

Earth First! Action Update

No.37 MARCH 1997

30p

"All good things are wild and free." - Henry Thoreau.

MILFORD HAVEN

The publicised action to attempt to close down Milford Haven on Saturday 15th February did not happen. This was mainly due to the massive police presence around Milford Haven which included around 300 police, mainly in riot gear, who went to some extreme measures, including welding down manhole covers, replacing fencing around the port and putting in roadblocks around the area! As well as this, local green groups and some individuals in the area were paid visits by police, both uniformed and in vain attempts to disguise themselves as protesters, in order to find out more information on the plans for the action.

A whole hospital ward was also cleared and put on standby for the day and Mr. Heslop, the Port's main man, had police escorts to and from work as well as nice new fencing all around his home with fifty security men surrounding it!

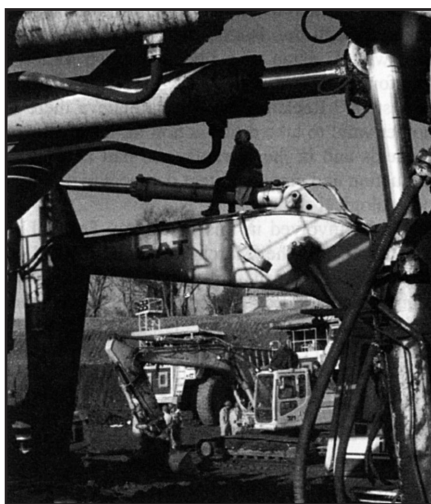
Facing all this, and realising that not much more disruption could be caused, it was agreed that a tactical change of plan was necessary if any action was to happen. An emergency meeting was called where it was decided that people would stick to the issue of fossil fuels, and the Reclaim the Valleys III action, originally planned for the Monday, would simply be moved forward to outwit the police. Despite the geographical and technical differences, both industries are engaged in destroying the ecology of South Wales in pursuit of profit with no regard for the consequences to the local people or environment.

It was also decided that the larger group would not be told of the change of plans until the following morning and then given the option as to whether they still wanted to be part of the changed plan, as by then it would be too late for the obviously dodgy geezers (that had appeared in the newly squatted home, from nowhere) to alert the police. This is obviously not an ideal way to carry out an action but faced with a number of problems, this seemed in the circumstances to be the best way to rescue an effective action from the original plan.

As it turned out the opencast mine at Brynhenllys was successfully closed down for the day as workers were caught completely unawares and every working machine was occupied.

It was at least half an hour before a solitary policeman showed up and another half an hour before a few of his companions joined him, all others having been called to Milford Haven. Workers were mainly quiet, apart from the odd one or two that were itching to use physical force to eject people from machines, indeed anyone with a camera was particularly in danger with one guy away from the safety of the main group being attacked and having his camera smashed to pieces. Anyone who had been on the previous occupation of this site though, considered this to be nothing in

comparison to the violence against protesters then. Apparently the workers are now under orders to stay calm and not to use violence. It is a shame that they did not all follow these instructions.



Work stops at Brynhenllys opencast mine.

The driver of one digger actually aimed it at people coming towards him and as one person climbed onto his cab he spun around in an attempt to knock him off. The guy banged on the window asking him to stop which caused the emergency window to pop out as it is supposed to. This was seen as criminal damage by the workers and they wanted blood. They settled for the arrest of this one guy and in hindsight a bad decision was made allowing him to go off with the police with what smelled of a deal, leaving people with a bad taste in their mouths. What should and could have happened is that he be surrounded by at least his affinity group and be rushed off sight.

Altogether there were six arrests for alleged criminal damage. Many outlandish stories had appeared in the local press over the weeks preceding the action, with complete untruths published about both Earth First! and the planned action at Milford Haven. One of those lies was that the whole action was being put together by people outside of Wales. This was simply not true as local people, both Earth First!ers and others, being centrally involved in the action planning.

In Tenby on the same Saturday, a local Earth First!er addressed the crowd at the Friends of The Earth Rally and put the story straight about Earth First! and their support for local concern around the Sea Empress disaster. Since the events on the February 14th there have been two more oil spills off the Welsh coast. We'll be back! Smash the Oil Industry!

GORLEBEN!

The first week of March saw the biggest ever mobilisation of police in peacetime Germany to force through a shipment of nuclear waste containers to the storage depot at Gorleben, near Hamburg.

Over 30,000 Police were mobilised for the operation which began when 6 storage flasks (Castors) were moved from their base at Neckar Westheim in Southern Germany the previous Friday. Protests happened during the weekend, with 30,000 people marching in Luneburg, and transport links being sabotaged. The transports were moved by train as far as Dannenburg, where they were confronted by nearly 3000 people the night they arrived. Tracks were cut through, and people cemented themselves to the rails, delaying the arrival by over 8 hours.

For the last 15 kilometres to Gorleben by road, the Castors were loaded onto specially reinforced lorries. They were confronted by massive resistance. There were only 2 possible routes, and one of these was made impassable by 50 tractors belonging to local farmers blocking the road, with tunnels dug under the road as well. The other route was lined with Police virtually the whole way, and a new law was passed, making it illegal to go within 50 metres of the road.

At midnight on Monday the Police began moving over 4000 people who were sitting in front of the gates by the Castors, initially picking them up, then hosing them with water cannon, and finally drawing truncheons on them. Some people dangled from trees above the Castors. It took over 8 hours to remove them all. When the Castors were finally ready to move, thousands of people who had been staying in different camps near the route were mobilised, employing various tactics. They were confronted by 1000 Autonome (German anarchist types) in a field outside the village of Quickborn, who erected burning barricades. A full-scale battle ensued, with the German state employing helicopters, water cannon, and armoured cars to force the transports through.

Later, a group of 50 protesters managed to get to the Castors, with one man locking on to the trucks. At one point riot Police who had tried to slash the tyres of tractors blocking the road, were chased away by a crowd of over 100 people, and then had to be rescued by helicopter! Because the route was so heavily policed, the Castors were hardly delayed once they had begun, but the got through at an estimated cost of £53m, and with accusations by opposition MPs of gross mismanagement. It is unlikely that there will be any more transports for 2 years, and with over 60% of Germans opposed to nuclear power, and thousands prepared to take direct action, it is questionable that the authorities will ever be able to repeat such an operation.

This issue of the Earth First! Action Update is the last that will be produced here in London. It has now moved to Manchester and will be produced there for the next year. The new contact is:

Earth First! Action Update, Dept 29, 1 Newton Street, Manchester, M1 1HW. Telephone: 0161 224 4846. E-mail: actionupdate@gn.apc.org

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NEWS IN BRIEF

The eviction of the Goutte d'Eau at the Aspe valley, France has been postponed and so the planned Easter tour will not go ahead. However people are still very welcome to go there, especially if they know something about lorry mechanics. If you want more information contact: Aspe Valley Campaign, c/o Alternatives, P.O. Box 7, Llangefni, Ynys Mon, LL77 7ZJ. Telephone: 01248 713 604.

'Does It Matter?' is a double sided A4 newsletter from the Somerset Activists Network. Issue one, covering February and March, is now available. Send SAE to: Does It Matter? c/o PO Box 426, Bath, BA1 2ZD. To subscribe send a second class stamp for every issue you want to receive to the above address.

In April and May, Trackways are running introductory weekends in primitive living skills. Covering subjects such as edible and medicinal plant identification and use, tracking and fire making it seems a worthwhile weekend to help prepare for the forthcoming collapse of civilisation. For more details send an SAE to: Trackways, 83 Lower Cheltenham Place, Montpellier, Bristol BS6 5LA or telephone: 0117 9555312.

Steven Anderton, who has been living at the Bingley Bypass camp in Yorkshire, has suffered serious burns after a fire in a treehouse. He is expected to be in hospital for at least two more weeks so send cards, letters and nice things to: Steven Anderton, Regional Burns Unit, Pinderfields Hospital Trust, Aberford Road, Wakefield, WF1.

The 6,000 U'wa Indians in Colombia, who had threatened to commit mass suicide in protest at plans to explore their ancestral lands for oil, have won a court case against the US oil giant Occidental. The constitutional court, Colombia's highest judicial authority, upheld the U'wa claim that their cultural integrity was at stake and ruled that Occidental should shelve plans to survey what a company spokesman called "potentially some of the largest reserves in Colombia."

At around 10am on February 26th several people stopped a convoy carrying nuclear warheads at Abermarle, near Hadrian's Wall in Scotland. The convoy was stopped for two hours, the longest managed yet, and nine people were arrested. For more details of this and forthcoming anti-nuclear actions contact CND on: 0171 700 2393.

Following the success of the last one another Northern Earth First! Gathering is being planned for April or May. If anybody would like to get involved in organising it or can offer a site to hold it on, catering equipment or a marquee contact Manchester Earth First! on: 0161 224 4846.

'The Law' is a radical law journal. Subtitled 'Progressive but Interesting' (!?) it covers all types of legal issues including framed defendants, racial cases and direct action. For a year subscription send a cheque or postal order for £4 made payable to 'The Law' to: The Law Subscriptions, PO Box 3878, London SW12 9ZE.

NEVER MIND THE BALLOTS...

London Reclaim the Streets are at it again! A massive 'Two Day Festival of Resistance!' is planned for the weekend of Saturday 12th and Sunday 13th April to coincide with the 'March For Social Justice' that has been called to highlight the need for social change. While Reclaim The Streets share this aim they do not believe that such a change will be brought about by the mediation of professional politicians, but by individual and collective participation in social affairs. In short - by direct action. Reclaim The Streets are urging people to attend the march with the expectation that an 'RTS style' event will coincidentally occur! According to Reclaim The Streets the festivities will continue into the next day with as yet to be announced events!

As an RTS activist said, "With the increasingly meaningless ritual of the general election drawing near, and with the main political parties committed to 'more of the same' or at best 'tinkering with the details,' what can be done by those with a vision of a liberated green society? Vote for the 'lesser evil'?? Work for change 'inside the system'?? Reclaim The Streets believe there is another way: to take direct action in the streets, in the fields and in the workplace to halt ecological destruction and create a direct democracy in a free and ecological society."

To be involved in this 'Two Day Festival of Resistance!' join the 'March For Social Justice' on Saturday 12th April. It meets at 12 noon at Kennington Park, London. For more details contact London Reclaim The Streets, PO Box 9656, London, N4 4JY. Telephone: 0171 281 4621.

ANIMAL LIBERATION ACTIONS

On Sunday 9th February the animal liberationist Barry Horne ended his hunger strike that was begun on Monday 6th January. His hunger strike was the spark that provoked an unprecedented wave of attacks on targets connected to animal abuse. Over the last months dozens of animals have been liberated in daylight raids involving hundreds of people and thousands of pounds of damage have been done to property connected to animal abuse.

On Saturday 25th January a site that breeds beagles for vivisection was raided and eight beagles were freed. This was a national day of action and hundreds of people turned up. Due to the isolated site some people, despite a police presence, were able to enter the site and free the dogs. This is only one of the animal liberation related actions that has happened over the last few months.

For details of more subscribe to the Animal Liberation Front Supporters Group magazine at: BCM 1160, London, WC1N 3XX or Arkangel, BCM 9240, London WC1N 3XX. Remember Barry, as well as many more, who are still in prison for animal liberation activities. Obtain a list of them from the Animal Liberation Front Supporters Group magazine and then write to them.

NO OPENCAS

At 5am on 9th March 'No Opencast' campaigners from throughout the country descended on Wiseton in Nottinghamshire, home of Richard Budge, Chief Executive of RJB Mining, the company responsible for destroying vast amounts of the environment in the UK.

Environmentalists, community activists, miners and women from mining communities have stepped up their campaign against those directly

responsible for the destruction of our deep mine coal industry, the disgraceful expansion of strip mining, and the consequent devastation of the countryside.

The forty or so people were met with scores of police manning road blocks on all roads into Budge's house. Police dogs were also deployed and five arrests were made for walking along the public highway, although all were later released without charge. The police's 'Operation Babysit' ended with two police vehicles escorting each vehicle out of the county. Complaints are to be made to Nottinghamshire County Council as well as Joe Ashton, MP for the area, about police harassment as well as the massive waste of resources used to stop a peaceful protest.

Meanwhile the campaigners were overjoyed to hear that they have won the right to insist upon a ruling by John Gummer, Secretary of State for the Environment, on the planning application for a mine on the Deputy Prime Minister's land. A spokesperson for the campaign said, "We will be back at Heseltine's before the election to remind him we have not forgotten of forgiven his vicious attacks on our mining communities." For more information about the No Opencast campaign call: 0171 603 1831 or 0181 672 9698.

A55 EUROROUTE

The 18th March will be the first day of the public enquiry for the second stretch of the A55 Euroroute across Anglesey. The plan is to build a dual carriageway across the marshes, about 500 yards from the existing A5 dual carriageway. It will go through a woodland and a new embankment will be built across the water between Anglesey and Holyhead, yet another SSSI. The Welsh Office has admitted that the road will have a detrimental effect on the Welsh language, as well as local shops and hotels losing trade.

A few Earth First!ers will actually be giving evidence at the public enquiry while others outside will be having the best party ever! To make sure this happens they need you to go along to Anglesey on the 17th to join in the final planning. The Welsh Office cannot afford to build this road so it will go out to the DFBO finance system and it is possible that if 'they' see how many people are willing to stand in the way it will seriously put off any potential investors. For more information, including accommodation for people coming for the inquiry, contact Gwynedd & Mon EF!: 01248 713 604.

F.A.N. UK

On Monday 24th February twenty activists from Forest Action Network (UK) occupied the London offices of Mahogany importer Meyer International plc.. They demanded that Meyer place a moratorium on purchasing Brazilian mahogany until they physically track each log from its source to the UK and thus prove that the timber is both legally obtained and environmentally sustainable. Outside the offices climbers scaled the building to hang a banner saying: 'If you don't think mahogany will be extinct', while others chained closed the front doors of the office. Employees were offered sticky buns and informed of their company's likely involvement in the trading of mahogany which has been felled illegally.

There is overwhelming evidence that a considerable proportion, perhaps even the bulk, of Brazilian mahogany has been illegally felled from Indian reserves or protected areas. Activists agreed to talk to Amanda Burton, the Company Secretary, and asked for a ban on mahogany imports until the imports could be proven to be legal and sustainable. Ms Burton said she had not seen the Channel 4 Dispatches television documentary

How to Contact the Earth First! Action Update

Post: Earth First! Action Update, Dept 29, 1 Newton Street, Manchester M1 1HW. Telephone: 0161 224 4846. E-mail: actionupdate@gn.apc.org.

Enclose a SAE for replies. Send us your details if you want to subscribe to the free e-mail server.

Earth First! Website address: <http://www.hrc.wmin.ac.uk/campaigns/EF/earthfirst.html>

programme 'The Mahogany Trail' which shows one of Meyer's suppliers, Nordisk, trading in stolen mahogany. She agreed to see the video and also agreed to consider Forest Action Network's position that the listing of mahogany in Appendix II of CITES would not in itself be sufficient to stop illegal trading. Forest Action Network campaigners are committed to a campaign of direct action until they are convinced that mahogany is no longer in danger of becoming extinct.

If you want a Mahogany Information and Action pack or would like to be kept informed of forthcoming actions contact: Forest Action Network (UK) c/o Alternatives, P.O. Box 7, Llangefni, Ynys Mon, LL77 7ZJ. Telephone and fax: 01248 713 604. E-mail: afu01b@bangor.ac.uk

NO M66 ACTION

About 30 people met at Daisy Nook visitors centre on the morning of 21st Feb - the first anniversary of the eviction of the small tree village at Daisy Nook. They walked to the site of the original camp and then down to the small camp set up the night before in preparation for the action. The whole valley is now destroyed - all that exists there now is a desolate swamp. No work was going on there as the authorities closed down most of the work sites for the day because of the publicised action. So the 30 walked towards Ashton Moss, two or three miles down the route. People stopped along the way to delay work being done by diggers and trucks before meeting up again at Ashton Moss to stop what little work AMEC was attempting to do there as well. There were no arrests and very little trouble.

The No M66 campaign continues and they have a new contact telephone number. Contact them on: 0161 368 3810.

STRINGERS COMMON

There are now 4 camps on the site of the A320 road scheme at Stringers Common. Hairy Mog, Camp Cannibalistic, Yoghurt Free State are in the process of moving everything up into the trees to try to prevent any nasty eviction surprises. As of yet no eviction papers have been served, though a tip off was received that eviction equipment had been booked for the end of March - before the nesting season arrives.

The newer camps are especially in need of more people, so do go along if you can. Also desperately needed are CBs, mobile phones, office equipment, 10-12 mm polyprop, tarpaulins and a tat van. Unfortunately there are no suitable places for live-in vehicles or caravans so please do not bring them.

The council have got a very limited budget for this road scheme and it really looks as though the cost of evictions could mean that they it does not get built. For more information call: 01483 32167.

AMSTERDAM STREET PARTY

Street Parties have gone international! On 8th February Amsterdam held their first 'Reclaim The Streets style' street party. Around fifty people came over from the UK (wish it was as easy to get people for actions in Britain) and thanks to friendly Amsterdam squatters they all had free accommodation for the weekend.

While people gathered at two train stations, 'Plan A' was busted by the police as vans containing tripods, sound systems, banners and lock-ons were confiscated by the police. This meant that the favoured location for the party - on the motorway outside the Amsterdam Motor Show, was no longer possible. Plan B then came into effect, and a road into Amsterdam was blocked by a smaller sound system and around 400 party

goers, mainly from the city but also a large number from all over Europe.

For a couple of hours there was minimal police presence. Apparently police had thought that it was all over when the vans had been confiscated and so were caught off guard.

As a fire was lit in the middle of the street they decided to move in and the party turned into a march into the city centre. Intersections full of cars were blocked while trams received special treatment as the crowds opened up and let them through with lots of applause. The march ended as lines of riot police got batons out and attacked anyone attempting to go down the final stretch of road into the centre. So instead people turned into a market square and had a huge bonfire, with free food, music and dancing before heading off late in the evening to squat parties elsewhere.

LYMINGE FOREST

The Rank organisation still plan to construct an 'upmarket holiday village' affecting over 1000 acres of land in the Lyminge Forest in Kent. It will include over 850 buildings, golf course, shopping centre and sports club. Although they have not announced the date that work will start it looks likely that it is to be sometime this summer. This is a big site to defend and camps need establishing now if people are to effectively resist construction. Rank have already hinted that they will pull out of the project if a concerted campaign is launched against them. It is likely that a camp will have been established by the time that you read this article. For more details contact: 01227 261057.

NO PATENTS ON LIFE

To coincide with International Women's Day, March 7th saw a visit paid to the offices of Abel and Imray, solicitors acting for Biocyte, the US Biotechnology company which holds the patent for human umbilical cord blood cells. The patent gives Biocyte complete control over the extraction and the use of cells and subsequent therapies developed.

The group occupied their offices and hung a banner out the window reading 'No Patents on Life!', meanwhile out on the street there was a very pregnant lady present with a bar code on her stomach; this symbol of commodification highlighting the point of the action. Passers-by were at first bemused by the whole scene, though eager to accept leaflets telling them more. A spokesperson from the group said; "Biocyte want to own parts of people and these lawyers have a hand in smoothing the path for this to happen. As well as this they are abusing the patent laws. Patents are meant to be granted on inventions, not discoveries, and umbilical cord blood cells are certainly not inventions!"

This action was part of an international campaign to raise awareness and direct concerned members of the public to call on their MEPs to ensure that the forthcoming European Patent Directive will not permit the Patenting of Life. For more information contact No Patents On Life! at the Women's Environmental Network on: 0171 247 3327.

GENETICS

While government bods met for a conference, in Lancaster House, near to St James' Park, London, to bash out the Government's position on Biotechnology, they were met by Super Heroes Against Genetics (SHAG). Captain Chromosome and his cronies asked; 'Who will really benefit from biotechnology?' and demanded that the British Government institute an immediate moratorium on the growing and trading of genetically engineered food crops and commodities. When asked, members of the biotechnology industry are hard pressed to list the benefits of GEO release. That is because the

EVENTS

MARCH

- 14-17 Faslane Peace Camp Women's Actions. Bring tents, sleeping bags, boltcutters etc.. Contact: 01706 812663.
- 17-22 ASEED European General Meeting in Oslo, Norway. Contact ASEED on: +31 20 66 822 36 email: aseedeur@antenna.nl
- 17-18 A55 public enquiry action. Camp details available from 15th March on: 01248 713 604. General information from Gwynedd and Mon Earth First! on: 01248 713 604. E-Mail: afu01b@bangor.ac.uk
- 21-25 Sea Action Groups Training Day with workshops on waterborne direct action, inflatable boat driving, safety and general tactics. At Gareloch, near Faslane Peace Camp, Scotland. Followed by an action. For more details contact: 01436 820901.

APRIL

- 1-7 International Earth Nights - Bite Back Against The Fur Industry.
- 4-6 Gathering Visions, Gathering Strength. A weekend of meetings, workshops and speakers on the history of non-violent action and a time to explore new directions for action in the future. For more details contact: 0113 262 9365.
- 5 'The Social Ecology of Murray Bookchin: an assessment.' Anarchist Research Group meeting. 2.30pm at International Relations Room, Institute of Historical Research, Senate House, Malet Street, London WC1.
- 6 'Technology/anti-technology' debate. Starts 3pm at the 121 Centre, 121 Raiton Road, Brixton, London.
- 11-13 The Land is Ours Strategy Convergence, near Oxford. For more details contact: 01865 726126.
- 12-13 Never Mind The Ballots... Reclaim The Streets! A Two Day Festival of Resistance! Starts on Saturday 12th April. Meet 12 noon at Kennington Park, London. For more details contact London Reclaim The Streets on: 0171 281 4621.
- 19 Mass Action against Consort Beagle breeders in Ross-on-Wye. Meet at the main gate at 12 noon. Consort is situated just off the A49 (Ross to Hereford Road) at Harewood Park, Harewood End, Near to Ross-on-Wye, Herefordshire. Contact: 0171 278 3068.
- 19-20 The Big Gene Gathering. Genetic Engineering information for Anti-Genetic Engineering actions. For more details contact: 01865 791391.
- 21-26 Global Days of Action against Genetically Engineered Foods and Crops. For details contact the Genetic Engineering Network (GEN) on: 0171 923 9511.
- 26 World Day for Laboratory Animals. Actions and Demonstrations planned. For more details contact: 0171 278 3068.

MAY

- 3 National Anarchist Bookfair, Bradford. Part of a week of events to reclaim May Day from decades of left-wing and trade union dogma. For more details contact: 1 in 12 Library, c/o 1 in 12 Club, Albion Street, Bradford BD1.
- 3 Sheffield Reclaim The Streets! For more information contact Sheffield Earth First! on: 01142 671200.
- 14 Shell AGM. A major action is to be planned. For more details and to get involved in organising it contact DELTA on: 0116 255 3223.
- 14-19 European Hope and Resistance Gathering, near Kiel in Germany. Network of non-violent resisters involved in civil disobedience and ploughshares action welcome ecological activists to come and meet with them. For more details contact 01865 714036.
- 16 Shut down Shoreham! a day of direct action to close Shoreham port down. Meet 10am at the main gate.

JULY

- 8-15 National Earth First! Gathering. Location and details to be announced nearer the time. For more information send an SAE to: Earth First! Gathering, c/o 16 Sholesbroke Avenue, Chapelton, Leeds LS7 3HB or telephone: 0113 262 9365.

LEGAL DISCLAIMER: The editors of the Earth First! Action Update do not intend to encourage people to carry out any illegal action. The Action Update is for information purposes only.

'benefits' are only seen on the balance sheets of transnational corporations.

Due to silly Royal Park bye-laws police went over the top yet again, threatening anyone holding banners or handing out leaflets with arrest, even though some delegates were specifically asking for them.

The Big Gene gathering will be a gathering dealing specifically with genetics issues on 19-20 April. Go along if you are working on the Genetics campaigns and/or actions or would like to. It will be followed by Global Days of Action, an international week of actions against genetically engineered food and crops.

For more details contact: 01865 791391 or Womens Environmental Network on 0171 247 3327. To get on an E-mail list for Genetics information send requests to: rts@gn.apc.org

PURE GENIUS

The Wandsworth Eco-village site that was evicted and obliterated in October last year is about to be re-occupied. It had been home to many in the six months since The Land is Ours had handed it over after an initial week long occupation the previous May.

On May 5th 1997 you can start the regeneration of the site. Join PURE GENESIS in re-seeding the land at a mass rally at South Park, Fulham, SW6 at 12 noon. Bring along pioneering species seeds and seedlings, eg. poplar, birch, oak, wild roses, sunflowers, vetches and poppies. Pure Genius are also calling for an international boycott of all Guinness and United Distiller's products as part of a wider campaign. Details of actions and anti-Guinness propaganda, can be found on the TLIO website at: <http://www.oneworld.org/tlio/index.html>. Call 0171 249 3765 or email stevej@dircon.co.uk. Beermat size stickers with the words 'Guinness Kills Trees' and 'Brewers of Destruction' in original Guinness style format are also available.

Please send a cheque or postal order payable to The Land is Ours for £11 per 250 (incl p&p) to: Box E, 111 Magdalen Road, Oxford, OX4 1RQ.

BOUGAINVILLE NEWS

Bougainville is an island that lies 7km west of the Solomon islands. Originally colonised by the Dutch, then the Germans, it came under Australian rule after World War 2. Despite close cultural and geographical links to the Solomon islands it was governed as part of Papua New Guinea (PNG) and when PNG was given independence in 1975 Bougainville was included as part of PNG territory.

In 1969 CRA, an Australian subsidiary of British mining company Rio Tinto Zinc (RTZ), forcibly established a copper mine on Bougainville. From the outset the people of

Bougainville resisted this mine. Finally in 1988, after years of failed protest, people on the island closed down one the largest opencast copper mines in the world. Following the closing of the mine the Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA) was established to defend the land and environment from further damage. This expanded into a struggle for independence from Papua New Guinea (PNG) and for 8 years the BRA, despite being heavily outgunned and out numbered, have been winning and pushing PNG military forces off the island.

PNG's solution came to light in February when news that mercenaries from various countries, predominately South Africa, had been sent into Bougainville to assist the PNG military. The British company Sandline International, based in the Kings Road, London, is one of the companies also involved in sending the mercenaries out there. These mercenaries are highly experienced and probably some of the best soldiers in the world. If they go ahead and engage the BRA it is most likely that they will win.

To highlight the situation a demonstration was held outside the Papua New Guinea High Commission in London, (which coincided with one in Australia) on Wednesday 5th March. A number of people climbed the statue opposite and as well as hanging a banner saying 'MURDERERS' and 'BRITISH HITMEN OUT OF BOUGAINVILLE', one activist dangled himself from the scaffold around the statue with a chest harness, so resembling somebody who had been hung by the neck. This attracted considerable attention from passers by and most were shocked when informed as to what is going on out in Bougainville.

For more information about Bougainville contact: Bougainville Freedom Movement (UK), c/o SDEF! To receive the latest news on the situation in Bougainville, subscribe to the newsletter Garamat. A year long subscription costs AU\$20. Make cheques payable to the Bougainville Freedom Movement, PO Box 134, Erskineville, 2043 Australia. They also have a web page at: <http://www.magna.com.au/~sashab/> and E-mail contact at: sasha@magna.com.au Oh Yeah... Victory to the BRA!

RUNWAY 2

A little bit more of the paradise that is commonly known as countryside in our supposedly pleasant land is due for the chop and digger. The planned second runway at Manchester will destroy over 1000 acres of greenbelt land which will destroy 43 ponds, 15km of hedgerows and 7 hectares of mature woodland. As well as this the River Bollin, a Site of Biological Importance (SBI) will be culverted and forced to flow through a concrete tunnel.

Visitors have been impressed with the growth of the campaign and the camps, of which there are

now five. On the site there are tree houses constantly appearing and tunnelling and defence building is continuing day and night. Only a small percentage of the threatened land has actually been covered by camps so far so there is a need for people to come up and set up new ones. Papers have been served on the camps with a court date set for 27th March. So evictions are not likely until April at the earliest, with a judicial review due to start soon. There is loads that needs both on the ground, in the trees and in the office. The usual list of tarps, ropes, polyprop and tat is needed.

There is going to be a Runway Walk and Rally sometime in April so if you haven't visited this beautiful site by then that is an ideal opportunity to join the people of Manchester in saying NO! to Runway 2.

For more information contact Coalition against Runway 2 on: 0161 834 8221. They also have a web site at: <http://www.geocities.com/RainForest/6096>

JUDI BARI DIES

On 2nd March Judi Bari, a prominent Earth First! organiser in the US, died peacefully of cancer. She came to widespread attention in the summer of 1990 when the car that her and another EF!er, Daryl Cherney, were in was blown up by a bomb which left her crippled. They had been in the middle of organising Redwood Summer, a mass of actions surrounding the issue of logging of the old growth Redwoods in the Headwaters Forest, Northern California.

Initially the pair were accused of carrying the bomb to a target and accidentally blowing themselves up although in reality a lawsuit against the FBI, accusing it of attempting to frame her as a terrorist in order to discredit her and the radical ecology movement in the public's mind, is still going through the courts. The suit went forward, Cherney vowed. When he spoke with Bari recently, she told him, "Take Richard Held to trial. Take this case to trial. Don't let them off the hook." And as Daryl said: "That's what we're going to do".

Richard Held was the FBI Special Agent in charge of the San Francisco office at the time of the bombing. He was central in the FBI infamous Counter Intelligence Programme (COINTELPRO) that was central in trying to discredit and destroy the American Indian Movement (AIM) and Black Panthers. He resigned from the FBI shortly after Judi, through the lawsuit, forced the disclosure of police photos of Judi's bombed car clearly showing that the bomb had been hidden directly under her driver's seat, rather than on the back seat floorboard, as police and the FBI had claimed to the press.

For more details contact: Earth First! Journal, POB 1415, Eugene, Oregon, USA. Telephone: 00 1541 741 9191 or E-mail: earthfirst@ign.apc.org.

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‘Four Arguments for the Elimination of Television’

by Jerry Mander.

(Taken from the book: 'Questioning Technology: tool, toy or tyrant?' edited by John Zerzan and Alice Carnes. Published by New Society Publishers, Philadelphia in co-operation with Freedom Press, London 1991.)

Most Americans, whether on the political left, center or right, will argue that technology is neutral, that any technology is merely a benign instrument, a tool, and depending upon the hands into which it falls, it may be used one way or another. There is nothing that prevents a technology from being used well or badly; nothing intrinsic in the technology itself or the circumstances of its emergence which can predetermine its use, its control or its effects upon individual human lives or the social and political forms around us.

The argument goes that television is merely a window or a conduit through which any perception, any argument or reality may pass. It therefore has the potential to be enlightening to people who watch it and is potentially useful to democratic processes. It will be the central point of this book that these assumptions about television, as about other technologies, are totally wrong.

If you once accept the principle of an army - a collection of military technologies and people to run them - all gathered together for the purpose of fighting, overpowering, killing and winning, then it is obvious that the supervisors of armies will be the sort of people who desire to fight, overpower, kill and win, and who are also good at these assignments: generals. The fact of generals, then, is predictable by the creation of armies. The kinds of generals are also predetermined. Humanistic, loving, pacifistic generals, though they may exist from time to time, are extremely rare in armies. It is useless to advocate that we have more of them.

If you accept the existence of automobiles, you also accept the existence of roads laid upon the landscape, oil to run the cars, and huge institutions to find the oil, pump it and distribute it. In addition you accept a sped-up style of life and the movement of humans through the terrain at speeds that make it impossible to pay attention to whatever is growing there. Humans who use cars sit in fixed positions for long hours following a narrow strip of gray pavement, with eyes fixed forward, engaged in the task of driving. As long as they are driving, they are living within what we might call "roadform". Slowly they evolve into car-people. McLuhan told us that cars "extended the human feet, but he put it the wrong way. Cars replaced human feet.

If you accept nuclear power plants, you also accept a techno-scientific-industrial-military elite. Without these people in charge, you could not have nuclear power. You and I getting together with a few friends could not make use of nuclear power. We could not build such a plant, nor could we make personal use of its output, nor handle or store the radioactive waste products which remain dangerous to life for thousands of years. The wastes, in turn, determine that future societies will have to maintain a technological capacity to deal with the problem, and the military capability to protect the wastes. So the existence of the technology determines many aspects of the society.

If you accept mass production, you accept that a small number of people will supervise the daily existence of a much larger number of people. You accept that human beings will spend long hours, every day, engaged in repetitive work, while suppressing any desires for experience or activity beyond this work. The workers' behaviour becomes subject to the machine. With mass production, you also accept that huge numbers of identical items will need to be efficiently distributed to huge numbers of people and that institutions such as advertising will arise to do this. One technological process cannot exist without the other, creating symbolic relationships among technologies themselves.

If you accept the existence of advertising, you accept a system designed to persuade and to dominate minds by interfering in people's thinking patterns. You also accept that the system will be used by the sorts of people who like to influence people and are good at it. No person who did not wish to dominate others would choose to use advertising, or choosing it, succeed in it. So the basic nature of advertising and all technologies created to serve it will be consistent with this purpose, will encourage this behaviour in society, and will tend to push social evolution in this direction.

In all of these instances, the basic form of the institution and the technology determines its interaction with the world, the way it will be used, the kind of people who use it, and to what ends. And so it is with television. Far from being "neutral," television itself predetermines who shall use it, how they will use it, what effects it will have on individual lives, and, if it continues to be widely used, what sorts of political forms will inevitably emerge.

It was only after a long while and many half-steps of change in viewpoint that I finally faced the fact that television is not reformable, that it must be gotten rid of totally if our society is to return to something like sane and democratic functioning. So, to argue that case, especially considering that it involves a technology accepted as readily and utterly as electric light itself, is not something that ought to be done rapidly or lightly. Nor can such a case be confined to the technology itself, as if it existed aside from a context.

The first argument is theoretical and environmental. It attempts to set the framework by which we can understand television's place in modern society. Yet, this argument is not about television itself. In fact, television will be mentioned only occasionally. It is about a process, already long underway, which has successfully redirected and confined human experience and therefore knowledge and perceived reality. We have all been moved into such a narrow and deprived channel of experience that a dangerous instrument like television can come along and seem useful, interesting, sane, and worthwhile at the same time it further boxes people into a physical and mental condition appropriate for the emergence of autocratic control.

The second argument concerns the emergence of the controllers. That television would be used and expanded by the present powers-that-be was inevitable, and should have been predictable at the outset. The technology permits of no other controllers.

The third argument concerns the effects of television upon individual human bodies and minds, effects which fit the purposes of the people who control the medium.

The fourth argument demonstrates that television has no democratic potential. The technology itself places absolute limits on what may pass through it. The medium, in effect, chooses its own content from a very narrow field of possibilities. The effect is to drastically confine all human understanding within a rigid channel. What binds the four arguments together is that they deal with aspects of television that are not reformable.

What is revealed in the end is that there is ideology in the technology itself. To speak of television as "neutral" and therefore subject to change is as absurd as speaking of the reform of a technology such as guns.

This text is one of many that is being produced by Dead Trees Earth First! They are available as cheap self produced pamphlets as well as on the internet. For more details send an SAE to: Dead Trees Earth First! c/o SDEF! Prior House, Tilbury Place, Brighton, East Sussex, BN2 2GY.

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WHAT IS EARTH FIRST!?

Earth First! is not a cohesive group or a campaign but a convenient banner for people who share similar philosophies to work under. The general principles behind the name are non-hierarchical organisation and the use of direct action to confront, stop, and eventually reverse the forces that are responsible for the destruction of the Earth and it's inhabitants. The above contacts are autonomous groups that consider themselves to share these principles. International contacts are entry points into that country's own network of groups. Other contacts are ones whose aims and principles are ones that we agree with fully or in part, or groups that we think may be of use or interest to people. New additions or alterations are shown in bold.