

The idea of the Red Market comes from ~~XXXX~~ Pisa in Italy, where peasants came ~~int~~ into the town and sold together to people direct instead of going through the shops. Our idea of the Red Market was to make a focus in the area, where people would come together around something organised communistically. Our idea was also to do something which people could organise themselves and which would hopefully serve as a beginning to do other things, like a creche or organising around the rents. Something which could make an identification of class interests in the area.

There was another meeting and only 2 women came, so we went talking to people ~~x~~ individually again. Although in lots of ways it's obviously impossible to organise people individually, we decided that it wasn't because people didn't want to do things that they couldn't come to meetings, but because of all the pressures of working all day and wanting a rest (or having to keep on working), of the kids and also of isolation. None of the women we met from one tower block had ever met any of the others before.

The first market we organised practically all ourselves, although we were talking all the time to women about what we should get and how it should be done. Once the market was actually a reality - when we said 'Right, it's on next Saturday' - people began to see more clearly how they could be involved. One of the women got her husband (who used to be a butcher) to cut the meat up, and the Friday night when we did that together and the pricing and making of posters and the next day selling, really began to bring people together. At the 2nd market we were very straightforward with ~~XXXXX~~ the women who came to buy. We said we were not a charity and that we couldn't continue unless there were more people. We asked people to leave their names and addresses and we went round with some of the other women we'd met already to see new people. We began to build up a base of people who wanted to organise.

The third market was really successful. By this time there were about 8 women who were directly involved with the organising, who were taking responsibility for a lot of the buying, the packing up and the pricing and the selling and who were meeting each other. The most important things were that we made it clear from the

beginning that - 1. The struggle around prices was political.
 - 2. It was a way of organising, of bringing people together..
 - 3. That it was connected to the other problems which people face every day - conditions, wages kids. And that these problems come from capitalism.

We were still calling on people, but because it was now more positive it was much easier. With some of the women we began very quickly to talk about everything - VD, drugs, blokes, kids, ways of living, Russia. At this stage our differences with Fight On began to come clearer. They saw it, and still see it as unpolitical to form friendships with people who you are trying to organise. For us, although we reject the unstructured - friendship-network idea and want to be very positive about how we organise in a revolutionary way which will grow and be part of an organised movement; what we have learnt, and the confidence and strength we have begun to share with the women has been an extremely positive, onward-going thing.

However we still feel that the most important aspect of the Red Spot Market has been that it is people - mostly women - organising together. It is collectively taking action against rising prices and against the oppression of isolation, the day to day struggle to survive under capitalism. We hope this will begin to break down the defeatism that people feel (which comes from the system) and will be a base for organising other things in the area.

Another point of disagreement with Fight On has been over how often we should ~~have~~ have the market. They say we should be there with 'clockwork regularity', i.e. every week; so that people get used to us and trust us so that we can organise more and more things, and that it must always be 'the action of political militants holding it on constantly; endlessly'. We've said that because of the dead weight (of the history of reformism in the area (and also in peoples' heads from bourgeois conditioning); people will ~~XXXXX~~ just take advantage of the situation. (Cheap meat every Saturday - who wouldn't stop and buy it?) And as we've said elsewhere, we're not into "serving the people". For us there have been other very positive things which we ~~we~~ still want time to do.... Going to see new women with the women we've already met. Making sure its not the same old people who do it; which we think would begin to happen if we had it every week.

The other thing is the way that decisions and initiatives are taken. The two of us from Ned Gate who have been the most involved have used our group for discussion, analysis and support, yet ultimately the decisions we have made have been ours. It was us who did the day to day organising and who were most in touch with the situation. With Fight On decisions made are constantly having to be referred back to the organisation. Each leaflet has to be checked to make sure it has the right line.

These differences have not been resolved and we are doubtful that they can be. As the struggle develops, the women themselves will have to decide how they can continue. For us, these differences have also meant that we can see our ideas of organisation more clearly. We are more sure than ever that each individual in the group should be someone who can take political initiatives themselves. We must share our knowledge and build confidence and ideas in each other.

A NOTE ABOUT FRIENDSHIPS AND ORGANISING.

There are no hard and fast rules here - probably there will never be, but we'd like to bring up a few things. The women have tended to treat us (at the moment) as individuals in that some people get on better with some people, others with others, whether we're Fight On or Ned Gate. They do not differentiate between the 2 groups. They see us as people with ideas like "If people work together they are stronger. They can begin to do something to right some of the wrong." And mostly its this idea that is talked about and they agree with. It has a positive base because we are

organising something. Its clear and easily understood. Without this, the base for developing anything more than a casual acquaintance or a 'contact' would not be there. We say this because there is a tendency in the "Movement" (don't know what else to call it) to 'cocoon' friendships with working-class people instead of organising with them.

Sure, we get to know a lot of people by selling the paper or leafletting or whatever and its necessary that we know militants in different places and maintain contact with people we have met on pickets even tho we know we can't actually organise in all these places. Maybe we always have to ask ourselves - "How does this relate to the class struggle? How can it be part of a long term perspective.?"

With the Red Spot Market, we are trying to make a base of struggle in which people can organise themselves and grow stronger on a class basis. At the moment we are directly a part of that. People don't regard us as outsiders, mainly because the estate itself is not cohesive. (They are all outsiders to each other anyway.).

The questions we have not confronted yet because we have not reached them. How autonomous is that group? We don't see ourselves as controllers of situations - but we have taken initiatives and we want to keep organising there, and we want to make it a revolutionary struggle. If this means we are revolutionaries, how can we define our practice so that we know its what we have in common with other groups? And is our aim to encourage the women that we have met to become militantsX too so that they can take their own initiatives in the struggle.?

Other things - Could we enlarge the street meeting idea to make it even more positive as a regular gathering of people on the estate? Would it be better if we had it indoors?.

NEWSLETTER NETWORK MEETING - 15th / 16th / 17th / FEBRUARY IN NOTTINGHAM.

Please write to us now and say how many will be coming. Send ideas for agenda . Will you be bringing any kids. Arrive Friday . Contact

FLAT 3, 59 FOREST RD., NOTTINGHAM.

About 2-3 years ago a C.U. kids handbook was started, restarted and never finished. A group of us recently formed to look at the project and the existing copy. We have decided to produce a series of broadsheets/ leaflets/ pamphlets which groups can use in schools & youth struggles in our own areas. These sheets may form the parts to a completed fact folder. We intend to form groups around the various aspects of struggle in case people may be interested in only one. We intend to cover: 1) WORK . 2) SCHOOLS. 3) ARMY RECRUITMENT. 4) LAW. 5) SEXUALITY . 6) YOUTH. RIP OFF CULTURE . 7) THE YOUTH GETTING RIPPED OFF CULTURE. 8) HISTORY OF YOUTH STRUGGLES AROUND THE WORLD.

We will act as the coordinating group to arrange any workshops & printing etc. Contact ISLINGTON, HACKNEY or WEST LONDON?