

CATS, COPS AND CHAOS

On Saturday February 20th 2000 people gathered at Hillgrove farm in one of the largest demos in the long running campaign against the only remaining breeder of cats for vivisection in the UK.

At the start of the day the police imposed an assembly point at the bottom of the lane, half a mile from the farm.

One group of activists made it round the back onto the property, Unprepared for the huge numbers the police could not stop the rest of the crowd moving up to the farm perimeter. But after about an hour police horses were brought in to try and force the crowd back down the lane.

Mounted police then proceeded to trample the crowd. One woman is still in hospital, with hoof marks covering her body and a fractured leg.

Next national demo April 18th

Save the Hillgrove Cats: 0121 632 6460

RESIST RAILTRACK!

On Thursday, February 25th, Railtrack’s storage dump in Oxford was occupied for two hours by around 40 people. The storage dump, dubbed ‘the quarry’ because of its similarity in terms of noise and dust pollution, has been the subject of local dislike for many months and people are now turning to direct action to address the problem.

The protesters are all local people and most have had no previous experience of direct action. Their intention was to stop the stone being removed

from the dump, but as no removal work was happening that day they left after 2 hours having ‘generally disrupted its working’. There was a police presence but no arrests. Further attempts to stop work look likely in the future..

Contact: Oxford Community Action

EF! Action Update needs your action reports (~200 words), articles, **photos** and feedback.

Contact us at: EF!AU, Cornerstone Resource Centre, 16 Sholebroke Avenue, Chapeltown Leeds, LS7 3HB 0113 262 9365

<actionupdate@gn.apc.org>

www.eco-action.org/efau

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THIS IS CITIZEN SMITH:

“We are a small group based in Northwest London whose focus is a Sunday free café and infoshop for everybody and anybody. We hope to raise awareness of environmental / social issues in the local area and also to provide space for meetings, workshops, small gigs and creativity.

Having left the magistrates court we were squatting until this month, we’re now in an old community centre, unfortunately due to be demolished shortly! But we’ll move on (there are loads of empties round here!) and probably go mobile for the summer.WAHEY!!

It would be great to see more squatting around here and more action in general (perhaps we will see a steady migration from the Southern end of London given all the recent events).So there it is. We’re here. Hello!”

http://www.members.tripod.com/citizensmith/hello.html

citizensmithuk@hotmail.com 07931-980-534

SWINDON EVICTION

The site set up outside Swindon to resist a greenfield housing development by Beaufort Homes was evicted on the 27th of January. Thirty police were involved in the operation to remove 4 people from the site, with one man being arrested for Aggravated Trespass. The trees have now been fenced off and the ground around them churned up, presumably to dissuade potential future occupiers.

Work has now started on the site and legal action by the local council, which could have delayed work, has been dropped. The council believe that they own part of the land to be built on but have given up their claim of ownership in the face of superior corporate financial clout. After the eviction 80 local people took part in a protest walk around the site.

CARGILL DEBACLE

On the 19th of February a group of 35 activists occupied part of a massive seed oil processing plant in central Hull for 4 hours, owned by Cargill, a multinational, which despite being family owned, is involved in 60% of the world grain trade. It is also heavily connected to the biotech industry due to undertake joint operations with Monsanto. It deserves to be better known, seeing its name dragged through the mud with Monsanto, Novartis etc. till they all grind to a halt.

After a bleary briefing people arrived unhindered on

the site at 9am and split into four groups, occupying a silo and a tower, blockading a lorry in the grain loading bay (meaning no other lorries could load up that day) and staging a protest outside the gate. Mysterious plain clothes police ‘negotiators’ turned up to mediate between the different groups of protestors and Cargills – they seemed friendly enough, no arrests were made and the protestors left at 1pm as planned.

Contact: Hull on Earth. See contacts list.

GENETICS PROTESTS

MANCHESTER: On 4th February 3 Manchester genetics campaigners removed Genetically Modified food from Marks & Spencers’ shelves. They wrote to the store in advance outlining their motivations for the action; and their plans, explaining that they felt that responsibility had fallen to them to get GMOs out of the public domain.

One of the campaigners managed to remove crisps and cheese containing GM soya and tortilla chips containing Bt maize and deliver these to the Environmental Health Department in the city council. After explaining that no, she hadn’t paid for them as that would be legitimising their right to exist, she explained that she wanted the products investigated and treated as a biohazard. The council employee dutifully bagged up the products and started filling in forms.

The other two protesters replaced some GM products with organic alternatives before being removed from the shop by security guards and so joined in the leafleting outside. There was a police presence but no arrests.

Marks & Spencers held a board meeting when they were told about the proposed action but unsurprisingly came up with only a ‘limited and token’ position statement.

LONDON: A similar action took place in London, at Sainsburys on Camden Road. Sainsburys were picked to highlight the connections between big business and government (David Sainsbury being a government minister) A ‘biohazard waste dump’ was created outside the store out of planks of wood and a big plastic bin. One person then entered the store, filled a trolley up with 96 labelled items of GM food, and walked straight out again. He joined others outside and emptied the food into the waste dump, where it remained until the police came along 40 minutes later and nicked two people for theft.

Lots of shoppers joined in as they passed by, highlighting the huge public concern about this issue at the moment. Contact: 0181 8090739

Legal Disclaimer

For what it’s worth the Earth First! Action Update is not intended to incite any illegal activity.

Earth First!
Action Update



Issue 56, March 1999

30p Where Sold. Free to Prisoners

“The most violent element in society is ignorance” Emma Goldman

BARRICADES IN BRIXTON

The 121 centre in Brixton has been squatted since 1981; over the years it has been used as an info-shop, cafe and venue, and provided space and resources for a wide range of anarchist groups, campaigns and publications.

Lambeth Council obtained a possession order for the building over 6 weeks ago. By dawn on February 8th - the first expected date of eviction - over 80 masked-up supporters were outside and prepared to resist the bailiffs. As the first police-car pulled up, barricades appeared in the street, to be followed by a sound system and huge puppets. By lunch time it had become clear that any plans to evict had been postponed. A smaller group set off to storm the town hall, where they soon found themselves in the office of Jim Dickson (the New Labour leader of the Council). Police broke in to reach the protesters, handcuffed and threw to the floor those nearest the door, and cleared everyone from the building before de-arresting them.

The eviction of 121 is part of a larger attempt by the council and property developers to gentrify Brixton, making it "safe" for the middle classes and tourists. Squats have been evicted, while rents and house prices have rocketed, pushing people out of the area. Local pubs have been replaced by yuppie bars. Drinking in the street has been banned. CCTV cameras push crime away from the 'town centre' and into

local estates and streets.. Many community spaces, advice centres and services are facing forced closure, including five libraries and at least eight schools. The kind of Brixton the council want is one where



The first failed attempt by police to evict the barricaded 121 Centre

people don't cause trouble as they are pushed out of their own communities in the name of "development".

The 121 is still barricaded and awaiting the bailiffs: a phone tree has been set up, and visitors are welcome. Links are being made with other campaigns against closures: on Friday 26th activists joined forces to protest the Queen’s visit to one of the borough’s “flagship” (grant-maintained) schools. A number of marches are planned to converge at the council meeting on Wednesday 3rd March, with more exciting collaborations due in the future. A weekly newssheet, the ‘South London Stress’, is being produced. Get in touch (SAEs for info): Box Stress, c/o 56a Info Shop, 56 Crampton St, London SE17. 121 Centre: Tel: 0171 274 6655 or 0171 978 8214.

E-mail: mark261@hotmail.com
http://i.am/121centre

BOAT BASHED
IN BARROW

In the early hours of February 1st, two activists from the Aldermaston Women’s Group, part of the Trident Ploughshares 2000 campaign, swam into Barrow Docks, where the navy’s fourth Trident submarine, Vengeance, is under construction. The women caused £25000 worth of damage to the sub, forcing a delay in its sailing date.

The women swam undetected for an hour and a half before reaching the sub. They spray painted the conning tower with various slogans such as “illegal” and “death machine,” before turning their attention to what Vickers are calling “testing equipment” attached to the conning tower. After smashing it, they hung a banner reading “Women want Peace.” It was only then that security guards cottoned on, but they still had time for a wander round inside the sub, chatting to a worker on the way. Unable to gain entrance to the main part of the sub, they came out again and nonchalantly walked off the sub, leading the open-mouthed ‘guards’ to the security portakabin.

Two hours after their arrest, three women from the support team were also arrested “on suspicion of conspiracy to commit criminal damage” while they were delivering dry clothes for the swimmers to the police station. All five women were later charged with the damage. Magistrates remanded one of the first two women for a week before releasing her on conditional bail. All of them were given extremely restrictive conditions including curfews, exclusion zones and signing on 3 times a week.

All five women are bailed to appear at Barrow courts on 2nd March. Offers of cash support are urgently needed.
www.gn.apc.org/tp2000/

The Action Update is a monthly roundup of ecological direct action news and forthcoming events in Britain.
Feature articles inside:
Local Networking Initiatives.
Conflict Resolution and EF! National Campaign (feedback from Winter Moot)

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Leeds LS7 3HB

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News In Brief

- ◆ Top tips on tunnelling. New web page - <http://www.sol.co.uk/d/diffusion/cornerstone/crc/tunnel.tunnel.htm> -If you haven't got internet access then send a SAE and 50p to cover costs to Leeds EF!
- ◆ Four of those arrested at Whatley Quarry in Dec 95 have sued the police for false arrest, false imprisonment and assault, winning out of court settlements of £1500-£2500 each. Others who want to do the same contact: Ed Boyce, St John Napier and Co solicitors, Bridgewater, Somerset. tel: 01278 429944 or Iftikar Manzoor, Irwin Mitchells Solicitors, St. Peters House, Hartshead, Sheffield. Tel: 0114 276 7777
- ◆ The small fascist group PCN (Parti Communautaire National-Européen), based in Belgium and France, has a cover association called Europe-Ecologie.They claim Europe-Ecologie to be part of the Earth First! network, and to be EF's official representative for Europe! You can check their website <http://www.planetepc.fr/pcn> Anti Fascist Vigilance!
- ◆ Crown Point Estates, where the anti-genetics crop squat took place last year, has announced that it will not allow GM crops to be grown on its land. Another farm in the North East has done the same - and both places have given fear of further crop sabotage as the reason why.
- ◆ Lambeth Council is planning to close its Centre for Integrated Living. In resistance to this it has been occupied by activists from the Disabled Action Network and members of the centre's staff. The occupation is on-going and a large demo is being held on Wednesday 3rd of March concerning not only this but other council closures too.
- ◆ The people in the Genetic Engineering Network Office in London are totally overworked, so if anyone has any time to go in and help, that would be most appreciated. 0181 3749516
- ◆ In the build up to the 18th June mass protest against G8, and the increasing stranglehold of global corporations, an assembly is being held in Glasgow to discuss ideas and action for effective opposition to the global economy for a declaration of autonomy. It's also a follow up to last year's Bradford Mayday conference. It's happening on Sat 3rd and Sun 4th April. Write for more details to Counter Information (Autonomy)/c/o 28 King Street, Glasgow, G1 5PQ or radfest@yahoo.com
- ◆ Brighton's Anarchist Teapot Collective haven't done a squat café for a while, and are becoming more of an action kitchen, ready to cater for all your culinary needs with cheap organic food wherever the need might arise. Contact them c/o South Downs EF!

FARMERS ON THE MOVE

The Inter-Continental Caravan (500 farmers mostly from the Karnataka State Farmers Association who recently burned Monsanto's cotton crops) is set to travel around Europe doing actions with local people in transnational, world governmental and financial centres in the lead up to June 18th.

The farmers state: 'there are plenty of organisations in the North claiming to speak on behalf of 'the poor of the South' which are actually more part of the problem than of the solution. We do not want Western money, technologies or 'experts' to impose their development model on us.'

About half of the ICC will come to London between 27th and 30th of May. Various action ideas are now beginning to take shape, especially around the issue of genetic engineering, as well as plans to visit the the Millennium Dome.

The London group welcomes any participation, Support is called on from grassroots organisations and rejected from greenwashed corporations. They also need offers of cash, leaflet distribution, accommodation and innovative action ideas. please contact icc99uk@hotmail.com, phone 07970 896736 or write to 39 Thornhill Square, London N1 1BE.

TARMAC VS. BESTWOOD

The "No Tarmac Quarry At Bestwood Campaign" is trying to stop a proposed 32 acre sand quarry in part of Sherwood Forest on the outskirts of Nottingham.

On February 1st, the day after the EF! Winter Moot, people from the local campaign joined with Earth First! activists and shut down a Tarmac Quarry at Devils Elbow near the city. The day marked the 1st anniversary of the campaign, and a desire to widen the campaign against Tarmac.

The quarry's gates were d-locked and a tripod and barricades went up. Work was stopped for the day and the office was taken over and comprehensively rearranged. The local surveyor commented: "this has definitely focused the minds of the managing directors on the issue". Thankyou from the campaign to all who took solidarity with them.

On the 1st of March and the 1st of April it is "phone Tarmac day!", please join in a phone blockade, demanding that Tarmac give up all planning permissions in the area known as Bestwood. Phone; Mike Saunders, Director of Tarmac Quarry Products on (01777) 703891; Bill Bolsover, Chief Executive of Tarmac Quarry Products on (01902) 353522; & Sir John Banham, Chairman Tarmac PLC on (01902) 307407 or (0171) 3791697. Be creative!

For a"Target Tarmac solidarity pack" with campaign information and a list of sites local to you call Notts EF! on (0115) 9585666 (packs will be sent automatically to contact list groups). It is vital that communities defending themselves against the profiteering of the multinationals, act in support and defence of each other!

WAREHOUSE EVICTION

The construction contract for the Avon Ring Road, due to be signed on February 10th has now been delayed to March 4th due to pressure being put on the council by local people.

A warehouse, on route, which was squatted 24 hours before it was due to be demolished, has now been evicted following a 2 week siege by security guards. Its one occupant was arrested.

There is still an off-route camp and more action looks imminent. Contact 0797 999 0389.

VALENTINE'S BLOCKADE THE BASE

Monday 15 February 7am saw over 100 people blockade the gates of Faslane Nuclear Sub Base as the workers arrived for the morning shift, effectively closing it down for the day. The police, forewarned, had sent in reinforcements, but the mood remained one of humour. Activists managed to chain themselves across the South Gate, causing a huge traffic jam all the way up to the North gate where waves of protesters were sitting down in the road and being carted away by the police.

The atmosphere was maintained by drumming and other live musical performances.(Police are still holding one musician's costume; a gigantic pair of spotted reptilian trousers, and a drum as evidence of 'resisting arrest').Chaos reigned for most of the day, with 54 arrests (mostly for breach of the peace).

Faslane Peace Camp: 01436 820901

STOP PRESS! The arrival of HMS Vengeance, one of the Trident submarines, is expected imminently. Contact the camp to get put on the action 'phone tree.

The council is under renewed pressure from the MOD to evict the camp, as the MOD wants to sell a plot of land adjacent to it. The camp has submitted proposals to the council and is expecting to hear from them soon.

NEWS FROM LIVERPOOL

Inspired by the concept of sustained campaigns, Liverpool EF! has decided to concentrate on a popular supermarket in the city centre. The Tesco's store in question has already been the subject of actions against genetic engineering and now fortnightly actions are planned on a variety of issues.

On Friday the 12th of February 8 activists blocked aisles with trolleys filled with genetically modified food. The trolleys were decorated with placards warning of the danger of their contents. At the same time, people dressed as mad scientists chased others dressed as mutant bananas around the store to the amusement of shoppers.

More activities are planned for the 26th of February. The campaign against a new McDonalds on Smithdown road has recieved vast community support and is reported to be going very well. Parents of local school kids are appalled that McDonalds could consider putting a drive-through opposite the school. The preliminary date for the council meeting is the 9th of March. Stuff will happen outside the council offices that day. Contact Liverpool Earth First!

DUTCH RAILWAY RESISTANCE

On the 29th of January 50 Dutch activists squatted two buildings on the route of the 'Betuwelijn', a train line under construction. The buildings, a farmhouse and a worker's house, are being fortified and treehouses are under construction in nearby trees.

The Betuwelijn is a Trans European Network project connecting Rotterdam with the Ruhr area with a freight train line. It is predicted to cost the Dutch Government 4 billion euros.

One activist commented: 'Construction will ruin some nature, bother people in the area and is useless.'

GroenFront! (+31) (0) 6 50953263 / 22896779.

ARTHUR'S WOOD

The camp against Manchester Airport at Arthurs Wood is currently on stay of eviction until March 3rd, pending a decision on whether the appeal against eviction can be taken to the House of Lords. If that further appeal is granted, then the camp will be safe for some time to come,. However, if it is not then eviction is expected to follow immediately. The reason for the haste is that the contract for felling the trees ends on March 31st, the day the bird nesting season starts. The campaign intends to start legal proceedings if work continues into the nesting season,. Contractors estimate that there is about 4 weeks of work to do on the site, so any delay in the eviction caused by large numbers of people could prove decisive in saving the wood and giving Manchester Airport PLC a greater headache. Contact: 01565 873551

DIGGERS 350 CELEBRATIONS

April 1999 marks 350 years since the diggers rebellion of 1649 and today's land rights movement is making plans to not let it slip by unnoticed. "The Diggers Working Week" is being organised to sort out all the elements for a Summer of successful land actions and activities. Between Saturday 20th - Sunday 28th March a venue near Brighton will be used to assemble all the essential components for a large scale land occupation. It is hoped that this week will be the springboard for a summer of land based actions and activities. For a successful week, and consequently a kicking Summer, all hands are needed to help out making, preparing and repairing – canvas structures (there is an industrial sewing machine), portable compost toilets, kitchen resources, banners, defences, etc. Whatever your skills are there is something for you to do...

Then, to commemorate the 350th anniversary of the invasion of St. George's Hill there will be a march from Walton-on-Thames to the hill to lay a memorial stone. Meet at 12.30pm, at The Centre, Hepworth Way. The march will be totally above board but there is additional advice for direct activists: "If you are coming to the march bring tents and sleeping bags - spades, tools, seeds and things to grow. Make sure there is someone to feed your cat for a few days..." It's going to be an occupation with a big education content (introduction to permaculture, tree planting and grafting, planning, woodland skills etc.).

Contact 0961 373 385 or The Land is Ours Other Diggers 350 activities include an education project 0961 460 002, a theatre project 0171 359 3847 and long term land occupations 0117 955 6769

WINTER MOOT

The first EF! Winter gathering was held at the end of January in Nottingham this year with the intention of working on the strategy and structure of the EF! network.Several projects have arisen from this:

- ★ A national campaign. See feature pages.
- ★ A 'roadshow' / 'outreach' project. The first planning meeting for this is being held on March 20. The Rainbow Centre, Nottingham. 0115 958 5666.
- ★ Summer gathering planning meeting. March 21. Leeds. 0113 262 9365. Come along to air your opinions about what it should be like even if you can't commit to organising it.
- ★ EF! Action Update weekend. April 10 - 11. Leeds 0113 262 9365. To assess the role of the EF! AU in the network. Do you want to see changes? If so what? Come and tell us. The Action Update changes hands every year to avoid the build up of hierarchy. It is due to move on in September '99. People thinking of taking it on are especially welcome!

BNRR ACTIVISTS OCCUPY KVAERNER...

The construction company Kvaerner established the company Midland Expressway Limited (MEL) to build the Birmingham Northern Relief Road. The local campaign group, Alliance Against the BNRR, have already tried and failed to obtain a court ruling preventing work on the road. Since then however they have revealed that MEL were involved in a secret 'concession agreement' with the government which means that if the road was stopped then the government would have to fork out for cancellation charges. So, on the 22nd of Feb., the Alliance was back in the High Court contesting the go-ahead decision.

On the same day Kvaerner's offices were visited by 30 activists, spreading themselves around the 18 storey building causing general office chaos complete with banners and fire juggling. The workings of the office were disrupted for several hours. One employee, when asked if Kvaerner see the economy as more important than the environment, replied with a very firm 'Yes!'

The occupation was held in solidarity with the Alliance's court appearance, and with activists who had been imprisoned for resisting eviction from the proposed route of the road (now released).

...AND LABOUR HQ TOO

On Wednesday 24th February protesters against the Birmingham Northern Relief Road (Britain's first ever toll road being built by Autostrada and Kvaerner) occupied the Labour regional headquarters in Birmingham city centre, dropping banners, leafleting the public and causing mayhem. The action was to highlight Labour's U-turn on their pre-election pledges that this road would not be built. Camera crews and reporters turned up and eventually the police, at which point protesters escaped across several roofs and there were no arrests. The Labour officials seemed reluctant to involve the police, perhaps they were scared of bad press?

After several recent evictions (see AU55), a new camp has now been set up at the Spinney, just up the road from the old Greenwood site.

The Spinney: 07970 301 978

BROADMEADOW ESTUARY

A house has been squatted in the path of a new motorway in Ireland. The building is adjacent to the Broadmeadow estuary, designated a Special Protection Area under European law and particularly known for its large flock of wild swans. It's a beautiful place with a garden ready for cultivation, and visitors are welcome. The address is: Seaview Cottage, Seatown Lane, Swords, Co. Dublin.

Action Diary

- March**
- 10. Arms to Indonesia demo and action outside Liverpool University. Contact Liverpool EF! for details.
 - 11. 3rd Doin it in the North action, Theme: GMO. Meet 10am Blackie Community Centre, Berry St, Liverpool 0151 7271611
 - 12-14. Peace Camp at Aldermaston Atomic Weapons Establishment. Bring tents and food. 01235 868319
 - 13. Northern Anarchist Network Conference, Manchester Yellow Brick Cafe, Old Birley Street, Hulme. More Info: Dept 99, 255 Wilmslow Rd, Hulme
 - 15. International Day of Protest against Police Brutality. Autonomus actions the world over. Contact COBP c/o La Librairie Alternative, 2035 St-Laurent 2ieme etage Montreal, Quebec, Canada H2X 2T3 E-Mail: seahorse@odyssee.net or cobp@hotmail.com
 - 20. EF! National Campaign planning meeting, Yorks. 01508 531636
 - 20. EF! Roadshow / Outreach project planning meeting, Nottingham Rainbow Centre 0115 958 5666
 - 21. EF! Gathering planning meeting, Leeds 0113 262 9365
 - 20-21. Spring equinox party and action. Faslane Peace Camp. 01436 820 901
 - 20-28. Diggers Working Week. See article this page.
 - 27. Anniversary Demonstration and Rally for the sacked Tameside care workers. From Astley Road, Stalybridge 0161 3082452
 - 30. Celebration of Charles I execution - starts 11am outside Banqueting Hall, Whitehall. Contact MA'M 0956 506946
- April**
- 1 Target Tarmac Day. See "Tarmac Vs. Bestwood" article for details.
 - 3. March to St. George's Hill, followed by land grab. See Diggers article this issue.
 - 3-4. A June 18 Conference in Glasgow, discussions for action. Contact 28 Kings St., Glasgow G1 5PQ
 - 5-10. ASEED, European Activist Gathering, Spain +31 20 6682236
 - 10-11. Action Update Weekend, See box, below
 - 17. Silent Spring - local accountable GE test site trashings. genetiX.snowball@161.834.0295
 - 18. National action at Hillgrove 0121 632 6460
 - 28. British Aerospace AGM action. CAAT: **May**
 - 1. World Cannabis Day Demo in London.
 - 1. Resist Globalisation Action. Birmingham 0961 810356
 - 15. International Climate Action Day. ASEED +31 20 6682236
 - 17. Doing it in the North Action, Sheffield More details next issue.
 - 27-30. Inter-Continental Caravan in Britain see article this issue.
- June**
- 18. is JUNE 18! rise up and revolt day. Actions in financial centres around the world. Contact RTS.

Prisoners

The recently-arrested Kurdish rebel leader Abdullah Occalan is going to be executed by the Turkish state, before the general election in April. The Kurdish people and Turkish revolutionaries urgently need your support, in whatever way you are able to give it. Contact 5th of May Group (Kurdish and Turkish Anarchists in exile in Britain) PO Box 2474 London N8 0181 374

Daniel Gomez Velasco and Jose Angel Gomez Velasco. Arrested and tortured because the state believes they are Zapatista militants. La Voz de Cerro Hueco, Cereso #1, Penal de Cerro Hueco, Tuxtla Gutierrez, Chiapas, Mexico. You can also write to the Mexican Embassy, 8 Halkin Street, London. SW1X 8QR, protesting their internment. Letters from groups which sound official are good.

Leonard Peltier is an indigenous activist who has been inside for 23 years.He is now very ill and in excruciating pain having been badly treated by prison hospitals. Write to him at USPL, Leonard Peltier, #89637-132, PO Box 1000, Leavenworth, KS 66048, USA.

EF! CONTACTS MARCH '99

ACTION GROUPS					
Arun Valley EF! c/o 1 York Road, Littlehampton, W. Sussex 01903 721615 aunet@radicaluffdemon.co.uk	Manchester EF! Dept 29, 255 Wilmslow Rd, Manchester M14 5LW. 0161 2266814 manco@nematodefreeserve.co.uk	York EF! c/o York LEAF, PO Box 323, York	Anarchist Black Cross (prisoner support) c/o PO Box 446, Sheffield S1 1NY	Friends of MOVE PO Box 14129, London W12 8GR	Avon Ring Road Protest Camp. c/o 84 Colston Street, Bristol, BS1 5BB. 0797 999 0389
Bath EF! c/o PO Box 426, Bath, Somerset BA12ZD 01249 713742	Mid-Somerset EF! PO Box 23, 5 High St, Glastonbury, Somerset BA6 9PU	GROUPS SUPPORT	Anarchist Communist Federation c/o 84b Whitechapel High Street, London, E1 7QX	Industrial Workers of the World, 75 Humberstone Gate, Leicester LE1 1WB	Birmingham Northern Relief Road Campaign The Spinney, Turf Pits Lane, nr Sutton Coldfield, W.Midlands 07970 301978
Blackburn EF! 12 Balmoral Road, Darwen, Lancashire BB3 2EW	Norfolk EF! The Greenhouse, 42-46 Bethel Street, Norwich NR2 1NR	Anarchist Teapot Action Kitchen Box B, Public House Bookshop, 21 Little Preston Street, Brighton BN1 2HQ	Anarchist-Primitivist Network PO Box 252, Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire WD3 3AY	The Land is Ours (as for Oxford EF!) 01865 722016 office@tlio.demon.co.uk	Crystal Palace (development) Big Willow Ecovillage, Palace Parade, London SE19. 0181 693 8200 07957 313777
Bristol EF! c/o Box 51, Greenleaf Bookshop, 82 Colston St, Bristol BS1 5BB 0117 939 3093	Nottingham EF! c/o The Rainbow Centre, 182 Mansfield Road, Nottingham NG1 3HW 0115 958 5666	Corporate Watch (as for Oxford EF!) 01865 791391 mal@corporatewatchiway.co.uk	Anti-Fascist Action BM Box 1734, London WC1N 3XX	Legal Defence & Monitoring Group BM Haven, London WC1N 3XX 0181 5337116	London GreenPeace & McLibel Support Campaign 5 Caledonian Road, London N1 9DX 0171 713 1269 info@mcspotlight.org
Cambridge EF! Box E , 12 Mill Road, Cambridge	Oldham EF! PO Box 127 Oldham OL4 3FE	Do or Die (journal) c/o South Downs EF!	London GreenPeace & McLibel Support Campaign 5 Caledonian Road, London N1 9DX 0171 713 1269 info@mcspotlight.org	Making Waves (boats/training) PO Box 1377, Sheffield S36 4BZ 01226 762359 pp3mo@aol.com	Friends of Lyminge Forest c/o 3 Abbott Rd, Folkstone, Kent, CT20 1NG 01303 257046/265 737/0468945595 merlin@envirolink.org
Cardiff EF! c/o Green Group, Glamorgan Uni SU, Pontypridd, Mid- Glamorgan CF37 1DL	Oxford Community Action Box E , 111 Magdalen Road, Oxford OX4 1RQ	Spirit of Freedom (Earth Lib. Prisoners) c/o BM HEAL, London WC1N 3XX earthlibprisoner@hotmail.com	Campaign Legal Group (self-training) 43 Swan Meadow Road, Poolstock, Wigan WN3 5BJ. 01942 513792	Save the Hillgrove Cats Box CB, 111 Magdalen Rd, Oxford 0121 632 6460	Toytown The Old Village, Great Western Rd, Cheltenham, Worcs, GL50 3QN 0797 1316597/01242 525280 toytown@stones.com
Cheltenham EF! 16 Portland Street Cheltenham Gloucs. GL52 2PB chelt_ef@yahoo.com	Pendle EF! Klondike Central Prospect Farm, Lenches Road, Colne, Lancs, BB8 8ET 01282 870 919	Head State Support Group 72 Park Road, Worthing BN11 2AN	Disabled Action Network 3 Crawley Road, Wood Green, London N22 6AN 0181 8891361	Sellafield Women's Peace Camp (bimonthly) Box Z, Cornerstone Resource Centre (see Leeds EF!)	Sellafield Women's Peace Camp (bimonthly) Box Z, Cornerstone Resource Centre (see Leeds EF!)
Exeter Env. Network PO Box 185, Exeter EX4 4EW	Reclaim the Valleys c/o Swansea Environment Centre, Pier Street, Swansea SA1 1RY	EF! Action Update c/o Leeds EF! actionupdate@gn.apc.org	DELTA C/O Leaf	0141 2265066 /0113 2621534	Swindon site, c/o 49 Holbein Road, Swindon SN5 6DN 01793 783040
Fife EF! c/o 91 South Street, St. Andrews, Fife KY16 9Q 01334 477411	Reading Roadbusters R.I.S. Centre, 35-39 London Street, Reading, Berkshire 0118 954 6430 roadbusters@clara.net	PROPAGANDA	Earth Circus Network CREATE Centre, Smeaton Road, Bristol BS1 6XN. 0117 9250505	Subvertise! c/o Box E 111 Magdalen Road Oxford OX4 1RQ subs@vermify.i-way.co.uk	AUTONOMOUS ZONES
The Flat Oak Society c/o 3 St Alphege Lane, Canterbury, Kent CT1 2EB.01227 463368	Sheffield EF! c/o SheFIN, 54 Upperthorpe Rd, Sheffield, S63EB. 0114 263 4494	Black Flag BM Hurricane, London WC1N3XX	EarthRights (env. law & right to protest advice) Law Centre Federation, Duchess House, 18-19 Warren Street, London W1P 5DB. 07071 225011 earthrights@gn.apc.org	Third Battle of Newbury PO Box 5642, Newbury, RG14 5WG 07000 785 201 thirdbattle@hotmail.com	Autonomous Centre of Edinburgh 17 West Montgomery Place, Edinburgh EH7 5HA. 0131 557 6242
Glasgow EF! PO Box 180, Glasgow G4 9AB	Southampton EF! SUSU Pigeonholes, Southampton University, University Road, Southampton eco@soton.ac.uk	Counter Information C/O Transmission, 28 Kings St., Glasgow G15QP	Environmental Ploughshares (affinity group-based NVDA) Box W, 111 Magdalen Road, Oxford OX4 1RQ	Trident Ploughshares 2000 (anti-nuke direct disarmament) (as for Norfolk EF!) 01603 611953 reforest@gn.apc.org	Citizen Smith Old Community Centre, 161 College Road, Kensal Green London, Nw10. 07931 980534. citizensmithuk@hotmail.com
Guildford EF! PO Box 217, Guildford GU1 1WS fax 01483 203212	South Devon EF! Birdwood House, 44 High Street, Totnes, Devon. 01626 363844	Genetics Update C/O GEN	Forest Action Network (as for Norfolk EF!) 01603 611953 fanuk@envirolink.org	URGENT (greenbelt housing network) Box HN, 111 Magdalen Road, Oxford OX4 1RQ 01865 721366 info@urgent.org.uk	Kebele Community Centre 14 Robertson Road, Eastville, Bristol BS5 6JY. 0117 939 9469 kebele@mailexcite.com
Gwynedd & Mon EF! The Greenhouse, 1 Trevelyan Terrace, Bangor, Gwynedd LL57 1AX. 01248 355821 afu01b@bangor.ac.uk	South Downs EF! PO Box 2971, Brighton BN2 2TT savage@easynet.co.uk	Green Line PO Box 5, Lostwithiel, Cornwall, PL22 0YT 0870 733 4970	Gandalf Support Campaign c/o London Greenpeace, Panther House, 38 Mount Pleasant, London WC1X OAP lgp@envirolink.org	PROTEST CAMPS	121 Centre (infoshop +) 121 Railton Road, Brixton London SE24 0171 274 6655
Hereford EF! Wern Derys, Michaelchurch Escley, Hereford HR2 0JZ 01981 510659	Swansea People EF! c/o Green Action, Swansea Uni SU, Swansea, Wales	Peace News 5 Caledonian Rd, London N1 9DY	Genetic Engineering Network (GEN) (as for RTS) 0181 374 9516 genetics@gn.apc.org	Aldermaston Women's Peace Camp (alt w/ ends) 33 Heron Road, Bristol BS5 0LT 0117 939 3746 / 01703 554434	Poland EF! PO Box 40, 43-304 Bielsko-Biala 4, Poland +48-33 183153 wapienka@pnwimostorg.pl
Hull On Earth c/o PO Box 43, Hull HU1 1AA	TAPP (Tyneside Action for People & Planet) PO Box ITA, Newcastle Upon Tyne NE1 1TA tapp@newcastle54. freeserve.co.uk	Smash Hits BMBOX 5538, London, WC1N 3XX	GenetIX Snowball (open crop removal) One World Centre, 6 Mount Street, Manchester M2 5NS 0161-834 0295 genetixsnowbal@orangenet.co.uk	1 in 12 Club 21-23 Albion Street, Bradford BD1 2LY 01274 734160	Rainbow Keepers (Ukraine) PO Box 322, Kiev 252187, Ukraine rk@cci.glasnet.ru
Leeds EF! c/o Cornerstone Resource Centre, 16 Sholebroke Avenue, Leeds LS7 3HB 0113 262 9365 cornerstone@gn.apc.org	Warwick EF! c/o Green Society, Warwick Uni SU, Coventry CV4 7AL suad@csv.warwick.ac.uk	Squall 0171 5611204 eds@squall.co.uk	Green Anarchist Network BCM 1715, London WC1N 3XX	OKasional Cafe c/o Manchester EF!	Volunteers For Earth Defence 189 San Antonio Ext SFDm, 1105 Quezon City, Philippines
Liverpool EF! 96 Bold Street, Liverpool L1	Wolves Eco Action c/o Wolves Hunt Sabs, Wolves Uni SU, Wulfruna Street, Wolverhampton	Advisory Service for Squatters 2, St Pauls Road, London N1 2QN 0171 359 8814 advice@squat.freeserve.co.uk	Hunt Saboteurs Association PO Box 2786, Brighton BN2 2AX 01273 622827 hsa@gn.apc.org	Worthing Anarchist Teapot PO box 4144, Worthing, West Sussex, BN14 7NZ teapot@worthing.eco-action.org	
Lune EF! c/o Bookcellar, 9 Meeting House Lane, Lancaster LA1 1TJ.					

WHAT IS EARTH FIRST!?

Earth First! is not a cohesive group or 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 its inhabitants. The above contacts are autonomous groups that consider themselves to share these principles. The **Propaganda** section lists non-EF! publications which we think are worth reading. **International Contacts** are entry points into that country's own network of groups. **Other Contacts** are ones whose aims and principles we agree with fully or in part, or groups that we think may be of use or interest to people. For groups web addresses visit www.k2net.co.uk/ef/

NEW ADDITIONS OR ALTERATIONS ARE SHOWN IN BOLD

LOCAL NETWORKING INITIATIVES

- *experiences from around the country*

How do new people find their way into our movement and become empowered enough to organise actions? In the past this has happened mainly through protest camps, but nowadays a wider range of actions take place, not all of them so public. Also, some Earth First! groups have decided that they want to work as closed ‘affinity groups’, for reasons of security and trust, but see problems with this approach as it does not involve new people. For these reasons, and also to network with those already active on other issues, several ‘networking initiatives’ have sprung up around the country. Here’s a profile of three of them - two of them are in the major activist centres of Brighton and Manchester, but the third, in Norwich, shows that it may also work in areas without a large activist base - it’s up to you to decide whether the idea would work in your area or not.

Activist Network, Manchester

“The ‘Activist Network’ meeting in Manchester was born out of necessity last summer after EF! meetings became too large and dominated by announcements. At a Manchester EF! away weekend, we devised the Activist Network, to hive off the networking function, and free up EF! to organise actions.

The idea was to provide a forum for activists working on different issues to get together in the same place every month and discuss, debate and share information. We aimed to branch out beyond the EF! ghetto a bit and in this respect it’s going OK. We have about 25-40 people there, and a good mix of generations and types of activist, with people from Groundswell (anti-JSA), Workers Power, Socialist Party, long-time anarchists, ISL, animal rights and us lot. We also aimed to have a different issue / topic of debate / speaker/ video/ presentation to focus on every month, and that organisation and facilitation of the meeting should rotate. This is working okay too, with recent topics including medical research on animals, the Spanish revolution, and the millennium bug, although some meetings are more patchy than others. However, one area we need to work on is our original aim of moving away from the original meeting structure to include a socialising element e.g. drinks, food, games etc. - this aspect is lacking energy to make it happen currently.

Other criticisms are a slightly inaccessible venue, and that it is not being used by all activists in Manchester as a networking tool - we don’t think this is a problem with the format though, which we feel is good - it just needs more time and energy invested in it.”

The Rebel Alliance, Brighton

“The Rebel Alliance is a monthly meeting of non-hierarchical direct action groups based around Brighton. The original idea was to improve communication and practical solidarity between groups, and to provide an accesible way for new people to get involved. A good range of groups have got involved, including, Brighton hunt sabs, SchNEWS, the Kempton Network, The Anarchist Teapot, Brighton Claimants Action Group, Brighton Animal Rights Coalition, The Student Autonomist Society, Brighton Class War, a local street theatre group, a genetics group and Molescomb Forest Gardening collective.

When the meeting has been well publicised up to a hundred people have turned up, with old faces as well as new people attending. The basic format is that each group has a few minutes to introduce themselves, provide an update on what they have been up to over the last month and to announce any forthcoming events. The meetings have been confined to this - avoiding discussions and debate - and staying short, sharp and interesting.

After the final announcements have been made the "formal" bit comes to an end and people are given an opportunity to chat with people or groups they found interesting, or to have more in depth discussions about stuff that came up.

Established groups have picked up new members but - more importantly - people have begun to form new groups themselves. For example a Subvertising Collective and a Women's group, HAG (Hellraising Anarchist Girls) have already been formed.

By identifying itself as a forum for non-hierarchical direct action groups the Alliance has so far avoided any problems with authoritarian parasites - which is nice! Overall its been a really positive boost to activities in Brighton.

The next meetings are taking place at 7pm in the Hobgoblin Pub, London Road, Brighton on Thursday 18 March, Wednesday 28 April, Wednesday 26 May”

Direct Action Forum, Norwich

“Norwich Direct Action Forum is a monthly open meeting for existing and potential activists to share ideas and information about direct action, with the aim of broadening the local network of people involved. The idea was to provide a point of contact for people interested in getting involved in direct action and to improve networking between existing local groups in a place where anarcho agitation and sub-cultural deviancy are very much minority activities. It was decided to focus on direct action rather than any particular issue and this was the focus of all the publicity we did. We talked to all the other groups we knew who might be interested (the hunt sabs, the sol fed – this didn’t take long). We fly posted to fuck, this cost us about 25 quid in photocopying, we also made loads of A6 flyers put them in shops, cajoled big issue sellers to give them to likely suspects, handed them round the university. What we aimed to do with the first meeting on February 4th was create a welcoming space, and so we advertised it as including a video showing. Fifty people turned up which was about three times what we expected. However, that’s only one meeting and it’s only when those people start getting actively involved that we’ll know whether or not it’s a successful idea that warrants replication elsewhere. A bigger venue has been sorted out for March. Next Forum, March 4, 8pm, The Plough, St. Benedicts. Come along or contact Norfolk EF! if you want to know more.”

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

A perennial problem at gatherings, sites, actions etc. is the difficult and disruptive situations which arise when there is conflict between individuals, or some people feel that another’s behaviour is unacceptable or upsetting. This has happened on numerous occasions at EF! and similar events, and many feel it has been dealt with badly, often upsetting many people, distracting energy from the political activity that everyone wants to engage in, and still not necessarily resulting in a just and decisive outcome. To this end a workshop was held at the EF! Winter Moot with the aim of trying to develop a mechanism for dealing fairly with these situations when they arise in the future. Because the possible conflicts are varied and unpredictable, and because the underlying problems in society run so deep, no absolute answers were reached, but hopefully the following, which represents the outcomes of that workshop, may provide some sort of guidance for the future.

WHAT ARE THE ISSUES?

If a problem arises at a large event with no mechanism in place to deal with it, it tends to be made public, and naturally everyone feels some sort of duty to be involved, or at least show an interest. But this often feels like voyeurism; problems are not best solved when they descend into being titillating gossip for everyone at the gathering or action. If bringing their problem to the whole group is the only option then people are deterred from bringing it up at all. Small groups are by far better at offering meaningful support than large ones. Also important is to minimise the disruptive effect these conflicts can have on the business of the gathering, site or action.

People with certain mental illnesses can also have a disruptive effect when there is a lot of work to be done, but blowing this out of proportion is not helpful to anyone involved. One suggestion is to try to ensure there is a welfare space. Most festivals have a welfare tent, and so should our gatherings and large action camps. There is a need for “trained” or experienced people who can take on running this space as their main role in the gathering. But we should also accept the limits on the movement: dealing with the mentally ill is difficult, and the busy and stressed atmosphere at activist events does not allow us to devote the time to this that it really deserves. Whilst we recognise that the personal is political, we are not a therapy group and there are certain situations where the needs of certain mentally ill people and the activity in question are not compatible.

The variety of conflicts is huge, and we shouldn’t expect to be able to deal with different situations in the same way. Often they trigger emotional reactions in many other people because they are symptomatic of bigger problems in our movement or society. We should recognise that at times we are all both the oppressors and the oppressed, and that under the system we all live in there will always be unequal power relationships. Not recognising these oppressions legitimises and permits them - they are something which we should be continually challenging in our movement.

SHOULD PEOPLE EVER BE EXCLUDED FROM EVENTS?

The consensus in the workshop was that there will be times when this is necessary. Allowing people to be intimidating or abusive puts so many other people off actively participating that doing this is far more exclusive than to take the decisive action of ensuring those causing the disruption are banned from the event. The difficulties arise in deciding when this should happen. Ground rules, consensual decided at the start of a gathering are a good start. Examples of ground rules which have previously been adopted have included banning alcohol before 6pm, and banning racist, sexist or homophobic behaviour. Anyone breaking these ground rules could clearly and legitimately be excluded from the rest of the gathering.

But experience has shown that the range of conflicts which require attention cannot all be anticipated in advance. Instances will arise where action will have to be taken and if it is not to involve everyone then it must be a small group of people that undertakes that action. These people should be motivated by the smooth running of the event and/or empowering ‘victims’ and not set themselves up as being vigilantes/kangaroo courts.

The problem is how to create a safe environment without requiring people to expose gory details. People are often called upon to justify details of the situation, and this can be both difficult and undesirable. But there is also a desire to find out the facts, to get both sides of the story. All sorts of problems arise when you are trying to deal sensitively and fairly with difficult situations, witch hunts do happen, lies are told and so on. There is never going to be a simple solution.

Those involved in conflict resolution need to be careful. We criticise the justice system in mainstream society, we do not want to recreate the same problems ourselves. The work involved can be very draining, and there is a danger that the group/gathering can abdicate responsibility onto a small group of people who ‘deal with situations’. It maybe best to ask individuals who feel able to deal with it to do it in each case. Remember that it should never be an exclusive group that tackles conflict resolution; anyone who wants to should have the right to intervene.

Of course, those trying to resolve disputes should see exclusion as a last resort. Temporary exclusion might be mutually recognised as a good way to calm down a situation in some cases. In a similar way apologies, recognising problems and agreeing to look at ways of resolving them may be seen as a sign of progress.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

Whilst not claiming to have the whole of the answer, the workshop felt it could come up with some generally agreed points based on the discussions and past experience, that will hopefully be helpful in the future.

- There is a right to exclude
- Ground rules for acceptable behaviour should be drawn up and agreed by consensus at the start of each event
- A conflict resolution group should be appointed for each gathering, although not rigidly defined - anyone who feels they should be involved has a right to be. The same people should not have to do it each time, the rotation of the job means the sharing of skills
- Recognise that some problems are manifestations of problems in our movement, the particular gathering or society at large. Something bigger than a small group will be needed in some instances.
- Local groups should discuss these ideas to see what they can offer to future gatherings. Groups and campaigns should consider getting advice from professionals and other movements (the peace movement has a good record in this area - contact for example Turning the Tide)

An EF! National Campaign

It was decided at the Earth First! Winter Moot 1999 that Earth First! would put on a national campaign, or series of hits. This is a summary of the discussion that led to and arose from this decision, and plans for turning it into reality.

The discussion from which these points are drawn was attended by about 30 people. The main areas talked about were: what might be the aims of a national campaign? How might it be structured? It was generally agreed not to discuss potential targets at this stage, especially given time constraints, though inevitably some ideas on this subject were aired. A meeting will be held on March 20th, by which time it is hoped that these ideas will have been discussed and developed by local groups, which can then feed back to the meeting, whether through attendance or directing correspondence through the Action Update.

There was general agreement that this should not be a one-off action but a sustained campaign, not with one static target, but multiple targets with a wide geographical spread.

AIMS: Internal. To strengthen local, regional and national networks through regular mobilisation for action.
To provide a vehicle for building links with other groups/ communities.
To provide individuals with a regular point of contact and action

External. To damage/ shut down a company/ activity. ***Pro.** We could get rid off something we all have a gripe against. Would show up links between state and industry as police moved to protect company. Empowering. **Con.** Affecting profits is not as easy as we sometimes think (e.g. Shell had growth in profits in '95 year of Brent Spar and Ogoni solidarity actions across UK and Europe). If we aim to shut down and that doesn't happen, the campaign would be seen as failure, which wouldn't be fair to ourselves.*

Comparison was drawn with the campaign to shut down Hillgrove cat farm by the animal rights movement. It is the only place of its kind, a ‘weak link’. There were disadvantages in this sort of campaign for EF! Actions are too easily prevented by police if campaign is too geographically specific. If we choose a weak company/activity we could be doing the market’s job, and also not being effective in a wider sense. Lessons should be drawn from Hillgrove.

Structure. There was support for the idea of kicking off the campaign with a large national action, and following it up with monthly regional actions interspersed with regular (ie. every 3 months) national hits. There was a suggestion that the responsibility for sorting out these national hits could rotate around groups/regions. The monthly actions could be on the same day of each month to give people grater access to them (as with Critical Mass). There was acknowledgement of a need for flexibility and constant analysis. The Campaign could be a vehicle for breaking down perceived hierarchies and organisational cliques. We should avoid burdening particular groups/ individuals with what could be a large workload (ie. A Road Alert! situation)

Targets: This is probably the most difficult bit. How do we choose one target, when we are against a majority of companies, industrial activities, etc? No matter what we choose one campaign will not bring down global capitalism. Should we focus on a company or an issue? What criteria do we use to pick the target? Do we pick something where we can use our experience and proven tactics, or something that might take us out of the ‘single issue’ rut and give us an opportunity to build links with other struggles? Here are some of the suggestions so far:

Chevron. An oil company with operations in Nigeria. As well as showing solidarity with struggles over there, it links in to transport/ pollution, globalisation etc. and has multiple potential targets

New Deal. Again, multiple targets, links with workforce/unemployed.

Nuclear Industry / Waste Transport. Industry is currently weakened and discredited in the public eye. Opportunities for linking with other groups active on the issue.

Tarmac. Construction company involved in road-building (Twyford Down, M65, Manchester Airport) and lots of quarrying. There has been a target tarmac campaign, circa 1993. They didn’t like it.

Genetics. Already a huge focus on this. Possibilities are endless. Could focus on one company ie. Monsanto are in a dodgy position in this country. Suggestion that there are a few smaller companies underpinning the industry, especially in research and development.

Advertising. An attack on this industry is one that would strike at the heart of consumer culture? Billboards, TV, Radio, PR and ad companies provide multiple targets.

None of these suggestions were discussed at any length, and so no doubt there are many more out there. All suggestions, along with reasonings behind them, should be conveyed to the meeting in March via the Action update.

Meeting on Saturday March 20th, probably in Yorkshire.
Call 01508 531636 for details.