



# Earth First!

## Action Update

No 20! 30p  
September '95

*'Paid ymddiried mewn hipis!'*

### No M11 LINK

The Greenmania camp, an area of public land near the Greenman roundabout in the path of the M11 Link road is expecting eviction on Tuesday 5th September. Approximately 100 riot police have already assisted London Transport staff in felling three large and mature trees. Specially trained TSG with climbing gear then proceeded to remove barricades, fill in tunnels and cut walkways down. Your support is desperately needed. Regular actions restart 4th September - every Monday and Friday. All welcome - meet 10am at Wanstead Environmental Centre, 1 Wanstead High St, London (nearest tube, Snaresbrook). Action info: 0181 512 5222, general 0181 527 4896.

### NEWBURY

On 2nd August, demolition contractors (one firm involved is Hughes of Portsmouth 01705 671671) moved in to destroy 5 buildings on the road route. Local people attempted to stop the work, resulting in one arrest for "Aggravated trespass". However with the help of large numbers of police, all five buildings were destroyed.

**ACTIVISTS ARE NEEDED NOW!!!** Although main work is not expected to begin for a few months, it is probable that all valuable things on route will be destroyed before the E.C. can hear the pending complaints. Mott McDonald look set to be the consultant engineers supervising this trashing.

If you haven't visited Newbury yet - now's the time!! There are camps in need of support, sign the "Beat the Bulldozer" pledge and get to Newbury ASAP - Spread the word! For more info please call 01488 608388 or 01635 45544 (new office number), fax 01635 45545 or contact: Third Battle of Newbury at PO Box 5520, Newbury RG 14 7YW. If you would like to be included on the new phone tree and mailing list please phone the office.

### SELAR FARM NATURE RESERVE

The protesters at Selar Farm, fighting the proposed open cast site in Cwmgwrach, South Wales are preparing for battle against a possible eviction from September 1st. This is the date the nesting season ends and Celtic Energy can 'legally' cut down the oaks (also the eviction order runs out in mid Sept.). Strangers have been snooping with cameras on the ground and in the trees - they claimed to be 'bat experts' and were escorted from the site.

A possibly greater battle with the elements approaches; the camp is being made water proof for the winter, log cabins and pathways under construction. Local support continues.

Polyprop, People, Plastic sheets and tarps needed. Contact: 1 The Oaks, Selar Farm Nature Reserve, Nr Cwmgwrach, Mid Glamorgan, Tel: 0589 114899.

Sustainable Wales (01656 783405) are organising a gathering of all the groups campaigning against open cast mining in Wales. Seminars and workshops are planned for Saturday September 23rd at The Environment Centre, Pier Street, Swansea. There will be workshops on court action against major companies, the Criminal Justice Act and the effects of direct action.

### No M66

Protesters against the M66 (North of Manchester) through Medlock Valley have been camping at Daisey Nook Country Park since July. A new camp and squat have recently been opened up and the first tree house



**Life's a drag at Solsbury Hill!**

is now up! On the 18th August 40 local activists closed down the work site for the day. The road to a disused quarry which is being opened up to provide road stone has also been blockaded. A festival was recently held in Beale Valley. One protester was recently arrested after opening up a squat, and charged with stealing £50 of gas - he was only in the building for 30 minutes! There are meetings every Tuesday and a picnic every Sunday from 1pm at the camp in the Medlock Valley. Help is needed, particularly from people with previous experience of road campaigns. There is also talk of an 'amazing action' involving a squat like no other squat! Find out more on 0161 628 4727 or 0161 627 4862.

### No M77 OR M74

August saw the 1st anniversary of the camps against the M77 in Glasgow. Now only the Pollock Free State camp remains. However, recently there has been a greater involvement from the residents of Pollock who will be the victims of air pollution from the new road. Anti-road actions and anti-CJA actions have proliferated all around the city. Contact 0141 2265066.

Opposition to the proposed M74 is also growing. Contact No M74, c/o the Larkfield Centre, 39 Inglefield Street, Govanhill, Glasgow. G42. Meetings every Tuesday, 7.30pm at the Larkfield Centre.

### MARINE ACTION SOCIETY 2000

MAST 2000 is a new maritime organisation. Their initial campaigns will seek to address: whaling and dolphin abuse, live animal exports and to offer co-operation and assistance to other organisations in their campaigns. MAST have been successful in obtaining a converted 60ft trawler plus associated marine equipment needed to spearhead their campaigns. They will be visiting a number of ports to raise money,

educate and to undertake peaceful, direct action protests, both on land and sea. For more information ring 01304 215902.

### PEAKES PARKWAY

Over 250 people got together in People's Park Grimsby on August 19th for a "Tribal jam" The rally was organised to raise awareness for the campaign against the Peakes Parkway road in Grimsby. The scheme proposed by Humberside County Council will follow an old railway line and threatens huge numbers of trees and hedgerows, an ancient burial site and will blight hundreds of houses. Work could start soon. For more info and details of future events, etc. Phone 01472 277358.

### NORTHERN LAND ACTION

The Great Northern Land Action will be a Reclaim the Land action and festival in West Yorkshire. It will be in late September with the location being announced on the day. Prepare yourself for one major party and also a chance to reclaim land from some nasty earth rapists! Bring music, food, tarps, rope and whatever you'd like to find when you arrive. For more information and the exact dates call 0113 262 9365.

### EARTH FIRST! GATHERING

The Earth First! Gathering runs from Friday 22nd until Sunday 24th September. Its success depends on you! Start planning displays/workshops and bring loads of energy for those oh such fun type things! £2 will cover costs and food (there's a vegan cafe). Bring sleeping bags, waterproofs etc. Don't bring any dogs - there are other animals to consider. Make sure everything can be carried as the site is half a mile down a valley, (no roads, yeah!) Transportation can be arranged for anyone





Things to do in Newbury on a sunny afternoon ...

with impaired mobility. There will also be a crèche. To get there by road: Hornby is on the A683, 8 miles from Lancaster and M6. Wray is on the B6480 from Bentham, 1.5 miles from Hornby. From Hornby or Wray, take the road signed to Roeburndale West. About 1.5 miles up the hill you will cross a cattle grid. Take the first track down on the left, signed MIDDLEWOOD. By bus: Ribble buses 80, 81 and Kirkby Lonsdale 278 run regularly from Lancaster to Hornby/Wray until 11 p.m. Please arrive from Friday afternoon. There will be pick ups from Lancaster and Hornby at 8 p.m. and 10 p.m. on the Friday and Saturday. A mobile phone will be available from Friday 22, Tel : 0378 336006, there are no promises of reception due to the landscape! For further information before the weekend call: 0151 733 2073. See you there!

### **BOYCOTT WATERWORLD**

On August 9th several Native Americans and British EFL types staged an action in London to kickoff a nation-wide boycott of Kevin Costner's new film "Waterworld". Costner who once spoke up for native American rights, has now announced plans to build a holiday resort within the Black Hills - a National Park that has been sacred to the Sioux people for thousands of years.

A banner drop took place at the Empire Cinema in Leicester Square attracting lots of attention both from the press and passers-by who agreed to boycott the film, cause it's shite anyway. For Leaflets contact The Combination, End Cottage, Wood Green, Long Stratton, Norfolk, NR15 2RR.

If you want to write to Costner to tell him what you think, his business address is: 1888 Sentry Park East, Suite 210, Los Angeles, 90067, USA.

### **SOLSBURY HILL**

On August 11th - 14th around 100 people returned to the hill for an action packed gathering. Saturday saw 150 pedestrians and cyclists hold a Critical Mass/Reclaim The Streets action. They very slowly walked, cycled and danced their way through Bath city centre for 2 hours. They blocked the traffic flow and stopped at several busy junctions for 10-15 minutes. The cops were unable to do anything and could only follow where they decided to lead!

On Sunday about 100 went to Siston Common, another of Avon's free spaces threatened by a road. The Avon Ring Road will trash the common and the old railway that serves as a cycle/footpath.

On Monday 80 people invaded the work sites. As one

section was invaded, they would disappear and emerge at another part of the site. This prompted the security's shepherd to get frustrated and shout "They're over there you stupid bastards".

More actions are likely as Wessex Water plan to use the old Batheaston Reservoir as a dump for spoil from the construction of the bypass. If this goes ahead they'll need **another road** this time on the other side of the Hill, along Chilcombe Bottom. It looks like they're inviting us all back - see you there! Contact Solisbury Hill Action Group for more info: 01225 448556

### **OUR LAND IN THEIR HANDS**

The Land Is Ours together with Friends Of The Earth, The Green Party and Friends, Families and Travellers' Support Group have just launched a competition to uncover the very best and the very worst landowners in the country. They are asking for nominations from all over Britain explaining just how considerate or how thoughtless they can be. To enter send in a reasonably full account of the landowners' activities, about 500 words, along with a suitably entertaining prize suggestion. Anonymity is guaranteed although a contact phone number is needed in case further details are required.

Send your nominations to: Landowners competition, The Land Is Ours, Box E, 111 Magdalen Road, OXFORD, OX4 1RQ. Tel: 01865 722016. The closing date for all nominations is November 1st 1995 and winners will be invited to collect their imaginative prizes at a ceremony on January 2nd. If they don't turn up on the day prizes will be delivered later, in person, by several hundred campaigners for The Land Is Ours!!!

### **PRINCE TO BUTCHER ANCIENT OAKS**

Phillip Windsor, The Duke of Edinburgh, has ordered 38 ancient Pollard Oaks, all over 300 years old, to be cut down, in 'Windsor Great Park'. His orders come as they don't fit in with the new landscaping plans!

Tree houses and a ground camp have been set up. Work has stopped since August 7th. However, The Crown Estate says that they're in no hurry to do the work, claiming that they will sit it out until the protesters become bored. This may prove to be problematic as the camp just doesn't fit in with the Windsor style! More people are needed. This is a winnable campaign with real opportunity to embarrass The Duke into backing down.

So, get down there! The tree sitters are in Queen Anne's Drive, off the A332 Kings Road from Windsor towards Ascot. They're on the left as you leave Windsor

and enter The Great Park. For further info call: 01635 521770.

### **GWYNEDD LAND OCCUPATION**

Eithiog Meadows in Bangor, Gwynedd, N. Wales, a 30 acre wild flower and woodland site rich in wildlife (400 species) is under threat from an executive housing development. Arfon council which owns the land, plans to grant full planning permission despite a 3000 strong petition, a survey showing local opposition, numerous objections from environmental groups and their own housing survey which shows NO housing need!

Gwynedd EFL and local residents have been working on a high profile campaign for over a year. With "conventional" methods being ignored direct action is now being planned as contracts go out to tender in 3 weeks.

As part of the campaign a 'Land is Ours' occupation is planned - 5 days of workshops, life style and campfire culture. This will be from the 25th-30th September, so don't go straight home from the EFL gathering - take a detour to scenic N. Wales for a prelude of North Wales' direct action campaign of 95-6! Further info: 43 Water Street, Llanechid, Bethesda, Gwynedd LL57 3EU. Tel. 01248 600286.

### **TREE SITTING**

At Blackwood Mill Near Darlington a group of Beech trees were threatened by the expansion of some private gardens. A request for an emergency tree preservation order was made but the council announced that it could not be considered until their next meeting. In the mean time 20 people camped out in the trees to help protect them. The police allowed them to stay there until the council, who in the end decided not to protect the trees, had made a decision. The tree houses were evicted during which three people were arrested. Although the threatened trees were lost, 29 other trees in the vicinity have had preservation orders placed on them as a result of the incident. On a brighter note, near Glastonbury a tree squat prevented the removal of a group of protected trees to make way for a private access road. Work was held up until the local authority stepped in to stop them being cut down. Direct action works!

### **WELLS RELIEF ROAD**

Regular actions have been continuing against the Wells Relief road which will cut through the grounds of a local school. An en route squat has been evicted but another has been set up in a building whose garden lies in the proposed route. A tree in the path of the road has been saved through a decision to alter the proposed route after threatened actions. Meanwhile, the department of Health and Safety have confirmed that a building hastily demolished to make way for the road, contained asbestos. This was not properly removed thus causing a local health hazard. Help in the campaign is still desperately needed. Contact 0585 106615/116620 or 01749 880639.

### **PRISONERS SUPPORT**

Jim Chambers and Stuart Edwards are presently in jail, accused of criminal damage on a road construction site. They were recently sentenced to 18 months, which will be appealed against. There was an all night vigil outside Wormwood Scrubs on the 6th of August. Stuart Edwards (PB1864) and Jim Chambers (PV2504) are at Pentonville Prison, Caledonian Rd, London N78TT. Please write to them.

A full list of prisoners from the earth and animal liberation movements can be obtained from: Earth Liberation Prisoners, c/o Mid Somerset EFL, PO BOX 23, 5 High St, Glastonbury, Somerset. BA6 9PU.

### **FREE MUMIA ABU-JAMAL!**

On August 7th Judge Sabo announced an indefinite stay of execution for Mumia Abu-Jamal. BUT as Mumia himself says; "The state of Pennsylvania still has every

## **HOW TO CONTACT EARTH FIRST! ACTION UPDATE.**

By phone: 01222 383363; by post: Action Update, PO Box 7, Cardiff, CF2 4XX; by fax: 01222 640666; or finally by email to `actionupdate@gn.apc.org'.

Articles should reach us before the 20th of the month for inclusion in next months AU! For replies please enclose a SAE.

Send subscriptions/requests for bulk copies/ distribution enquiries to Dead Trees EFL. To subscribe to the free e-mail server give us your details. Please send us a donation or stamps if you can afford it (we rely on getting atleast £50 a month in donations to be able to send free subscriptions to community groups etc.).



intention of killing me - just not right now ... Although many radicals and progressives expressed joy at news of the stay, other political analysts saw it as a clever move by a clever judge, who did what higher courts would've done and, in so doing, attempted to blunt the edge off of a growing and militant anti-death penalty movement ... Whatever the reason, let us utilize this precious time to build a stronger and broader movement, to not "stay" one execution, but to halt them all!"

Angry protests have taken place around the world. Political prisoners in the USA, as well as from the Red Brigades in Italy and from the Red Army Faction in Germany have gone on hunger strike in solidarity with Mumia. Here in Britain there have been actions in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Brighton and Bristol, as well as the vigil and demos in London. More actions are desperately needed. Use your imagination, there are American Government buildings, consulates, corporations etc. in most major cities (including one near YOU). Contact: Friends of Move, PO BOX 3069, London SW9 8LU. Tel. 0181 5199228

### A30, DEVON

Come down to Devon and learn to live in the trees at the "tree-protester's university"! Assistance is still needed in the building and digging of a tunnel system in preparation for the soon expected eviction. In the mean time the Quercus Tribe invites you to a Full Moon Acoustic Family Gathering on the 9th September at the protest camp on the A30 at Fairmile. Contact 01404 815729 or 0385 278156/7 for further details.

### FASLANE PEACE CAMP

Over 200 people attended the Nagasaki Action at the Clyde Nuclear Submarine Base, Scotland on August 9th. 35 were arrested for blocking and entering the base, including activists from Europe and New Zealand. The night before the action a torch lit procession to the Trident area at Faslane saw an effigy of the 'fat man' bomb being burned on the razor wire.

A week of events and activities included films, interactive theatre at the MoD offices in Glasgow, and a shelf clearance of French products in Marks & Spencers stores in Edinburgh and Glasgow. A demo at the Edinburgh Military Tattoo was met by furious police hysteria, who snatched banners, broke someone's nose and arrested others. Thanks to all who supported these actions.

Support now needed for 'ALIEN' an action to end all wars on 7, 8, 9th October - more info 01436 820901.

### WOMENS' PEACE CAMP.

Menwith Hill is the largest U.S. spy station in the Northern Hemisphere. Run by the National Security Agency, it is an integral part of the U.S. war machine. There has been a camp outside Menwith for 18 months; women take NVDA to impede the spying activities, provide information and are a permanent peace presence. There was a blockade of the base last month in which 4 were arrested.

Kate Witham has been charged with £21,504.34 damage to a Radome on which she 'allegedly' painted 'Peace, Truth, Justice, Freedom'. She now faces a Crown Court trial and a possible prison sentence of 12 months or more.

For more information about Menwith contact Kate/ Rachel, Peace House, 5 New Road, Littleborough, Lancs OL15 8PJ, 01706 371387. Menwith Hill, Womens Peace Camp, A59 lay-by Nr Menwith Hill spybase, Nr Harrogate, N. Yorks O583 329 313. You can also contact Peace House for news of the womens' peace camps at Sellafeld.

### LEEDS OPENCAST

The campaign against open cast mining is kicking off in the West Yorkshire area. A camp has been established at Hawks Nest Wood, Ash Lane (opposite East Garforth Post Office), Garforth. The first tree-houses are up, but full-time residents are needed. Actions are being planned. Local support is high, with The Rackwood Colliery Co. unable to evict thanks to a friendly landowner.

On the 7th Sept. there will be the court case of 17 protesters and 2 journalists arrested for aggravated trespass during a recent anti-opencast action. All help needed, particularly if you have experience in

climbing or tree-house building. Wish list: Tarps, harnesses, ropes, polyprop, water butts, pallets, banners, stoves/burners, pots'n'pans. Contact Cornerstone on (0113) 262 9365

### BRYNHENLLYS..CADWCH Y MOCH O'R WINLLAN

By occupying the proposed open cast site at Brynhenlllys (S.Wales), direct action against Celtic Energy's part in the continuing rape of the valleys extends.

Funded by the local campaign, a network of walkways, nets and tree houses have been constructed. Farm buildings were barricaded and the first Welsh tower (alright, a small one) was built. This resulted in Celtic Energy 'bottling it' and leaving the protestors (mostly) alone, even as the proposed start of work came and went. Since then the amount of committed local involvement has grown. Work has been directed towards an open weekend to get more local's involved. The campaign will try and balance future activity between local crafters, squatting farm buildings and defensive work.

An Eviction will happen, despite some delay resulting from the local Plod insisting Celtic Energy hire private security guards (unlike Selar, where they did the jobs themselves). The land being squatted still has 500 acres of prime anthracite open cast. This is hundreds of millions of pounds worth of 'motivation' for a quick eviction.

As ever: help of any kind well appreciated; wish list as usual. Most vital of course are Protesters. Directions: From Swansea: up Swansea valley to Ystalyfera, then up Twrch Valley, to Ystrad Owen, right at bus station, right at bridge, along road, UP side of valley. Actions in the area, including September the 20th.

### N-DAY, NO CAR DAY

9 activists from Earth First! and the Pedestrian Liberation Front joined the Glasgow Citroen Dealerships N-Registration party at 24:00 hrs. on Monday 31 July, heralding the car free future with 'HAVE A CAR FREE N DAY', 'DEATH MACHINES AHEAD' banner drops and a special personal appearance by Jacques 'nucleaire-attaque' Chirac. The band stopped playing, the wine stopped flowing and the sad car buying punters were highly embarrassed. Despite the dealership being opposite a cop shop the plods took 15 minutes to show up.

### EARTH FIRST! JOURNAL

The Earth First! Journal is a forum for the no-compromise environmental movement, covering international issues (although predominantly North American at the moment due to lack of contributions from other regions). The latest "Lughnasadh", 40 page edition of the Journal is now available. International subscriptions cost \$35US (\$45 airmail) from Subscriptions, PO Box 1415, Eugene, OR 97440, USA. 8 issues are published a year.

### GROUP 4 GET GUNS!

The thin yellow line of Group 4 are really tooling up at the moment. They are planning to apply to transport military hardware, when the State privatises it. Group 4 have also been receiving riot training (and not from *Class War!*) to help them deal with the refugees imprisoned at detention centres such as Campsfield. Group 4 seem to believe that people fleeing from injustice, poverty and oppression might turn into violent criminals when they enter Britain. They, together with H.M. government, have come up with the obvious answer ... injustice, poverty and oppression here too! As one of Group 4's highly paid and professional staff at Campsfield said "I've got no sympathy for those bastards, they shouldn't have come here in the first place." There are regular actions at Campsfield, for

## DIARY DATES

M11 Direct Actions: Every Monday and Friday, 10 am. Meet Wanstead Environmental Centre, 1 Wanstead High Street, London. Nearest Tube: Snaresbrook. 0181 512 5222

Every Tuesday: weekly vigils/actions, 5-8 pm - outside French Embassy (London) Against Nuclear Testing. Youth CND: 0171 607 3616.

### SEPTEMBER

9th Sat: Full Moon Acoustic Family Gathering - Fairmile Site, A30 Road Campaign. 01404 815729

10th Sunday: Free Festival in Dover Against Live Exports 01342 303166.

11th Monday: Mass Sit Down Against Live Exports 01304 374064.

16th Sat: Green Festival, Central Library, Portsmouth. 10am-5pm. Anyone fancy doing an EF! stall? 01705 737455

20th: Mystery Anti Opencast Action in South Wales (Celtic Energy have got an open day in Ystradgynlais...mmm) Contact Cardiff EF! 01222 488153

22nd-24th: Earth First! National Gathering, Lancashire. Workshops, help needed 0151 733 2073.

22nd-25th: Sellafeld Women's Peace Camp. 01706 371387

23rd Sat: C.A.A.T. International Day of Action Against Landmines. 0171 2810297

23rd Sat: Stop Open Cast Campaigners Gathering, The Environment Centre, Swansea. 10am-4pm. Sustainable Wales 01656 783405

23rd Sat: International No-Shopping Day. 0161 237 1630

25th-30th: Reclaim the Land at Eithinog Meadows, Bangor, N.Wales. 01248 600286

25th Mon: McLibel Trial resumes. Demonstrate outside the High Court, Strand, London WC2; 9.30am -10.30am (nearest tubes Temple & Holborn).

Late September: The Great Northern Land Occupation. W.Yorkshire. 0113 2629365

29th-1st Oct: Survival of the Tribes Gathering, Glastonbury Assembly Rooms. Music, entertainment including the Dongas Play. Bath & West FIN: 01225 444133

### OCTOBER

7th-9th: ALIEN - an action to end all wars! Faslane Peace Camp. 01436 820901

11th-15th: Green Party Conference, Southport, Lancs. 0181 882 0955

16th Mon: World Wide Day of Action Against McDonalds. 0171 7131269

16th Mon: Videos of Dissent at Pegasus Theatre, Magdalen Rd, E.Oxford. 7.30pm, £2.50. 0865 741682

21st Sat: Reclaim the Streets, Manchester. 0161 2489224

21st-22nd: Campaign Against the Arms Trade, Student and Youth Gathering. University of Central Lancashire, Preston. 0171 281 0297

28th Sat: Anti-Corporations Fair: 11am-8pm. Conway Hall, Red Lion Square. London. London Greenpeace 0171 713 1269.

### NOVEMBER

31st Oct-5th Nov: Earth Nights. Pixies help nature strike back!

8th-9th: Picket of "Management Summit 95" 8th/9th, 9am-11am. Park Lane Hotel, Piccadilly, London W1 (Hyde Park Corner tube) executives from Nestle, McDonalds etc. will be speaking. 0171 7131269

### AN EDITORIAL

This is the boring stuff we were told to put in or the editor will sulk (she's in Marakesh spending the profits!)... If you don't think that our reports of your actions are accurate do them yourself (please). Funding: We realise that groups are skint so if you are a Rich Pop Star give us all your money or lose your cred! If you know of anywhere that will stock or distribute AU - tell us. Don't forget to Photocopy up your copies of Action Update, (if you want loads of copies let us know!) we don't put subliminal messages about it for nothing. We would all to take this opportunity to thank Bill Gates for letting us produce AU using Windows 95™ & thanks to Budweiser Budvar! Cheers (hic).

**Disclaimer: Bollox!**



more info contact Close Down Campsfield, c/o 111 Magdalen Rd, Oxford.

## SUNDANCERS UNDER ARMED SIEGE

In Shuswap territory in Canada a sacred sundance and burial site is being occupied by Native Americans. This land, and much of Canada has never been surrendered by treaty. As of August 27th all communication with the Shuswap camp has been cut and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police have surrounded the area with armed SWAT teams & helicopters. The sundancers have always maintained that they want a peaceful settlement to the dispute, but they have also stressed that they will defend the site to the point of being "removed in body bags".

Elsewhere in Canada, Mohawk warriors have seized a government building to protest about continued violations of the sovereignty of the indigenous peoples and in solidarity with the sundancers. At the time of writing they have barricaded themselves into the building, raised the Mohawk warrior flag and declared the building "closed for ever".

One Canadian cop claimed "Brits don't give a shit about dancing prairie niggers". Prove him wrong, there are Canadian government buildings, tourist offices etc. near all of us ... act now! For more info contact 0181 749 7935.

## RECLAIM THE STREETS

Not content with the massive Reclaim the Streets on the 23rd of July, RTS staged another action just over a week later. Arriving in rush hour at 7am 100 activists armed with 20 foot tripods blocked a major road passing through Greenwich. Up until this action most RTS/Critical Mass's have been either at the weekend or when people have been travelling back from work. The action was successful and lasted all through rush hour. Five days later in Birmingham 150 pedestrians swarmed onto the street. Skips were placed across the road and while horns beeped, bands played and kids frolicked in the newly established beach and paddling pool. The action lasted for five hours and the organisers are planning another. Manchester are organising a Reclaim the Streets for October the 21st. Contact for further details 0161 248 9224.

## OFFROADING IN SUSSEX

If we don't want cars on the road we sure as damn don't want them on the downs. With this in mind reACTION organised an action against the Sussex leg of the Eurochallenge Onyx Championship on August the 19th. 136, 4 wheel drive offroaders intent on ripping the downs to shreds were confronted by around 50 activists from Lewes & Brighton. Route flags were pulled out, the racetrack was invaded and a gate was blockaded. This stopped them accessing half of their track. Some drivers had come all the way from France, Holland, Belgium and Germany. A crowd shouting 'scum' at them on the finish line was not to their liking. With their racing ruined and half of the area due to be destroyed saved, they packed up.

## EF! ROADSHOW

An Earth First! tour of Ireland, the bit not still occupied by the British state, will take place in November (dates to be announced) and promises to be full of craic (fun) with trips to Limerick, Galway, Tipperary, Cork and Dublin. Anyone interested should contact Pete 0161 226 1138.

## THE COMBINATION

"The Combination" is a group based in Norfolk in a rural location with just over half an acre of land, who are working towards a more self sufficient way of life. From this base they intend to co-ordinate an ongoing tour of Britain, a sort of 'no more roads-show'. The tour will provide outreach into communities, with access to information, exhibitions, empowerment and training. It will also provide inreach into the 'radical environmental movement' with resource packs, coalition building, training and support. What comprises the tour depends a lot on what other campaigns can offer them. At the moment they intend to offer information, video displays, a mobile library, transport to actions and support for other campaigns.

They also intend to use their Norfolk base as a space for 'burnt-out' activists who could look after the vegetables while providing back-up to the tour, thus enabling it to stay on the road! If you feel able to contribute ideas, time, financial assistance, events needing a display... anything! - get in touch. Write to: End Cottage, Wood Green, Long Stratton, Norfolk NR15 2RR. Tel: 01508 531636 or 0973 429227.

## TOXIC ALERT!

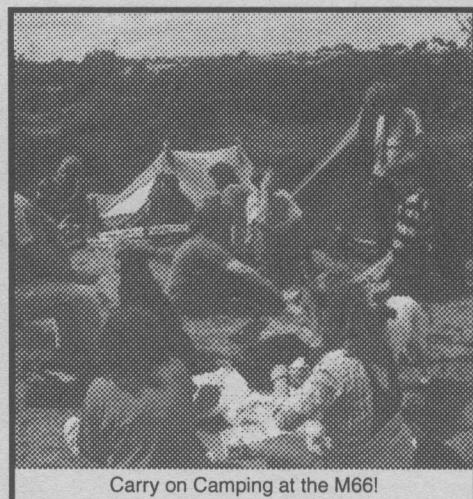
Toxic Alert! is putting together a health survey to find out how many people suffer from the effects of toxic pollution. The survey is being launched in Manchester, but they'd like people to do something in their own area. If you'd like to help with the survey please contact them.

## FREE TAHITI - NUKE CHIRAC!

As well as Greenpeace's actions, protests against French nuke testing are spreading around the world. In Tahiti protesters have invaded French Government buildings and are, at the time of writing, occupying and blocking the main road on the island. The protesters have been attacked by French riot police. Protests against Nuke testing have given the islanders' struggle for independence from French colonial rule a boost. Meanwhile 200 activists blockaded the main bridge across the Seine in Paris. Also a French airliner was hijacked halfway to Spain and taken to Switzerland.

## M65

Direct action is continuing on the route of the M65, being led by an elderly local farmer whose farm is on the path of the road. He is refusing to obey the compulsory purchase order on his property, and has pledged to barricade himself in to one of the buildings when the time comes for eviction. For information on direct actions, 0161 231 4812 (new number). Direct



Carry on Camping at the M66!

actions occurring every day at 4.30pm, so get yourself down there. The farm is on Haslingden Road, Guide, Blackburn.

## TARMAC-V-DO T

Tarmac and the Department of Transport are still "a million miles apart" from reaching a settlement over costs for the construction of the M3 through Twyford Down. The original tender was £26 million but eventually ended up at £44 million. Tarmac received £8.5 million for the delays caused by protests against the road but are still asking £28 million more for 'various costs' - including security costs.

## THANET WAY

Despite the illegal eviction of their bunker site, the Flat Oak Society are continuing their protest against the A299 (Kent). They have moved to woodland site at Chesterfield and are regularly digger diving. A meeting to set up a local support group has occurred to counter the bad press and consequently the bad image they have received locally. On the 1st of September, 15 Police with dogs entered the woodland site at 3.30am obviously preparing for an imminent eviction. Papers have now been served. Tree houses, walkways & other defences have been built but people are needed to lock on, Contact 01227 275404 or mobile 0973 262259

## STOP THE ARMS TRADE!

A week long peace camp at the British Aerospace factory in Warton, Lancs resulted in many actions and only two arrests by the police. In a bizarre twist in the plot the people arrested where security guards. Realising the MoD were allowing protests to continue the security guards decided to kidnap some protesters and dump them in the middle of nowhere! They where arrested for false imprisonment and will hopefully be prosecuted to the full extent of the law. Contact Stop the Hawk Deal: 0161 834 0295.

## Subscribe to the EF! Action Update.

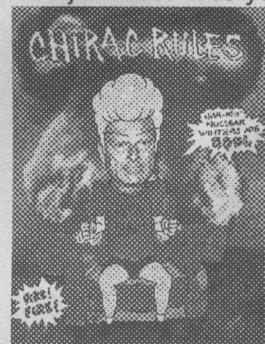
Please send me the next twelve copies of the EF! Action Update, Starting with number 21. Here is my **Minimum Contribution of £4 not in cash**, cheques made payable to EARTH FIRST! Donations above £4, for those who can afford it, enable us to reply to enquiries and give free subscriptions to Free Information Networks, Libraries, Grassroots & Community Groups etc. Please send more if you can. Fake names are always good for a laugh (and security) - John Major subscribes you know! Also Postal Orders are more secure than cheques.

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From: EF! AU Subscriptions, c/o Dead Trees EF!, Box 25, 82 Colston Street, Bristol, BS1 5BB.





# SUING THE POLICE

A growing number of people are now suing the police for damages in court instead of making a complaint against the police. Two reasons for this are 1) If you are successful you get financial compensation (cash) and 2) people are realising that taking out a complaint against the police rarely succeeds.

If you have been a victim of police misconduct and want to know if you can take them to court, this leaflet will help you decide if you want to take the matter further, and what to do next.

Obviously your chances of succeeding in suing the police are better if you have witnesses supporting your claims and any other evidence to back up your case. It may be difficult to win if it is just your word against theirs.

## WHAT CAN I SUE FOR?

**Most people want to sue the police because they have been wrongly arrested, assaulted by the police or prosecuted for something they didn't do.**

Here are some things you should know about these types of action:

### Wrongful Arrest

Unlawful arrest and detention is called false imprisonment. The police must justify any arrest and detention, so if you think the police have acted outside their powers it is worthwhile seeking further advice. False imprisonment can happen on the street, in your home, in a police vehicle and of course at the police station - in fact any place where the police control your freedom.

### Assault

This is much wider than many people think. You are assaulted as soon as someone touches you without a lawful reason to do so, and when they put you in fear of violence. Of course, it includes being punched and kicked and being subjected to illegal body searches. If you are assaulted by the police it is important to see a doctor (at casualty or your GP) straight away and for the injuries to be noted. You should also take photos of any injuries, if possible.

### Prosecuted for something I didn't do.

This is called malicious prosecution. You have to prove that the police had no reasonable cause to prosecute you and that they had a "wrongful motive". In doing so, you also usually have to win your case, which means either: (a) any charges were dropped before the case went to court, or (b) you accepted a bind-over at court before the case starts, or (c) you were acquitted (found innocent) in court.

### Other complaints.

You can also sue the police for negligence, trespass to land and goods, and a few other civil wrongs. It may also be possible to make a police complaint about some misconduct about which you cannot sue. However, don't make a police complaint if you intend to sue as this will provide them with your evidence before the case comes to court. It is highly unlikely that a police complaint will succeed. If you feel any of these apply to you, talk to a solicitor or advice or law centre.

## WHAT KIND OF COURT CASE WILL IT BE?

Suing the police takes place in the normal civil courts such as the County Courts or High Courts. It is similar to other kinds of civil cases except that there can be a jury (as well as a judge) in cases for false imprisonment and malicious prosecution. You are suing the police for compensation for the wrongs done to you. It may, though, take two or three years for the matter to get to court. It is unlikely that any police officer will be punished as a result. For this to happen you would also have to take a complaint out against the police officer(s) through the Police Complaints Authority. Again speak to a solicitor, advice or law centre, before you do this.

## HOW MUCH COULD I WIN?

It is very difficult to say because if the case goes as far as the court, it is up to the jury to decide. However, in a large number of cases the police pay up before the case goes to court, as they realise they probably won't win. Either way, some awards can be for thousands of pounds (see boxes). In 1993/4 the Metropolitan Police have set aside £8.9 million to cover the cost of compensation payments and associated legal fees for alleged cases of misconduct by the police (Time Out - Issue 118 April/May 1993).

## WHAT ARE THE COSTS OF SUING THE POLICE?

Legal Aid is normally available for these cases if you are not working, or on a very low income, or have high financial commitments. Legal Aid usually gives you an insurance against paying the legal costs of the police if you lose. Law Centres who do this kind of work may do so for free if you cannot get legal aid.

If you lose your case and are not legally aided you will probably have to pay your legal costs. These may be quite high so check this out before you start your case.

## HOW LONG HAVE I GOT TO START A CASE?

Three years for assault resulting in personal injury, six years for everything else. But of course you should start as soon as possible.

## WHAT SHOULD I DO NEXT?

You should write down the facts of the incident as soon as possible, including as much detail as you can about the police officers involved. You should see a doctor if you have any injuries. Speak to a firm of solicitors, but TRY to use ones who specialise in this type of work and are recommended to you. Campaign groups, Law Centres or Citizens Advice Bureaux should be able to help you with names of good solicitors, or at least tell you somebody who can.

## CASE 1

A black community activist accepted £50,000 and costs (believed to be around £70,000), to settle his action, out of court, for false imprisonment, assault and battery and malicious prosecution, from the Metropolitan Police. It is one of the largest settlements and resulted from a police raid on a restaurant and community centre in Notting Hill, west London in May 1988. During the raid the man was kept face-down on the floor for twenty minutes with two policemen sitting on his back and another with his foot on his head.

Guardian 13.10.92 & Independent 13.1.92

## CASE 2

In January 1989 a 73 year woman, was assaulted, maliciously prosecuted and falsely imprisoned by the police after her husband was arrested at their home in east London following a minor traffic accident. The woman was pulled to the ground and held down by three officers when she tried to give her husband his diabetes tablets. At the police station she was searched and charged with assault, but the charges were dropped. She sued the Metropolitan Police in a civil action and her award included £20,000 for the assault, £15,000 for malicious prosecution and £20,000 for false imprisonment. Reported in the Guardian, Independent and Hackney Gazette Feb/Mar, 92.

## USEFUL ADDRESSES

Legal Defence & Monitoring Group,  
c/o BM Haven, London, WC1N 3XX  
Tel. 0181 802 9804.

Liberty, 21 Tabard St., London, SE1  
4LA. Tel. 0171 403 3888.

Law Centres Federation, Duchess  
House, 18/19 Warren St, London,  
W1P 5DB.

ABC, 121 Railton Road, London  
SE24.

John Davis of Erwin & Mitchell has  
regularly, successfully sued the  
police on behalf of environmental  
activists. Tel. 01142 767777.

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Written by Steve Cragg of Hackney Law Centre  
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Earth First! is a network of autonomous groups who believe in doing just that-putting the earth first. It is based on a concept of non-hierarchical organisation, direct action, and the empowerment of individuals to confront the ecological catastrophe facing our planet. The above contacts are groups in this network. Let Earth First! Action Update know of any alterations/additions/removals from the list. Alterations from last months are shown in bold and underlined groups may no longer exist. Telephone numbers given for international contacts include UK dialling codes. Please note that the global contacts given are not "in charge" of each country's actions but simply represent a way in to their direct action network.