

# Animal Liberation



*Ronnie Lee reports:* On Monday, July 26, about 30 members of the Hunt Saboteurs Association occupied the London offices of the British Field Sports Society.

Entering the open offices at about 1pm, armed with sleeping bags, bog paper and sandwiches, we announce our intention to stay a long time and that staff are free to leave at will.

Conversation with the staff is rather one-sided: "Do you work here just for the money or do you believe in it?" *No answer.* "Don't you feel bad about encouraging people to persecute animals?" *No answer.* "Would you like a Marmite sandwich?" *No answer.*

Most of the occupiers begin to sit down on the floor, while some of us barricade ourselves in Major Louis Feeny's office. We soon notice that files, accounts and pamphlets have somehow got scattered

all over the place, and the police are now outside Major Feeny's door.

We ultimately decide to let them in. "Who did this?" says one large policeman observing the mess. Following police threats of criminal damage charges, some folks agree to tidy up—only things get put back in the wrong places.

BFSS boss General Sir Richard Goodwin gives a euphemistic speech. Hunting is a British Tradition, a basic human liberty, we're over-emotional, we've no right to impose our views on others. He justifies blood sports as being legal, and when challenged on a moral basis replies "I'm not interested in morality". His argument defeated, he formally asks us to leave. So we sit, and amiable police carry us out with difficulty for some of us have linked arms. To show him we're not against him as a person, some of us shake hands with the general. 2.45pm and it's all over. So much for the sleeping bags and bog paper.

Into the pub and then on to the offices of the National Coursing Club in Kennington. Burst into the main office and invite people to leave if they wish.

Anti-bloodsports banner hung out of window and we begin to disrupt filing system. Eventually all the staff leave the main office and the door is barricaded. We wave to the crowd gathering outside.

Eight assorted police vehicles draw up. Lots of sirens and flashing blue lights. "This is a nonviolent occupation, nobody's going to get hurt", we shout from the window. Old Bill are outside the door

now, trying to get in. Saboteurs split into militant and not-so-militant factions. Not-so-militant worried about getting arrested and want to go. Rest of us have to let them. Barricades removed and police come charging in. This lot not so pleasant, start searching people and threatening charges. Bosswoman points out those who disrupted filing, but we all get away in the general confusion.

A bad day for the persecutors of wild animals and a good day for life.

A new group, the Animal Liberation Front, has claimed responsibility for sabotaging animal experiment centres. Since June, they have daubed a building with paint at the Charles River medical centre in Thanet, snatched three pregnant beagles from the Pfizer Pharmaceutical Research Centre in Thanet, and damaged vehicles at the Rabley Heath Breeding Centre in Herts to stop the transportation of animals to vivisection centres. Two years ago, the Band of Mercy did £1,000 worth of damage at Rabley Heath—one of the actions for which Ronnie Lee and Cliff Goodman were jailed and Robin Howard fined £500.

ALF has also claimed responsibility for damaging a badger digger's car in Cheshire, cutting and 150 yards of power cable at a country "sports" fair near Northampton, and damaging several pounds worth of angling equipment in Woolworths in Leamington Spa!