

NEVER MIND THE BANKERS



open a newspaper and what do you see?



Financial crisis, social crisis, climate crisis. A few people played the financial markets. The majority of people paid the price.

Again, a few people are drilling for oil, digging up coal, plundering the planet. And as the American Gulf oil spill disaster and global climate change show, again we all pay the price.

We know things are screwed up. A new politics was promised, but all we get is the same politics, different faces.

it doesn't have to be this way

The Camp for Climate Action takes action on the root causes of climate change and tackles injustice. We're not about nicely asking corporations or government to change their ways. We're about getting in the way, and building a mass social movement to tackle the enormous environmental and economic crises we face.

In 2007 thousands camped in the path of the proposed third runway at Heathrow. A business-sponsored climate disaster was stopped. Afterwards, thousands camped in Kent where multinational energy giant E.ON planned to build the UK's first coal-fired power station in 30 years. Those plans are now frozen.

These are important victories, but not enough. The very way the economy is organised means environmental destruction and social injustice are built in. We must change the economy from being destructively led by the rich, to democratically owned by us all. We must change from ever more growth – in consumption, production, hours at work and dangerous pollution – to more free time to really live.

This summer we are targeting the Royal Bank of Scotland. Remarkably, we own over 83% of RBS. More remarkably we are mortgaging our own future. RBS lends more money to companies extracting fossil fuels than any other bank in the UK. They fund big energy companies like BP and Shell to dig up ever more dangerous fuels, from Deepwater Horizon oil

to tar sands to shale gas. For RBS – using our money – it's all about maximising short-term profits regardless of community destruction or the long-term impacts. For all of us it's exploitation and climate catastrophe. RBS must be stopped.

Some people think that our spectacular summer camps and direct action shining attention on one major problem isn't enough. We agree. But, we do change things. The third runway is cancelled, and plans for eight coal-fired power stations have been slashed to four. And there is now a vibrant community talking and taking action on the critical issues that face us.

The Royal Bank of Scotland HQ and nerve-centre is in Edinburgh. It sponsors the world-famous Edinburgh Fringe Festival. Imagine, amongst the 500,000 festival-goers, thousands of climate campers living together in a radical experiment in real democracy. The atmosphere will be electric. Imagine.

What will we – you – do? Lay siege to RBS HQ, stopping its global operations? Creatively use the spectacle of the Fringe? Will we win an award for best Fringe performance? Seriously, awards are not important. What is important is continuing to grow a community of people who take on the institutions and ideas that are driving us headlong to social and environmental catastrophe.

We were told the banks were too big to fail. After the bailout we were told that they needed to be broken up. Now the very same people demand austerity from us while lending cash to climate change criminals.

So come and participate in Climate Camp V.

Saturday 21 to Tuesday 24 August, a mystery location in or around Edinburgh.

Come break the banks. Come work out solutions. Come give RBS the big V.

This is a newspaper that has been created by a number of people who are involved in Camp for Climate Action. It's been made in the hope that you learn lots about the Royal Bank of Scotland and its role in making climate change much worse, and that you might be inspired in August to come to Edinburgh and take part in Climate Camp V.

Even if you can't come in August, there are regional CfCA meetings taking place all over the country all year round. Here you'll find like minded people coming together to hatch plans and organise in their communities, trying to make the much needed changes in the here and now rather than waiting in vain for governments and business to get round to it.

We apologise if bits of this are a bit nerdy. We tried to avoid jargon and make it as accessible as possible – but some bits of it proved to be very resistant to our efforts!

All of this newspaper can be downloaded as a pdf from www.climatecamp.org.uk

an ILLUSTRATED HISTORY OF HAVING A POP at the Banks.

Where banks create chaos, people at the grassroots have fought back to stop them financing fossil fuel and mining projects, and to create democratic financial institutions that serve the needs of people and sustainability rather than just lining the pockets of greedy bankers. Here are just a few examples.

enric 'robin hood' duran: rob from the rich, give to the radical...

"I robbed 492,000 euros from those who rob so much more." Enric Duran has become notorious for being the guy who defrauded 39 different banks of nearly half a million Euros over two years. Without any intention to pay the loans back, the money was instead distributed to progressive social projects focused on establishing alternatives to capitalism. His action was announced on 17 September 2008, two days after the collapse of Lehman Brothers, with the distribution of 200,000 copies of a newspaper titled 'Crisis' in Barcelona. The paper laid out a systemic critique of the banking and finance sector, tying it to the ecological crisis. It urged people to establish self-managed alternatives funded by the refusal to repay debts and mortgages. A second newspaper published 6 months later, with 350,000 copies distributed across Spain, held the central piece 'We Can Live Without Capitalism' and launched an organisation of the same name focused on linking together socially just alternatives.



dsb – decisively shutdown bank

The Dutch bank DSB went bankrupt in November 2009 after depositors withdrew £550 million of savings in 12 days. After an aggressive strategy of pushing cheap credit and landing masses of people in financial difficulties, the bank came under fire from the Dutch Mortgage Grievances Foundation. The run on the bank occurred after their campaigner, Pieter Lakeman, appeared on Dutch television arguing that it was "in their [the customers'] personal and collective interest to take their money out."

'boerclaysbank'

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, Barclays Bank provided finance for the racist Apartheid regime in South Africa. The bank's direct loans to South Africa between 1982 and 1984 came to \$725.4 million. In 1976, the year of the Soweto uprising, Barclays handed over 10 million rand to the South African Defence Force who were bloodily repressing the intensified struggle for freedom by black South Africans.

In outrage at Barclays Bank's complicity in the Apartheid regime, student activists in the UK organised a 15 year boycott of the bank. The campaign has been credited with causing the bank's share of the lucrative UK student market to drop from 27 % to 15 %, and helping to force Barclays' withdrawal from South Africa in 1986. 12,000 student accounts were closed during the period of the boycott.



climate camp and uk actions targeting rbs

For years, the Royal Bank of Scotland has been targeted in the UK for its financing of fossil fuel projects and companies. Rising Tide, People & Planet and the Camp for Climate Action have taken sustained and diverse direct action against the bank. Last summer a group of Climate Camp activists successfully disrupted operations at RBS London HQ, blockading the front door and supergluing themselves to the trading floor. During Rising Tide's RBS Day of Action in 2007, there were 34 actions around the UK. In 2009, People & Planet activists in Manchester occupied the rooftop of the RBS branch on their campus, demanding that the student union not renew the bank's lease. Throughout 2009-10 a coalition of groups took the Treasury to court over their failure to stop RBS pumping billions into fossil fuel projects and companies post bailout.

f***ing ace

In 2006 a brazenly unscrupulous bank opened for business in Belgium, advertising "maximum return for the client" with investments in human rights and environment bashing projects and companies. Titled ACE, and aggressively promoting a 'no holds barred' approach to profit-making, the bank whipped up a media storm. The saga ended at a packed press conference at which Netwerk Vlaanderen, a Belgian NGO that targets the banking sector, revealed themselves behind the elaborate (though highly accurate) hoax. They had created a bank which publicly advertised what other high street banks did behind closed doors, shedding light on the \$8 billion invested into companies involved in human rights abuses by Belgian banks AXA, Dexia, Fortis, ING and KBC.



argentinian grannies trashing atm's

From 1989, Argentina faced "surgery without anaesthetic" : drastic neo-liberal restructuring in return for IMF dollars. Debt and unemployment soared, the latter hitting 20% in December 2001, and thousands of people went unpaid. As industry went bankrupt workers took control of their factories and huge *puquero* road blockades were set up around the country. A run on the banks was threatened as people increasingly withdrew their money. The government responded by introducing the *corralito* in December 2001, freezing all bank accounts for 12 months and permitting only small sums to be withdrawn. Two weeks later, further cuts were announced – the budget was to shrink by 20%. Huge sections of Argentine society took to the streets, food riots erupted and protesters banging pots and pans soon turned their attention to the banks, causing extensive property damage. They chanted "¡Que se vayan todos!" (All of them out!), and on 20 December 2001 president De La Rúa fled the country.

oyal bank of canada

The largest financier of the Albertan tar sands, The Royal Bank of Canada has been targeted with continued campaigning from activists and First Nation communities within Canada. Since 2007, the bank has pumped more than \$16.7 billion in loans into companies operating in the tar sands. In March 2010, 170 people converged at the bank's Annual General Meeting in Toronto to demand they stop these investments. Inside the meeting, representatives of First Nation communities in Canada challenged RBC's CEO, Gordon Nixon, about the devastating impacts tar sands are having on their communities and banner drops happened about town. The meeting was successfully disrupted, with over half of it spent on the topic of tar sands.

A HISTORY OF THE FINANCIAL crisis, AS FAST AS YOU RIP OFF A PLASTER

post-war boom years

After World War II, employers and governments were eager to accommodate the demands of workers in the face of increasing social unrest. Returning soldiers and their families demanded a life 'more than the tyranny of either work or war'.

To appease this growing radicalism, demands for services were granted - such as the NHS. These concessions had the benefit of quelling dissent and incorporating people into a system that they could now see some advantage in.

The destruction of the war was also followed by a boom in production. Amongst the ruins of Europe were investment opportunities for capitalists, and the unions were able to negotiate higher wages for the increased productivity of the workforce. A period of relative stability (essential for the growth of capitalism) existed between 'labour and the bosses' and continued well into the 1960s.

the party is over

Stability was not to last. The boom years ended, followed by an economic downturn. Employers sought profit, and squeezed it from the workers. The deals brokered over wages could no longer be maintained. People continued to work, but for less rewards, with no increase in pay and no reduction in working hours. Growing inflation pushed the cost of everything up, and people's wages did not stretch as far as they once had.

The response was industrial and social unrest. A wave of strikes and riots crippled production. Due to the militancy and strength of these struggles (often outside of official unions) working people won many victories.

the empire strikes back

By the end of the 1970s, bruised and battered employers teamed up with politicians to orchestrate a fightback. Margaret Thatcher's Conservative government, alongside Reagan's Republicans, set in motion a series of legislative reforms to the international markets and led brutal attacks on sectors of the working class. 'Divide and rule' was the play on the union movement, offering deals to some sectors, but not to others. Massive mobilizations of police were deployed to violently oppose strikers and communities. The major defeats of this period were the Miners' strike in the UK and the Air Traffic Controllers' strike in the USA.

With old industries and centres of production dismantled (coal mines, steel plants, car factories and shipyards) business moved overseas to exploit cheap labour and weaker environmental laws. This meant more profit with less investment. At the same time, the rules governing the banking sector were loosened to allow new avenues of investment that would not be interrupted by striking workers.

This left the unions greatly weakened with little or no bargaining power. Wages did not increase in line with the rate of inflation. This kept profits high for capitalists, but led to a crisis in consumption - people simply couldn't

afford to buy the goods they were producing. The economy started to decline once again. To counter this banks started offering credit, allowing anyone to buy with borrowed money. The economy turned back around.

decades of debt

As British industry was slowly being dismantled, the City of London was seen to be the new engine of the national economy, with extensive deregulation of the banking sector making it possible for banks to create exotic financial products for speculators and to aggressively push new forms of credit on consumers. Much of this credit was based on the price of people's homes, which at the time were rising and rising.

At the same time workers in the Global South became increasingly active demanding higher wages. Panicked capitalists got anxious unable to re-invest in manufacturing in the Global North. Many instead chose to invest in the financial and banking markets. Profits there were quick and easy to make, but relied upon the continual rise of house prices as banks bought and sold mortgage derivatives (people's debts).

Despite the blind faith of the markets, house prices couldn't rise forever: they floundered and fell, bringing down the whole system that was stacked up on top of them. Banks called in their debts, which people couldn't afford to pay, investors panicked, withdrawing their capital. As high street banks ran out of money, credit dried up and with no manufacturing

base, economies in the Global North went into recession.

bubbles burst

To avoid a global systemic collapse, governments stepped in. In the UK billions of pounds of tax-payers money was pumped into banks, effectively nationalising them in the process. The people were now paying for a crisis which they had not created.

The markets are still unsteady, and the problem has not been solved. The reality of the recession is huge unemployment, social poverty, families evicted from their homes, privatisation and cuts of frontline services. Meanwhile the taxes you pay are handed over to the banks, such as the Royal Bank of Scotland, who invest in industries devastating our shared ecology whilst creating massive profits of which we see no return.

move on

Despite the wishful thinking of progressives everywhere, capitalism isn't over just yet. Rather, it's going through its own hangover. But after this it could get a whole lot worse. What it becomes next depends entirely on how we organize ourselves to resist the current wave of attacks on all that we hold in common, both at home and internationally.

Through the coming struggles we may find routes around capitalism, perhaps opportunities to exit it entirely, and ways to build more socially and ecologically just alternatives.

"The bail-out will go down as the
biggest bank heist in history."

Naomi Klein



finance turns a key, and locks us into decades of CO2

The dozen-or-so lending decisions a month taken by the oil, gas and energy teams at multinational banks like RBS dig deeper wells, build longer pipelines and entrench infrastructures and cultures for decades to come.

finance is the foundation, without which a project cannot be built

Sometimes banks arrange loans direct to companies for specific projects. Alternatively, various forms of credit are offered to companies with lots of operations in different places. A key role for banks is also to arrange lending from a group of other banks, to share out the risk involved in lending money. Banks might also invest clients' savings in stocks and shares of particular companies; they might insure other banks' lending; they might buy entire banks, taking on all their lending.

RBS has historically positioned itself as the 'go to' bank for oil and gas companies. It was self-styled as 'the Oil and Gas Bank' until campaign groups started kicking up a fuss. RBS removed their website of the same title, but it maintains a 'special relationship' with oil and gas companies and sponsors many industry events.

finance is a god, ordaining what is to be and what is not

All lending and acquisition of debt carries with it risk. If the project or company goes bust, the bank loses money. So banks palm off the risk on to other bodies as much as possible, until the banker is 'comfortable with the risk'. The risk is passed on to the governments and companies involved in the lending agreements. Environmental and social risk are valued only in financial terms. This process of assigning costs to environmental and human impacts is relevant only as far as taking into account

the costs of legal cases arising from health and safety or environmental breaches or the impacts of trade unions. And it's these risks that banks pass on to the government of the country of the project, risks that normal people usually end up paying for.

finance is fuel

In November 2007 a group of seven banks – Barclays, Citigroup Inc, RBS, HSBC, Deutsche Bank, JP Morgan Plc and BNP Paribas – reached deep into their pockets and found \$22, 284.95 each to finance E.ON's Europe-wide gas and coal power expansion plans.

finance is an opportunity

...And that's where we come in. When people take direct action to undermine and decimate the profits of a company by halting their daily operations, they make the company's profits their target. Looking at the finance sector as a leverage point takes this same logic and applies it to the wider web of communities of interest directly involved in maintaining and profiting from capitalism's destruction of ecosystems, landscapes, homes and livelihoods. Using this leverage point is one way to dismantle capitalism because it demonstrates its impacts while directly undermining the continued growth of operations. It weakens the web.

finance is a leverage point

Mainhill Solidarity Camp, a protest site in South Lanarkshire woodlands working with local communities against further open cast coal mining, may have cost Scottish Coal millions to evict, on top of the financial impact of its nine month duration and the direct action to stop tree-felling taken during that time. The anti-apartheid Barclays boycott lost the bank close to half of its share of the student market, costing it a generation of debt, while the actions of anti-apartheid groups cost Barclays an estimated £10 million.

As conventional oil starts to dwindle, energy trans-nationals are setting their sights on sources that are much more expensive to extract and exponentially more polluting. Canada's tar sands are by far the biggest – they contain almost as much oil as Saudi Arabia. Millions of barrels a day are already being extracted in Alberta, creating lakes of toxic waste so vast they are visible from space, and emitting three to five times the greenhouse gases as conventional crude.

Indigenous Peoples in Canada are feeling the greatest impact of tar sands development. They are losing ancestral homelands and ways of life, suffering from rare forms of cancer and auto-immune diseases, and experiencing the fundamental violation of their rights to their traditional territories.

In the past year the Camp for Climate Action, along with the UK Tar Sands Network, has been organising with First Nations communities from Canada to highlight UK involvement in what is being called 'the world's most destructive project'. This has involved kicking up a storm about BP's plans to enter this development and fighting Shell's long-standing involvement.

And it's not only UK oil majors that are up to their necks in this toxic tar. British banks are investing heavily. RBS takes the prize – between 2007 and 2009 RBS underwrote loans to companies operating in the tar sands, to the tune of more than \$7.5 billion. Since the initial government bailout of UK banks in October 2008, RBS has underwritten corporate debt and equity worth nearly \$2.5 billion to tar sands related companies. This is an enormous investment of taxpayers' money in an energy pathway that is taking us to the cusp of climate chaos.

The Enbridge pipeline is just one example of the devastating infrastructure being constructed against the wishes of Indigenous communities. This massive pipeline would carry oil from the heart of Albertan tar sands, across the land of more than fifty First Nation territories, to the coast of British Columbia, where a proposed port would service some 225 tankers a year. In December 2008, RBS underwrote a loan to Enbridge Energy Partners worth \$166.67 million. An "unprecedented" alliance of more than 150 First Nations, environmentalists, unions and even Olympic athletes have united to oppose Enbridge's proposed Northern Gateway pipeline.

This is a crucial moment to pull back investment and extraction in a project that will further entrench the energy model responsible for the climate crisis. The fight to stop the tar sands is now on.

"UK taxpayers have a right to know how their money is being spent. RBS is currently financing the largest and most destructive industrial project on the planet destroying my people, my community and my traditional lands."



Eriel Tchekwie Deranger, member of the Fort Chipewyan community which is described as the 'ground zero' of tar sands extraction

The Oily Tentacles of RBS

Between 2001 and 2006, RBS provided over \$10 billion in oil and gas loans, and structured the loan agreements and acted as financial advisor on over \$30 billion of oil and gas projects. Between May 2006 and April 2008, RBS took part in loans worth nearly \$16 billion to coal-related companies, more than any other UK bank. In the first six months following the banking bailout, RBS was involved in loans worth more than £10 billion to coal, oil and gas companies – over a quarter of the money that had been spent on bailing out RBS at that point. For more detailed info on RBS's appalling record on fossil fuel finance, google 'The Oil and Gas Bank', 'Cashing in on Coal', and 'Cashing in on Tar Sands'.



tullow oil

In January 2009, RBS helped raise £400 million for the Irish company Tullow Oil, and in March 2009 RBS was part of a consortium of 14 banks that lent it a further £1.4 billion. Tullow Oil is involved in the exploration and extraction of oil around Lake Albert on the border between Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Critics of the company have accused them of "arrogance, environmental damage, collusion in secrecy and indifference to human rights abuses," and warn that the collaboration between oil companies and military groups is likely to escalate existing resource-conflicts in the region.



"Listen to me, dear brothers and sisters, did you hear everything? We need people from outside to stand with us. Then we have to fight. Then we can survive. We can save our land. And we can be in charge of our territory!"

Pidikaka Bari, Dongria Kondh person, from community affected by Vedanta mine

vedanta resources

RBS or its subsidiaries have provided financial support worth £163 million to Vedanta Resources, a British-owned mining company, since 2004. The company runs a large aluminium refinery in Orissa, an impoverished region in central India. An investigation by Amnesty found that the refinery had flouted the law and undermined the rights of local communities in the Niyamgiri Hills. Vedanta was accused of displacing landless workers without compensation, and polluting water used by people for drinking and bathing. Plans by Vedanta to excavate a new 1,700-acre bauxite mine in the area have run into fierce opposition. The indigenous Dongria Kondh community, who rely on the land for their livelihoods, are trying to stop the mine, claiming it will bring pollution and destruction.

L-3 communications

In October 2009, RBS contributed an estimated \$57 million to \$1.5 billion overdraft to L-3 Communications. This US-based company supplies a broad range of products that are used in a number of defence platforms, including cluster munitions. These bombs, which scatter explosives over a wide area, have killed or maimed thousands of civilians over the last 40 years, a quarter of them children. More than a hundred countries have signed the Convention on Cluster Munitions banning the use, production or stockpiling of the weapons.

cairn energy

In the year following the banking bailout, RBS facilitated a finance deal worth £116 million with Cairn Energy, a Scottish oil company with wells in Rajasthan in India and operations in Greenland where it is "keen to ensure that it is in a position to preserve the option to accelerate its exploration drilling plans." The company is planning to start drilling in four deepwater wells 200 km off the coast of Greenland this summer.

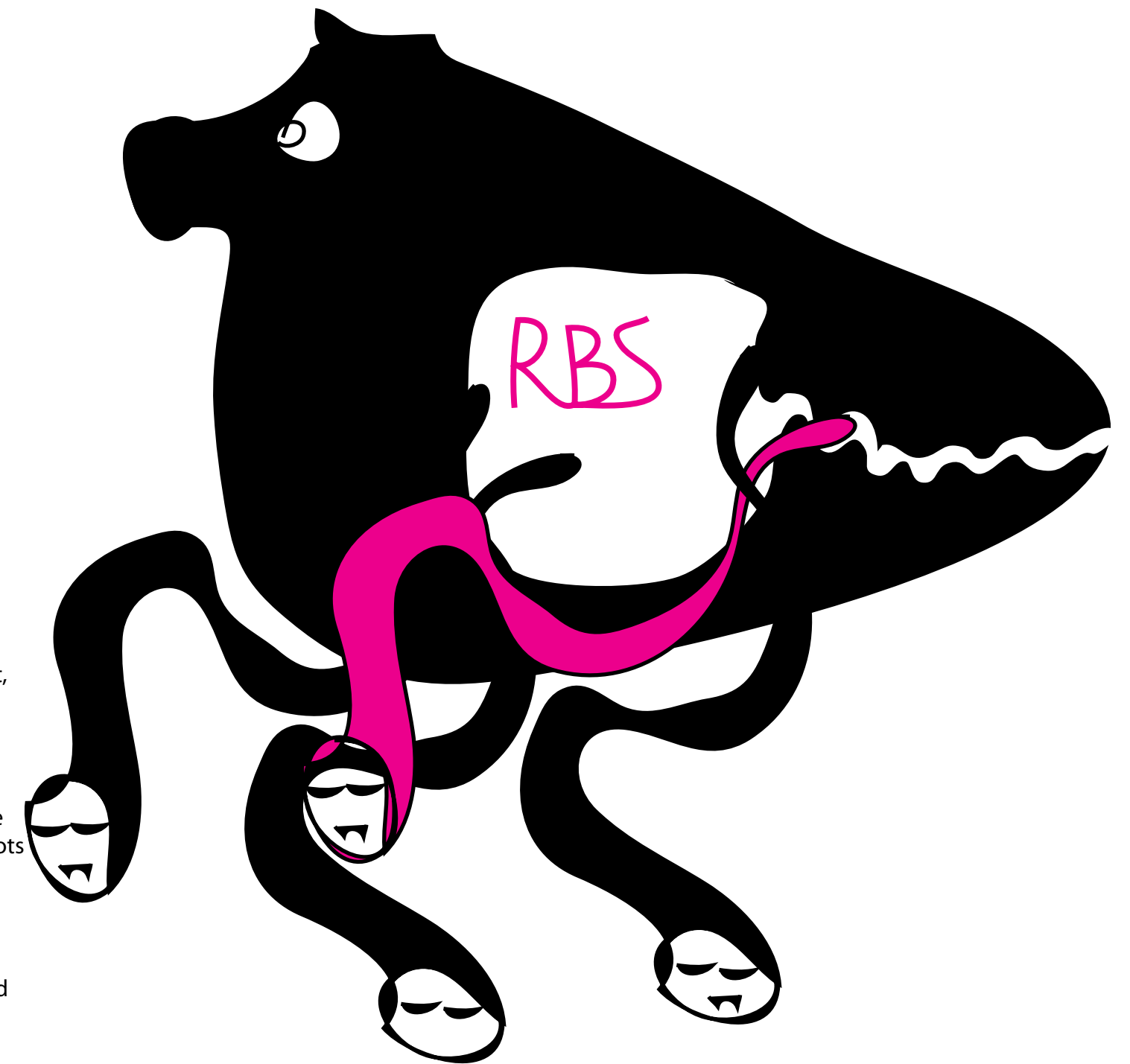
These are just some of the many examples of dodgy climate and human rights trashing companies that RBS has helped finance over the years.

e.on

RBS took part in financing controversial energy giant E.ON to the tune of \$70 billion over the course of 2007. In 2008 the Camp for Climate Action set up at the company's Kingsnorth power plant, where E.ON intended to build the first new coal-fired power station in the UK in over 30 years. Plans for Kingsnorth have since been shelved, in no small part due to the organising and activism of grassroots groups like the Climate Camp. However at around the same time that E.ON received the \$70 billion finance, it announced its plans to build a further 17 gas and coal-fired plants across Europe and Russia.

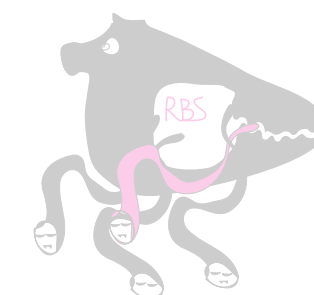
hargreaves services

In September 2009, RBS led a consortium of five banks in providing Hargreaves Services with a £115 million credit facility. This British coal mining, importing and haulage company owns the Maltby coal mine in South Yorkshire which supplies Drax power station, the single biggest carbon emitter in the UK and the site of the first Camp for Climate Action in 2006. On the back of this finance, Hargreaves announced that it was taking its first steps into opencast coal mining with an initial £4 million investment in the Tower Colliery in South Wales. Its subsidiary Rocpower also has six proposed biofuel power plants with a combined capacity of 60 megawatts at various stages of being approved across Yorkshire and Lancashire, including at Wakefield, Barnsley and Sheffield.



arch coal

In October 2006, RBS took part in providing Arch Coal with an \$800 million overdraft facility. Arch Coal is the second largest coal producer in the US and owns a number of mountain top mines in the Appalachia region. Their use of 'Mountain Top Removal' (MTR) involves using explosives to destroy up to 1,000 feet of vertical rock and produces vast quantities of coal sludge that is dumped in neighbouring valleys. Arch Coal has been responsible for the disappearance of more than 300,000 acres of biologically diverse hardwood forests through the use of MTR.



BAE systems

A report in 2008 showed that RBS had shareholdings worth more than £21 million in BAE, the biggest arms company in the UK, whose clients have included the governments of Indonesia, Israel, Saudi Arabia, and Zimbabwe. In the ten year period between 1998 and 2008, RBS was the world's leading creditor to the arms sector, having participated in 52 deals over the last 10 years worth £44.6 billion, including loans to producers of cluster munitions and depleted uranium munitions.

ensus

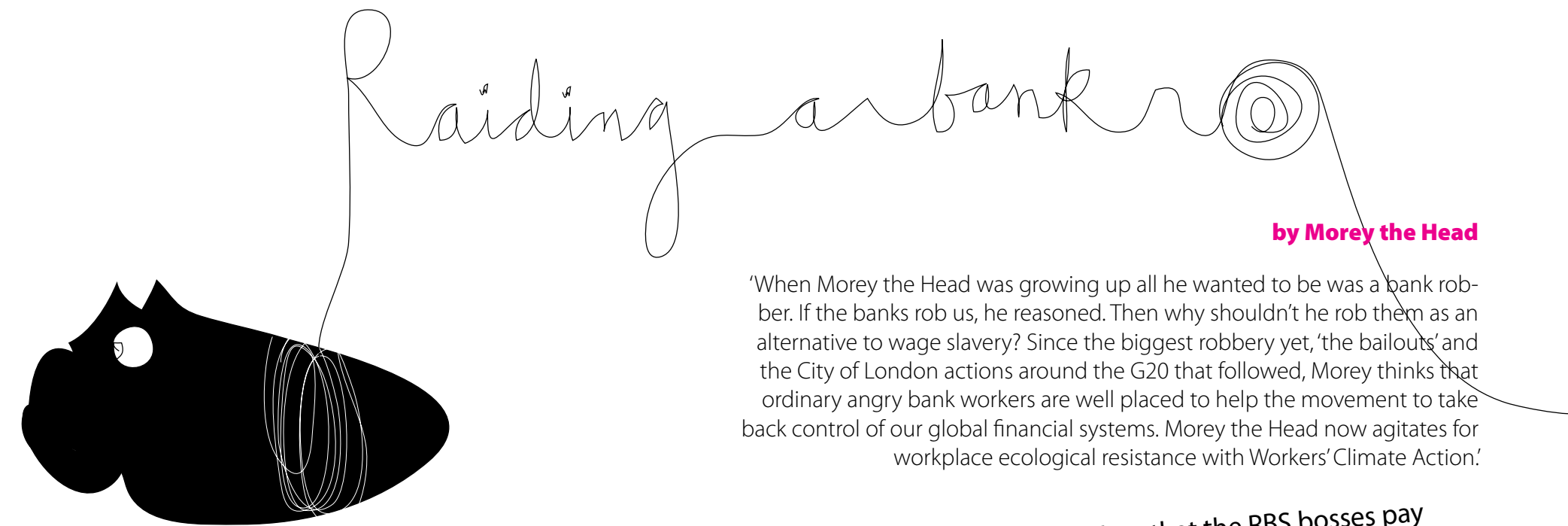
RBS helped to get the UK's first large wheat ethanol refinery off the ground. The Ensus refinery in Wilton is now up and running and will require 1.2 million tonnes of wheat a year. A farmer's union has confirmed that this alone could turn the UK into a net wheat importer, even without the other refineries that are planned. RBS co-organised loans for Ensus worth £155 million.

Supporters outside the Vestas wind turbine factory occupied by the workers Isle of Wight, Summer 2009



“They hang the man
and flog the woman
That steals the goose
from off the common
But let the greater villain loose
That steals the common
from the goose”

Anonymous, 17th Century



‘When Morey the Head was growing up all he wanted to be was a bank robber. If the banks rob us, he reasoned. Then why shouldn’t he rob them as an alternative to wage slavery? Since the biggest robbery yet, ‘the bailouts’ and the City of London actions around the G20 that followed, Morey thinks that ordinary angry bank workers are well placed to help the movement to take back control of our global financial systems. Morey the Head now agitates for workplace ecological resistance with Workers’ Climate Action.’

This summer the Robin Hood types from the Climate Camp are casing up the Royal Bank of Scotland. Not only has it got loads of our money in the form of an 83% government stake but it’s using this money to invest in accelerating climate catastrophe at home and abroad. We’ve got to get it out and we need a way in.

A little bird told me that right now most RBS workers are pissed off. Loads of them have been sacked and even more (3000) will be getting their p45s soon. 23,000 jobs have gone at RBS since the bankers staged their own heist of a bailout on the UK Treasury a couple of years ago (they bagged £45.5 billion of a bailout). Of the jobs that are left lots will be off-shored to Norightsistan or somewhere equally nice. If they’re still getting paid after that then they can look forward to having their future pay and pensions restricted.

So what happened to the £45 odd billion of Treasury loot? ‘Fred the Shred’ nearly walked away with a gold clock worth £8.3 million when he retired, until everyone kicked off and he cut a deal for £2.7million. (Cue the smallest violin in the world.) Bonuses like this soon started flowing again for the ‘loads of money’ City boys presumably to keep them in top notch charlie, even while most (ex)staff couldn’t get a bottle of Lambrini with their Christmas bonus.

I know you’re asking yourself why all this matters, but use your loaf for two

seconds and it’s obvious. If you want to know how to go to work on a bank you have to know the inside layout, who is most likely to let you in the back door or tell you which way the cameras point. You need to know what security they’ve got and where it’s weakest. You need to know which bosses are on the take and where they do business. Those that work at RBS know best how to take it down but why should they help you?

Well at the moment the ordinary staff at RBS have got serious beef with their bosses. More importantly they’ve got very little in the way of back up. With the Whigs and the Tories in Downing Street, state support for low-paid workers will drop back to 19th century levels. Add to this a pro-business mainstream media, and staff are being attacked from all sides.

The once-fearsome British bulldog of a trade union movement has been castrated by the 1992 Industrial Relations Act (aka. the anti-trade union laws) so that any kind of collective workplace direct action can be stifled by one stroke of a judge’s injunction.

Worse still, the trade union representatives for RBS workers seem to stifle any rank and file action by restricting what can be done to resist and by refusing to build a pro-workers social justice movement.

The most that Unite has demanded is that the redundancies aren’t compulsory. Woo-fucking-hoo! Instead

of demanding that the RBS bosses pay for the crisis they created themselves, they’re pedalling the bosses’ age of austerity bullshit and fighting for the right to be able to volunteer to leave before they’re sacked. Up the revolution comrades!

So if you want to go to work on RBS, start showing active solidarity with the rank and file workers in their fights against the bosses. You might be all the back-up they’ve got. Use the direct action tactics that environmentalists have become famous for to ignite and skill up workplace resistance.

Thousands of Robin Hoodies doing all the bank jobs in the world won’t end capitalism. But when the people at the bank start doing the jobs themselves then Robin Hoods won’t be needed. With thousands of workers in other industries starting to fight back, the example of an inside job at RBS might just echo loudly enough for the resistance to spread.

A workplace revolution won’t happen overnight but in the meantime one supportive RBS employee could open the door to the public just enough that we could take control of our banks and transform them into institutions that no longer deserve to be robbed.

EVERYBODY'S TALKING Green Investment WANK

We agree that climate change needs urgent and drastic action. Hasn't the government shown it's serious about helping green solutions get funded by setting up the Green Investment Bank? What other way are we going to make the changes we need in the time we've got?

But it's not just the government and the Green Investment Bank, there are other investments going off all over.

The government says it's going to set up the Green Investment Bank, but it's hardly coming at it quickly. More to the point, it's said it will probably throw two or three billion quid at it. That's a lot of money to you or me, but in the scale of national infrastructure it's change you can lose down the back of the sofa. We spent hundreds of times that on bailing out the banks. Anybody think the threat of climate change is a fraction of a percent as important? Or that it will cost more than £3bn to sort it out in time?

There are other green investments, but they're dwarfed by the fossil fuel investments that make the problem worse. At the same time as it kicks off the Green Investment Bank, the government's top priority is, like governments everywhere, boosting economic growth.

We all want to be paid for our work. Everybody's got to put food on the table. And anyone who takes the risk of investing in new ideas deserves their rewards. They need incentives.

Getting paid is one thing, depending on something that will inevitably collapse is another. 'Economic growth' is another way of saying 'ever-increasing consumption of resources, most of which are finite'. It doesn't take a particularly brilliant mind to work out why you can't keep using more and more of things that are going to run out. Yet this literally insane belief is the foundation of how we live and what we expect for the future.

At a modest rate of economic growth - 3% a year - we double the economy every 23 years. Which means we double the amount of stuff we buy, the stuff we throw away, and the energy we consume. And then we double that again in 23 years. And again. And again.

Short of little green people giving us the secret of infinite clean energy, there is no accommodating that energy requirement. The glaring central change we need to make is to stop swimming in more stuff than anyone could ever possibly need.

But not producing and consuming so much carbon-intensive stuff means less buying and selling to businesses. It means less profits. This is kryptonite to corporate power and they won't let that into their ideas. The same banks and corporations who told us for years that there was no climate change have finally admitted it, and now brazenly present themselves as the people to be trusted with the solutions. In other news, David Beckham is to be referee for England's matches in South Africa.

How do you think the big changes like clean electricity are going to happen without big corporations making new stuff? You think you're going to make new windfarms out of recycled plastic bottles in your garage? They want safe investments, and it's clear that green will pay off in the long run. Why else is all this money pouring in?

They're human beings like you and me, they've got kids, they're not Dr Evil.

Out goes the baby with the bath-water. All the expertise these people have in setting up deals on the grand scale needed, you're rejecting that because it's tainted by having contact with other money.

If the money were pouring in there'd be no need for the GIB. Even the GIB's three billion quid is not so much pouring as a slight sense of dampness. But the real deal is that banks and corporations are not looking for what's the most effective, but what's the most lucrative. Any chance for serious profit will be taken. This is why they push hard for expensive, ineffectual schemes like carbon trading and car scrappage. They don't help reduce carbon emissions, they do make the brokers and companies involved a fortune.

For most of us, ideas of well-being - of being happy, taking care of those around us, not killing people - are primary, and making a lot of money is secondary. But for corporations, these ideas are reversed.

Corporations have 'fiduciary duty', a legal obligation to maximise profits for their shareholders. At home they put human values first; at work, it's actually illegal for them to do so.

Some of the solutions they invest in are worse than the things they replace. Biofuel for cars causes more carbon emissions than burning oil, and pushes food prices up for the poor of the world. It took several years for that to be widely noticed, by which time the EU governments were committed to having a mandatory minimum of it in our petrol and diesel.

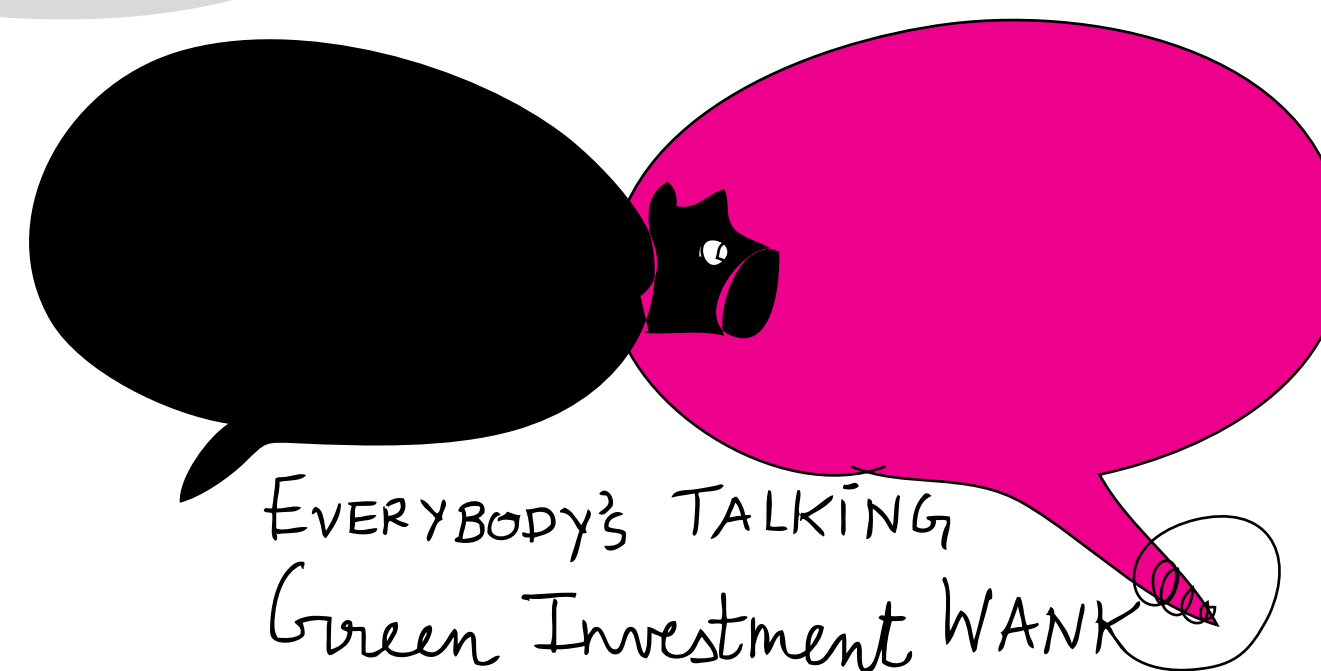
The investors had looked into it, they had the knowledge long before the rest of us. They chose to ignore it because they could make so much more profit by keeping shunt.

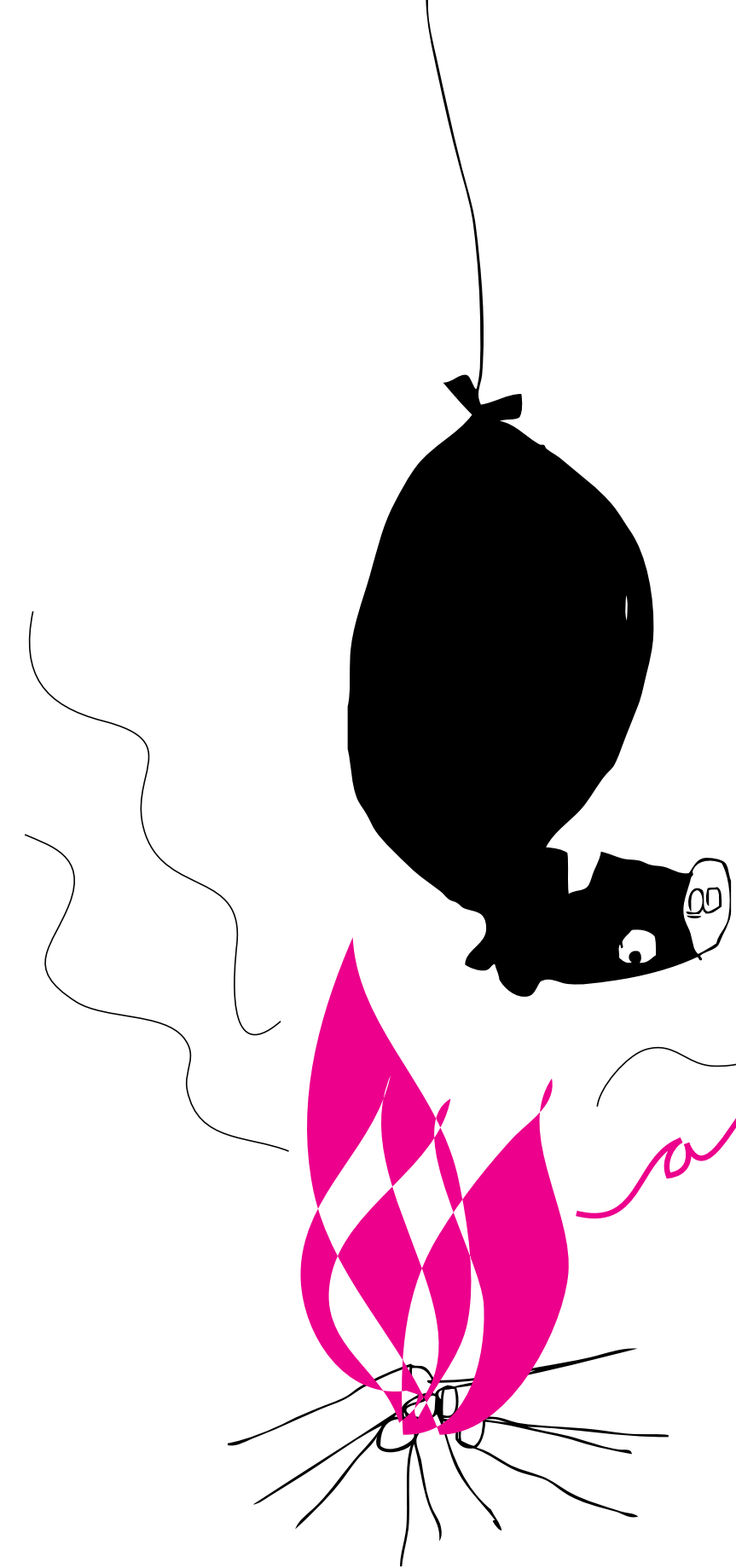
But even without the sleight of hand and deception, even with the stuff we know works like energy efficiency or wind turbines, simply investing in these cannot ever solve the problem.

There is clearly a need to shift our essential industries away from high-carbon production. There has to be swift, massive investment in clean sources of power, transport and food production, and this must be done with a central political focus. But thinking that these things alone can solve the problem is like slowing down from 90mph to 50mph as you drive towards the edge of a cliff. It buys us some time, but does not stop and turn around. If we want to do that we need to think bigger, much bigger.

We have to get beyond the profit motive dominating us. We need to stop measuring our wellbeing by how much money can be made by the super-rich. We can only solve this problem if we stop having the profit motive as the dominant force in our culture. We need less rat-race, more life.

The immediate big technological shifts take a lot of central organising and a lot of big money. But the vision that turns these advances into a sustainable society that avoids the looming climate crisis, rather than an opportunity to make more money for those who caused this problem in the first place, has to come from somewhere else. That vision, and the pressure that makes it a reality, can only come from those who aren't super-rich. That's us.





investing

Most of the time we experience banks just like high street shops, but we so easily forget that they invest and move around vast amounts of money that we helped make in the first place. Investment is the number one reason we're on RBS's back: billions of pounds worth of investment in fossil fuels. So a big problem here is that banks are an undemocratic way of investing the money we make. Where would we rather the money went? Well, the first thing is that the profit we've earned for the bosses and banks could go straight to the people who do the work instead. This is what happens in workers' co-operatives. The Brukman textile factory in Argentina divides its profits equally among the workers, who own every part of the building and operation. That way, the profit they've helped generate isn't just invested in a faceless company by the

bank, but helps working people get on with their day-to-day lives.

Workers co-ops also have a way of changing the way we work in general: they usually work less, but for the same amount of pay. The Utah State Government even passed a law last year making a flexible three to four day week for all workers, and the New Economics Foundation here in the UK is proposing a 21 hour week. The Industrial Workers of the World have been pointing out the benefits of the four day week, four hour day since the 1920s, and it's become clear that there would be lots of environmental benefits to this too: less work means more chances to invest time in our communities and each other, but also less production and commuting, so less emissions. So making a workplace that bypasses the banks also means building a world that doesn't cause ecological damage, over-use of natural resources and climate change!

What does the future hold for us? It seems pretty clear that we don't want it to involve banks, and certainly not ones like RBS. So what are the alternatives?

Taking your own money out of a particularly dirty bank is one thing – finding ways to live without any banks at all is quite another, but it seems it just might be the kind of action we need.

Over the years, people around the world have been trying to find ways of living that instead rely on mutual aid and cooperation. Here are some of their glimpses of what a future beyond banks might look like:

a world without banks

borrowing

When banks aren't just a high street shop in our day-to-day lives, they are big money lending machines. How could we possibly get on without those big loans, the massive credit? That's what people wondered through the nineteenth century when they clubbed together to make Credit Unions: democratically run bodies where everyone has an equal say on the size of interest rates, fees and services. Just like with the workers' co-ops, and unlike a corporate bank, these financial co-ops are not legally obliged to place profit-making for shareholders above all other considerations.

A lot of the time, we can make do without the big loans anyway. A good example is housing: if we get together, the banks become less important. The Berkley Student Cooperative,

in California is democratically owned and run by the students that live in it - they share the costs of living. Set up during the Great Depression, just 14 students got it going by working for the University in exchange for lower rent. There are now 20 houses, all owned by the Student Cooperative, comprising of 1300 students who work five hours a week to keep the rent low. In the UK, Radical Routes is a successful network of co-operatives, which includes 27 housing co-ops around the country, allowing people to reclaim control over their housing needs.

And this isn't the only source of cheap housing: the network of squatted *Centri Sociali* in Rome provides space for music, art, cafes and housing. With almost half a million empty properties in the UK, those big bank loans might not be so necessary.

"Idealists are foolish enough to throw caution to the wind. They have advanced humanity and enriched the world."

Emma Goldman

trading

Banks help set currencies and exchange rates. But what if we could bypass the banks in this too? Well, some people are doing just that. Transition Town Totnes set up their own currency in 2007, and the Brixton Pound was launched in Brixton, South London last year. These currencies keep money in the local area, rather than sending it straight into the coffers of multinational corporations and big business, which are more likely to invest in fossil fuels than the good of the community.

But what if we could bypass money all together? Local Exchange Trading Schemes (LETS), sometimes known as Time Banks, use a central recording point - like a book in the town hall - for everyone to record what services they're doing for each other, and to exchange them according to democratic exchange rates. This way, these groups don't use money at all, but instead rely on mutual aid.

What if we put all these ideas together? Well, here's one example: Next year, a three-mast ship from Finland is going to sail to Mexico. There it will pick up coffee produced by farmers' co-operatives in the autonomous zone of Chiapas. And when it returns to Europe, the beans will be ground at the workers' co-op in Hamburg, and then sent out to be sold in occupied social centres across Europe. Now that's team work. Maybe some of those bags of coffee will even end up being bought by a Totnes pound!



You've probably noticed that the banks haven't been behaving themselves. Their crazy speculation, financial crashes, mass bailouts and ludicrous bonuses have recently taken centre stage, but all the while they've carried on funding destructive and climate-trashing projects the world over. They justify all this by pointing to our deranged global economy, claiming that it can and must grow forever, like a balloon being pumped up by a madly optimistic circus clown. To be honest, the whole thing stinks to high finance. But what on earth can we do about it?

get your cash out

Money, eh? Filthy lifeblood of the capitalist system, yet also kind of handy when you need to buy a bag of chips or a pair of bolt-cutters. Unless you're growing all your own food and clothing in your squatted garden, generating your own electricity and weaving your own laptop from fern fronds and potato peelings, you're probably stuck with using money, at least for now. So where to put it?

You could shift your money to an "ethical" bank, which would at least mean it wasn't being invested in some of the worst stuff, even if it's still in the banking system as a whole. You could put it in a local credit union, or invest it directly in a project that needs your support. While moving your £4.27 (or whatever) out of HSBC is unlikely to bring the financial sector to its knees, it will at least allow you to campaign on the issue without being labeled a hypocrite. You might also want to get rid of those shares in Halliburton while you're at it.

build the alternatives

OK, now we can get to the more interesting stuff. If we really want to challenge the banks, we need to build our own grassroots alternatives based on the needs of people rather than profit and growth. There are examples elsewhere in this paper – credit unions, local currencies, cooperatives, community land, food and energy projects or any other scheme based on shared access to common wealth rather than private gain. Find out what's already there and support it, or get imaginative, get some mates and set something up yourself.

leverage the big cash where you can

Even if we're not swimming in cash ourselves, many of us have links to institutions with big investment budgets – employers, universities, pension schemes. We can pressure them to change what they do with their money. While a lot of "green investment" schemes involve sending tiny trickles of cash towards slightly-less-bad corporations, or organising cosy backroom chats between fund managers and corporate executives, there are examples of investors standing up to

system is based on nonsense: the myth of endless growth on a single planet. There are some great resources out there to help you understand how the whole thing really works, and debunk the worst of the economists' spin. For example, this series of friendly videos (with whizzy diagrams and graphics) is great for explaining where money comes from and the link between debt and endless growth: <http://tiny.cc/crashcourse>. There have also been some good issues of the New Internationalist on the topic – "Make Banks Fair" and "People First Economics", both of which are free online.

challenge the whole darned system

The main problem with economics is that most people don't realise that there is a problem – in Northern countries, at least. The media invite us to get angry about the behaviour of particular banks, CEOs or politicians but don't mention that the entire system – based on profit and endless growth rather than people's real needs and desires – is at fault. While it's useful for us to keep discrediting (ha ha) the worst of the banks, and trying to cut off money to the most destructive projects, we mustn't forget to keep hammering at the wobbly foundations on which the whole thing's built. We can use our collective power – as people, not just as customers or shareholders – to bring this whole thing crashing down.

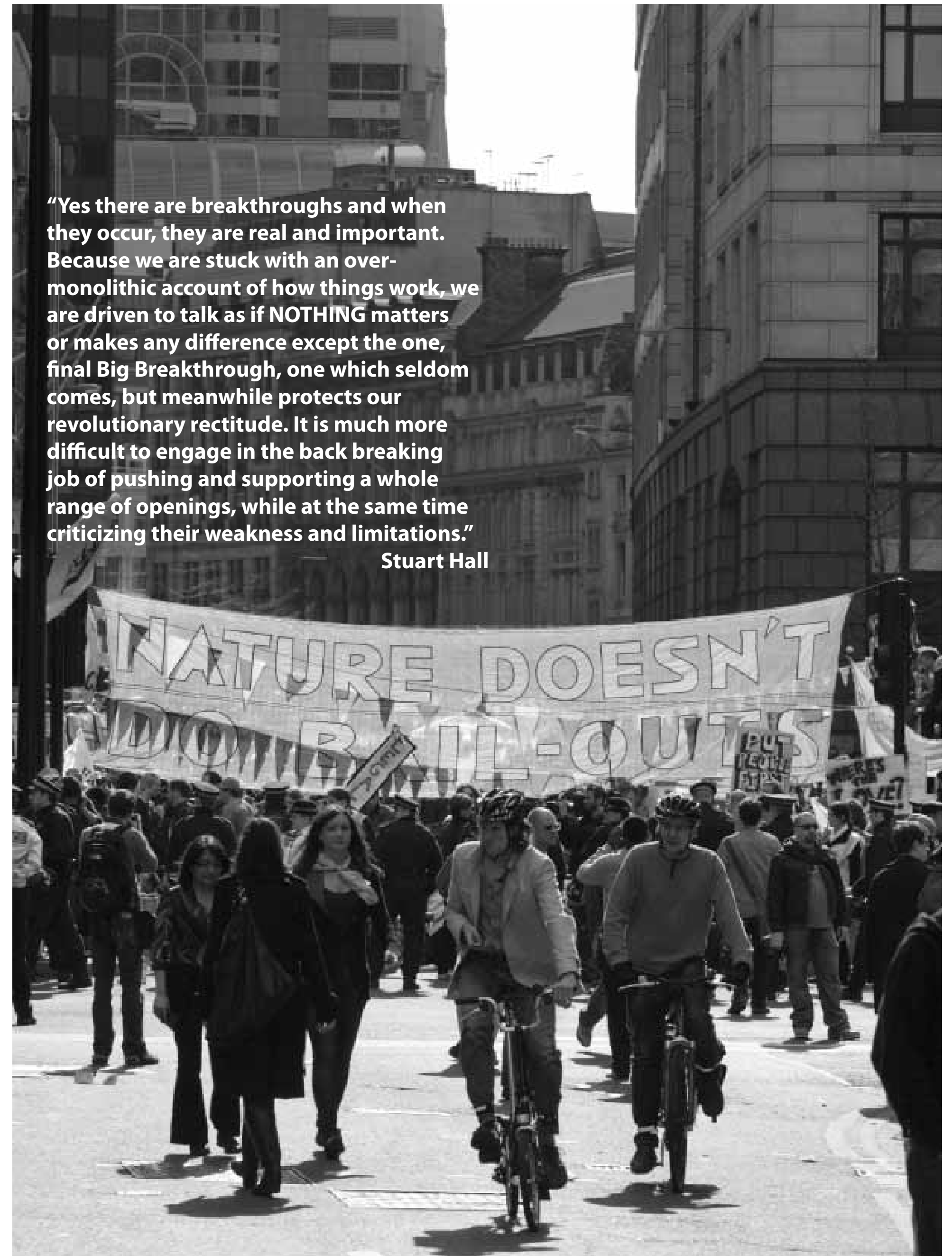
Whatever actions we choose to take against the banks – boycotts, invasions, sit-ins, occupations, subvertising, blockades, media stunts, the promotion of radical alternatives – we should make it clear that whatever target we choose to hit is just one example thrown up by a rotten system. The Camp for Climate Action isn't focusing on RBS this summer because we want everyone to bank with Barclays instead. RBS is just an excellent example of everything that's wrong with "mainstream" economics. Our actions against them should be just one part of a wider effort to bring high finance down to earth.

get clued up

The greatest weapon the financiers have at their disposal is confusion. By wrapping up their activities in economic jargon that no-one understands, they successfully disguise the social disruption and climate carnage they've been causing. In reality, their whole economic

"Yes there are breakthroughs and when they occur, they are real and important. Because we are stuck with an over-monolithic account of how things work, we are driven to talk as if NOTHING matters or makes any difference except the one, final Big Breakthrough, one which seldom comes, but meanwhile protects our revolutionary rectitude. It is much more difficult to engage in the back breaking job of pushing and supporting a whole range of openings, while at the same time criticizing their weakness and limitations."

Stuart Hall



CAMPing it up - WHAT TO EXPECT in Edinburgh

We must act swiftly to tackle the root causes of climate change and build a movement to create the systemic change necessary to avert climate catastrophe. So that's what we're doing. Taking action. Building a movement. Collectively, a force to be reckoned with. Come to Edinburgh this summer and be a part of it.



"A map of the world that does not include Utopia is not even worth glancing at."

Oscar Wilde, 1891

The Climate Camp is a place for anyone who wants to take action on climate change; for anyone who's fed up with empty government rhetoric and corporate spin; for anyone who's worried that the small steps they're taking aren't enough to match the scale of the problem; and for anyone who's worried about our future and wants to do something about it.

The people participating in the Camp for Climate Action are all volunteers, lots of us learning how to do it as we go along. We're a pretty diverse bunch – teachers, nurses, students, couriers, plumbers, graphic designers, doctors, youth workers, lawyers, carpenters, campaigners, artists, carers and many, many more.

Here's a whirlwind history tour of the Camp for Climate Action. United around the shared aims of education, direct action, sustainable living and movement building, the first camp was in 2006 when 600 people gathered outside Drax coal-fired power station in Yorkshire - the UK's largest single-point source of carbon emissions. Our aim was to kick-start a social movement to tackle climate change.

In 2007 we camped outside Heathrow airport against plans for a third runway that would lock us into irreversible climate catastrophe and displace a whole community. Over 2,000 people came to the weeklong camp. BAA has now withdrawn its plans to expand Heathrow!

In 2008 coal was the focus once again as thousands targeted Kingsnorth, owned by energy giant E.ON who wanted to build the UK's first coal-fired power station in 30 years. Despite extraordinary over-policing, we created a space for education and sustainable living, taking action on the final day by land and sea. Since then, the plans have been "shelved". Another massive success coming out of a long legal battle after the Kingsnorth camp was the police's admission that their blanket stop and search operation was unlawful.

2009 was a busy year. The financial crisis made apparent the fact that corporations, banks and politicians are reinforcing a system that puts profits before the needs of people and communities. Starting with a "flash-camp" in April outside the European Climate Exchange during the G20, we targeted false solutions like carbon trading, that are produced by the market and growth-driven economic system fuelling climate change. In the summer we set up camp on Blackheath Common in London, the site of historic uprisings against the privatisation of the commons, and in October hundreds swooped on Ratcliffe-on-Soar coal-fired power station in Nottingham to shut it down!

As the world turned towards Copenhagen to observe the outcome of the COP 15 climate talks, the Camp for Climate Action joined with movements for climate justice worldwide, to challenge the undemocratic nature of the climate talks spearheaded by the economic elite. In solidarity with activists in Copenhagen, an impromptu camp was set up for the conference's duration in Trafalgar Square.

So here we are in 2010. This summer, the Camp for Climate Action is not letting RBS and other banks get away with the destructive and deceptive practices that devastate the planet and communities all over the world. We'll actively confront the fossil fuel finance of climate criminals like RBS, and learn about local and international struggles that RBS has affected.

We will be camping in Edinburgh from Saturday 21st to Tuesday 24th August.

Take and set up the basecamp:

19 - 20 August

Four days of direct action training and taking between the 21 - 24 August

Day of action against RBS:

23 August

Return basecamp to nature:

25 August

Details will unfold at www.climatecamp.org.uk

Everybody is welcome. See you there!

What to bring

Tent

Sleeping bag

Warm clothes

Toothbrush + paste

Sunblock

Waterproofs

Torch

A desire to change the world and a willingness to muck in with everyone

What not to bring

Food - our kitchens are delicious and only ask for donations!

Dogs – there are lots of small kids about

A belief that nothing can change.

Get involved

Regional groups across the country are mobilising! Find yours here:

www.climatecamp.org.uk/get-involved/local-groups.

Washing your hair in August?

Can't make it to Edinburgh? RBS conveniently has branches and offices all over the country, which means there's still lots of potential for you to do an action during the August dates in your area.

The Camp for Climate Action is active all year round in different parts of the country – it's a little bit less campy but still bringing it with the action! Check out the website for local groups in your area. Even if you've never been involved in stuff like this before, people can fill you in on what's going on and how you can get involved.

climate justice

is a useful way of understanding the links between the social struggles to tackle the climate crisis and action on the many other problems created and made worse by the economic system we live in. There are many examples in Scotland that illustrate the interrelationships between social and environmental injustices, and many local campaigns that act in solidarity to other, more global struggles. From coal mining to oil extraction, and from fossil fuel finance to fuel poverty, there is plenty of evidence that Scotland isn't yet taking climate justice seriously.

triple crises

The situation in Scotland shows clearly how the triple financial, energy and climate crises together reveal the contradictions inherent in the system of growth-oriented capitalism. The growth economy is straining due to the banking bailouts, energy demand is outstripping supply, and the climate crisis is being exacerbated by a commitment to carbon intensive energy and economic growth. Despite having some of the most ambitious climate change legislation in the world, the Scottish government has so far failed to back this up with the scaling back of polluting activity on the ground. A 42% reduction in emissions in ten years is simply impossible without a shift away from our current carbon intensive system.

open cast coal mining

Communities in Scotland are resisting open cast coal mining because the Scottish and UK governments' energy, climate and planning policies for opencast expansion impact on them, the wider environment and call into question the role of democracy in the planning system. Among the impacts are health problems such as lung cancer and heart disease, noise from blasting, increased lorry traffic, reduced investment in the area, destruction of the landscape, degradation of water quality, destruction of agricultural and forest lands, as well as the contribution to global climate change. Over half of the indigenous coal burned in UK power stations like Drax comes from opencast mines in Scotland. This contributes massively to UK emissions. The struggle for community health is also the struggle for planetary health.

new coal-fired power stations

The building of a new super-critical coal fired power station at Hunterston by Ayrshire Power, and the expansion of Longannet by Scottish Power reveal the contradiction between Scotland's energy and climate policies. It is clear that Carbon Capture and Storage, which is still unproven on a commercial scale, won't cut emissions sufficiently and is preventing serious attempts at a renewable energy strategy. Much of the coal burned in UK power stations is imported from countries that have very poor human rights and labour standards, such as Colombia. So whether imported or indigenous, the exploitation of coal causes injustice; but where it is mined, transported or burned there are opportunities to confront this injustice.

north sea oil and gas

The growth of the Scottish economy, particularly the North East, and in the UK as a whole, has been highly dependent on profits from oil and gas extraction in the North Sea. Production has now peaked and the industry is in a slow but inevitable decline. Workers in these industries must not be left to redundancy but should be an active part of a just transition to a post-oil future, with skills transferred to support clean technologies like offshore wind generation. There are questions about our resilience to the imminent peak oil crisis, both economically as a producing nation and as a society that is highly dependent on cheap fossil fuels.

Mapping Climate In/Justice
in Scotland

Mainhill Solidarity Camp was set up in June 2009. For over seven months the camp stood in the way of the open cast mine with massive support from the local community.



"When Stephen Hester, CEO of RBS was asked at their AGM in Edinburgh April 2010 why he invested millions of taxpayers money into environmentally destructive projects, his response was "it is not a crime!" If the banks won't listen, and our governments won't listen then it is time for the people to stand up and be heard. The crime here is not the conscience of the people, it is those who are ignoring the truth of the destruction that airport expansion brings with it. I salute the Climate 9 for standing up for what can only be right, to protect the planet against the march of ecocide."

Polly Higgins

The Climate 9 went to trial in June 2010 for occupying Aberdeen Airport runway

fuel poverty

Fuel poverty refers to the inability to afford adequate warmth in the home. It is caused by poor energy efficiency, low disposable household income and the high price of domestic fuel. For those living in fuel poverty, the consequences are misery, discomfort, ill health and debt. Living in a cold, damp environment can make health problems such as asthma and heart conditions much worse. Fuel poverty is a major problem in Scotland - it was estimated to affect over a quarter of households in 2009. Scotland faces particular challenges unique from the rest of the UK. It is colder, people are on average less well off, home insulation is worse, and gas supply can be difficult in rural areas. Even though most of the oil and gas that is extracted in Britain is under the North Sea, inequality of access to those resources means there are hundreds of people dying of fuel poverty every year in Scotland.

militarisation and conflict

Scotland is a key outpost in hosting the US war machine's infrastructure - including the Trident nuclear submarine system. Scotland also sends a disproportionate number of soldiers to fight in conflicts on behalf of the British government, with many being killed and injured. Recent wars in the Middle East are being increasingly recognised as resource conflicts, a situation that is likely to deteriorate as we remain dependent on ever scarcer energy sources.

transport

The Scottish government has in recent years spent billions building roads and motorways in as part of a transport policy that is centred around personal car use. Projects such as the M74 have been resisted by community and environmental groups. Now, as the public deficit looms and fuel prices continue to rise, many are realising how outdated this unsustainable transport plan really is. As in other parts of the UK, Scotland is subject to plans for airport expansion and there is resistance to this from environmentalists and community groups.

land use

Squatting buildings is illegal in Scotland, a law that remains since the Highland clearances. Land reform came quite late in Scotland. The feudal system of land tenure was only reformed in 1999 and Scotland still has one of the most unequal and unfair land ownership regimes in Europe. Lots of land remains unproductive due in part to it being owned by aristocrats. The struggle for land reclamation is essential to ensuring bio-resilience and the food and energy security for communities.

fossil fuel finance

The Scottish finance sector is a huge investor in all kinds of fossil fuel extraction in the UK and abroad. RBS has historically characterised itself as the fossil fuel bank, tapping into a sense of national pride on account of Scotland's heritage of fossil fuel exploitation.

FROM COPENHAGEN Groundhog DAY

At some point during the spectacular failure that was last year's climate summit in Copenhagen (the infamous 'COP15'), someone – more precisely, Bolivia's first ever indigenous president Evo Morales – had the possibly odd idea of countering the failure of the summit with, you guessed it, yet another summit. This time not a summit where governments, corporations and (by and large) mainstream NGOs would talk about how to make a quick buck out of the climate crisis while leaving the problem unsolved. This time it would be a summit where social movements, some governments and other institutions as well as concerned individuals would come together to discuss the real structural changes that would need to be made if there's any hope in hell of dealing with climate change in a just and effective way. So the call was made for the movements of the world to gather in Cochabamba, Bolivia, in April 2010, for the first ever "People's World Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth".

But why another climate summit? Sure, it was going to be different people, far more 'World Social Forum', far less 'World Carbon Trading Organisation'. But why send lots of people all around the world to discuss what we already know - that we need to leave fossil fuels in the ground, recognise and make reparations for the North's ecological debt to the South, etc. – why another talk-shop?

Because, to be honest, we still have no idea how to get any of these things done. It's all well and good to shut down coal-fired power

plants one by one, but what the climate justice movement lacks, beyond the bullet-point-demands, is strategies for implementing these changes. Put differently: in Copenhagen, one key slogan was, "change the system, not the climate." Sure, but how? And with whom? Who's out there fighting for the same things as we are here? How do we work together to achieve this enormous task?

It was these questions that the climate justice movements gathered together to discuss in Cochabamba: 35,000 people from all over the world. Autonomous activists and government ministers, UN- bureaucrats and indigenous peasants, scientists and religious folks. The vibe was somewhere between Social Forum and global summit – which meant that there were also challenges. During the conference, movements from across Bolivia and Latin America formed an alternative working group, Mesa 18, which confronted the contradictions between the words and actions of many Latin American governments, including Bolivia.

The group discussed how resource extraction, exports and megaprojects, which fund the socialist development project of these governments, still devastate communities. The exciting thing was that these issues were acknowledged, and 600km south of Cochabamba the San Cristobal Community was using the opportunity to take action with blockades, marches and office take-overs against the multinational mining company that contaminates and threatens its water resources.

In the end, the conference came up with a final declaration that is somewhere between inspiring and frustrating. Inspiring, because it vastly amplifies and strengthens the critique of capitalism and infinite, insane economic growth that the Camp for Climate Action and others have been articulating. Sometimes a presidential pulpit can be quite useful! It specifies, at a technical level, how some of our key demands could be implemented: for example, that climate debt repayments should bypass neoliberal scumbag institutions like the World Bank. And it calls for difficult goals, like writing a Universal Declaration of the Rights of Mother Earth. In this sense, it's also frustrating: it's yet another text that has all the right demands - and not enough of a sense of how we can get there.

Cochabamba did many things: some useful and important, some – probably – banal and irrelevant. But the most important thing: it reminded us that we're part of a global movement. That whatever the challenges, we can be powerful if we work together with the millions and billions fighting for climate justice elsewhere. In that sense, it wasn't just another summit, it wasn't Groundhog Day: it was a spectacular success, and a signpost to new possibilities opening up.

For more on people's experiences in Cochabamba:
<http://notesfrombelow.wordpress.com/>
<http://climatejustice.posterous.com/>
<http://turbulence.org.uk/>

TO COCHABAMBA: ALL OVER AGAIN?



"We have frequently printed the word Democracy. It is a great word, whose history, I suppose, remains unwritten, because that history remains to be enacted."

Walt Whitman

grassroots stuff in the uk

www.climatecamp.org.uk

I think we've gone on enough about this already.

www.risingtide.org.uk

Rising Tide is a network of groups and individuals dedicated to taking local action and building a movement against climate change.

www.planestupid.com

Plane Stupid is a network of grassroots groups that take direct action against aviation expansion.

www.transitionnetwork.org

Transition Network aims to inspire, encourage, connect, support and train communities as they self-organise around the transition model.

www.coalactionscotland.noflag.org.uk

Coal Action Scotland aim to inform people about the dangers posed by new coal, promote alternatives, work with those involved, and directly challenge new coal exploitation from source to point of use.

a bunch of ngos that have done stuff on rbs and banks

www.platformlondon.org

Platform is a small outfit that crosses education, activism and art in fighting against social and ecological injustice. It has been running a campaign on RBS since 2006

www.peopleandplanet.org

People & Planet is the UK's biggest student activist network, and its members have been involved in numerous activities against RBS branches and recruitment fairs.

www.wdm.org.uk

The World Development Movement is a UK-based anti-poverty campaigning organisation that was one of the groups that recently took the Treasury to court over RBS' fossil fuel finance.

www.foe-scotland.org.uk

Friends of the Earth Scotland have co-published reports on RBS activities, and were involved in organising protests outside the AGM this year, as well as the 'Public Shareholder Meeting'.

www.sead.org.uk

Scottish Education and Action for Development challenges the causes of poverty, social injustice and environmental degradation and supports the community-based movement for positive social change.

The Camp for Climate Action is on facebook!*

Come find us, and invite all your friends to Camp for Climate Action 2010 – Break the Bank!

And follow us on twitter on @climatecamp



* Much like a banker's arse, Facebook has a practical purpose, but it's not something you'd want to get too deep into.

www.planespeaking.org.uk

PLANEspeaking is a not-for-profit umbrella movement in Scotland bringing together national environmental organisations, local communities and individuals concerned about airport expansion.

www.earthfirst.org.uk

A loose network using non-hierarchical organisation and direct action to confront, stop and eventually reverse the forces that are responsible for the destruction of the Earth and its inhabitants.

www.radicalroutes.org.uk

Radical Routes is a network of radical co-ops whose members are committed to working for positive social change.

www.workersclimateaction.wordpress.com

Workers' Climate Action is a campaign network of environmentalists, trade unionists and class struggle activists that fights for a just transition.

FIND OUT MORE AND HOW TO GO-GO

www.banktrack.org

BankTrack is a global network tracking the operations of the private financial sector and its effect on people and the planet.

www.waronwant.org

War on Want fights poverty in developing countries in partnership with people affected by globalisation, and they also did a great report on UK banks and the arms industry.

www.thecornerhouse.org.uk

The Corner House aims to support democratic and community movements for environmental and social justice. GREAT collection of climate justice analyses as well as casting a critical eye on financial markets.

www.ran.org

The Rainforest Action Network campaigns for the forests, their inhabitants and the natural systems through education, grassroots organizing, and non-violent direct action. They have done a lot of work on banks, coal and tar sands.

International stuff and random bits

www.climate-justice-action.org

Climate Justice Action is a global network of people and groups (including Camp for Climate Action) committed to take the urgent actions needed to avoid catastrophic climate change.

www.climate-justice-now.org

Climate Justice Now is a network of organisations and movements from across the globe committed to the fight for social, ecological and gender justice.

www.durbanclimatejustice.org

The Durban Group for Climate Justice is an international network of independent organisations, individuals and people's movements who reject the approach to climate change promoted by polluting corporations, financiers, northern governments and economists.

www.newint.org

New Internationalist workers' co-operative exists to report on issues of world poverty and inequality; to bring to life the people, the ideas and the action in the fight for global justice.



www.climatejustice.posterous.com

News, reports and independent voices from the World People's Conference on Climate Change.

www.ienearth.org

The Indigenous Environmental Network is a network of Indigenous Peoples empowering communities on issues of sustainable living and environmental justice. They are at the forefront of community organizing against tar sands in Canada.

<http://tarsandsinfocus.wordpress.com/>

The UK Tar Sands Network is a new grouping of UK-based individuals and organisations who are committed to standing in solidarity and working in partnership with First Nations in Canada whose health, livelihoods and future are being directly threatened by the Tar Sands.

www.shiftnag.co.uk

The idea is to create a space for the exchange of radical ideas and strategies, though always with reference or direct relevance to organisation and 'activism'.

acknowledgements

daniel sliwka - cover design, hemant jain, lesley barnes - illustrations, arthur girling, amelia gregory, minimouse, callum bennetts - photography, martin rowson - cartoon.

Saturday 21st to Tuesday 24th August

Somewhere in Edinburgh

Take and set up the basecamp: 19th - 20th

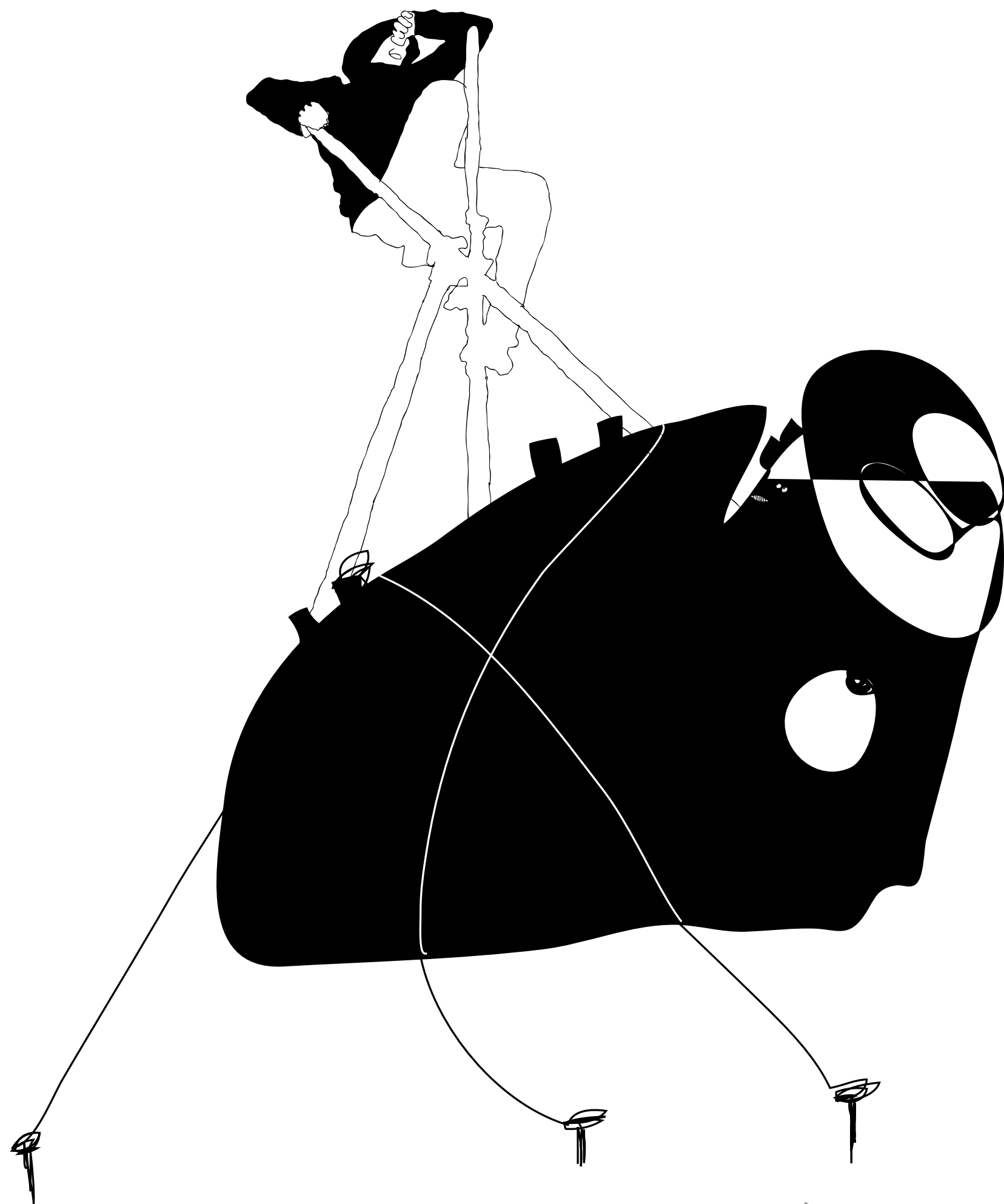
Four days of direct action training and taking: 21st-24th

Day of action against RBS: 23rd

Return basecamp to nature: 25th

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- SUMMER 2010. NOW IS THE time to:
- ☐ wait for the new government to sort the MESS OUT
 - ☐ WATCH BIG BROTHER
 - ☐ MAKE TUTTING NOISES FROM YOUR SOFA
 - ☒ GET ANGRY AND GET on it.