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The latest issue of the North American Animal Liberation Press Office Newsletter is filled with some important information on recent developments in the world of activism and animal liberation. Also, as with every issue, movement warriors speak out about direct action and the struggle against the oppression of non-human animals.

Shortly before ending their final session in November, the US Congress passed the latest version of the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act (AETA). In a pathetic attempt to further criminalize the actions of those who fight on behalf of oppressed and exploited animals, the US government instead sent a clear message to animal liberation forces: Focus your activities on clandestine liberation activities, since we will impose ever-harsher penalties on those who utilize effective forms of legal protest. No one in the underground cares what ridiculous laws are on the books to protect those who abuse animals; everything the underground does is illegal already under an outdated, speciesist system of laws formulated by rich white male humans to benefit rich white male humans. Read a provocative and insightful analysis this issue by Dr. Steven Best, as well evidence that the liberation movement is as active as ever.

As with all liberation struggles, both historically and concurrently, the struggle for animal liberation is not going away until non-human animals are free from human exploitation, suffering and oppression. We encourage everyone with any compassion for species besides their own to join the struggle, in whatever way one can.

Press Office Directive: The North American Animal Liberation Press Office (NAALPO) was founded to communicate the actions, strategies, and philosophy of the animal liberation movement to the media and the public. Many of these actions are illegal under a current societal structure that fails to recognize the rights of non-human animals to live free of suffering, but validates and promotes the “right” of industries to do whatever they want to animals for profit or research. Within these conditions, those in the underground working for animal liberation often cannot speak out directly. Nevertheless, their actions and message is urgent and deserve to be heard and understood. Since animal liberation actions either go unreported in the media or are uncritically vilified as “violent” and as “terrorist” with no attention paid to the suffering that industries and individuals gratuitously inflict on animals, NAALPO seeks to clarify the motivation and nature of actions taken in defense of animals.

The Press Office also tries to provide a historical, social, and philosophical context for an objective understanding of the nature and motivation of illegal direct actions taken on behalf of captive animals.

The “Animal Enterprise Protection Act”:

New, Improved, and ACLU Approved

by Steven Best, Ph.D.

Welcome to the post-constitutional America, where defense of animal rights and the earth is a terrorist crime.

In 1992, a decade before the passage of the USA PATRIOT Act, animal exploitation groups such as the National Association for Biomedical Research successfully lobbied Congress to pass a federal law called the Animal Enterprise Protection Act (AEPA). This legislation created the new crime of “animal enterprise terrorism,” and laid out hefty sentences and fines for any infringement. The law applies to anyone who “intentionally damages or causes the loss of any property” of an “animal enterprise” (research facilities, pet stores, breeders, zoos, rodeos, circuses, furriers, animal shelters, and the like), or who causes an *economic loss* of any kind. The AEPA defines an “animal rights or ecological terrorist organization” as “two or more persons organized for the purpose of supporting any politically motivated activity intended to obstruct or deter any person from participating in any activity involving animals or an activity involving natural resources.” The act criminalizes actions that obstruct “any lawful activity involving the use of natural resources with an economic value.”

Like the category of “domestic terrorism” that is a keystone in the USA PATRIOT Act attack on civil liberties, the frightening thing about the AEPA is its strategic vagueness that subsumes any and every form of protest and demonstration against exploitative industries to a criminal act, specifically, to a *terrorist* act. Thus, the actions of two or more people can be labeled terrorists if they leaflet a circus, protest an experimental lab, block a road to protect a forest, do a tree-sit, or block the doors of a fur store. Since, under the purview of the AEPA, any action that interferes with the profits and operations of animal and environmental industries, even boycotts and whistle-blowing could be criminalized and denounced as terrorism. On the sweeping interpretations of such legislation, Martin Luther King, Mahatmas Gandhi, and Cesar Chavez would today be vilified and imprisoned as terrorists, since the intent of their principled boycott campaigns was precisely to cause “economic damage” to unethical businesses. And since the AETA, like the legal system in general, classifies animals as “property,” their “theft” (read: *liberation*) is unequivocally defined as a terrorist offense.

There already are laws against sabotage and property destruction, so isn't the AEPA just a redundant piece of legislation? No – not once understands its hidden agenda which strikes at the heart of the Bill of Rights. The real purpose of the AEPA is to protect animal and earth exploitation industries from protest and criticism, not property destruction and “terrorism.” The AEPA redefines vandalism as ecoterrorism, petty lawbreakers as societal menaces, protestors and demonstrators as domestic terrorists, and threats to their blood money as threats to national security. Powerful economic and lobbying forces, they seek immunity from criticism, to intimidate anyone contemplating protest against them, and to dispatch their opponents to prison.

Free Speech on Trial: The SHAC 7

Hovering over activists' heads like the sword of Damocles for over a decade, the AEPA dropped in March, 2006, with the persecution and conviction of seven members of a direct action group dedicated to closing down the world's most notorious animal-testing lab, Huntingdon Life Sciences (HLS). Exercising their First Amendment rights, activists from the Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty (SHAC) campaign ran a completely legal and highly effective campaign against HLS, driving them to the brink of bankruptcy. Alarmed by the new form of animal rights militancy, HLS and the biomedical research lobby commanded special sessions with Congress to ban SHAC campaigns (can you recall the last time animal rights activists and vegans held a special session of Congress to voice their demands against animal exploiters?). Using the AEPA, HLS successfully prosecuted the “SHAC 7,” who currently are serving prison



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Animal Enterprise Terrorism (continued)

sentences up to six years.

After the SHAC 7 conviction, David Martosko, the noxious research director of the Center for Consumer Freedom and a fierce opponent of animal rights, joyously declared: "This is just the starting gun." Indeed, corporations and legislators continue to press for even stronger laws against animal rights and environmental activism, as the Bush administration encloses the nation within a vast web of surveillance and a militarized garrison.

In September 2006, the US senate unanimously passed a new version of the AEPA (S3990), significantly renamed the "Animal Enterprise *Terrorism* Act" (AETA). To prevent critical discussion, the Senate fast-tracked the bill without hearings or debate, and just before adjourning for the election recess. In November 2006, the House approved the bill (HR 4239), and President Bush obligingly signed it into law. Beyond the portentous change in name, the new and improved version extends the range of legal prosecution of activists, updates the law to cover Internet campaigns, and enforces stiffer penalties for "terrorist" actions. Created to stop the effectiveness of the SHAC-style tactics that biomedical companies had habitually complained about to Congress, the AETA makes it a criminal offense to interfere not only with so-called "animal enterprises" directly, but also with third-party organizations such as insurance companies, law firms, and investment houses that do business with them.

Thus, the Senate version of the bill expands the law to include "any property of a person or entity having a connection to, relationship with, or transactions with an animal enterprise." The chain of relations, like the application of the law, extends possibly to the point of infinity. As journalist Will Potter notes, "The clause broadens the scope of legislation that is already overly broad." This problem is compounded further with additional vague concepts such as criminalize actions that create "reasonable fear" in the targets of protest, making actions like peaceful home demonstrations likely candidates for "ecoterrorism."

Updated and fortified, the basic purpose of the AETA is to make it a terrorist crime punishable by imprisonment to cause any "animal enterprise" (and its supporting companies) to suffer a loss of profit, whether through sabotage ("property damage") or by legal activities such as peaceful protests, consumer boycotts, and media campaigns ("economic damage"). AETA sentences first time violators up to six months in jail and \$10,000 in fines, and a second offense may earn one up to 18 months in prison and a \$25,000 fine. Seems non-violent, civil disobedience can be quite costly these days, earning burdensome fines, prison time, and the stigma of "terrorism." The penalties escalate from there for acts that produce a "reasonable fear" of bodily harm or yield actual physical harm, even though the use of violence is unprecedented in the US animal rights movement.

"It's depressing to know that, just because of our beliefs involving animals, we are going to be branded terrorists if we protest," said Lori Nitzel, a Madison attorney and executive director of Alliance for Animals, a statewide group that pledges nonviolence. As the Equal Justice Alliance aptly summarizes the main problems with the AETA:

- It is excessively broad and vague.
- It imposes disproportionately harsh penalties.
- It effectively brands animal advocates as 'terrorists' and denies them equal protection.
- It effectively brands civil disobedience as 'terrorism' and imposes severe penalties.
- It has a chilling effect on all forms of protest by endangering free speech and assembly.
- It interferes with investigation of animal enterprises that violate federal laws.
- It detracts from prosecution of real terrorism against the American people."

An Army of One

A sole voice of dissent in Congress, Representative Dennis Kucinich (D-Ohio) stated that the bill compromises civil rights and threatens to "chill" free speech. Virtually alone in examining the issue from the perspective of the victims rather than victimizers, Kucinich said: "Just as we need to protect people's right to conduct their work without fear of assault, so too this Congress has yet to address some fundamental ethical principles with respect to animals. How should animals be treated humanely? This is a debate that hasn't come here."

In response to Kucinich's concerns, Congressman F. James Sensenbrenner (R-WI) stated that subsection (e) in the Senate bill, "rules of construction," explicitly claims to protect legal protest actions, but Kucinich fails to counter that this minor clause conflicts with, and hardly counters, the overwhelming emphasis of the AETA, which is to criminalize any actions that cause "loss of profits" to a research lab, zoo, circus, breeder, or any other type of "animal enterprise."

With appreciation for Kucinich's remarks, one finds a much more trenchant analysis in Will Potter's analysis of the AETA, Potter underscores numerous evasions, disingenuous clauses, and logical inconsistencies. Addressing Sensenbrenner's attempt to silence Kucinich on the question of First Amendment protections, Potter unravels the semantic chicanery and points out that:

[S]ome lawmakers adamantly maintained that "damages" means physical damage to physical property, and not the "loss of profits," as defined by "economic damage." If that's the case, why does the penalty section spell out sentences for "non-violent physical obstruction," and for a crime that "does not instill in another the reasonable fear of serious bodily injury or death" and "results in *no* economic damage or bodily injury"? If this bill only targets property destruction and violence, which by definition would have to cause economic damage or instill fear, how does the penalty section include sentences for crimes that do neither? ...Lawmakers could spell out the definition of "damage," and note that "economic damage" (including the loss of profits) only applies to the penalty section of the legislation. In other words, spell out that the offense must include physically damaging property, but penalties for that can take into account the amount of impact that property destruction had on a corporation's "loss of profits."

ACLU Betrayal

One of the most unfortunate aspects of the passing of this bill was the failure of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) to challenge it. The ACLU did indeed write a letter to Congress about the passing of the AETA, to caution against conflate illegal and legal protest, but the organization failed to challenge the real terrorism perpetuated by animal and earth exploitation industries, and ultimately consented to their worldview and validity.

In an October 30, 2006 letter to Chairman of the House Judiciary Committee F. James Sensenbrenner and Ranking Member John Conyers, the ACLU writes that it "does not oppose this bill, but believes that these minor changes are necessary to make the bill less likely to chill or threaten freedom of speech." Beyond proposed semantic clarifications, the ACLU mainly warns against broadening the law to include legal activities such as boycotts: "Legitimate expressive activity may result in economic damage.... Care must therefore be taken in penalizing economic damage to avoid infringing upon legitimate activity."

Thus, unlike dozens of animal protection groups who adamantly reject the AETA *en toto*, the ACLU "does not oppose the bill." In agreement with corporate interests, the ACLU assures the government it "does not condone violence or threats." It thereby dodges the complex question of the legitimacy of sabotage against exploitative industries. The ACLU uncritically accepts (1) the corporate-state definition of "violence" as



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Animal Enterprise Terrorism (continued)

intentional harm to *property*, (2) the legal definition of animals as "property," and (3) the use of the T-word to demonize animal liberationists rather than animal exploiters. Ultimately, the ACLU sides with the government against activists involved in illegal forms of liberation or sabotage, a problematic alliance in times of global ecocide. The ACLU thereby defends the *property rights* of industries to torture and slaughter billions of animals over the *moral rights* of animals to bodily integrity and a life free from exploitation and gratuitous violence

The ACLU failed to ask the tough questions journalist Will Potter raised during his May 23, 2006 testimony before the House Committee holding a hearing on the AETA, and to follow Potter in identifying key inconsistencies in bill. Does the ACLU really think that their proposed modifications would be adequate to guarantee that the AETA doesn't trample on legal rights to protest? Are they completely ignorant and indifferent to the fact that the AEPA was just used to send the SHAC 7 to jail for the crime of protesting fraudulent research and heinous killing? And just where was the ACLU during the SHAC 7 trial, one of the most significant First Amendment cases in recent history? Why does the ACLU only recognize violations of the Constitution against human rights advocates? Do they think that animal rights activists are not citizens? Do they not recognize that tyrannical measures used against animal advocates today will be used against all citizens tomorrow? How can the world's premier civil rights institution be blatantly speciesist and bigoted toward animals? *Why will they come to the defense of the Ku Klux Klan but not the SHAC 7?* The ACLU silence in the face of persecution of animal rights activists unfortunately is typical of most civil rights organizations that are too bigoted and myopic to grasp the implications of state repression of animal rights activists for human rights activists and all forms of dissent.

Dispatches from a Police State

As a sign of things to come, in December 2006, a Portland, Oregon fur store owner urged the state to use the AETA against protestors of his store who "terrorized" him and affected his business. Corporate exploiters and Congress have taken this nation down a perilous slippery slope, where it becomes difficult to distinguish between illegal and legal forms of dissent, between civil disobedience and terrorism, between PETA and Al Qaeda, and between liberating chickens from a factory farm and flying passenger planes into skyscrapers. The state protects the corporate exploiters who pull their purse strings and stuff their pockets with favors and cash.

While animal rights activists are caught in the crosshairs of state repression, all forms of dissent have been targeted, and a broad pattern is emerging with undeniable boldness and clarity, alerting us to the systematic and full-scale assault the government has waged against the Bill of Rights. Recent documents obtained by NBC News, the ACLU, and other organizations show that the Defense Department, FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force, Department of Homeland Security, and local police forces have unleashed a dragnet of surveillance on all manner of protest groups, from anti-war activists to vegetarians, from children to grandmothers. Whether in the streets, military recruiting centers, classrooms, or churches, the government has monitored dissenting individuals and groups; they follow peaceful citizens, write down their names and license plates, and enter their information into massive databases, all organized under the rubric of security threats and terrorists.

The USA PATRIOT Act, signed into law in October 2001 and renewed in December 2005, overrides the Constitution and grants the state authority to unleash warrantless wiretaps and information searches (such as what materials one checks out at the local library). The newly bolstered PATRIOT Act allows secret service agents wider latitude to charge protestors at public events (such as political conventions and the Olympics) with disruptive behavior (if the President or any other person protection by the Secret Service is in attendance), with a possible penalty of six months to a year in prison.

Despite government denials, the USA PATRIOT is being used to curtail

freedoms of US citizens. Among other things, the PATRIOT Act has been used to investigate students expressing anti-government views in schools, to harass and jail activists, to surveil doctors and scientists warning about the threat of bioterrorism in the US, to subpoena a university professor to appear before a federal grand jury that will consider bioterrorism charges against him for using biology equipment in his art, and to persecute an investigative journalist for unauthorized filming of an Exxon Oil refinery.

The government is collecting information about legal exercise of the First Amendment that goes far beyond any legitimate concern for actual terrorism and verges toward creating a garrison state that criminalizes freedom of thought and speech. None of it is accidental or random; it's all part of a pattern, of the MO of a paranoid Police State peddling fear and controlling dissent.

The bogus "war on terror" has served as a highly-effective propaganda and bullying device to ram through Congress and the courts a pro-corporate, anti-environmental, authoritarian agenda. Using vague, catch-all phrases such as "enemy combatants" and "domestic terrorists," the Bush administration has rounded up and tortured thousands of non-citizens (detaining them indefinitely in military tribunals without right to a fair trial) and surveilled, harassed, and imprisoned citizens who dare to challenge the government or corporate system it protects and represents.

In yet another assault on the Constitution, in October 2006 the Bush administration signed into law the Military Commissions Act which denies habeas corpus rights to all non-citizens suspected of being threats to national security. This act is part and parcel of their self-aggrandized powers to torture detainees and flout the Geneva Convention. Whereas the Military Commissions Act targets non-citizens, many legal experts believe that it also targets American citizens, authorizing the president to seize American citizens, declare them "enemy combatants," strip them of all legal rights, and throw them into a military. According to the *Washington Post* reports, "The Bush administration is developing a parallel legal system in which terrorism suspects -- U.S. citizens and non-citizens alike -- may be investigated, jailed, interrogated, tried and punished without legal protections guaranteed by the ordinary system, lawyers inside and outside the government say."

The massive police resources of the US state are being used far more to thwart domestic dissent than to improve homeland insecurity. While Big Brother is obsessed with the email, conversations, and meetings of people who know a thing or two about the duties of citizenship, the airlines, railways, subways, city centers, and nuclear power plants remain completely vulnerable to attack.

Hour by hour, day by day, our First and Fourth Amendment rights (among others) are hemorrhaging and bleeding away into the sinkhole of corporate-state tyranny. As I write, there are new reports that the Bush Administration has collected reams of information on every airline passenger, and assigned each one a secret security rating (which can never know or protest), based on criteria such as the number of one-way trips one takes and preferred meal choices. Displaying the fascist poison spreading throughout the nation, former Speaker of the House, Newt Gingrich, launched a speaking campaign in November 2006 to persuade lawmakers that free speech rights must increasingly give way to security needs.

This issue goes beyond Republicans vs. Democrats, as the latter have hardly distinguished themselves on civil liberties since 9/11 and we can expect little improvement in the future, even if they control the executive and legislative branches of government (it is significant indeed to note that Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) co-sponsored the AETA). For what we have witnessed in the post-9/11 era is a *sea-change* in political thought, one that is rapidly constructing an authoritarian society where we are neither secure nor free. From coast to coast, citizens are resisting (such as efforts to declare the USA PATRIOT Act unconstitutional and to impeach Bush), but we are nowhere a critical mass yet. As citizens, it is our profound obligation to counter the forces of darkness descending upon us, and to



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begin building a truly democratic culture.

Web Resources

SHAC 7: www.shac7.com
Stop AETA: www.stopaeta.org
Equal Justice Alliance: <http://noaeta.org/>
ACLU FBI Spy Files: www.aclu-co.org/spyfiles/JTTFdocuments.htm
Greenscare: <http://www.greenscare.org/>
GreenIsTheNewRed: Greenisthenewred.com
Thomas Legislative Guide: <http://thomas.loc.gov/>

An Interview with Animal Liberation Prisoner Peter Young

First off, I want to thank you for the statement you gave at your final court hearing. Being in that courtroom and hearing it was one of the most inspiring experiences of my life, and I think a lot of the other folks thought the same. I don't know if you noticed, but there were so many people there supporting you that we had to sit on each other's laps! What were you thinking during the hearing when all those fur farm scum were talking? Were you happy to see so many supporters?

Coming through the door into the courtroom that day was like stepping through the looking glass. From the cold concrete-and-steel cell with a dozen convicts exchanging tactics on the best way to dispose of a weapon, 20 feet east to through an obliquitous door to a cheering crowd. It was a tremendous send off to prison. Most impressive was hearing later that prior to the proceeding, the crowd recognized that having 50+ animal liberation supporters together was an opportunity not to be wasted, and that an anti-fur industry demo was held outside the courthouse. This, I was told, was covered by the media and broadcast on Madison news=stations that evening. It is in this way I feel these human-centered efforts are best utilized - as something to be capitalized on to bring attention to even greater injustices. Even as a prisoner, I struggle with exactly how many resources and people we should devote to prisoner support, something that affects such a relative few, while billions die behind the scenes. Yet from the experience of incarceration over the last year, I have noticed the tremendous mobilizing effect of people being imprisoned for acts of conscience.

I would say that over half of the mail I receive is not from people taking time out of fighting for animal liberation to write me a letter of support, but from timid vegetarians who had never considered veganism or aggressive action in defense of non-human animals. And perhaps through my case these things will become part of their lives, even something at the forefront. This is what is important for me to see in any support effort taken on my behalf - that my situation be used as a springboard to more important things, or a gateway issue on the way to bigger fights. This is not to say in any way that prisoner issues are not important, only that they are best addressed in conjunction with issues of wider scopes. This was what was most wonderful about my sentencing - the demo, the statements on the conditions animals endure made to the media, and even just the networking which occurred at the after-sentencing party. I would never wish for someone to hold a bake sale defense fund benefit without putting "Why Vegan?" pamphlets on the table, I would never want an article written on my case without explaining the injustice which drove my actions, and I would not have wanted 50 people to drive from out of town to attend my sentencing without disturbing the peace. For efforts this side of a UW lab raid, I think it was an afternoon well spent.

And while the savages testified, my primary thought was that after all the blood they've spilled, the lives they've taken, after I am dragged to prison and they leave court to kill again, after it all - we will get the last laugh. the demise of their barbaric reign will happen in my lifetime, and I will be there

to spit on its grave.

You've talked about being inspired and informed by punk and hardcore music, particularly vegan straightedge music. What does vegan straightedge mean to you today? How have your feelings about it changed over the years?

The vegan straightedge scene is directly responsible for the course my life has taken. Although I sit in a federal prison, this is nonetheless the highest of compliments. All praise and credit is given to this movement for providing the spark that ignited an internal revolution in me many years ago. One from which I would never recover. It was bands like Culture, Framework, Green Rage, and Vegan Reich which confronted me with the crime of my inaction. Patches and singalongs are never enough. The day I mark as my joining of the animal liberation movement I was skating the streets of Seattle, listening to Raid, and something in me broke. The fate that would have awaiting myself and the animals had I continued as an inactive vegan stood to be far more horrific than prison. Hardcore taught me urgency. It taught me anger, and it taught me to point fingers. Without these elements, little is accomplished. I remain vegan and straightedge to this day.

Straightedge remains to me a crucial line in the sand, holding back degenerative effects of drugs and alcohol, and just as important, the degenerative effects of the culture that surrounds them. The numbing effects of these substances and the destructionary nature of the party scene make intoxication not just "a great way to have fun", but an effective way to keep large numbers of people docile and ineffective. As is the case with television, computer games, and various fashionable internet networking sites. While I myself am not entirely guiltless, it continues to be a disquieting trend, watching people with passion and conviction drown in artificial distractions, limiting their potential and dealing out precious moments of their lives to the transient sensory pleasure of marijuana, "The O.C.", and scene message boards. I'd like us to pretend our lives are worth living and not merely passing through.

And veganism is of course the single greatest step one can take to end the single greatest injustice in the history of our world - the 10 billion animals murdered each year for food, clothing, and science. This is not a symbolic boycott but a movement.

Vegan straightedge today... With the experience of 12 years of observation and participation, I have one major criticism of the movement. It is something that has always been there, an unmentionable flaw that few care to highlight, but it must be said, and I say it not out of contempt but hope for our evolution: The problem with vegan straightedge is that everybody is talking and nobody is walking. The problem with vegan straightedge is a problem of credibility. The most visible and influential people in our movement are those in the bands promoting vegan straightedge politics. To look honestly at those spokespersons of both past and present, I believe we can make the honest assessment that we are not putting our most credible foot forward. The face that we are showing our newer adherents and the world at large is, truthfully, setting the bar far too low.

Those making up the face of vegan straightedge are not making themselves credible as vanguards of a new movement. Consequently, their armchair approach sets a low bar for vegan straightedge as a whole. We are too comfortable making our music our activism. Even the consumption of the music gives the illusion of participation in a liberation movement. It would bring our fight to another level to see the most visible faces of vegan straightedge take their politics into the world and start making waves. Organize demos, open rescues, creative outreach efforts. With the influence newer bands have over newer adherents, they could build an incredible activist movement locally by flirring for upcoming activist events outside of the hardcore scene. The ripple effect through the scene of seeing band members back up their lyrics with action would inspire countless others to do the same. When politics are limited to lyrics and lifestyle, we have a scene. When we take those politics into the world and start to tear it down - we have a movement. Let's make vegan



Peter Young Interview (continued)

straightedge a movement.

How can we both acknowledge and transcend the conservative and moralistic limitations of vxse in the past (homophobia, anti-choice, tough guy shit)?

No one should live life looking backwards. No one, no scene. The baggage we bear is dead weight, and should be discarded. If we speak and live in opposition to that which we despise, I see no value in dwelling on mistakes of others from our past, for we are reborn. Remember we are speaking of statements and songs from very young people pressed onto cheap plastic and poorly copied publications 10+ years back, no regrettable military offensives against beer drinking civilians or generations of imposed slavery against homosexuals. We can move on from Abnegation. Picking at the scab prevents it from healing.

Why the vxse scene lives in terminal guilt over Vegan Reich going Muslim while scenes have much greater points of shame on their records is not clear to me. Before dwelling on a 15 year old article in Vanguard, let's strive for consistency and remember all scenes have, on their records, many a blemish. Punk rock began with the Sex Pistols and Ramones and has recovered just fine. '88 Hardcore was about as subversive as a Boy Scout not finishing his brussel sprouts, and for this we have long since atoned. I don't wish for the ghost of a bad Chokehold interview to haunt me when claiming vxse any more than I want to live under the dark cloud of Tony Hawk's "Got Milk" ad when skating to the beach. This is not to say lock the closet where we hold our skeletons. Just that we might do better to stop kicking a long-dead corpse and rebuild our threat from the ground up.

I cannot move on without stating that I feel 2 of your 3 items from the Vegan Straightedge Hall of Shame are greatly overstated. I have never known homophobia to exist outside of Hardline, a movement the size of which was always greatly exaggerated. Forgive me for never being the most accomplished show going scene socialite, but my window into Hardcore has always presented to me nothing but a staunch anti-homophobia stance. It is furthermore my take that the "tough guy" tag is grossly overused, applied unfairly to 1) militant animal liberation or sxse lyrics, and 2) band members whose only crime was dressing clean cut, being on the heavy side, and looking mean on stage. There is no question that "tough guy" dancing was and is a problem, one I would like to see cleansed from the scene forever. I'm as intolerant of obnoxious machismo as anyone I've ever known (and my mental health in prison suffers greatly because of it), but I can think of only rare examples of bands or people being called "tough guy" where I didn't feel it was misapplied. Again, forgive me for perhaps not socializing enough to get an accurate read on things. However, I just can't get behind labeling Earth Crisis lab rad lyrics as "tough guy". I just call those awesome.

In short: Reject, Reinvent, Rebuild.

How does animal liberation relate to other struggles (for example, anti-prison or eco-defense campaigns)?

They are joined as being among the most pressing injustices we face. At their base, these are timeless struggles. While we could spend lifetimes to bring together all liberation movements, I abandoned this agenda long ago. These struggles are linked, and it pains me to see people who do not extend their awareness outside of one issue, but our time is short and lives are being lost. No longer do I have faith in the logic of an argument bringing large numbers to a unified struggle. The tireless push to "bridge movements" has been a colossal failure every time, resulting only in inviting halfhearted activists into circles they are not committed to.

Through our unity dream, we serve to water down struggles with fraudulent people, adding weak links to the chain. Anyone who moves a struggle forward should be welcome, those who hold it back should be shown a different door. While this position is terribly unpopular, it is the product of

much experience in failure at forcing counterproductive efforts for the sake of "bridging movements". I have seen the folly of bringing new wave anarchists into organizing sessions for animal rights demonstrations and other such strategic errors made with good intentions. And from it I've seen the effects of pouring tar on a decently running machine. Arguments over "consensus", static over an imprecise gender or racial breakdown of participants in an action... at what cost do we pursue unity? There should be nothing but inclusiveness, respect, and cordial exchange of ideas right up to the point of action. and when it's time to make things happen, we all must be on the same page. I wish for everyone to see the connection between the struggles you mention, but more than this, I wish for them to fight those struggles in which they will be most effective. At the end of the day, I care not for holding hands with everyone who maybe doesn't think Bush is a wonderful human being. At the end of the day, I care about saving lives. At the end of the day, I care about what works.

In our correspondence you've talked about getting a lot of unsolicited mail from around the country and around the world. What are some of the funniest or strangest letters you've received?

There is so much. By my rough math, we're speaking of 1300+ pieces of mail over the last year of my incarceration. As to where to start, I'm at a lose. There are those pieces that are disturbing: an old women's photo of her ferret dressed up as a small child, another who felt I would see it as a sign of affection that she dug into my life so deep she knew what high school I went to and where my father lived. There are those that bring me back 10 years: the letters from the vocalist of one of my favorite mid-90's vegan straightedge bands, and my first girlfriend who I have not spoken to since 1996. There are those I would rather have never received: word that a friend has died, the AP story from which I learned 11 activists had been indicted for actions including the torching of a slaughterhouse. There are those I can only humbly call flattering: an attendee of the New Age Records showcase reporting that during their reunion show Outspoken had dedicated their last song to me and a myspace message from one of the better know "girl groups" requesting a benefit shirt to wear every night on tour. There are those that learn the shortest route to the trash can: every person who ever haughtily demanded to know what I was doing in a Starbucks the night of my arrest, and a "let's be friends" letter from the man who had given sanctuary to codefendant and snitch Justin Samuel in San Diego for years. And there are those I don't know what to do with: all those from people writing to inform me that the FBI had just come to their door seeking information about me, to the woman who had assaulted her roommate and went to jail for one month when he tore up a letter from me. One thing will be certain for the remainder of my imprisonment: the 5:15 mail call will always be the best part of my day, and whether joyous or revolting - it will always bring a surprise.

Finally, there have been a lot of arrests lately on the west coast related to alleged Earth & Animal Liberation Front actions, with many former activists turning snitch. What advice do you have for the prisoners who chose not to collaborate and to all the people who are working to support them?

My first advice would go not to the prisoners themselves, nor their supporters, but to the defendant's friends and affiliates. In the wake of an arrest, the essential first step must be to end the gossiping. End the speculations. Stop doing the FBI's work by feeding them even the most seemingly benign information. Discussion, even in private, travels - anything, must be urgently avoided. In prison, they call this "dry snitching" - informing on another in an indirect fashion. When the heat is on, to whisper the most insignificant rumor or fact about a person under indictment should be regarded as we would regard speaking that information directly to an FBI agent. There is too much on the line to take a liberal stance on this. Gossip can literally be a deadly weapon.

To the accused, I would offer them what I wish someone had offered me. Not a "look on the bright side", "everything will be ok" pep talk as is so often offered by well meaning supporters, but a serious breakdown of prison life and what to expect. While it may be something no one wishes to talk about, none of us are in a position to assess whether the accused can



NORTH AMERICAN ANIMAL LIBERATION PRESS OFFICE

Peter Young Interview (continued)

realistically expect to be found guilty and go to prison. Only the defendants and their attorneys can make that assessment. And many of them may in fact know they are going to prison. I hope very much that this is not the case, but it may be so. And the best thing we can do for them is demystify the next stage of their lives, be there to connect them with people who have experience in prison life and can answer questions, from what security level they can expect to be housed in, to prison etiquette, food issues, mistakes to avoid, and much more. For the NW defendants specifically, it may be too early for this topic, but there is a point where it should not be ignored. There is much I wish had been communicated to me, from the ease of eating vegan in federal prison to the generally relaxed atmosphere of federal prison.

My belief in the justness of my actions has brought, from day one, a comfort that's bigger and more important than a few years in their worst prison. Come what may. This satisfaction did not put to rest the thousands of questions I had about life in prison, questions that are certainly running through the heads of many political prisoners in jail at the moment. Were they to be given the truth, they would rest much easier. I have been on the phone this week with an activist on his way to prison, offering my 14 months of accumulated knowledge as I wish someone had done for me. No one wants to mention the possibility of prison until it's too late. This is why I will always offer myself as a resource to anyone under indictment. I will always be the person to let those people currently awaiting trial know, on the subject of prison, the fantasy is often worse than the reality.

Lastly, to the supporters working for those on the inside: please keep them informed. Nothing gets inside prison walls that you do not mail them. I would cite as my biggest complaint during my pretrial phase and on the present day that information relevant to my case was not communicated to me. From information on people being questioned about me to mainstream news articles on those on my case, I was simply kept in the dark on far too much. Please inform those on the inside of even the most minute detail pertaining to their case. If the Center for Consumer Freedom sends out a press release on their case - tell them. When someone is subpoenaed to a grand jury investigating those things they are charged with - give them their names. If a 13 year old girl in Kansas writes a poem on her livejournal profile in tribute to them - mail it in. Keep them informed. Such information will not only bring the peace of mind of knowing they are being updated on everything happening outside, the information you give them can be crucial for their defense. If the information is too sensitive to be communicated directly to a prisoner, hand deliver it to their lawyer. NEVER assume the accused knows something already. I learned of my recent South Dakota charges two weeks after the fact from a letter reading something similar to "bummer about your new charges." I'd never run to a telephone so fast in my life.

This interview appeared in issue #2 of **Total Destruction: straightedge fanzine against the ruling social order**. Copies can be ordered for \$2ppd for a single issue or \$10ppd for 10 copies from the following address.

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"In a war you have to take up arms and people will get killed, and I can support that kind of action by petrol bombing and bombs under cars, and probably at a later stage, the shooting of vivisectors on their doorsteps. It's a war, and there's no other way you can stop vivisectors." --Tim Daley, British Animal Liberation Front Leader, BBC interview, 1987

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The Chilling Effect

By Will Potter

Chances are your home won't be raided by federal agents. You probably won't get hauled before a grand jury for a political witch-hunt, or rounded up and accused of "eco-terrorism." While these things are taking place, most activists will only read about them.

These heavy-handed tactics are a small part of the current crackdown on animal rights and environmental activists in the name of "eco-terrorism." In this "Green Scare," the real danger is not Senator Joseph McCarthy naming names, or cops breaking down doors: it's the subsequent fear seeping into every crevice of the movement.

Even at the height of the Red Scare, amid the blacklists and the Congressional hearings, amid the red-baiting and the rhetoric of treason, the McCarthyists rarely, if ever, preached prohibition: they didn't use their pulpit to ban subversive speech outright because they simply had no need.

The climate of fear they created, through scare-mongering and legislation more palatable for the public, had the same effect. Self-censorship, they learned, could prove even more effective than a new set of Alien and Sedition Acts.

Take the case of *Lamont v. Postmaster General*. There was a federal law that said anyone receiving "communist political propaganda" through the post office had to specifically authorize the delivery of each piece of mail.

The law didn't say it was illegal to send or receive communist propaganda. It just said you had to authorize it. But that has the same effect, doesn't it? You'd have to be a real nut job to voluntarily put your name on a list of folks receiving commie propaganda during the Red Scare: clueless, fearless, or a little of both. So people didn't do it.

Justice Douglas, delivering the opinion of the Supreme Court that struck down the law, wrote: "...any addressee is likely to feel some inhibition in sending for literature which federal officials have condemned as 'communist political propaganda.' The regime of this Act is at war with the 'uninhibited, robust, and wide-open' debate and discussion that are contemplated by the First Amendment."

That's what lawyers call a chilling effect. The law didn't take away people's rights, but it chilled them. It made reasonable, everyday people fearful of speaking up.

Now history repeats itself. The new enemies of the hour, the FBI's "number one domestic terrorist threat," are the animal rights and environmental movements. The new McCarthyists have taken a few pages from the Red Scare playbook, and a few from the "with us or against us" playbook of the war on terror. The architects of this Green Scare are building on a foundation of fear.

The government hasn't outlawed animal rights and environmental activism, but the green-baiting campaigns of lawmakers and corporations are starting to have the same effect.

When environmentalists are rounded up as part of "Operation Backfire," you start to wonder if you'll get hit with outlandish charges for being seen as a "leader."

When a nonviolent activist like Adam Durand gets 180 days in jail, \$1,500 in fines, probation, plus 100 hours of community service, all for producing an undercover documentary about a factory farm, you start to wonder if it could happen to you.

And when the SHAC7 are convicted on "animal enterprise terrorism" charges for running a website, you start to wonder if you'll be next.

Yet, the new McCarthyists haven't confined their scare-mongering to the

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The Chilling Effect (continued)

courtroom. Industry groups are getting more and more gutsy. They're taking out full-page anonymous ads in both The New York Times and The Washington Post, labeling animal rights activists as "terrorists." They're going so far as to label the recent children's movie, Hoot, "soft-core eco-terrorism" because it shows kids saving an endangered owl from developers.

Meanwhile, the Department of Homeland Security does not list right-wing terrorists on a list of national security threats, even though those groups have been responsible for the Oklahoma City bombing, the Olympic Park bombing in Atlanta, violence against doctors, and admittedly creating weapons of mass destruction. The animal rights and environmental movements have done nothing like that.

The Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act, passed in Congress, creates stiffer penalties than the original Animal Enterprise Protection Act, and expands its scope to include "any property of a person or entity having a connection to, relationship with, or transactions with an animal enterprise."

The vague and overly broad language of the bill includes undercover investigators and activists using civil disobedience. Supporters say it won't be used to target aboveground activists, but the penalty section spells out sentences for "non-violent physical obstruction," and for crimes that "do not instill in another the reasonable fear of serious bodily injury or death" and "result in no economic damage or bodily injury." All in a terrorism bill. The real danger of this legislation is not the stiff penalties it spells out, but the chilling effect it will have on the animal rights movement.

The repression we're seeing now may mimic many of the tactics of the Red Scare, but our response cannot. Witch-hunts will test the backbone of today's social movements, just as they did 60 years ago. But it's not enough to cowardly distance ourselves from the "eco-terrorists," as many did during the Red Scare. Condemning underground activists, or anyone charged with illegal actions, won't get you off the hook. Naming names and making loyalty oaths didn't protect activists then, and it won't protect activists now.

Activists can't just focus on their work, and wait for this to pass. It won't. At the same time, they shouldn't act like home raids and FBI harassment are badges of honor for scene points. Too many activists act as if it's selfish to worry about our civil liberties, because it takes time and effort away from the animals and the environment. The only way we're going to get through this is by coming out and confronting it head-on. That means working with anti-abortion activists, anti-war activists and others fearing they may also be targets of this scare-mongering. That means reaching out to everyone and telling them that labeling activists as terrorists wastes valuable anti-terrorism resources. That means building strong activist communities who know their rights, know how they're threatened, and know what's at stake if we acquiesce.

There's a long fight ahead. There will be more "eco-terror" legislation. There will be more arrests. And there will be more activists in need of prisoner support. Letter writing, commissary money, media outreach: work to make sure these people survive and are not written off as a casualty of a greater cause.

Supporting those that do not go to prison, though, may prove even more critical. We have to remind each other that it's okay to be afraid. We have to ensure in these supportive communities that we can speak openly and honestly about what's going on, and how to overcome it. If this fear, this hopelessness, is not confronted, it will incarcerate and incapacitate many more activists than any "eco-terrorism" legislation.

Will Potter is a freelance reporter based in Washington, D.C. He has written for publications including The Chicago Tribune and Legal Affairs, and has testified before the U.S. Congress on the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act. He is the creator of GreenIsTheNewRed.com, where he blogs about history repeating itself.

The *Satya* Interview with Rod Coronado

On March 24, 2004, long-time earth and animal liberation activist **Rod Coronado** was arrested for his involvement in an Earth First! campaign against the killing and removal of mountain lions in the Sabino Canyon recreation area outside Tuscan, AZ, an area usually closed to hunting. In December 2005 he was found guilty of "conspiring to impede or injure an officer of the U.S.," a felony, "interference with a U.S. Forest Service Officer," and "aiding and abetting the depredation of government property," both misdemeanors. On August 7, 2006 Rod was sentenced to eight months in federal prison and three years of supervised release (probation) in which he is forbidden to write, publish or speak about the animal and earth liberation fronts, Earth First!, or encourage illegal activities practiced by those groups.

While serving his federal sentence, **Rod Coronado** shared with **Sangamithra Iyer** his thoughts on recent animal enterprise terrorism legislation, his changing perspectives on direct action, and the magic of Harry Potter.

Can you talk a bit about the Sabino Canyon case?

The depredation of government property stems from the alleged destruction of a mountain lion snare set in the canyon by a federal lion hunter. The trap was never damaged, only sprung, but that never came out in court. Our efforts were very public, and I served as spokesperson for the people who represented the lions. When all legal measures to stop the hunt were exhausted, AZ Earth First! was contacted by the Center for Biological Diversity to help intervene as we were the only group opposing these trophy hunts authorized by Arizona Fish and Game. I was arrested in Sabino Canyon along with a reporter from *Esquire* magazine after being chased by a helicopter and cornered by federal and state officers. We had succeeded in stopping that hunt, but learned in our trial that after media attention died down, hunters returned to the area killing four lions and capturing more.

What are your thoughts about recent federal legislation targeting animal and environmental activists? What do you think it means for the future of animal activism in this country?

This recent legislation is typical for a society that uses law enforcement as a means to resist social change while also protecting the special interests of industries with powerful friends in Washington. It reminds me of the abolitionists of the 19th century who were faced with prosecution under the Fugitive Slave Act for aiding runaway slaves, something we consider downright heroic today. Just as rich landowners were frightened at the prospect of losing slave labor, corporations today worry about the impact on their profit margins should they ever be held responsible for committing large-scale animal cruelty and environmental [destruction].

With animal welfare it is economically unfeasible to be compassionate while remaining profitable. I read about the global threat to fisheries if pollution and overfishing continue unabated, yet the fishing industry assures us everything is fine. When it comes to the environment we have a historic record of showing scarcity of a resource simply drives up the market value, fueling industries to relentlessly exploit it until total ecological and market collapse. With such a record of inaction no one should be surprised that some people become frustrated and find no other avenue besides lawlessness. If Congress truly wanted to prevent "animal enterprise terrorism" they would generate greater responsibility in managing the natural resources of the earth instead of dragging their feet when a serious environmental catastrophe is at our doorstep.

Since 9/11 the political climate makes it far too easy for actions that destroy property to be seen as a form of terrorism. In response, we can best adapt our activities towards avenues, which do not result in some of our brilliant young leaders being criminalized as terrorists. We have to shift the blame to where it belongs, with irresponsible profit-driven corporations and public policies that cater to them. At the same time we need to return to a very grassroots approach and not allow animal and environmental activism to be relegated to the work of national and international



Rod Coronado (continued)

organizations who operate as corporations themselves, capitalizing on societal concerns for animals and the environment. We need to return to a level of democracy where it's not lawyers representing our interests, but the affected communities themselves.

Has your position on direct action changed?

Yes, personally and politically. When I began my career as a direct action activist, animal rights and environmentalism were still very fringe issues to the mainstream. Now thanks in part to direct action these issues have extended to the forefront of society. We have Prime Ministers and former Vice Presidents sounding the alarm we were ringing years ago. Of course law enforcement has responded with draconian laws that categorize direct action on the same level as terrorism. Dealing with political actions against corporate interests and property more severely than most physical crimes of violence.

In my opinion, direct action in first worlds like the U.S. have served their purpose and it is time for us to evolve strategies away from a focus on what's wrong with our world and direct our energies toward what is right. Those who have been sounding the alarm now have a chance to show disenchanted citizens our vision of a peaceful, harmonic and sustainable way of living. There is a greater example to be made by us through mutual aid and cooperation, free education, organic gardening, etc. than any act that seeks to attack our destructive system.

I could continue to do what I have done for the past 20 years, but what would come of it? Martyrdom and a life sentence. No, I want to be part of the rebuilding. I want to watch my children grow and live the way I believe we should.

Do you have any regrets?

Of course, who doesn't? I regret my children suffer from my separation. I regret not having learned the things I now know before they began causing pain. I regret externalizing my unhappiness with the world onto others rather than first endeavoring to change myself. I regret having hurt people I love. But I am human and like most of us, we learn from our mistakes. I learned that nothing helps us prevent future acts of insensitivity like our past acts of insensitivity. It's just a question of whether we are courageous enough to accept what we have done wrong. If only our government could do the same.

One thing I don't regret is accepting the challenge to live in a way that doesn't make me a pawn of our political climate or a slave to the dogmatic self-defeating patriarchal worldview.

What advice do you have for fellow activists?

We make our lives the model of how we want others to live. I believe in relating to people as a counter measure to the corporate media and fear-mongers who portray us as extremists. What we represent should never be termed as extreme because nothing could be simpler than living with consideration towards others. What should be labeled extreme are political agendas at the expense of all life on earth.

All of us want to see an end to suffering, but we have to accept that many others have tried and sacrificed, often more than we ever will, only to see the injustice they fought outlive themselves. And while it is important to stand up for what we believe in, little is gained from being knocked down. Let's not do the state's work and allow our actions to resemble the terrorist acts they allege them to be. Let's embody what we represent: love, compassion, respect and peace and leave out the war, destruction and greed. People are smart. They will be able to tell the difference, but not if our actions represent those of the system we are trying to stop. It's not going to be a handful of individuals attacking the state that effects change, but the multitudes of oppressed standing in solidarity as victims of injustice. It's our job to win people over without lying to them and by offering realistic solutions they can understand and embrace.

Most importantly be happy. There is great joy to be discovered in helping

others.

I understand this incarceration has been a transformative experience for you.

This time in prison has been transformative just as it would be for anyone imprisoned for their political actions or views. What I see as my current state of transformation began earlier this year when for the first time I began to reflect, not just on my political activities, but on my personal actions as well. In pursuit of my activist career, I hurt a lot of people very close to me, always keeping my "eyes on the prize" and never questioning the hypocrisy of my own actions. Last winter, the pain I was causing became too great to ignore and I was ashamed of how I had been justifying my personal behavior that was nowhere near embodying the respect, compassion and love that I have endeavored to represent. That's when I decided to "retire" from my confrontational politics and antagonistic positioning and focus on a simpler way of practicing what I want to preach. As a father and a partner in a relationship that meant working on being emotionally, spiritually and physically available to those who teach me about love more than any type of actions against violent injustice.

It's been a whole new revelation and more rewarding than any "revolutionary" action I had previously engaged in. More importantly, it taught me to live life with the great level of joy we all desperately need to survive and sustain ourselves in the coming years of turmoil.

It has also helped me find common ground with "enemies" and see that however misdirected we both might be, there is enough commonality for us to discover a mutual way of resolving conflict without violence. I no longer believe in "good vs. evil." I believe we are *all* capable of good and evil, it's just a matter of being accountable.

What's really sad and frustrating is not being able to convince my past opponents of my willingness to work towards change in a different way. The system is totally unforgiving and unwilling to look past my actions of before to see the potential in working together now. When I was sent to prison, I accepted the punishment, but really would have liked for Arizona Fish and Game to ask for a sentence of community service so that we both might learn an alternative form of conflict resolution that is less punitive. Still, whatever injustice I personally suffer will not sway me from extending myself to explore a different way of dealing with social and ecological problems. The system can refuse to change but I won't.

What have you enjoyed reading in prison?

I've really enjoyed J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* books, which are a wonderful exploration into a parallel world where magic still exists. They are beautiful stories that remind us that more important than power and control is friendship, respect, unity and tolerance. It's funny but ever since I became a parent, I've found such inspiration in children's books. So often the heroes are those who rescue animals or risk their lives to save their loved ones—important lessons that many grown-ups could benefit from learning again.

What gives you hope?

I know there is much pain in the world. I've seen the faces of thousands of animals suffering in cages, the destruction of ancient forests...No one needs to remind us of the dark times we face. But if we are going to make it through, we are going to make it by helping one another. This world is still a wonderful place. They haven't destroyed it all yet, and there's still enough to inspire hope. We are a crazy species, but smart enough to pull ourselves out of this nosedive if we act now and stop pointing our fingers at others. We just have to hold on tight to what we love, our children, each other, the Earth and I think we will be all right.

For more information visit www.supportrod.org. To learn more about Rod, read the two-part 1997 Satya interview "Freedom from the Cages" www.satyamag.com/interviews.html.



Liberated in Italian ALF Raid November 2006

Confession of a former hunter from Sevnica (Slovenia)

For 37 years he was a member of the hunting family from Sevnica, for 22 years a member of its administrative board and for 12 years the president of this board and of the rifle commission. In this period he killed a great deal of animals, but four years ago he decided to quit hunting for good. Rudi Ameršek from Sevnica today says that he is a converted murderer – his opinion is that killing animals is a crime. Not spending so much time aiming his barrel at game, he has more time left for his hobby and his family. In Slovenia he is known for unique hand-made vine sculptures.

What memories do you have of your first years as a member of a hunting family?

To become a hunter I had to fulfill some conditions. The president at that time said to me: If you want to become a hunter, you must have a hunting dog! He then sold me a young of his hunting dog and I had to kill my mongrel with poisonous gas. We used poisonous gas in ampoules in many cases. We usually threw such an ampoule in front of the earth and when a fox ate or bit through it, it soon died. Fox fur was very valuable at that time and sometimes I waited in the woods for my prey the whole night. Today I am ashamed for killing animals in the past.

What happened that made you quit murdering animals?

My children from the second marriage and my present wife Slavka kept telling me for years that killing animals isn't ethical. At last they even forebode me to bring shot animals home. That was a shock for me. Every enthusiastic hunter is proud of his prey and wants to show it. I used to do that too. As I couldn't bring killed animals home, my passion for hunting slowly ceased. In time I began to understand that hunting is merely passion for killing animals. Women in my family opened my heart to animals and today I can call myself a converted murderer.

Many hunters claim that they are friends of the animals.

Hunters and love for animals? That is ridiculous! Hunters only love animals when they are eating them. Hunters that go to the woods to feed the animals without their guns are very rare. A hunters' saying makes everything clear: A hunter without his gun is like a man without his penis on his wedding day!

Hunters claim that they kill animals to prevent their increase in number.

Nature doesn't need hunters. It is scientifically proven that there are certain mechanisms that maintain balance in nature, therefore human interference with nature isn't needed. If there are too many animals at a certain area, the number of births reduces or an illness takes care of the least resistant members of a species. Another thing has to be stressed concerning the number of animals: hunting families often report a greater number of animals at their hunting ground than the actual truth, so that the Slovenian Hunting Association can authorize a greater number of animals to be killed. I can confirm this is happening.

What is the primary hunter's motive?

Only passion for killing and selfishness. Do you know what hunters are talking about most of the time? How they shot an animal, what kind of trophies they have, which one is better, they compare each other, which hunter has a better gun, which gun does more damage to the animal, has better breakthrough... Some hunters throb with excitement and passion when they see an animal or when something moves in the bushes. This excitement can also cause accidents. Last year two accidents happened at boar hunt, when a hunter shot another hunter. I know hunters who neglected their families and farms because they preferred hunting and going to a pub after. Sometimes hunters even started a fight in a pub because someone was jealous of another one, who had shot a better animal. Even the police had to interfere. Let me tell you a story which well presents, how many hunters are addicted to killing. Years ago a member of our hunting family fell ill. I suggested to visit him on Sunday instead of going hunting. Most of the members chose hunting. Only three of us went to visit our friend. They even resented me for wanting to deprive them of their hunting pleasure (killing animals).

What about the trophies?

It is all about the most beautiful trophy. Just like other men love beautiful cars and girls. Many hunters decide to kill the most beautiful deer species, in spite of the fact that it is sometimes forbidden. They think it is worth to kill a deer that will make such a beautiful and enviable trophy, even though their hunting license might be revoked for two years.

I heard that some of the hunters visit schools and lecture to pupils. What do they talk about?

Yes, that's true. School administration invites hunters to do that. A few years ago a hunter even visited a kindergarten in Sevnica and he clearly didn't tell them that hunting is passion for killing animals. He was telling children fairytales about hunters being friends of the animals, he was convincing them, how good they are to animals, how they take care of them and how the animals need them.

Some farmers complain about wild animals eating their crops.

We didn't get a lot of such complaints. People complained more about hunters shooting their cats or loose dogs. They even shot ducks that some farmers had in creeks. Domestic animals become victims when hunters don't shoot anything in the woods.

What is your advice to hunters?

I advise them to take up a more ethical hobby or sport. They should sell their gun and buy a bike instead. Gun means killing and killing is a crime. Fishing is a crime too. At hunting an animal usually dies right away, but at fishing it is dying in terrible suffering for couple of minutes. The animals want to live together with humans and nature in harmony. In my opinion another problem is that humans interfere with nature more than they should and they are increasingly contracting living space of the animals.

What memories does his wife Slavka has of the bitter period, when Rudi was still a hunter?

Sometimes Rudi used to be away from home for the whole weekend, hunting. The hunt finished at 2 p.m., but often he afterwards went with other hunters to a pub, where they stayed till late hours. Sometimes I would come home at 10 p.m. and he would still be out. I didn't like him coming home drunk. Hunters have a saying: A real hunter comes home on Monday, if the hunt is on Sunday. In some cases alcohol led to violence at home. 15 years ago Rudi gave me fox fur that he himself tanned and he also killed the fox. My daughter told me that if I ever wore it and came to school, she would pretend not to know me. I'm against wearing animal fur too, so Rudi had to sell it. I disapprove of fishing just as much because fish suffer even more. I don't understand sport fishing, where fisherman catches a fish and then throws it back. I'm sure a fish doesn't enjoy to have a sharp hook through its mouth. I remember a teenager in botanical garden Mozirski gaj who fainted when she saw a severely damaged fish that a fisherman pulled out of the pond.



NORTH AMERICAN ANIMAL LIBERATION PRESS OFFICE

Worth the Cost?

By Tom Feters

I love you earth mother with all my heart
Can't stand watching them tear you apart
Lumber lusting, needing oil wells
Nature's listening to industry's hell's bells

One month we stop the clear cuts there
Now they want to hunt down a grizzly bear
Global warming pollution must decline
Action is needed, environmentalists align

Bioterrorism research in the lab
Another rhesus monkey dead on a slab
Harlem is going to set a precedent
Dense population, accidental germ incident

Department of Interior has a new head
Jumping up and down on a corporate bed
War is waged over control of resources
Greed is really what the driving force is

Amendment to Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act
Protects the traffic in skins torn off backs
Try to save an animal you're a terrorist
Bill passers on furrier's contribution list

Japanese trawler nets another whale
Sea Shepherd plunges through relentless gale
Liberate every endangered captive soul
Before they find out for whom the bells toll

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PO Box 999, 1120 Pike Street
Huntingdon, PA 16652

After years of unrelenting protests and attacks by animal activists, Schumacher Furs announced last month they were closing their only store in Oregon. Another victory for the animals!



Sign at Schumacher Furs, Oregon

Activists Shrug Off New Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act

Illegal Direct Action Appears to be on the Increase, Animals Benefit

North America: Numerous anonymous communiques have been received by the North American Animal Liberation Press Office in the last week, including those mocking the new Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act (AETA) passed by Congress last month, and others signaling support for jailed animal liberation prisoners. Below are selected excerpts from the messages received :

December 10

"Greetings from México. Two FLA (Frente de Liberación Animal) strikes very early this morning in Monterrey, Nuevo León. The first target was a big fur store, where all locks and doors were glued, threw paint bombs and wrote "Frente de Liberación Animal", "Muerte" and "Cada Piel es una Muerte". The second target was a KFC, that was painted with paint bombs. In Support of all ALF and ELF cells and dedicated to the SHAC 7."

December 14

"in a well coordinated action, 487 bottles of pom wonderful juices were tampered with along the Eastern seaboard in stores like wild oats, d'agostino's and food emporiums. those who drink the contaminated juice won't die like the animals in pom labs, but the diarrhea, vomiting and headaches will hopefully send a strong message that people will no longer allow innocent defenseless animals to be tormented and killed for a health juice and to line the pockets of profiteers who dont have feelings for those weaker than they are...thanks to feinstein and inhoff and the stupid animal enterprise terrorist law that violates the principles that this country is supposed to be founded on, more and more activists like us will choose to retreat into the shadows and fight for the animals underground"

December 18

"a group of individuals went to the lower east side of manhattan and glued and tampered with the locks of every fur, leather, and wool store on orchard street between delancey street and houston street. There are dozens of stores profiting off of animal suffering in this three block stretch and our group tried to glue every one of the locks. This is the one of many actions against the buisnesses that profit off of animal exploitation."

December 19

"Last night we gave an early Christmas present to around two hundred and fifty of our friends at the Griggstown Quail Farm in Princeton, NJ. After clipping through the fencing we cut out large sections of the canopy covering three pens, then flushed several hundred quail, pheasants, and partridges out into the starry sky and freedom. The farm is located by a waterway and open fields, and we wish our friends the best of luck in establishing new lives. To the animal abuse industry, welcome to post-Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act America: not one damn bit different. Putting the Crime back in Christmas since 1984...This action dedicated to the SHAC 7"

To read the full communiques, visit: www.animalliberationpressoffice.org/communiques_home.htm

The North American Animal Liberation Press Office (NAALPO) is a non-profit organization working to expose animal exploitation and oppression in the media. This newsletter is published quarterly, and is free of charge. This issue is dedicated to Peter Young, political prisoner imprisoned for his compassion and willingness to put it to good use.

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