abandoned the country, they were obliged to rescind the contract.

Twenty-four hours later, the congress modified the law, with all the public's demands included. Eight days after the blockade started, peace, and control of the water, returned to the town.

Thousands defy police violence to shut Convention

Aug. 14 - Shortly after an 8-year-old boy sang the National Anthem to open the Democratic National Convention in Los Angeles, an 11-year-old boy was shot in the back, nearby, with a rubber bullet by L.A. Police Officers.

Abraham Mejia was one of scores of innocent people who were hit as police fired volleys of cork-like rubber bullets into the crowd attempting to leave the official protest centre, across the street from the convention site. The two locations are separated by a 13-foot-high fence. After firing the rubber bullets and using tear gas and water cannon, the police - on foot,

motorcycles and horseback - went on a rampage chasing protesters for blocks through downtown Los Angeles.

Two young environmental activists who were shot while attempting to exit the rally and concert site said police opened fire without warning. The rifles the police used shot multiple rubber bullets with each volley, making it impossible to target alleged troublemakers. The police attacked before the rally could be cleared of the overflow crowd, which had swelled to 15,000.

Bicycle riders participating in a "Critical Mass" ride were also victimised

by police. After a pleasant 40-minute ride during which they were followed and escorted by police officers on bikes, the more than 200 cyclists were surrounded by cops from several agencies. Most of the riders were able to escape but 70 were arrested, handcuffed and booked on reckless driving charges, which normally merits only a citation. Instead they were put in jail for 24 hours. The women were subjected to repeated body cavity searches by jailers.

Protesters were targeting the Party convention to highlight what they described as a "fundamentally undemocratic political system controlled by corporate interests". Many Americans now see the Democrats and the Republicans as two wings of the same party.

Building on the mass movement that exploded into the public consciousness last November in Seattle, the actions in Los Angeles were significant and of lasting value. While the focus on corporate, or neoliberal, globalism is still at the heart of the movement, its impact on poor and working people - particularly those of colour - was the major focus of many activities.

Marches and rallies during the week focused on the prison-industrial complex, abolishing the death penalty, justice for political prisoners including Mumia Abu-Jamal, police abuse, mass transit, sweatshops, immigration, women's rights, youth rights and fighting racism.

Nearly all protest event planners considered the week's activities an overwhelming success, with the exception of the ugly daily police violence.



Celebration as activists are freed following two days of jail solidarity

Depression kills more than cancer

Depression is the second greatest cause of death in the industrialised world, after heart disease. The World Health Organisation 1999 report revealed that neuropsychiatric conditions such as depression, alcoholism and anxiety account for 23% of the disease burden in the West.

Rates of suicide have greatly increased in Britain since the 1950s, those for young men tripling. Three quarters of the population suffers from one or more unreasonable fears, anxiety or spells of panic.

Looking at possible causes of this epidemic raises difficult questions. More than half of the people in Britain that are eligible to work live either in poverty or permanent insecurity. The flexible labour market, instigated by Thatcher and boasted of by Tony Blair, means that in 1993 35% of the population eligible for work had secure jobs, compared to 55% in 1975. This is somewhat ironic, given the moral value politicians place on

work, and the condemnation heaped on those who refuse to hire themselves out as chattel.

Every possible piece of public space now has an advert on it. The message is invariably the same - buying this product will make you happy. A lifestyle is presented, with the consumer item shown as something 'those' sort of people use. Owning this particular car will mark you out as an anti-materialist care-free person. You don't need to be an ascetic to find this shallow. This emptiness applies to those who can afford to purchase a lifestyle. Those who can't, have to suffer poverty

and have their noses rubbed in it every time they walk down a street.

In 1995 there were 5.6 million prescriptions for antidepressants. Accepting that a large part of the population should take drugs to control a serious condition asserts the inevitability of psychological problems, when it is generally accepted that most depression is caused by environmental factors. Mental illness has become the collateral damage of consumerism.



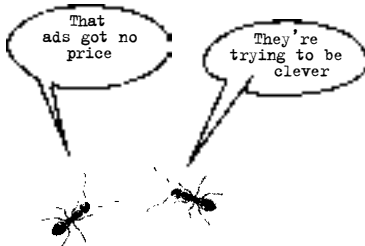
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- Poo on posh car

Economist thugs converge on Prague

In the latest episode of what is becoming an increasingly frustrating spectacle, more than 20,000 extremists intent on mayhem have descended on Prague for what has been described as the “55th meeting of the IMF and World Bank”. Once again braving the cynicism and thuggery of these self-styled economists, concerned citizens from around the world will do their utmost to stop events degenerating into the usual scenes which the economists refer to as "adjusting to globalisation".

As usual, the stage has long been set, with the Financial Times’ inflammatory collage of police repression from the shut-down of the World Trade Organisation meeting in Seattle over tourist brochure snaps of Prague's Old Town Square. Recall claims before protests in

London to coincide with the Seattle demonstrations, “Reclaim the Streets stockpile stun guns”, or "army on standby for London riot" in anticipation of the guerilla gardening action in Parliment Square on Mayday? Expressions of outrage fine-tuned, politicians around the world await their cues

as microphones hover the tape begins to roll. Does it all seem far removed from the lives of you, your family and friends? In reality, none of us stand outside the global "race to the bottom" in which Prague is simply the latest relay.

In this country, NHS and benefit cuts, pollution and climate change, privatisation of railways, education and water, to name some of the issues that frighten us all, are presented by the media separately and often confusingly, so that it is difficult to make the

connections between them. We read and watch (or “consume”) the news, but are often left feeling powerless, because the links needed in order to see the whole picture are concealed by the reporting.

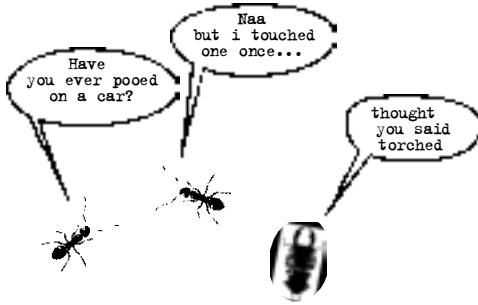
One current trend is the promotion of the welfare of business, which is increasingly in sharp opposition to that of individuals. Meanwhile, as “service users” we have increasingly been transformed into vehicles for money to move from A to B.

The protesters in Prague are simply people who are attempting to make these connections. They are taking action on hundreds of issues, including climate change, world poverty and inequality by challenging the IMF and World Bank as representatives of, and major players in, the system that generated those and other issues. We have to wake up to the fact that problems can never be effectively challenged in isolation, and that the “proper channels” provided by the very institutions which are being challenged, are simply dead-end streets.

As you watch the spectacle of Prague unwind before you this week, remember that the protesters must be pressing the right buttons to have attracted such a massive – and costly – security operation. Similarly, the cost and effort involved in the media “cover-up operation” designed to gain monopoly over your perception of events clearly demonstrates one thing: you are more powerful than you think.



Prague braces its self for an invasion of men in suits.



Understanding the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank

Two global institutions, the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, have again come under public scrutiny as they tend to every few years. The following article attempts to chart the birth and growth of these institutions, alongside what it is they actually do day-to-day, without using the economists' jargon. The conclusion drawn is that they are unreformable, since in essence, they exist to perpetuate today's inherently destructive socio-political system. Past attempts at reform have involved only minimal policy changes masked by flashy public relations campaigns to distract the critics. This happened following the campaign against the World Bank in the early 1990's, and it is happening again today in response to the controversy surrounding the issue of Third World debt. If they have it their way, everything will change so that nothing changes. These institutions are an affront to decency and an attack on the limited democracy we have. They have had a long life. Now the time has come to bring them to an end.

There are two great temptations when trying to describe the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. Firstly, these institutions are often portrayed as a pair of cartoon villains, twiddling their moustaches whilst, with a sinister laugh, they put their evil schemes into place. The truth is a little more mundane, somewhat complicated and a little less black and white. Secondly, it is tempting to paint them as vast monolithic monsters, born and existing due to some immutable law of nature. It's important to remember that these bodies were created for a purpose by a group of men (and it was largely men), and can be abolished, if enough of us decide.

As the tide of the Second World War turned in favour of the allies, attention was increasingly focused on the economic aftermath. The terrible 1930s depression had left deep scars. Understandably few wanted it to happen again, particularly those who had fought or lost loved ones in the war. There was pressure from both the rich and the poor for something to be done, to prevent any possibility of return to either economic depression or war. The powerful, of course, wanted to remain powerful. Whilst the United States of America, in particular was keen to ensure that when the dust settled it would come out on top economically as well as politically.

was to prevent a recurrence of the breakdown of the international economic system that had overshadowed the 1930s. Then countries had sought to gain advantage over their competitors by devaluing their currencies, thereby making their exports cheaper and imports more expensive. This rationale comes straight from Dickens: "Annual income twenty pounds, annual expenditure nineteen pounds and six, result happiness. Annual income twenty pounds, annual expenditures twenty pounds ought and six, result misery." In practice, this worked for only some economies, and always at the expense of their neighbours. The IMF was also to help member countries with balance-of-payments problems, using money from other country members' subscriptions.

The World Bank is now in fact a group of banks. It comprises the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, as well as the International Development Association which makes low or no interest loans to the poorest countries, and the International Finance Corporation, which finances private sector projects. The Bank was originally intended to help finance the reconstruction of post-war Europe, but this mandate was later to expand to include the development of poorer countries. As the bank claims in its 1985 World Development Report, this

power in post-war Western Europe had been averted (although the threat of direct military intervention, in Italy, and actual intervention, in Greece, was required to ensure that people made the 'correct' choice in their 'democratic' elections).

But the situation wasn't to last. The system became unsustainable for many reasons, not least the growing strength of Europe and Japan. The number of foreign-held dollars grew to such an extent that America's ability to convert dollars to gold looked questionable, eroding confidence in the currency. By 1971 the US had a trade deficit of \$2 billion, partially due to Japan and West Germany deliberately undervaluing their currencies (and hence making their goods more affordable to the American consumer). In the wider context, the implicit bargain that had been struck after the war between the ruling elite and a section of the working class was also under attack, as those who had most consistently lost out (women, black people, those dismissed by right and left as 'lumpen proletariat') started to find their voices during the 60s.

In 1971 Richard Nixon severed the link between the dollar and gold. The system of fixed exchange rates was at an end. Currency values would now be determined by the market. The consensus that had created the Bretton Woods institutions

was gone, and the IMF in particular was without a role.

The prospect of the world's top economists and bureaucrats facing an uncertain future might well tug at the heartstrings, but fear not - the IMF was to find a new purpose, thanks to a combination of a growing debt crisis and the rise of a new economic ideology: Neoliberalism. Neoliberalism is about as attractive a philosophy as its name suggests. Briefly, it's the ideology of the global free market, the free movement of capital, goods and services; where the best allocation of everything is provided by the 'invisible hand' of the market; whilst this optimum allocation entails the greatest welfare for the greatest number. Adam Smith - one of the originators of this idea - also recommended the free movement of people and their labour as one of the tenets of free trade. Funny enough the free movement of the powerless seems to have been ignored by his followers, as the realms of anti-asylum legislation and immigration detention centres

attest. Skyrocketing oil prices in the 70s and the lack of any currency regulation led to a large amount of capital (so-called petrodollars) sloshing around the world. Apparently there's no point in having money about if you can't make more money from it, so banks and governments were eager to lend money to the rulers (whether elected or not) of what's often called the Third World. When, inevitably, repayments began to bite, debt started to mount. This became a serious problem in the early 1980's when, as a result of rising interest rates, the price of such essential commodities to Third World economies as cocoa and coffee collapsed.

There was a genuine possibility that countries might start defaulting on their loan re-payments; the global elite decided that this could not be allowed to happen, so the IMF and World Bank were sent in.

This turned out to be a crucial period in their history. The idea was that loans would be given to countries so that they could avoid defaulting on their debt. This was no charity however, and these loan came with strings attached. These strings are known as 'Structural Adjustment Programmes' or SAPs. As part of the new economic ideology of neoliberalism these SAPs were designed to entrench the free market system in Third World countries.

Typically SAPs entailed cuts in government spending - even on healthcare, education and poverty reduction schemes; the sale of state assets, such as water, to private companies (privatisation); a rise in internal interest rates; the removal of restrictions on the movement of international capital in and out of the country; and the removal of restrictions on foreign ownership of businesses. The results for a country's poor are not hard to predict. Productive investment drops, unemployment and income inequality rises. The results for the controllers of this system are not hard to predict either. The prices of raw materials from SAPed countries plummet, shareholder profits increase and, importantly, those who control the IMF are placed firmly in control of whole Third World countries.

Structural adjustment didn't bring growth. The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa found that countries following IMF programmes had lower growth rates than those that relied on the public sector to meet their population's needs. It didn't even bring debt relief: The debt burden was \$785 billion at the start of the debt crisis; by 1993 it was nearly \$1.5 trillion. And it certainly didn't lessen poverty. Even the president of the Inter-American Development Bank, Enrique Iglesias acknowledged that in Latin America SAPs had the effect of

"largely cancelling out the progress of the 1960s and 1970s." Whether it's the publicly stated goal of reducing poverty, or the goal fundamental to neoliberal ideology - namely growth - structural adjustment has not worked. Not that any of this seems to have impacted on those at the top, so perhaps structural adjustment worked for one tiny group in society.

It's a reasonable question to ask why this has gone on. One clue might be the voting power behind World Bank/IMF decisions. The more money you put in, the larger your say. America has roughly 17% of the vote, whilst the G7 leading industrial countries (UK, Germany, Italy, France, Canada, Japan) have, between them, 45% of the total. In other words those suffering the most have the least say. According to Jeffrey Sachs - one of the IMF's favourite economists - the IMF now dictates economic policy for 1.4 billion people.



So you see, the entire future of the international financial system hangs on your capacity for quick reaction and wot economic growth

Neoliberalism has been 'in favour' amongst the rich elite, as it favours them the most. According to the 1999 UN Human Development Report the assets of the 200 richest people are worth more than the combined income of 41% of the world's people. IMF bureaucrats are well aware on which side their bread is buttered.

A lack of caring or understanding also plays a part. Former World Bank chief economist Joseph Stiglitz criticised the IMF for its lack of consultation with 'civil society', with its economists 'more likely to have first hand knowledge of [a country's] five star hotels than of the villages that dot its countryside.' In 1992 an internal World Bank review found that more than a third of all bank loans didn't meet even the Bank's own seriously flawed lending criteria.

The evidence has been so overwhelming that the institutions have been shamed into talk of reform. It calls to mind the platitude of Metropolitan Police spokespeople every time they're found guilty of discrimination of killing a young black man: 'there were problems in the past, but we've put in place measures to ensure it never happens again.' Cosmetic reforms have arrived. The issue of debt is now obscured by the Heavily Indebted Poor Country initiative. This forces a chosen few countries through hoops - hoops, which not unlike the SAPs of the past are designed to further entrench neoliberal

policies - with the promise of relief from a small number of debts that were never going to be repaid anyway.

It has also been announced that SAPs are to be replaced by Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PSRPs). The idea is that governments come up with their own structural adjustment plans. However, the IMF/World Bank will only cough up if they agree with the measures the government proposes. A cunning plan to give a veneer of control to the SAPed countries (though control will inevitably only go to the elite of that country). Meanwhile, the World Bank constantly promises to take more care when selecting projects to fund. The fatuousness of these promises can be illustrated by an example from the past year: the Western China Poverty Reduction scheme to resettle 58,000 Chinese farmers on land currently and traditionally occupied by Tibetans. The project generated international protests and was even shown to be in violation of their own rules, according to no less than a World Bank inspection report. The result was that the World Bank president James Wolfenson decided to delay payment for a year. The Chinese government, however, have now decided to go ahead without World Bank support.

Thanks to growing protest it is harder for the WB/IMF to get away with the excesses of the past, but the threat of public awareness is leading the World Bank to seek a monopoly

on information. Styling itself the 'Knowledge Bank' it is planning to establish the 'Gateway', the main internet entry point for information on poverty and development. Management of information is a classic tactic of those in power, whether by soviet commissars or your daily newspaper. Uncomfortable facts can be distorted, glossed over or simply ignored. The advice must be to read widely, and not trust any source - even this one - without trying to gauge the wider picture.

The Bretton Woods institutions were created to build a stable international economic regime based on national sovereignty. Since the 1970s they have been doing the very opposite - promoting an unstable system which they and the market control. Keynes, one of the architects of the original system, warned that movement of capital must be regulated or money would 'shift with the speed of a magic carpet and these movements would have the effect of disorganising all steady business.' He saw the danger of rapid currency speculation. And has been proved correct. They talk of poverty reduction, yet promote policies that benefit the richest of the rich. According to campaign group '50 Years is Enough' the IMF has transferred over \$3 billion out of Africa since the mid-1980s.

The IMF and World Bank are an affront to decency, and actively undermine democracy. When reformed in the past, they have only responded by entrenching neoliberal ideology further, whilst keeping a critical public at bay with clever PR campaigns. The time has come to bring them to an end.

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IT'S NOT JUST THE WORLD BANK

Lets break open Fortress Europe

While the IMF and World Bank clear the way for money to move freely across the globe, the world's richest countries are barricading their borders. In Europe, the Schengen agreement abolishes internal borders between participating states and gives immigration authorities frightening powers of surveillance and detention everywhere in the territory, not just at frontiers and ports of entry. Britain is playing its part with the 1999 Asylum and Immigration Act, widely regarded as the most racist piece of legislation ever passed here.

This law forces 'asylum seekers' into a passive ghetto, breaking up strong and politically active migrant communities by 'dispersing' new arrivals across the country. People are deprived of all economic freedom, with cash benefits replaced by vouchers for 'essential goods', (excluding children's toys, for example). When a voucher is not used up by the value of any purchase, supermarkets are forbidden to give change.

New asylum criteria require applicants to prove that they have been persecuted individually because of their political activities, yet the Terrorism Bill, due to come into force later this year, will in many cases make it a serious criminal offence merely to express support for the struggles they risked their lives for at home.

The term 'asylum seeker' appeared out of nowhere to replace 'refugee' in politicians' speeches and media around the time of the Tories' 1997 immi-

gration bill. The 'advantages' are obvious: where 'refugee' implies that someone is 'taking refuge' from actual danger or hardship, 'asylum seeker' suggests someone asking for a 'favour'.

All the same, it would be a lie to deny that there is an asylum crisis. This is not the UK-specific crisis, however, but a world-wide crisis. Over the last decade the number of refugees has more than doubled from around 8 million to 15-20 million today (with a further 30 million people who have not crossed international borders, constituting the internally displaced). The same period has seen a shrinking proportion of the world-wide refugee population actually applying to the UK for asylum, with the vast majority of the displaced remaining close to their country of origin. (Africa shelters more than twice as many refugees as Europe, North America and Oceania combined).

Since the brief period after World War Two when cheap labour was sought for the Northern European 'economic miracle', immigration law has gradually been tightened, to the point that now it is almost impossible to settle in the EU other than by claiming asylum, which has in turn become more and more difficult to get. As Jack Straw plans to abolish the 1951 UN convention on refugees altogether, across the EU rights to appeal against rejected asylum claims have been cut back, legal representation limited and ever-stricter standards of proof of persecu-

tion required - as if refugees, unable in most cases to obtain even a passport, could get certificates of having-been-tortured from the local paramilitaries.

Economic circumstances result from political decisions, and political terror often follows, as if 'naturally', from economic misery. In Nigeria and Colombia for example, 'Structural Adjustment' economics imposed by the IMF and World Bank on behalf of Western oil companies, whose catastrophic effects eventually drove workers and peasants to take up arms, are 'defended' through massacres carried out by US and British-trained soldiers and death squads using European weapons. Yet UK immigration officials classify almost everyone who manages to get away from these crime scenes as an 'economic migrant'.

Throughout human history populations have moved, or been moved, for 'economic' reasons. The purpose of immigration controls is not to prevent all migration, but to ensure that people move according to capital's needs, rather than their own desires. Whether as refugees or 'economic migrants', the poor are allowed to travel only as passive bodies, liable to be moved on, forced to stay put or conscripted into slave labour at any time.

Fighting immigration controls is in everyone's interests, because unlimited freedom of movement poses a fundamental threat to the economic system that enslaves us all.

Fortress Europe is too important to capital to be broken open easily: the struggle is likely to be long, dangerous and frequently illegal. Some things, however, already cry out to be done. It's crucial to fight back the media vilification of refugees and racist violence encouraged by government. Victims of immigration control need tireless support: as has happened in North London in the past, networks of assistance (e.g. help with squatting) could be set up for those forced to live illegally. In deportation cases, legal work is often needed: the general standard of representation, especially for detention centre inmates, is appalling. It's also important to publicise injustices, building support for people facing deportation in their local communities so that immigration officials face non-cooperation at every turn, and attempts to carry out expulsion orders meet with spontaneous obstruction. Deportations can also be blocked by direct action at airports: this has been done successfully in London in the last few months, while in Belgium it became such a regular occurrence that commercial airlines now refuse to handle deportations.

Successful direct action against companies who profit from detention and deportation, or State agencies administering immigration control is far from impossible. There's certainly no lack of potential targets here in Britain: the only limits to the struggle will be those of our commitment and imagination.

Permanent state of emergency declared: but no-one noticed

The government have rewritten your dictionary. Extra lines have been added to the definition of terrorism. Look and you'll see they've added an entry for protest there - you might recognise your friends, family or even yourself in the new wording. Welcome to the Terrorism Act 2000.

The Act widens the existing legal definition of terrorism to include 'the use or threat ... of action which involves serious violence against any person or property' for the purpose of advancing a 'political, religious or ideological cause'.

A different system of arrest, detention and prosecution has been created, the criteria being the motivation, rather than the seriousness of the act. So smashing a window whilst drunk is far less serious than smashing one on a demonstration.

The act explicitly intends to undermine anti-capitalist protest by targeting activists. It comes in the wake of mass public actions. Is it possible that this act may not be about protecting the public, or democracy, but the interests of the powerful, by stamping out growing dissent?

The Home Secretary will be able to brand any groups it deems as terrorists, then incriminate people who, for example, wear clothing indicating membership or support of a proscribed organisation. Hopefully this will get rid of those Che Guevara t-shirts.

The Home Secretary can proscribe overseas-based organisations too, thus incriminating their supporters in the UK of 'inciting terrorism overseas'. This may or may not include organisations fighting against repressive regimes to

which the UK sells weapons.

The whole Act is worded so it can be manipulated to fit the agenda of future governments. That a piece of legislation with power to criminalise social movements should be subject to the whims of a few individuals is terrifying and somewhat ironic. And there's more: a 'reversal of the burden of proof', (guilty until proven innocent); and powers to search and arrest without a warrant, any 'person whom [the arresting officer] reasonably suspects to be a terrorist'.

So, you're detained for up to seven days without charge, no legal advice for the first 48 hours and an officer listening to all consultations between you and your solicitor. You could be arrested for pulling up a GM crops. Compare that with someone suspected of rape or murder who cannot be held more than 96 hours without charge and no longer than 36 hours without confidential legal advice.

The Terrorism Act 2000 enshrines two pieces of contentious 'temporary' legislation: the Emergency Provisions Act, introduced in 1973, and the Prevention of Terrorism Act in 1974. The new Act is more far-reaching - restricting the right to possess or pass on information, and to freedom of expression and association.

When dissent becomes terrorism it doesn't take a radical to realise something's wrong. Perhaps the rise in DIY politics is causing more concern than the government admit. The Terrorism Act is repressive, but it shouldn't deter people from standing up against injustice and oppression. It's intended to cause fear and isolation, so our unity is our best defence.

WORLD INSTITUTIONS

IT'S NOT JUST THE IMF AND THE WORLD BANK

Call us paranoid, but one of the key weapons used by those at the top against the rest seems to be boredom. They deliberately make their institutions sound so dull no sane person would want to read about them. Just seeing the name Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development is enough to send anyone to sleep.

Acronyms are part of this plot. Just think, if asylum seekers renamed themselves TMPs (transnational migratory persons) they might get left alone by Britain's institutionally racist press. Nowadays reading an article on international politics is akin to a trip through the human genome: IMF, TABD, WTO, NAFTA, IBRD, IFC, ERT, TRIPs (okay, that one's funny), UNEP, G-7, ILO, OECD, UNHCR, NATO, OSCE...

It wouldn't be so bad if these bodies and treaties were politically irrelevant - sports societies, perhaps, or flu-like diseases (I'm sorry Mrs Jones, I think you're coming down with a nasty case of WTO). But unfortunately for anyone interested in the way the world works, they are important. Each has a specific role to play in keeping the march of the global economy onwards. If that isn't incentive enough to read about these organisations just try thinking of the western elite as Mr Garrison and the IMF as Mr Hat. Which makes the folks in Prague the kids from South Park!

G7/G8 (Group of 7/8)

The G8 is the 'Group of 8' industrialised nations: the USA, Britain, Japan, France, Canada, Italy, Germany and, since the fall of communism, Russia. Given Russia's poor economy, the cabal is often still referred to as the G7. This is where serious discussion and economic policy-making takes place, and its influence spreads throughout all the major international bodies.

WTO (World Trade Organisation)

Now this one's really naughty. The World Trade Organisation's main aim is to eliminate 'barriers to trade'. It might be easier to think of barriers to trade as barriers to profits. These can include decent worker's rights, environmental standards, and human rights concerns. National laws can be overturned if they interfere with a corporation's divine right to make money.

OECD (too long to fit!)

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development is 'Diet WTO'. It pushes free trade and economic liberalisation, but lacks enforcement powers. Most of its members are in the rich North, but some lucky industrialised outsiders such as Mexico and South Korea have been invited in. It is most notorious for developing the MAI, which acronym lovers can read about below.

WEF (World Economic Forum)

In their own words the World Economic Forum is "an independent, impartial, non-profit foundation which acts in the spirit of entrepreneurship in the global public interest to further economic growth and social progress". Nothing dodgy there, then. They're a network of corporate bosses, top politicians, academics and media moguls exchanging information and formulating policy in the interests of, well, themselves, really, and accountable to no one.

UN Security Council

The United Nations Security Council is intended to maintain international peace and security. There are five permanent members - the USA, United Kingdom, France, Russia and China. Ten elected members also sit on the Council. They pass resolutions that can be vetoed by any permanent member and ignored by US allies such as Israel. The security council can order military action.

NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation)

The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation is a military alliance linking Western Europe with the US. A cold war institution, it now provides a living for arms dealers (as new members from Eastern Europe have agreed to increase their military spending). This is useful for the US as an alternative route for action when a UN security council member would otherwise block it, as happened over Kosovo.

OSCE (another silly long one)

Now we're getting obscure. Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe. This is essentially NATO (see above) minus the US. NATO-lite - when a less gung-ho approach to military affairs is needed. Rarely used.

MAI (Multilateral Agreement on Investments)

The Multilateral Agreement on Investments would have given multinational companies supremacy over governments in international law. 'Barriers to trade' could be challenged directly by them, instead of their host nations through the WTO. There were too many shocking aspects to list. Thankfully it was defeated after massive protest.

ICC (International Chamber of Commerce)

The International Chamber of Commerce is little known, but extremely influential. In brief terms, it is a collective lobbying body made up of corporations that are powerful in their own right. Their stamp is all over the policies of the institutions already mentioned, and they even wrote large chunks of the draft MAI.

TABD (Transatlantic Business Dialogue)

Business leaders seem to spend all their time knocking up text for international economic institutions to regurgitate. The Transatlantic Business Dialogue is another forum for this, this time a group of US and European corporate representatives.

ERT (European Round Table)

Business leaders of Europe. The European Round Table of Industrialists write and put forward ideas that become European Union legislation. An example of which was their blueprint for a 'trans-european road network'. This road network is now EU policy.

Bolivian resistance in their own words

In April this year a coalition of workers, environmentalists, artisans, peasants, market vendors, neighbourhood organisations, local governments and others fought off the privatisation of Bolivia's water system ordered by the World Bank. Oscar Olivera, secretary of the Federation of Factory Workers in Cochabamba, Bolivia, is one of the spokespersons for Defense of Water and Life. They coordinated an alliance of groups fighting privatisation. Here we print this inspiring story in Oscar's own words, translated from Spanish and edited for length only.

“In 1985 the process of structural adjustment began. The objective was to stop inflation - which it did in the short term - but it was also a move to destroy the unions and privatise state-industries. In 1985, the state provided 60 % of employment. We had strong, state industries. The government's strategy included bonuses for voluntary redundancy, and then privatising the industry. They destroyed the union movement and began a new period of political repression and economic changes.

One mine worth \$57 million was sold to a UK multinational for \$19 million. The government has done this with everything. The state has no more businesses. After privatisation, they collect only about \$80 million in taxes. Privatisation hasn't benefited us. There is little investment, no jobs, more layoffs. Working conditions deteriorated. Now the state has no money for public services, it wants to privatise them.

In Cochabamba, a major city, we have serious problems with water. In June 1999, the World Bank issued a report discussing water in Cochabamba, which recommended "no public subsidies" to control water price hikes. The government privatised the city's water 3 months later, granting a 40 year concession. For people living in Washington, a \$30 increase is nothing. For Bolivian families who earn \$100 per month, the increases were catastrophic.

By October, parliament passed a new law. The people look at water as something sacred, a right, not something to be sold. It forbade collecting rainwater, no longer guaranteed water for rural areas, eliminated towns' rights to determine where wells could be dug and to collect water taxes, and if the Bolivian currency dropped, the equivalent of a price set in U.S. dollars had to be paid. In Cochabamba, half the population is on a central system, half use co-operative water houses. Each barrio has one. In the 'area of concession', the companies were the only ones who could distribute water. All autonomous water systems had to be handed over without compensation. If I had a well in my house,

I would have to pay to use it, or they could cap it. The government signed a contract in September and passed the law in October. The company began operations on November 1st. The contract had a clause saying that it superseded any other contract, law or decree. The companies in the consortium - Aguas de Tunari - were International Water, Bengoa of Spain, and 4 or 5 Bolivian companies, registered in the Cayman Islands. It said that rates would increase annually, measured against the US consumer price index and guaranteed an average 16 % annual return for the companies.

Many people could only get access to water for two hours a day. In some cases, the cost of water increased 400%. A teacher on \$80 a month, saw his bill go from \$5 to \$25 a month. According to the company's bills, people began to consume more. Some bills said that usage went up from five to 20+ cubic meters per person in one month. It wasn't possible.

We contacted campesinos, people from the barrios, everyone and formed a Co-ordination group. Even the rich from the condominiums joined. In February 1999, they paid \$50 for a whole building's water. After the company took over, \$500 a month. In December, we had the first mobilization - nearly 20,000 people in the central plaza. We announced a general strike and road blockade. The government responded by using tear gas, the first time in 18 years. People maintained the blockade. Two weeks later, they signed an agreement promising to revise the law and the contract, but maintaining the price hikes. For two months no-one paid their water bills. When they came to break the blockade, the people reinforced it with logs.

In February, when the promises weren't honoured, the Coordinator group called for a peaceful seizure of the plaza. It was a symbolic event, demonstrating our unity. We came with flowers, it was a party. The government said they would not permit this and the 30,000 crowd decided to leave peacefully. We had gone 200 meters when there were gunshots. There were 1000 police. 175 protesters were injured over 2 days. Another agreement was reached, this time rolling back the water rates and freezing them until November. We realised reading through the contract that it was a kind of front company based in the Cayman Island, with very little money. People demanded that the government break the contract and return water to public hands. We drafted new provisions, eliminating the dollarisation, honouring traditional rights. We gave participation to the municipalities, allowing the co-existence of people's own systems. But the contract stood. On March 26 we conducted a consultation in the Cochabamba area served by the water company. Did they want the contract, the law privatising water, increases in the water bills? About 96% said no to all of these. 50,000 people voted. On April 4, an indefinite road blockade began. The people prepared for it like for a war.

A meeting was held. Everyone was there. Businessmen, campesinos, everyone. The government came and locked everyone in the building for 4 hours.

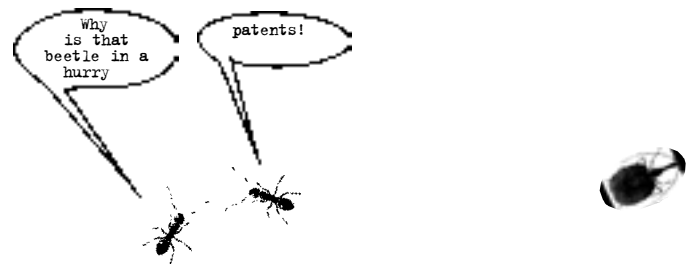
The state governor and some of the congress decided to present the government with a plan to avoid more bloodshed. The bishop announced this in the plaza, where a huge party erupted. There were 30,000 people there, everyone dancing, followed by a mass. But La Paz announced martial law. Soldiers started appearing. One 17-year-old was killed. The military commander was ordered to shoot people, and he refused. By Sunday the superintendent appeared on TV: "we have talked with the company and they have decided voluntarily to leave the country."

"We are going to Cochabamba, but we will not negotiate with the Coordinator because it is illegal ... financed by drug traffickers." Old ladies blockading the streets were saying, "what us, drug dealers?" After the kid who died and the others who got shot, people were incensed. There were more than 80,000 people in the streets. But while the government was saying one thing in La Paz, a delegation arrived and met us. We reached an agreement. We drafted a memo to break the contract, and faxed it to La Paz. It came back, signed.

The consortium had already disappeared. They had taken out all their computers, everything. Congress modified the law, with all our changes. We lifted the blockade. And on Wednesday, the control of the water returned to the people. Out of all this, there were basically three lessons.

First, it's the common people who brought justice. Second, I think that all the sense of individualism, the isolation and the fear of the unemployed disappeared under the spirit of solidarity. This is what came out of the self-mobilization of the people. During the worst fighting, there were people who provided water, who provided food, who provided transportation, communication, all the elements of a well-coordinated resistance. People were afraid of the bullets, but not anymore.

The third thing is we want democracy. We want a government that takes our opinion seriously. We want a government that doesn't just take into account the interests of international financiers and their neoliberal agenda.”



“Whether in the North or South, we face the same future... Globalisation should mean we want to globalise human society, not businesss. Life is not business”

I can't believe it's not capitalism

All this talk about global institutions and men in suits flying around the world for secret meetings stitching up the fate of the planet sounds like some dodgy X-files plot. Of course it's not some conspiracy, nor is it all down to some unshakable law of nature. Socially and environmentally, our world is deteriorating. If we are to reverse these trends we'll have to understand these meetings and institutions in the widest possible context. One brave street reclaimer has added to this process...

Articles about the evils of large institutions like the World Bank, IMF, WTO and so on can cause problems and confusion. They often read as if it's just bad people doing bad things, more or less for the sake of it. To a certain extent this has truth to it, but it isn't the full story.

The 'bad people'syndrome can, in its worst cases, lead to conspiracy theories: it's all a plan concocted by the freemasons, a handful of banking families, aliens, whatever. Obviously personalities do matter. Given the choice between Mother Teresa and Saddam Hussein as a boss I know who I'd choose. And yes, Thatcher was as nasty as you remember her. But such people do not exist in a vacuum. They emerge from structures, institutions. To take ex-Russian president Joseph Stalin as an example, he was undoubtedly a monster, responsible for murder on a staggering scale. However, few would argue that life under a different Soviet leader was a technicolour palace of fun. The state socialist model of the Soviet Union was repressive; that was one of its defining characteristics. Stalin could carry out his crimes because he had the machinery of a brutal cen-

tralised state behind him.

It can be comforting to believe that everything will be alright if we can just 'speak truth to power' as the Quakers put it. The logic is that you either force the leadership of whatever institution, including governments, to step down, or even simply bring facts of which they were unaware to their attention, thus changing their behaviour. However, institutions have a culture and a purpose. They reflect the wider society in which they are situated.

People rise in institutions such as a corporation because they do not challenge the dominant ideas within the institution and, by implication, society. This is fairly self-evident. You might think the boss is an idiot, but if you're ambitious you keep your mouth shut. The number of junior executives who vocally question the profit motive is probably dwarfed by the number of vegetarian butchers. Of course, this is a generalisation. Dissent, or at least disagreement, is tolerated

in most bodies as long as it remains within certain bounds. So you might suggest that the boss is slightly mistaken, or the odd junior executive might suggest something good for the community, like sponsorship of the arts or donations to a hospital (termed 'cause-related marketing' in the PR world). This way the upper echelons can look tolerant and inclusive, and probably end up with better thought out policies. However, the limits of how much and what type of dissent will be tolerated remain clear.

The same applies to global institutions like the IMF and WTO. Many campaigners against these organisations seem to believe that what's needed is a bit of a shake-up. By bringing the issues to the attention of the public and political leaders they'll create pressure for reform - back to 'speaking truth to power'. Obviously reform can be a good thing. The welfare state was a reform. Safety regulations in factories are reforms. But reforms can often be a way of diverting attention from structural problems, so that

they do not get dealt with, and the foundations remain unchallenged. Flawed structures carry on generating problems: would you really decorate your house if you knew you had subsidence?

Economists at the IMF didn't come up with Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) because they are evil. And they weren't an idea knocked up on a Friday afternoon in a hurry because everyone wanted to go to the pub. SAPs fitted in with the predominance of free market ('neoliberal') thinking within the Fund. When 'bad things' happen, the question to ask is why? Often it's a question that needs to be repeated.

Why has neoliberalism been the ideology of the IMF? Well, one key reason is that the IMF is an institution of the powerful, by the powerful, for the powerful. They don't even hide it with veneers of democracy: we don't vote for it. Control is mainly in the hands of the richest countries. And within rich countries powerful lobbying groups influence the policies within these countries. Sounds a bit much? Name and address of the UK's chief representative at World Bank anyone?

Neoliberalism benefits rich

countries, and most of all it benefits the rich within these countries. The logic is the same as the senior management of a company awarding themselves huge pay rises and bonuses while urging workers to tighten their belts. This isn't a conspiracy, it's institutional: people in power act in their own interests. You could replace the individuals within that management team without substantially altering the outcome. It is possible to imagine a Chief Executive forgoing a pay increase in solidarity with the workforce, but you'll never find one taking the same wages or living in the same housing.

Looking at structures and institutions rather than individuals means looking at power. Actions that harm one particular group are better understood if you look at who they benefit. And this doesn't only apply to particular bodies: despite all the rhetoric about 'democracy' we live in a society that is riddled with power inequalities. This is not a conspiracy theory, it's so integral to the way things are we don't even think about it. To take a simplistic example, who has more political influence, you, with a vote once every four or five years, or the head of BP? You and your friends or the Confederation of British Industry?

Sometimes people group

together to combine their limited power and make their voice heard or take direct action. Trade unions are an obvious example. But they're still operating in an undemocratic system. Unions with millions of members rarely match the influence of a few industrialists schmoozing Blair at Glyndebourn. When they do challenge those with power the full force of the elite is brought to bear on them. The media and the Labour Party churn out language vilifying them with words usually specially reserved for asylum seekers, while the police wade in with batons, and nowadays CS gas. Concessions to workers are granted when the stability of institutional structures of power are threatened.

The Unions themselves are hierarchical institutions. The leadership has power and therefore a vested interest in ensuring that the democratising force they control doesn't go too far. Heaven forbid Bill

Morris, the leader of the Transport and General Workers Union should lose his invite from Blair to the Queen's garden party...Heaven forbid that he should publicly support members of his union working the Liverpool docks who were on strike for two years fighting casualisation.

Inequality of power applies outside the political sphere. It affects our daily lives. Look at the workplace, the way it's structured. It's a perfect hierarchy. Orders come from the top and are enforced all the way down the structure by a chain of managers and supervisors, each with power over those beneath them. If a country was run like this we'd call it totalitarian. Decent people would shun such a regime. Robin Cook might sell it weapons, but most decent people would shun it. Why should this model be so unacceptable in one instance yet celebrated in another? The arguments in favour of workplace tyranny tend to rest on ideas like efficiency. Under what other system could we get the trains to run on time? In this context efficiency is a euphemism, for profit maximisation.

In a society like ours money and power are intrinsically linked. Not just in terms of political influence but also in everyday life. Someone earning £50 000 has less constraints on their life than someone managing to survive on the 'Jobseekers Allowance'. The freedom to choose between shopping at Kwik Save or Aldi is not much of a choice at all. The freedom to

choose which landlord to pay rent to is not much of a choice at all. The freedom to choose Tony Blair or William Hague is not much of a choice at all.

There is no intrinsic reason why power and wealth should be concentrated in the hands of the few. It is this monopoly that allows corporations to bleed poor countries dry. It's behind large scale destruction of the environment. It's why we sell arms to repressive regimes. It's why people join left wing groups only to end up flogging papers on a wet Saturday morning.

There is no immutable law like that of gravity that determines how our society runs. We can choose the values and relations by which we live, and together we can bring about a free and ecological society. Is it such a radical idea that people should have an equal say over their own lives, work and community?



"Political and economic domination must end, yes, but what about other forms of hierarchy? What about domination of the young by the old? Of one ethnic group by another? Of bureaucrats who profess to serve the 'best interests' of the people? Of countryside by town? Of the rich by the poor? Of spirit by shallow rationalism? Of nature by society and technology? Freedom will require the dismantling of all these hierarchies. We will see that there is no intrinsic superiority or inferiority, as the ecological principle of unity in diversity re-emerges."



WORLD STOCK MARKETS

FTSE All-World Index Series

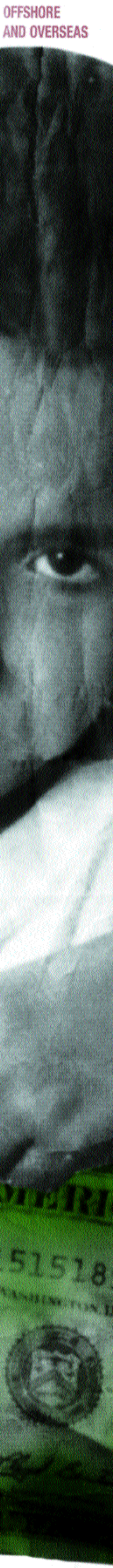
Aug 25	US Index	Day Index	Mo %	Yr %	
FTSE All-World Index (2401)					
FTSE World Index (2072)	375.16	0.2	1.2		
FTSE World Europe (813)	387.86	0.4	-2.3		
All-World Developed (1832)	209.62	0.2	1.2		
All-World AS Emerging (268)	105.66	0.0	-0.4		
All-World Adv Emerging (269)	200.61	0.0	-0.3		
All-World Emerging (208)	182.89	-0.1	-0.5		
All-World ex US (1818)	205.98	0.0	-0.1		
All-World ex UK (2252)	209.68	0.3	1.9		
All-World ex Japan (1930)	210.04	0.1	0.7	0.2	
All-World Dev ex US (1275)	208.45	0.7	-0.1	0.3	
All-World ex Europe (2123)	210.48	-0.1	2.8	0.5	
All-World Nordic (175)	193.57	0.6	-0.5	0.0	1.2
All-World Euro-Pacific (1503)	203.66	0.6	-0.2	0.3	1.5
Americas (786)					
Argentina (13)	340.31	0.7	-6.0	0.0	3.3
Brazil (29)	221.47	2.0	1.8	2.9	1.6
Chile (28)	343.87	-0.8	1.7	0.0	2.4
Colombia (10)	353.74	0.2	-14.5	2.0	7.2
Mexico (27)	1946.78	-2.1	-6.8	-9.9	0.9
Peru (6)	336.21	0.0	3.2	0.0	2.8
Venezuela (36)	314.26	0.3	-8.5	0.0	3.6
North America (870)					
Canada (107)	213.29	-0.1	2.3	0.0	1.1
USA (553)	124.25	0.7	1.6	3.2	1.1
USA (553)	689.46	-0.1	2.3	2.7	1.1
FTSE Industry Sectors					
Resources (114)					
Mining (42)	230.72	-0.5	7.9	-15.4	2.5
Oil & Gas (72)	356.59	-0.1	10.4	7.8	2.1
Basic Industries (251)					
Chemicals (15)	186.43	0.4	-0.3	-14.0	2.2
Construction & Bldg Mats (52)	294.79	0.8	0.3	-10.5	2.2
Forestry & Paper (37)	106.45	-0.1	-1.7	-10.1	2.1
Steel & Other Metals (33)	175.64	-0.3	-2.5	-24.2	2.9
General Industrials (210)	186.32	1.0	1.9	-10.5	1.9
Aerospace & Defence (18)	326.28	0.8	7.2	3.1	1.6
Diversified Industrials (55)	245.98	0.7	0.7	7.1	1.6
Electronic & Elect Equip (82)	744.43	1.0	5.5	12.3	0.9
Engineering & Machinery (83)	226.51	0.7	0.2	-11.2	1.8
Cyclical Cons Goods (103)	477.50	1.1	1.6	-10.9	1.6
Automobiles (48)	239.57	0.8	1.3	-7.3	1.9
Household Goods & Text (55)	241.86	1.5	2.3	-15.5	1.1
Non-Cyc Cons Goods (247)					
Beverages (37)	410.17	0.2	1.2	6.7	1.4
Food Products & Proc (78)	481.90	1.8	-5.4	3.0	1.5
Health (36)	243.42	-0.7	3.8	1.5	2.0
Packaging (18)	781.06	1.1	5.1	24.5	0.8
Personal Care & Hse Pds (10)	353.31	0.1	-1.0	-9.1	2.0
Pharmaceuticals (54)	549.00	0.9	-1.3	-22.7	1.7
Tobacco (14)	665.11	0.6	1.1	13.1	1.3
Cultural Services (368)	405.24	0.5	17.4	23.7	5.4
Life Assurance (26)	469.62	0.7	-3.0	-11.1	0.9
Investment Companies (7)	147.13	1.2	-0.5	1.8	0.9
Real Estate (68)	181.08	0.9	-2.3	-24.4	0.9
Society & Other (16)	354.18	0.5	3.3	9.3	0.6
Media & Photography (32)	483.57	0.7	-3.2	-7.6	0.9
Tele Technology (142)	213.70	0.2	-0.7	-16.5	1.3
Info Tech Hardware (51)	648.13	1.1	-1.0	-14.9	1.2
Software & Comp Svcs	169.50	0.1	0.9	-3.0	1.6

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COMMENTS AND ANALYSIS

Capitalism can't go on forever...

Here we re-print excerpts from a secret report obtained by Financial Crimes on the future of capitalism. This report was commissioned last year by the managers of the global economy anxious to retain their increasingly coveted privileges, despite the growing hostility of the excluded. The editorial collective does not agree with the tone, language or aims of the report. It illustrates however, the fundamental contradictions of capitalism, a system that is past reform. In short the report's key findings are:

- that the free market is incompatible with ecological sustainability.
- 'financial growth' is no measure of human 'progress'. It ignores the staggering social and environmental costs, borne mainly by the poor.
- that inequalities will increase throughout the world, causing the social fabric to fray and rupture. Humanity will be faced with a stark choice: slow death or the overthrow of the system.
- that the increasing volatility of financial markets is a constant threat to the entire world economy.

The clear message to the rapidly increasing majority who do not benefit from the present system is that a better future will only be possible if we dismantle capitalism utterly and forever.

Potentially Catastrophic Ecological Breakdown
The danger signs are spread all around us yet scarcely register in the standard economic models. Nature is the greatest obstacle of all to the future of the free-market system but cannot be treated as an adversary.

Whether or not economists are truly blind to ecological danger, they behave as if the less said about it the better. Perhaps they fear that revealing or analysing this major contradiction of our economic system would be detrimental to its preservation while undermining the scientific pretensions of their discipline and the standing of their own profession.

Whatever the limitations and mass denial of mainstream economics, it has become clear since the path-breaking work of Nicholas Georgescu-Roegen in the early 1970s (subsequently popularised by Professor Herman Daly and others) that economies must ultimately be analysed in terms of potential energy flows and 'used up', non-available energy (referred to as "entropy"). In other words, the economy, like other physical systems (including the human body) must be understood within the framework of the Second Law of Thermodynamics.

This law applies for the simple reason that our economic system is a sub-system of the natural world and does not encompass that world. To consider the economy as the encompassing system and nature as a mere sub-system is a purely artificial construct. It is also a recipe for disaster.

In mechanics, all phenomena are reversible. Reversibility is similarly assumed by nearly all neo-classical, Keynesian and Marxist economists. No event, so to speak, leaves a durable mark; everything, given time, may revert to 'initial conditions'. This is nonsense: The economic process is not an isolated, self-sustaining process. This process cannot go on without a continuous exchange which alters the environment in a cumulative way and without being, in its turn, influenced by these alterations. Recognising this basic truth would involve recasting much of the academic canon as presently handed down from one generation to the next.

To deny the enormous pressures placed upon nature by capitalist economies (and by formerly socialist ones) is foolish. Standard economic calculations treat the consumption of both renewable and non-renewable resources ('natural capital') as income and as contributions to growth. Growth, in turn, is considered synonymous with economic well-being.

In such a system, a forest razed and sold for logs, sawn timber, charcoal, furniture, and so on is counted only on the positive side of the ledger. The destruction of the natural capital represented by that forest and the 'services' it provides, such as its capacity to absorb carbon dioxide, to stabilise the soil, to shelter species diversity, are nowhere to be found.

Air, water and soil are counted as free, or nearly free, goods; their scarcity value is not recognised or calculated. Depletion of fish stocks, topsoil, minerals, the ozone shield, wildlife species, rare plants, and so on is either regarded as income or compensated by subsidies to the very producers intent on further depletion (such as agribusiness multinationals and natural resource companies).

Such an attitude is suicidal. The economy is contained in the finite, physical world, not vice versa. The reality of the biosphere is a 'given'; its resources cannot be expanded; its absorptive capacity cannot be increased by human intervention; once damaged it does not revert to 'initial conditions'.

The economy, rather, transforms inputs of energy and materials into outputs of goods and services, disposing of the wastes, pollution and heat (entropy) engendered by this process into the biosphere. In other words, the economy is an open system operating within a closed one.

Present descriptive, computing and accounting techniques do not tell us what we need to know. They are inadequate tools because corporate and national accounts are 'mathematical mechanical' constructions and assume an economy operating independently from nature.

Goods and services extracted from the biosphere are thus

undervalued or not valued at all; pollution, waste and heat returned to the biosphere are not measured as costs. Real ecological costs are 'externalised' and as such must be borne by society and the planet as a whole.

Questions of scale therefore immediately arise. If the scale of the economy is small with regard to the biosphere, as it was until this century, environmental questions are not pertinent, much less paramount, or only occasionally and locally. As the economy grows, however, scale becomes critical.

The world now produces in less than two weeks the equivalent of the entire physical output of the year 1900. Economic output (or 'throughput', which conveys a more dynamic sense of the process of resource capture, transformation and disposal) doubles approximately every 25 to 30 years. Early in the next century [this century! ed.], the scale of activity will strain biospheric limits and even the capacity of the planet to sustain life.

Improved technologies can retard this process but cannot halt it altogether. Several signs indicate that the competitive market system is already causing certain natural thresholds to be crossed, including some which may not be recognised by political authorities until too late. Some of these thresholds are well known: the disappearing ozone layer, man-made climate change, collapsing fishing grounds and the like.

Among the palpable and immediate economic costs of human interference in natural systems is the increasing frequency of severe tropical storms, associated by many scientists with global warming. Hurricanes are the most expensive natural disasters in America and forecasters now believe their resulting cost could soar to new heights.

The world's major insurers have recognised the greatly increased frequency of these 'natural' disasters as a significant and potentially unsustainable financial drain on their industry. They now propose novel financial instruments in the hope of off-loading future costs of claims to the investing public willing to wager that catastrophic storms will not occur. Ecological tensions will also lead to greater political instability and more armed conflicts. Perhaps 70 per cent of the world's population already lives in 'water-stressed' areas. 'Eco-conflict' will occur first in the Middle East, Sahelian Africa and Asia, subsequently touching better endowed regions.

Giant corporations, wealthy communities and rich individuals, whatever their assets cannot escape the consequences of ecological degradation. Yet even they seem powerless to halt the process. They illustrate the paradox of beneficiaries unable to protect the system that benefits them.

At its heart lies the problem of the 'free-rider'. Whereas only some would pay the costs for turning these destructive trends around, all would benefit. If one company stopped trawling in order to allow fish stocks to recover, some less scrupulous rival would move in, take whatever fish remained and ruin the more ecologically responsible firm in the bargain. Short-term interests are paramount.

No one wants to go first, so all end up going last. Entrepreneurs do not want powerful states which can impose stringent rules on business, much less a global government, so no one regulates. No one can afford to stop and turn around, so destruction continues. Yet no one can live on a dead planet.

Pernicious Growth

To say that the free-market economy is threatened by growth sounds mad or heretical. 'Everyone' knows that growth is the motor of our economies and that no growth implies stagnation and decline. To risk a metaphor, just as the traveller in the harsh environment of the Sahara or the Arctic must keep moving forward or risk annihilation, so the voyagers on the market's great journey cannot stand still.

To stop is, sooner or later, to be shouldered aside and eliminated, to die by the wayside. Growth has thus become the system's never-ending quest, yet much of what passes for growth now reflects counter-productive, even harmful and destructive trends. The concept must be re-examined and redefined. The distinction between 'growth' and 'welfare' must be sharpened. Bigger and more do not necessarily mean better.

Economic activity registered as 'growth' in the Gross National Product (GNP), includes treatments for cancer, prison construction, drug rehabilitation centres, repairs occasioned by terrorist attacks and so on. The most efficient way to increase GNP rapidly is probably to wage war.

Although growth once correlated closely with increases in overall welfare, this is no longer the case. More and more economic growth is occasioned by social phenomena that most people would rather do without. Precise measurement of growth based on corrections or repairs of past failures is impossible. Instead of welcoming growth for growth's sake, we should calculate its total costs, including the ecological and social ones, now externalised by those to whom the financial benefits of pernicious growth accrue.

Social Extremes and Extremism

The future of the free market also depends on who receives the benefits of growth. Deregulated, competitive economies, benefit those at the top most. Evidence from a broad variety of countries is overwhelming on this point: following liberalisation and deregulation, the top 20 per cent improve their position. The closer they are to the summit, the more they gain. The same law applies in reverse to the remaining 80 per cent: all lose something; those worst off to begin with lose, proportionally, the most.

The fact that great differences in wealth and living conditions can provoke rage, disruptive behaviour and violence is hardly news but the late twentieth century has added a new wrinkle to this age-old truth: the tendency of the information-rich to provoke the rage and violence of the information-poor. The information-poor are a globe-spanning category and may or may not be the same as the materially poor.

The information-poor, precisely because they cannot produce, absorb or manipulate information in sufficient quantities or with sufficient speed have become dysfunctional when they have not been socially discarded. Their willingness to work, their muscle-power, is increasingly irrelevant in the computerised age.

Some rich societies like the United States, in spite of sharp wealth divisions between social strata, still seem able to absorb class frictions, though the existence of thousands of self-contained, walled and gated private communities reveals a profound apprehension. It is not clear how much longer this relative tranquility may continue, particularly when the middle classes can no longer count on social benefits once supplied without direct financial outlay, such as satisfactory public schools and safe neighbourhoods.

In the European Union, although social extremes are less glaring, chronic unemployment, stagnation of wages in the lower brackets and the prevalence of temporary jobs (Continental Europe) or sharp increases in the number of 'working poor' (Great Britain) cause resentment and fear.

European governments are made and unmade on the issue of employment and their citizens are trying in vain to square the circle. Europeans want jobs but do not want to give up their social benefits in favour of more flexible labour markets. Many commentators have remarked on the 'vanishing middle' and the anxiety of middle-class people who live in dread of losing their own security and that of their children. 'Globalisation' is increasingly blamed for this state of affairs.

In many Third World countries, particularly in Latin America where extremes of wealth and poverty have always been the norm, the benefits of affluence are already offset by its draw-backs. Private security guards are indispensable, children of rich parents cannot go to school unaccompanied for fear of kidnapping, businesses must pay protection money, women cannot wear jewellery on the street, jogging or bicycling is impossible, driving one's own car or taking a taxi is risky but public transportation unthinkable, and so on.

The rage of the poor everywhere is augmented by televised fantasies featuring opulent lifestyles (usually accompanied by flagrant 'immorality' of behaviour). Millions therefore believe that wealth is finite, unjustly appropriated by the dissolute few and therefore 'stolen' from the deserving many, including themselves.

Other disparities may be completely irrelevant to the rage-violence dialectic. One example frequently cited by moralists concerns the 450-some dollar billionaires who are said to be 'worth' as much as perhaps two and a half billion people in the Third World (as measured by their average per capita share in the GNP of those countries).

The billionaires versus the billions comparison is irrelevant to the continuing success of the free market because world wealth is not finite but elastic and, so far at least, constantly growing. The fortune of the billionaire is not perceived as stripped from the poor because the two groups do not inhabit the same physical space. The two and a half billion are most unlikely to meet the 450 billionaires or to stake a claim to their assets, but, even if they tried, they could not enforce that claim.

Physical contiguity of winners and losers makes the lives of the former far less pleasant than they ought, by rights, to be. But for paradoxical reasons, even in cases of severe hazard, winners rarely advocate redistribution of wealth to losers, although by doing so they might significantly lessen the risks to themselves. The winners' motto remains, as it has ever been, Apres nous, le deluge.

Meanwhile, Western politicians invoke 'family values' in the

mistaken belief that these values may somehow serve to hold together societies undergoing increasing stress. They do not explain how masses of people can adapt instantly to unemployment, inferior or precarious working conditions, geographical dislocation and longer hours while simultaneously devoting the requisite time and attention to their families.

In a climate of privatisation and the downgrading of state services, people are expected to take more responsibility for their local communities and their own poorer compatriots. Again, it is not clear how people who must necessarily compete and put their self-interest first and foremost throughout their working lives can radically change their mentality and devote themselves to the disadvantaged and the downtrodden in their 'spare' time.

Inexorable economic pressures combined with fraying social fabrics indicate that we are not merely entering another era of 'haves' and 'have-nots' as in the Great Depression of the 1930's. Our world is that of the Ins and the Outs. Optimists insist that there will be far more winners than losers, more Ins than Outs. We see social integration - bringing vast numbers of Outs in-as-a formidable challenge to the system's resilience.

Just as citizens of the same country are distributed along the continuum of wealth / poverty and security / insecurity, so entire geographical regions are subject to the disparities generated by liberalisation and global competition. These regions also qualify as 'winners' or 'losers'.

South-eastern England and some neighbourhoods of London are booming whereas much of the North is wasteland and other areas of the capital are in decay. The United States' 'rust belt' stands in sharp contrast to more dynamic areas of the South and West. At the global scale, 'Tiger' or 'Dragon' Asia was typically regarded as a 'winner' area. As we complete this Report, however, the deepening financial crisis may relegate these countries to a lower rank. Africa qualifies as the quintessential loser.

Whether losers react psychologically by blaming themselves and their leaders or by blaming others and refusing to accept guilt and responsibility for their loser-hood, sooner or later they attempt to compensate for their deficiencies. The means they choose may range from individual suicide to mass immigration; from political protest and peaceful demonstrations to the formation of private militias and outright terrorism.

Financial Meltdown

The risks of a major financial accident are intensifying; we are in fact surprised that it has not yet occurred. Here we shall flag the inherent volatility of financial markets as a grave threat to the market economy.

World stock market indexes like the Dow-Jones, the FTSE, the CAC-40 or the Nikkei are narrowly based. In terms of the weight of their respective capitalisations these indexes rest on the fortunes of an extremely limited number of giant transnational corporations, perhaps 50 or 60 in all. Derivatives markets are now valued in the tens of trillions of dollars, at least in notional terms, well beyond the GNP of the United States, the largest national economy in the world.

Although the market may be at most times, in most places, inherently wise, it has, historically, displayed periodic attacks of insanity and mental breakdown endangering the entire system that our Report has been commissioned to defend. This danger is greater than at any time in the past.

Underscoring the Contradictions

Simply stated, the Commissioning Parties have asked us if the global economic system is safe from major harm, if it is moving in the right direction to avert danger and, if not, how it might be protected. The threats to this system as outlined above all contain paradoxical aspects. Their inherent contradictions do not bode well for its continuing safety:

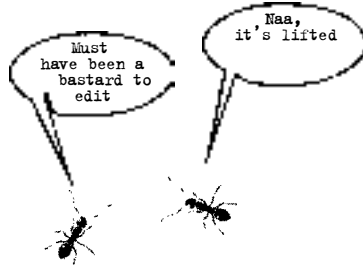
- The market is the best judge of the wisdom and value of human economic activity, but the market cannot tell us when we may be crossing ecological thresholds until it is too late.

- Growth is the economy's lifeblood but general well-being no longer necessarily correlates with growth, which in many cases is increasingly counter-productive, impoverishing rather than enriching.

- The economy is at the heart of society, but undesirable social effects may prove strong enough to undermine economic benefits. Businesses must remain free to invest and to prosper wherever conditions are most suitable, but people left behind will behave in unpredictable and destabilising ways. Over-regulation must be avoided but a wholly unregulated (or 'self-regulated') market risks self-destruction because, left to itself, it will create too few winners and too many losers, more Outs than Ins.

- In the late nineteenth century, Walter Bagehot said, 'People are most credulous when they are most happy'.

Reports on the future of capitalism are nevermade available to the general public. To fill this information gap, an economic analyst wrote the above extract, part of 'The Lugano Report', deliberately taking the point of view of those in power.



But state socialism doesn't work either...

A decade ago the communist regimes of Eastern Europe collapsed. They had been held up by their defenders as the true standard-bearers of socialism. If state crimes and repression were admitted at all, they were excused by appeal to the privations resulting from capitalist hostility, or dismissed as the result of later leaders such as Stalin deviating from the ideals on which the states were originally founded.

The state socialist societies were based on a dominant form of Marxism that became known as Marxism-Leninism. By looking at their practice rather than theory, it is possible to identify five main principles of this ideology - principles central to its eventual failure.

1. To achieve communism, state power has to be seized. This was possible only through revolution.

It was never contested that state power had to be taken. Opinion was divided as to how this would take place; most favoured either a general insurrection or an overwhelming election victory. However this was achieved, the eventual plan was to launch a fundamental, concrete change in the infrastructure of socio-political power.

Parties not in power sought to achieve this in any way they could. Once power had been achieved, astonishing measures were taken in order to prove that the 'rev-

olution' was an irreversible turning point. The coming to power of the party was portrayed as a moment of transformation in history. The end of communist rule in Eastern Europe saw the personal visions of millions crumble. Faith in the state - and an important tenet of Marxism-Leninism - eventually collapsed under the weight of its own contradictions.

2. To achieve and maintain state power the working class and/or the so-called progressive forces must organise under a single party.

This party could be the mass party of the German Social Democrats or the vanguard party of the Bolsheviks. Either way, such parties were the spiritual home of millions of individuals, who devoted their lives to organising for revolution and its aftermath. Links with other groups or organisations would weaken the party. This was both a reason for a mistrust of religion as well as of kind of doctrinal atheism. This also explains the parties' hostility to nationalism, feminist, ethnic and other movements. The class conflict was the primary struggle - in fact, the only struggle. All other causes were merely a diversion, unless they could be incorporated into the party's programme for tactical reasons. There was an overwhelming fear that party members would falter in their loyalty, hence in many ways the parties became more totalitarian than the societies they created.

Whilst this emphasis on a single strong party may have been effective as a means of taking state power, it was much less so once power had actually been achieved. In power, the party became simply a decision making body in which a tiny group settled all current issues. For most members, the party became simply an instrument of individual upward mobility.

Once this occurred, the party lost its function as a spiritual home. Those outside regarded it as illegitimate, while insiders viewed it with cynicism. Devotion to collective interests waned. The nature of the party in power was itself a force contrary to the supposedly irreversible 'revolution'.

3. The transition from capitalism to communism requires the 'dictatorship of the proletariat' - that is, power was to be given entirely and exclusively to the working class.

Whatever 'dictatorship' was originally meant to mean, in practice it became the denial of so-called 'bourgeois' civil rights. Any organisation not controlled by the party was denied not only free speech but also the very right to exist. Political discussion or disagreement was limited to private conversations between a small number of people and the occasional rumblings of the population.

The justification for dictatorship was that the state and party represented the working class. However, while many leaders had been workers in the past, they

had themselves become part of a new ruling class.

There was no way of exercising trade union rights in the workplace or negotiating with management. Workers had less means of making demands than those in capitalist countries. Almost no one thought they were living in a workers' state. At best they believed they were living under a regime that was seeking to improve the living conditions of the workers - a reformist rather than a revolutionary state. When, under economic pressures the few compensations these states offered (jobs and social security) were withdrawn, the regimes also lost their social basis.

4. The socialist state was a necessary stage on the road to communism.

The idea that history progresses linearly through a series of stages was a grand justification for everything. It underpinned the three principles above. The 'revolution' had to be irreversible as it was a stage in social evolution. Everything the party did was thus correct; like the Catholic Church it was infallible. Every party member became an apostle of progress. And as the workers were in power, the state too could not fail to be an agent of progress.

The theory of progress led to newer revolutionary states being taken under the wing of 'advanced' revolutionary states. This could be accepted by the general public of these countries so long as they believed in the reality of progress. But once the socialist economies began to stagnate, buried rivalries re-emerged, and the Soviet Union for example came to be increasingly regarded as imperialist. The

socialist world fell apart.

5. The transition from socialism to communism requires national development.

Marx predicted that the first revolutions would be in the most technologically advanced countries, but power was seized in nations on the periphery of the world economy. Building socialism therefore became a process of catching up economically with the industrialised world. There are three basic elements to these economic policies.

The first is planning. This was overwhelmingly bureaucratic, but initially it was fairly successful. Problems arose when it had to cope with a more modern infrastructure. Failures were compounded by convoluted processes of negotiated cover-ups, as the party attempted to preserve its infallibility.

The second element is all-out industrialisation. This was a narrow definition of industrialisation, not looking further than building factory machinery, when elsewhere, issues such as profitability were increasingly coming to the fore. As more and more of the world became industrialised the socialist states found it increasingly hard to catch up with 'advanced' countries.

The third element is centrally con-

trolled market transactions. Most aspects of life were subject to this form of far-reaching control.

Initial growth produced optimism, and seemed a great achievement, but the stagnation of the 1970s and 1980s found the socialist states to be as close to the periphery of the world economy as when they started.

Marxism-Leninism was once the great alternative to capitalism. But it has since been shown to have been flawed from the very start. This does not mean that capitalism is the only system under which we can live. Rather history stands as a warning to avoid the methods and mistakes of the past. Our goal should not be to replace one form of domination with another, but to bring hierarchy itself to an end.

So what do these anti capitalists want?



Capitalism has been fiercely resisted since its inception. This resistance has taken many forms, from the radical, through the reformist, to the reactionary. The current fashion for worldwide mass protest timed to coincide with the meetings of global institutions is no exception.

The diversity of movements fighting dozens of causes across the globe is as vast as it is inspiring. To explain who we are, involves defining who we are not. The following piece intends to distinguish between the politics of various groups often associated with so-called anti-capitalist events. Naturally, this piece draws on particular perspectives - several of which are often associated with what is called the UK direct action movement, of which Reclaim the Streets is only a part.

The recent phenomenon of uncompromising, worldwide mass protests timed to coincide with leaders' summits can be traced back to the first World Trade Organisation (WTO) ministerial meeting in Geneva and the G8 meeting in Birmingham in 1998. This followed the first call for action by the international network of grassroots social movements, Peoples' Global Action. Street blockades and parties occurred simultaneously in more than 20 cities in over a dozen countries, whilst in Geneva three days of heavy rioting rocked the WTO meeting. This vibrant dynamic upsurge has developed through June 18th, N30, Washington and now Prague. The broad coalitions involved—and some elements who weren't—are trying to build on those 'successes'.

Left Political Parties

These are probably the most visible element, due to the Socialist Workers' Party tactic of swamping demonstrations and actions with thousands of branded newspapers and placards. Their visibility belies their relative smallness in terms of numbers. They are latecomers to the current anti-capitalist movement.

The politics of these groups is authoritarian and hierarchical. They want to replace the current elite with themselves. The SWP journal, The Socialist Review, made their intentions for the 'new' anti-capitalist movement more than explicit: "Mass movements don't get the political representation they deserve, unless a minority of activists within the movement seek to create a political leadership, which means a political party that shares their

vision of political power from below [sic]. Such a party will be much less than the movement numerically, but much more than the movement ideologically and organisationally." Any guesses as to who the SWP envision filling this leadership role?

Following their entry into new anti-capitalist politics, they have taken to organising events and printing anonymous publicity, which apes the direct action movement, but without the direct action, of course. Examples include, the 'S24' conference to coincide with this year's Labour Party conference.

The far-right

Far-right groups are another late entry into the anti-capitalist movement—although they've hardly shown their faces on the UK scene. They're fond of emotive issues such as national sovereignty and the empowerment of local economies—especially if the issue offers potential for fostering racism. They rarely go beyond the emotive, however. And whilst this allows them to align broadly with some of the themes of the world-wide anti-capitalist movement, they won't be so keen on many of the movements' closer analyses, which often emphasise diversity, self-determination, and anti-authoritarianism—mainly anathemas to the far-right.

They have posed more of a problem for groups abroad. In Australia nationalist groups sent messages of support to those

taking action in financial centres across the world on June 18th 1999; whilst in Belgium the anti-MAI (Multilateral Agreement on Investment) coalition was damaged by the involvement of the extreme right. They have planned a big march in Prague for Sept 23rd and maybe they won't all head home the next day.

Non-governmental Organisations

Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) such as Friends of the Earth and Greenpeace or Jubilee 2000 and Oxfam are not, despite popular perceptions, normally involved in the mass direct action protests at large summits. They align themselves with the most positive aspects of the movement, such as diverse widespread concern, yet vociferously denounce perceived negative aspects, such as damage to property. Often one and the same aspect of a particular action or demonstration will be denounced and embraced, in accordance with changes in media attitude. Sometimes they will organise separate demonstrations in cooperation with the police and summit organisers to raise awareness through the mainstream corporate media.

NGOs are often an excellent source of information for direct action groups: however, most of them are now funded by the very corporations we are fighting against. For this reason, their research is often excellent, but the analyses not so.

Also, we would question aspects of the organisation of these groups. NGO's often foster strong distinctions between the experts and policy makers at the top, and the membership. Members are too

often involved only in the most derisory sense, little encouraged to inform and empower themselves, and treated as sources of cash to be contacted only as part of fundraising initiative. Cynics might suggest that a reliance on 'experts aims to protect the privileges of the self-satisfied, highly remunerated elites that make up the majority of such experts.

The central offices of NGO's are normally run along fairly standard hierarchical lines, indistinguishable from those of transnational corporations. Did you know that in recent years Amnesty International staff have taken industrial action over mistreatment by management?

Most consider capitalism to be reformable, and would normally describe themselves as working to help the current socio-economic system to overcome its social and ecological problems and run more smoothly. Aspects of such a strategy include a tendency to assume the mantle of a government-friendly 'legitimate' voice, and a reliance on the capitalist media.

Direct Action Movement

The recent global days of action such as those on June 18th and November 30th last year didn't arise from nowhere, they were born out of existing movements and networks. In Britain, groups like Reclaim the Streets and others belonging to the Earth First! network have continued to develop their ideas and practices, foster-

ing links with like-minded groups across the world and working and learning together. Results of this development have included the global days of action, and a renewed attack of capitalism and other forms of domination and hierarchy.

This 'movement' is about diversity, but over time it has developed an identity, which will continue to evolve. Broadly speaking it has drawn on ideas from anarchism (in the political sense of the word—refusing hierarchies, the state and party politics), communism (in the best sense of the word—seeking to overcome a world of work and wage oppression and individualism, in favour of a world of genuine community) and ecology (celebrating and preserving the bio-diversity of which we are an integral part). Of course there are differing opinions about all of these, but there are broad themes that we share or it wouldn't make sense to talk about a movement at all.

These groups see the use of direct action as a tool for the reclamation of our lives. Direct action, and self directed action, is not like joining a political party, adopting an ideology, or lobbying for reforms, it is about people—both individually and collectively—creating their own means of confronting and dismantling the power structures which dominate our lives and are destroying the natural world. There are no leaders and no party line, only the dream of a free and ecological world in which competition and coercion are replaced with community and co-operation.

Inspiration for new societies

The question always asked of us is: "so you don't like capitalism and you don't like communism - well what do you want then?" When our answers are not clear blueprints for a future society we are ridiculed as hopeless idealists. Yet what could be more idealistic than believing in the current system?

The question of me, writing these words, telling you, reading these words, how to live your future life is clearly wrong. The idea of an enlightened few telling (and then forcing) the masses how to live is the current situation - why would anyone want to replicate that? How can I know you, you may live on a Glasgow housing estate, you may be a Korean student reading this on the internet, you may be reading this on a compost toilet in a Somerset eco-village, the answers to how we want to live our lives are clearly different for different people. And it is for them, free from any coercion to decide how to live.

This is not to say that we do not have any ideas for how we may live in the future. In the broadest terms we are against all forms of oppression, and for a free and ecological society based on mutual aid and co-operation. We are not against the consideration of alternatives, as long as they are not imposed. The following pieces lay out more thoughts on this subject and outline some principles for new societies.

"Thoughts ran in me that words and writing were nothing and must die, for action is the essence of all and if thou dost not act, thou dost nothing."



Getting from here to there

It is time long past when we need to define with some clarity an alternative strategy to the defunct one of "revolution." I think that such redefinition is a collective world-wide task. I can only suggest here a few lines of action that might be elements of such a strategy, but which do not add up to a total strategy.

The first is a return to a traditional tactic. Everywhere, in every workplace, we should push for higher wages, that is more of the profit made on our labour. Simultaneously we must press for external costs such as pollution, education and healthcare to be borne by every enterprise. Local level constant pressure, around the world with these aims will deeply shake the patterns of accumulation of capital.

Second, everywhere in every political structure at every level, more democracy, that is, more popular participation and more

open decision making. A transformation to a better world-system will not be possible without genuine, deeply motivated popular support, which has to be created and developed through more democracy now.

Third, we need to search for a way of constructing a new universalism that is based on a foundation of countless groups and not on the mythical atomic individual. We need thus to give operational meaning to Senghor's "rendez-vous de doner et de recevoir." (the meeting of the donor and the receiver). It should be tried at countless local levels.

Fourth, we need to think of state power as a tactic, utilising it whenever we can and for whatever immediate needs, without investing in it or strengthening it. Above all, we must shun managing the system, at any level. We must cease to be terrified of the political breakdown of the system.

Will this transform the system? I do not

know. I see it as a strategy of "overloading" the system. What could overload the system more than the free movement of people, for example? And, along with overloading the system, it is a strategy of "preserving our options," of moving toward better things immediately, of leaving the total responsibility of managing the existing world-system to its beneficiaries, of concentrating on creating a new sociality at the local and world levels.

As the present world-system crashes down upon us in the next fifty years, we must have a substantive alternative to offer that is a collective creation. Only then will we have a chance of obtaining a Gramscian hegemony in world civil society, and hereby a chance of winning the struggle against those who are seeking to change everything in order that nothing will change.

Spain 1936

The Anarchists were still in virtual control of Catalonia and the revolution was still in full swing. To anyone who had been there since the beginning it probably seemed ... that the revolutionary period was ending, but when one came straight from England the aspect of Barcelona was something startling and overwhelming. It was the first time I had ever been in a town where the working class was in the saddle.

Practically every building of any size had been seized by the workers and was draped with red flags or the red and black of the Anarchists. Every shop and cafe had an inscription saying that it had been collectivised; even the bootblacks had been collectivised and their boxes painted red and black. waiters and shop-walkers looked you in the face and treated you as an equal. Servile and even ceremonial forms of speech had temporarily disappeared ... Almost my first experience was receiving a lecture from a hotel manager for trying to tip a lift-boy.

There were no private motor cars,

they had all been commandeered, and all the trams and taxis and much of the other transport were painted red and black. The revolutionary posters were everywhere, flaming from the walls in clean reds and blues that made the few remaining advertisements look like daubs of mud ... It was the aspect of the crowds that was the queerest thing of all.

In outward appearance it was a town in which the wealthy classes had practically ceased to exist ... Practically everyone wore rough working-class clothes, or blue overalls or some variant of the militia uniform. All this was queer and moving. There was much in it that I did not understand, in some ways I did not even like it, but I recognised it immediately as a state of affairs worth fighting for ... Above all there was a belief in the revolution and the future, a feeling of having suddenly emerged into an era of equality and freedom. Human beings were trying to behave as human beings and not as cogs in the capitalist machine.

More radical than protest

The voices we are hearing from around the world are celebrated as protest, in part by those of us raising our voices, as we realise the potency of the rich diversity of social movements who are uniting, and in part by the system that sees itself 'benevolent' and 'democratic' to allow our criticism.

Yet our voices, in many tongues, have been speaking for a long time. When we say that we cannot accept that people have to die, be damaged, displaced and abused in order that the system may continue or that we will not just bear silent witness as our earth, our air, our water are plundered and polluted, we are hardly being radical - Cardinals have said this, Fidel Castro has said this, Fanon... the list is endless.

But backstreets and barrios, fields and forests are bursting forth with revolutionary visions - of the solutions that will sustain us, uniquely, in the

places we inhabit and make our homes. There are voices that we have never listened to before - form the South, from women, from Indigenous peoples, from communities who have thought and fought long and hard just to survive.

It is a crass platitude for the 'experts', the elite to suggest that there is a blueprint, a universal equation that will solve the crises they have caused. - there will be many solutions, and they will come from and be shared by us. The experts have never ensured anything but their own security, and their security is the only thing they know anything about.

But our wisdoms, and our resilience, our ability to reinvent, reinvigorate, reciprocate and thrive in the face of their abuse will be the seeds of our resistance. We will nurture our visions of a more equitable continuation of life on this planet, and they will sprout and take root. Plant a seed today.

Kick the habit

There is a different world out there if we can imagine it and break the grip of capital. Money is the smack in the veins of global society: the larger the dose, the more we need. At present human behaviour is largely about scoring more. The market has invaded virtually every aspect of life. Describing life after economic cold turkey is in a sense ridiculous as there are an infinity of lives to be led by the free. However, some principles and contradictions can tentatively be traced.

Capitalism requires uniformity. Even for vegetables. A weed-free crop, genetically engineered to grow to a defined size and uniform quality is good for profit. Profit is hostile to life. The alternative is diversity. Ecosystems are more stable if they contain more species, and the more genetically varied the better. Cultural diversity is no bad thing either. Let's attack uniformity, embrace diversity.

Capitalism demands exploitation. It sucks our creativity, it steals our labour power and murders millions to reproduce itself. The alternative is that human beings and wild nature cease to be instruments of an abstract economic process and live for themselves.

Capitalism centralises power. The free market economy demands strong states.

The alternative to centralised power demands we cooperate and take decisions in a world without hierarchy.

Capitalism cannot function without scarcity. It demands that we constantly itch to consume more, that we never have enough. The alternative is surplus. Goods can be made to last longer, libraries need not contain just books but tools and almost everything we need. Communism is about sharing. Creativity turns work into play, yet capitalism seeks to transform play into the demand for yet more commodities.

In 'Cat's cradle' novelist Kurt Vonnegut describes how a special form of ice, ice nine, is developed for the US Army. Ice nine turns the molecules of water it touches into more ice so that bridges can be built over fast flowing rivers to hasten the progress of the military. The process of ice formation goes on for ever freezing the world, eventually killing everything. Capital is ice nine.

One hears of the virtues of localised forms of capitalism, of small firms and different types of money. Yet capitalism is a way of life that is a form of death, a process of constant simplification and reproduction. We cannot roll it back to a simpler, older more local or even more national form of exploitation. We can an either abolish it or wait for it to abolish us.

No future chains Values and visions

"Why do you not say how things will be operated under Anarchism?" is a question I have had to meet thousands of times. Because I believe that Anarchism can not consistently impose an iron-clad program or method on the future. The things every new generation has to fight, and which it can least overcome, are the burdens of the past, which hold us all as in a net. Anarchism, at least as I understand it, leaves posterity free to develop its own particular systems, in harmony with its needs. Our most vivid imagination can not foresee the potentialities of a race set free from external constraints. How, then, can anyone assume to map out a line of conduct for those to come? We, who pay dearly for every breath of pure, fresh air, must guard against the tendency to fetter the future. If we succeed in clearing the soil from the rubbish of past and present, we will leave to posterity the greatest and safest heritage of all ages.

What is wrong with the original socialist vision? Why can't workers in different enterprises and industries, and consumers in different neighbourhoods and regions, coordinate their joint endeavours themselves - consciously, democratically, equitably, and efficiently? What is impossible about a social, iterative, planning procedure in which other workers approve production proposals only when they are convinced they are socially efficient and other consumers approve consumption requests only when they are convinced they are not socially abusive?

I am going to propose some broad 'economic' goals: equity, solidarity, diversity, and participatory self-management.

E says we should have fair or just outcomes. No one should get more of a good thing or of a bad thing than he or she deserves.

S means the economy should foster empathy among people and mutual respect and caring, rather than an attitude that you are mt enemy or, in any event, that I don't care about your well-being.

E testifies to a belief that homogeneity is boring and we all benefit from diverse outcomes. **E**

S means each person should be able to affect the decisions that in turn affect him or her in proportion as we are affected by those decisions.

Your broadsheet guide to Reclaim the Streets' history...

Reclaim the Streets (London) is a loose fluid group that started in 1992. Eight years and thousands of people later there is a history in the actions, the leaflets, the stories, the memories, the parties, the spoof newspapers, the friendships and numerous other ways. However, there is no archived history. There are just too many people with too many different ideas and stories to be encapsulated in some 'Official History of Reclaim the Streets'.

The creation of some definitive history is impossible in other ways. For example, how can RTS be separated from groups that have inspired us and we have worked alongside, from other direct action groups like those from the Earth First! network to groups like the Liverpool Dockers, the tube workers and the Hillingdon hospital strikers, the diverse social movements involved in Peoples' Global Action such as the inspirational Chikoko movement resisting oil development in Nigeria, or movements from history such as those that defeated the poll tax, and the 17th century revolutionaries known as the diggers?

What follows is a snapshot of RTS, produced by various RTS folks, old and new. It is an attempt to give a flavour of the ideas, actions and development (both positive and negative!) over the years. These two pages are of course incomplete, biased, and will contain omissions and errors. They may well be the template for a future generic RTS leaflet, so if you remember things differently, get in contact.



1) Routes to RTS I: Campaign to save Twyford Down from bypass
What kind of person or system could value economic growth over and above the preservation of a place of such magic?

It's becoming ever clearer that the present system is profoundly anti-ecological, and we neither can, nor want, to wait for the 'right historical conditions' for revolution. Radically creative and subversive change must happen now. The planet is running out of time.



2) Routes to RTS II:Claremont Road - centre of the No Mill Link Road campaign: Even the buildings become defiant as well as giving shelter to the most bloody-minded of the old time inhabitants and their new allies, who are busy forging techniques, theories and friendships that will last well into RTS' first decade.

The privatisation of public space through the car continues the erosion of sociality and neighbourhood. Road schemes, business 'parks', shopping developments - all flatten the locality and contribute to the disintegration of community. Everywhere becomes the same as everywhere else. Community is replaced by commodity and spectacle, sold in simulation. The street is sterilised; reduced to a conduit, to workplace or shop floor, it becomes Noplace.



3) Motorshow actions, Oct '95 Public transport goes to the motor show. This fine bus and a dodgier tube train visit Earl's Court in a month-long series of RTS actions, some more hopeful than successful. As so often we see the action through a police line - dour, drab and bewildered by this coming together of imaginative, comical yet completely determined individuals acting with no chain of command and an overflow of fluid spontaneity.

CARS CANNOT DANCE: when they move they are violent and brutish, they lack sensitivity and rhythm. CARS CANNOT PLAY: when they diverge from the straight and narrow, they kill. CARS CANNOT SOCIALISE: they privatise, separate, isolate and alienate.



3) Routes to RTS III: Mobilisation against the Criminal Justice Bill, 1994:
Out of repression comes rebellion

Legislation partly designed to clamp down on unruly gatherings of E'd up, clued up partygoers becomes a catalyst for more of the same, aka RTS. The bill sees many tribes come together to fight it: ravers, travellers, greenies, animal rights-ers and more, with big celebratory marches and small celebratory actions the order of the day.



4) Camden street party, May '95
Kids clamber in topsy turvy heaven: Carmageddon goes belly up in Camden

'Single issue?' 'Just against the car?' Whatever anyone else says, for those involved it expresses much more. The empowerment of the crowd is as integral to the festival as the banishment of the engines. The Street Party, itself reclaimed from the inanities of royal jubilees and state 'celebrations', is just one recent initiative in a vibrant history of struggle, both to defend and to take back collective space. In countless places, in countless times, extraordinary people have continually asserted not only the need to liberate the commons but also the ability to think and organise for themselves.

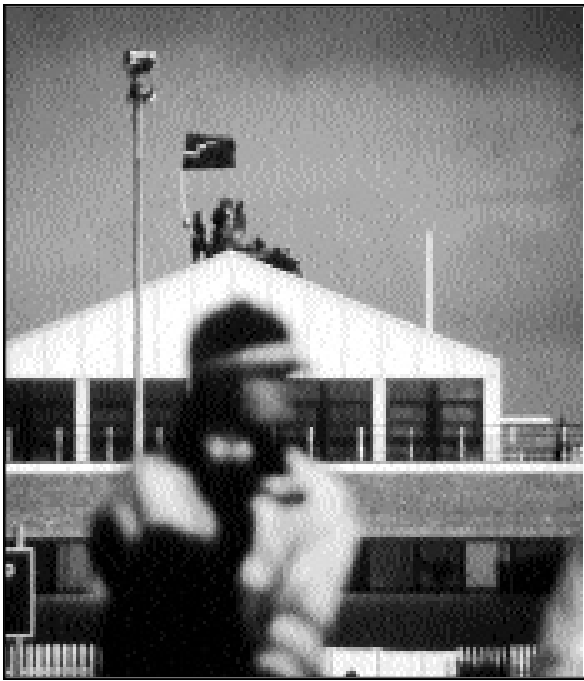


6) Roadblock in solidarity with over-deprived, over-polluted Greenwich communities, 1995 Regeneration in Greenwich, and not a Dome in sight.

The struggle for car-free space must not be separated from the struggle against global capitalism. The streets are as full of capitalism as of cars and the pollution of capitalism is much more insidious.

9) RTS link up with striking Liverpool dockers for lock-ons and lock-ins, 1996/7
"RTS decided to support the Dockers in Liverpool, and they occupied the headquarters of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company in Merseyside.

I saw something there, seriously they are doing very good actions - direct actions. That's why, through that way, I got to know RTS - I asked them where their meetings and discussions were, and so, directly I came to their meetings, and events, which I found very positive"



7) 7,000 slip through police lines to take west London's M41 for a street party. 13th July '96.
Beneath the skirts, a pneumatic drill cracks the concrete just enough to allow a sapling to be planted: a ground-breaking example of motorway guerilla gardening.

Carnival and revolution have identical goals: to invert the social order with joyous abandon and to celebrate our indestructible lust for life, a lust that capitalism tries so hard to destroy with its monotonous merry-go-round of work and consumerism. Carnival, unlike capitalism, insists on participation. There are no spectators in a carnival, no sidelines, no passive viewers.

8) Critical mass and London Underground office occupation for London tube strikers, 1 Strike for the planet, cycle for social justice.



10) 10,000 join the March for Social Justice, called by the dockers, April '97

The planned occupation of the Dept. of Environment goes belly up, but Trafalgar Square still gets its first street party, the National Gallery rocks while rucks with a bullying police presence give RTS its first (but by no means last) clutch of hysterical front pages.



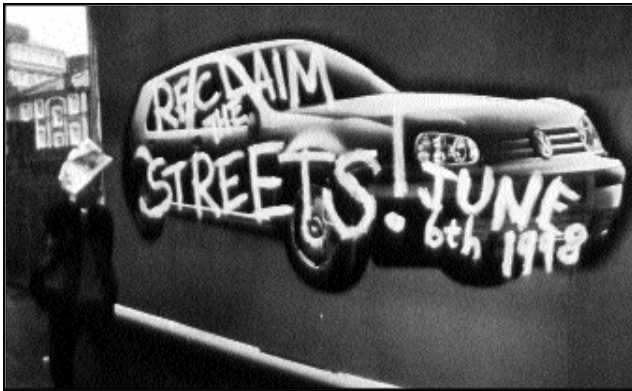


11) Strike Oil - derelict 'Toxico' petrol station occupied during Kyoto climate negotiations, Dec '97
'Fossil fuels = climate chaos'

The privatisation of the climate, via emissions trading and all the other pseudo-solutions offered up by capitalism to 'solve' a problem it created in the first place, is really the final act of enclosure - that is until they manage to export these rotten discredited ideologies well and truly into outer space. You really have to hand it to them: all the things we take most for granted as being un-ownable - great intangibles like the weather and our own DNA - have become the hunting grounds of a system casting about hungrily for new sources of profit. We can only hope that this growing audacity will trigger a more profound understanding of capitalism as well as a more unified and grassroots resistance both to it and its devastating effects.

13) Brixton & Tottenham street parties, June '98
Advertising coats us all in a thick layer of glutinous commodification; subvertising can cut through that layer using nothing more than a paintbrush, a getaway bike and a few drops of imagination.

Early in 1998, voices from London RTS could be heard from within the brouhaha surrounding the new spirit of global resistance saying: 'Think how much closer to our ideals it would be if one street party dissolved into many all over London on the same day. Our own power structures would be shattered, we could help link local people and local struggles to wider issues - diversity and autonomy would really take centre stage.' In the end it was simply a lack of resources and time that saw only 2 of the many mooted parties take place, but even these went at least some way towards achieving the hoped-for aims. And for those veterans who disappeared into Brixton tube station and reappeared via the Victoria Line at Seven Sisters, it was as if all of London had become a car-free carnival and their dreams had become fantastically real, at least for one summer afternoon.



14) Carnival Against Capitalism, London RTS & friends' contribution to the global day of action in financial centres, June 18th 1999.
It's official: capitalism is pants



15) N30: global day of action vs. the WTO
RTS teams up with the Strike Support Group outside Buxton station for discussion, info-sharing (about the WTO's secret agenda for public service privatisation and supercharged environmental degradation), not to mention an overturned vehicle and police over-reaction.

Effective direct action, or any threat to the power wielded over us by state and business will result in repression, whether it's criminalisation of dissent by state legislation, or marginalisation and misrepresentation of those who don't conform by the corporate media.



Cap'italism n. 1. a system by which the few profit from the exploitation of the many. b an irresponsible philosophy which encourages and rewards the worse parts of human nature, greed and competition. 2. A mindset addicted to profit and work which values money above life. 3. An unsustainable ideology obsessed by growth despite our finite planet. 4. The cause of the global, social and ecological crisis. 5. Polit. A social system overthrown at the beginning of the 21st Century. Car'nival n. 1. an explosion of freedom involving laughter, mockery, dancing, masquerade and revelry. 2. occupation of the streets in which symbols and ideals of authority are subverted. 3. When those on the margins occupy the centre, [marginalised take over the centre and overturn] the world turned truly upside down. 4. A creative participatory experience, in which spectatorship is not an option. [You cannot watch carnival, you take part]. Polit. an unexpected carnival is revolutionary.]



We are about taking back public space from the enclosed private arena. At its simplest this is an attack on cars as a principal agent of enclosure. It's about reclaiming the streets as public inclusive space from the private exclusive use of the car. But we believe in this as a broader principle, taking back those things which have been enclosed within capitalist circulation and returning them to collective use as a commons. .

12) Global Street Party, Birmingham leg, May 16th 1998
The G8 are flown out, rotten fruit and veg are thrown-up, a copper is pried, props and systems are nobbled, a car is flipped and very nearly burnt out...

The global street party, with its challenge to private space and celebration of defiance, is part of a growing worldwide movement against the enclosure of our future. The global street party is not an end in itself, but the foreshadowing of a time when the present conditions of our lives might be no more than a memory. But the euphoria of today will recede to leave a foggy sense of powerlessness unless we take forward the spirit of today's party to work in any one of countless ways in and for communities, united against economic globalisation.



16) Mayday 2000: guerilla gardening action
Turfed streets, a Maypole, samba replacing sound systems, pixie planting, a fine flurry of banners and an overall positive vibe is lost in a cloud of media hysteria. The seeds sprouted for weeks and months to come...

Whether it's the Brazilian landless peasants (MST) squatting huge tracts of empty land and building co-operative farms and communities, Reclaim the Streets replanting Parliament Square or Indian peasants destroying a Kentucky Fried Chicken outlet - direct action is about changing things through our own self-organisation and ultimately taking control of our own lives and communities, without the mediation of politicians and bureaucrats. Direct action is founded on the principle of direct and immediate participation, and it threatens the core of capitalist society, of its need for spectacle, hierarchy and separation.

20,000 delegates are expected in Prague from all over the world to attend the 55th meeting of the World Bank and the IMF. The Ministry of the Interior have predicted dangerous riots, and told people to get out of the city because international criminals will be flooding the city to terrorise the local population. The schools will be shut and the army is on standby. Yet while the delegates are talking behind the walls of a fortress built especially to resist access, the 'international criminals' are holding public meetings in churches, public halls and schools under the banner of Peoples' Global Action.

Political activists from as far as India, Nicaragua, South Korea, the Philippines and Yugoslavia are coming together to exchange experiences with the people of Prague, giving them the opportunity to listen to those who have been fighting for decades against the World Bank and the IMF. Their message is clear: these institutions maintain and promote a system responsible for the systematic destruction of people and planet, a system that subverts peoples' needs to the needs of profit and economic growth.



Peoples' Global Action: planetary resistance on the up!

Peoples' Global Action (PGA) is a loose network of peoples' movements from all continents that have come together to communicate, and co-ordinate resistance to the global market economy and all forms of domination and exploitation. From its launch in February '98 many of the groups involved have been key players in the growing anti-capitalist movement, targeting capitalist totems like the World Bank, the World Trade Organisation (WTO), the G8 and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). (Prague is sure to see some serious discussion of the merits of continuous 'summit hopping'.)

The idea of PGA was partly inspired by two encuentros, or gatherings. In January 1996, the Zapatistas, a revolutionary indigenous uprising in Chiapas, Mexico, called for an intercontinental

meeting 'for humanity against neoliberalism'. This brought together six thousand people from the North and South who tried to find common ground for their struggles and listen to each other's visions of different futures and ideas for constructing a 'world that has room for many worlds'. A year later a second Encuentro was organised in Spain by a loose network of European activists in Europe, focusing on the possible ways and forms in which intercontinental networks of resistance and communication could be solidified. This attracted in activists from ten of the world's largest social movements, including the KRRS, (the largest Indian peasant movement, known for actions such as the cremation of Monsanto GM fields and the dismantling of a Cargill seed factory), Movimiento Sem Terra, (a Brazilian movement for land

reform through direct action) and the Zapatistas. They all drafted a document which formed the basis of the objectives and organisational principles of PGA.

In February '98 more than 300 delegates from grassroots movements around the world came to Geneva, HQ of the WTO, for the first PGA conference. This was a really inspirational gathering of groups and individuals wanting passionately to find ways of working together across borders, cultures, races and languages.

For UK participants, queuing for lunch had never before had such potential for a fascinating encounter with activists from some of the planet's most compelling struggles. A common understanding gradually emerged that rejected all forms and systems of domination and oppression, including capitalism, racism, caste and patriarchy, and that would entail the building of local alternatives through people power built on solidarity and sustainable living. A manifesto and four hallmarks were collectively written stating 'we have to join forces to create diverse spaces for co-operation, equality, dignity, justice and freedom on a human scale, while attacking national and

transnational capital, and the agreements and institutions, that it creates to assert its power'. It was the experience of Geneva that led to London Reclaim the Streets becoming Western European convenors for PGA, which it passed on to Ya Basta! at the next conference.

The groups involved in the PGA co-ordinated into visible action on May 16th '98, the day of the G8 leaders meeting in Birmingham, when tens of thousands took to the streets world-wide to 'laugh in the face of the global economy' in a Global Street Party. Prague saw the biggest mobilisation on its streets since the Velvet Revolution and a day later, over 15 000 people protested against the WTO in Geneva, smashing bank windows, overturning the WTO Director General's Mercedes - kicking off three days of rioting in the usually calm streets of Geneva. The Global Street Party set off a wave of momentum that led to a proposal for a global day of action in financial centres, to coincide with the G8 meeting in Koln on June 18th '99, not to mention a caravan of activists from the South travelling through Europe on an action/information tour. J18, as it came to be known, exploded in seventy-two cities on every continent right across the planet. From 10,000 people dancing through

London's financial district in a Carnival Against Capitalism, to hundreds of domestic workers on the streets of Dhaka, Bangladesh against the IMF/WB, the anti-capitalist movement was growing in new and creative ways.

In August '99 a second PGA conference was held in Bangalore in India, hosted by the KRRS, providing the opportunity to co-ordinate global resistance to the forthcoming WTO meeting. On November 30th, 100,000 protesters took to the streets of Seattle, defying martial law, rubber bullets and teargas and effectively stopping the WTO ministerial meeting. At the same time anti-capitalist actions took place in seventy cities around the world.

Five months later a proposal from the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW) made Mayday 2000 the latest of the globally co-ordinated days of action, but this time in response not to another summit but the need to remind ourselves and the world that we have positive visions of the future as well as a clear-eyed critique of the present. Moving beyond the focus on global days of actions, the most important offspring of the PGA network has been the weaving of global and local networks. This is where the most work is needed to include

regions like Africa and the Far East into the process, as well as to make day-to-day communication much more of a reality, since PGA is really nothing more than a process of making international links a reality. With the success of recent global days of action and the signs of a growing international movement against capitalism, PGA has become the most radical network of grassroots movements in the world today.

Getting in touch:
Web: www.apg.org
Secretariat: CUPW, DBLEAKNEY@cupw-stfp.org
377 Bank Street, Ottawa, Ontario K2P 1Y3 Canada

Western European Convenors Ya Basta! are hoping to host a gathering in December with a view to strengthening European PGA networks: yabasta@tin.it
Tel. ++3926705185,
Fax...++3926705621

London RTS is still a good place to receive a previous bulletin, find out about PGA activity and get involved.

Manchester PGA support group have produced an excellent new bulletin in time for Prague - email pgamanchester@yahoo.co.uk or ring RTS for a copy.

The structure of PGA
PGA has no membership, offices, staff or bank accounts. No organisation or person can represent PGA, nor does the PGA represent any organisation or person. The PGA only facilitates co-ordination and information flow with the help of conferences and other information tools. The PGA international conferences happen every two years, with regional gatherings for some continents. At each gathering convenors are chosen from each continent to spread information from the network throughout their region, and to collect information for the bulletins. The PGA tools of information are regular printed multilingual bulletins, emails and a webpage.

Independent Media / WebZines

Act Locally! Local news sheet c/o TAPPO Box 11A, Newcastle Upon Tyne NE1 1TA Email: tapp@newcastle54.freeseerve.co.uk www.newcastle54.freeseerve.co.uk/

Allsorts, a direct action news and information list: subscribe to allsorts@gn.apc.org

A - Infos A multi-lingual news service http://www.tao.ca/ainfos/

AK PRESS Anarchist publishers and distributors PO Box 12766, Edinburgh, EH8 9YE 0131 555 5165 / e-mail: ak@akedin.demon.co.uk http://www.akuk.com

Anarcho-Syndicalist Ring http://nav.webring.org/cgi-bin/navig?ring=asynidicalism&list

Aufheben magazine: Regular magazine Brighton & Hove Unemployed Workers' Centre, Po Box 2536 Rottingdean, Brighton BN2 6LX, http://jefferson.village.Virginia.EDU/~spoons/aut_html/aut1edit.htm

Cobalt magazine: UK-based magazine for free party scene www.cobaltmagazine.demon.co.uk/

IndyMedia UK is an evolving network of artists, and DIYmedia activists giving independent reporting of Global and local actions. http://www.indymedia.org.uk/ www.zmag.org/

SchNEWS: Weekly direct action news-sheet. Send stamps to: PO Box 2600, Brighton BN2 2DX or email: schnews@brighton.co.uk http://www.schnews.org.uk/ Phone/Fax: 01273 685913

Squall: A well-maintained UK-based alternative media site + Regular hard-copy printout *Squall Download*. Send 80p worth of stamps PO Box 8959, London, N19 5HW www.squall.co.uk Email: squall@squall.co.uk

Undercurrents: Direct video 16b Cherwell Street, Oxford OX4 1BG Tel: 01865 203662 / Fax: 01865 243562 / Email: underc@gn.apc.org http://www.undercurrents.org/

Urban75: UK's independent websites featuring direct action, rave, drug info, unpublished stories, photos, rants and more. http://www.urban75.com/

Corner House: Research and analysis on globalisation-related issues. PO Box 337, Station Street, Sturminster Newton, Dorset DT10 1YJ. Tel: 01258 473795. cornerhouse@gn.apc.org www.icaap.org.uk/cornerhouse

The Ecologist: Green opinion magazine 15 Lts Road, Chelsea Wharf, 15 Lots Road, London SW10 0QJ Tel: 0171 351 3578 / Email: ecologist@gn.apc.org www.gn.apc.org/ecologist

The Agitator: Comprehensive lists of non-hierarchical, radical groups in Britain and worldwide. Recently updated. Send £1 to HSG PO Box 2474 London N8

Black Flag Legendary anarchist mag £1.50 issue/subscriptions £5 from BM Hurricane London WC1N 3XX Email: blackflag@drcon.co.uk http://flag.blackened.net/blackflag/

Cassandra feminist-anarchist web http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Troy/2777/

Counter Information: Free news-sheet reporting from struggles around the world 28 King St., Glasgow G1 5QPScotland Email: counterinfo@cablenet.co.uk http://www.kwweb4.cablenet.co.uk/muirhs/coun-teninfo/

Direct Action: Revolutionary unionism - magazine £1.50 an issue/subscriptions £5 PO Box 29 SW PDO M15 5HW. Tel: 0161 232 7889 / 01603 611072 http://www.directa.force9.co.uk/

Do or Die: Mag from Earth First!-ers Includes June 18, Globalisation, pirates, feminism, Kosovo, international, reviews... c/o Prior House 6 Tibury Place, Brighton BN2 2GY email: doordtp@yahoo.co.uk www.eco-action.org/dod/

I-Contact: video network 76 Mina Road, Bristol BS2 9TX Tel: 0117 914 0188 email: i-contact@videonetwork.org

Organise! Theory magazine of the Anarchist Federation £1 an issue/subscriptions £5 84b Whitechapel High St, London E1 7QX Tel. / Pager: 01523 786692 email: acf@burn.ucsd.edu http://www.afed.org.uk

Peace News: Mag for non-violent revolution 5 Caledonian Rd, London N1 9DXX Tel: 020 7278 3344 Email: peacenews@gn.apc.org

The Porkbolter: Local news sheet PO Box 4144, Worthing BN14 7NZ

Action South West: Local news sheet c/o Box 80, Greenleaf, 82 Colston Street Bristol BS1 5BB Email: wc99@hotmail.com

Green Line: Regular magazine PO Box 5 Lostwithiel, Cornwall PL22 0YT 0870 733 4970

FINs: Produce local free news sheets. For a full list send SAE to London FIN c/o 99 Toriano Ave, London NW5 2RX

Y Ddeilan Werdd/The Green Leaf Local news sheet c/o Gwynedd &Mon EFl Email: jlmK@undeb.bangor.ac.uk

Collective Action Notes: Good workers resistance archives www.geocities.com/CapitolHill/Lobby/2379/

Kate Sharpley Library: Long-running archiver and publisher of anarchist materials BM Hurricane, London WC1N 3XX Email: kar98@dia1.pipex.com http://members.aol.com/wellslake/Sharpley.htm

Smash Capitalism! webring http://www.webring.org/cgibin/webring?ring=smashcapitalism&index

International

RadiX: Europe wide DÁvideo lending library c/o Projektkwerkstatt, Gostenhefer Hauptstr. 50, D-90443, Nuremberg, Germany. Tel.: +49 (0) 911 2875880 Email: radix@pathfindermail.com

Live Wild or Die: US radical ecology mag POBox 204 2425B Channing Way, Berkley, CA94704, USA

Earth First! Journal US radical ecology POB 1415 Eugene OR 97440, USA Tel.: +541 741 9191, email: earthfirst@igc.apc.org

Anarchy: A Journal of Desire Armed regular magazine C.A.LPress, POB 1313, Lawrence, KS 66044, USA

Adbusters: Culture jammers includes mag. The Media Foundation, 1243 W. Seventh Ave, Vancouver, BC V6H 1B7 Canada, Tel: 001 604 736 9401, Email: adbusters@adbusters.org www.adbusters.org

Corporate Watch: US research and info about corporations P.O. Box 29344, San Francisco, CA94129 USA. Tel: 415-561-6568 Fax: 415-561-6493 http://www.corpwatch.org/ corpwatch@corpwatch.org

Check also these web sites: www.damn.tao.ca/ www.messmedia.rootmedia.org/ www.enviroweb.org/ALFIS/index2.htm www.indymedia.org/ www.zmag.org/ www.essential.org/monitor

Radical Bookshops

(Also check autonomous centres as most stock various publications)

Centreprise Books 136-8 Kingsland High St.London N8

Compendium Books 234 Camden High St., London NW1

Freedom Books Angel Alley, 84b Whitechapel High St. London E1 7QX

Housmans Bookshop 5 Caledonian Rd.,London N1

Frontline Books 255 Wimslow Rd. Rusholme, Manchester M14

New Beacon 76 Stroud Green Rd. London N4 3ON

Blackcurrent Books 4 Allen Rd., Abington, Northampton NN1 4NE (Open Fri. 1.30-4pm & Sat. 3-5.30pm)

Greenleaf Books 82 Colston St., Bristol, BS1 5BB

Littlethorn Books 73 Humberstone Gate, Leicester Le1 1WB

Mushroom Books 12 Heathcote St., Nottingham, NG1 3AA

News from Nowhere 96 Bold St., Liverpool, L1 4HY

October Books 4 Onslow Rd., Southampton SO2 0JB

Word Power 43 West Nicholson St., Edinburgh, EH8

Terrorism Bill campaign For an in-depth look at the new Terrorism Bill, go to www.blagged.freeseerve.co.uk/terroillindex.htm

The A30 Event: a picture of dissent http://drink.to/dissent

Are You a Terrorist?! http://www.new-labour.com/

Terrorism Bill: Standing Committee "Prevention of terrorism" bill & standing committee membership, by the real terrorists www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm19990/0lcmstand/d/center.htm

Liberty: Mainstream independent human rights organisation 21 Tabard Street, London SE1 4LA Tel: 020 7403 3888/ Fax: 020 7407 5354 Email: info@liberty-human-rights.org.uk http://www.liberty-human-rihts.org.uk/

Noborder Network **Statewatch**: Monitoring the state and civil liberties in the UK and Europe PO Box 1516 London N16 0EW Tel: 020 8802 1882 / email: office@state-watch.org http://www.statewatch.org

Cambridgeshire Against Refugee Detention (CARD) 16 Bryon Cobain, 1 Macaulay Hse 16 Newton Rd. Cambridge CB2 2AL Tel: 01223 462187 / card@zensearch.net

Campaign to Close Campfields 111 Magdalen Rd Oxford OX1 1RQ Tel: 01865 558145/ 557282/ 726804 sue.walton@bt.xc.ac.uk BMKKeith@aol.com http://users.ox.ac.uk/~asylum

Close Down Harmondsworth Campaign Tel: 020 8571 5019

Hackney Refugee and Migrant Support Group c/o Hackney community law Centre 236-238 Mare E8 1HE Tel: 020 8986 9966 kmcg_1999@yahoo.com

National Coalition of Anti-Deportation Campaigns National coordinator: John O 110 Hamstead Rd., Birmingham B20 2QS Tel: 0121 554 6947 Fax: 0870 055 4570 ncadc@ncadc.demon.co.uk www.ncadc.demon.co.uk

CARF - Campaign Against Racism & Fascism BM Box 8784 London WC1N 3XX Tel: 020 7837 1450 / info@carf.demon.co.uk http://www.carf.demon.co.uk

Action camps and Sites **9 Ladies Anti-Quarry Camp** Lees Cross, Lees Rd., Stanton Lees, Matlock, Derbyshire http://pages.zoom.co.uk/~nineladies/

Aldermaston Womens Peace Camp alternative weekends 33 Heron Road Bristol, BS5 0LT 0117 939 3746 01703 554434

Avon Ring Road Protest Camp 84 Colston Street Bristol, BS1 5BB Tel: 0797 999 0389

Birmingham Northern Relief Road Campaign The Spinney Turf Pits Lane, Near Sutton Coldfield West Midlands, B75 5T7 Tel: 07931 161 761

Faslane Peace Camp Shandon, Helensburgh, Dunbartonshire, Scotland, G84 8HT 01436 820 901

Gorse Wood: anti-A170 bypass Tel: 07957 915 977

Hockley Housing near Southend Tel: 01702 206181 0831 687635

Park Nook Camp Liverpool Tel: 0403176279

Pressmennan Woods Camp c/o 7 Plicox, Dunbar, EH42 1RQ. 01368 850630

Sellafield Women's Peace Camp c/o Cornerstone Resource Center Box Z (bi-monthly), 16 Sholebrock Ave Leeds L57 3HB Tel: 0113 262 1534

Autonomous Zones **1 in 12 Club** 21-23 Albion St Bradford BD1 2LY Tel: 01274 734160

56a Infoshop 56 Crampton St, London SE17 3AE open 2-8pm Thurs and Fri

A-Spire (see Leeds EFl) Email: aspire@geocities.com

Anarchist Teapot Box B, Public House Bookshop, 21 Little Preston Street Brighton BN1 2HQ. teapot@brighton.co.uk

Autonomous Centre of Edinburgh 17 West Montgomery Place, Edinburgh EH7 5HA Tel: 0131 557 6242

Kebele Community Centre 14 Robertson Rd Eastville, Bristol BS5 6JY Tel: 0117 939 9469. Email: kebele@mailexcite.com

Okasional cafe see Manchester EFl

Platform6 Cafe c/o 6 Kent House, Kent Street, Southampton Email: platform6@angelfire.com

Rainbow Centre 180-182, Mansfield Rd., Nottingham NG1 3HW Tel: 0115 958 5666

Worthing Anarchist Teapot, c/o Worthing Eco-Action,

Green / Vegan / Animal Lib

Animal Rights Resource Site http://www.animalconcerns.org/

ALF -Animal Liberation Front ALF Supporters Group UK BCM Box 1160 London WC1N 3XX E: 1003021616@compuserve.com http://www.enviroweb.org/ALFIS/index2.shtm

ARC - Animal Rights Coalition ARCNEWS PO Box 339 Wolverhampton WV10 7BZ Tel: 01902 711935 / Email: james@arcnews.co.uk http://www.enviroweb.org/arc/

No Compromise: US magazine www.enviroweb.org/noocompromise.html P.O. Box 1440, Santa Cruz, CA95060 (831) 425-3007. E-mail: NoComp@waste.org

HSA- The Hunt Saboteurs Association PO Box 2786, Brighton BN2 2AX Telephone 01273 622827. Email: info@huntsabs.org.uk http://www.huntsabs.org.uk/

London Animal Action BM Box 2248, London WC1N 3XX Tel/Fax: 0171 278 3068 Email: laa@londonaa.demon.co.uk http://www.londonaa.demon.co.uk/

Tactical Internet Response Network tacticalresponse@mailcity.com

Vegan Society Donald Watson House, 7 Battle Rd St Leonards-on-Sea, East Sussex. TN37 7AA Tel: 01424 427393 / Fax: 01424 717064 Payable to Earth First! Remember security, false names and a collect or care address are best. Electronic version (text only) by e-mail - free.

Other contacts and resources

Action Against Injustice PO Box 858 London E9 5HU

Anarchist Black Cross Prisoner support and prison abolition c/o Tibury Place, Brighton, BN2 2GY Katchoo22@chickmail.com

Anarchist-Primitivist Network PO Box 252 Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire WD3 3AY

Anarchist Federation 84B Whitechapel High St London E1 7QX Tel. / Pager: 01523 78669 / Email: acf@burn.ucsd.edu http://burn.ucsd.edu/~acf/

Anarchist Trade Union Network Box emab Abbey Street, Darby DE22 3SQ Tel: 0776373@aol.com www.geocities.com/CapitolHill/Parliament/2522/

Anti-Fascist Action Contact below for list of regional groups: BM Box 1734, London WC1N 3XX 07000 569569

A SEED (Action for Solidarity, Equality, Environment and Development): working especially on European government issues. Postbus 92066, 1090 AB, Amsterdam Netherlands + 31-20-668-2236 / Fax: + 31-20-468-2275 email: aseedeur@antenna.nl www.antenna.nl/aseed/

ASS - Advisory Service for Squatters 2 St Pauls Road London N1 2QN Tel: 020 7359 8814 http://www.squat.freeseerve.co.uk/

Baby Milk Action Campaigns for safe baby-feeding: especially challenges Nestle. 23 St Andrews's Street, Cambridge CB2 3AX Tel: (01223) 464420 / Email: babymilkacti@gn.apc.org www.gn.apc.org/babymilk

BEN: Black Environment Network 9 Llanwion, Uchaf, Llanberis, Wales, LL55 4LL Tel: 01286 870715

Banana Link: Solidarity with banana workers worldwide Tel: 01603-765670 38-40 Exchange Street, Norwich NR2 1AX Email: blink@gn.apc.org Web site: <http://www.laslett.com/bananas/>

British Coalition for East Timor PO Box 2349, London E13 HX

CAGE: A network resisting prison industry PO Box 68, Oxford, OX3 7YS Tel: 07931 401962 Email: prison@narchy.fsnet.co.uk / CAGE@veggies.co.uk www.veggies.org.uk/cage

Campaign Against Arms Trade (CAAT) 11 Goodwin St, London N4 3HQ T: 020 7281 0297 F: 020 7281 4369 Email: enquiries@caat.demon.co.uk www.gn.apc.org/caat

Campaign Against Tube Privatisation 47c Wadson Street, Bethnal Green E2 9DP Tel: 020 7387 4771

Catalyst Collective (Brighton) Help and advice in setting up cooperatives. Email: catalyst@greenline.clara.net

Centre for Alternative Technology Machynlleth, Powys SY20 9AZ Tel: 01654 702400 / email: info@cat.org.uk http://www.cat.org.uk/

Chiapaslink Box 79, Greenleaf, 82 Colston St, Bristol BS1 5BB E mail: chiapaslink@yahoo.com

Class War: Contact for regional groups. PO Box 467 London E8 3QZ Tel: 01582 750601

Communities Against Toxics PO Box 29, Ellesmere Port, Cheshire CH66 3TX Tel: 0151 201 6700 Email: cats@tpub.demon.co.uk or Raiph@ctpublications.freeseerve.co.uk

Conscious Cinema PO BOX 2679, Brighton BN2 2EF 01273 278018

Corporate Europe Observatory. Exposing and understanding corporate power in Europe and worldwide. Paulus Potterstraat 20 • 1071 DA Amsterdam • Netherlands Tel/fax: +31-20-6127023 / Email: ceo@ks4.nl www.ks4.nl/~ceo

Corporate Watch Research and magazine about corporations 16b Cherwell St. Oxford OX41BG Tel: 01865 791 391 Email: info@corporatwatch.org www.corporatwatch.org

Crossroads Womens Centre 230A Kentish Town Rd., London NW5 020 7482 2496

Delta: Newsletter an d info network focusing on Shell and Big Oil in the Niger Delta. Box Z, 13 Biddulph Str, Leicester LE2 1BH Tel/fax: 0116 2109652 Email: lynx@gn.apc.org www.oneworld.org/delta

Disabled Action Network (DAN) 3 Crowley Road London N22 6AN Tel: 020 8889 1361

Down to Earth: campaign for ecological justice in Indonesia. 59 Athenley Road, Lon don SE15 3ON. Tel: 01508 471413 / Email: dte@gn.apc.org

EFl (Earth First!) Across UK Earth First! Action Update PO Box 1TA, Newcastle, NE 99 1TA Enclose a SAE for replies. Telephone: 0797 4791841 / E-mail: actionupdate@gn.apc.org Earth First! website: <http://www.hrc.wmin.ac.uk/campaigns/ef/earthfirst.html>

Action update subscription Printed version by post - subscriptions cost a minimum contribution of £5 (E6 International subscriptions) for the next 12 issues. Send more if you can afford it. Payable to Earth First! Remember security, false names and a collect or care address are best. Electronic version (text only) by e-mail - free.

EFU groups in Britain: **Arun Valley EFl** c/o 1 York Rd Littlehampton V. Sussex Tel: 01903 721615 / arunefl@actionuff.demon.co.uk **Avon Gorge EFl** c/o PO Box 426 Bath, Somerset BA1 2ZD Tel: 01249 713742.

Blatant Incitement Project Outreach and small group support c/o Manchester EFl doitnit@nematode.freeseerve.co.uk **Bristol EFl** c/o Box 51 Greenleaf Bookshop 82 Colston St Bristol BS1 5BB Tel: 0117 939 3093 **Cambridge EFl** Box E 12 Mill Rd Cambridge CB1 2AD **EFl South Centre** www.mindstar.freeuk.co/ef Efl@mindstar.freeuk.com

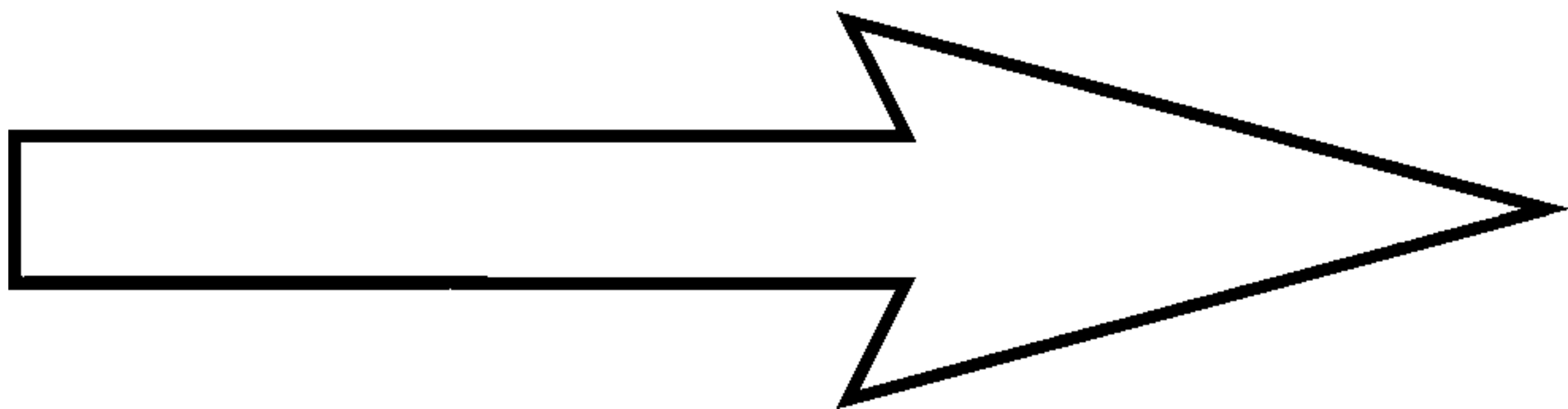
Exeter Environmental Network PO Box 185, Exeter EX4 4EW **File EFl** c/o 91 South Street, St. Andrews, Fife KY16 9Q Tel: 01334 477411 **Guildford EFl** PO Box217 Guildford, Surrey, GU1 1WS Fax: 01483 203212

Gwynedd & Mon EFl The Greenhouse, 1 Trevelyan Terrace Bangor, Gwynedd LL57 1AX Tel: 01248 355821 / Email: afu01b@bangor.ac.uk **Hull On Earth** c/o PO Box 33 Hull HU1 1AA Tel: 01482 218377 **Irwell Valley EFl** c/o Dept 29 255 Wilmslow Rd Manchester M14 5LW ivelf@nematode.freeseerve.co.uk **LEAF** Box Z 13, Biddulph St Leicester LE2 1BH Tel/Fax : 0116 255 3223

Leeds EFl c/o Cornerstone Resource Centre 16 Sholebrock Ave Leeds LS7 3HB Tel: 0113 262 9365/ Email: leedsef@ukf.net http://www.leedsef.ukf.net **Liverpool EFl** 96 Bold Street Liverpool L1 4HY **LuneAC (Lancaster)** Tel: 01524 593878 Email: luneac@jymmail.com **Manchester EFl** Deht 29 c/o MERCI, 22a Beswick Street Manchester M4 7HS Tel: 0161 226814 mancel@nematode.freeseerve.co.uk **Mid-Somerset EFl** PO Box 23, 5 High St, Glastonbury Somerset BA6 9PU

Norwich Direct Action Forum PO Box 487, Norwich NR2 3AL Tel: 07931 308091 directionforum@egroups.com **Nottingham EFl** c/o The Rainbow Centre , 182 Mansfield Road Nottingham NG1 3HW. Tel: 0115 9585666 **Oldham EFl** PO Box 127 Oldham OL4 3FE Tel: 01457

“The society
that abolishes
every adventure
makes its own
abolition the
only possible
adventure”



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There is no such thing as a free press, you know it and I know it. There is not one of you who would dare to write his honest opinion.

The business of a journalist is to destroy truth, to lie outright, to pervert, to vilify, fall at the feet of mammon, and sell himself for his daily bread.

We are tools, vessels of rich men behind the scenes, we are jumping jacks. They pull the strings - we dance. Our talents, our possibilities, and our lives are the properties of these men.

"

We are intellectual prostitutes

John Swinton - editor of the New York Times being remarkably candid on the day of his retirement addressing his staff