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Long Live Eco-Terror!

A defense of criminal sabotage

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Retrieved on 2021-11-14 from Rose City Counter Info

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*There are so many things of beauty
In this world to see
A wild, running river
Or an old-growth redwood tree
But in such an ugly situation
So sinister and dire
There's nothing quite so lovely
As a Wal-Mart on fire!*

The very concept of "eco-terror" is one of those heavy-handed Orwellian phrases that you're surprised anyone would ever fall for. But then again, America is the country where people accepted the Department of War's change of name to the Department of Defense.

Like the comrades of the decentralized vegan-anarchist collective, Food Not Bombs, who deliver free food to the homeless and hungry and have been characterized as "food terrorists" by the bourgeois mayor of Fort Lauderdale, "eco-terror" is an act that is unambiguously good but characterized as unambiguously evil.

The most famous "eco-terrorists" are the soldiers and martyrs of the Earth Liberation Front (ELF) and Animal Liberation Front (ALF) who sabotage the corporate tools and infrastructure that carry out the destruction of the Earth and the snuffing out of human and animal life. The ELF and ALF are strict pacifists, who believe in never harming a sentient creature, even an ethically guilty one. They only commit nonviolent acts of property destruction that pose no threat of injury or death to human beings. And in doing so they save animals from torture and slaughter, and protect ecosystems and human beings from being ravaged by the rapacious greed of CEOs.

The ALF are known to break into animal testing labs, fur farms, and inhumane animal breeding centers, rescue the animals, and burn down the building behind them, to prevent the perpetrators from quickly resuming their agenda of animal torture and animal murder.

The ELF are known to use rudimentary tools and tactics to sabotage logging and mining equipment: slashing tires, pouring sand in gas tanks, tearing up paved roads, setting fire to the vehicles and buildings owned by Earth-destroying industries.

Any heroic act of criminal property damage aimed at directly interrupting the heartless economic processes of slaughter, destruction, and extraction can be considered "eco-terror" and this is why it should be supported wholeheartedly. It is altruism in its purest form. Rather than sully one's conscience—by complicity with state authorities and their use of police and imprisonment, and complicity with corporate bastards and their parasitic exploitation of workers across the planet—"eco-terrorists" take direct action and directly disrupt the destruction and despoliation of our Earth.

All over the world they do this. Indigenous people in the Brazilian Amazon set fire to the trucks used by loggers and confiscate their chainsaws. The Sea Shepherd Conservation Society harass whaling and seal-hunting vessels on the ocean, and at harbor they sabotage and sometimes even sink destructive fishing vessels that threaten vulnerable species in the oceans. The ZADists in France have camped out in a forest, occupying it to prevent the expansion of an airport. Cascadia Forest Defenders in our own state of Oregon have climbed up into the trees near McKenzie Bridge to protest the sale of thousands of acres of public land, and to prevent the trees they sit in from being cut down. In Olympia, Washington, environmentalists sat on train tracks and kept a train full of oil from being transported for a full 24 hours. (Perhaps it might have been even more effective to simply tear up the tracks under cover of night, and leave without being caught.)

In the last 40 years, since "eco-terror" has exploded in popularity and use, there have been literally tens of thousands of incidents like these: regular everyday people taking matters into their own hands, saving animals and the Earth themselves, without waiting for the interventions of lawyers and politicians.

You can do it too! The upside of neoliberal imperial capitalism marketizing the entire world is that the whole world is now tightly interconnected, and small actions can have ripple effects a world away. Any action that causes financial loss, time delays, and bureaucratic headaches for Earth-aping activities can be a useful act of eco-sabotage. Profit-seeking corporations need extreme efficiency when they ravage the Earth in order to turn a profit, and when you disrupt them, when you cost them money, you prevent them from turning a profit. If they can't profit, they wouldn't be doing it in the first place, and they will quickly give up once their activities are no longer profitable. You, lone individual facing the global capitalist megamachine, can make a difference. Your actions, direct actions, can stop the destruction of our planet's vital life supporting systems

Anything can be a tool. A knife to slash tires, some sand to pour into a gas tank, a little fuel to set something on fire, a chain to lock up a machine's moving parts, a pound of sugar to ruin wet cement, anything you can think of. There's so much destruction, extraction, and exploitation going on. Dams killing rivers, farms sucking up too much freshwater, industrial feeding operations producing lakes full of hog and cattle feces, car dealerships selling gas-guzzling trucks and SUVs, loggers clear-cutting forests, oil companies drilling and laying pipelines, industrial fishing operations emptying the oceans. Use your imagination and make trouble. We have only one Earth and its ability to support human life is quickly being snuffed out in the name of short-term profit. Support imprisoned and paroled eco-saboteurs; and support the organizations that fight directly to save our Earth and the people and animals that depend on it.