



offline

THE INDYMEDIA NEWS SHEET

Offline

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Direct Action Blockades Against GM

At 3am on Saturday 26th February, a coalition of environmentalists used direct action to blockade a huge regional Sainsbury's distribution centre at Emerson's Green, causing disruption to Sainsbury's retail supply across the South-West and beyond. Braving sub-zero temperatures and snow campaigners blockaded the entrance to the depot - locking themselves together for three hours with steel tubes. There were six arrests. Campaigners are demanding that Sainsburys honour their undertaking to stop marketing dairy products from animals reared on genetically modified soya and maize. Currently the use of animal feed is keeping GM in the food chain despite overwhelming opposition from consumers. Sainsburys have also been heavily criticised for driving down prices for dairy farmers

who are demanding a fair price for GM free milk. One week later, 25 activists shut down the Sainsbury's depot in Haydock Merseyside - blockading the depot by d-locking themselves to gates and blocking the main gate with a vehicle that others then locked themselves too. The blockade lasted for around two and a half hours before specialist police units cut people free. The actions followed multiple blockades and actions against Sainsbury's last year - and previous blockade of Merseyside depot.

For more info and to get involved, check out www.geneticsaction.org.uk



Climate Action

On 16 February 2005 the Kyoto Protocol came into effect, legally binding most industrialised countries to greenhouse gas emission reductions by 2012. On the same day 35 Greenpeace activists halted trading on the global oil market by occupying the International Petroleum Exchange in London, and disrupting the trading - there were 27 approx arrests. The Kyoto treaty was agreed in 1997 but has since been watered down by special provisions and has been often criticised as being too little too late and for promoting potentially damaging practices.

There were also actions and events around the world. Recently (on 25th January) the Greenpeace Business Lecture itself a target of climate campaigners when the 'Greenwash Guerrillas' from London Rising Tide protested against what they called

they Greenwash of Shell's Chairman, Lord Oxburgh.

On Saturday 12th February hundreds of people marched to the US Embassy in London as part of the annual Campaign Against Climate Change Kyoto March [see full report and pictures]. Carrying all 141 national flags representing the current signatories to the Kyoto Protocol together with costumes and bicycle powered sound systems the march passed by the ExxonMobil offices [see exxonsecrets.org] and the Australian Embassy (Australia is the only major developed country not to have ratified Kyoto apart from the US) before arriving at the US embassy for speeches from many campaigners.

Offline brings back to the streets highlights from Indymedia websites, part of a global network that encourages the public to report their own stories to the world uncensored. Offline is available online to download and you are encouraged to copy and distribute printed copies far and wide.

Offline is just one of many indymedia initiatives aimed at reclaiming the media. You may also wish to check out indymedia radio and cinema projects.

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Don't hate the media -become the media!

There was also a critical mass bicycle protest starting from the Thames Flood Barrier [pics]. The event was also part of an International campaign that saw events scheduled around the world including Edinburgh in Scotland.

The next big mobilisations on Climate are expected to be at the G8 Summit in Scotland, with the last day of the summit, Friday 8th July, set aside as an International Day of Action Against Climate Change and at the 'MOP' climate talks later in November.

Find out more or get involved by contacting www.risingtide.org

G8 repression

"kicked, punched, slapped, tripped, clubbed and dragged by their hair" - just some of the abuses meted out to about 150 detained protesters following the G8 summit in Genoa in July 2001, according to a damning report published by prosecutors in Italy last week. The 534 page report details cases such as the detainee forced onto his hands and knees and made to bark like a dog, female prisoners stripped in front of male officers, and threats of sexual assault.

Meanwhile, four years on and the police in the UK are preparing for the 2005 G8 taking place in Scotland in July and a series of mini-summits taking place before then.

On the 11th March, while the Employment Ministers of the G8 nations were meeting in London, activists staged a small 'New Deal For The Dead' demo outside the Department of Trade and Industry and other locations - accompanied at all times with a heavy police presence.

Rising Tide (the climate change campaign network), organised an Alternative Summit for Climate Justice, held at Toynbee Hall on Monday 15th. Around 100 people attended the seminar which was closely watched by yet more police in what was clearly more about intimidation than intelligence gathering operation.

The following day there was a Climate Change Noise Protest outside an International Energy and Environment Ministers' Roundtable G8 mini summit in London. Forty people turned up to demonstrate their opposition to the business as usual policies being proposed as solutions to global warming but were outnumbered by more than 50 police officers. The demo was initially restricted to a side street away from the main entrance of the building in which the meeting was taking place. When protestors moved to the front entrance prior to ending the demo, two people were arrested under a hastily imposed section 14.



MORE COMPUTERS SEIZED

Last October, two hard drives belonging to Indymedia were seized by authorities in London causing twenty IMCs to be taken offline as well as several internet radio stations. Also on the drives were legal correspondence relating to trials taking place in Italy relating to the 2001 G8 in Genoa. Now it appears that police in Italy have seized two laptops from "a Genova Legal Forum consultant and an activist of Supporto legale" who are apparently involved in building up databases for the Genoa G8 trials. <http://www.indymedia.org.uk/en/2005/03/306709.html>

One was a journalist who was arrested within minutes of showing his press card. Police retained his footage, video camera and notes. Both were charged and given bail conditions preventing them from attending further G8 related meetings.

On Thursday, despite extraordinary measures approved by the Home Secretary to Ban all Marches in Derby and set up exclusion zones, planned anti-G8 protests in Derby went ahead. A Critical Mass bicycle protest took place in the morning with around 40 people taking part - police arrested 12 cyclists, who were released on bail that night (their bicycles kept 'as evidence'). Later, with over 1,000 police stationed across the city, and several police surveillance units filming protestors, around 100 people managed to gather in the town square.

Other planned G8 Ministerial meetings include the G8 Finance Ministers in London (June 10-11th), the G8 Justice & Interior Ministers in Sheffield (June 16-17th), and the G8 Pre-Summit Foreign Ministers meeting in London (23rd June).

Look out for coverage of these future events:

- 21st March - Destroy the arms trade - International Day of Direct Action
- 26th Close Campsfield Refugee Detention Centre - demo 12noon - 2pm
- 28th Easter resistance at Aldermaston.
- 2nd April - Day of Action for Freedom of Movement and Right to Stay
- 9th April - London Hacklabs 'no patents' day and party - rampART
- 6-10th April Lanarkshire Festival of Dissent!

- 15th April - Make Poverty History, all night demo Whitehall, London
- 16th-17th April - Scotland IMC meeting
- 1st May - eh... mayday perhaps? oh, and the IMC UK 5th birthday!
- 14th-15th May - G8 International Media Convergence, London
- 15-17th June Sheffield: G8 Justice and Home Affairs Meeting
- 2-8 July 2005: Gleneagles, Scotland: G8 Summit

check out protest.net for more events...

Bypass the corporate media - www.indymedia.org.uk



Indymedia is an open network for information produced by grassroots groups challenging the bias of the corporate media. To report your own actions, upload images and video or see what else is happening locally near you - visit the IMC UK website at: www.indymedia.org.uk

Community Direct Action Santas deliver the goods!

After 6 months of occupation the squatted Nursery Social Centre in Birmingham is to be voluntarily vacated by the occupying Collective after they convinced the council to hand over the building to a community project. After resisting three eviction attempts, the Collective agreed to move on to pastures new on the condition that the building be returned to social use by the council. The Collective felt along with local people that the building should not be left empty again. Birmingham City Council has finally arranged for the RITE Project (which works with young people excluded from the education system) to use the building until 2006. The building is then due to be demolished pending a public enquiry as part of the controversial Bristol Road expansion. The Collective are keen to point out that the social use of the building would not be on the council agenda if they had not taken Direct Action, highlighting the misuse of public buildings by local authorities.

Violent Eviction In Goiania Brazil

On 16th Feb, a large military police operation took place to evict the land occupation of Sonho Real (Real Dream) in the city of Goiânia, Brazil. Many people were wounded, five severely, and two people were killed. Among the 800 arrested were two Indymedia volunteers, one from Goiânia and one from New York.

The occupation had started in May 2004, in an area that had been abandoned for years, and quickly grew to 3,000 families. In January 2005, the Ministry of Justice ordered an eviction and the police then harassed the families with death threats and unprovoked attacks. On February 11, police fired rubber bullets, gas and concussion bombs, against the people. One child was injured by a concussion bomb. On February 15, in another attack, police fired live ammunition, injuring two people. Due to the pressure from social movements and human rights groups, the state Governor had promised a non-violent eviction - but clearly he was lying.

FREE SPACES?

New Social Centre opening

The Institute for Autonomy is a newly occupied social centre in central London. Created in a disused university building in a city where house & rent prices continue to climb far out of the reach of the majority, it has lain empty and forgotten for over 5 years. The Institute aims to be an open space for daily development towards autonomy.

"It's vital for us to create space where a different reality can be experienced, where new paths can be walked, along which can emerge common action, interest and identity amongst people. We organize both the space and our work in open assemblies where, in a rejection of this society

where our 'superiors' tell us what to do, we practice horizontal and direct democracy. When ideas are discussed openly, we are recreated as real actors in our lives - we use our differences to make any idea a better idea. We aim to create a self-organised space where people aren't judged by their ability to consume or to produce; where really human discussion and action can take place."

76-78 Gower Street, London WC1
Opening Saturday 19th March - 7pm
til 1am
Café :: films :: music :: info-shop ::
kids space

Open meeting every Monday at 8pm to discuss progress, and for new projects and events to be proposed.

Corp Media Watch :: Sun Starts Hate Campaign Against Travellers

The Sun's first article was headlined "stamp on the camps". Had this been any other minority group, would they have got away with it? The Sun is calling for a repeal of the Human Rights Act so that Gypsies and Travellers won't have the right to a home, but they claim this is not racism because they are highlighting 'good' Gypsies who apparently agree with them and live in a way they find acceptable. The Sun claims that Gypsies and Travellers deliberately flout planning regulations and get a special deal due to the Human Rights Act, which makes them "untouchable".

However, the reality is far removed from the Sun's version of the truth. For non-Travellers planning permission applications have a 12% chance of failure. For Travellers the figure is 90%. Therefore the community has no choice but to apply for permission retroactively after they move on the land. At least then they have a few years to go through the appeal process (which they pay for). In case you are wondering why they don't live a travelling life on the whole this has been made impossible due to the Criminal Justice Bill 1994. There is no where to stop anymore and when they do stop they can be moved on immediately by police and bailiffs.

Twenty years ago the government directed Travellers to buy their own land after removing the responsibility of councils to provide sites. Now site after site is evicted traumatically violently because of the impossibility of obtaining planning permission.

This is racism. Gypsies and Travellers are still the least literate have the lowest mortality rates of any other group in Britain. Police regularly make brutal attacks on families and communities. Gypsy children are still beaten to death in racist attacks. Having headlines in some of the widest read papers in this county calling for attacks on the Traveller community is bound to be popular because they are the only people in Britain that it is still acceptable to be openly racist to. These articles will make a bad situation worse. For Gypsies and Travellers to see these articles in the papers is a manifestation of the hostility they experience anyway and they will stir up more hatred.

<http://www.indymedia.org.uk/en/2005/03/306570.html>



Iraq-pillagers targeted

Thanks to the Coalition Provisional Authority's Order 39 the occupation of Iraq has coincided with a mass selling-off of Iraq's public assets. Here in the UK there has been an ongoing campaign opposing this process; a process which amounts in international law to the illegal pillage of Iraq.

Last week four activists were charged with 'aggravated trespass' in relation to an action last December against Windrush Communications Ltd. The activists were seeking to provide the company with a legal briefing highlighting that their role in organising the Iraq Procurement Conferences is illegal. When the briefing was refused, the building was occupied.

Iraq Procurement is a global initiative focused on realising the enormous trade and investment potential of Iraq. Now established as the premier business summit for Iraq, the project brings together the key business leaders and decision makers devoted to the future development of the country. One such conference was held in London last April, another has since been held in Jordan. The London conference was targeted by activists. In the end though the Crown Prosecution Service dropped all charges against activists protesting the event.

In this case, as in the more recent one, the charges against activists were for 'aggravated trespass.' Now in order for aggravated trespass to be proved the prosecution must show that activists were disrupting lawful business. That disruption took place cannot be in doubt which only leaves the lawful part! Activists maintain that the activity they were disrupting was anything but lawful.

Upcoming Actions

A week of action has been called against the corporate plunder of Iraq. From 1 to 6 April activists will target Windrush Communications and other groups seeking to exploit Iraq's resources at the expense of its sovereignty. Meetings to plan for the week of action are to be held every Monday from 28th February at 7.30pm. The meeting on the 28th will be at 15/17 RampART Street, E1 (www.rampart.co.nr).

More information can be found by checking out the Corporate Pirates website, by emailing stopthepillage@yahoo.co.uk (ask to join the email list for the week of action!) or by calling 07810 867476.

Rachel Corrie anniversary memorial at Caterpillar Solihull:

This week, a small Westmidlands PSC delegation went to lay a wreath outside the Caterpillar European Financial Headquarters in Solihull in memory of Rachel Corrie who was killed by an Israeli Caterpillar bulldozer in Rafah, two years ago. "We were marking the painfully tragic death of an American student who's mangled body testified to the world, that all was far from well in, occupied Palestinian territories. Rachel Corrie was not criminally disposed, but one who lived and died with her ideals about a better existence for many of her fellow human beings."

F15 Rememberance and Protest

On the anniversary of the massive international February 15th Anti-War demonstrations in 2003 (largest anti-war demonstrations in living memory) people throughout the land paused to remember the dead and to protest against war. In London a 'die-in' protest outside Parliament briefly blocked traffic [pics 1 2]. In Glasgow the Day of Civil Disobedience saw an army recruitment office closed for the day and people blocking roads (as well as a high level of police surveillance and intimidation). Other events took place in Brighton, Bristol, Cambridge, Oxford, Menwith Hill, as well as Canterbury, Edinburgh, Greenwich, Lewisham, Plymouth and Leeds. In Swindon a naming the dead event took place while Nottingham saw an anti-war Critical Mass bicycle protest. In Stirling in Scotland, a protest was also held outside an Army recruitment centre.

Update on Fairford Five Appeal - Toby and Phil from Oxford

The House of Lords (Judicial Appeals Committee) has granted leave to hear the appeal of the Fairford Five including Toby Olditch and Phil Prichard of Oxford. Nurmeburg principals international criminal offence of a crime against peace/international aggression is now also a crime under English Domestic Law for which individuals in this country may be held liable - including also those claiming government immunity (under the Royal Perogative) i.e. Blair, Straw and Hoon et al. The hearing will be in about a year's time in the highest court in the land. To say this is the biggest peace protest case of the past 50 years is no overstatement.