

The Making of Milton Keynes

DIVERSITY AND ACHIEVEMENT

A Disaster Averted!

Inter-Action and Welfare State International, 1978

In 1978 Welfare State International, accompanied by a Dutch Street Band, came to Inter-Action, to create their November 5th fireshow, entitled 'Parliament in Flames'.

A giant Big Ben was built, created from telegraph poles clad in canvas, and beneath it a huge hill of pallets with houses.

On Sunday morning an anxious man turned up. 'I live up the road in Eaglestone and I've been watching this being built. I'm a Gas Engineer and I need to tell you that one of the main city gas mains is 3 feet beneath the middle of your bonfire'.

The police were called. 'That bonfire must be at least 50 feet away from the gas main. You're Inter-Action, interact and move it!'

There was no way everything could be moved and rebuilt in just a few hours. One side of the safety fence was removed and a few of the pallets were put 50 feet away from the gas main in an unfenced field.

The main structure remained. The crowd arrived in great numbers. At 6 o'clock the show began and three JCBs sprang to life and proceeded to push the structure away from the gas main to the fire in the next field. Huge fireworks exploded overhead, the Dutch Band played and a sensational time was had by one and all!

