



M11 Latest News

The most dramatic defiance yet of the government's insane road-building programme ended on Friday morning last week. The eviction of Claremont Rd took 4 days, cost £2 million and involved over 700 police, 200 bailiffs and 400 security guards.

The M11 Link Road in East London is 3.5 miles long; will destroy 350 homes, parks, trees and woodland; increase pollution; cut 7 minutes off car journeys and cost £350 million.

Since the Sweet Chestnut Tree was cut down in Dec 93, Claremont Rd has been the main focus of the campaign against the M11 Link. A squatted street in the path of the road, it had to be seen to be believed. A vision of the future with no cars (on old vehicle with RUST IN PEACE blocked one entrance), the houses were painted, the street full of sculptures, art-work and people. After Twyford Down it has been this campaign that has helped keep the issue of roads on the agenda. Under the CIA road protesters are criminalised and it has been the NoM11ers who've masterminded Operation Roadblock (invading sites, climbing on diggers and cranes and stopping work), the rooftop protest at Westminster, the mass trespass at Michael Howard's house.

Portrayed as a bunch of 'squatters and New Age Travellers' by the media, it has involved a large alliance from local residents, children and lollipop ladies. Involving people for the first time in non-violent direct action - and, according to the DoT and Met police putting security costs at £6 million!

When the bailiffs arrived 2.15pm Monday afternoon they were met by 500 people using every delay

continued overleaf...

SchNEWS LIVE!
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george, trafalgar st, every Friday.

Quote of the Week

Dolly, 93-year-old Claremont Rd resident sent a message to the tower:

"If I was queen, you'd all be knighted."

After a fall Dolly has been in Hospital she refused to move out of the house she was born in, and was offered £1,500 compensation and an OAPs flat by the ever-caring Department of Transport.

Home Office says Yes and No to Drugs!

Confusion at the Home Office : A Government report on Drugs out today says that Local Authorities should encourage legal raves and states that

"elimination of drug misuse is generally regarded as an unobtainable goal"

Yet, this is, apparently, not incompatible with anti-rave legislation, and the Govt still favours "stop and search" policing to stamp out drug use.

On the subject of stop and search laws, MP Bernie Grant has tabled a question in the Commons about whether police will put the information gained from stop and searches onto their national computer. No reply from that one as yet. BUT REMEMBER THAT Home Office figures from the 70's say that a whopping 42% of those stopped under the SUS laws then were from ethnic minorities.

Police thumbs up to CCTV

They have, apparently, had tremendous fun spotting all their friends and neighbours on T.V. and playing with their little zoom lenses and directional tracking things.

They also managed, according to the Evening Argus, to detect drug takers on the beach, BOO! HISS! and to assist a woman with cut wrists in West Street. They didn't, however, manage to spot one graffiti artist (not a million miles away from here) who sprayed "somebody's watching you" on the base of every single one.

CIA League Round-up

Hunt Sabs	72
Travellers	8
Road Protesters	4
Footie Fans	1
Michael Portillo	0

(as of 5/12/94)

Hunt Sabs increased their lead this week with 72 arrests all for aggravated trespass. Travellers were stable in second place with 8, road protesters still had 4, while footie fans hovered round the relegation zone with one (remember tho' it was only a caution).

Meanwhile supporters waited with baited breath to see if Michael Portillo MP might enter the fray. On Friday, he held a big party with 400 of his mates at Alexandra Palace. At police discretion, this may have been stopped, or perhaps by the fact that plenty of people in fancy dress and suits were going along to hurl abuse and cause a disturbance. If we can't have our parties then we'll gatecrash yours.

all articles, info etc to either peace centre, cheers!

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... tactic possible. A concrete-filled car with protruding scaffold poles stopping the cherry pickers moving in. People locked on to the road. Others hung in nets strung across the street. Seven people buried themselves alive under 15ft of rubble, others huddled on rooftops and treehouses. Lastly, 12 people scrambled up a 100ft scaffold Tower painted with grease and tied with pink ribbons. It was here the bailiffs scratched their thick heads and police trained in hostage negotiations tried to talk them down. Warning of hurricanes and imminent collapse, the scaffold crew sang and drank whisky, tea and coffee while clocking up £ after £ after £

Quote 1

"While they were there no machinery could be brought into the road. After manhandling the protesters the bailiffs decided they would have to dig them out. A pneumatic drill was brought in. All but one of them was dug out this way. If anyone expected non-violence by the bailiffs they were about to proven wrong. The last protester was removed by having his arm twisted so bad that he was screaming in agony, then a piece of twisted metal was jammed down into the tube his arm was in, cutting his hand and arm. Under this much violence he released his lock and was dragged away.

Then the if's and but's and would-be scenarios became irrelevant. First one riot van, then another and another and another and another. The stream of police vehicles was incredible; this was real and it was happening now. Before the cheers could start someone had turned the sound system on the tower on. The bailiffs were greeted by hundreds of roof top protesters and full-on in your face rave. The atmosphere was incredible.

The long drawn out eviction started with all reporters and photographers on the ground being removed, some forcibly some by choice. Once they were gone the next step was to remove the people who had locked their arms into the road itself."

Quote 2

"From the moment the riot police marched in it was obvious they were out for violence. Those involved in a sit down protest were violently removed. One guy was taken aside and punched full on in the face for no reason. Legal observers and press were moved out and the riot police removed their identification numbers. At least 30 who I could see were unidentifiable.

One woman, Leslie, hit her head and fell unconscious because the driver of the digger she had lowered on to and balanced on had been ordered by a TSG (Tactical Support Group) to move back. When she fell a lot of people believed her dead. However, six police just picked her up and dragged her away. Fortunately she was OK but had she incurred spinal or brain injuries, she could have been paralysed for life.

I have never before felt such immense hatred for anyone, but I knew when I saw Leslie fall, that if I had been in possession of a gun I would have killed every police officer, TSG and security guard there."

Quote 3

"I was shocked to find myself being groped by a bailiff as I was removed from the roof - and even more shocked when he told his boss he'd get his hand back later"

Quote 4

"The resistance to the eviction of Claremont Road, the squatted street blocking the proposed route of the M11 Link Road, was massively encouraging episode. The scale of the resistance was unprecedented in Post-War Britain representing a concrete fusion of the environmental movement and the squatting movement, deriving strength from the unity between previously (apparently) disparate class struggles, which the CJA has imposed. It was a pointer that the opposition to the road building programme and the opposition to the CJA will not crumble in the face of the law, but will move onto mass defiance through Direct Action.

As always there are reservations. The tactics of non-violent Direct Action employed, the use of rooftops and towers, etc., proved successful in delaying the eviction, and piling up the costs for the state. But such passive tactics are incapable of actually preventing the state from recapturing the autonomous spaces we create. The police captured the streets of Claremont Road within minutes, bar a few people locked-on in vulnerable positions. Although at present, we may not have the numbers to confront force with force, build barricades, and actually prevent evictions, we must recognise the direction in which we need to go. We should learn the lessons from successful resistance on the continent and criticise the liberal dogma of non-violence which prevents us from making those connections. Is our autonomy worth defending effectively, or do we simply want to wave while we drown in the tide of commodification?"

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