



# SUMMITS AND PLATEAUS

**WHEN** the powerful meet, we meet. When the leaders of the world's richest nations, largest corporations, most important institutions gather to make decisions on how power will be administered, we, the **MOTLEY**, the rabble, the troublemakers, the ne'er-do-wells – the multitude – gather to exercise power.

Summits are our summits! What happens at them? On the face of it, they're about protesting, about being against things. But in fact what we do is far more positive: we spend time together, we demonstrate together, maybe riot a little; we talk together, we argue together; we dance together, we drink together, some lucky ones even fall in love... in short, we **LIVE!** And we **CHANGE**: we don't come out of it the same as we went in. All of this organised in non-hierarchical, non-authoritarian ways. Frequently messy, rarely 'perfect' or 'pure', but usually in such a way as to give all of us realistic hopes of doing it better next time.

And what of before? Organising mobilisations against, say, the Group of Eight (G8) summit is an immense amount of work, involving perhaps several hundred people doing stuff up to two years in advance – with obviously many, many more people as the date approaches and far, far fewer for most of the months before that. An enormous amount of work: media stuff, networking stuff, legal stuff, health, accommodation, liaising with NGOs, trade unions, political factions, local government... and all of this co-ordinated and done with no leaders,

no one telling others what to do. And, again, frequently **MESSY**...

Journalists, leftists, politicians frequently ask, "Okay, so you're against the G8 [or the World Bank, or the...]. But what are you for?" What an absurd question! **WE ARE FOR THIS!** This openness, this way of organising, this way of living, of being, of producing life! When we look at it like this, it's not about how to fuck them up, it's not about how much damage we can cause. It's not about them; it's about **US**. Of course it's easy to see why we keep getting dragged back on to this territory. Our summits take place in opposition to theirs, so we always end up talking about the G8, the World Bank, the IMF, the WTO etc. But the reality is that Blair, Bush and Berlusconi meet and talk all the time. They have computers and telephones. They don't have to meet at G8 summits. So whether or not we prevent them from meeting doesn't really affect their power to make decisions. But our effect on their ability to meet is an index of the 'other worlds' we are living. It is almost a measure of their **POSSIBILITY**. Our summits and our movements aren't about destroying capitalism by fucking things up; they're about **EXPANDING** our own possibilities, turning ever outwards – **EXCAVATING** capital's power to make its world pointless.

Over the last few years the period following summits has seemed, almost by definition, one of decline. Our sense can be one of deflation, of 'coming back to earth', of returning to the world we had (fleeting) left. Our normal world seems hollow, our jobs seem pointless. This is hardly surprising because we feel – we are! – irrevocably changed by those collective moments of **INTENSITY** and **CREATION**. The problem is how this energy, these moments of excess, can be sustained. This is nothing to do with maintaining summit links, preparing for 'the next one', keeping in touch, or anything like that. Every meeting or gathering seems to end with someone (or all of us) suggesting yet another mailing list to 'continue the discussion' – to make our wealth-producing machine permanent – and then passing round a piece of paper to collect email addresses. We're certainly not suggesting that we shouldn't stay in touch, but human beings maintain long-lived connections in different ways – more one-to-one or small group-based, and founded on shared labour, personal attraction, simply 'clicking' with one another. When we slip back to thinking about formal lists or networks, we're making unnecessary assumptions about what 'the movement' is or should be. We revert to organisational, bureaucratic, ways of thinking about ourselves as a way of trying to keep something wonderful going – when those ways of thinking are the antithesis of what that 'something' was. The movement isn't a defined collection of people, it's not a network of groups, it's not even a 'thing' – it's a process, a **BECOMING**.

Summits are singular moments, moments of excess, during which we change individually and collectively. At Gleneagles we'll produce immense **COLLECTIVE** wealth and experience new ways of being. It's this we need to keep in mind as we discuss the event and how we organise for it. New processes and possibilities will emerge and it's crucial that we don't try to close these down or jam them back into pre-conceived notions or schemes. It's vital that we allow our creativity and our energy to flow freely. It's in these circumstances that our collective intelligence can ignite to generate other worlds, that we can connect the present moment to those moments of excess yet to come. Our experiments in new ways of being are limited only by our imagination: let's keep it **OPEN**... See you at Gleneagles!

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