

Friday June 18th 1999

Confronting Capital And Smashing The State!



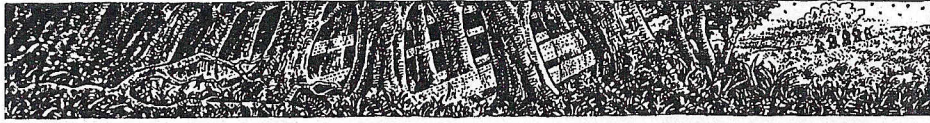
As the economy has become increasingly transnational, so too has the resistance to its devastating social and ecological consequences: The June 18th (J18) International Day of Action in financial and banking districts across the world was probably the largest and most diverse day of action against global capital in recent history. Hundreds of actions took place in over 30 countries on every continent,¹ all "in recognition that the global capitalist system is based on the exploitation of people and the planet for the profit of a few and is at the very root of our social and ecological troubles."² But where did this extraordinary show of international solidarity spring from? And how and why are such diverse groups building global networks of struggle to counter the globalisation³ of misery under capitalism? What follows is a personal account of the history, context and organisation of the events leading up to June 18th. It is a story that needs telling...

Contradictions Of Globalisation

International solidarity and global protest is nothing new. From the European-wide revolutions of 1848, through the upheavals of 1917-18 following the Russian Revolution, to the lightning flashes of resistance nearly everywhere in 1968⁴, struggle has always been able to communicate and mutually inspire globally. But what is perhaps unique to our times is the speed and ease with which we can communicate between struggles and the fact that globalisation has meant that many people living in very different cultures across the world now share a common enemy. An enemy that is increasingly becoming less subtle and more excessive ('capitalism with its gloves off') and therefore easier to see, understand and ultimately dismantle.⁵

A Common Enemy

The irony is that before the onslaught of globalisation, 'the system' was sometimes hard to recognise in its diverse manifestations and policies. Abstract critical theory was confronting an abstract multifaceted system. But the reduction of diversity in the corporate landscape and the concentration of power within international institutions, such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and the financial markets, has clarified things and offered a focal point for protest and opposition. It is a lot easier to oppose concentrated uniform power than diverse and flexible forms.⁶ As power heads further and further in this direction, those opposing it seem to become more and more diverse and fluid, and hence much harder

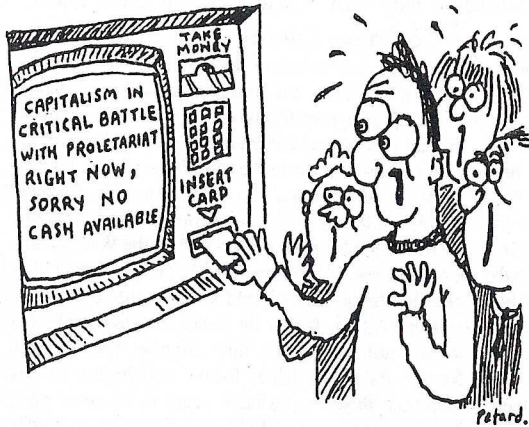


to diffuse and undermine.⁷ As the elite, their transnational corporations and their puppets the IMF and WTO impose 'free market' policies on every country on the planet, they are unwittingly creating a situation where diverse movements are recognising each others' struggles as related and are beginning to work together on an unprecedented scale.

The global 'race to the bottom' in which workers, communities and whole countries are forced to compete by lowering wages, working conditions, environmental protections and social spending, all to facilitate maximum profit for corporations, is stimulating resistance all over the world. People everywhere are realising that their resistance is pointless if they are struggling in isolation. For example—say your community manages, after years of tireless campaigning, to shut down your local toxic waste dump, what does the transnational company that owns the dump do? They simply move it to wherever their costs are less and the resistance weaker—probably somewhere in the Third World or Eastern Europe. Under this system, communities have a stark choice; either compete fiercely with each other or cooperate in resisting the destruction of our lives, land and livelihoods by rampaging capital.⁸

Diversity Versus Uniformity

To accelerate profit and create economies of scale, global capital imposes a monoculture upon the world with the result of making everywhere look and feel like everywhere else—the same restaurants, the same hotels, the same supermarkets filled with the same musak. Sumner Redstone, the multibillionaire owner of MTV, summed up this denial of diversity



when he said, "Just as teenagers are the same all over the world, children are the same all over the world." On his business trips, he obviously forgets to rural and visit the slums of Delhi or the impoverished rural villages of Africa. In New York, London⁹ and Berlin, kids may have succumbed to his spell of sameness, as they sit prisoners of their own homes, their dull eyes glued to the screen. But the majority of the world's children would rather have clean water than Jamiroqui.

Herbert Read in *The Philosophy of Anarchism* wrote that, "Progress is measured by the degree of differentiation within a society." The president of the Nabisco Corporation would obviously disagree, as he is "looking forward to the day when Arabs and Americans, Latins and Scandinavians will be munching Ritz crackers as enthusiastically as they already drink Coke or brush their teeth with Colgate."¹⁰ Progress under the capitalist system is measured by economic growth—which inevitably means monoculture. Just because more money is changing hands doesn't mean that life is getting any better, it is quite the opposite for the majority of the world. But by embracing diversity, social movements are proposing powerful challenges to capital's addiction to uniformity.

Space For Utopias

Capital was only able to become truly global after the fall of the Berlin wall and the break-up of the Eastern Bloc. The fall of 'communism' not only opened up the space for capital to be unrestrained, but also gave a new lease of life to radical movements.¹¹ For more than 70 years, Soviet-style socialism was seen as the main model of revolutionary society, and of course it was a total social and ecological disaster. But its shadow lingered over most radical movements. Those who wished to discredit any forms of revolutionary thinking simply pointed to the Soviet model to prove the inevitable failures of any utopian project.

Now that the Soviet Union has ceased to exist, it has become a lot easier for those of us working in radical movements to conceive of different societies without having to refer to a failed model. Ideas of utopia can return unhindered. The space has been cleared and the power of radical imagination is back at the centre of revolutionary struggle. Not only has the imagination been freed, it has also become more diverse and fluid than it was



ever able to be under the shadow of the strict monolithic ideology of Soviet socialism. There is no longer any need for universal rules, there is not just one way, one utopia to apply globally, because that is exactly what the 'free marketeers' are trying to do. The radical social movements that are increasingly coming together don't want to seize power, but to dissolve it. They are not vanguards but catalysts in the revolutionary process. They are dreaming up many autonomous alternative forms of social organisation, and they are celebrating variety and rejoicing in autonomy.

The Ecology Of Struggle

In *Post Scarcity Anarchism*, Murray Bookchin wrote that "in almost every period since the Renaissance, the development of revolutionary thought has been heavily influenced by a branch of science."¹² He gives the examples of mathematics and mechanics for the Enlightenment, and evolutionary biology and anthropology for the 19th Century. Ecology has influenced many movements today, and that is perhaps why their model of organisation and co-ordination resembles an ecological model, working like an ecosystem. Highly interconnected, it thrives on diversity, works best when imbedded in its own locality and context and develops most creatively at the edges, the overlap points, the in-between spaces—those spaces where different cultures meet, such as the coming together of the American Earth First! and logging unions or London tube workers and Reclaim the Streets. The societies that they dream of creating will also be like ecosystems—diversified, balanced and harmonious.

The ecological crisis changes the way many of these movements think and act. Kirkpatrick Sale illustrates the scale of the biological meltdown; "More goods and services have been consumed by the generation alive between 1950 and 1990, measured in constant dollars and on a global scale, than

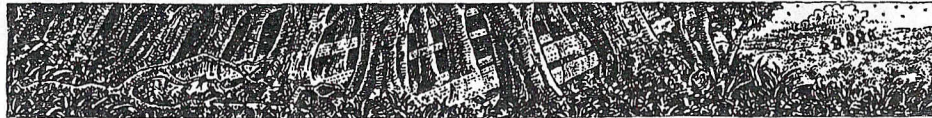
by all the generations in all of human history before."¹³ The level of ecological destruction is mind blowing, and the present generation feels an incredible urgency about the future.¹⁴ We know that mere reform is useless because it is clear that the whole basis of the present system is profoundly anti-ecological, and that there is no longer any use waiting for the right historical conditions for revolution as time is rapidly running out. Radically creative and subversive change must happen now, because there is no time left for anything else. During the May '68 insurrection in Paris, a message was scrawled on the walls of the Theatre de L'Odeon:

"Dare to go where none has gone before you. Dare to think what none has ever thought." Despite capital's rapacious ability to enclose and recuperate everything, the space has now been opened up, and we can finally pay attention to that message.

Transnational Resistance

On New Year's Day 1994, the day the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) came into effect, two thousand indigenous people from several groups came out from the mountains and forests of Chiapas, the most Southern state of Mexico. Masked, armed and calling themselves Zapatistas, their battle cry was "Ya Basta"—"Enough is Enough." An extraordinary popular uprising which was to change the landscape of global resistance forever had begun. Five towns were occupied and 12 days of fighting followed. This was not an isolated local act of rebellion; through the Zapatistas' resourceful use of the internet, which could not be censored by the Mexican state, people all over the world soon heard of the uprising.¹⁵ These masked rebels from poverty stricken communities were not only demanding that their own land and lives be given back, neither were they just asking for international support and solidarity. They were talking about neoliberalism, about the "death sentence"





that NAFTA and other 'Free Trade' agreements would impose on indigenous people. They were demanding the dissolution of power and the development of 'civil society', and they were encouraging others all over the world to take on the fight against the enclosure of our lives by capital. Public sympathy in Mexico and abroad was overwhelming, on the day of the ceasefire, celebratory demonstrations took place in numerous countries. In Mexico City, 100,000 marched together shouting "First World HAHAHA!" Phenomenal poetic communiques came out of Chiapas and were rapidly circulated through the internet. There was a new sense of possibility, and the Zapatistas and their supporters were weaving an electronic fabric of struggle to carry the seeds of revolution around the world.¹⁶

People's Global Action

In 1996 the Zapatistas, with trepidation as they thought nobody might come, put out a call for a gathering—an 'encuentra' (encounter)—of international activists and intellectuals to meet in Chiapas and discuss common tactics, problems and solutions to the common enemy: capitalism.¹⁷ Over 6,000 people attended and spent days talking and sharing their stories of struggle. This was followed a year later by a gathering in Spain, where the idea of a more concrete global campaign, named People's Global Action (PGA), was hatched by a group made up of ten of the largest and most innovative social movements, including the Movimento Sem Terra, the Brazilian Landless Peasants Movement (see *DoD* No. 7, page 88) and the radical Indian Farmers—the Karnataka State Farmers Union (KRRS). Four 'hallmarks' were proposed by this group in an attempt to get people to rally around shared principles. These were:

- A very clear rejection of the institutions that multinational and speculators have built to take power away from people, like the WTO and other

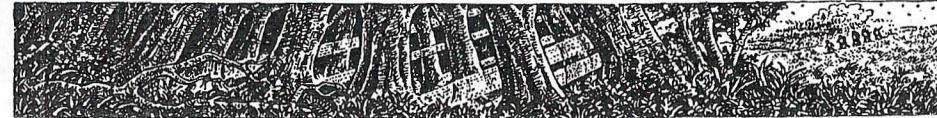
trade liberalisation agreements (like APEC, the EU, NAFTA, etc.)

- A confrontational attitude, since we do not think that lobbying can have a major impact in such biased and undemocratic organisations in which transnational capital is the only real policy maker.
- A call for non-violent [hmmm] civil disobedience and the construction of local alternatives by local people, as answers to the actions of governments and corporations.
- An organisational philosophy based on decentralisation and autonomy.

In February 1998, People's Global Action was born and for the first time ever, the world's grassroots movements were beginning to talk and share experiences without the mediation of established Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs). The first gathering of the PGA was held in Geneva—home of the much hated WTO. More than 300 delegates from 71 countries came to Geneva to share their anger over corporate rule. From the Uwa peoples of Columbia, Canadian Postal Workers, European Reclaim the Streets activists, anti-nuclear campaigners, French farmers, Maori and Ogoni activists, through to Korean Trade Unionists, the Indigenous Women's Network of North America, and Ukrainian radical ecologists, all were there to form "a global instrument for communication and co-ordination for all those fighting against the destruction of humanity and the planet by the global market, while building local alternatives and people power."¹⁸

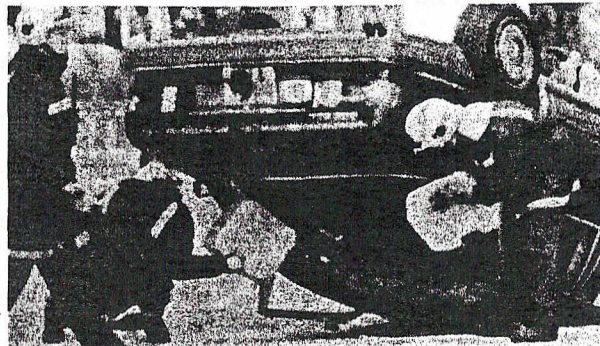
One of the participants spoke of this inspiring event: "It is difficult to describe the warmth and the depth of the encounters we had here. The global enemy is relatively well known, but the global resistance that it meets rarely passes through the filter of the media. And here we met the people who had shut down whole cities in Canada with general strikes, risked their lives to seize lands in Latin America, destroyed the seat of Cargill in India or Novartis' transgenic maize in France. The discussions, the concrete planning for action, the stories of struggle, the personalities, the enthusiastic hospitality of the Genevan squatters, the impassioned accents of the women and men facing the police outside the WTO building—all sealed an alliance between us. Scattered around the world again, we will not forget. We remain together. This is our common struggle."

One of the concrete aims of this gathering was to co-ordinate actions against two events of global importance that were coming up in May of that year, the G8 meeting (an annual event) of the leaders of



the eight most industrialised nations, which was to take place in Birmingham and the second ministerial meeting of the World Trade Organisation which was being held a day later in Geneva.

For four consecutive days in May 1998, acts of resistance echoed around the planet. In Hyderabad, India, 200,000 peasant farmers called for the death of the WTO; in Brasilia landless peasants and unemployed workers joined forces and 50,000 of them took to the streets; over 30



Reclaim the Streets parties took place in many countries, ranging from Finland to Sidney, San Francisco to Toronto, Lyon to Berlin. In Prague, the biggest single mobilisation since the Velvet Revolution in '89, brought over thousands into the streets for a mobile street party which ended with several McDonalds being redesigned and running battles with the police. Meanwhile in the UK, 5,000 people were paralysing central Birmingham as the G8 leaders fled the city to a local manor to continue their meeting in a more tranquil location. The following day, the streets of Geneva exploded. The G8 plus many more world leaders had congregated there for the WTO ministerial and to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GAAT), the forerunner of the WTO. Over 15,000 people from all over Europe and many from other continents demonstrated. Banks had their windows smashed, the WTO Director General's Mercedes was turned over and three days of the heaviest rioting ever seen in Geneva followed. The dust settled, the world leaders stuck in their glass bunker beside Lake Geneva made a statement saying that they wanted the WTO to become "more transparent!" As if that was going to make the blindest bit of difference.

Geneva 1998: oops that was a director general's posh car.

"Invitation to a riot", June 18th was organised by "ringleaders" during a "secret council of war", several other papers mentioned "cells" and "shadowy groups"; while others concentrated on the "protest by Stealth", the fact that it was all "plotted on the internet"²⁰ and was therefore "secret". If you believe the papers, the internet is so secret that The Sunday Times had to "intercept an e-mail"—which happened to be on the open discussion list—to show to its readers. Apparently the fact that it was "hatched" on the internet also meant it was "impossible for the police to estimate how many protesters² might be involved"²² or know what the protest was actually about!

The media go to extraordinary lengths to make people believe that this kind of thing can't be organised by fairly normal people, using fairly normal everyday life tools such as conversations, phone calls²³ and public meetings. Only 'shadowy' type using weird and highly unusual things like computers and the internet and meeting in strange, secret places like pubs and community centres could possibly organise such an event. But how did it all start and in what ways was it really organised? If you work for MI5 or the police, don't get all excited and think I'm about to divulge the names and technique of all the "organised anarchists"²⁴ that you so desperately want to catch.²⁵ I'm going to do no such thing, but what I do want to attempt however, is to demystify the whole process of organising June 18th

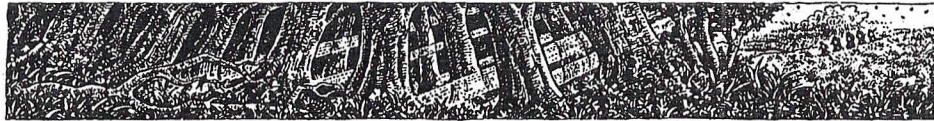
June 18th—Keep On Building

It was clear that things were really moving and that we had to keep the momentum going, and build on the success of the May actions. The question was how? Then came an idea—why not go for the jugular this time? Why not aim at the heart of the beast, the pulsating core of the global economy, the financial and banking districts, the engine room of all ecological and social devastation? This time we could make it bigger, better and even more diverse. According to an article in *The Daily Mail*¹⁹ entitled

Desiring The Impossible

Those moments where incredible dreams are first shared and aired, where imagination becomes actual by speaking, are wonderful to look back on. Sometimes it takes so little, just a conversation at the right time with the right people, and the seed of a





idea is planted and takes root. Like all good ideas, lots of people were thinking the same thoughts at the same time, and all it took was a bit of talking to make those dreams real.

Last year for the May '98 actions, Reclaim the Streets had spent some time trying to work out how to hold an event in the City of London, this was before it was decided to move the whole thing up to Birmingham. But the 'ring of steel', the blanket CCTV coverage and the fact that the event was going to be during the weekend and the City would be empty of office workers put us right off. However, the desire to do something in this small square mile of land right on our doorsteps, Europe's leading financial centre, and one of capital's oldest and most powerful sites, proved too strong. Having a tendency to believe in the reality of our desires, we couldn't let this one go.

Then during a hot summer's day in June 1998, a conversation occurred between a Reclaim the Streets (RTS) activist and someone from London Greenpeace (LGP—the anarchist collective not linked to Greenpeace International) who had been involved in the Stop the City demonstrations during the '80s. It turned out that they had been thinking similar thoughts about having an 'event' in the City that year to bring all the 'single issue' campaigns together around the common enemy of capital, and a date had already been set for a public meeting. LGP felt that the time was right to take on such an audacious target. The Stop the City in the '80s had come out of the momentum of the peace movement. In the last few years, the ecological direct action movement had been getting stronger. There seemed to be an upsurge in workplace action—the Jubilee line wild-cat strikes, and the Thameside care workers being two examples. Street Parties had sprouted up across the country with thousands taking direct action and there was a sense that there was enough momentum to take on such an ambitious and cheeky action.

The idea was taken back to RTS's weekly public meeting and to LGP's. In mid-August, the first of many public meetings about June the 18th was held in a community centre in Central London. As well as RTS and LGP, several groups were present, ranging from the Mexico Support Group, London Animal Action, through to McLibel and Class War. A date was decided, June 18th, to coincide with the G8 summit. It was a Friday—therefore a work day in the City. An initial proposal text was agreed and rough ideas of a timetable for the day and different groups to approach for involvement were discussed. It was

agreed to hold open co-ordinating meetings every month, and these continued to take place right up to a few weeks before the actual day.

At this point, there was much debate and some pretty dire brainstorming sessions trying to find a title for the day. Suggestions like 'A carnival against commerce', 'Laughing all the way to the Bank', 'For a millennium without multinationals', 'Reclaim the City' and 'Reclaim the World' all were mentioned, yet nobody could agree on a suitable name. Time passed and still no title had been thought of, so we stuck to the date—June 18th—with a subtitle of 'a day of action, protest and carnival in financial centres across the globe'. For some extraordinary reason, perhaps due to the fact that a date provides the ultimate in global ownership, no one is taking on someone else's tag, it seemed to work and eventually, many groups began simply calling it J18.²⁶

Good Ideas Spread Like Wildfire

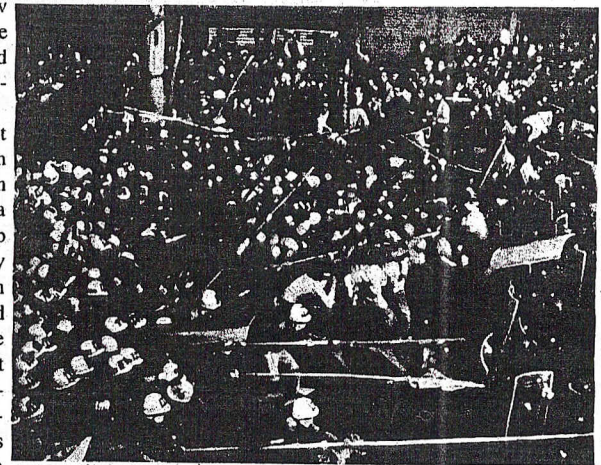
By the end of August 1998, the first leaflet was put together—an A4 cut and pasted photocopied sheet—and it was taken to the Earth First! Summer Gathering for discussion. A small number of people thought it was a suicide mission to try and occupy and transform the city on a work day, when many people would be unable to attend because they were working,²⁷ but others were excited by it and they agreed to take the idea back to their localities and discuss it. By the beginning of September 1998, an international proposal had been written was taken to the PGA Convenors' Committee meeting in Finland and discussed with social movements from each continent, who gave the go-ahead for it to be networked internationally. Soon after this, an international networking group was established to distribute and translate the proposal into 8 languages. Paper copies found themselves in many backpacks and were taken to far flung places on people's travels.

A J18 e-mail discussion list was set up, where any message sent from anywhere in the world is automatically distributed to everyone who is signed up. This list was entirely public, anyone with an e-mail account could join. During the run up to the action, over 1,000 people passed through the list, and there was a steady membership of about 400 people. Over 300 different people sent an e-mail contributing to the discussion, which showed a surprising level of participation. Someone who had very little experience designing web pages used a web page making programme and set up a basic web site with the proposal on it.



Academics and corporations agree that the internet has become one of the most potent weapons of resistance for activists fighting global capital. A PR manager teaching multinationals how to deal with modern day activist groups was quoted as saying "The greatest threat to the corporate world's reputation comes from the internet, the pressure groups' newest weapon. Their agile use of global tools such as the internet reduces the advantage that corporate budgets once provided." Harry Cleaver, a professor of economics in the USA, has written that "the most serious challenge to the basic institutional structures of modern society flow from the emergence of computer-linked global social movements."²⁸

Despite the fact that most people on the planet don't own a phone, let alone a computer linked up to the internet, many social movements in both the North and South now have some sort of internet access. It's a relatively cheap medium that enables small groups with very few resources to



Preparation pays off—but how many e-mails before we too get this? (Narita Airport protests in Japan in the '70s)

communicate on a mass scale. June 18th could not have happened globally without it. The cost of sending letters or making phone calls halfway across the world would have been prohibitive. But it's the way the internet spreads ideas rapidly and in every direction through web sites, discussion lists etc. which is extraordinary. Once a message has gone out, a simple click of a button can send it to thousands of people and each one of these in turn can forward that message within seconds. Ideas spread and multiply at the speed of light.

There is a great anecdote which describes the decentralised multiplying nature of the internet. Someone in the international networking group sent an e-mail to an anarchist group in New York, which was then forwarded by them to Chicago, who in turn forwarded it to Boston and so on to several other cities in the US until eventually it reached Mexico City, where it was forwarded to Zapatista supporters in Chiapas, who were friends of the originator of the

e-mail in the UK but who had no idea that she knew anything about J18. They then e-mailed her saying "Wow, have you seen this proposal? Have you heard about this action?" The message had literally gone around the world.

Traditional media was also of key importance, and by the time 20,000 red, green and black leaflets²⁹ had been printed and mailed out (yes, real stamps and licking envelopes) to around 1,000 groups around the world, many countries and groups had already got involved—including the North Sumatran Peasants Union, the Policy Information Centre for

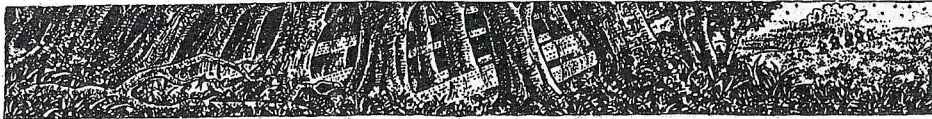
International Solidarity (PICIS) in South Korea, Chicoco (the coalition of tribal people fighting the oil industry in Nigeria), the Canadian Auto Workers Union, Green Action in Israel and a coalition of several groups in the United States and Australia.

J18 was spreading like wildfire. Like a virulent virus, it had taken hold of people's

imaginings. Uncontrollable and untameable, it had moved from city to city and country to country. Like the financial markets, it fed on rumour and speculation. Unlike the markets, it needed co-operation, community and hope to keep it alive.

The Importance Of Process

Although what happened on the day went beyond many people's wildest dreams, the process that led up to it was just as important. Although it had some failings, it did achieve much which will strengthen many of the movements who worked on J18. Primarily, I believe there are three key areas in which the process succeeded—group building, education and networking, both on local and international level. I can only speak about the first two in terms of what happened in the UK, but I'm sure similar processes happened in many places where actions were organised.



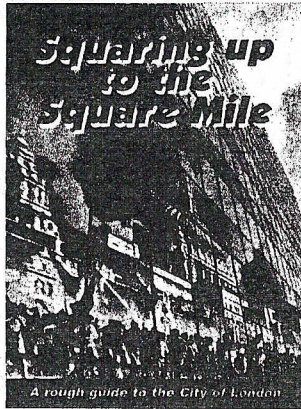
Acting Together

In terms of group building, what seemed clear was that the process of local groups getting together to plan their autonomous actions on the day was incredibly important. June 18th was providing a common focus for groups up and down the country. New groups were forming and existing groups were coalescing and expanding. Local meetings which brought together diverse interest groups began happening in Sheffield, Cardiff, Newcastle, Brighton, Bristol, Glasgow, Manchester and Southampton to name but a few (eventually there were over 35 different UK groups and places that had their own June 18th point of contact.) Local posters and stickers were produced, stalls and exhibitions appeared in cafes and at festivals. With the freedom to act completely autonomously, yet knowing that there would be many other groups doing actions on the day providing both cover and support, groups found extra confidence and security and felt part of a wider process. All sense of feeling too small and too isolated seemed to evaporate. The success of the day itself will also help inspire them further. Hopefully many of these groups will continue working together for many years to come.

Learning Together

There has been a tendency in the UK direct action movement to concentrate on action at the expense of more conscious thinking and theoretical clarity.³⁰ The positive side of this is that it has enabled wildly imaginative actions and strategies to take place. It has also helped avoid the ideological factionalisation and bickering that has beset much of 'traditional' politics. The downside of this however, is that if we want to build "organised popular movements which think things through, which debate, which act, which experiment, which try alternatives, which develop seeds of the future in the present society,"³¹ then we have to get a lot better at thinking, talking and educating ourselves and others. June 18th once again acted as a focusing agent, bringing together diverse people from different 'single issue' campaigns, and getting them to think about one question—the question of capital.

Few people seriously understand economics, and even fewer understand the complexities of the arcane currency, futures and options markets that lie at the heart of the world's economy. There are very few places which will tell you about such things in clear

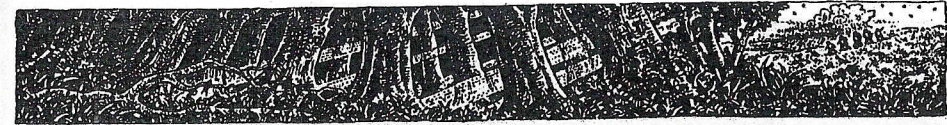


Produced in the months leading up to June 18th were two useful action orientated publications. 'Squaring up to the Square Mile' was a 32 page pamphlet detailing the institutions and workings of the City. The accompanying publication was a A3 map of the City, marking financial institutions and places. See page 318 for how to get your own copy.

and simple language.³² It is in the interest of the elites to make these things inaccessible and difficult to understand for the average citizen. In many ways, it resembles the hold on power that has gone on for millennia within religious societies. The high priesthood would often hold arcane ceremonies in temples hidden from the populace, and for over a thousand years, mass was held in Latin which excluded the majority of the population from understanding it. Now, in their towering glass temples of Mammon, the elite, the bankers, traders and financiers are still waking up at dawn and engaging in secret rituals. Aloof and isolated from the devastating effects of their magic, they sit safely in front of their screens playing with numbers and abstract mathematical equations, knowing that most people will never make a connection between these arcane games and the misery of their everyday life.

As "a first step towards unlocking the City's mystique"³³ and to help educate ourselves on the issues of contemporary capital and financial markets, Corporate Watch and Reclaim the Streets produced a clear and concise 32 page illustrated booklet entitled *Squaring Up to The Square Mile—A rough Guide to the City of London*. 4000 copies of this excellent publication were distributed to groups preparing for J18, alternative bookshops and conferences, and a version was also put up on the web. Tucked inside the booklet was a full colour map of potential targets in the City—banks, exchanges, corporate HQ's, investment houses etc., all to help people planning their autonomous actions. A wonderful way of showing that theory without action is useless.

Face to face debate is as important as radical literature, and at the end of February 1999, a 'day of self education' was held in a squatted social centre in



Stoke Newington, London, which involved over 100 people participating in theoretical workshops and debates about the issues surrounding J18. As well as this, various people travelled around giving workshops at conferences and gatherings, sometimes illustrating them with slide shows and the J18 video. This 18 minute video featured an amusing spoof Hollywood trailer for J18, complete with deep husky American voice and superfast paced edits, an ironic short film on the resistance to the IMF and World Bank and a couple of spoof adbusters adverts about growth economics and the G8. 100 free copies of this were distributed globally, and it was shown in many places ranging from Israeli and US Cable TV, squatted social centres in Europe, through to benefit gigs in London. Some people even illegally dubbed it onto the beginning of rented video tapes!

Sharing Together

As has been described extensively above, one of the central ideas behind J18 was the need to create international and local networks of resistance. But perhaps describing this amorphous and fluid form of communication as a network is misleading. Harry Cleaver describes a net as a "woven fabric made up of interlinked knots—which in social terms means interlinked groups. This is applicable enough when it comes to easily identifiable, co-operating groups, such as NGOs."³⁴ But, what is missing from this description, continues Cleaver, "is the sense of ceaseless, fluid motion within 'civil society' in which 'organising' many not take the form of 'organisations' but an ebb and flow of contact at myriad points."

For Cleaver, the perfect metaphor for the type of organising that is presently taking place between grassroots groups is water, "especially of oceans with their ever restless currents and eddies, now moving faster, now slower, now warmer, now colder, now deeper, now on the surface. At some points water does freeze, crystallising into rigidity, but mostly it melts again, undoing one molecular form to

return to a process of dynamic self-organising that refuses crystallisation yet whose directions and power can be observed and tracked." The process of J18 was exactly like this, and this fluidity is one of our greatest strengths against the rigid constraints of capital.

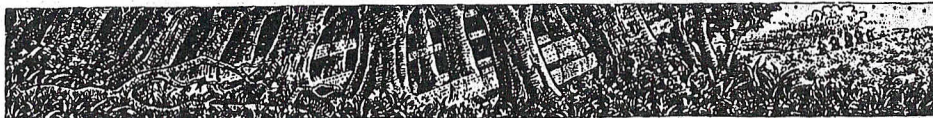
The Day Gets Nearer—The State Prepares...

It was no coincidence that on the 29th January, a full page article appeared in *The Daily Mirror*, with the headline "Police spy bid to smash the anti-car protesters." Including 10 surveillance mug shots with WANTED printed above them, the article began "An Anti-Car group is being targeted by police who fear it plans to bring chaos to Britain's roads. Every police station in Britain has been circulated with photographs of Reclaim The Streets demonstrators in a bid to identify ringleaders."

Five months to go 'til J18 and the state had begun their counteroffensive. According to an article, "A Special Branch document obtained by *The Mirror* admits it is almost impossible for police to monitor groups like Reclaim The Streets. It says: "Increasingly, the environmentalists represent an impenetrable problem for conventional intelligence gathering. The need for an enhancement in covert pro-active intelligence by police is clear." Which was great news, and was further evidence of the fact that the state is completely unable to grasp the way fluid 'disorganisations' work. They are so used to hierarchy, orders and centralisation that they just can't see us, let alone catch us. Perhaps this is why Operation Jellystone, as it was called by the police, did not succeed in rounding up 'ringleaders' or preventing J18 happening.

The Angry Brigade knew this in 1970 when they declared "We were invincible because we were everybody. They could not jail us for we did not exist."³⁵ You would have thought that 25 years later, the state would have cottoned onto us!





The Day Gets Even Nearer—We Prepare...

J18 stickers, which were printed with over 30 different designs, were beginning to be seen everywhere—lamp-posts, cash machines, bustops—you could hardly walk down a street in Central London without seeing one. A Virgin Airways advertising campaign proved particularly apt for sticking, as Virgin had recuperated Communist slogans such as 'A revolution is in the Air', 'Up the Workers'—and orange stickers on the deep red background below these slogans looked great! A sticker was even seen stuck to the back of an unsuspecting police officer during the Mayday Reclaim the Streets tube party!¹⁶

Numerous gigs took place to raise awareness and money. 50,000 club-like metallic gold J18 flyers¹⁷ which opened up to reveal a quote from Raoul Vaneigem saying 'To work for delight and authentic festivity is barely distinguishable from preparing for general insurrection'¹⁸ somehow disappeared within a month as did 10,000 fly posters.

Meanwhile, NATO was bombing Serbia back to the stone age in order that Western Capital could enclose this last enclave of the Eastern Bloc. We asked ourselves who was going to rebuild the bridges, oil refineries, roads, schools, hospitals and power stations and who is going to replace the millions of pounds worth of weapons used every day? Could it possibly be Western oil, engineering, construction and arms companies? Many of us felt compelled to do something, to take action. But the timing was dreadful, and as we were all overworked with June 18th preparations, there was no way we could organise anything else. Would the war still be going on on June 18th? The issues were so clearly identical, but how could we successfully integrate it into the action?

With only four weeks to go, the media war began, *The Sunday Telegraph's* Business Section front page headline declaring "City faces mass protest threat" went on to claim: "Banks and finance houses are being urged by the City of London Police and the British Bankers Association to tighten security and alert their staff after uncovering plans by protest groups to bring Britain's financial centre to a standstill."¹⁹ After describing J18 fairly accurately, mostly quoting the web site, the article went on to quote a 'City professional' as saying: "We will not bow to these people. We have money to make here". But it was clear that the City was taking things very seriously. All leave was cancelled for City of London

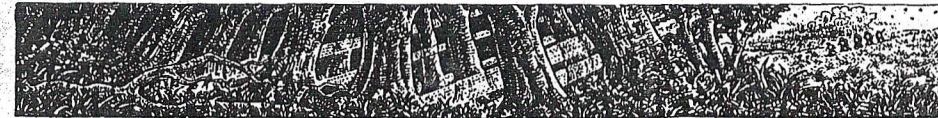
police officers on the day. The Corporation of London sent letters out to the Managing Director of every firm in the square mile (and many outside it) with instructions to circulate the warning of "major disruption" and the need for extra security measures to be taken on June 18th to all staff. Two weeks to go and *the Big Issue's* front cover had a montage of a businessman on fire, with the headline "Breaking the Banks", and a five page feature on J18 inside. The heat was on...

Leaked letters from firms in the City showed that enormous amounts of security precautions were being taken, including barricades erected in entrances to buildings, extra security guards, minimising meetings with people not normally in the particular offices, discouraging visitors to the building and keeping deliveries to an absolute minimum for the day. There were even rumours that several firms told workers not to bother coming into the City on the day and to work from home.

One particularly worried and especially aggressive city worker sent an abusive e-mail to one of the groups, threatening to "smash your pinko faces in." He sent it via a hotmail account, thinking it was an anonymous way of e-mailing someone. Within hours a cyber-geek on the J18 discussion list had managed to trace the origin of the e-mail to merchant bankers Merry Lynch. The IT manger there was immediately told of his worker's abuse of company computers—we never heard of him again!

The Last Few Days...

Now with only a short time left to go, 8,000 red, green, black and gold masks were printed and painstakingly hand threaded with elastic. Final preparations were happening across the country: autonomous action plans tightened up in Bristol, giant carnival heads with sound systems inside were nearing completion in Sheffield, the London International Futures Exchange (LIFFE) was measured up so that it could have a wall built in front of its entrance, the web masters and mistresses put finishing touches to the special web pages which would stream live video from London and Sidney on the day, wigs and disguises were bought, freshly painted banners hung up to dry, four different sound systems donated separate pieces of equipment so that a communal sound system can be driven in on the day, blockading teams memorised maps and mobile phone numbers, people had to file past a competing team of police surveillance and media cameras to get into a meeting, and a crew of Red Bull junkies sat up



all night editing a 32 page spoof newspaper, called *Evading Standards*, for distribution across London.

A year on from that hot summer's day's conversation, everything was set to go. Hundreds of groups in 43 countries had said they were going to do something on the day, and the City of London Police estimated 10,000 people would turn up for the actions in the Square Mile. But despite all the endless meetings, careful preparations and military precision planning we knew that only one thing will enable the day to succeed—the active spontaneous actions of the participants. Spontaneity is one more vital tool of resistance to join fluidity and diversity. It is the freedom to play. The desire beyond want and external compulsion. It's the play of life itself and the very opposite of work, order and hierarchy.

Revolutionary epochs are periods of convergence when apparently separate processes collect to form a socially explosive crisis—perhaps it was an unwittingly accurate description of our times, when the leader of *The Express* claimed that it was "Critical Mass" which "planned...[June 18th]...across the world." You and I know that 'Critical Mass' does not exist, that it's just an idea—the blocking of rush hour traffic by mass bike rides—and it certainly didn't organise June 18th. But perhaps there is no better way of describing what is happening around the world. A critical mass is building—and every year, every month, and every day it gets bigger and stronger. Reports of strikes, of direct actions and of protest and occupations from across the world flow along the same lines of communication that carry the trillions of pounds involved in the reckless unsustainable money game of transnational capital. Soon there is going to be an explosion—an explosion which will be so different from any other revolutionary upsurge that those in power won't even realise that it is about to transform their world forever. There is much work to be done, but the hope and possibility expressed during the process and events of June 18th have brought us one step closer to this wondrous moment...

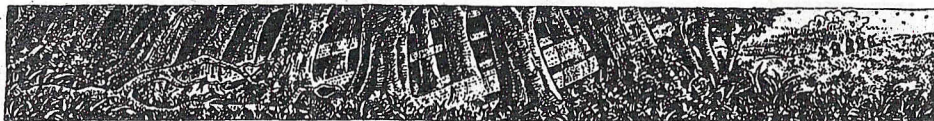
Footnotes

1. See the June 18th website for a complete list of actions: www.j18.org
2. From the first June 18th leaflet, published 1998.
3. Globalisation has become a buzzword and can be a confusing term. I prefer the term Neoliberalism, used in Europe and Latin America, but will use the more common English term. My understanding of globalisation is best summed up in the following section of Reclaim the Streets Agitprop: "Capital has always been global. From the slave trade of earlier centuries to the imperial colonisation of lands and cultures



across the world, its boundless drive for expansion—for short term financial gain—has recognised no limits. Backed up by state power, capitalist accumulation has created widespread social and ecological devastation where it ever extended. But now, capitalism is attempting a new strategy to reassert and intensify its dominance over us. Its name is economic globalisation, and it consists of the dismantling of national limitations to trade and to the free movement of capital. It enables companies, driven by the demands of the rapacious gambling of money markets, to ransack the entire globe in search for ever higher profits, lowering wages and environmental standards in their wake. Globalisation is arguably the most fundamental redesign of the planet's political and economic arrangements since the Industrial Revolution." *Global Street Party Agitprop*—May 16th 1998.

4. See: *Year of the Heroic Guerilla—World Revolution and Counterrevolution in 1968*, by Robert V. Daniels, Harvard University Press 1989, for an overview of the global struggles in 1968. Or for a very readable pictorial account: *1968, Marching in the Streets*, by Tariq Ali, Castelle 1998.
5. Ironically, this was one of the central weaknesses of the Soviet-Style state. Uniformity undermines diversity and the capacity to diffuse opposition.
6. The engines of capital, the financial markets, may be 'anarchic', flexible and fluid—but they are still governed by one unbreakable law—profit.
7. A further irony is that the same tools that enable capital to disregard borders and produce commodities thousands of miles away from their markets, the internet and cheap air travel, are the same tools which are helping global social movements to meet and work with each other. Of course I am aware of the ecological and social costs of the computer industry and air travel. The only way I can resolve this contradiction is by applying a homeopathic metaphor to it. The word Homeopathy comes from the Greek and means 'similar suffering'. The idea is that a substance that can produce symptoms in a healthy person can cure those symptoms in a sick person. For instance, if you suffer from hayfever, running nose and eyes, then you take a minute dose of onion, because onion juice produces similar symptoms (something anyone cutting up onions will have experienced.) The concept of this minimum dose states that we must only use as little medicine as possible to stimulate the body's own healing



- mechanism. So if we apply this to the use of destructive technologies to enable social change, it is clear that the amount of air travel and internet used by activists is minute, compared with what is used for capitalist gain and perhaps this minute amount of 'poisonous' substance may actually stimulate the healing capacities of the social body.
8. See Jeremy Brecher and Tim Costello's excellent book about global struggle: *Global Village or Global Pillage—Economic Reconstruction from the Bottom Up*, Second Edition, South End Press, Cambridge 1998.
 9. Despite the fact that a recent government statistics reveal that one in three children in the UK is brought up in poverty.
 10. Quoted in: *Trilateralism*, edited by Holly Sklar, 1980, quoted in *The Case Against the Global Economy, and For a Turn Toward the Local*, edited by Mander and Goldsmith, Sierra Club Books, San Francisco 1996.
 11. See: *A Handicap Removed* by Dominique Vidal, Le Monde Diplomatique, May 1998.
 12. *Post Scarcity Anarchism* by Murray Bookchin, Black Rose Books, Montreal 1971.
 13. *Rebels Against the Future—Lessons for the Computer Age* by Kirkpatrick Sale, Quartet Books 1996.
 14. The generations of the '50s to the '80s had the threat of nuclear apocalypse hanging over them, but that was a question of probability—IF there was a nuclear war. The question is no longer an if, because there is certainty that as long as business continues as normal, the biosphere will be irrevocably damaged. If it hasn't already been so.
 15. Emanating from Subcommandante Marcos' now legendary jungle battered Olivetti laptop.
 16. See the excellent writings of US academic Harry Cleaver about computer linked social movements—available on the web at: <http://www.eco.utexas.edu/faculty/Cleaver/hmchtmlpapers.html>
 17. Subcommandante Marcos said in his speech to the Convention: "We...ask in the name of all men and women that you save a moment, a few days, a few hours, enough minutes to find the common enemy."
 18. From PGA manifesto, February 1998—see: www.agp.org for more details on the PGA.
 19. *The Daily Mail*, Monday June 21 1999, p. 23 'Invitation to a Riot' by Steve Doughty and Peter Rose.
 20. *The Daily Express*, Saturday June 19 1999, p. 3 'Day of Chaos Planned on the Internet' by Danny Penman.
 21. So does that mean that when actions were organised using leaflets and posters, they were able to use their psychic powers and guess exactly how many protestors would be in the City of London? The irony is that police figures, weeks before the protest, estimated 10,000 people which was good deal more accurate than the figures quoted on



- the day by the majority of the media, which ranged from 3000-7000.
22. *The Daily Telegraph*, Saturday June 19 1999, p. 5 Protest Hatched on the Internet by Tom Sykes.
 23. Phone calls are not normal tools in most of the world. I am obviously referring to the 'affluent' societies here.
 24. *The Financial Times*, Friday June 18 1999, 'Organised Anarchists'
 25. After June 18th (and at time of writing in August 1999) the police had 60 officers working on the case full time, looking at 5000 hours of CCTV footage and other evidence.
 26. There is a very unfortunate similarity between J18 and the name of the violent ultrafascist group C18 (which stands for combat and then the initials of Adolf Hitler, A and H the first and eighth letters of the alphabet). None of us clocked on to this until too late, but some of the media did mention it!
 27. Most large-scale action, especially street parties, have taken place on weekends. Holding something which required thousands to participate, if it was going to work, on a weekday was admittedly quite a risk.
 28. *Computer Linked Social Movements and the Global Threat to Capitalism* by Harry Cleaver, <http://www.eco.utexas.edu/faculty/Cleaver/hmchtmlpapers.html>
 29. Three colours representing Anarchism, Communism and Ecology.
 30. See George MacKays introduction to *DIY Culture, Party and Protest in '90s Britain*, Verso, London 1998 for an academic but interesting critique.
 31. From J18 international leaflet—quoted from Noam Chomsky. No further reference available.
 32. If you are going to read any paper which tells you the real stories about what is going on in the world, who pulls the strings and how the system works, then you have to fork out 85p for the *Financial Times*. Or go into a large branch of WH Smiths, where they trust you to pay just by dropping the change (a few coppers can do) into a bucket. It will be the most educating shoplifting you have ever done.
 33. From the introduction of *Squaring Up to the Square Mile—A Rough Guide to the City of London*, Corporate Watch and Reclaim the Streets, J18 Publications 1999.
 34. *Computer-linked Social Movements and the Global Threat to Capitalism* by Harry Cleaver, see above.
 35. The Angry Brigade Communique 6/7, 1970.
 36. RTS organised a Tube Party in support of Tube workers and against the privatisation of the London Underground, which took place on May 1st, 1999.
 37. Many people assumed that these gold flyers cost the earth to print, in fact they cost the same amount as if we had done them in any other colour.
 38. *The Revolution of Everyday Life*, Raoul Vancigem, Rebel Press 1994.
 39. *The Sunday Telegraph*, May 16 1999 'City Faces Mass Protest Threat' by Grant Ringshaw.



Autonomous Actions and Anarchy!

In all the talk and publicity leading up to June 18th a huge emphasis was put on the importance of groups and individuals organising their own autonomous actions to be carried out on the morning in the City of London. In the end there were around 20 of these actions that took place in and around the square mile of the City, as well as a number outside the capital. Groups that took action in the City that morning included Campaign Against the Arms Trade, a selection of Earth First! groups, International Solidarity with Workers in Russia, Haringey Solidarity Group, the Association of Autonomous Astronauts, London Animal Action and Tyneside Action for People and Planet. Here we have included a few pieces of writing on the background to some of these actions. All are personal accounts and do not necessarily represent the views or ideas of the rest of the people involved in that particular group or action. For more comprehensive coverage of other events that happened during the morning on June 18th get the *Earth First! Action Update*, No. 60/July 1999—see page 344 for their contact details.

Unions—Pimps For Capitalism!

Revolutionaries from the Northern Anarchist Network, the Anarchist Communist Federation, plus individual anarchists and communists, invaded the Trade Union Congress (TUC) HQ in London as part of the June 18th day of action.

Around 25-30 people gathered at a nearby re-direction point. The group then walked into the main reception area, up the stairs and into the labyrinth of offices and corporate style meeting rooms. The leaflets that we had produced for the day, entitled 'Why Target the TUC?' outlining the consistent role that the unions have played in helping to isolate workplace resistance, were given out to the people that were in the building. We were greeted by several TUC bureaucrats with the expected "What the hell do you think you're doing in here—get out now!" One or two officials actually started into a panic motivated sprint down the corridors—to call the cavalry maybe? One secretary asked "What's this? Oh, it's that day isn't it?"—sounding a bit like it was April Fool's Day!

Leaflets were placed in all the offices that we could get into. We walked through the restaurant handing them out to the bemused diners. As we moved around the corridors and offices, we seemed to be swallowed up by this maze-like bland complex. The huge building seemed barely in use, bad timing? Was everyone at lunch? Was it always this quiet in here? Several members of the group remained outside giving out leaflets to the passers-by.

As we left the building singing sarcastically, '...you won't get me I'm part of the union, 'til the day I die..' suddenly the fire alarms started to ring out and the remaining leaflets were thrown about the foyer.

As we walked off towards the City of London to join the rest of the people who were gathered for the

J18 celebration, a couple of police vans were spotted cruising towards the TUC building. We had left just in time!

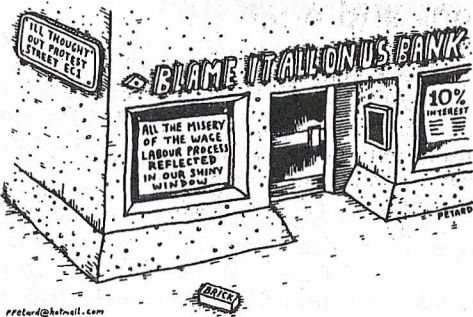
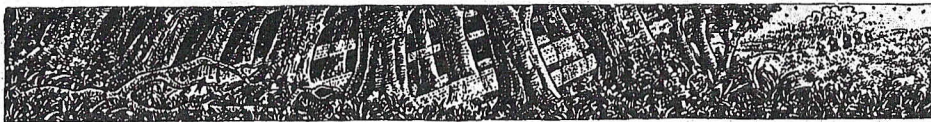
The HQ of the Trade Union Congress was chosen for this action to point out the reactionary role that the unions play in helping to keep the cogs and wheels of the capitalist mechanism running so smoothly.

We must always understand that the interests of the union and all its officials are different to ours. This separation applies to all of those who attempt to represent our class and act as a pacifying interface between the boss class and the rest of us.

The planning of an effective action between different parts of the country was slowed down by justifiable hesitancy to use the phone and e-mail etc. for security reasons. Ideally, we would have informed many more militants about what we had planned. Also, we could have checked out the lay-out of the building and maybe phoned the press etc. from one of the offices.



P.P.



Diary of a Meeting Junkie!

Don't get me wrong, I am not against meetings in principle at all. In the City of London, nothing is going to happen naturally and spontaneously. My only feeling, one I think shared by others after the day, was that you can try to plan too much. When it comes to the crunch, the unexpected will always happen (as it did) and then you have spent the whole of the spring sat in a darkened room expending energy that could have been better used elsewhere.

After a small amount of publicity, the Brighton June 18th group formed and started to meet fortnightly en masse four months before the event. As I remember, there was always a healthy turn out for the large meetings in the beginning. In these, it was decided that there were certain tasks which needed attention: publicity, fundraising, transport, props, finances, and a group to plan the action. These sub-groups sorted out what needed to be done and then cleared it past the larger group.

Some of these groups worked really well in an autonomous fashion. The publicity group produced some excellent posters, flyers and stickers (still on my bedroom wall) and pretty comprehensive coverage of Brighton was organised. The local magazine, *Impact*, said, 'I defy you not to have noticed some item of flyposting, flyer or graffiti about June the 18th.' Nice one!

The fundraising group put on some brilliant stomp-ing benefit gigs, not only raising money but providing a situation for everyone to get to know each other—just as important as a meeting any day.

And then there was the action group. Because we wanted to plan a really good, effective action in the City, we met regularly—at least once a week in the beginning and every day at the end. However, the problem was that almost every member of the action group was also a member of another sub-group. This meant that time in these meetings was often taken up

by other groups' business and problems. Plus the action group members were having to become meeting junkies.

The action group had decided that the best way to organise was around an affinity group structure. Being new to the whole thing, I thought this was a great idea. However, now I know people better, I realise that if you want to organise around a structure of affinity groups, they have to exist first—work with what you have, not with what you want. A lot of time and effort went into trying to form people into affinity groups and the main way we tried to achieve this was through organising two training days.

The first training day concentrated on informing people about what June 18th was, and we showed videos. Then we had games to try to get people to know each other. Then, in arbitrary groups, we did a hypothetical exercise about an apocalyptic post-mil-lennium period and how an affinity group would cope with problems in such a situation.

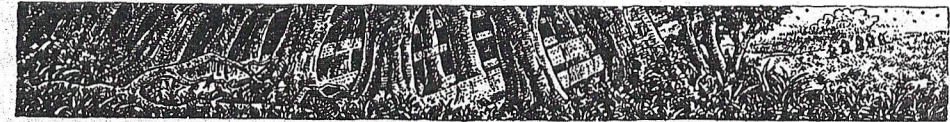
The second training day was much more fun, because by that time we had formulated our secret plans and clever tricks and knew what we wanted. We had legal workshops (very useful) and a de-arresting workshop that generated a mini-riot, 'Quick, grab his nose and give him a hammer blow to the diaphragm!'

After we had all jumped on each other's heads in de-arresting and had a few pub sessions, it felt like there was more of a group atmosphere—something you can't produce through meetings.

Then we held a final briefing on June 16th, where people were told everything except the target. People were told it was a traffic blockade, timed to coincide with the morning rush hour and involving three cars and a chain with a banner across the southbound carriage way.

So on the big day, we all met at 5am and piled off to London. The target was London Bridge. (Can you imagine how hard it was not to hum, 'London Bridge is falling down' in the months leading up?) Everything was going perfectly, and people seemed happy. When we got to our drop-off point, we walked the back way to the bridge, avoiding CCTV on the way; you can never be too careful. At the bottom of the Southwark Cathedral steps it all went a bit pear shaped. This was when so much planning seemed futile.

Fifty people all standing masked up at the bottom of the bridge looked just a little suspect. One of our cars had broken down—curses. After tense minutes



of waiting, the spotter gave the signal and we piled up the steps, only to face the advancing law. Some people did a runner immediately, while others rushed to try to complete their tasks. Two cars were D-locked together and had their tyres slashed, while we nearly managed to chain up the other side of the bridge, in spite of irate motorists, pigs and a bus driver who seemed determined to kill us.

Later on, the broken-down car was turned sideways into traffic and had its tyres slashed by the magic bradawl fairy, effectively causing a traffic jam further back on the feeder road. Wonderful.

Three people ended up in police custody, which was bad, missing the Carnival, which was worse. But all in all—we did what we set out to do. And that was very good. When it comes to empowerment, lots of the people on that action, including myself, were inspired by their first taste of group action planning and involvement and will keep on causing trouble and refusing to move on, shut up, bow down and knuckle under.

More To Life Project

"The role of the revolutionary artist is to make revolution irresistible."

The More To Life Project (MTLP) was one of several small affinity groups which came together as a result of discussions about using surreal theatre on June 18th. We were motivated not only by the issues around J18 itself but also frustration at the lack of politics in art and theatre. Inspired by Situationist theatre from the past, we began putting these bizarre ideas into action.

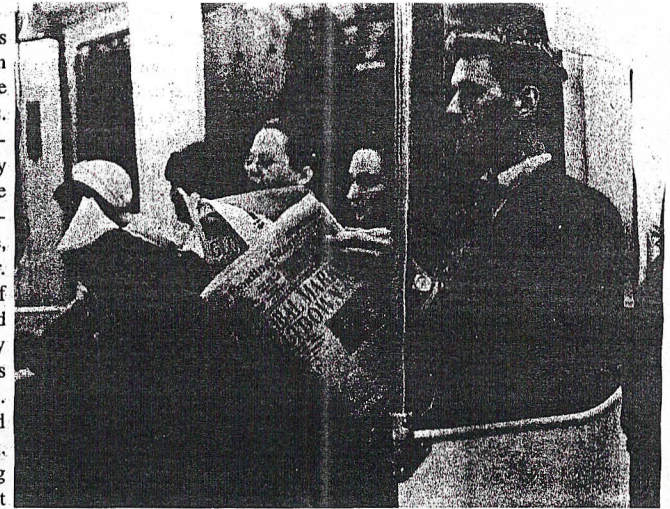
Our message? That there is more to life than consumerism and the destructive rat-race which capitalism perpetuates. We wanted to shock city workers 'into critical thought' not by asserting that MTLP could give them solutions (join this, boycott that, etc.) but with surprise, playing, poetry and laughter. We aimed to prick the bubble of their be-suited reality and expose the death and misery caused by their actions. Work is their prison, not their liberation.

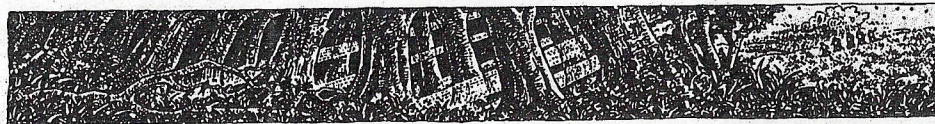
Preparation meetings focused on doing rather than talking. Improvisation, game-playing and generally acting mad kept

creative ideas flowing and built our confidence. A crack team fashioned outlandish mobile phones and other props from polystyrene, bits of wire and anything else they could grab. Another team trawled poetry books, zines, cartoons and leaflets for our propaganda, which was designed to be immediate, funny and cover a broad range of topics. The combination of visual actions and written propaganda was very important—we didn't want to just be an entertaining spectacle.

Excited by a bizarre range of ideas, we planned to do something every day in the week building up to June 18th. We hoped that by pre-empting the day itself and the inevitable media backlash that would follow, we could help get the real message of June 18th across, and complement the office occupations, blockades and disruption which would take place on the day. We time-tabled bars, the tube and the street as venues on different days for our theatre experiments: loud conversations about selling fresh air, breaking into games of tag (complete with briefcases), 'follow my leader', and going berserk with toy mobile phones.

We pushed ourselves hard and it was emotionally exhausting. Every day we dressed up in suits, pretended to be something we weren't, entered an alien, hostile environment and then did things that drew attention to ourselves—while simultaneously trying to block off that little voice in our heads which screamed "Shit! People are looking at me! Aaaargh!" We learnt loads of lessons—about what didn't and did work (especially in enclosed environments like





the tube) and how to overcome our fears. We learnt that the risks and stress were not less than 'usual' political actions, but very different!

The big day itself saw immaculately-dressed members of MTLP striding around the streets of the city in formation, briefcases on heads, umbrellas turning, singing straight-faced ('money makes the world go around' and 'if you're happy and you know it, quit yer job'), spouting poetry into mobile contraptions and stopping in the street suddenly to proclaim joyously that we'd 'made a killing!' We'd drafted in a few friends to hand out leaflets with us, having found it difficult to both keep in role and thrust leaflets into bemused and laughing faces.

We're now making plans for the next MTLP venture and writing up (in more detail than we can here) some of the ideas we would like to share with others. In particular we're interested in pushing the boundaries of 'usual' direct action and finding new and better ways to be challenging, disarming, amusing, confusing, engaging, disruptive, bizarre...

For further information e-mail: more2life@england.com

Northerners Doing It Down South!

Manchester began organising for June 18th at the beginning of the year, when several people from the EF! network instigated a June 18th organising group. The first few meetings were relatively well attended by a diverse bunch of people. Early on, the decision was taken not to do an action in Manchester, but to network, publicise and organise transport for the London event.

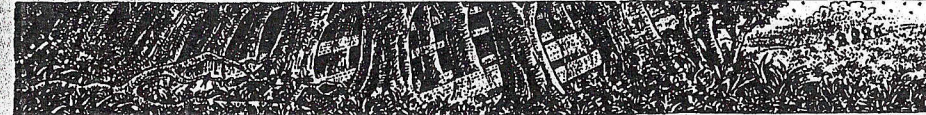
However, from this point, the J18 group lost focus and all but collapsed. Meetings became increasingly tortuous, numbers attending steadily dwindled, and in the end it was yet again a tiny handful of people from the EF! network who ended up doing most of the J18 work. The attempt to broaden the J18 group out beyond our usual networks failed in Manchester,

and it may be interesting to look briefly at why this happened.

One of the reasons the meetings didn't really work is that the group was operating in a vacuum. We had no idea what sort of event J18 was going to be until only a few weeks before the day. Our only frame of reference was a street party, and we had had it drummed into us that this was *not* going to be a street party. We had no idea what we were networking for. Even the morning actions were hazy, as we had some vague idea we might need to co-ordinate with other groups around the country, and this didn't seem to be happening. The group also suffered from lack of a clear remit. Were we planning for a Manchester action on the morning or were we just a networking group? I recall it being totally unclear to all of us involved at first, as to which would be the most effective thing to do in terms of bringing together different Manchester networks both for this action and for future events here.

The group spent ages arguing about different action possibilities, and also the different politics around the event. And this was the final downfall of our group. The accepted wisdom on diversity is that it is a strength. Yet in a group trying to plan around an unknown action, with an unknown random collection of people, with different politics and experience, diversity is a real bind.

I felt particularly hampered by the fact that very few Manchester 'activists' (meaning those full/nearly full-time activists coming largely but loosely from the EF! network) got involved with these meetings, or in fact J18 generally. The original J18 group consisted of a tiny handful of 'us lot', a few old time anarchists, a few random nutters, a few students, and due to Manchester's rich leftie history—a fair few revolutionary and reformist left groups/individuals. How do you hope to achieve anything, when in response to "what we think the aims of J18 are", someone says that "of course, the main aim is good media coverage!" And when someone else says that we should steer clear of putting the word 'capitalism' on a poster because lots of people who might want to come to a street party think that capitalism is an okay thing? It became clear that the J18 group could not attempt to organise a Manchester action, and that we'd have to leave that to autonomous groups. The J18 group would stick to organising transport to the afternoon event, producing publicity, organising trainings and briefings, and managing the money. We could, of course, have gone out to talk to community groups, student groups, grassroots workers



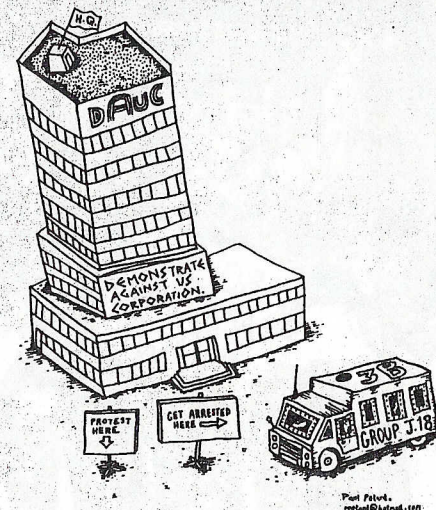
groups, workers in struggle, animal rights groups (who, typically of that scene in Manchester, didn't get involved at all with the exception of some individuals linked with EF!) But the J18 group became about 4 people, all 'activists' with tons of other stuff to do, and still without a clue as to what the rest of the activist population of Manchester thought about J18. This same group were the only ones really pushing to get the Manchester EF! network to do anything for the morning of J18, so it was just not possible to do everything. A group squatted the Hacienda as a networking weekend for J18 among other reasons, but the mini-riot resulting from this just gave us more work in court support and very nearly got most of the EF! group nicked, too.

The briefings and public order training went well, and we produced a good little booklet from this, on tips on how to behave in a public order situation, to be given to everyone on our transport. The coach was more than filled, and if people had got round to phoning to book the coach before 8pm on the 17th, we could have fetched many more people down from Manchester.

At the very last minute, four different groups emerging largely from the EF! network did do autonomous actions in the morning—involving blocking roads, bridges and tube lines. Other people from Manchester took part in a Northern Anarchist Network action at the TUC, a fair few went on a Campaign Against The Arms Trade (CAAT) action, a group of students attempted to organise a morning action, some went on the Critical Mass, and others scattered among other different actions.

Most of these actions worked well, but we nearly screwed up our afternoon role, due to being unaware that we even had a crucial role. Either the secrecy was the problem or the last minute arrangements, because someone from Manchester went to London only the previous weekend in order to work this out, and wasn't told anything really. By the time we managed to find out we had a role (midnight of the 17th) it was way too late to involve anyone other than our small affinity group for a job which required most of Manchester activists. Even at the point of being in the station, only one of us knew anything at all, having been sworn to secrecy. This clearly has the potential for a large fuck-up. I think we need to trust each other a bit more.

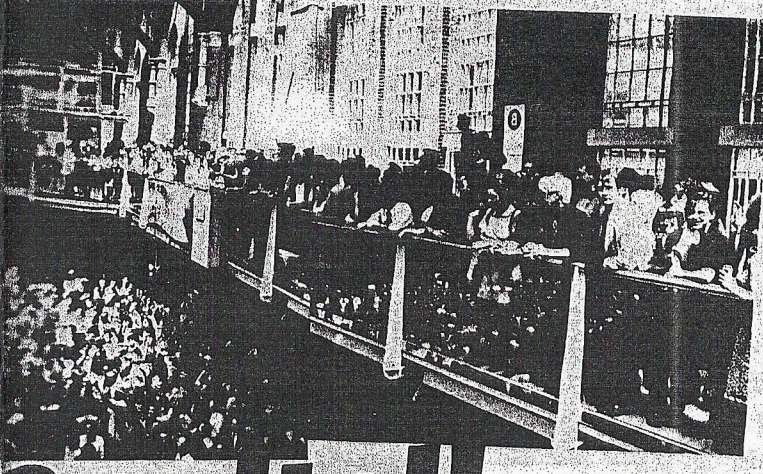
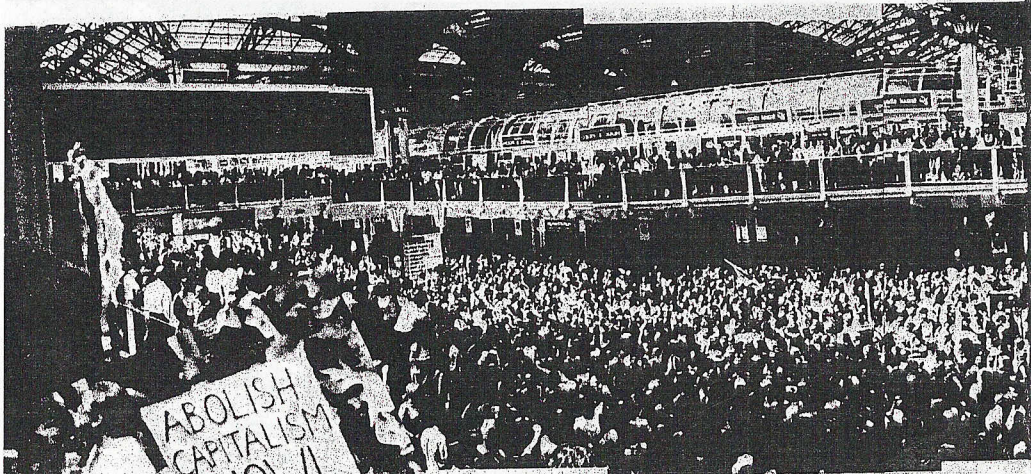
And just a final little dig (because of course in general, I felt J18 was inspiring), we must try harder to avoid London centism. None of the publicity had space for local contacts, and one of the stickers actu-



ally didn't even mention the action was in London assuming everyone in the country would know which city Liverpool Street station was in. We lacked information from the beginning, and not enough was done soon enough to involve the regions [surely the colonies?] in J18. In Manchester, we shouldn't have bothered with a J18 group in my view—we couldn't effectively network and publicise it in advance because we lacked information from London or enthusiasm from activists here, and all the organising was done in the last two weeks as per usual.

Finally, the after-effects of J18 are still with us. Many of us here felt the day was inspirational, some of us were disappointed we didn't achieve more, and some were disappointed that J18 wasn't a much broader alliance than the street party crowd. However, a significant number of people, including some activists from Manchester, said they would never go on an action like J18 again, due to the 'violence'. We discussed this in our 'Riotous Assembly' network forum, and had an interesting and amicable discussion.

We may be following the State's agenda to be discussing the violence—as it deflects from the real issue and the real perpetrators of violence in our society—but in Manchester, if we don't want to appear like some hardcore exclusive clique we don't give a toss what some among us think of this discussion is essential. Moreover, it reminds us that diversity can be not a problem, but a bonus.



"We met at Liverpool Street Station at 12 noon, and at first I thought 'Fuck there's not enough people,' but then I went outside and was blown away with the size

Carnival Against Capital!

of the crowd there. Most newspapers said around 4,000—I reckon more like 15,000!"

In England, the most ambitious and largest June 18th action was the Carnival Against Capital held in London's financial district. The meeting point was announced for 12 noon at Liverpool Street Station on the edge of the City. By 1pm, masks were being handed out, and then the various groups moved off in different directions...



For the 'Carnival Against Capital' in the City of London, 9,000 masks were produced. They came in four different colours, to divide the crowd into four different groups to be led off by people with streamers of matching colours. The masks had this text printed on the reverse: "Those in authority fear the mask for their power partly resides in identifying, stamping and cataloguing in knowing who you are. But a Carnival needs masks, thousands of masks; and our masks are not to conceal our identity but to reveal it... The masquerade has always been an essential part of Carnival. Dressing up and disguise, the blurring of identities and boundaries, transformation, transgression; all are brought together in the wearing of masks. Masking up releases our commonality, enables us to go together, to shout as one to those who rule and divide us 'we are all fools, deviants, outcasts, clowns and criminals'. Today we shall give this resistance a face; for by putting on our masks we reveal our unity; and by raising our voices in the street together, we speak our anger at the facelessness of power. On the signal follow your colour. Let the Carnival begin..."

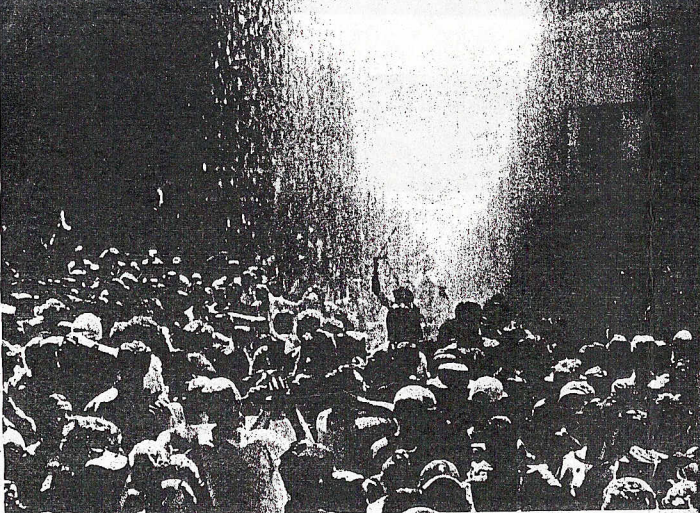
"The protests forced many offices to add extra security, stationing guards in the street and advising employees to dress casually to avoid becoming a target." Financial Times, 19th/20th June 1999



"A former employee said: 'I used to work in the City and they were a bunch of capitalist bankers.'" The Independent, 19th June 1999.



After a good while walking through the City, the four different groups converged on Upper Thames Street, in front of the London International Financial Futures Exchange (LIFFE) building. The sound systems pulled up, a punk band was playing, a



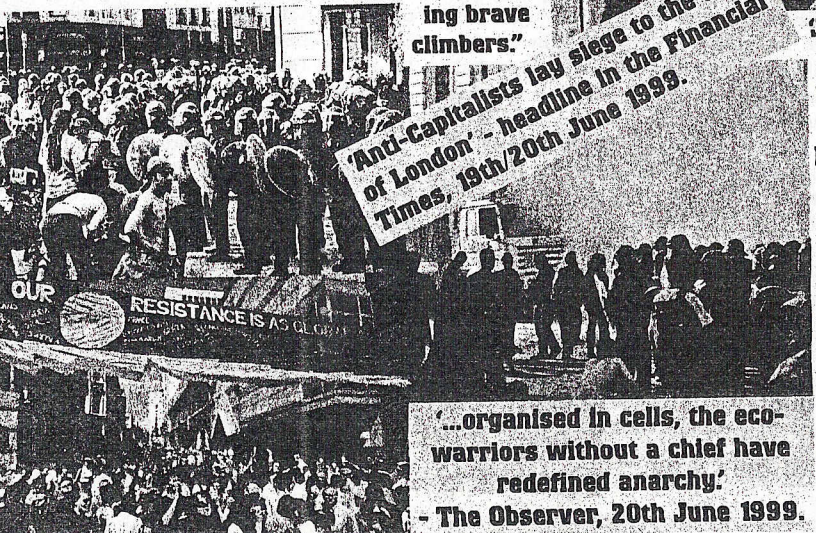
smashed fire hydrant sprayed water four storeys high, and the party started...

"As I arrived at the scene of the party someone was busy sledgehammering into the ventilation system of the LIFFE building. When through, he shouted—so who wants to go in? A drunk punk dressed all in leather

clutching a can of brew volunteered and disappeared inside. Did anyone see him come out or is he still in there?"

"I looked around worried about the amount of CCTV on the buildings, but slowly had this realisation that most had bin liners put over them by some fucking brave climbers."

'Anti-Capitalists lay siege to the City of London' - headline in the Financial Times, 19th/20th June 1999.



"...organised in cells, the eco-warriors without a chief have redefined anarchy."

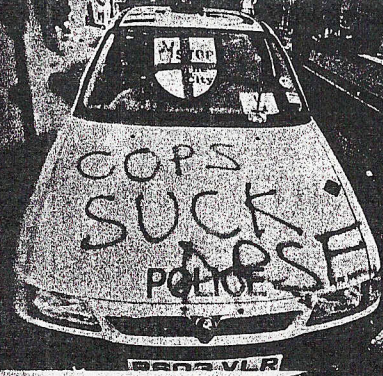
- The Observer, 20th June 1999.

"A few trucks got trapped on Upper Thames Street in the thick of the riot. The crowd ransacked them to find they were builders supply merchants vehicles—full of scaffold poles and two huge vats of paint. It was like a gift from the gods!"



John grins behind his Halloween mask and reaches into his dinged and spattered rucksack. He pulls out...a...jack of all trades. The front has the City of London Police insignia, the back is covered in scores of marks. "I got this from a copper," he says. "My mate set fire to his car and I took the front end."

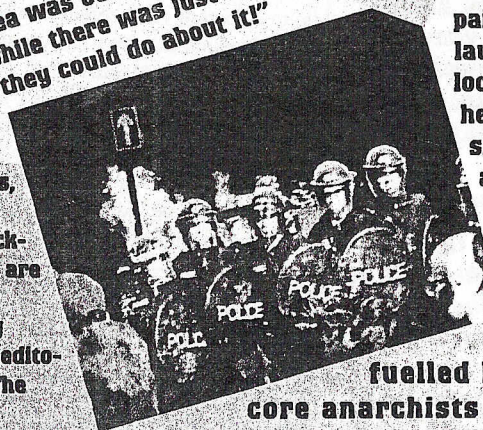
- The Observer, 20th June 1999



...the loony I saw had taken a fireman's helmet and then proceeded to strap it on tightly and use his head as a battering ram to smash through the bank's plate glass windows. The cops were paralysed—just stood and watched. I'd lost it—they knew it. The area was ours, and for a while there was just a war of attrition. I don't know what all they could do about it!"

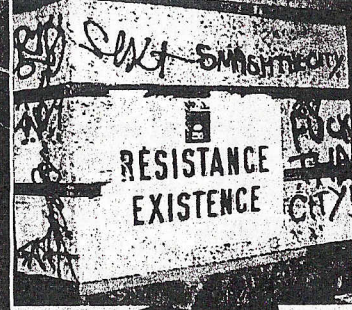
"Most of the perpetrators are not political demonstrators in the conventional sense but anarchists committed to the destruction of property." - Evening Standard, Monday 28th June 1999.

"I was nicked on one of the actions the morning so was in a police station kicking off all afternoon. One came in drenched from head to toe in paint. I really had to control myself not laughing—it looked like he'd been shat on by a huge bird!"



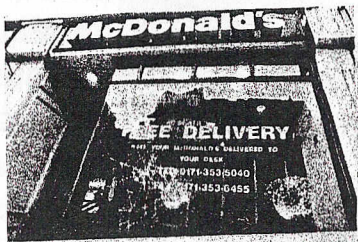
'Booze-fuelled hardcore anarchists turn anti-capitalist protest into orgy of violence' - The Daily Star, 19th June 1999.

The most depressing thing about the whole day was the minority of troublemakers that tried to pull other peoples masks or disguises off. I've had this happen before and tried to discuss the danger that doing this puts people in. It's a pointless, and I've come to the conclusion that if I see anyone do it again I'll punch them fucking hard in the face first and discuss it later. Cunts!"



"I ran in the LIFFE building smashed a few mirrors in the foyer and they looked ready to see this masked up figure light a distress flare and hurtle up the escalators towards the offices. Fuck, I thought, this is really for real."

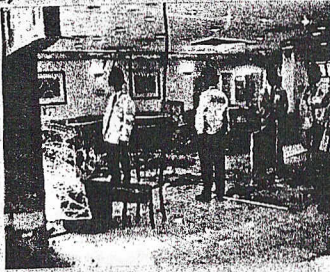




'At one point, city money men taunted protesters who had chained themselves to

buildings by showering them with champagne and photocopied £50 notes from first floor windows to incite the demonstrators.' - The Daily Star, 19th June 1999

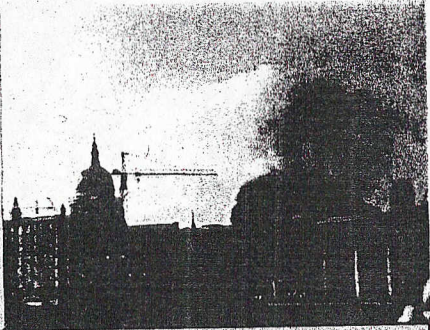
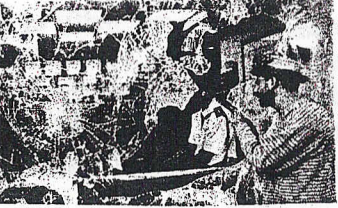
"We're playing catch-up now," admitted one senior City of London Police officer yesterday. "We do not know who is behind this. But they got what they were looking for. Our resources were overstretched. Tactical decisions were made as we went along. We were taken by surprise." - The Observer, 20th June 1999.



"We're being besieged by open-toed sandaled hippy vandals. We have armed our doorman, Bernard, Maclay, Murray and Spans with a shotgun." Partner at The Lawyer magazine.

Levene, Lord Mayor of the City of London, said: "It was wanton terrorism, anarchy. The riot police came to rescue an impossible situation. That was nothing short of a war zone." - The Sunday Times, 20th June 1999

"I saw some people crowbar the back of a cop van and nick all the riot gear out of the back—there were protesters running around with helmets and riot shields!"

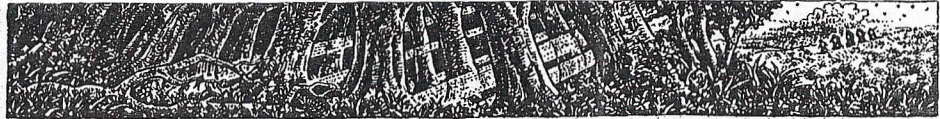
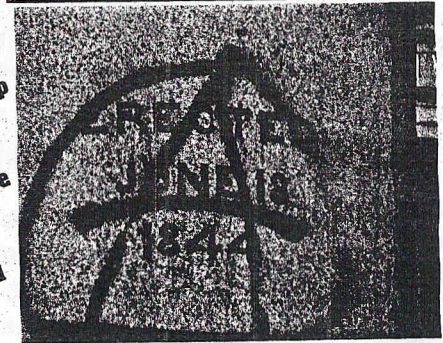


Arrests So Far And An Appeal For Witnesses

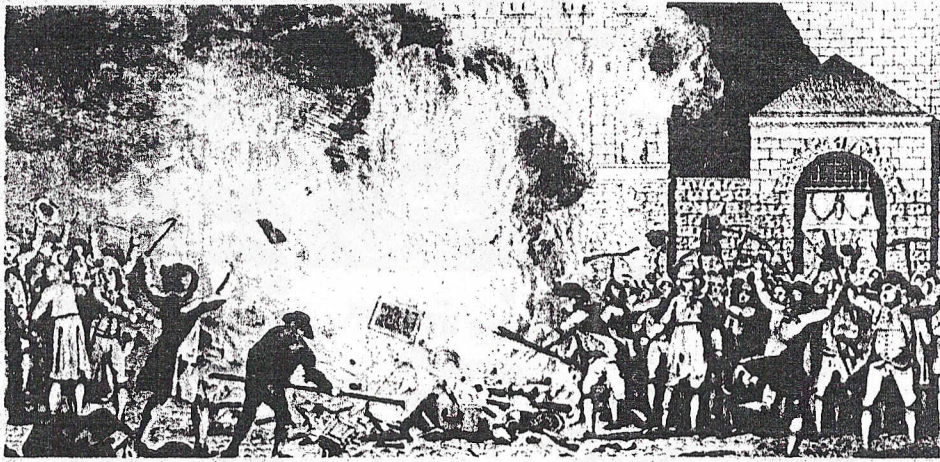
On June 18th there were around 15 arrests—a remarkably low number. Since the day the police have launched an operation to attempt to track down more of those involved. As of mid August 1999 there have been around 43 further arrests, with one person held on remand. For more details of this and how you can support these people contact Reclaim The Streets in London (see page 341 for their contact details.)

Did you witness an arrest or injury at the J18 events in London?

If so (or if you were one of those arrested or injured) please send details of the incident (time, location and description/names of the people involved) together with your name, address and a contact telephone number to: Legal Defence and Monitoring Group, c/o BM Haven, London, WC1N 3XX, UK. In the event of further arrests remember to give only a name, address and date of birth and then no comment to everything else. Nobody Talks—Everybody Walks!



The Great Liberty Riot



On a Friday in June, a large protest in London with a peaceful carnivalesque atmosphere turned into a riot. The City was attacked and property destroyed as the dispossessed took their revenge on the hub of global finance contained in the square mile around the Bank of England. The politicians and the media blamed 'mindless drunkenness' and called the rioters 'animals' and 'savages'. This happened in 1780.

The Daily Telegraph of 19th June 1999 reported that on June 18th, "the City was confronted with the worst trouble in the Square Mile since the Gordon Riots of 1780." That summer, a mob of several thousand, led by African-Americans, broke open the prisons of London, attacked the Bank of England and threatened the House of Commons. Buckingham Palace, the police station at Bow Street and the Arsenal at Woolwich were all attacked. The just-completed Newgate prison, the country's principal jail, was stormed and burned (see picture). There were 300 prisoners inside, some awaiting execution. The prisoners were all taken to neighbourhood blacksmiths to have their chains struck off. Triumphant rebels danced and postured, defying the flames—they raided the Keeper's wine cellars and passed around the drink from hand to hand.

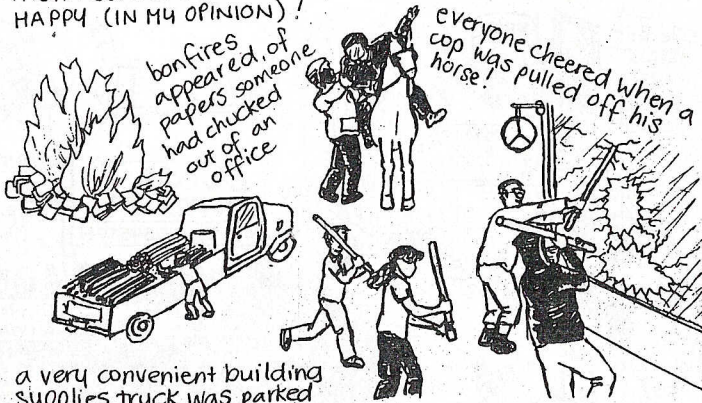
In a week of rioting and looting, the rebels systematically destroyed all the prisons in London, one by one. The Old Bailey was in ruins, all the records having been burned and London was lit up at night with the glow from burning prisons and bonfires in the streets. Many of the casualties suffered by the rioters were due to a raid on a huge gin distillery in Holborn

at which many rebels literally drank themselves to death [sounds familiar!]. In total over 2000 prisoners were freed, the vast majority of them debtors, condemned to be chained up in a pestilential hole until they could pay off their debt. After the prisons, the rioters' next target was the Bank of England. The assault on the Bank was led by a man on a cart horse brandishing the broken chains and fetters of the liberated from Newgate—even the horse was decorated with chains from Newgate.

The Gordon Riots struck a blow for freedom around the world. In 1780 the British state was involved in fighting a desperate war against the revolutionary American colonists. The riots were an extremely effective act of practical solidarity with the rebels. The following Autumn the last British army surrendered to the Americans. The rioters really did hold the balance of history in their hands.

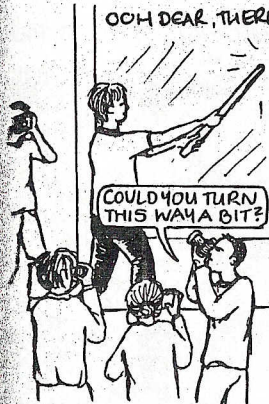
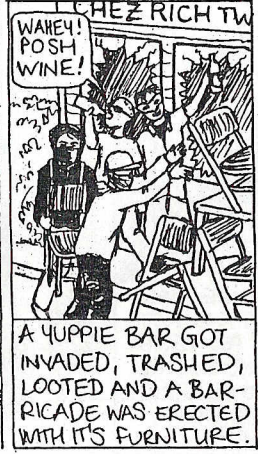
The poet William Blake, aged 23, was in "the front rank" of the crowd that destroyed Newgate on June 6th 1780. "In America Blake describes the spirit of rebellion as crossing the Atlantic to Great Britain and inspiring, particularly in London and Bristol, open demonstrations against the war, which temporarily deranged the guardians of the status quo and hastened the coming of peace. Amid 'fires of hell' and 'burning winds driven by flames' of revolution, 'The millions sent up a howl of anguish and threw off their hammer'd mail, And cast their swords & spears to earth, & stood a naked multitude.'" Long live King Mob!

THE ATMOSPHERE IN THE CROWD WASN'T ONE OF INTIMIDATION - IT FELT POWERFUL AND HAPPY (IN MY OPINION)!

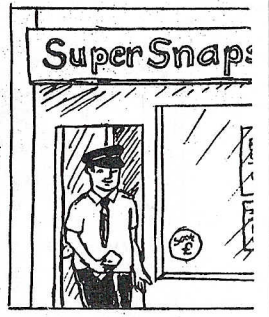


THESE TROUBLEMAKERS TURN UP AT EVERY BIG RTS OR DEMO, AND DISRUPT THEM. THEY HAVE REALITY PROBLEMS, AND YOU CAN'T DISCUSS THE MATTER WITH THEM - THEY'RE TOTALLY UNREASONABLE. I'VE LEARNT JUST NOT TO BOTHER. SOMETIMES SOMEONE WILL ASK WHY YOU'RE MASKED UP, YOU EXPLAIN THAT YOU DON'T WANT TO BE IDENTIFIED ON THE MILES OF FOOTAGE

THE POLICE INTELLIGENCE WILL CARRY HOME, AND THEY SAY "FAIR ENOUGH". BUT THOSE WHO SHOUT AND EVEN TRY TO UNMASK YOU - I HAVE NO TIME AT ALL FOR THEM. THEY'RE JUST UNOFFICIAL HELPERS OF THE COPS. MY ONLY ANSWER IS "FUCK OFF, THEN" AND PUNCHING THEM IF THEY TRY TO PULL OFF YOUR MASK IS A LEGITIMATE FORM OF SELF-DEFENCE, AS WELL.



OOH DEAR, THERE WERE SO MANY CAUSING THOUSANDS OF POUNDS WORTH OF CRIMINAL DAMAGE WITHOUT MASKS OR EVEN SHIRTS TO COVER THEIR DISTINCTIVE TATTOOS! AND THERE WERE SO MANY FUCKING CAMERAS AROUND! WHY? TAKING PICTURES WILL JUST END UP INCRIMINATING OTHER PEOPLE. IT'S A LOT MORE LIKELY THAN YOU THINK, THAT THE POLICE GET THEIR HANDS ON A COPY OF YOUR PICTURES - WHO NEEDS HOLIDAY SNAPSHOTS ANYWAY WHEN IT WAS SUCH A REAL, UNFORGETTABLE EXPERIENCE? LEAVE YOUR CAMERA AT HOME, AND POINT THIS OUT TO PEOPLE YOU SEE TAKING INCRIMINATING PICTURES!!



OF COURSE, THE MEDIA TRIGGERED THEIR RANDOM RIOT HEADLINES MACHINE - WHO CARES? PEOPLE WORRY THAT THAT WON'T MAKE US ANY FRIENDS. YES, THE MEDIA HAS AN INFLUENCE ON WHAT PEOPLE THINK (I DOUBT THERE ARE MANY WHO BELIEVE EVERY WORD, THOUGH) BUT FACE IT: WE WON'T EVER BE ABLE TO CONVEY WHAT WE THINK, OR THE WIDE SCOPE OF OUR STRUGGLES THROUGH THEM, WHO PLAY SUCH A VITAL ROLE IN MAINTAINING THE STATUS QUO. WE CAN'T START AVOIDING CONFRONTATION, SUPPRESSING OUR DESIRES IN ORDER TO ACCOMMODATE THEM, WORRYING ABOUT "WHAT THE PUBLIC WILL THINK". I HAD AN EXCELLENT DAY AND FELT REALLY STRONG. THAT'S WHAT COUNTS FOR MYSELF, AND I THINK IT'S FAR MORE INFLUENTIAL, HOW WE INTERACT WITH OTHERS FACE TO FACE OR IN OUR COMMUNITIES, THAN WHAT THEY SEE ON Telly.

THE POLICE HAD NOT BEEN PREPARED FOR WHAT HAD HAPPENED. YEP, WE HAD BEEN DAMN LUCKY. THEY'RE QUITE KEEN ON GETTING "THOSE WHO ORGANISED THE RIOTING" AND WILL BE CONDUCTING A HUGE INTELLIGENCE OPERATION AND GOING THROUGH THEIR SURVEILLANCE FOOTAGE. I CAN'T RECALL SEEING ANY EVIDENCE GATHERING TEAMS SO I TAKE IT THEY WERE USING PLAIN CLOTHES PHOTOGRAPHERS (ANOTHER REASON TO CONFRONT THOSE TAKING INCRIMINATING PICTURES). I DO HOPE PEOPLE ARE CAREFUL NOW... YOU GET AMAZING RIOTS LIKE THIS ONLY ONCE EVERY FEW YEARS. JUNE 18TH CAN'T BE REPEATED IN THE SAME WAY IN THE NEAR FUTURE. THE POLICE LEARN FROM FAILURES AND WOULD TRY VERY HARD TO CONTAIN IT. BUT WHAT WE CAN DO IS CARRY THE INSPIRATION INTO FURTHER COLLECTIVE ACTION. WE SHOULD STRENGTHEN THE SOLIDARITY BORN OUT OF THE SHARED EXPERIENCE, E.G. BY SUPPORTING THOSE WHO GET DONE FOR J18. WE COULD ALSO WORK ON STRENGTHENING THE NETWORKS FORMED, CONTINUE WORKING AND ORGANISING IN THE LOCAL GROUPS THAT GOT INVOLVED. AT LEAST THAT'S WHAT EXCITES ME IN THE AFTERMATH OF A GREAT DAY OUT...

"JUNE 18TH" WAS EVERYWHERE - SCRIBBLED ON WALLS, FLUPOSTED, STICKERED, TALKED ABOUT. I ALREADY GOT SICK OF HEARING ABOUT IT IN APRIL.

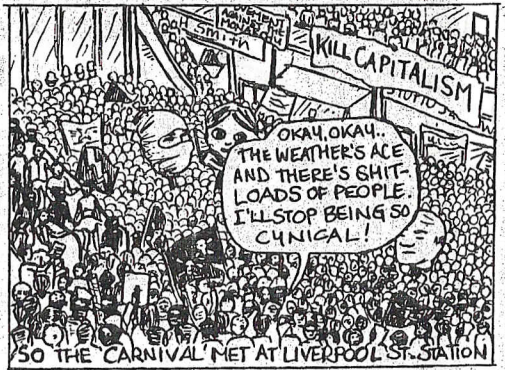


OH NO, THEY'RE TALKING ABOUT THAT DAY AGAIN!!



AND ALL THAT EFFORT PUT INTO IT!

WHAT IF IT RAINED AND ONLY 200 PEOPLE AND 7000 COPS SHOWED UP?



OKAY, OKAY... THE WEATHER'S ACE AND THERE'S SHIT-LOADS OF PEOPLE. I'LL STOP BEING SO CYNICAL!

SO THE CARNIVAL MET AT LIVERPOOL ST. STATION



WHAT ARE WE WAITING FOR? LOOK, LOADS OF PEOPLE ARE ALREADY BIMBLING OUTSIDE.

NO, WE'RE SUPPOSED TO STAY HERE!

THE DIFFERENT COLOURED CARNIVAL MASKS WERE HANDED OUT. AH, THERE WERE INSTRUCTIONS ON THEM - THAT CLEVER THING OF SPLITTING UP INTO COLOUR CO-ORDINATED GROUPS TO MOVE OFF IN DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS.

(HOW COOL! THAT REMINDED ME OF SOUTH KOREAN RIOTERS WITH THEIR COLOUR CODED CRASH HELMETS.)



WHY DIDN'T I GET A HELMET?



SO WE DID

HEY! THE COPS ARE TRYING TO UN-MASK SOMEONE! HOLD ON TO THEM!!

AND THEN WE WALKED FOR FUCKIN AGES AND NO ONE KNEW WHERE WE WERE GOING AND WE SEEMED TO RANDOMLY END UP IN A TUBE STATION.



LET'S GET ON THE TRAIN!

NO, NOT ON THAT ONE!

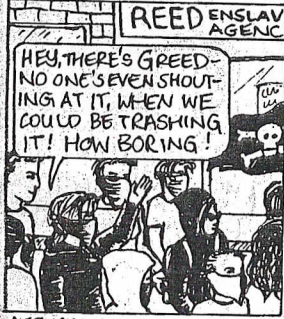
SO ARE WE GETTING ON OR NOT?

THIS IS STUPID! LET'S GO OUT!

NO!

THERE'S THIS RECURRING PHENOMENON ON RTS'/BIG ACTIONS, THAT THE MAJORITY HAVEN'T GOT A CLUE WHERE THEY'RE HEADING OR EVEN IF THINGS ARE GOING TO PLAN OR NOT. THERE'S SOMEONE SHOUTING "THAT WAY!" WITHOUT EXPLANATION AND YOU DON'T KNOW IF THAT'S BOLLOCKS OR IF THEY'RE AN 'ORGANISER' OR WHAT. IT'S ALL FOR OBVIOUS REASONS, I KNOW, BUT IT'S CONFUSING AND PEOPLE ARE FORCED TO FOLLOW SOME ANONYMOUS LEADERS LIKE SHEEP. I DON'T KNOW, BUT IS THERE A BETTER WAY TO ORGANISE MASS ACTION? AFTER ALL, THE SUCCESS IS MOSTLY DOWN TO SPONTANEOUS CROWD REACTIONS - AND COMPLICATED MASTERPLANS CAN FUCK UP & BE QUITE DISEMPOWERING. BUT I HAVEN'T REALLY GOT ANY BRIGHT IDEAS ABOUT THIS, SO I'LL STOP WHINGEING...

THEN WE JUST LEFT THE STATION AGAIN. WE WERE LUCKY THE COPS WERE BEING FUCKWITS AND DIDN'T GRAB US AS WE CAME OUT.



HEY, THERE'S GREED - NO ONE'S EVEN SHOUTING AT IT, WHEN WE COULD BE TRASHING IT! HOW BORING!

ACTUALLY, ONE OF THE OTHER 'COLOUR GROUPS' TRASHED A McDONALDS ON ROUTE

VERY PREDICTABLY, WE WENT TO THE OFF-LICENSE - AND CAME ACROSS A BUNCH OF CITY WORKERS.



WINE BAR? REALLY REALLY EXPENSIVE WANKERS!

THINK YOU'RE SO HARD?

WHERE'S A HUGE UP FOR IT CROWD WHEN YOU NEED ONE?



I WANT TO KILL ALL OF THEM

AFTER NOT GETTING THEIR ACT TOGETHER AND NOT EVEN NICKING PEOPLE, THE FRUSTRATED COPS STARTED CHARGING AND RANDOMLY BATTERING THE CROWD IN AN ATTEMPT TO CLEAR THE AREA.

WE ALL CONVERGED ON UPPER THAMES STREET....



WHAT THE FUCK?

OPENED FIRE MY DRANT

LIFFE BUILDING

GLOBAL ECOLOGY NOT GLOBAL ECONOMY

FUCK CAPITALISM

BANGING SOUNDSYSTEM

LOADS MORE PEOPLE

PUNK BAND (WAHEY!)



I SPENT THE WHOLE DAY WITH MY AFFINITY GROUP - A BUNCH OF MATES AND WE'D DECIDED TO STICK TOGETHER. IT WORKED SURPRISINGLY WELL



WE FELT SAFE COS WE HAD TALKED BEFORE-HAND HOW WE'D LOOK AFTER & DE-ARREST EACH OTHER, AND IT WAS USEFUL, TOO.

BUT WE MISSED THE STORMING OF THE LIFFE BUILDING - WHAT A BUMMER!

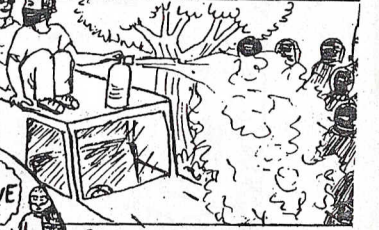


UH, COOL WHERE'D I GET THIS FROM?



OI! I'LL AVE ALLOF YA! COME ON WANKERS!

DRUNK PUNKS IN PUBLIC ORDER SITUATIONS ALWAYS PROVIDE MUCH AMUSEMENT!



STICKS AND STONES DON'T SEEM TO BREAK RIOT COPS BONES - JUST HOLD THEM BACK A BIT, WHICH IS USEFUL, TOO - BUT WHEN SOMEONE SETS OFF THAT POWDER FIRE EXTINGUISHER, IT ACTUALLY DISPERSED THEM - SOMETHING I'VE HARDLY EVER HAD THE JOY OF SEEING!