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SHIFT

Magazine for Debate and Analysis

What were the politics of the Camp for Climate Action? Is the emerging social movement against climate change anticapitalist or reformist?

Why did thousands of people mobilise against the G8? Did the diverse groups of protestors really have anything in common? Where are the Nazis fighting capitalism coming from?

FROM HEILIGENDAMM TO HEATHROW

Oct '07-Jan '08

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editorial

"The decision to go to Heathrow was wrong!" This was the impulsive thought that was playing on our minds as we followed eight politicians and herds of protesters to Germany; to meet Shift contributors, eat in squats, sleep in tents and on dirty floors, drink 50p-a-bottle beer with 'the movement', and of course to "shut them down" – again. Throughout the journey, this impulse became a much reflected upon certainty (avoiding the quick guilty trip by plane allowed us the luxury of 26 hour-a-go bus journeys and plenty of time to think).

Yes the aviation industry is a major problem, as the fastest growing source of C02 emissions plans for expansion fly in the face of any commendable efforts to tackle climate change. Heathrow seemed an obvious choice simply because of its size and expansion plans. But to make radical politics work, we need to come up with more than just big=evil! Sometimes the Camp for Climate Action transcended such simple equations, but more often than not it presented itself as a protest for austerity.

If the anti-G8 mobilisation (see page 4) in Germany showed anything, it was that protest is not necessarily progressive. Opposition to neoliberal globalisation did not only come from the Left. Anti-consumerist and "Bush go home" slogans were also heard on neo-Nazi marches. The common target on both sides of the political spectrum was the greed of a few causing unemployment, ecological disaster, widespread poverty and imperialist war. The German far Right (see page 12) had mobilised against a profit-driven system run by multinationals, America and Israel. Sound familiar?

But (as TOP Berlin argue, page 10) there are no puppeteers holding the strings of the world in their hands. Capitalist society is characterised by more hidden and complex forms of domination that underlie all aspects of our lives. Bush, Brown and BAA are all too easily depicted as greedy fat cats with a master plan for environmental destruction and world domination. But capitalism is not a conspiracy of a few politicians and airport bosses. The anti-globalisation focus on the opaque power of the rich and famous neglects the social aspects of capitalism.

This is where the choice of the aviation industry as the prime target of this summer's Climate Camp is flawed. Sure, from a moral perspective, we need to switch to less carbon intensive modes of transport. However, it seems to reduce our critique to one that simply contrasts the 'ethical' lifestyle to an 'unethical' one. Instead of showing the interconnectedness of the Social and the Ecological, Climate Camp has picked the individual as the point of attack. Of course, the mass action targeted BAA's corporate power and not individual passengers, but the message remained: "Fly less".

This disrespect of the social aspect of our lives seems to us reminiscent of a Thatcherism that stood firmly against the assertion of social classes in the 1980s. For Thatcher, the Social was no more than the accumulation of individual behaviour, denying the existence of society. This green Thatcherism is one that we can see in the UK's political centre. Cameron, Miliband and Co. are its true inheritors, with policy proposals that are aimed at consumer behaviour. Accordingly, Hillman, Monbiot and other movement theorists demand government action to make individuals comply with a more 'ethical' lifestyle. Yet, society is not just the sum of its individuals; it is shaped by social relations. The focus on individual consumption ignores the peculiarity of the social processes intrinsic to capitalism.

The campaign against the aviation industry is an ethical and moral undertaking worthy of support. And Climate Camp brings forward convincing arguments against the unequal distribution of power in society as one of the root causes of climate change. However, we also need to explore criticisms that go beyond moral and ethical positions. With this magazine we want to intervene into movement discourses, from the G8 to Climate Camp and beyond, and to force open spaces for a more radical analysis of capitalist domination.

Capitalism is no conspiracy, it exploits on an everyday level and there is no 'do or die'. From this perspective, the emerging social movement against climate change is as radical as an ethical lifestyle guide.

L.W. & R.S.

G8-Summit Protests in Germany

Against Globalisation and its Non-Emancipatory Responses

By Rob Augman

"make capitalism history: shut down the g8!"

The grassroots mobilizations against the G8 summit, held in the northern German town of Heiligendamm in early June of this year, were organized by broad networks of direct actionists, anti-racist groups, anti-border groups, anti-fascist militants, queer activists, squatters, debt-relief groups, trade unions, environmental organizations and many others. Despite the very restrictive policy of the German state that forbid any demonstrations in a large perimeter around the 'security fence' protecting the G8 summit, activists successfully disrupted the G8 meeting.[i]

The tiny enclave of Heiligendamm was for two days only reachable by helicopters or with boats from the seaside, as demonstrators blocked roads and train tracks leading to the site of the summit. Impressive were the pictures of thousands of people crossing fields and forests, in their effort to out-manoeuvre the huge police force, and make their way to the fence.

Heiligendamm will mark another memorable moment in the alter-globalization movement, a movement whose strength is often attributed to its diversity of actors. But this multitude, however, should not be mixed up with arbitrariness, as the movement itself also struggles with the challenges in developing a critique of global capitalism that provides emancipatory possibilities.

Contemporary social conflicts, a widespread sense of alienation, deep feelings of powerlessness, and the increasing intensity of violent conflict sets off a whole host of resentments and oppositions to the global situation that are not emancipatory. Many people who are deeply dissatisfied with the global political and economic order do not gravitate towards progressive or social justice organizations. The rise of racist, nationalist, fundamentalist and other forms of reactionary politics emerge as responses to the global situation as well, and they compete for power and influence on the same social terrain of those on the Left. These are present in the discourses, policies and politics in struggles around globalization/anti-globalization as well, and were therefore present in the mobilization against the G8 this year.

In Germany, with its history of National Socialism as well as uprisings of neo-Nazism and nationalism after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the left must struggle with and position itself against critiques of "the new world order," of "globalization," and even of "capitalism," from non-emancipatory positions, including those from the (far) Right. Such non-emancipatory critiques range widely, from proponents of economic protectionism and political isolationism (which can be seen in Right-wing anti-war positions), to the cultural field of "preserving cultural uniqueness from commercialism," all the way to the far Right and its attempts to solve social questions in hyper-nationalist ways.

The scale of right-wing involvement in anti-globalization politics, or broader sentiments of reactionary anti-capitalism, present facts that have not gone ignored by some on the German Left and can be seen present in the anti-G8 mobilization, whether against the far-Right, the state, or as self-criticism of our own social movements. These groups are employing various approaches, and seeking various goals in their emancipatory aims. In their confrontation with "globalization" on the one hand, and reactionary anti-globalization on the other, transformations can be observed in the analyses and the practices of the Left itself. The international mobilization against the G8 summit in Germany provides a unique look into these struggles in order to consider how left and social justice groups can better confront the complicated and varied challenges we face.

The infrastructure and mobilization for Heiligendamm had been built over the course of two years, connecting activists across Europe and beyond. A week of protests, a counter-summit with international guests discussing major problems of

globalization, from climate change and health politics, to gender justice and the right of free movement for all, and plans for physically blocking the G8 summit were some of the major events. People organized three camps to house thousands of activists, which included kitchens, security, showers, and other provisions. Indymedia groups provided infrastructure for a continuous reporting of the news. Information was circulated in leaflets and on the web informing people about police tactics, border restrictions, surveillance and much else regarding what they could expect and how they can get support in case of such a need. Legal aid was provided by a left-wing lawyer's organization. Mobile groups organized medic services. Additionally, activists organized a hotline in case of sexist or sexual abuse. Groups such as the Hedonist International energized demonstrations with their techno truck and their "Rave Against the Machine."

Self-organization was the backbone of the demonstrations and infrastructure of the mobilization against the G8 summit. The means are also the ends, and this included an appreciation for joy, leisure and aesthetic desire. The mobilization displays a pre-figurative politics, a vision in practice of the "other world that is possible."

Despite the intimidation, provocation, demonisation and the police's physical attempts at disruption, the mobilization would not be derailed. Massive showings of dissent towards the G8 and the broader global situation was going to appear at the gates of the G8 summit.

"Nie Wieder Deutschland!" (Never Again Germany!)

For international activists joining or observing the demonstrations against the G8 summit, the East German city of Rostock where the mass demonstrations and the main convergence centre were located, was no reference point at all. But for those old enough to remember, Rostock was the site of a violent 3-day attack on Roma and Vietnamese asylum seekers by neo-Nazis and ordinary German citizens. It was 15 years ago, in the summer of 1992, and it set off a wave of similar attacks across the country, on African, Turkish, Asian and other migrants, with houses burned down and people killed. "What 1968 was for the Left, 1992 was for the Right."[ii]

This wave of racist violence was a deeply political issue. It came at the time of reunification of East and West Germany, the fall of the Soviet Union and the realignment of international relations after the Cold War. Just decades after the Holocaust, racist mobs and political groups of the New Right were strong in Germany and Europe more broadly.

The host of economic problems following "reunification" were projected onto migrants, as a specific social group causing these crises. This racial skapegoating was not limited to the far-Right, but rather transcended political boundaries, and was therefore expressed in the mainstream discourse as well. "Bonn [the capital of former West Germany], unable to provide the ex-GDR economy with the quick fix that it had promised, shifted responsibility for the country's economic pains onto Germany's liberal asylum law."[iii]

Therefore, while the police brokered a deal with the Rostock mob, allowing them four hours of free reign to attack the asylum centre, state policy committed its own attack on migrants, with restrictions that effectively amounted to a revocation of the Asylum Law. It also instituted a hierarchical labour system for those who remained, and sent the message that migrants are the source of Germany's economic problems.

The new economic and political situation was articulated through a nationalist framework by centrist politicians, by the far-Right and throughout civil society[iv]. But this nationalist explosion and the changing political situation also prompted responses by the radical Left. German nationalism, racism, fascism and the history of the Shoah became major concerns. Seeing them as deeply related, the post-'89 German Left marched under the banner "Nie Wieder Deutschland!" (Never Again Germany!).

"We Are Here Because You Destroy Our Countries" "We Are Here Because We Destroy Your Borders"

As part of the protest actions against the G8 summit, an action day was organized

under the slogan "Global Freedom of Movement." In the early morning about 2,000 people took siege to the "Foreigner's Office" in Rostock, which is where decisions are made about whether or not individuals will receive residence permits or be deported. Informed of the activists' plans ahead of time, the office was shut down under the pretense of "computer problems." Activists climbed to the roof of the building and hung banners against deportation centres, reading "No Camp – Not Here and Not Anywhere!"

After this action the activists marched to the Sonnenblumenhaus, the site of the racist attacks 15 years earlier. "By holding this rally we want to remember the incidents of 1992 and show how much worse the conditions for refugees in Germany have become because of this pogrom."[v] At the gathering police continued their repression against activists. A snatch squad moved into the demonstration and grabbed a few black-clad demonstrators, breaking the nose of a Cameroon refugee and injuring a cameraperson in the melee. Later in the day, as the gathering sought to march towards the harbour in the centre of the city, it was blocked by riot cops with water cannons and armed vehicles, but after two hours of negotiations, the march was able to continue.

These demonstrations were part of a week of G8 protests that were specifically highlighting struggles against the regime of global migration management. Activists from numerous countries joined the transnational network meeting, discussing the situations of migrant struggles, whether it be mass demonstrations and strikes by illegalized migrants in the U.S., legalization struggles in France, Belgium, Italy and Spain, or protests to shut down detention centres in Germany.[vi] The events and actions are aimed at explaining that migration is part of the processes of international relations of exploitation – whether due to privatization of resources in the global south that makes life more and more unbearable for people in these countries to support themselves, or due to the explicit demands for cheap (often service) labour in the global North. Hence, the slogan, "we are here because you destroy our countries." But simultaneously, other activists find this portrayal too mechanical, implying that migrants are solely victims, simply set into motion by processes that are wholly out of their control. In response to this "Fortress Europe" position, activists from an "autonomy of migration" analysis, argue that despite the reality of migration management by states and inter-state systems, the barriers are continually defied and subverted by creative actors – therefore, migration could be seen as the "most successful social movement." [vii]

The relationship and conceptualization of migration as a phenomenon in the age of globalization then, is transformed from a paternalistic relationship of charity and protection into a relationship of support and solidarity. "Globalization" then can also be seen not simply as a one-dimensional plot by the global elite, but rather as a regime born of conflict, resulting from a variety of sources, some of which are self-determining. Therefore, the focus on migration at the anti-G8 mobilization highlights a structural fact of social life despite restrictions – possibly an intrinsically anti-national movement. It therefore emphasizes this fact of migration as a right of mobility, and envisions the practical assertion of global social rights as part of emancipatory transformations.

«therefore, migration could be seen as the "most successful social movement."»

"To point out the anti-fascist character of the anti-globalization movement"[viii]

In Rostock on June 2nd, while Left and progressive groups organized a huge international demonstration against the G8 summit under the banner "Another World is Possible," over 40 busses of neo-Nazis converged on the nearby town of Schwerin for their own demonstration against the G8. In response to the neo-Nazis, civil society groups, trade unions and antifa groups organized 3 different counter-demonstrations, the antifa groups with the intention of physically preventing the neo-Nazis from demonstrating. But on the morning of the protest, the neo-Nazi's and the antifa's permits were revoked. The neo-Nazi busses left Schwerin for surrounding towns, holding spontaneous demonstrations, one of which marched through the Brandenburg Gate in the centre of Berlin. A group 150 antifa activists who arrived in Schwerin, on the other hand, were surrounded at the train station by heavily armed police and arrested.

Fifteen years after the wave of racist violence of 1992, the far-Right is still an undeniable player in political and social life. They continue to skapegoat migrants as the source of persistent social and economic problems. Additionally, they have increasingly articulated their atrocious politics in anti-globalization and anti-capitalist language. For them, the powerful international institutions – such as the G8 – are seen in personified terms. The complex social arrangements often simplified under the term "globalization," are viewed as nothing other than a plot by a specific social group. Due to the historical association of international networks with Jewish communities, the far-Right personifies this international conspiracy as the "Jewish" rulers of the world.[ix] Against this perceived plot, they draw on an equally imaginary force to defend themselves, the so-called "national community."

Therefore, the strength of the far-Right has to do with intervening in contemporary political discourses whether those raised in mainstream political discourse, or those raised by the Left. In responding to these issues, they regularly project social crises on specific social groups as the source for such social problems – these groups often being migrants, Jews, or leftists. Therefore, real grievances set off by social, political and economic problems are a source of their support. By combin-

ing the anxiety over high levels of unemployment in the East of the country, with a skapegoating of migrants and "global elites" for these problems, the neo-Nazi National Democratic Party of Germany won over 7% of the vote in elections last year in the state of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, enabling them entry into regional parliaments. It was in this context that the antifa demonstration was organized, "to point out the antifascist character of the anti-globalization movement."

Militant anti-fascism became a major focus of radical Left politics after 1992, with the organizing of a countrywide antifa network which confronted far-Right groups in the streets. Additionally, concerned about the rise of a broader German nationalism, many took up research about the history of National Socialism. This enabled them to better understand the discursive framework of far-Right politics historically and its continuity (and divergences) in the present. These analyses can be seen in the call to action for the antifa demo in Schwerin. In their leaflet they explained the anti-Semitic ideology of the neo-Nazis' as a deranged form of anti-capitalism. The Nazi analysis of society is constructed through a bi-polar opposition of false premises. They believe that a "real, natural, material labour" is threatened by an "abstract, parasitic, financial elite." The antifa leaflet reads:

"On the one hand, [the Nazi] view [of capitalism] contains the idea of a national economy and it's "honest, German" labour - the so-called "constituting capital"; and the "money grubbing, Jewish" capital on the other hand. For the Nazis this allegedly "Jewish capital" is constituted in the sy[s]tem of interest and the financial world, for example in banks and stock exchanges in general, and in the "Wall Street" in particular."[x]

Failing to see capitalism as a social whole, a system from which labour itself is constituted, they view capitalism as a foreign imposition from the outside – especially from the U.S. Their response is then a naturalisation of something they perceive to be concrete, the imagined, "national community." This foreshortened critique of capitalism helps explain their simultaneously racist and anti-Semitic politics, on the one hand as being against the perceived nations which are supposedly invading otherwise harmonious Germany, and on the other hand against the perceived anti-national leaders of this world order, the international Jewish elites which prosper from the disintegration of "real nations."[xi]

But the electoral support the NPD gained at the polls is only the tip of the iceberg. Their views are influential even if they're not expressed in such crude and violent terms. Additionally, their themes overlap with some taken up by Left associated anti-globalization groups. Popular support for an alter-globalization movement is common when it is expressed against "American" capital, in contrast to a supposedly more socially responsible European or German capitalism, and when international investors are depicted as parasites looting the "real" economy. Examples abound in Germany of left-wingers arguing in language reminiscent of the Nazi era. These problems have led sections of the Left to criticize the presence of foreshortened critiques of capitalism found even amongst some on the Left.

Indeed, one doesn't have to search long at the anti-G8 demos to find examples of conspiratorial, dualistic or personifying social critiques: a 911-conspiracy theory banner, a "Bush is the #1 Terrorist" poster, or the omnipresent G8-octopus with its outstretched tentacles devouring the Earth. The lowest common denominator though, of anti-globalization critics, has often been an opposition to "finance capital." This can be seen in seemingly opposite sections of the movement: whether it be anti-capitalists smashing banks or reform oriented groups pushing for taxation on international investment. The "common sense" for such broad social movements might be the idea that "money is the root of all evil."

The analysis of capitalism as a social system, rather than a simple relationship of domination, or a binary struggle between "oppressors" and "oppressed," leads groups like TOP Berlin (see their article on page xx) to find ways of expressing a different orientation. Joining other post-antifa groups, they marched under the banner reading "Ums Ganze" which loosely translates into "All of It!" Therefore, while demonstrating against the G8, they reject the idea of equating the G8 to global capitalism, and rather aim to situate the G8 as part of an international, and conflicted system of global capitalism. [xii]

Therefore, rather than positing a "real labour" against a "finance capital," a "people's struggle" against an "international elite," or other such simplifications, such groups attempt to re-evaluate the forms of social life in contemporary capitalist society. This leads to different kinds of positioning. As demonstrations often demand simple symbolic representations, one attempt to intervene on this level was by using the imagery of leisure, and therefore a picture of a person relaxing on a hammock accompanied with calls for "luxury for all!" While anti-capitalism has been a mainstay in the alter-globalization movement, what it means to "smash capitalism," and to "fight the G8" is an open and contested terrain. In this way, the mobilization against the G8 is a site of many conflicts on various levels – the analytical, the practical and the symbolic. In these ways this mobilization shows many attempts to push against capitalism, simultaneously grappling with the various forms of non-emancipatory responses that arise along the way.

In Conclusion...

Despite a total ban on public demonstrations on Thursday the protests continued, and did so with impressive success. Thousands of people from the nearby campgrounds marched towards the fence, dragging trees into the streets to create huge barricades, walking train tracks to prevent transportation to the summit, and hiking through fields and woods to outmanoeuvre police blockades. The G8 delegates had to reach the summit by air or sea, and even the sea was not completely secure as a Greenpeace boat breached the security zone. This is a tremendous achievement of determination and organization.

Even the mainstream media portrayed the blockades in a semi-positive light, showing video footage of thousands of protestors streaming through fields and hills to reach the fence. Their favourite image were those of the clowns, of course, and made the perfect contrast to the reporting of the heavy clashes between police and demonstrators the day before, in which various news reports described the protests as marred by "foreigners."[xiii]

While the mobilization was successful in disrupting the G8 summit, as was described above, opposition to the G8 and globalization does not imply emancipatory critiques nor alternatives. Reactionary resentments and ideologies work through oppositional politics, placing many challenges on the efforts to effect positive social changes. The desire to build mass social movements often involves appealing to the lowest common denominator, but the simple populist chant of "Bush Go Home!" brings together a wide variety of actors across the political spectrum, including reactionaries of various types. This reality provides challenges to building broad-based social movements with emancipatory possibilities.

Additionally, while it is imperative to exclude the most abhorrent actors from taking advantage of popular discontent – as the antifa demo sought to do – non-emancipatory views are not limited to the far Right, but rather transcend neat political boundaries. This transcendence is not simply the result of intentionally-disguised reactionary views – though that is some-

times the case – but often due to analyzes autonomously generating personifying analyzes of power relations, dualistic thinking and foreshortened critiques of capitalism. Therefore, this sets an imperative of self-criticism within our own oppositional political movements, in order to prevent unintended support of non-emancipatory views and currents.

DISCLAIMER: This text is a selection from an article written for the U.S. Left. We have omitted a conclusion in which the author offers suggestions about what might be learned from the G8 protests in order to help Leftists address similar challenges in the U. S. context. The article was originally published on ZNet at www.zmag.org/content/showarticle.cfm?ItemID=13158.

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Many thanks go to Martina Benz for endless ideas and editorial support.

[i] The policing operation in the Heiligendamm area was the largest security operation in Germany since World War II. It included an enormous budget, a $17 million fence, 12km high, a wide no-protest zone, as well as air and sea defence. This operation was also more than defencive. A month before the summit, under the pretext of "threats by Leftist terrorists," police raided 40 private homes and social centres across the country. The raids were heavily criticized in the mainstream press and the mobilization gained broader support as a result. In Berlin, a spontaneous demonstration brought thousands of people onto the streets for an energetic showing of support for the anti-G8 mobilization, and in Hamburg a huge demo erupted into physical clashes between protesters and the police.

[ii] Free to Hate: The Rise of the Right in Post-Communist Eastern Europe. Hockenos, Paul. P 30. Routledge. New York/London. 1994.

[iii] Ibid. P 33.

[iv] For a look into the relationships of these different social actors and the changing situation at the time, see "Rostock: or, How the New Germany is Being Governed." Wildcat, No. 60, October 1992. http://www.wildcat-www.de/en/wildcat/60/w60e_ros.htm

[v] From the "Crossing the Borders of the G8" newspaper, at: www.noborder.org

[vi] Examples from the newspaper, "Crossing the Borders of the G8," published for the G8 mobilization by No Border. www.noborder.org

[vii] For a background on this discussion, and in relation to the G8 mobilization, see the essay, "Autonomous rear Entrances to Fortress Europe: Antiracist Perspectives in regard to G-8 Summit 2007," at: www.nolager.de/blog/node/452

[viii] "Stop the nazi demonstration - 2nd June 2007 Schwerin." www.schwerin.blogsport.de

[ix] In part due to criminal codes in Germany against openly anti-Semitic speech, as well as the popularity of "anti-Zionism" as a public discourse, the far-Right often calls this supposed elite "Zionist," "cosmopolitan," or "American," rather than "Jewish."

[x] "Head Off to Schwerin - Distract The Nazi Demonstration!" www.schwerin.blogsport.de

[xi] There are a whole host of other issues involved in neo-Nazi politics in Germany, which can not be adequately explained in the framework of this article. Some resources: For an analysis of Nazi Antisemitism as a form of fetishized anti-capitalism, see Moishe Postone's "Anti-Semitism and National Socialism" at: http://www.autodidactproject.org/other/postone1.html On anti-Zionism, see Thomas Haury's "Anti-Semitism on the Left" at: http://www.workersliberty.org/node/6705

[xii] A recent interview by ums Ganze with Michael Heinrich, titled, "There Simply Aren't Any Easy Solutions to Which One Can Adhere," helps to explain their attempts to reevaluate the place of the G8 in the system of global capitalism. It was published in Monthly Review zine, here: http://mrzine.monthlyreview.org/heinrich220607.html

[xiii] A member of the anti-globalization group, ATTAC, also used nationalist skapegoating to blame foreigners, saying the clashes of the protestors was "atypical for German groups." http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/0,1518,486330,00.html

Without a radical critique every action becomes mere activism

Reflections on the anti-G8 mobilisation 2007.

By TOP Berlin

make a foreshortened critique of capitalism history!

3, 2, 1...action!

Without a doubt, it was the event for the European left this summer: anti-racist groups, queer activists, squatters, debt-relief groups, anti-fascists, trade unionists, environmental organizations...in June, all of them travelled to the small German village of Heiligendamm in order to express disagreement or even disrupt the G8 summit. Months before there was a marathon of meetings, conferences, fundraising concerts, and every leftist place in Europe got swamped with flyers and posters mobilizing against the summit. The focus of it all: action. Demonstrations, riots, blockades, vigils, clandestine actions...there was something in it for everybody.

Those calling into question this mode of 'action for action's sake' are often accused of trying to break or slow down the movement, of being a threat to the radical left's unity, of intellectualizing. But protest in itself is not emancipatory – how often have we seen racist mobs in the streets protesting the building of a refugee home or mosque, or large-scale fascist demonstrations that also aim at 'the system'. Even 'anti-capitalism', the leitmotif of the more radical part of the anti-G8 movement, can be a deeply reactionary ideology, as can be seen not only when looking into the ideology of the Third Reich, but also when looking at contemporary campaigns by fascist groups who are decidedly 'anti-capitalist'.i

Keeping all of this in mind, it would be naive for a radical left to simply want to take part in whatever social movement comes along. Those who do not want to mix up Islamists, neo-Nazis, landless peasants, welfare recipients and fare dodgers in one subversive mass, to group them together as 'the people' standing up against 'the system', will come to a lowly result. An intervention without a critical definition of one's own standpoint is less than a sad 'being part of' - it turns itself into a tool for the wrong purpose. Therefore, theory becomes necessary - not because of a 'more-radical-than-thou' battle, but in order to truly understand just how capitalist society functions so that it can adequately be overcome.

G8: légitime!

Against the popular opinion among the anti-globalization movement that the summit was illegitimate in the sense of 'undemocratic', we need to take note of the realities of bourgeois society: Not just a gang of robber-knights but in fact representatives of constitutional states with basic laws and acknowledged proceedings of legitimisation came together at the summit. As juristic persons states can "freely" and "equally" arrange informal meetings and close contracts. Instead of forging alternative models of democracy and law, an emancipatory movement should recognize that domination and exploitation in capitalism are performed not primarily against law and democracy but within and through these forms.

This insight should have had large-scale consequences for the mobilization against the G8 summit. It implies an explicit refusal of economistic and personalized (state-) conceptions. Whereas the first wants to directly debunk the state as a mere tool of the economically dominant class - to demand its 'right' use for the common good in circular reasoning-, the second primarily conceives the condition of the world as a result of individual misconduct of single capitalists and politicians acting out of greed, venality or an absent sense of responsibility.

One of the inherent dangers of this logic is to fall into anti-Semitic stereotypes: the anti-Semitic ideology is usually embedded into a worldview, which 'explains' the evils of modern capitalist society. Capitalism in this worldview is not seen as a process, which arises following its own structural logic without a particular leadership, but rather as an exploitative project conscious-

ly put into effect by evil people. Historically, this way of thinking emerged in the 19th century in Europe in a time of to the rapid spread of capitalist society and the social upheavals this triggered. The anti-Semitic worldview thus consists of personification for non-understood economic and social procedures and draws upon the picture of the 'Jewish capitalist' that is deeply embedded in Western culture, which for centuries associated Jews with money. It can be displayed in talk of 'the capitalists' who 'pull the strings' from 'the US East Coast', 'dominate the world' and just can't get enough with their 'greed'.

Less reactionary but similarly problematic is the moral conviction of certain companies and multinational corporations, whose practices are - often rightly - stigmatized as especially abhorrent. What falls out of this perspective is a critique on the plain 'vanilla' exploitation - that lies in every wage dependant, commodity-producing labour. Furthermore, the notion misconceives that in capitalism the economic actors are following a rationality that is forced upon them by the economic relations themselves. Even the capitalist is dammed by the band of competition to make profit or to perish. The process of concentration and centralization of capital is insofar a structurally caused moment of the dynamic of capital accumulation. That's why it would be ludicrous to demand for instance 'fair competition' against the 'power of corporations' or to classify capital under the motto small = good and large = evil with sympathy points.

To conceive 'rule of law' as a specific form of capitalist domination does certainly not mean that within capitalism legal norm and legal practice, ideal and reality are always in accord with each other. That would mean to ignore the ideological character that the law form has in a capitalist society. That on an empirical level not only several capitalists but also institutions of constitutional states are using illegal practices - disposing toxic waste in Africa, killing trade unionists, practising torture, etc. - has been widely scandalized. However, a political movement that primarily criticizes what is generally defined as 'criminal', acts on the level of critique of an attorney. The fallacy of such a position admittedly is: The world would be all right if just everybody would respect the law.

Theory in action

While the contradictions of capitalism can be experienced in daily life, as a complex social relationship of domination capitalism withdraws itself from every-day-life's consciousness. To introduce a radical approach into the struggles against the G8 does target on more than a ritualized gesture. But building a foundation of theory does not mean to withdraw into the ivory tower and never take to the streets. On the contrary, such a conclusion would be fatal: if one does not want to capitulate in face of capitalist reality, a call to action is more than necessary.

The G8 summit can be conceived as one of the forms in which capitalist society reflects itself on the political level. An irreconcilable act of negation towards these should not aim at the 'One Family' of the defrauded and the disappointed, but at the possibility of bringing the scandal of capitalism in its totality into the focus of critique: to criticize its structures in institutions and in our heads and to develop a perspective beyond domination, violence, repression and exploitation. At this year's summit, this only happened to a certain extent – more visible were the 'analyses' that conceived the Group of Eight as the 'spider in the web' or the 'distributing centre' of 'predatory capitalism' and the personalisation's that imply some of the dangers and shortcomings mentioned above. More important than protesting against the summit seemed for us to critically intervene into one of the biggest leftist movements at present tense and challenge some of its dominant assumptions.ii

While talking about revolution seems to be pretty naive today, it appears to be even more stupid to waste all of one's abilities to arrange oneself with the status quo. The G8 summit can be seen as a cause to go the whole hog with the critique of capitalism – not because the G8 is the personified evil but rather because domination in capitalism basically has neither name nor address. The 'right place' for anti-capitalist resistance is never immediately given. It is defined exclusively by the experience of social contradictions, leading to the insight that there is a necessity to (to speak with Karl Marx) "overthrow all relations in which man is a debased, enslaved, abandoned, despicable essence."

TOP (Theory. Organisation. Praxis) is a Berlin-based antifascist, anti-capitalist group. They are part of the "...ums Ganze!" alliance (http://umsganze.blogsport.de) which consists of more than ten groups from all over Germany. Parts of this text are based on a paper written prior to the G8 summit which can be found in English at www.top-berlin.net. To get in touch with them write to mail@top-berlin.net.

By Jan Langehein

german neo-nazis and anti-capitalism

The 'social question' has been a focus for propaganda by German neo-Nazis in the past, yet not always did this have an anti-capitalist touch to it. After the reunification of the old GDR with the Federal Republic in autumn 1990, the whole of Germany experienced a rise in unemployment; poverty levels increased in the East and West. Responsibility lay, on the one hand, with the collapse and sale of the industry in the former planned economy, and on the other hand a structural crisis of the capitalist economy in the reunified Germany. Far Right political parties, at the time primarily the DVU and the more moderate Republicans, responded at first with a traditional racism: they exploited the situation for their purposes by blaming migrant labourers and a relatively high number of political refugees for the poverty. The centre-right governing party CDU also looked at migrants as scapegoats for the crisis, accusing them of being responsible for the millions of unemployed and the collapse of the economy in East Germany. Even the liberal magazine 'Der Spiegel' [comparable to 'the Economist' in its influence; translator's note] ran headlines suggesting that there was no place for refugees in reunified Germany.

The result of this agitation were dozens of deaths, some beaten or burned to death by Nazi attackers, some driven by German border police into the Oder river, which separates Germany from Poland. The dreadful developments culminated in August 1992: large parts of the population of Lichtenhagen, a suburb of Rostock, together with organised neo-Nazis and aided by the police's inaction, attacked a refugee's hostel over days and attempted to set fire to it. The "days of Rostock" received worldwide media attention, and victims of the past - from Russia via Poland to Israel – feared a resurrection of Nazi Germany. Far from pressing ahead with an intensified fight against the neo-Nazis, the German government responded to the situation by basically abolishing the asylum rights and thereby fulfilling a central neo-Nazi demand.i

As mentioned, this still followed the pattern of a traditional racism, to be expected from neo-Nazis. The anti-capitalist 'change of direction' for the German Nazis only happened at the beginning of the new millennium and is connected to partly two factors: firstly, the National Democratic Party (NPD), with closer historical ties to Hitler's NSDAP than DVU and Republicans, gained in importance; secondly, the focus of right-wing perception in Germany moved, after 9/11, from migration to the USA and Israel. The NPD's self-understanding is as an anti-communist as well as an anti-capitalist party. One of its slogans is: "No to Communism, no to Capitalism, yes to German Socialism!"

The political program of this 'German Socialism' is based on the ideas of the so called social-revolutionary faction of the NSDAP, which was very powerful until the summer of 1934, when Ernst Roehm, the leader of the (up until then social-revolutionary) 'Sturmabteilungen' (SA), was killed by Himmler's elitist 'Schutzstaffel' (SS). Its aim was not to nationalise the industrial establishment, but still to submit it to state control and to build a Berlin-centred structure of command. The centre of control was meant to turn workers from "free sellers of their labour power" into recipients of commands by the 'Führer'. Those ideas were impossible to put into practice only because Hitler was not prepared to take power away from German industrialists. Just as the NSDAP, the NPD too does not regard capital as an all-encompassing social relationship, but divides it into 'productive capital' (workers and entrepreneurs) and 'unproductive or money-reaping capital', which without working itself exploits the fruits of honest labour. For the historical Nazis, behind this 'unproductive' capital was both the 'bolshevism' of the Soviet Union, as well as British and American 'plutocracy' with its superior economic strength. In the final instance however,

both parts were seen as mere 'stooges' of a Jewish global conspiracy, which aimed at world domination and the destruction of the livelihoods of all 'peoples'.

This is exactly the worldview that the NPD [now the most influential neo-Nazi party in Germany, translator's note] has adopted today with its anti-capitalist rhetoric. Now they blame 'Wall Street' together with the US and Israeli governments for plotting to wipe out 'peoples' and 'cultures'. 'German Socialism', they say, should take up the fight against 'foreign influences' and build instead a geographically-defined economic order – a European internal market under German control, removed from the global economy and in a world without Jews. It is a 'culturalist'ii and anti-Semitic nightmare, which wants to achieve plans for modern Europe similar to those that Hitler's strategists had drawn up.

The NPD has understood that it can reach more people with its agitation against the USA and Israel than with the polemic against refugees and migrants. Since the pogrom of Rostock, open racism is ostracised, while the hatred of America and resentments against 'Zionism' are almost regarded as proof of one's critical faculties. Many Germans believe themselves to be 'critics of globalisation or capitalism'. They do not understand, however, that this should mean primarily a critique of one's own society. Instead, they look for the reasons of hunger, poverty and violence solely in the policies of Israel and America. This is where neo-Nazis move in: In spring 2007, they initiated a national campaign against the G8-summit in Heiligendamm, which used the same rhetoric as left-wing critics of globalisation. Now, the NPD attempts to organise a co-operation with the main left-wing party 'the Left', a successor to the old GDR's 'Socialist Unity Party'. While 'the Left' is decidedly anti-fascist, its electorate frequently comprises supporters of the authoritarian GDR, which is open to right-wing ideas. The NPD has already managed to be voted into a number of regional parliaments of East Germany. In Saxony, the parliamentary faction of the NPD regularly gains votes by members of other political factions. Nonetheless, the critique of globalisation in Germany is not yet a field dominated by the neo-Nazis. Sometimes however, it is almost impossible to differentiate between anti-capitalist positions with a progressive, emancipatory or with a fascistic, anti-Semitic direction.

Regrettably, the German Left has little to offer in terms of response to the neo-Nazi anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist change of focus. The racism of the 1990s was countered by a still active anti-racist movement, which provides assistance to refugees and attempts to resist racist attacks on migrants. However, anti-American and anti-Semitic positions can also be found in large parts of Left, with left-wing and right-wing anti-imperialist writings hardly distinguishable from each other. What unites both sides is primarily the 'culturalist' (völkisch) element of their critiques. Both sides support the terror of Hamas and al-Qaeda against Israelis and civilians of other Western states, while they differ only in their positions to Germany. For the Left, Germans form part of the oppressors, while for the Right, Germans are victims. Ironically, a 'deserter' of the Left formulated the Nazi propaganda phrase of the "jewish-american imperialist conspiracy": the lawyer Horst Mahler, a one time fighter and co-founder of the left-wing underground organisation Red Army Faction (RAF), is now a leading NPD-politico.

For a few years now, a small but publicly outspoken section of the German Left has criticised this phenomenon. Periodicals such as 'Phase 2', 'Bahamas' or 'Jungle World' point out that the NPD, despite its traditional racism, is looking to co-operate with culturalist-religious organisations such as Hamas and Hezbollah, while co-operation between the Left and those same groups exists too. Several groups of the German autonomous and anti-fascist movement have adopted this criticism. Nonetheless, the Left's response to the neo-Nazis turned anti-capitalists is still one of uneasiness. Anti-capitalism? Isn't that an anti-fascist subject? Nazis have got nothing to say about it! Often it is said that neo-Nazi anti-capitalism is a mere masquerade, hiding the affirmative role Nazis play for capital. However, such a point of view is not just dumb but also dangerous. The danger is that the German Left refuses to abandon its mistaken positions and becomes, in some respects, indistinguishable from the Nazis. There is the chance, however, to rethink and to reformulate its own critique of capitalism – counter the fascist variant, for the progress and emancipation of humanity and in strict opposition to all anti-Semitic tendencies.

interview with catherine from the climate camp

The Camp for Climate Action spearheads a radical movement against the "causes of climate change". What are those causes?

I'm no expert but the key cause of climate change is the release of carbon out of the earth back up into the atmosphere as CO2. All the carbon from the trees and plants that have been slowly getting squashed to make coal, oil and gas over millions of years is now being released very quickly into the atmosphere. This quick release started at the Industrial Revolution and has been speeding up ever since. So the main cause is the burning of these fossil fuels for transport (e.g. cars and planes), making electricity (e.g. coal and gas fired power stations) and the manufacture of just about everything we use in the modern world (e.g. fertiliser for food from oil, electricity for factories and homes). There is also methane, emitted by the huge amount of cows we now have on earth, landfill (where household waste is buried underground) and other places such as the permafrost, which is now starting to melt and release huge amounts of methane.

You can therefore say that behind this, a key cause is modern life – capitalism and consumerism which focus only on profit. Also the individualistic nature of these, where other people and our impacts on them (whether in producing trainers or losing agricultural land through climate change) are ignored. This is completely unsustainable in every sense of the word – we depend on the earth for our survival (air, water, food) so destroying it is not an option if we are to survive. But the way we live, or at least those of us that do the mass consuming and live in capitalist systems, is doing just that.

The Camps were no spontaneous gatherings but were meticulously organised. How many people were involved with the planning process?

I'd say around 150. Some of these were working on camp stuff for an hour a week or less, others were doing it more like a part time job for several months. Some worked on the camp over 8 months, others did their bit nearer the start or end of the process. At each monthly weekend-long gathering (where key decisions were made) there were 50-80 people. Some people came to every gathering, some to most and some just to one. So there was a core of the same people (maybe 30) every time but also the group was different every time.

Working groups also met at these gatherings. These were smaller groups with a specific focus e.g. Networking (website, media and publicising the camp) and Site Practicalities (infrastructure and transport). They had autonomy to work on their particular areas but any big decisions, which affected the whole process or camp, were taken to the full gathering and decided by everyone. There were also smaller working groups (e.g. entertainments, kids) who mainly met at other times or worked together through phone calls and e-mail. All members of working groups did lots of work outside of gatherings and many met between as well as at them.

In gatherings and working group meetings consensus decision-making was used – allowing all voices to be heard and everyone's say to be equal and drawing together the best of everyone's ideas to reach a decision that everyone was happy with. This was tricky at times but meant that all decisions were collectively reached.

Also local groups (e.g. Yorkshire, West Midlands) got together to organise neighbourhoods. Before the 2006 camp these were mainly just organising to get a kitchen, shelter and people to the camp. After

the camp some of them became local action groups, taking action against the causes of climate change locally as well as organising a neighbourhood for the 2007 camp.

The land on which both Camps were held was squatted. How was it occupied?

I wasn't actually involved in this but in 2006 small groups of people (about 80 people in total) were transported to near the site and dropped off at different places. This was in the middle of the night. They then walked onto the site. A fence was erected and legal notices put up. A complex scaffold tripod was erected and some attached themselves to it so that eviction would be harder. A few marquees were erected. This was all done before about 6am. That all sounds quite simple but it took an awful lot of planning and organising, which had to be done in secret.

In 2007 a similar method was used. Small groups of people from different parts of the country got themselves to places near the site – transport was less of a problem in an urban location – then when the coast was clear walked onto the site and carried on as last year but with a simpler and quicker to set up fence and a spectacular double tripod which it seems was erected in seconds, well minutes. Both times it took the police a few hours to find the site, by which time infrastructure was well under way.

The focal points of the Camps were the "days of mass action". What did these actions aim to achieve?

There were several aims in 2006. The first was to shut down one of the root causes of climate change: Drax coal fired power station. It seems crazy to try to shut down a power station but it's much crazier to still be burning coal in such huge quantities so it's a proportionate response. Secondly we wanted to get media attention to let people know just how crazy it is to be burning fossil fuels and that people are willing to take direct action to stop it. Thirdly the aim was to inspire people – who were on the action, at the camp or heard about it – to take direct action against the root causes of climate change. As well as being inspired people could also attend training and workshops and talk to each other so that they had more idea of how to take action. The aim was to build the growing network of climate change activists, and that people joining this network would come from lots of different backgrounds not just the 'usual suspects'. This last aim seems the least tangible but you should never underestimate the potential of physically getting lots of people together in one place who share a common purpose, and then telling loads more people about it.

In 2007 the second and third aims were the same and were definitely expanded on – we got huge media attention and a lot more people got themselves clued up and joined the action. Also a dozen smaller actions took place around the same time as the mass action – BP, carbon offset companies, a nuclear power station and an airport owner were targeted by small affinity groups. The first aim was to disrupt Heathrow airport but by targeting the corporations – BA and BAA – not passengers. These corporations are pushing for airport expansion and a third runway in the full knowledge that this gives the UK zero chance of meeting even its 60% CO2 reduction targets., Basically they want to commit us to runaway climate change. So this year we wanted to tell BA and BAA exactly how appalling their actions are and support the ongoing local campaigns against airport noise, pollution and expansion by telling the whole world about the proposed third runway and the wider impact on climate change and all our lives.

Why and how was the decision made to target Heathrow airport in the first place?

The decision was made by a process of consensus decision-making at a gathering of about 100 people, one of the open public monthly meetings. Detailed information on six different locations was provided by the Land group who had spent months researching different potential sites.

How do you measure success or failure?

I don't think you can. The camp was definitely a huge success both years in that we achieved our aims, but it's so much more than that. For me there are many successes, small and large but all important. Just mobilising enough people to organise the camp was a huge success, as was each bit of positive media coverage we received or each person inspired.

I don't think you can say that something as complex as Climate Camp was simply a success or a failure, and to do so is to completely detract from our whole ethos which is that there is no one solution to climate change, that people need to find new and various ways of working together, that we are trying out new ways of living, being, thinking and organising here. This is all about a complex, diverse, ever-changing way of behaving not about simple black and white choices between A or B. So there were multiple successes and lots of failures too, but I'd see these more as part of our learning and our experiment. Like some of the meetings at the camp were very difficult, people didn't participate in a fair way and bad decisions were made. However, that is both a failure and a success if in the process lots of people learnt better how to conduct themselves in meetings to make them work well. You can only succeed or fail if you have set, concrete and immovable aims. Thankfully Climate Camp isn't like that – if it was then it would be just another political party or ideology-based group.

This isn't to say that we shouldn't think about success or failure, of course we should, but that it would be dangerous and counterproductive to measure it in the terms it is usually measured in, say in the contexts of business or elections. It may make us sound like we're fobbing off the person asking whether we succeeded or failed, but people need to start thinking in different ways if we are to change the world enough to escape the most devastating effects of climate change. It is up to us to demonstrate and live these different ways, and to inspire others to do the same by the way we act and what we say. For me the camp was a huge and ever-changing experiment in collective living which was incredibly exciting. We started off at this year's set-up with maybe 150 people who were already used to DIY culture and working collectively, then every day more and more people arrived who weren't used to that but started to learn about it, be inspired by it and consider how they could take it back into their homes, communities, workplaces and anywhere else they found themselves. This was incredible to be part of. Every day in the Welcome tent I met dozens of people for whom this was all completely new, and every day I saw someone who I'd welcomed yesterday taking part in consensus decision making, being a legal observer, cooking with others to feed 200…now that's what I call a success!

« we are trying out new ways of living, being, thinking and organising here »

The only thing I would be tempted to call a failure would be if the taking of the land hadn't worked or we'd been evicted straight away, but even that wouldn't have been a complete failure. It would be a failure in that the aim of taking a site wasn't achieved, but so many of our other aims would have been achieved because a huge amount of people would already have been inspired and mobilised and we'd have run at least the workshops somewhere else. It was portrayed that not shutting down Drax was a failure, but again that's only if you take a narrow view of what success and failure are. It wasn't a failure to me – it would have been great if we had shut it down but the real impact and therefore success was still there in the money it cost them for security, the huge amount of adverse publicity and the fact that lots and lots of people really started to think about coal and why we really have to stop burning it.

Also, for me personally and for many others, we understood what direct action is all about and were inspired to support or carry it out ourselves. For me one of the biggest successes you can have when campaigning on any issue is to educate people – be it information, ideas, attitudes or behaviour. Every single person that has ever campaigned, protested, taken action or stood up to be counted was inspired and educated at some point which set them off on that path; whether through reading something, seeing something, hearing something or talking to someone. So, just getting our message and our ways of living, working and being out there was, to me, actually our biggest success.

Will there be a third Camp for Climate Action?

Who knows! There are regional meetings taking place through September for local groups and neighbourhoods to get back together and decide what they can do next. Then there will be a national gathering in October where everyone will decide what next. Anyone who comes can input into this. Lots of people assume there will be a third camp but there are lots of other ideas to consider too. Whatever happens though, this ever-growing movement for action on climate change is not going away. I can't wait to be a part of what happens next…

Catherine has been involved in the Process and Welcome groups for the Camp for Climate Action. She works as a teacher in Leeds.

By Jessica Charsley

climate camp hijacked by a hardcore of liberals

Introduction

The Camp for Climate Action landed with a thud at Heathrow this summer, directly in the path proposed for a third runway, at the busiest airport in Europe. I experienced both of the UK's Climate Camps from the starting point of local level preparations. In this article, I do not knock those who put blood, sweat and tears into the camp, because it was a valiant effort and an incredibly inspiring experience. Whilst I had a fantastic time, I also think that if we are for 'social change', it is essential that we critically analyze along the way, so this article will cover my hopes and fears before the camp and whether they were realised. I focus in particular on the messages that the camp gave out and the nature of political debate within the camp.

Mixed Messages

In the run-up to the camp, much promotional material included the message that 'we can not trust governments and corporations to solve the problem of climate change'. This message was the result of discussion meetings had before the Drax camp and the Heathrow camp, on an open, consensus basis. The result of these discussions was that the Camp would take a fairly radical stance on the solutions to climate change, and present alternative ideas to those proposed in the mainstream. The platforms for the latter are huge, for example, the voices of major NGO's, the government, corporations and the mass media. However, green voices in these situations are severely constrained by the very platforms they stand upon. 'Legitimate' organizations are rarely able to host voices of dissent. Legality, hierarchy, government and corporate influences are the issues that the climate camp originally homed in on as fundamentally linked to the problem of climate change, and these are the very issues that the mainstream ideas cannot confront, because their existence depends upon these concepts being intact. For example, an NGO would be liable for inciting illegal direct action.

The camp therefore set about building its own platform. The method of organization aspired to replace the hierarchical models we are accustomed to with horizontal systems. Rather than a pyramidal hierarchy, horizontal organizing allows participants equal ownership over and responsibility for a process. Whilst tasks can be divided, they are not delegated down to others and significant decisions must be reached via consensus because it is a rejection of leadership. Devolving responsibility for the camp required an enormous amount of time, with frequent open meetings held around the country throughout the year. This is not to say that the organization was inefficient, rather, that incredible effort was put into carefully constructing the platform in a manner that corresponded with the ideals of the camp.

Desiring inclusivity, mainstream voices were welcomed, and the camp attracted people with a variety of political persuasions, predominantly liberal. In other words, many people came with a desire for moderate social and political change, expressed in opposition to a third runway, for example. All who attended the camp were sufficiently worried about environment issues - and open-minded enough - to leave the realm of conventional lobbying tactics and legality. So what did the camp present to them as an alternative to government action? What were the radical alternative visions of those who agreed that the camp would not trust them the government to act? Unfortunately, from my perspective, the case against the government and capitalist social relations was not explored enough, never mind made strong enough. It was there, but only in glimpses, so the mainstream voices were again the loudest.

Granted, regardless of the camps' message, the mainstream media would only

have picked up on soundbites, so the camp did do well to get journalists reporting a criticism of economic growth. But, for the people who attended the camp, criticism of economic growth, corporations, and the government could have been the starting point for crucial debates and ideas sharing. The odd dig at corporations and the government can only hold up with a home audience. Meanwhile, the lack of emphasis on social change left us vulnerable to attack. For example, the camp put major emphasis on lifestyle change, even though most passers by could tell us that it is impossible to live sustainably in today's society. Compost toilets and grey water systems are not things that the majority of the general public can opt into, so what remained was the demand for them to opt out of other actions, such as flying. Hence, one message of the camp appeared to be a call to 'riot for austerity', in contrast to calls that have historically rallied mass movements around a desire for prosperity.

One of the more radical messages of the camp was the call for direct action. In this case, the concept rested on very murky ground, but was presented as one of our features to be most proud of. The whole camp was geared towards a day of direct action, so the topic came up in almost every interview and press release. Although encouraging a break from the destructive codes of conduct that we live by, such as deference to illegitimate authority, direct action alone does not an anarchist make. One problem is that it can be coercive, and has been employed readily by fascists. Another is that it can be confused as a dramatic lobbying technique. Both of these problems were significant at the camp, for example, tending towards the coercive, it was inevitable that we would be accused of wanting to disrupt holidaymakers. Secondly, the majority of actions taken were in fact more symbolic than direct, in terms of both the amount of disruption caused and their interpretation as a demand to the government. I had hoped that there would be a little more honesty at the camp about the potential of direct action, or, non-violent direct action, as political tools.

Green Authoritarianism

I first became concerned about the politics within the camp when I saw the workshop programme lead with four white middle class men who have no trouble getting their voices heard elsewhere; Lynas, Hillman, Monbiot and Kronick. The star status given to these people made me uneasy, but this quickly turned to anger as I began to realise that their ideas would be left relatively unchallenged. . In the lecture by Hillman, for example, he explained that his latest published work did not go far enough in terms of expressing the urgency of climate change and the severe measures necessary to deal with it. Interpreting the camp as a plea to the general public to change their lifestyles he told us that instead, our best efforts should be geared towards lobbying the government, for it is only the state that can save us now. The talk was well received, even when it hit the topic of authoritarianism, stating that we can not risk having elections in which one party will offer higher carbon incentives, so in effect what we want is a suspension of democracy.

Also on the topic of state intervention, such as carbon rationing, Monbiot apologized to 'the anarchists in the crowd', despite the Anarchist side of the argument being left virtually untouched. So, as much as I was surprised to see a lack of anarchist theory, I was shocked at the fervor with which green-authoritarianism was received. The call for direct action generally sat uncomfortably next to the call for more state intervention, which would require a higher degree of obedience. At best, I would say that the enthusiastic applause for increased state intervention may have been down to celebrity culture, a reflection of the sheer excitement at the gathering, or, more seriously, down to better formed arguments. Although, this does not explain why the Turbulence panel were not received with such enthusiasm when they raised points in a similar vein to in this article.

A classic argument against anarchist theory is the insufficient time for a complete overhaul of the way society functions, so we are better off trying to improve peoples' lives directly. With a renewed sense of urgency over climate change, many cli-

mate campers seemed to be erring towards the side of 'there is no time to have anarchist ideals, we must succumb to the system which is slowly destroying us'. I do not at all suggest that in the run up to the camp a deep critique of capitalism should have been agreed upon by consensus, rather, that debates should have been had at the camp, covering difficult questions such as:

How can one be for autonomous living and for closer policing of personal carbon counts? Why do many environmentalists talk about the problem of increasing global population without talking about redistribution and freedom of movement? If the public are infantilized by state intervention, how can it be the solution to getting people to take responsibility for their environment? If we offer more power to a government will we ever get it back? Will it ever be in the interests of an elite to minimize environmental damage to the poor? Can we reconcile 'we want luxury for all' with 'we want sustainable luxury for all?'

The science tells us that the situation is urgent, so it is essential to think hard, for example, about what kind of world we are trying to save and for whom. There were opportunities at the camp to reveal another emancipatory layer to our desire for social change, for example, a demonstration at the nearby detention centre, but perhaps due to energy drain, they were not fully realised. I concede that the camp was a DIY project, so if I wanted anarchist theory to be more prominent then I should have done something about it myself, but it actually took the experience of the camp itself to make me realize this as a priority.

Conclusion

Whilst troubled by the difficulties ahead, I'm excited by the buzz around the emerging movement against climate change. Perhaps it could be the dawn of a mass realization that systemic change is necessary? If it is a climate for change in more ways than one, then let's simultaneously be bold, clear and thoughtful about the type of change we want!

As for the camp, I have the nagging thought that when journalists accused Anarchists of 'infiltrating the camp', we may have missed the chance of a lifetime, to say to the whole world, yes, the camp has been formed on the anarchist principles of horizontal organization, cooperation and self-determination. If the platform that we constructed can be compared to a football stadium, I would report that "it was an absolutely crucial match for a team who never get invited to play away, yet the home game advantage was not quite seized upon and, and 'at the end of the day', too many own goals were scored".

The camp at Drax had a message of decentralizing power in both senses of the word, which fitted well with autonomous ideas. The decision to hold the camp at Heathrow presented many problems for getting such a radical message across, but perhaps it will stimulate overdue reflection on how we tackle issues of individual lifestyle choices versus collective action and desires for wider social change. Of course, all of the disadvantages must be weighed up against the kick that major media coverage may have given to the movement. As for the lack of controversy around the call for increased state intervention in our lives, I think that it would have been a problem regardless of the location of the camp. The sense of urgency will only increase each year, making the Climate Camp movement more susceptible to its' influence.

Jessica Charsley attended Climate Camps at Drax power station in 2006 and Heathrow airport in 2007. This year she was lucky enough to be in one of those affinity groups who made it to the siege of BAA headquarters despite the best efforts of the police!

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by John Archer

are we armed only with peer-reviewed science?

This year the Camp for Climate Action apparently came 'armed only with peer reviewed science'. In a society that hasn't quite given up the idea that it should be governed rationally, this approach wins respect. However, whilst crucial to know the best available science, this shouldn't eclipse the need for political discussion. The neglect of the latter was palpable at the camp: Were we a lobby group with faith in the oligarchy, or did we want to work towards dissolving the social and economic structures that caused this mess? The former came through strongest. The manner in which environmentalists are currently utilizing science may have unforeseen consequences. Of most importance, it leaves us vulnerable to cooption with agendas antithetical to the emancipatory ideals outlined in the original aims of the camp. An unlikely source of useful criticism on this matter comes from the writers of Spiked, vociferous critics of all things green. If you can stomach the numerous ideological divergences and their 'interesting' epistemological orientations, their demands to put the politics back into environmental issues are worth listening to.

Environmentalists have become used to discursive marginality, having spent most of their time simply trying to persuade others to take anthropogenic global warming (AGW) seriously. Suddenly hoards of unlikely people want to be seen to be green.

For some, it's too little, too late, and too insincere. However, most campaigners see cause for celebration. Even 'radical' environmentalism no longer causes controversy. Campaigning has become like pushing at an opening door.

Whilst not discounting crucial advances in awareness, there are grounds for caution. Few people are asking important questions about the social implications of our responses to climate change. Where does the door being pushed lead to? What kind of world are we trying to save? Whose world? If politics is continually overshadowed by science rather than complemented by it, and all eyes are kept fixed upon carbon emissions, terrible things may happen in the background.

Many consider the situation urgent enough to warrant almost any measures. At the Camp for Climate Action this year, authoritarian and market-orientated proposals dominated at a forum for progressive, libertarian solutions. Intentionally or not, the affair became a dramatic single-issue mass lobby for punitive state intervention. Friends of the earth with D-locks. Campaigners concerns may not so much be accepted as co-opted, providing leverage for agendas antithetical to those outlined in the original aims of the camp.

Millenarian fantasies aside, capitalism and the state apparatus supporting it could survive climate change, though in uglier forms. Barring a clean energy revolution, this would entail cutting energy consumption by ensuring only a minority carry on consuming: Deepening inequality coupled with exclusion through green taxation; the poor being forced to sell energy quotas to survive; prevention of infrastructure development in nations hit hardest by climate-change under the ruse of sustainability, whilst rich nations aided by stolen majority world resources - including land to grow bio-fuels and organic vegetables - create fortress-like border controls.

'Cut the carbon by any means necessary' campaigners seem asleep to this, but what should be a nightmare is a fast approaching reality.

Those associated with Spiked-Online usually appear in environmentalist discussions as vilified 'denialists', neoliberal stooges, or Trotskyite entryists. Beyond such hasty assumptions, there is more to Spiked than mischievous contrariness and a social-constructivist approach to science. They're one of few voices in the cli-

mate-change debate that touch upon issues outlined above. Their contribution provides a much-needed demand for reflection upon the political strategies of radical environmentalism, or the dangers inherent to the lack of them.

Reclaiming the human subject

Many core contributors to Spiked and associated organisations were once active Revolutionary Communist Party members. The RCP formed in the mid 70's as an expelled faction of The International Socialists. Contrary to orthodox socialist peers, they perceived the working class as too indoctrinated to harbour revolutionary potential, and so instead concentrated on creating an intellectually combative and upwardly mobile vanguard. Following electoral failure, focus shifted towards elite intellectual realms of the media and academia. The principle vehicle for this was their publication, Living Marxism, later re-branded LM. Bankrupted by a libel case, LM became Spiked-Online. Many ex-RCP now write for leading newspapers, make prime-time documentaries, commentate on national television and radio, or organize high-profile conferences.

By 1996 the RCP had been disbanded, conventional political avenues declared redundant, and distinctions between left and right irrelevant. The key struggle was instead between those seeking to extend human freedoms and progressive enlightenment values, and those undermining them. With an unacknowledged anti-progress alliance spanning the political spectrum, the dominant spirit of the age is pessimistic about human potential to overcome adversity, obsessed with manipulative exaggeration of risks, fearful of material, technological and social progress, and inclined towards infantilising society through increased regulation, surveillance and state interference.

Even capitalism, driver of growth, innovation and desire for self-improvement, has succumbed to the era's guilt-ridden miserabilism, and is fighting rearguard actions to present itself as 'caring'. Spiked is unwavering in advocating unfettered free market capitalism, with virtually all state intervention negative.

Nonetheless, branding them neoliberal stooges is neglectful of their complexity. A parallel is their assumption that all environmentalists must be misanthropic, authoritarian, anti-development, and enthralled to a proto-religious vision of Gaia. Prominent in their coverage of the camp, Spiked often resort to predictable slurs, stereotyping, and building straw men out of superficial environmentalist arguments. A little attention deficit disorder aside perhaps, it's easy to see what provokes such hostility.

If the majority of relevant scientists are correct, climate-change demands recognition of limits to certain human activities. 'Externalities' may not remain external, while 'nature' might not be eternally bent to humankinds will; a spanner-in-the-works for believers in permanent material progress. Passionate humanists also react aggressively to suggestions of another stage in the inevitable erosion of anthropocentricism.

Crisis? What Crisis?

In light of these difficulties, Spiked's first approach to the environmental crisis is to question its existence. They are usually armed only with standard sociological critiques of scientific knowledge. Examples include funding bodies encouraging certain results, scientists holding culturally formed opinions that sway research, 'science' being methodologically incoherent, the paradox of permanent discovery and absolute certainty, and social factors delaying paradigm shifts. Josie Appleton, for example, states that the veracity of scientific discoveries depends almost entirely upon the "circumstances in which such science is produced". Echoing others at Spiked, she claims that AGW theories "[owe] more to the anxious zeitgeist than to climate realities."[i]

I hope they're right, and not simply missing the limitations of critiques that are, as post-modernist science critic Bruno Latour asserts, "useless against objects of some solidity".[ii] You cannot deconstruct the reflective properties of carbon dioxide molecules. Likewise, past unreliability in the field should not entail automatic rejection of all climate modelling.

Nonetheless, there is not always the certainty many environmentalists claim. As Brendan O'Neill observes of the climate camp, "If, possibly, perhaps, risk…all these caveats are expunged by the protestors who declare simplistically 'the science says

we have 10 years to SAVE THE WORLD!'[iii] Simultaneously, it is rarely considered necessary to know which scientists and which studies are being cited. Scientists say so. End of discussion.

The scientific consensus is often invoked to stamp out moral and political rather than scientific debates, providing a screen for environmentalist moral and political evaluations. There are two pertinent examples. Firstly, the individual moralization of carbon emissions; whilst necessary to a degree, it does as Spiked commentator Sadhavi Sharma points out, 'completely let off the hook our social and economic systems'. An almost inevitable result of holding the camp at Heathrow, it made us seem, as Nathalie Rothschild recognised, "more like new puritans than radicals".[iv] Secondly, descriptions of human activity in terms of a rapacious virus display misanthropy by locating the cause of environmental destruction in 'greed' central to the human condition, rather than as results of the social and economic systems people live within.

Both implicitly encourage increased state coercion to ensure the malevolent majority is forcefully controlled, and could easily transfer into horrific policies towards the rapidly industrializing majority world.

Spiked also aren't averse to muddling science for political purposes. Whilst most climate-scientists are portrayed as unreliable cultural pessimists, paradoxically we should trust 'science' for solutions to climate-change. Humanity can invent its way out of any corner. This is exemplified in their stance toward GM technology; of course GM crops are safe, they'll feed the world, even if half the cultivatable land becomes desert. Just don't mention agribusinesses breathing down the necks of genetic researchers!

'Armed' with science?

A lead banner at the camp read, 'we are armed only with peer reviewed science'. Armed indeed, scientific credibility is a vital weapon for marginalized campaigners. 'The Sciences' provides more than a baseline for climate-change discussions, it stuns critics and provides space for political manoeuvre. 'The science' that marchers were carrying was a report on contraction and convergence, which is primarily a political solution to climate change, not an assessment of it.

Numerous different commentators were simultaneously claiming that 'the science' leaves no solution but theirs. This included Mayar Hillman's well-received proposals for the virtual suspension of democracy.

Indeed, environmentalist appeals for regulating, controlling, and reducing, assimilate more easily with authoritarian than libertarian political systems. As George Monbiot pointed out in his seminar, 'there has never been a riot for austerity, but that's what we're asking for'. Most revolutions ask for more, principally more freedom to live according to ones desires. What form a libertarian-green revolution would take is a difficult question.

« the frenzied 'act-now or we all die tomorrow' routine could have harmful consequences »

Subsequently, Spiked present environmentalism and 'the science' as a sinister anti-politics project. Josie Appleton suggests we base approaches to climate-change, 'not on scientific facts but political critique'.[v] Meanwhile, Spiked editor Mick Hume pointed out that traditionally protestors go armed with political arguments.[vi] Though political discussion without reference to relevant aspects of material reality is dangerous idealism, at the camp the focus was on science, with politics comparatively untouched, effectively handing the matter to the government.

Climate Science can deceitfully blend with politics and morality, become a distraction from necessary political discussions, or perilously ignored. Efforts must be made to integrate them more appropriately.

Acceptable risks?

'Risk' said Ulrich Beck, 'is the moral statement of a scientised society'.[vii] Considering the scientific consensus on climate change, the lives at stake, and lack of technological solutions available, it might appear that only the callously immoral would risk continuing the carbon economy. For Spiked however, such notions display apocalyptic obsessions symptomatic of perverse cultural attitudes towards risk, and negative appraisals of the human subject. The precautionary principle embodies a society afraid of itself and its creations. Environmentalism, according to Furedi, is the work of "fear entrepreneurs" exploiting anxieties for political gain. We should reject this emasculating tendency to view uncertain futures "through the prism of fear", and instead reclaim the human ability to triumph against adversity.[viii]

To environmentalists however, this may seem an article of blind faith, asserting humanism as the true successor to Christianity. The need for more debate that Spiked plead for acts as a long-grass into which the climate change ball can be thrown, as it was throughout the 90's. Furthermore, this call is easier made when residing in a position of ignorance or little personal risk.

Spiked are however right to point out that the frenzied 'act-now or we all die tomorrow' routine could have harmful consequences for what little democracy we have. 'The time for debate' it is often said, 'is over'. Does this refer to science or politics? Again, too often the two are confused.

Common ground

Ironically, as much as Spiked lament the onset of scientific green-authoritarianism, beneath a newfound green-sheen the establishment are not taking climate change as seriously as the scientists. Far from timidly backing away from that particular notion of 'progress', growth remains a priority over all others, as demonstrated by

the Heathrow question. Far from opting in to the culture of pessimism, risky optimism remains central.

Beyond differing assessments of AGW and interpretations of 'progress', Spiked may share considerable unrecognised common ground with environmentalists. Sanctimonious and misanthropic elements aside, most environmentalist campaigners are true humanists, believing in the potential for rational intervention to change the world for the better of all humanity.

Many might also agree that cultural pessimism is at work in their movement, manifest in the immediate inclination to align with existing political and economic structures in the search for a solution, rather than facing them as part of the problem and looking forward.

It needn't be so. Necessity is the mother of all invention, and so hybrid politics can arise in times of crisis. Effort is needed to overcome the apparent contradiction between emancipatory social change, and the challenges posed by climate change. The best available science provides context, but should not distract from political tasks. Far from climate science destroying politics and debate, it can throw it wide open again by bringing to light new matters of concern, new problems coupled with new opportunities as flaws in contemporary society's orthodoxies are laid bare.

The root causes of this crisis are not particular buildings, particular corporations, or particular politicians, but the wider social, political and economic structures within which we live, our cultural priorities, and the dominant ideologies of our time. It is a 'battle of ideas', and this movement needs to wade in with more courage.

John Archer is based in Manchester, and writes and campaigns on a variety of issues, including the Camp for Climate Action. Amongst other things, he is interested in the relation between science and power. The issues raised by climate change leave him utterly confused.

[i] Josie Appleton: *Measuring the political temperature* http://www.spiked-online.com/index.php?/site/reviewofbooks_article/3366/

[ii] Bruno Latour: *Why has critique run out of steam? From matters of fact to matters of concern, Critical Inquiry* **30**, 225-248. 2004

[iii] Brendan O'Neill: *Let the puritans protest* http://spiked-online.com/index.php?

[iv] Nathalie Rothschild: *Heathrow Protest: Not so Happy Campers.* Http://www.spiked-online.com/index.php?/site/article/3730/

[v] Josie Appleton: *Measuring the political temperature* http://www.spiked-online.com/index.php?/site/reviewofbooks_article/3366/

[vi] Mick Hume: *These self righteous clowns at Heathrow.* http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/comment/columnists/mick_hume/article2295752.ece

[vii] Ulrich Beck: *Risk Society: towards a new modernity.* Sage, 1992

[viii] Frank Furedi: *The only thing we have to fear is the 'culture of fear' itself* http://www.spiked-online.com/index.php?/site/article/3053/

by Rebecca Johnson

faslane 365: mobilising communities to abolish nuclear weapons

Since starting a year-long non-violent blockade of the Faslane nuclear weapons base in Scotland on October 1st last year, Faslane 365 has involved thousands of people from all over the world. With two months to go, the campaign is now gearing up towards October 1st 2007, when many will be returning for a unified Big Blockade, aiming to close the base completely.

Actions over the year have been as varied as the people who have participated: large or small, carefully planned or serendipitously chaotic; some were poignantly funny, such as the Spanish group that covered themselves in slippery blood-red paint before lying down (imagine the MoD cleaning bill), while some were unbearably moving, as when a group of elderly Hibakusha (survivors) of the Nagasaki and Hiroshima bombings laid paper peace cranes across the mouth of the gate and sang songs about preventing nuclear weapons destroying anywhere else in the world. Then they sat down, defying police orders to move. The blockades have ranged from bagpipes and ceilidhs to dawn lock-ons and tripods in the road that closed all the gates for over an hour. Among those arrested there have been Members of the Scottish and European Parliaments, a UN Assistant Secretary-General and his family, renowned writers and musicians, doctors, nurses, community workers, unwaged (but hardworking) activists, scientists, cyclists, mixed choirs, women in wheelchairs, grannies for peace, representatives from various faiths, students with their arms locked together while their professors sat on camp stools in front of the North Gate and held a 6-hour seminar (in the pouring rain)...

What was the purpose of spending all this time and energy? What has it achieved? What was it intended to achieve? What lessons can be learnt?

First, at a time when the majority of British public opinion is portrayed as uninterested in nuclear issues, a primary objective was to raise awareness and opposition to Tony Blair's precooked decision to renew Britain's nuclear weapon system, Trident. But Faslane 365 aimed to do more than raise awareness. We wanted directly to disrupt the military-nuclear machine and stimulate a regrowth in non-violent community-based activism on peace, justice and environmental issues.

By blockading the base, we are disrupting what we see as immoral and illegal nuclear deployments; in effect, the citizens being arrested and dragged from the gates of Faslane are the people who are actually upholding the law. In deploying nuclear weapons – and even more so in plotting to procure the next generation – it is the British government that is breaching humanitarian law and the nuclear non-proliferation treaty obligations it has undertaken. Preventing nuclear business-as-usual then becomes a citizen's duty, enshrined in the Nuremburg Principles. One reason why so few arrests have resulted in prosecution is that the 'Authorities' do not want the courts clogged up with hundreds of non-violent protesters determined to show that nuclear weapons are illegal as well as being immoral, inhumane and incapable of contributing to our real security.

But passion and having right on our side are not enough to bring about political change. The yearlong blockading of Faslane was part of a political strategy to break the nuclear chain at its weakest link – Scotland. The deployment of Trident relies on the naval base at Faslane and a facility for storing and fitting nuclear warheads, built into a rock-face at Coulport, a few miles away. But the overwhelming majority of Scottish people want nuclear weapons taken out of their country. This was underscored on June 14 by a vote in the Scottish Parliament in which 71 MSPs voted against Trident, with only 16 (all Tories) voting to keep it. The Scottish Labour Party split - 5 brave souls voted with the majority who

want to abolish nuclear weapons. The other 39 abstained, mostly because the replacement of Trident is official New Labour government policy, whether they agree with it or not.

Blockading Faslane puts pressure on the Scottish executive, who have to pay for the policing of the base. Debarred by the devolution agreement (The 1998 Scotland Act) from having an independent say on defence and foreign policy, the Scottish Executive is finding other ways to put legal and financial pressure on Westminster to change its nuclear policy. In one important example, there are moves afoot to charge the Ministry of Defence one billion pounds per warhead that travels on Scotland's roads to and from Coulport. The grounds are the serious environmental and safety risks when these live warheads are transported in frequent convoys from the nuclear bomb factories at Aldermaston and Burghfield and use routes such as the M8 or M9 past Edinburgh and the A82 past Loch Lomond. Danger money might also be levied for the nuclear weapons carried through Scottish lochs on the Trident nuclear submarines.

A further challenge initiated by Faslane 365 and now taken up, is the argument that London cannot use the Scotland Act to impose Trident on Scotland when the renewal, use and threatened use (and therefore deployment) of these nuclear weapons contravene obligations and undertakings in international law. This is the basis for the 'Prevention of Crimes Committed by Weapons of Mass Destruction (Scotland) Bill 2007', sponsored by Michael Matheson MSP, which underscores that Scotland has legal as well as moral and political grounds to reject having Trident.

If Scotland succeeds in rejecting Trident, London would be hard put to find an alternative base for its nuclear weapons, which would greatly add to the political pressure on the UK government to move from nuclear re-armament to disarmament. In so doing, Britain would become the first nuclear power to take on board the 21st century reality that nuclear weapons are a security problem, not a security asset. By transferring our resources to devaluing and abolishing nuclear weapons, Britain could give an enormous boost to international security and non-proliferation.

But of course the issues that have to be addressed go far wider than getting rid of Trident. As exposed in the Blair government's White Paper and hurried debate on Trident renewal leading up to the 'three-line-whipped' vote on March 14, the justifications for getting the next generation of nuclear weapons are very thin. Relying on scaremongering about 'unknown unknowns' and outdated notions of deterrence, they equate nuclear weapons with an insurance policy - justifications that could function as proliferation drivers for any nation on earth to acquire their own weapons of mass destruction. Not only do nuclear weapons provide no more insurance than voodoo medicine, but they are also no answer to the real threats we face, which include climate change and terrorism. On the contrary, they contribute to additional WMD threats and get in the way of international efforts to implement coherent security and disarmament policies.

Instead of wasting resources on a capability to threaten mass annihilation, we need to learn to think in different ways about war and peace, and base our defence and security on international cooperation, justice and sustainable development. Overwhelming national force and armaments are now as irrelevant for human security as bows and arrows had become by the 17th century. Terrorism and climate change will not be defeated by nuclear weapons – or even by smart bombs and the suspension of our hard-won civil liberties. We need greater understanding of the causes (including our own roles and practices) and better policy options for dealing with them.

Laws and restrictions enacted under the guise of combating terrorists are now being employed to rob us of human and democratic rights that were painstakingly won during centuries of civil resistance

against despotism and tyranny. So Faslane 365's approach has been to challenge militarism directly while also building a broader, stronger community of activists and resisters who would learn from each other's struggles and campaigns, share ideas and give support. For this purpose, the 6-person steering group has sought to facilitate rather than organise. Making extensive use of website and internet, we have provided detailed briefings for blockading groups, encouraging them to do the planning, practicalities and decision-making for their particular actions themselves. In most cases this has worked, and people have been so energised and inspired by blockading together that group-members have kept in touch and often gone on to organise further blockades at Faslane or other kinds of non-violent actions at local bases or facilities.

Faslane 365 developed out of a long history of non-violent opposition to nuclear weapons, drawing from the successes of the Greenham Women's Peace Camp of the 1980s and decades of protest at Faslane itself, from the peace camp to Trident Ploughshares. It added its own unique contribution, encouraging concerned people to form groups and organise autonomously, and take responsibility for one or two days of a collective action extending over the whole year. Each blockading group then posted its stories and pictures on the website for all to share.

October 1st may be the finishing line of the first phase of Faslane 365, but it is by no means the end of the struggle to rid Scotland, Britain and the world of nuclear weapons. On September 30th, representatives from many of the groups will gather in Glasgow to discuss future strategy and plan for the next stage. Civil resistance is not an end in itself, but a tool of mobilisation, pressure and change. It works best when placed in a broader political context that includes education about the issues, analysis of the security environment, alternative thinking about how to address the problems, and participation in (and strengthening of) democratic institutions, including informing and lobbying elected representatives.

« civil resistance is not an end in itself, but a tool of mobilisation, pressure and change »

Come to Faslane on October 1st and you will meet people from all walks of life. Check out the website for information and ideas. If you can, join the strategy meeting on Sunday. You can make your own way to Faslane or make use of overnight accommodation in Glasgow. Coaches to Faslane will leave from Glasgow and Edinburgh early Monday morning. For further info: www.faslane365.org

Rebecca Johnson is a member of the Faslane 365 Steering Group and a former Senior Advisor to the International Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission, chaired by Hans Blix.

what next?

If you would like to contribute an article or response to any of the debates raised in issue one, or if you would like to help with distributing or funding the next issue please visit our website or contact us directly.

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Thank you,

Shift Editors.

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