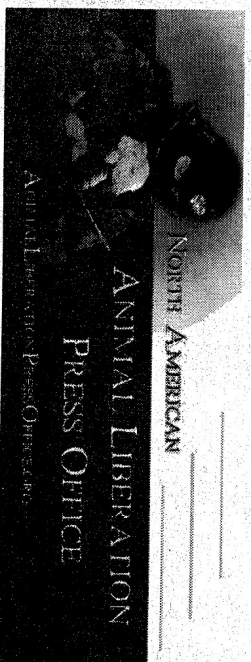


The struggle for animal liberation and environmental defense is about preserving the lives and rights of others; it's not about our own morality, it's about ending war. To apply tactics that result in long and costly court battles that serve only to divert attention away from animals in labs, fur farms, circuses and the wild and instead see us defending our own rights are strategically a failure. We must only engage in tactics and strategies that focus attention on the truly oppressed, the animal people and their natural homelands.

It's not about feeling good while preserving our privileged philosophies that further separate us from other humans resisting oppression by all means necessary; this fight is about stopping the wholesale slaughter of billions of innocent beings who depend on us for their survival. Let's get over our moral hang-ups and recognize that the fate of the earth and all life upon it calls on a continued escalation in direct action.

[No Compromise was a San Francisco-based bi-annual animal rights magazine first published in the winter of 1989. The magazine covered global aspects of animal rights and promoted a vegan lifestyle, which included the use of cruelty-free products. The magazine was founded by Freeman Wicklund and stopped publishing in 2005 with the 29th issue.]



The High Price of Pacifism
By Rod Coronado
(from *No Compromise* Issue 16)

I don't know how it happened, but this past Spring at the Environmental Law Conference in Eugene, Oregon I found myself on a workshop panel on police brutality. I have been on the receiving end of police brutality before, but in general, I avoid direct confrontations with law enforcement authorities and do not believe in confronting a militarily stronger opponent face to face. That is why I personally engaged in ALF activity, because when it comes to fighting an enemy much larger than yourself, the hit and run tactics of guerrilla warfare can create an advantage impossible in conventional warfare.

Too often I hear of nonviolent protesters becoming the victims of violence when they place themselves in the path of opponents who demonstrate total disregard for their adherence to Gandhian principles of nonviolence. So as I listened to each panel member recounting the instances when police terrorized them and the subsequent legal battles they became encumbered with as result, I couldn't help but feel that it was sometimes strategically unwise to pursue this avenue of action.

I am not pacifist. Yet at the E-Law Conference I got the feeling that the majority of attendees believed more in passive nonviolence than aggressive self-defense. So I knew it wouldn't be with wide support for me to say what I believed about my misgiving towards nonviolence in the political climate we find ourselves in today. I told the folks in Eugene that I came from long line of cop killers. I told them that had it not been for my ancestors' willingness to kill their oppressors, I might not be alive today.

In the 1800s and early 1900s, to not take up arms against the Spanish and then Mexican military often meant the loss of your land, liberty, cultural identity, and even your life. Yaqui seen was Yaqui killed, imprisoned, raped or deported and without willingness to defend yourself, you surrendered control over your own life and that of your family to your oppressor. In a similar fashion, albeit lot less extreme, I see activists doing the same thing when we

religiously adhere to nonviolence and the tactics of civil disobedience in the face of increasingly violent attacks by police.

Don't get me wrong, I prefer the path of nonviolence and it saddens me to see societal attention and change primarily in response only to aggression, but unfortunately, we don't make the rules, we just play the game. Governments rarely respond to whispers, but almost always hear a scream. In such times it becomes necessary for political struggles to reevaluate their tactics and strategies and choose those that result in the least amount of physical violence, not only against our opposition, but equally against ourselves.

To not adapt strategy to changing times becomes counterproductive and when we fail to do so we become partially responsible for the violence that occurs when our nonviolent protesters are encouraged to place themselves in the path of violent prone police. No matter how many nonviolent training sessions you go to or how many books on Gandhi you read, nothing is going to change this police state's policy of using violence against peaceful protesters when they know they have the law on their side and will always get away with it. Which leads to my next point. If we do continue to use nonviolent civil disobedience as a tactic, then we should react appropriately when that tactic is responded to violently. What I mean is self-defense. There is nothing immoral, unethical or wrong with defending oneself. It is the most instinctual response in the natural world. It's genetically built into most every animal and plant and the only thing that prevents us from using it is an institutionalized belief that all physical violence is bad.

Each time we allow violent attacks on us to happen without defensive action we give strength to dangerous precedent that tells the police that they can get away with literal murder. You need only see what happened to Earth Firster David Chain to believe that. The Pacific Lumber employee who felled a redwood tree on David was never even arrested for the death of this nonviolent forest defender, let alone spent one night in jail like so many nonviolent protesters.

In the 1980s while sabotaging fox hunts in Britain our group was attacked by hunt supporters. I thought I was a pacifist, but when I saw hunt saboteurs defending themselves and the effect it had in showing our attackers that we would not passively take a beating, I abandoned that philosophy for more pragmatic belief that allowed self defense. When the hunt supporters realized that we'd fight fire with fire they retreated. Their power over us was dependent on our refusal to defend ourselves.

Likewise, whether during a protest against the World Trade Organization, International Monetary Fund or any other target within the evil empire, when police take advantage of our commitment to nonviolence and victimize innocent young activists exercising their supposed constitutional right to protest, we must retaliate. Maybe not when such response would further endanger activists, but whenever peaceful protesters are beaten, pepper sprayed, and their civil and human rights violated, we have every right to demonstrate our right of self defense and target the property of our attackers.

Every time a protester is beaten, cop cars should burn. Every time an activist is pepper sprayed, tires should be slashed and windows of the offending agencies should be broken. These agencies obviously have total disregard for life, but they sure as hell care about their property. In such a way we are able to preserve our belief in the sacredness of all life while still retaining the ability to defend ourselves.

We must demonstrate our own power instead of always witnessing theirs being used against us and all of natural creation. Even Gandhi said that nonviolence was only appropriate when used against an opponent who respects it. In Northern Ireland it was state violence against nonviolent protesters that forced the resurgence in the Irish Republican Army. In South Africa it was state violence that forced the African National Congress to form the guerrilla army, Spear of the Nation and in the United States it was state violence that encouraged the growth of the Black Panthers. As Malcolm said, nonviolence is appropriate with nonviolent people, but if someone attacks you, self-defense is justifiable.