

BENETTON, THE UNITED COLOURS OF EXPLOITATION

Behind a false appearance of multiethnic solidarity, Benetton, the biggest landowner of Argentina, takes water, land and freedom away from the native Mapuche people. In 1991 the big Venetian company bought 900,000 hectares of territory in Patagonia, Mapuche's land, which the Argentine government sold for next to nothing. The Mapuche people were confined in a strip of land called 'reserve of the Benetton company' where they live in conditions of poverty and overcrowding. Most of them are compelled to work for the company in order to survive and get very low wages. Benetton exploits the Mapuche's land for grazing about a million sheep, which produce tons and tons of wool for their company. Any attempt to revolt against the Benetton invasion has always been violently suppressed by the Argentinian police which works in accordance with Mr Benetton. In recent times a Mapuche family who had taken back their piece of land in Chubut (Patagonia, Argentina) were evicted by 12 policemen and had their poor house completely destroyed. The Curinanco family were told by the police commissioner Perez that no one can contrast Benetton because they have more money than anyone. Other Mapuche communities, namely the ones living in Vuelta del Rio and Corcovado, are about to be thrown off their land as Benetton has taken possession of it. The struggle of the Mapuche people against the colonists of their land started a long time ago, when the Argentinian State gave its first concessions (oil, minerals and forest) to various companies inside the Mapuche territory. In the 90s, the Mapuche tried to take a great deal of estate back, but each time they were evicted. That didn't stop the many actions carried by the Mapuche against any company involved in the realisation of devastating plans such as the building of dams or the destruction of forests. In November 1998, for example, the Mapuche of Cuyinco attacked some vans of the big forest company Bosque Arauco, which was engaged in destroying the forest. They also attacked a group of journalists who were filming the actions and fought against the company's security service. In January 1999, Mapuche organised a big demonstration against the building of Ralco hydro electric dam and were violently attacked by the army. In March 1999, the Mapuche rebelled against the creation of a tourist area in Lleu Lleu river region and set fire to a building. Five of them were arrested and 2 started a hunger strike in prison. In April 1999 the Mapuche set fire to a digger of the woodcutting company Miminco in Traiguen and in June they destroyed a bulldozer and a few vans of the same company in Bio Bio.



ACTIONS AGAINST THE BENETTON

May 1998 – Athens (Greece) A Benetton shop is destroyed by fire.

10 March 1999 – Trieste, Italy. The clothes of the Benetton shop in piazza della

Borsa are dirtied with a stinking liquid. 15,000 euros' damage. A few days later the window of via Imbriani Benetton shop is dirtied with red paint.

October 1999 – Xixon (Spain) The local Benetton factory is attacked in solidarity with a few anarchists imprisoned for an attempted robbery.

March 2000 – Pisa, Italy. A Benetton shop is attacked and five windows are broken.

2001

19 January – La Spezia, Italy. Some eggs full of tar are thrown against the windows of a Benetton shop.

26 March – Florence, Italy. The windows of 3 Benetton shops are broken. The action is claimed by this communique:

Strike the capital and its tentacles every day. Behind Benetton's joyful appearance something awful hides itself: child labour, prisoner's work, Mapuche's land stolen. Marici weu: we'll win 10 times!

29 March – Milan, Italy. The windows of 3 Benetton shops are broken with steel balls. This is the communique that claimed the action: *Benetton exploits prisnoers' work. Benetton also took Mapuche's land in Patagonia away from its inhabitants. Strike Benetton, the multinationals and the State. Marici weu!*

4 April – Rome, Italy. The windows of 2 Benetton shops are destroyed with hammer blows. The claim: *We are with all the people who fight and rebel, we are with the Mapuche people, the struggle against Benetton is also ours.*

18 July – Ponzano, Veneto, Italy. A postal packet explodes inside Benetton head offices.

2002

8 February – Prato, Italy – 5 windows of a Benetton shop are broken. That night a telecom call centre (in which Benetton is a major investor) is set on fire. The claim: *Fire to Telecom for the Argentine rebels.*

19 December – Trento, Italy – A few balls full of paint are thrown into 2 shops. The damage is 15,000 euros. Two comrades are accused.

19 December – Lecce, Italy. Police attack a demonstration against Benetton. One cop is injured.

2003

A great many actions against Benetton, including demonstrations and distribution of leaflets, are carried all over Italy.

2004

5-11 January A new campaign against Benetton is organised in Italy.