

# **MILITANT FORCES AGAINST HLS (MFAH)**



# **BLACKMAIL 3 & THE SHAC MODEL**



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# INTRODUCTION

## A conspiracy to incite

This introduction for me is by far the most difficult part of editing this zine. Why? As all the articles and information within these pages have been poached from the likes of; Bite Back Magazine, Blackmail 3 Support Group, 325 website, Corporate Watch and Crimethinc Ex-Workers Collective – so credit due to all these collectives for their writings.

I merely edited this zine to initiate a conspiracy. Not that I'm attempting to assert my innocence however, far from it in fact. But I did manage to do this within two days, which just goes to show how easy it is to make a zine these days. This additionally explains why there are no fancy graphics, only raw information presented in a basic format.

The inspiration for producing this zine proceeded the imprisonment of Debbie Vincent, and the current solidarity being organised for the Blackmail 3 and SOCPA 7 defendants. But make note, this is not produced by either support group, or member(s) therefore, or any aforementioned collective. This is by an anonymous individual – aka person(s) unknown.

The motivation for this creation was due to the dire lack of zines available on the SHAC campaign or repression of SHAC(tivists). The last documented release appears to be “SHAC Attack” produced in 2003, which was additionally translated into French. This zine seems to have since been lost, or widely neglected due to it's dated existence. It did however well document the intense (and successful) campaign against Marsh Insurance, at the time the world's largest insurance broker who insured HLS, but this now seems like ancient history.

To clarify the existence of this conspiracy. Contrary to previous and current defendants who have either pleaded guilty to conspiracy, or attempted to prove their innocence, I intend to do neither. I admit while it's easy to write due to my anonymity [1], the pages within this zine are intended to incite action, whether legal or illegal. To be clear however: I feel no guilt in producing this zine, and I am clearly not innocent. Therefore this zine should not be considered legit - far from it. It's distribution should realistically be considered as illicit.

To elaborate on the action I intend to incite, similar to many other quasi-anonymous publications, is primarily of solidarity but also that of attack. While the SHAC campaign may be over or on hiatus (who knows) the affiliates of HLS still very much exist. For example Novartis, who worked with cops to try and entrap Debbie using an undercover, as well as own their own animal labs, can be held directly accountable for co-operating with the state to imprison Debbie. As Novartis' corporate lawyer suggested – there could be a “backlash”.

Furthermore, this zine documents the campaign by the Militant Forces Against Huntingdon Life Sciences (MFAH), who definitely intended to incite militant action against HLS.

The reasoning for this is due to the connection between the actions of the MFAH and the trial of the Blackmail 3. While in reality there is no evidence of a direct connection, they are still related as part of a conspiracy with these “person(s) unknown” and therefore relevant. Not to mention the actions are pretty impressive, as I hope you'll agree after reading them.

To provide some context, in previous trials such as that of the UK SHAC 7 – who were imprisoned for a total of 50 years for 'conspiracy to blackmail' in 2009 [2] – the case was predominantly based on ALF actions. In the trial of the Blackmail 3 however, the militant actions of 2009 providing 'evidence' of the conspiracy were primarily those of the MFAH. [3]

Not forgetting the attempted (and failed) entrapment of SHAC activists concerning the Novartis CEO mother's ashes that were kidnapped by the MFAH in July 2009. If only he'd bothered to read the communique; asking for your ashes back 7 months later, when you've been told to act fast, probably means they've been flushed down the loo already [4]. Clown.

So for the first time these 24 communiqués from 2009-2012 of MFAH direct action in Western Europe have been compiled for your reading pleasure. I just hope I haven't missed one!

It's also worth noting that during this period it wasn't just the MFAH who were targeting HLS during the middle of the night. ALF activists maintained their decade long campaign, while occasionally the Animal Rights Militia and Animal Liberation Brigade pitched in too. But as you can imagine, to list all of these actions during this period would fill too many pages, not to mention be quite boring to compile - but there were many more than documented herein.

To complete this zine the article from Roller Thunder Magazine by Crimethinc (USA) - The SHAC Model: A critical assessment - is included. Too often the animal liberation movement, as well as other movements, fail to critically analyse their tactics and model(s) of organising.

Given that this is the only in-depth analysis of the SHAC campaign, it seems appropriate to include it in this zine. Especially now the movement is no longer still active due to the substantial amount of repression it has been dealt - it's more appropriate than ever. In no way however is this intended to be representative of the views of the editor of course.

Finally, I claim this opportunity to dedicate this zine to Darko Matthers [5]. A friend & comrade I spent many hours with discussing anarchism, nihilism, and what he coined 'civil anarchism'. The section on the MFAH is dedicated to him, for his contribution in publishing insurrectionist zines such as “August 2011 Revolt”, as well as his strong conviction in critical analysis.

While he will be missed, leaving a gap in publication - his memory lives on in these pages.

#### Notes

[1] Using the Tor Network is still an effective way to protect your online anonymity. Furthermore, PGP is an incredibly useful tool for encrypted communication. Not forgetting Tails that leaves no trace on a computer harddrive, and/or TrueCrypt for encrypting computers, harddrives, memory sticks, documents, etc. Whatever you do, stay clear of Microsoft Windows yo!

[2] For more information and links to articles on this trial see: [www.indymedia.org.uk/en/2009/01/419733.html](http://www.indymedia.org.uk/en/2009/01/419733.html)

[3] A look at Bite Back Magazine ([directaction.info](http://directaction.info)) will confirm that the majority of attacks against HLS in 2009 were by the MFAH.

[4] In MFAH's 10<sup>th</sup> communique from August 2009, they threatened to “empty the urn in the closest toilet” if the CEO did not act fast.

[5] Darko Matthers was a comrade of Darko Matters Publications and the website [www.prisonislanduk.noblogs.org](http://www.prisonislanduk.noblogs.org).

*“The lack of major political violence and revolutionary struggle, and the sporadic and disorganised insurrections (in time and in consciousness), means that while the UK has a very strong democratic-social (cross-class) tradition, it lacks the sort of conflictual tradition of other European countries. This is the political landscape of the UK within which the “anarchist”/far-left is firmly situated.”*

**Introduction to 'Anarchy? Civil or Subversive'  
by Darko Matthers**

# THE MILITANT FORCES AGAINST HLS (MFAH)



“We will attack your private life  
wherever possible.”

**MFAH Austria**

August 2009

## COMMUNIQUE 1

NIGHT: Monday 30 - Tuesday 31 March [2009]

TARGET: 6 Bayer and Novartis criminals

AIM: Hitting them where it hurts and making their lives miserable. Dropping HLS.

MISSION MESSAGE: There is just one message for Bayer and Novartis. Drop Huntingdon Life Sciences or things will only get worse. You make the animals suffer, we will make you suffer. And Bayer we will never forget you have been supplying gas to the nazi's for killing jews. You are a company without any remorse.

### **MISSION REPORT:**

HLS Customer: Novartis

Position: Vice Chairman and lead director (involved in Novartis Germany and international HQ in Switzerland)

Name: Prof. Ulrich Lehner

Address: [...], Duesseldorf

Phone number: [...]

Details: We climbed over his gate. Smashed his doorhandle. Went up to his house and covered the front in spraypaint. We ran to car park. Poured paintstripper over his Porsche and other sports car. Slashed all tires of all cars.

HLS Customer: Bayer

Position: Member of Supervisory Board and Member of Human Resources Committee

Name: Karl Josef Ellrich

Address: [...], Dormagen

Phone number: [...]

Details: House got covered in spraypaint. Car got paintstripped and all tires slashed.

HLS Customer: Bayer

Position: Global head Of supply Chain Management Pharmaceutical operations

Name: Dr. Hans-Walter Höhl

Wife: Dorothea

Address: [...], Burscheid

Phone number: [...]

Details: House got covered in spraypaint. Car got paintstripped and all tires slashed.

HLS Customer: Bayer

Position: Honory chairman

Name: Hermann Joseff Strenger

Address: [...], Leverkusen

Phone number: [...]

Details: House got covered in spraypaint. Huge slogan was left on his dark garagedoor with white spraypaint, visible from whole street.

Special: You and your family are the worst scum of all. Your dad worked for Bayer during the second world war and that was when Bayer supplied gas to the nazi's for gassing the jews. You followed your dad and just couldn't resist taking more lives of innocent animals. You are part of criminal bloodthirsty family. We will not hold back.

HLS Customer: Bayer

Position: Director Material Science

Name: Dennis McCullough

Address: [...], Duesseldorf

Phone number: [...]

Details: While lights in the house were on and a dog was barking we covered his house in spraypaint. Two cars got paintstripped and tires got slashed.

HLS Customer: Bayer

Position: Director, Minister of foreign affairs

Name: Dr. Franz-Josef Berners

Wife: Doris

Daughter: Hildegard

Address: [...], Leverkusen

Details: House got covered in spraypaint. On big white wall we left message 'Bayer - ANIMAL AUSCHWITZ. DROP HLS'

Special: How was your retiring day Dr. Franz? When you woke up on Tuesday morning March 31 that this will be your last day at Bayer and live your life without your past. But none of this is true. We will keep hunting down the scum who killed animals, not forgetting about gassing the jews by Bayer. We will never let the scum like you live in peace. Your past will always follow you. BTW sorry we missed your birthday on March 27th.

**MISSION COMPLETE - NOW FOR ROUND 2...**

Militant Forces against HLS

Tier Befreiungs Front/Animal Liberation Front

## COMMUNIQUE 2

**28 April 2009**

TARGET:

>Sandoz<

Susanne Gebhardt

[...], Garching, Germany

ACTION: Rows of garages and house painted to let neighbors know about Sandoz Susanne killing kids and animals

TARGET:

>Sanofi<

Dr. Eckehard Leberer

[...]

ACTION: Incendiary devices left under his luxury 4WD outside his house

DROP HLS.

Militant Forces against HLS

## COMMUNIQUE 3

### Attacks against NYSE Euronext PUPPYKILLERS May 2009

\*\*\*\*\*

Roland Gaston-Bellegarde  
Wife: [...]  
NYSE Euronext International Board of Directors

ADDRESS:

-----

[...] Impasse Clos de la Gueriniere  
Morsang-sur-Orge

ACTION:

-----

'Drop HLS or [...]' and 'NYSE SCUM' was painted with red paint on his white garage door. How was it waking up, planning to go to work with your car and finding out your gate was concreted shut? [...] Knowing you don't give a shit about animals, it would be smart [...]

\*\*\*\*\*

Xavier Jean-Pierre Pontacq  
Atos Euronext Director

ADDRESS:

-----

[...] Rue du Marechal Foch  
Ablon-sur-Seine

ACTION:

-----

We climbed his 3 meter high spikefence and ended up in his garden surrounding his house. We paintstripped his posh car and punctured a tire. After that we sneaked up over the grated floor towards his front door and painted it. In case someone would wake up and notice us we [...]. To finish it off we put a heavy chain lock around his only gate.

\*\*\*\*\*

TARAK ACHICHE  
Euronext Group Chief Information Officer

ADDRESS:

-----

[...] Avenue des Pages  
Le Vésinet

ACTION:

-----

This one was simple and straight forward. We sneaked up to the posh car of Tarak and placed 3 incendiary devices underneath his car, turned them on 39 minutes and left again unnoticed. 39 Minutes later it was time for a high five by the Special Arson Enforcements team of the Militant Forces against HLS France.

\*\*\*\*\*

WE WILL [...] NYSE EURONEXT. DROP HUNTINGDON LIFE SCIENCES.

MFAH France

## COMMUNIQUE 4

**10-05-2009, 03.15am**

**SC Novartis, Saint Louis, France**

<private sports facility for Novartis workers>

We are writing to explain the incendiary action on the clubhouse at SC Novartis (St. Louis) - as reported by regional news two days later - that stands in the shadows of Novartis HQ, Basel. The strike was carried out as an attack on the leisure time of the Novartis murderers. While they exercise, playing tennis and other sports, there are animals in cages that have not even the space to walk. As they check their noticeboards (thanks for all the addresses!) and walk round their clubhouse they will come face to face with our painted disagreements and suggestions.

We didn't expect a large fire on the Franco-Suisse border to go unnoticed - or we would have burnt that building to the ground - but we wish to make it abundantly clear that we will be at your workplaces, at your homes, affecting your leisure time and attacking you wherever we will find you. We are only beginning to show you what we are capable of, the lengths we are willing to go to. Our demands are simple and you know what they are. It's your move.

We're fucking coming for you Novartis...

Militant Forces Against HLS

## COMMUNIQUE 5

NAME: Peter Antoon Hugo Guenter

CRIME: Sanofi Aventis Head of Board

LOCATION: [...], Laarne

\*\*\*\*\*

Hiding in a dark house with no number? do better than that! We found you and left you with black slogans on your garages, a car on the drive paint-stripped and tyres slashed, and with five liters of weedkiller poured around your tidy looking front garden.

NAME: Nico Roger - Madeleine van Hoecke

CRIME: earning blood money from Schering Plough

LOCATION: [...], Lokeren

\*\*\*\*\*

We wonder if you will have spent the morning desperately scrubbing your walls, trying to hide the truth that we painted over your drive, sidewalk and house. What will the neighbors think?

NAME: Greta Beenaerts

CRIME: Bayer Director, Division Manager Consumer Care

LOCATION: [...], Geel

\*\*\*\*\*

How do you like the messages we left over your fancy house? Your special lighting system certainly helped to guide us.  
Shame neither them or your security camera could protect your car from our paint-stripper and knives. You're just lucky it wasn't worse for you Bayer scum!

You bastards can expect the Militant Forces outside your houses any night until you drop HLS..

MFAH

## COMMUNIQUE 6

Maybe Geri Brouwers has been reading the news, or maybe he was told of the visit to his employee earlier in the week. Whichever, when we got to his house, we found that two of his three cars were no longer on his drive, but suspiciously hidden in the garage...

It's nice to know that our reputation precedes us, but we now had too many petrol bombs! In return we blew up the car that was there (you might as well give up trying to sell it, we don't think it's worth much now) and set fire to the tidy front hedge that blocks your drive from the road. That can serve as a lasting reminder.

Don't think you can escape by hiding you fucking dirt bastard, this ends on our terms!

FUCK HLS

The Militant Forces Against Huntingdon Life Sciences

Details:

-----

Name> Geri Brouwers

Crime> Schering Plough General Manager Belgium/Luxembourg, Director

Home Address> [...], Grimbergen [B]

Home Tel> [...]

Date> May-2009

## COMMUNIQUE 7

20-05-2009

This night we placed incendiary devices under 2 expensive cars locked behind the gate of Ulrich Lehner.

We will only give you two warnings Ulrich, the third time that we will pay a visit someone will get hurt.

Make Novartis drop Huntingdon Life Sciences or you wished you would have made that decision earlier.

Further information on this murderer:

Since 2002 he is part of the Board of Directors of Novartis AG Switzerland. He is Vice Chairman and Lead Director as well as Chairman of the Audit and Compliance Committee. He is also a member of the Chairman's Committee, the Compensation Committee, and the Corporate Governance and Nomination Committee. The Board has appointed him as Audit Committee Financial Expert. He

qualifies as an independent Non-Executive Director.

Address:

Prof. Ulrich Lehner

[...]

Dusseldorf, Germany

**\*Special note\***

We are happy to see the increasing attacks on HLS targets around the world by the Militant Forces against Huntingdon Life Sciences, the ALF and other individuals. It is our duty to take down the murdering scum who are responsible for the killing inside HLS.

Let it be clear to any company, investors or any kind or link to HLS that we will track you down and come after you. It has come to a point where we must hit hard, strong and effective, to take down the murderers and make them suffer.

It has come to a point where we must take any necessary action to make the murderers stop. And if necessary we are prepared to do physical harm.

You can expect the MFAH on your doorstep if YOU have links with HLS.

Novartis, DROP HUNTINGDON LIFE SCIENCES OR BE PREPARED!

-Militant Forces against Huntingdon Life Sciences-

## COMMUNIQUE 8



NAME: Louis COUILLARD

CRIME: France Pfizer CEO

LOCATION: [...], 75016 Paris, France

\*\*\*\*\*

'PFIZER DROP HLS', 'COUILLARD SCUM' and 'FMAH' was painted with red paint on your house and sidewalk.

How do you like the messages we left over your fancy house?

Shame neither cops near your street or your job could protect your house. You're just lucky it wasn't worse for you Pfizer scum!

We wonder if you will have spent the morning desperately scrubbing your walls, trying to hide the truth that we painted over your sidewalk and house. What will the neighbors think?

You bastards can expect the Militant Forces outside your houses any night until you drop HLS..

MFAH France

PS : Hey friends, call this scum: [...] or [...] or [...]

## COMMUNIQUE 9



\*\*\*\*\*

### **Daniel Vasella's Hunting House Oberbach, A-6653 Bach, Austria**

\*\*\*\*\*

**night 02-03 August 2009**

\*\*\*\*\*

As well as butchering animals at HLS, Novartis Chairman and CEO Daniel Vasella likes to butcher animals in his own private hunting estate in Austria. He had it personally built in a town called Bach, up in the mountains. There is a large cooling unit and an area for preparing his kills, which he sometimes supplies to the local restaurant. There is also a large garage, that we guess holds the car that picks him up from the neighboring town (the rich scumbag flies in on his personal helicopter!)

You could tell it was his house from a distance - the skulls of deer we saw hanging from the walls outside and inside only made us more determined.

60 litres of petrol was concentrated in two places around the house - the roof sheltering the front entrance was packed full of petrol bombs with most of the petrol containers placed under it by the door to catch the wood inside, and around the side the wooden garage door and angled roof supports were targeted with the second group of devices.

It hasn't been your week has it, Daniel? Understand this: This will continue until you sever all ties with Huntingdon Life Sciences. We will attack your private life wherever possible. If you think it's fun killing animals in your own forest in Austria and bring them to your hunting estate, we will destroy it. Have you got any more hobbies Daniel? We will destroy them. We will destroy your life. Just remember one thing, dealing with HLS means dealing with US.

**DROP HLS NOW!**

MFAH Austria - if it can burn, it WILL...

## COMMUNIQUE 10

>>Location: Friedhof Hof, Chur,  
Switzerland<<

>>>Target: Daniel Vasella [15.08.1953],  
lives in Risch<<<

In the night of the 27/28th July, the  
Militant Forces entered the graveyard  
that contains the family graves of Daniel  
Vasella, CEO/Chairman of Novartis.

The first grave was rearranged as a  
warning for his coming 56th birthday.  
Plants were ripped out and two extra  
crosses naming Daniel and his wife  
Anne-Laurence Vasella were added to  
the grave. And the second grave -  
holding the remains of his immediate  
family - was dug in order for an urn of  
ashes to be removed.



--DROP HLS NOW--

On the 15th of August, this message was sent to Daniel Vasella's email:

'Daniel Vasella,

Because of you there are thousands of animals dying unnamed in mass graves, but yours was all too easy to find. If you wish the urn that was taken from the grave to be returned then you need to publically finish with Huntingdon Life Sciences immediately.

You have 2 choices Mr Vasella: lose HLS or LOSE THE URN.'

We kidnapped the ashes of one of his immediate family members in order to teach him that in life and death all beings are equal and deserve to be treated so. Until he can show some respect for the animals Novartis sends to slaughter then we see no reason to respect his dead. It could be either of his sisters, one who died of Lymphdrüsenkrebs or one who died in a car accident, or could it be his father who died unexpectedly after an operation when he was 13?

This time you've got the chance to receive back your family's urn in exchange for dropping HLS for now and for ever, Daniel, and if you don't act fast enough we can just empty the urn in the closest TOILET...

The Militant Forces Against Huntingdon Life Sciences

## COMMUNIQUE 11

[18/09/09]

Letters have been posted to several directors of HLS's main customers. We hope your families dont open the mail first.

Militant Forces Against HLS.

## COMMUNIQUE 12

### 5th October

As a small taste of what the MFAH are capable of, we not only tracked down the home of Leonard Neville Brewis, Astra Zeneca's Engineering Technology Director, but we also slashed all the tyres on his car.

Leonard Neville Brewis (married to Felicity)

[...]

Bristol

BS9 1SE

Tel: [...]

## COMMUNIQUE 13

### 31.10.09

HLS customer Astra Zeneca have got away with far too much for far too long. In the early hours of Halloween, the MFAH paid a visit to the home of one of their Group Engineers; Robert J Baxendine and his wife Ruth ([...], Hawkesbury Upton, Badminton, Avon, GL9 1BL. Phone: [...]). Both their cars were doused with paint stripper and had their tyres slashed. Who's going to be next?

## COMMUNIQUE 14

**Update from Bite Back:** Karim Bohn no longer works at Fortress

"WHEN: 5-1-2010, Night time!

WHERE: Karim Bohn

[...]

In the night of 5 on 6 January the M.F.A.H. has operated by placing incendiary devices at the car of Karim

Bohn, Vice President at Fortress Investment. Fortress Investment lends money to the filthy business of Huntingdon Life Sciences, they are the main investor!

The M.F.A.H. hopes Fortress Investment gets the point, when our family on earth, the animals, are getting threatened and murdered by evil human beings wearing white lab coats, that there will be caring human beings waging a militant war against those evil people and companies responsible, including any company supporting these evil businesses.

Bad luck to you Karim that the fire brigade couldn't get through because of a too small street and too many cars ha! What do you think that will happen when we would set fire to your house once you and Jörg Dietrich Beyer are off to work, no fire brigade for you we guess!

When words are not enough direct action will be taken against you Fortress Investment. Drop HLS now or one of you will be next...

And remember, we know you've been filthy liars. Andrew Baker can tell you what he wants, in the end



he is the same like all the other corporate scum, it's about making money, on the back of innocent lives. There's nothing that can stop us from making this your worst nightmare in the whole Fortress Investment Group History.

Withdraw the loans given to HLS and stop any business with them, and your company's future will look a lot more positive.

M.F.A.H. Deutschland 2010

## COMMUNIQUE 15

On the early hours of Monday 19th July, Highgate Farm in Lincolnshire, UK was visited and information was gathered to be used in the future against this lab animal breeder.

But before leaving we wanted to make sure that Geoffrey Douglas, the owner of the 'farm' was left under no illusion to what we think of his animal abusing ways and to remind him that we're not bothered by his noisy alarm system or his security lights (thanks it helped us see where your delivery vans were). We lit up the night sky in our own way as flames engulfed the vehicles, make sure you tell your insurance company that you are a high risk customer. You are quite isolated on Highgate Lane and we're sure to return and leave more messages until you do the right thing and pull out of animal abuse once and for all.

The rabbits and ferrets you breed and send to their torture and death in labs across the UK will not be forgotten and scream out for justice. We'll be back when you least expect it until you stop your vile business for good. This is just a little warning, if we have to come back again the next time we will not be so nice.

You only have one choice, make it soon...

For the animals we will fight.

MFAH

## COMMUNIQUE 16

[12/08/10]

Last night the Militant Forces Against Huntingdon struck at two supporters of HLS in the capital, locks were glued firmly shut at the offices of Fortress Investment Group and several paint bombs were thrown at the UK HQ of AstraZeneca. Both of these companies are guilty of allowing Huntingdon Life Sciences to continue killing 500 animals a day. Cut your ties with HLS or we will return.

Militant Forces Against Huntingdon.

In solidarity with Walter Bond

*Editors note: In November 2011 Walter Bond released a pro-life and anti-abortion statement, and is unfortunately still supported by the animal liberation movement broadly. See here for statement:*

<http://www.negotiationisover.net/2011/11/28/walter-bonds-official-statement-about-abortion/>

## COMMUNIQUE 17

*[France]*

In the early morning of the 30st October 2010 the Militant Forces Against Huntingdon visited the home of Frederic Cezard Executive Director, Equities and Funds at Nomura. We burned down his car on his driveway in solidarity with all our comrades around the world who are jailed for animal, human and earth liberation. We will keep this fight going untill all are free to live how they want to live. untill all animals inside laboratories like Huntingdon Life Sciences can run free trough the forests and for the first time in their lifes, feel alive.

Untill All Are Free!

Militant Forces Against Huntingdon

## COMMUNIQUE 18

GERMANY, 2010 This is a message to Nomura. LET FORTRESS WITHDRAW THEIR 70 MILLION DOLLAR LOAN TO HUNTINGDON LIFE SCIENCES! To make this message a little bit clearer the Managing Director at Nomura, Dr. Hanno Kühn, has to walk to work from now on. His car burned to the ground in the night of november 29th. Militant Forces Against Huntingdon

## COMMUNIQUE 19

*[03/12/10 – Germany]*

Nomura, HLS has to go, we will go on until this happens so you have only one choice, make Fortress retract the loan to HLS. In the morning of December the 2th, the Militant Forces Against Huntingdon paid a little visit to Sven Krüger an executive director at Nomura. the MFAH paint stript his nice new car and emptied a bucked of paint on his driveway. Also a message to his neighbors was left on some garage boxes further down the street 'Sven Krüger Puppy Killing Scum'

Militant Forces Against Huntingdon

## COMMUNIQUE 20

in the night of 9 december 2010 an arson attack took place on a building of Astra Zeneca(AZ) in Wedel, Germany. After cutting through the fence, four petrol bombs were placed at strategic points around a wing of the schooling building.

Astra Zeneca is one of the most important clients of Huntingdon Life Sciences(HLS) a contract lab that tests products on animals for any company that pays them for it. this sick company is notorious for their animal abuse. some abuse filmed by under cover people is workers hitting beagle dogs in the face and monkeys that wake up while their rib cage is being cut open. HLS has to close, by any means necessary.

This attack is meant as a warning to Astra Zeneca, and any other company using HLS. Drop HLS or deal with us.

this action is dedicated to all SHAC prisoners.

## Militant Forces Against Huntingdon



### COMMUNIQUE 21

*[2011]*

AstraZeneca hasn't quite learned the lesson like Novartis and Roche, that dealing with HLS is bad for business. So we decided to disrupt their day for them on 9th Nov.

While AstraZeneca use HLS to inflict great suffering and deaths on animals and humans with their unscientific wholesale abuse, there will always be those that will act for those with no voice. The countless victims of their genocide against creation must end and we will seek justice for those that have been blighted by the corp pharma machine.

We hope you 'enjoyed' your extra break from the offices at 2 Kingdom Street, London and we will never back down from our task. Expect much more AstraZeneca, you are firmly in our sights and you will stop your abuse and cruelty or face the consequences of your actions. Maybe next time it will be more than just a scare...

Until every cage is empty and HLS is closed

MFAH

### COMMUNIQUE 22

*[14/11/11 - Sweden]*

As humans we do a lot of things wrong, we destroy our natural surroundings that we need to survive, put concrete structures on land that once thrived and make fertile ground into deserts. All this makes for suffering around the globe. Humans on one side of the world suffer from hunger and thirst because on the other side they use too much. Animals suffer as their land gets taken by big companies, or if they are owned by us humans. But the suffering goes on for the non human animal, in abattoirs they get their throats slit while in the vivisection labs they get poisoned and killed.

Benny Hygrell works for Astra Zeneca a company that survives on the suffering of animals. Astra Zeneca works together with Huntingdon Life Sciences a animal testing facility that kills around 500 animals a day. Benny Hygrell as a Swedish board member at Astra Zeneca pays for the slaughter of these 500 animals each day.

We decided that enough is enough and visited Benny Hygrell at [...] 64735 MARIEFRED and put petrol bombs underneath his car.

as you let the animals suffer we let you suffer.

Militant Forces Against Huntingdon

## COMMUNIQUE 23

**14 NOVEMBER 2011, SÖDERTÄLJE SWEDEN**

Tonight we visited Leif Gallo, senior counsel legal research & development at Astra Zeneca. We burned down his car in the hope that Astra Zeneca will finally realize that its not only for the animals best interest but also for their own.

Drop Huntingdon Life Sciences.

Militant Forces Against Huntingdon

## COMMUNIQUE 24

[23/02/12]

Henderson Biomedical are a newly exposed supplier of lab equipment to Huntingdon Life Sciences. A few nights ago activists visited their premises in Lower Sydenham, London, to deliver a message to the company.

Mark if you keep supporting HLS you will continue to be a target of the animal rights movement.

It won't hurt to stop dealing with them but as the graffiti said, this is just the start if you don't.

If you continue to be responsible for animal cruelty, the attacks will continue.

Drop HLS!

MFAH - Militant Forces Against Huntingdon

## SOURCES

**Bite Back Magazine**

[www.directaction.info](http://www.directaction.info)

*Editors note: Some of the communiques already had personal details (such as home addresses and telephone number) removed and replaced with [...] by Bite Back due to legal reason. The others have been removed as it is not guaranteed that these details are still correct in 2014, and some targets (such as Fortress and NYSE Euronext) are no longer affiliated with HLS.*

*So if you want to know an address/telephone number then search for the uncensored versions on the Bite Back website, don't forget to do your research as well though. I just didn't want to give the impression that the information published is still accurate to date.*



# THE BLACKMAIL 3



*“In some ways I’m really not surprised I was found guilty, as I don’t believe anyone can get justice when faced with a political conspiracy charge and the huge resources of the state and multinationals against me.” - **Debbie Vincent***

# HUNTINGDON LIFE SCIENCES

*From [blackmail3.org/hls.html](http://blackmail3.org/hls.html):*

Huntingdon Life Sciences (HLS) is Europe's largest animal testing laboratory. They kill 500 animals every day.

Because they're a contract testing facility, they will test anything they're paid to - including household products, cleaning chemicals, herbicides, pesticides, food colourings, food additives, artificial sweeteners, GMOs, photocopier ink... They'll poison animals with anything they can profit from.



Some of the animals used in experiments at HLS are monkeys, dogs, cats, rabbits, guinea pigs, hamsters, mice and birds. Right now there are about 70 thousand animals locked inside the lab facing a death sentence.

Staff at HLS have been routinely exposed for animal cruelty, misconduct and falsifying test data. They've been caught dealing drugs on site, simulating sex with animals and most famously, punching beagle puppies in the face. HLS is the only contract testing lab to have had its licence temporarily revoked for animal cruelty. Needless to say, this type of abuse happens every day inside Huntingdon, with another animal dying every 3 minutes.

Compassionate people have been so outraged by what's happening that HLS has become the most protested animal lab in history and the target of the largest and most effective grassroots animal rights campaign the world has ever seen; SHAC (Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty). Over the past decade hundreds of companies - including some of the world's largest financial institutions - have cut their ties with HLS and sworn never to deal with them again. Because of this, HLS are now over £100 million in debt.

HLS have been repeatedly dragged to their knees and would have been forced into closure many times already, except for help from the UK government, who have vested interests in the pharmaceutical and vivisection industries. In a desperate attempt to protect these interests, the government stepped in and provided a massive lifesaving loan, along with private banking and insurance facilities to HLS. Huntingdon is the only commercial business in history to have received private banking and insurance from the British government. On top of this, the UK authorities have launched a lengthy campaign of repression against anyone they consider to be a threat to HLS. This has included numerous international police operations, with surveillance, undercover police infiltrators and dozens of raids and arrests. Activists have also been given disproportionately long prison sentences and extreme bail and licences conditions - in some case, even lifelong ASBOs.

**This latest case against the Blackmail3 is the third conspiracy to blackmail trial against people accused of campaigning against HLS.** Once again, the authorities are attempting to silence anyone they believe to be challenging animal testing in the UK.

**It's important that we stand in solidarity against animal testing and state repression.**

# CASE BACKGROUND

*From [Blackmail3.org/case.html](http://Blackmail3.org/case.html):*

**People believed to be campaigning to close down the world's third largest animal testing facility; Huntingdon Life Sciences (HLS), have repeatedly been subjected to arrest and harassment.**

On the morning of 6th July 2012, several teams of police raided the homes and business premises of three people arresting them on suspicion of "conspiracy to blackmail", in relation to animal testing laboratory, Huntingdon Life Sciences. The person in the UK is accused of committing this between 2001-2011 and the 2 people in Holland between November 2008-December 2010. In recent years this charge has been deliberately used against campaigners due to its good conviction rate and because it carries a maximum sentence of 14 years in prison. This is the third UK conspiracy to blackmail trial involving people accused of campaigning against HLS.



One set of raids took place in London, while the others took place at two locations in Amsterdam. Two people in Amsterdam were arrested with a European arrest warrant, and after a week in prison they were released on strict bail conditions, having surrendered their passports. They now await extradition to the UK. The third defendant, in London, was bailed the following evening and also has many restrictive bail conditions.

During the Dutch raids, police forced entry into a shared office space, removing computers, electronic devices and paperwork belonging to a variety of campaign groups. This is on top of a huge amount of items taken from the suspects' homes, which included cameras, printers, storage devices and several laptops.

On 21st September 2012 another person was also raided and arrested in the UK, but their charges were eventually dropped on 19th March 2013.

**Debbie Vincent in the UK began her trial on 12th February 2014 and received a guilty verdict on 18th March 2014. On 17th April 2014 she was sentenced to 6 years in prison, followed by a 5 year ASBO. The extradition of the two people from Holland can't take place yet, so their trial is delayed until a later date.**

This most recent case reflects the ongoing attempts by the UK authorities to criminalise and stop the effective and persistent targeting of HLS. Huntingdon have once again clicked their fingers to order a round-up of people they believe are affecting their business.

**In an atmosphere of increasing repression against activists and the criminalisation of effective campaigns, it is important that we show our solidarity for those involved and form a strong network of support for the animal rights movement in the UK.**

# COURT REPORT

*Here's a brief update on the court case for one of the Blackmail3 defendants potentially due to come to a conclusion on Monday. From <http://325.nostate.net/?p=9830>.*

**Court updates about Debbie's trial at Winchester Crown Court over the past five weeks (so far).**

## **Week 1**

Wednesday, 12th February 2014: Debbie's trial begins at Winchester Crown Court and is expected to last about 4 weeks. Due to prosecution's failure to disclose information and late service of evidence, the trial was adjourned until Monday 17th February.

## **Week 2**

Monday, 17th February 2014: Debbie's trial reconvened at Winchester Crown Court. In an interesting development, the defence revealed that the 'Novartis executive' who campaigners previously dealt with, was in fact an undercover policeman, working under the alias 'James Adams'. The prosecution were pushing for another adjournment, but the defence put forward their argument for the trial to continue as planned even though there was a chance of an unfair trial. The judge heard from both sides and called for time to deliberate, with court adjourned until 10.30am tomorrow.

Tuesday, 18th February 2014: Following more legal arguments, court has been adjourned until Thursday afternoon, after which it will be adjourned again until Monday while the defense have time to go through late disclosed evidence.

Thursday, 20th February 2014: More legal arguments took place in court this afternoon. Debbie is due back in court on Monday, with her trial finally expected to begin next week. Some of the prosecution's evidence was taken out due to the undercover officer breaking PACE guidelines as well as other legal issues removing some of the prosecution's case against Debbie.

## **Week 3**

Monday, 24th February 2014: Debbie's trial began today. The jury was sworn in and introduced to the case. They then heard the prosecution's opening arguments. Cross examination of witnesses and statements will begin tomorrow.

Tuesday, 25th February 2014: Began working through evidence footage of 'secret' recordings that were made by the police during meetings with Novartis at court today, before the trial was adjourned for the afternoon due to a power cut.

Wednesday, 26th February 2014: The majority of court time today was spent listening to the covert police recordings from 2009, of three meetings between activists and Novartis, who were a top customer of HLS. The Novartis staff member present was Head of Security Andrew Jackson (AJ), revealed in court to have previously worked for the UK Government as a 'spook'. Along with him was

a man claiming to be Corporate Security and Head of Special Projects for Novartis, who was actually an undercover law enforcement officer, using the fake name 'James Adams' (JA). The activists were deceived about his identity and the police involvement. Both of them were searched by Novartis' security before the meetings and AJ and JA repeatedly emphasised that the meetings must be confidential and not recorded, falsely claiming that they were not recording the meetings themselves. The activists were tricked into attending the meetings in unsuccessful attempts to link them to criminal activity, with Novartis and the police lying to them and misleading them throughout the process.

Thursday, 27th February 2014: In court both Andrew Jackson (AJ) and James Adams (JA) gave evidence. The defence questioned AJ about many of the scandals, cruelty and corruption that HLS and Novartis have been responsible for, but as became a pattern with him, he seemed unable to remember anything and somehow oblivious to any of the bad press his company has received. It transpired that he had lied on one of his police witness statements by claiming JA was a member of staff, despite knowing he was an undercover police officer. AJ admitted that the police had increasing involvement and were guiding the communication allegedly sent from Novartis to SHAC. It was stated that senior police staff from SO15 had advised AJ to lie about JA's identity in his statements, seemingly with the intention of misleading the court (judge, jury and defense) throughout the Blackmail3 trial(s). JA later gave evidence himself, using his false identity and hidden behind a screen to shield him from public view. A start was then made on looking at the computer evidence being used in the case.

Anonymous threatening emails had been sent to Novartis using the alias 'George Orwell'. The prosecution argued that Debbie is linked to George Orwell because she was found to have a copy of '1984' (book written by George Orwell) on her hard drive, has quoted George Orwell in the past and also received (unsolicited) messages from email lists in which someone else had quoted him. The defence provided documentation revealing that 'George Orwell' is in fact a default alias of the email software used to send the anonymous emails. They also argued that Debbie has used quotes from many well known people and is far from having any obsession with George Orwell, as the prosecution are trying to claim. This was apparently recognised by the Judge, who said "she doesn't even have 'Animal Farm'!".



Friday, 28th February 2014: The prosecution finished the first week of the trial by covering the admissions; including the history of the campaign against HLS and the previous convictions of some activists who were involved in it. The prosecution also ran through the schedule of events in the Blackmail3 case and looked at some of the evidence against the defendants. It was striking how little related to Debbie, with a lot of material referring to activists who were involved in the campaign many, many years ago. A police Forensic Computer Analyst stated that there had been about 40 thousand pages of evidence throughout criminal cases (relating to the campaign against HLS) over the past decade, but of that, only a few appear to mention Debbie. NDEU (National Domestic Extremism Unit) police officers Ian Caswell (now retired) and Christopher Cowley were called to give evidence. Questioning by the defence confirmed that both officers frequently did surveillance of peaceful demonstrations – photographic and taking details of those present (including recording vehicle number plates) and logging when people entered or left private events such as gatherings. More info on the routine surveillance of lawful protest activities can be found on the Fitwatch website. The prosecution is expected to finish their case by next Wednesday, but the trial will likely continue into late March.

## **Week 4**

Monday, 3rd March 2014: Debbie's trial resumed for the second week by running through some more admissions. The defence then spent a while questioning police about the circumstances surrounding Debbie's raid and arrest. They were asked why they forcefully broke into the house belonging to the owners of the property that Debbie rented. The police were also asked why they sent 2 male officers into Debbie's bedroom, before she was allowed to dress herself. A query was raised about the fact that 25 officers were present (all to arrest Debbie) and also why only 1 of them was female, despite knowing that their 'suspect' was female and there were 4 other females at the property. The defence highlighted how it could feel for a female to suddenly and without warning, have 20+ (plain clothed – so not immediately identifiable) policemen force entry into her house during the early morning, shouting and acting aggressively. After gaining entry, the police didn't explain why they were there or arrest Debbie for some time. They eventually directed her to sit down by her computer and then produced a search warrant. Debbie reached for her glasses so that she could read the document and also switched off her computer (at this point she was not under arrest). The prosecution are now alleging that she turned off the computer to hide evidence, which the defence have argued. Following the police questioning, the focus returned to some of the foreign evidence. The defence argued that Debbie was not involved in any of the alleged criminal activity and was in the UK at the time.

Tuesday, 4th March 2014: During court today, the prosecution and defence finished their cases by discussing some of the phone evidence and some further admissions.

Wednesday, 5th March 2014: The trial continued with Debbie giving evidence for the defense all day, including talking about her life and her involvement in campaigning over the past twenty years.

Thursday, 6th March 2014: In court today Debbie continued giving evidence, including her cross examination by the prosecution for 3 hours. Court is now adjourned until 12th March because of a barrister's strike about cuts in legal aid and the judge being away, with the defence, prosecution and Judge expected to conclude their summing up of the case by the end of that week and the jury's verdict expected the following week. The proceedings are expected to finish by 20th March.

## **Week 5**

Wednesday, 12th March 2014: After a long weekend adjournment, the trial continued with more admissions and the prosecution summing up over an hour about the case against Debbie. After some more legal arguments the trial was finished for the day.

Thursday, 13th March 2014: The defense started their summing up which including details of surveillance, raids and issues about undercover police, which in between other legal arguments and admissions continued to the afternoon. The judge then mentioned that the defense summing up was too political and moral and the jury were reminded that the court was a court of law, not about morals or politics! The jury were giving legal direction about the charge facing Debbie and finished for the day.

Friday, 14th March 2014: The judge gave a fair and quick summing up of the case to the jury over an hour or so in the morning and the jury were sent out at 11:30 to start their deliberations as to whether Debbie was guilty or not guilty. The fate of Debbie now hangs on the jury. The jury didn't come back in the afternoon and the trial was later adjourned until Monday 10am. A verdict from the jury next week is expected...

# 'If you don't fight, you've already lost'



17<sup>th</sup> April 2014  
Corporate Watch

**Today Debbie Vincent, an animal rights activist from the Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty (SHAC) campaign was sentenced to six years in prison for conspiracy to blackmail after a five week long trial at Winchester Crown Court. She was also given an Anti Social Behaviour Order which means she can be arrested if she protests against or contacts Huntingdon Life Sciences (HLS) or its business partners for a further five years after her release from prison.**

The sentence should serve as a wake up call to anti-capitalists of the need to offer solidarity to those who have been singled out for repression because of their involvement in effective resistance to corporate power.

A press release from the Blackmail 3 support campaign quotes Debbie: “I have been made an example of because I put myself up as a public face of Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty and for believing that such places as Huntingdon Life Sciences should be resigned to the history books.” “In some ways I’m really not surprised I was found guilty, as I don’t believe anyone can get justice when faced with a political conspiracy charge and the huge resources of the state and multinationals against me. I will always have hope and will always continue to try my best to make the inhabitants of this planet more compassionate to all and try to make the world a better place for all.”

What we are seeing is a coordinated campaign against animal rights activists in an effort to silence dissent,” said Adrian Shaw of the Blackmail 3 Support Campaign. “This is the third conspiracy to blackmail trial in the UK involving people accused of campaigning against Huntingdon Life Sciences.”

Corporate Watch spoke to Debbie prior to the sentencing. She said: “What is scary in this world is oppression and injustice, when people hurt people, animals and nature. What is beautiful in this world is resistance, when people say 'enough is enough' and act. Oppression and injustice are everywhere, but so is resistance. Because some people know that if you fight you might lose, but if you don't fight,

you've already lost.”

### **The campaign**

SHAC was set up in 1999 with the aim of closing down Huntingdon Life Sciences (HLS). HLS is one of the largest contract testing companies in the world. They keep about 70,000 animals on site at their lab in Huntingdon. According to SHAC, “HLS will test anything for anybody. They carry out experiments which involve poisoning animals with household products, pesticides, drugs, herbicides, food colourings and additives, sweeteners and genetically modified organisms. Every three minutes an animal dies inside Huntingdon totalling 500 innocent lives every single day.”

SHAC's tactics have been groundbreaking for direct action campaigns in their targeting of the network of companies with business relationships with HLS: from its customers to its service providers and from its suppliers to its investors. To read an analysis of the SHAC model of campaigning click [here](#).

Over the years SHAC has published details of the companies doing business with HLS on its website and has encouraged people to persuade these companies to cease their business with HLS. The SHAC website is clear that it is not encouraging people to break the law. SHAC contacts the companies and tells them that they will remain listed on its website until they cease doing business with HLS. Hundreds of companies have ceased trading with HLS. View a list [here](#).

HLS have been infiltrated and their practices exposed several times. To read undercover exposes of animal abuse at HLS click [here](#).

### **The arrests of the 'Blackmail 3'**

In June 2012 European arrest warrants were issued in the UK for two activists in Holland, who will be referred to as SH and NS in this article.

On 6th July 2012 Debbie Vincent, who had been targeted by the police for many years for her involvement in the SHAC campaign, was arrested and detained on suspicion of conspiracy to blackmail. Her home address was searched. On the same day SH and NS were arrested and premises in Amsterdam were searched. Debbie was charged in July 2012 with conspiracy to blackmail, an offence under the 1977 Criminal Law Act. The British police have sought the extradition of the Dutch activists and the Dutch courts granted it. However, until now there is an ongoing dispute over the extradition as the lawyers for one of the Dutch defendants have demanded an undertaking from the British Secretary of State that he would serve his sentence in Holland if he was convicted.

The charge placed by the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) against Debbie was conspiring with 16 named people, including the two Dutch activists, and unnamed others “to blackmail representatives of companies and businesses and other persons” “by making unwarranted demands, namely to cease lawful trading with HLS, with menaces and with intent to cause loss to another.” The 13 other 'co-conspirators' have already been jailed for conspiracy to blackmail, at trials in 2009 and 2010 for a total of almost 70 years between them. For many of them the only evidence presented was involvement in lawful campaigning against the company and association with those involved in direct action. The use of the charge of blackmail against Debbie is another example of the twisting of the law to repress grassroots dissent against powerful corporations.

## **Blackmail?**

The events relied on in Debbie's case were that in 2008 and 2009 actions were carried out in France, Belgium, Germany and Switzerland against Novartis, EuroNext, Schering Plough, BDO, AstraZeneca, Fortress and Nomura, all companies with business relationships with HLS. The actions included setting fire to directors' cars, company buildings and, in one case, the holiday hunting lodge of Daniel Vasella, Director of Novartis. Graffiti was daubed on directors' homes overnight and the ashes of Vasella's mother were stolen from the family tomb. However, in the words of Michael Bowes QC, the prosecutor in the case: "There is no evidence that Ms Vincent was present at the scene of any of the attacks, or incidents in Europe. There is no evidence that she was outside of the United Kingdom at the time of any of these attacks". Instead the Crown Prosecution 'Service' (CPS) claimed that Debbie was guilty of involvement in a 'conspiracy to blackmail' involving those actions.

The CPS claimed that there was evidence linking SH and NS to some of these actions. However they were not the ones in the dock. The prosecution argued that Debbie had been in phone contact with SH and NS and had attended the 2009 Animal Rights gathering in Oslo that they also attended.

But the case went much further than that. The CPS argued that the SHAC campaign itself, in publishing details of companies on their website and encouraging people to protest against them, was guilty of blackmail. The effects of this legal 'logic' have broad implications for anti-corporate activists. For example, during the movement against apartheid in South Africa activists published details of companies like Barclays Bank and encouraged people to protest against them until they pulled out of South Africa. Was this an act of blackmail? Do campaign groups who publish the names and addresses of companies involved in fracking and encourage people to protest against them run the risk of convictions for blackmail?

## **Is activist security a crime?**

The CPS's case summary says that "Debbie Vincent has taken steps to conceal her criminality by the use of encrypted computers (she has failed to provide the encryption codes despite being known to have been using a totally encrypted computer shortly before it was seized). Encrypted storage media was found hidden behind the kickboard of kitchen units at her address". In highlighting this, the prosecutors were implying to the jury that Debbie had something to hide. The implication that the taking of lawful steps to protect privacy in the context of a concerted police campaign to monitor, criminalise, arrest and imprison activists seems laughable. However, it is a well rehearsed argument in animal rights cases.

## **The set-up**

The prosecution had evidence that Debbie had contacted the directors of Novartis after the direct action against the company had taken place. However, they had no evidence linking Debbie to the direct action itself apart from the circumstantial links to NS and SH. In order to try and strengthen their case, the police worked with Novartis to try to entrap Debbie and another SHAC activist (who was also arrested but had his charges dropped, he will be referred to in this article as 'X') into admitting links to the robbing of the Vasella grave.

SHAC had emailed Novartis, requesting that they cease dealing with HLS. Andrew Jackson, Global Head of Corporate Security at Novartis, replied and requested a meeting with the campaign. Jackson said that this meeting would be to discuss the issues raised in the email from the campaign. Debbie and

the other activist arranged to meet representatives of Novartis at the Le Meridien Hotel in Piccadilly on 10th March 2010. Unknown to them, the company had arranged with the police to bug the meeting, and one of the people they were due to meet was an undercover officer, using the alias 'James Adams', who was masquerading as a Special Contracts Manager for Novartis. The activists were swept for bugs at the beginning of the meeting and each time they went to the toilet. They were told that the meetings were strictly confidential. After the meeting Adams got in touch with SHAC again and said that "certain things are outside the parameters of the dialogue" and asked Debbie and 'X' to set up another meeting, encouraging them to communicate with him via PGP email encryption. 'Adams' was eager to communicate directly with Debbie and 'X' rather than through the campaign. The clear intention was to coax the activists into offering to secure the return of the Vasella remains.

Throughout the discussions in the meetings with Novartis, Debbie was clear that SHAC had no idea who took the remains and had no control over them. 'Adams', the undercover officer, took the lead during the conversations with Debbie. According to Debbie, he asked "leading questions about whether we were the right people" to talk to. Debbie's notes of the conversation record her as saying: "We're taking a risk the way the legal system is in this country to meet with you... [X] and I are painfully aware that going to these meeting with Novartis puts us in the spotlight, puts us at risk..." A representative of Novartis then says: "This is a confidential process..." In a later email to the company, Debbie said that she had spoken to some of the activists conducting demonstrations against Novartis and confirmed that they had agreed to stop protesting should Novartis end its contract with HLS.

Soon after the second meeting with Novartis Debbie met 'James Adams' on the underground, as if by chance. In fact he had followed her onto the train. He tried to broach the issue of the Vasella remains again but Debbie refused to discuss the issue.

### **Targeting of activists by political police units**

The arrest and prosecution of Debbie, and cases against animal rights activists more generally, are overseen by specialised political police units designed to protect corporations from public anger. In 1999 the National Public Order Intelligence Unit (NPOIU) was set up following the publication of a Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies report, which claimed that some protest groups "have adopted a strategic, long-term approach to their protests, employing new and innovative tactics to frustrate authorities and achieve their objectives". The NPOIU has been responsible for planting undercover officers in protest movements.

Debbie regards the use of undercover officers against her as a "sting operation". She said she believed that Adams was "clearly part of National Domestic Extremism and Disorder Intelligence Unit", formerly the National Domestic Extremism Unit, "who are just a re-branding of the Special Demonstration Squad and National Public Order Intelligence Unit" and that "there is now a 25 year history of unaccountable practice by a secretive and unaccountable police unit".

Specialised political police units aim to criminalise and imprison activists and neutralise political movements that pose a challenge to corporate power or other aspects of the current system.

### **'Decapitating' the 'leaders'**

The strategy of the police units involved in overseeing Debbie's case is explored in the January 2013 edition of the European Journal of Criminology. It includes an article by John Donovan and Richard Timothy Coupe. Donovan is employed by the Metropolitan Police 'Service'. The article encapsulates

the police and CPS's approach to the SHAC campaign as one of "leadership decapitation": "Police agencies combating terrorist or organised crime groups principally employ intelligence-led activities (Innes et al., 2005) and covert investigative techniques for identifying group participants and linking them to criminal activities. These involve human surveillance, informants and under-cover officers, as well as covert, electronic techniques, including wire-tapping, to monitor incriminating communications and understand member roles and ties in criminal networks, such as the Neapolitan Camorra (Campana, 2011; Campana and Varese, 2012). As well as the arrest of members of terrorist groups who commit or plan crimes, leaders and upper echelons have been specifically targeted in order to 'decapitate' and weaken or terminate groups (Cronin, 2009; David, 2002; Jordan, 2009; Price, 2012), an approach still emphasised in counter-insurgency doctrine (Hauenstein, 2011). This was the approach adopted by UK police in seeking to disrupt and terminate SHAC's campaign of intimidation."

The CPS's case summary claimed that Debbie was the representative of SHAC in the UK. Alistair Nisbet, the Senior Crown Prosecutor in the case, said: "Following the conviction of SHAC's main leaders in 2008, Debbie Vincent's role within the organisation grew. She became the public face of SHAC". Of course, the police's notions of leaders within the SHAC campaign betray a fundamental lack of understanding of horizontal organising by protest movements. Nevertheless, this tactic of painting individuals as leaders and targeting them is the strategy behind the police efforts to railroad Debbie and other activists to prison; an organised attempt by the police to neutralise a political protest movement through the twisting of the law to imprison those who the authorities label as 'leaders'.

### **Media greenscare**

So why aren't more people rallying to support Debbie and other SHAC campaigners? One reason is the police's attempts to discredit the movement in the media and thus to limit public solidarity for those under their cosh. In the past, mainstream media scare-stories about animal rights and environmental campaigners have been found to have been fabricated by political police units. During Debbie's case the media coverage was deeply offensive, defamatory and discriminatory, focusing on the fact that Debbie had undergone gender reassignment. The Mirror's headline was "The boy who grew up to become a woman of terror" while the Daily Mail ran with "Sex-change soldier who became an animal rights terror commander" and made the unsubstantiated claim that Debbie had "been attacking animal testing labs for over ten years". Debbie has already made a successful claim to the Press Complaints Commission and forced the Mail to amend an article which erroneously linked her to the Animal Liberation Front and linked SHAC to a previous blackmail case against the Save the Newchurch Guinea Pigs campaign. This defamation in the press is undoubtedly stirred up by police press releases, aimed at generating a negative image of animal rights campaigners in the media in order to limit public support for the movement. It is of utmost importance that anti-corporate campaigners are not taken in by this spin, which is designed to protect corporate profits, and to stand in solidarity with those experiencing repression.

### **Protecting corporations from dissent**

Pharmaceutical companies that are facing public anger over their activities have seized on Debbie's conviction to further restrict protest outside their premises. After the verdict in the trial, Novartis applied for a strengthened injunction under the Protection from Harassment Act (PHA) of 1997 against animal rights protesters. It was granted on 14 April 2014. The harsh terms of the injunction were requested, by notorious corporate lawyer Timothy Lawson Cruttenden, on the grounds that there could be a "backlash that occurs after the sentence".

The PHA Act was drafted and made its way through parliament as a provision designed to protect vulnerable people from harassment. Before the law was passed, the media had been evoking emotional accounts of the effect of stalking and the need to protect vulnerable individuals. The Act was never portrayed as a law designed to protect corporations and restrict protest. Yet, that's exactly what its being used for.

The new conditions put in place by Novartis are an interim measure and will be examined at another court hearing. The interim injunction has been made against 'persons unknown' but potentially affects anyone demonstrating against Novartis. It restricts demonstrations to six people or fewer, in designated protest zones, with no amplified sounds, and forbids face-coverings or blood-splattered costumes. Anyone deemed to have breached the conditions can be arrested and may face up to five years in prison. However, last year a test case at the Old Bailey of two SHAC activists put into question the practicality of prosecuting activists arrested under PHA injunctions.

### **Solidarity needed**

Debbie's conviction is part of an ongoing campaign of repression against the UK animal rights movement. A further seven SHAC activists have been charged with 'conspiracy to interfere with the contractual relations so as to harm an animal research organisation' under Section 145 of the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act (2005). The charges relate to demonstrations against companies with business relationships with HLS. They are due to appear in court later this year.

For more information on the ongoing repression of UK animal rights activists see the website: [www.stopukrepression.org](http://www.stopukrepression.org)

When we asked Debbie if she would need any particular support from people if she got a custodial sentence, she replied: "Practically, I'm not sure what my needs will be in prison, it will depend to a degree to where I go. I'm pretty sure I'll be able to cope, but being isolated from nature and friends will be the worst part. I will try to make the best of the bad situation, it's all a bit daunting and new. The whole charge and court case are still amazingly surreal."

"Keep on campaigning against all oppression and capitalist domination. Don't be afraid to speak out and never apologise for trying to make a difference and caring."

To see a list of imprisoned animal rights activists worldwide see here: [www.alfsg.org.uk](http://www.alfsg.org.uk)

For the Blackmail 3 Support Group see here: [www.blackmail3.org](http://www.blackmail3.org)



# SOLIDARITY WITH DEBBIE VINCENT

To send letters of support: include your name and address at the top of the letter and on the back of the envelope.

*Be aware that all mail can be read by the screws.*

**A5819DE  
Debbie Vincent  
HMP-YOI BRONZEFIELD  
Woodthorpe Road,  
Ashford,  
Middlesex,  
TW15 3JZ**

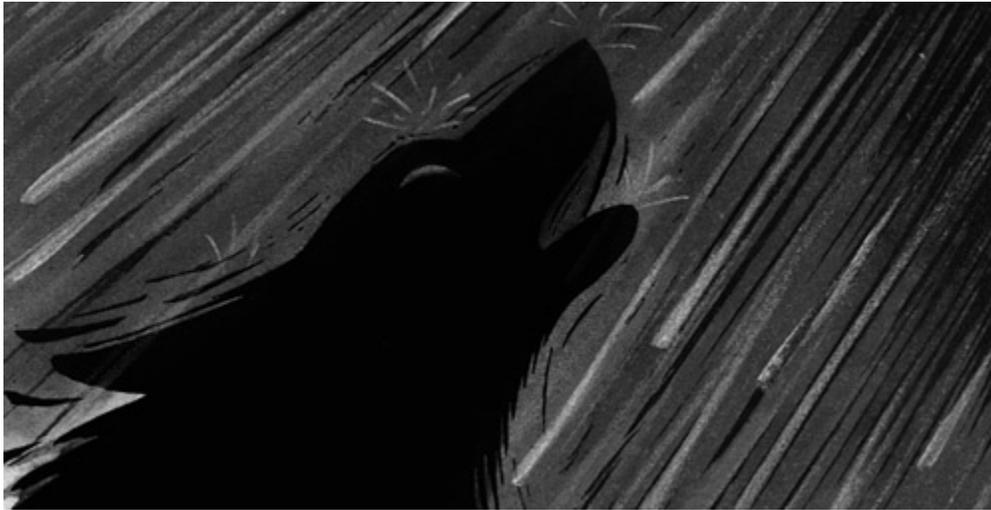




# THE SHAC MODEL

## A Critical Assessment

Roller Thunder Magazine 2009  
By Crimethinc Ex-workers Collective



**“We were aware of the activists, but I don’t think we understood exactly to what lengths they would go.”**

*–Warren Stevens, on dropping a \$33 million loan to  
Huntingdon Life Sciences despite having vowed never to do so,  
following rioting at his offices in Little Rock and vandalism of his property*

**“The number of activists isn’t huge, but their impact has been incredible . . . There needs to be an understanding that this is a threat to all industries.  
The tactics could be extended to any other sectors of the economy.”**

*–Brian Cass, managing director of HLS*

**“Where all animal welfare and most animal rights groups insist on working within the legal boundaries of society, animal liberationists argue that the state is irrevocably corrupt and that legal approaches alone will never win justice for the animals.”**

*–ALF Press Office*

Over the past decade, Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty—SHAC—has waged an international direct action campaign against Huntingdon Life Sciences, Europe’s largest contract animal testing corporation. By targeting investors and business partners of HLS, SHAC repeatedly brought HLS to the brink of collapse, and it took direct assistance from the British government and an international counter-campaign of severe legal repression to keep the corporation afloat.

In the wake of this campaign, there was talk of applying the SHAC model in other contexts, such as environmental defense and anti-war organizing. But what is the SHAC model, precisely? What are its strengths and limitations? Is it, in fact, an effective model? If so, for what?

## **First, a Glossary of Terms**

Viewed from outside, the animal rights milieu can be confusing, even for other radicals. On one hand, the intense focus on this single issue can contribute to an insular mindset, if not outright myopia; on the other hand, there are countless animal liberation activists who see their efforts as part of a larger struggle against all forms of oppression. Those not familiar with the inner workings of the milieu often conflate the positions of opposing factions. At the risk of oversimplifying, it is possible to identify three distinct schools of thought:

**Animal Welfare**—The idea that animals should be treated with mercy and compassion, especially when they are used for human benefit such as food production. For example, some animal welfare advocates lobby the government for more humane slaughter laws.

*Example:* the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS)

**Animal Rights**—The idea that animals have their own interests and deserve legislation to protect them. Those who believe in animal rights often maintain vegan diets and oppose the use of animals for entertainment, experimentation, food, or clothing. While they may participate in protests or civil disobedience, they also generally believe in working within the system, through lobbying, marketing, outreach, and use of the corporate media.

*Example:* People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA)

**Animal Liberation**—The idea that animals should not be domesticated or held in captivity. Since this is not possible within the logic of the current social and economic system, animal liberationists often tend towards anarchism, and may break laws in order to rescue animals or to preserve habitat.

*Example:* the Animal Liberation Front (ALF)[1]

Many groups focused on animal welfare and animal rights have criticized those who engage in direct action, arguing that such actions hurt the image of animal advocates and alienate potential sympathizers. It’s also possible to interpret this criticism as motivated by the economic inducement of building up a wealthy membership base and the fear of running afoul of government repression. In addition to denouncing direct action, prohibiting their employees from interacting with those who countenance it, and pulling out of conferences including more militant speakers, organizations such as HSUS have gone so far as to laud the FBI for cracking down on animal liberation efforts. In 2008, HSUS ostentatiously offered a \$2500 reward to anyone providing information leading to the conviction of persons involved with an arson alleged by the FBI to be the work of animal rights activists.

## **The SHAC Story: Overseas Beginnings**

The SHAC campaign originated in Britain, following a series of successful closures of laboratory animal breeders involving tactics from picketing to ALF raids and clashes with the police. Video footage shot covertly inside HLS in 1997 was aired on British television, showing staff shaking, punching, and shouting at beagles in an HLS lab. PETA stopped organizing protests against HLS after being threatened with legal action, and SHAC formed to take over the campaign in November 1999.

Huntingdon Life Sciences was a more formidable target than any individual animal breeder; the SHAC campaign constituted an escalation in animal rights activism in Britain. The idea was to focus specifically on the corporation's finances, utilizing the tactics that had closed small businesses to shut down an entire corporation. Activists set out to isolate HLS by harassing anyone involved with any corporation that did business with them. The role of SHAC as an organization was simply to distribute information about potential targets and report on actions as they occurred.

In January 2000, British activists publicized a list of the largest shareholders in HLS, including those who held shares through third parties for anonymity—one of which was Britain's Labour Party. Following two weeks of pitched demonstrations, many shareholders sold their holdings; finally, 32 million shares were placed on the London Stock Exchange for one penny each and HLS stocks crashed. In the ensuing chaos, the Royal Bank of Scotland wrote off an £11.6 million loan in exchange for a payment of just £1 in order to distance itself from the company, and the British government arranged for the state-owned Bank of England to give them an account because no other bank would do business with them. The company's share price, worth around £300 in the 1990s, fell to £1.75 in January 2001, stabilizing at 3 pence by mid-2001.

On December 21, 2000, HLS was dropped from the New York Stock Exchange; three months later, it lost its place on the main platform of the London Stock Exchange as well. HLS was only saved from bankruptcy when its largest remaining shareholder, the American investment bank Stephens, gave the company a \$15 million loan. This chapter of the story closed with HLS moving its financial center to the United States to take advantage of US laws allowing greater anonymity for shareholders.

## **In the USA**

Meanwhile, in the United States, the anti-fur campaigns that had characterized much of 1990s animal rights organizing had plateaued; the tactics of civil disobedience developed in those campaigns had reached a point of diminishing returns, and many activists were casting around for new targets and strategies. One faction of the animal rights movement, exemplified by groups like Vegan Outreach and DC Compassion Over Killing,[2] moved on to promoting veganism. More militant activists sought other points of departure. Some, like Kevin Kjonaas, who went on to become president of SHAC USA, had been in Britain and witnessed the apex of the British SHAC campaign, just as anti-globalization activists visiting Britain in the 1990s had brought back heady tales of Reclaim the Streets actions.

The US SHAC campaign came out of conversations between animal rights activists in different parts of the country. While the vegan outreach campaign sought to appeal to the lowest common denominator in order to win over consumers, SHAC attracted militants who wanted to make the most efficient use of their individual efforts. Some reasoned that it was unlikely that the entire market base for animal products would be won over to veganism, especially insofar as people tend to be defensive about their lifestyle choices, but practically everyone could agree that punching puppies is inexcusable.

SHAC USA got started in January 2001, just as Stephens, Inc. saved HLS from bankruptcy. Stephens

was based in Little Rock, Arkansas, so a number of activists moved there to organize. In April, 14 beagles were liberated from the new HLS lab in New Jersey; at the end of October, hundreds of people gathered in Little Rock for a weekend of demonstrations at Warren Stephens' home and the offices of Stephens, Inc. By the following spring, Stephens had ditched HLS, breaking off a five-year contract after only one year.

Unrivaled by any campaign of comparable scale and effectiveness, SHAC took off quickly in the US. Thanks in part to superior funding,[3] the propaganda was colorful and exciting, as were promotional videos that juxtaposed heart-wrenching clips of animal cruelty with inspiring demonstration footage to a pulse-racing soundtrack of techno music. The campaign offered participants a wide range of options, including civil disobedience, office disruptions, property destruction, call-ins, pranks, tabling, and home demonstrations. In contrast to the heyday of anti-globalization summit-hopping, targets were available all around the country, limited only by activists' imaginations and research. The intermediate goals of forcing specific investors and business partners to disconnect from HLS were often easily accomplished, providing immediate gratification to participants.

Whereas an individual might feel insignificant at an antiwar march of thousands, if she was one of a dozen people at a home demonstration that caused an investor to pull out, she could feel that she had personally accomplished something concrete. The SHAC campaign offered the kind of sustained low-intensity conflict through which people can become radicalized and develop a sense of collective power. Running in black blocs with friends, evading police after demonstrations, listening to inspirational speeches together, walking through offices yelling on bullhorns, reading other activists' reports online, the feeling of being on the winning side of an effective liberation struggle—all these contributed to the seemingly unstoppable momentum of the SHAC campaign.



## Action

**“Carr Securities began marketing the Huntingdon Life Sciences stock. The next day, the Manhasset Bay Yacht Club, to which certain Carr executives reportedly belong, was vandalized by animal rights activists. The extremists sent a claim of responsibility to the SHAC website, and three days after the incident, Carr terminated its business relationship with HLS.”**

*–John Lewis, Deputy Assistant Director  
FBI Oversight on so-called “Eco-terrorism”*

Direct action against those doing business with HLS has taken many forms, occasionally escalating to arson and violence. In February 2001, HLS managing director Brian Cass was hospitalized after being attacked with axe handles at his home. That July, the Pirates for Animal Liberation sank the yacht of a Bank of New York executive, and the bank soon severed ties with the lab. A year later, smoke bombs were set off at the offices of Marsh Corp. in Seattle, causing the evacuation of the high rise and their disassociation from HLS. In fall of 2003, incendiary devices were left at Chiron and Shaklee corporations for their contracting with HLS. In 2005, Vancouver-based brokerage Canaccord Capital announced that it had dropped a client, Phytopharm PLC, in response to the ALF firebombing of a car belonging to a Canaccord executive; Phytopharm had been doing business with HLS. All this took place against a backdrop of constant smaller-scale actions.



*Security camera image of the bombing at Chiron by the Animal Liberation Brigade.*

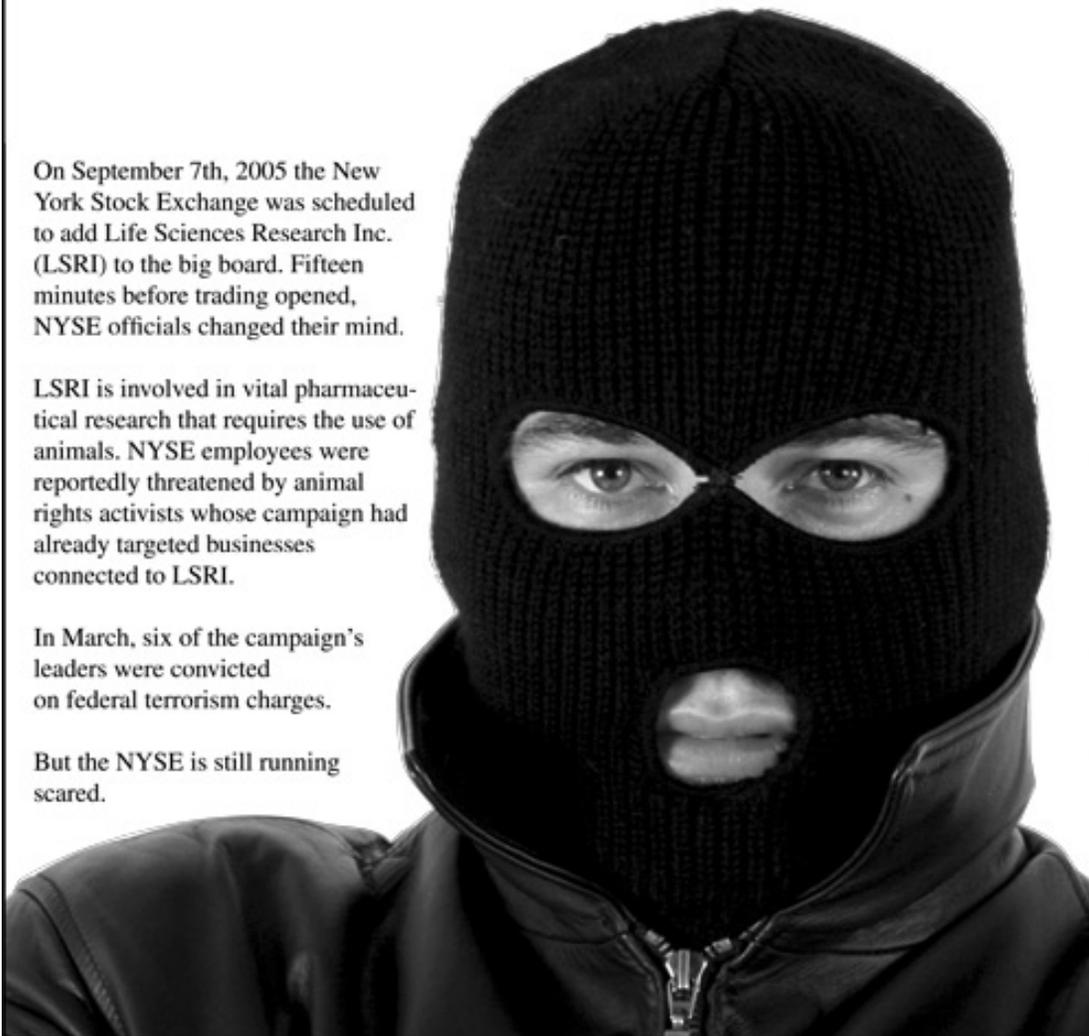
# I Control Wall Street

On September 7th, 2005 the New York Stock Exchange was scheduled to add Life Sciences Research Inc. (LSRI) to the big board. Fifteen minutes before trading opened, NYSE officials changed their mind.

LSRI is involved in vital pharmaceutical research that requires the use of animals. NYSE employees were reportedly threatened by animal rights activists whose campaign had already targeted businesses connected to LSRI.

In March, six of the campaign's leaders were convicted on federal terrorism charges.

But the NYSE is still running scared.



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In December 2006, HLS was prevented from being listed on the New York Stock Exchange, an unprecedented development that resulted in a full page ad in the New York Times portraying a masked, apparently leather-jacketed caricature of an activist declaring “I control Wall Street.”[4] In 2007, eight companies dropped HLS, including their two biggest investors, AXA and Wachovia, following home demonstrations and ALF visits to executives’ houses. In 2008, incendiary devices were left under Staples trucks and Staples outlets were vandalized. About 250 companies altogether have dropped in the course of the campaign, including Citibank, the world’s largest financial institution; HSBC, the world’s largest bank; Marsh, the world’s largest insurance broker; and Bank of America.

## **Maintaining Momentum**

It’s interesting to compare the arc of the SHAC campaign to that of the so-called anti-globalization movement. Both took off in Britain before catching on in the United States. SHAC was founded in England the same month as the historic WTO protests in Seattle; it got going in North America at the tail end of the anti-globalization surge, and maintained momentum after the US wing of the anti-globalization movement collapsed in the wake of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.

How was the SHAC campaign able to maintain momentum while practically every other direct action-based campaign foundered or was co-opted by liberals? Can we derive lessons about how to weather crises from its example?

SHAC activists differed from participants in most other social movements in that they neither perceived themselves to need positive press coverage nor regarded negative press coverage as a bad thing. Their goal was to terrify corporations out of doing business with HLS, not to win converts to the animal rights movement. The more fearsome and crazy they appeared in the media, the easier it was to intimidate potential investors and business partners. Activists in other circles feared that the terrorism scare would make it easy for the government to isolate them by portraying them as dangerous extremists; for SHAC, the more dangerous and extreme they appeared, the better.

All this came back to haunt them in the end, when the most influential organizers went to trial and it was easy for the prosecution to frame them as representatives of a frankly terroristic underground. In this regard, the greatest strengths of the SHAC campaign—the relationship between public and covert organizing, the fearsome reputation—also proved to be its Achilles heel. The lesson seems to be that this approach can be effective on a small scale, so long as organizers do not provoke a confrontation with forces much stronger than themselves.

In addition to the matter of press coverage, it may be instructive to look at the way SHAC organizers framed the issues. SHAC spokespeople never backed down from emphasizing the necessity of direct action for animal liberation, even when the rest of the nation was fixated on Al Qaeda; the historic mobilization in Little Rock took place only a month and a half after the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. Regardless of what happened in New York or Afghanistan, they emphasized that there were animals suffering at that very moment, who could be spared if people took a few concrete steps. Had organizers in other circles been able to maintain this kind of focus and urgency, history might have taken a different turn at the beginning of this decade.

It’s possible, also, that with other forms of organizing at a lower ebb, SHAC picked up more participants than it would have if other direct action campaigns had maintained momentum. In contrast to the massive symbolic actions of the antiwar movement, the SHAC campaign was a hotbed of experimentation, in which new tactics were constantly being tested. For direct action enthusiasts concerned with making the most of their efforts—or simply bored with being treated as a number in a crowd estimate—it must have been seductive by comparison.

Whatever the cause, the SHAC campaign was able to maintain momentum until federal repression finally began to take its toll. Unlike many campaigns, which have faded due to attrition or cooptation, it took the full power of the state to check its advance.

## Repression

All the accomplishments of the SHAC campaign came at a price. The more businesses dropped relations with HLS, the more attention the campaign attracted from law enforcement agencies and right wing think tanks. SHAC organizers in general were not an easily intimidated breed; it was common for participants in the campaign to joke about all the lawsuits and injunctions they had racked up and how little it mattered if they were sued as they had no money anyway.

The US and British governments ratcheted up repression steadily over the years, placing activists under surveillance, hitting them with lawsuits, blocking their fundraising efforts, intimidating organizations like PETA out of interacting with them, passing new laws against demonstrations in residential neighborhoods, and shutting down their websites. This culminated in the US with the trial of the so-called SHAC 7: six organizers and the SHAC USA corporation itself.



On May 26, 2004, Lauren Gazzola, Jake Conroy, Josh Harper, Kevin Kjonaas, Andrew Stepanian, and Darius Fullmer were indicted on various federal charges for their alleged roles in the campaign. Teams of FBI agents in riot gear invaded their homes at dawn, threatening them and their pets with guns and handcuffing their relatives. The investigation leading up to the arrest was reportedly the FBI's largest investigation of 2003; court documents confirm that wiretap intercepts in the investigation outnumbered the intercepted communications of that year's second largest investigation 5 to 1.

The defendants were all charged with violating the Animal Enterprise Protection Act, a controversial law intended to punish anyone who disrupts a corporation that profits from animal exploitation; some were also charged with interstate stalking and other offenses. The defendants were never charged with engaging personally in any threatening acts; the government based its case on the notion that they should be held responsible for all the illegal actions taken to further the SHAC campaign, regardless of their involvement. They were found guilty on March 2, 2006, sentenced to prison terms ranging from one to six years, and ordered to pay tremendous quantities of money to HLS.

The SHAC 7 trial was clearly intended to set a precedent for targeting public organizers of campaigns that include covert action; its repercussions were felt as far away as England. In 2005, the British government passed the “Serious Organized Crime and Police Act” specifically to protect animal research organizations. On May 1, 2007, after a series of raids involving 700 police officers in England, Holland, and Belgium, 32 people linked to SHAC were arrested, including Heather Nicholson and Greg and Natasha Avery, among the founders of SHAC in Britain. In January 2009, seven of them were sentenced to prison terms between four and eleven years.

## **The Future of SHAC**

Despite all these setbacks, the SHAC campaign continues to this day, though it faces serious challenges in the United States. Some regional organizations are still active, and autonomous actions continue to occur, but there is no nationwide organizing body, no newsletter, no reliable website to publicize targets and action reports. Consequently, there is less strategic targeting, less outreach and networking, and a lack of national events. The upside is that it has become more difficult for companies to figure out who to subpoena or seek injunctions against—but that’s a narrow silver lining.

This downturn can be attributed to government repression in general and the SHAC 7 trial specifically. Fear of legal repercussions has increased at the same time as key organizers have been taken out of action. With new local laws prohibiting residential picketing, and the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act of 2006 making interstate tertiary targeting illegal, many tactics that once involved little risk are no longer feasible. Now that more public forms of organizing are being more aggressively punished, it seems possible that the next generation of animal liberation activists will focus more on clandestine tactics. One of the strongest features of the SHAC campaign was the combination of public and clandestine approaches, so this is not necessarily good news for the movement.

It’s actually quite surprising that HLS is still in existence; half a decade ago, SHAC organizers must have been banking on already having won by this point. When Stephens, Inc. divested, their loans were all that kept HLS running; it was only the British government intervening again that enabled HLS to negotiate a refinancing and continue. Essentially, SHAC did win, only to have its victory stolen away. The same situation recurred when SHAC forced Marsh Inc. to break off ties, and HLS was faced with the prospect of operating without the insurance mandated by law. Again, the British government intervened, and HLS was given unprecedented coverage by the Department of Trade and Industry. Without this protection from the very pinnacle of power, HLS would be long gone—but that’s precisely why governments exist: to protect corporations and preserve the smooth functioning of the capitalist economy. Perhaps it was naïve to believe that the governments of Britain and the USA would permit even the fiercest animal liberation campaign to run an influential corporation out of business.

One can’t fight like there’s no tomorrow indefinitely, and the repeated return of HLS from the dead must have been maddening for long-term SHAC organizers who staked everything again and again on one final push. Participants disagree as to how significant a factor burnout has been, but it would be foolish to rule it out. The SHAC campaign has been oriented towards full-time activism from the

beginning, the mindset being that, as HLS employees work full time, their opponents must work at least that hard. Newsletter articles such as the “SHACTivist workout routine” indicate a high-pressure approach that probably correlates with a high rate of burnout. In any case, as difficult as it may be to distinguish the effects of burnout from those of fear, many activists have indeed dropped out of SHAC without moving on to other campaigns.

SHAC is currently active in mainland Europe and Latin America, and unrelenting in Britain. The British SHAC campaign may offer a better model for how to handle federal repression; from this vantage point, it appears that British activists were prepared in advance for it, had people ready to take over for central organizers, and were more open to new people getting involved. But Britain is more densely populated than much of the United States and has a richer history of animal rights organizing, so it is unfair to compare the two campaigns too closely.

Will SHAC ultimately succeed in shutting down HLS? It’s still possible, though it looks less likely than it did a few years ago. Some still feel that the most important thing is to close HLS at all costs, to win an historic victory that will inspire activists and terrify executives for decades to come. Others think that, whether or not HLS shuts down, SHAC has served its purpose, demonstrating the strengths and limitations of a new model for anticapitalist organizing.

## **Hallmarks of the SHAC Model**

When people think of SHAC, they picture demonstrations at the homes of employees and investors; some anarchists mean nothing more than this when they refer to the “SHAC model.” But home demonstrations are merely incidental to the formula that has enabled SHAC to wreak such havoc upon HLS. To understand what made the campaign effective, we have to look at all its essential characteristics together.

- **Secondary and tertiary targeting:**[5] The SHAC campaign set about depriving HLS of its support structure. Just as a living organism depends on an entire ecosystem for the resources and relationships it needs to survive, a corporation cannot function without investors and business partners. In this regard, more so than any standard boycott, property destruction, or publicity campaign, SHAC confronted HLS on the terms most threatening to a corporation. Starbucks could easily afford a thousand times the cost of the windows smashed by the black bloc during the Seattle WTO protests, but if no one would replace those windows—or the windows had been broken at the houses of investors, so no one would invest in the corporation—it would be another story. SHAC organizers made a point of learning the inner workings of the capitalist economy, so they could strike most strategically.

Secondary and tertiary targeting works because the targets do not have a vested interest in continuing their involvement with the primary target. There are other places they can take their business, and they have no reason not to do so. This is a vital aspect of the SHAC model. If a business is cornered, they’ll fight to the death, and nothing will matter in the conflict except the pure force each party is able to bring to bear on the other; this is not generally to the advantage of activists, as corporations can bring in the police and government. This is why, apart from the axe handle incident, so few efforts in the SHAC campaign have been directed at HLS itself. Somewhere between the primary target and the associated corporations that provide its support structure, there appears to be a fulcrum where action is most effective. It might seem strange to go after tertiary targets that have no connection to the primary target themselves, but countless HLS customers have dropped relations after a client of theirs was embarrassed.

- **Complementary relationship between public and underground organizing:** More than any other direct action campaign in recent history, the SHAC campaign achieved a perfect symbiosis of public

organizing and underground action. To this end, the campaign was characterized by an extremely savvy use of technology and modern networking. The SHAC websites disseminated information about targets and provided a forum for action reports to raise morale and expectations, enabling anyone sympathetic to the goals of the campaign to play a part without drawing attention to themselves.

- **Diversity of tactics:** Rather than pitting exponents of different tactics against each other, SHAC integrated all possible tactics into one campaign, in which each approach complemented the others. This meant that participants could choose from a practically limitless array of options, which opened the campaign to a wide range of people and averted needless conflicts.

- **Concrete targets, concrete motivations:** The fact that there were specific animals suffering, whose lives could be saved by specific direct action, made the issues concrete and lent the campaign a sense of urgency that translated into a willingness on the part of participants to push themselves out of their comfort zones. Likewise, at every juncture in the SHAC campaign, there were intermediate goals that could easily be accomplished, so the monumental task of undermining an entire corporation never felt overwhelming.

This contrasts sharply with the way momentum in certain green anarchist circles died off after the turn of the century, when the goals and targets became too expansive and abstract. It had been easy for individuals to motivate themselves to defend specific trees and natural areas, but once the point for some participants was to “destroy civilization” and everything less was mere reformism, it was impossible to work out what constituted meaningful action.

## **Advantages of the SHAC Model**

When the model pioneered by SHAC is applied correctly, its advantages are obvious. It hits corporations where they are most vulnerable: corporations do not do what they do because of ethical commitments or in order to obtain a certain public image, but in single-minded pursuit of profit, and the SHAC model focuses exclusively on making corporate wrongdoings unprofitable. In terms of building and maintaining a long-running direct action campaign, the SHAC model offers direction and motivation for participants, providing a framework for concrete rather than symbolic actions. The SHAC model sidesteps conflicts over tactics, offering the opportunity for activists of a range of abilities and comfort levels to work together. In establishing a wide array of targets, it gives activists the opportunity to pick the time, place, and character of their actions, rather than constantly reacting to their opponents. Above all, the SHAC model is efficient: SHAC USA has never had more than a few hundred active participants at any given time.

In contrast to most current organizing strategies, the SHAC model is an offensive approach. It offers a means of attacking and defeating established capitalist projects—of taking the initiative rather than simply responding to the advance of corporate power. SHAC did not set out to block the construction of a new animal testing facility or the passage of new legislation, but to defeat and destroy an animal testing corporation that had existed for decades.

The SHAC model demands and fosters a culture that not only celebrates direct action but constantly engages in it, encouraging participants to push their own limits. This contrasts sharply with certain so-called insurrectionist circles, in which anarchists talk a lot about rioting and resistance without engaging in day-to-day confrontations with the powers that be. Anti-globalization activists in Chicago sometimes asked SHAC organizers to lead chants at their protests, as the latter had a reputation for being boisterous and energetic: those who cut their teeth in the SHAC campaign, if they have not dropped out of direct action organizing entirely, are equipped to be effective in a wide range of contexts.

A subtler strength of the SHAC approach is that it draws on class tensions that are usually submerged in the United States. Activists from lower middle- and working-class backgrounds can find it gratifying to confront wealthy executives on their own turf. This also exposes single-issue activists to the interconnections of the ruling class. In visiting the houses of executives, one discovers that all the pharmaceutical and investment corporations are intertwined: they all own shares of each other's companies, sit on each other's boards, and live in identical suburban mansions in sprawling gated communities.

Finally, the SHAC model took advantage of opportunities offered by larger events and communities. Home demonstrations were often organized to take place after a conference or show; the ubiquity of potential targets meant there was always one close at hand. For several years running, SHAC demonstrations took place during the National Conference on Organized Resistance in Washington, DC, and they also occurred following anti-biotech protests in Philadelphia and Chicago. Though these sometimes provoked conflicts with other organizers, it only takes a couple dozen people to make an effective home demonstration, so it was always easy to pull one together.

SHAC itself tended to create and propagate a subculture of its own, complete with internal reference points and rituals. At conferences and major mobilizations activists compared notes about investors, local campaigns, and legal troubles. Sympathetic music scenes helped fund organizing and introduced new blood to the campaign. It would be difficult to imagine the SHAC campaign in the USA without the hardcore scene of the past two decades, which has consistently served as a social base for the militant animal rights movement. There are certainly drawbacks to identifying a campaign too closely with a specific youth-oriented subculture, but it is better to draw participants and momentum from at least one community than from none at all.

## **Spurious Charges**

Some anarchists have thoughtlessly charged SHAC with reformism. This is absurd: SHAC's goal is not to change the way HLS conducts itself, but to shut it down. It is more precise to describe SHAC as an abolitionist campaign: not being able to bring about the end of animal exploitation in one fell blow, it seeks to accomplish the most ambitious but feasible step toward that end. Similarly, certain idle critics deride animal liberation efforts on the grounds that they are "activism," with the implication that this is a bad thing in and of itself. Those who adopt this position should go ahead and acknowledge that they are unmoved by the oppression of their fellow living creatures and see no value in attempting to put an end to it—that is to say, they are hardly anarchists.

## **Drawbacks and Limitations**

Spurious critiques aside, the SHAC model has some real limitations, which deserve examination.

First, there are certain prerequisites without which it will fail. For example, the SHAC model cannot succeed outside a setting in which direct action is regularly applied. All the strategic thinking in the world is worthless if no one is actually willing to act. In the militant animal rights milieu, the issues at stake are felt to be concrete and poignant enough that participants are motivated to take risks on a regular basis; without this motivation, the SHAC campaign would not have gotten off the ground. Likewise, the SHAC model is powerless against a target that does not depend on secondary and tertiary targets, or has an endless supply of them to choose from. Above all, the secondary and tertiary targets must have somewhere else to take their business—the SHAC model relies on the rest of the capitalist market to offer better options. In this regard, while it is not reformist, neither does it provide a strategy

for taking on capitalism itself.

Secondly, as effective as they might be in purely economic terms, secondary and tertiary targeting locate the site of confrontation far from the cause for which the participants are fighting. Generally speaking, the more abstract the object of a campaign feels, the worse for morale. Much of the vitality of eco-defense struggles in the 1980s and '90s came from the immediate, visceral connection forest defenders experienced with the land they were occupying; when environmental activism began shifting to more urban terrain a decade ago, it lost some of its impetus. It is perhaps specific to the SHAC campaign that participants have been able to maintain their outrage and audacity so far from the object of their concern; it is risky to assume this will always occur in other contexts.

Apart from these challenges, the SHAC model may be ineffective precisely because of its effectiveness. Is it realistic to set out to shut down powerful corporations, or will the government always intercede? It may be that in posing a threat to corporations in the economic terms they take most seriously, the SHAC model picks a fight it cannot win. Once the government is involved in a conflict, it takes more than a tight network of militants to win—it takes an entire large-scale social movement, and the SHAC approach alone cannot give rise to such a thing. In this regard, the SHAC model's greatest strength is also a fatal flaw.

Time will tell if HLS was too ambitious a target; the corporation might still collapse. Even so, it would probably be wise for the next ones who experiment with the model to set smaller goals, rather than even more ambitious ones, since the SHAC campaign itself has yet to succeed. Perhaps some unexplored middle ground awaits between shutting down individual fur stores and attempting to close Europe's largest animal testing corporation.

This is not to say that the SHAC model is useless if it does not result in the closure of the target. Sometimes it is worth fighting a losing battle so as to discourage an opponent from starting another battle; other times, even in losing one can gain valuable experience and allies. Ironically, the SHAC model may be more effective for recruiting people to direct action organizing than for its professed goal—precisely because, in bypassing recruitment to focus on other goals, it attracts participants who are serious and committed.

But if the point is to bring more people into direct action organizing rather than simply to shut down a single corporation, there are significant drawbacks to the SHAC model, too—for example, the high stress levels and likelihood of burnout. In this regard, it is not necessarily an advantage that the SHAC model teaches activists to think in the same terms as capitalist economists—efficiency, finances, chain of command—rather than prioritizing the social skills necessary to build long-term communities of resistance.

Likewise, in focusing on secondary and tertiary targeting, the SHAC model emphasizes and rewards an aggressive attitude that is less advantageous in other situations. What are the long-term psychological effects on organizers who spend half a decade or more screaming over a bullhorn at employees in their homes? What kind of people are drawn to a campaign that consists primarily of making other people miserable? It cannot go unsaid that some anarchists have reported frustrating interactions with SHAC organizers.

Considering the model from an anarchist perspective—to what extent does the SHAC approach tend to consolidate or undermine hierarchies? The secure organizing necessary for clandestine direct action can promote a cliquishness that intensifies as repression increases, thus preventing a campaign from drawing in new participation when it needs it most. Informal hierarchies plague organizing of all kinds; in the case of the SHAC campaign, those who do the research often have disproportionate influence over the direction of a campaign and end up making judgment calls with far-reaching effects.

It could be argued that the single-issue focus and goal-oriented nature of the SHAC campaign deprioritizes addressing forms of hierarchy other than the oppression of animals. It is no secret that some SHAC organizing groups have been wracked by conflicts over gender dynamics[6] and some participants have not always been held accountable for their behavior. In a campaign that emphasizes victory above all else, this should not be surprising—if the most important thing is to win, it's easy to put off addressing internal conflicts, especially with the added stress of federal repression. Inevitably, the people who have bad experiences drop out of the campaign, taking with them the criticism others need to hear.

These questionable priorities have also manifested themselves in certain tasteless tactics. In one instance, a target who was struggling to escape alcoholism received a can of beer with a nasty note; in another, a woman's underwear was stolen and reportedly put up for sale. Utilizing the power imbalances of patriarchal society to target accomplices in the oppression of animals hardly sets an example of struggle against all forms of domination.

There are other ethical questions about secondary and tertiary targeting. Is it acceptable to risk frightening or injuring secretaries, children, and other uninvolved parties? What distinguishes anarchists from governments and other terrorists, if not the refusal to countenance collateral damage?

In essence, the SHAC model is a blueprint for a campaign of coercion, to be used in situations in which there is no other possible accountability process. This does not conflict with anarchist values—when an oppressor refuses to be accountable for his actions, it is necessary to compel him to stop, and this extends to those who aid and abet him as well. But targeting people who are not themselves involved in oppression muddies the waters. When an organizer publicizes a target, there is no telling what actions others will carry out. Perhaps the value of ending animal exploitation outweighs these risks and costs, but anarchists should not get too comfortable making such rationalizations.

## **Other Applications of the SHAC Model**

There has been much talk of applying the SHAC model in other contexts, but few such efforts have produced anything comparable to the SHAC campaign. This bears some reflection. It's worth pointing out that some of the hype about the far-reaching applicability of the SHAC model has come straight from HLS, and so should be taken with a grain of salt. HLS is not interested in promoting effective new direct action methods, but rather in creating enough of a scare that other members of the ruling class will come to their assistance; it follows that even if they claim that SHAC tactics can be used effectively against any target, this is not necessarily the case. The same goes for sensationalist analyses by organizations such as Stratfor, whose primary goal seems to be terrorizing the public into feeling a need for their "intelligence."

It may be that, because the SHAC campaign maintained momentum while other forms of organizing dropped off, it has exerted a disproportionate influence upon the imaginations of current anarchists, to such an extent that many now tend to imitate the SHAC model in their organizing even when it is not strategically effective. Failures can be more instructive than successes; unfortunately, as they are more readily forgotten, they are often repeated over and over. For this reason, any consideration of the SHAC model should begin with the example of Root Force.

Root Force arose out of Earth First! circles a couple years ago with the intention of promoting a SHAC-style campaign targeting the infrastructure of global capitalism—an exponentially more ambitious goal than shutting down HLS. The organizers researched the corporations involved in pivotal infrastructural projects such as transcontinental highways and power plants. A website was set up to publicize this information and any actions that occurred; road shows toured the country to spread the word. It seemed

that all the pieces were in place, and yet nothing happened.

Early in 2008, Root Force released a statement entitled “A Revised Strategy” in which they acknowledged that their efforts had failed to produce an effective direct action campaign and described the difficulties of attempting to inspire action against infrastructural projects located so far away as to seem entirely abstract.

Root Force misunderstood how direct action campaigns take off. Action and inaction are both contagious. If some people are invested enough in a cause to risk their freedom for it, others may do the same; but as no one wishes to go out on a limb in isolation, a sound strategy alone is not sufficient to inspire actions.[7] Properly publicized, one serious direct action in the Root Force campaign would have been worth a hundred road shows.

The Root Force campaign had other flaws as well. If the goal was simply to give demonstrators something to do, the strategy was as good as any other; but if they hoped to block the construction of the highways and power plants most essential to the expansion of the capitalist market, they would have had to mobilize a lot more force than the SHAC campaign. If the targets they picked really were of critical importance to the powers that be, it follows that the government would have mobilized every resource to defend them. Overextension is the number one error of small-scale resistance movements: rather than setting attainable goals and building slowly on modest successes, organizers set themselves up for defeat by attempting to skip directly to the final showdown with global capitalism. We can fight and win ambitious battles, but to do so we have to assess our capabilities realistically.

Other SHAC-influenced approaches have been characterized by an emphasis on home demonstrations. For example, over the past few years, protesters against the IMF and World Bank have experimented with targeting executives and corporate sponsors. In 2006, while Paul Wolfowitz was president of the World Bank, there were a series of demonstrations at his girlfriend’s home; eventually she moved. This does not seem to have impacted the IMF to the same extent as the worldwide upheavals associated with the anti-globalization movement. Sarcasm aside, there’s little to be gained from harassing people like Wolfowitz: unlike the tertiary parties SHAC targeted, they are not simply going to take their business elsewhere.

Similarly, at the 2004 Republican National Convention, some organizers called for demonstrators to focus on harassing the delegates. The risk of this approach is that it can frame the conflict as a private grudge match between activists and authorities, rather than a social movement that is able to attract mass participation. Like Wolfowitz, Republican delegates are hardly going to retire because a few protesters shout at them—and even if some did, they would instantly be replaced. One proposal for the 2008 RNC protests involved activists targeting corporations that would be providing services to the convention. Targeting corporations providing services might have helped build momentum in the lead-up to the RNC, but it’s unlikely that it could have succeeded in depriving an organization as powerful as the Republican Party of necessary resources. The same probably goes for proposals to target weapons contractors serving the US government—it might give demonstrators something exciting to do, but no one should underestimate what it would take to make a corporation like Boeing break off relations with the US military.

Some see the Rising Tide and Rainforest Action Network campaigns against Bank of America as relatives of the SHAC campaign; these did use secondary targeting, although they were directly descended from environmental campaigns that preceded it. At the end of 2008, in a context of broader economic turmoil, Bank of America declared that they were pulling their financing from companies predominantly involved in mountain-top removal. However insincere this declaration may be, it at least indicates that the campaign forced BOA to take notice. Environmentalists in Indiana have had less success attempting to stop the construction of highway I-69 via a combination of home and office

demonstrations and forest occupation tactics. In “A Revised Strategy,” Root Force cited I-69 as a pivotal infrastructural project; it will be interesting to see how the state responds if the struggle against I-69 ever becomes formidable.

All this is not to say that the SHAC model cannot be applied effectively, but simply to emphasize that activists must be intentional and strategic about where and how they attempt to do so. There are probably some situations in which the model could accomplish even more than it has for SHAC; without a doubt, there are other contexts in which it can actually be counterproductive.

To repeat, the SHAC campaign in the US has only involved a few hundred participants at any given time; a few thousand could possibly take on a bigger target. Even forcing the government to bail out a corporation, whether or not the target was successfully bankrupted, could still constitute an important victory. As of today, it remains to be seen where effective applications of the SHAC model will be found beyond the campaign that spawned it.

## Notes

[1] Unlike HSUS and PETA, the ALF is not technically an organization, but rather a banner taken up by autonomous cells which do not necessarily have any connection to each other.

[2] According to reports, the main organizers of this group have since joined HSUS. This is an example of the subtle conflicts and power dynamics that play out in the animal rights movement: SHAC organizers complain that HSUS absorbs committed activists by giving them paying jobs and forbidding them to collaborate with more militant activists.

[3] Unlike many social movements, the animal rights movement is supported by wealthy donors, and we can assume that some of them have contributed to SHAC.

[4] This advertisement is all the more ironic in view of the role masked thugs in nations like Colombia continue to play in defending the interests of corporations who trade on Wall Street.

[5] Secondary targeting means going after a person or entity who does business with the primary target of a campaign. Tertiary targeting means going after a person or entity who is connected to a secondary target.

[6] If there have not been corresponding conflicts regarding race and class, this may simply indicate that SHAC organizing has been predominantly white and middle class. Some have charged that the animal rights movement in the US attracts many from this demographic who are more comfortable protesting the oppression and exploitation of animals than addressing the power imbalances in their relationships with other human beings.

[7] Compare this to the critique of calls for “autonomous actions” at mass mobilizations in “Demonstrating Resistance,” available in the recent features section of the reading library on this site.

# **SOLIDARITY IS A WEAPON** ON THE RECENT WAVE OF REPRESSION



*“What is beautiful in this world is resistance, when people say 'enough is enough' and act. Oppression and injustice are everywhere, but so is resistance. Because some people know that if you fight you might lose, but if you don't fight, you've already lost.”*

**Debbie Vincent**

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