
Book Reviews

Infiltrator rips the mask from Greenpeace in Europe

by Emmanuel Grenier

La face cachée de Greenpeace

by Olivier Vermont

Albin Michel, Paris, 1997

360 pages, 130 French francs

This extraordinary book (in English, *The Hidden Face of Greenpeace*) is the story of a journalist's infiltration into the environmentalist group. Olivier Vermont, the pseudonym for a French journalist, spent 10 months inside Greenpeace-France. He presented himself as an unemployed photographer, willing to serve the green movement as a volunteer. He rapidly became trusted, as an assistant to the individual responsible for commando campaigns and for volunteers. In essence, he served as an unpaid secretary, which gave him access to a lot of confidential information.

On many points, the story and the documents entirely vindicate the studies published by *EIR* on Greenpeace: It is an irregular warfare apparatus in the service of the British oligarchy (see *EIR*, Jan. 13, 1995, "British Oligarchs Created the Eco-Terrorist Movement").

Among the letters to Greenpeace discovered by Vermont, one from a nuclear plant operator says he has created a "secret group" with three other operators and two electricians. He was not joking. During a strike of Electricité de France, the nuclear power utility, he and his friends locked themselves inside the control room and postered the whole area with copies of *Charlie-Hebdo*, a leftist-anarchist rag, which claimed: "We support you as long as you're on strike. As soon as you operate this shit plant again, we'll fight against the nuclear apparatus and its servants. With you in action!" Another letter, from an engineer for France-Telecom, the national telephone company, proposed to advise Greenpeace on how to reduce its phone bill, and went so far as to say the engineer could violate the secret files which contain unlisted numbers, if it would help Greenpeace.

These two examples show that Greenpeace has a tremen-

dous intelligence network, with people in strategic positions ready to give away "top secret" information for the service of the green cause. Even Greenpeace-France, which operates only a small office, and is a very small part of the international Greenpeace apparatus (it is not self-supporting and relies on donations from Greenpeace International) maintains a very large file of dossiers, with precise information on politicians and journalists. The collaboration with insiders goes up to the ministerial level. In Greenpeace's file on Brice Lalonde (environment minister, 1988-91), Vermont found a quote from Lalonde, speaking about his relationship with former Greenpeace International leader David McTaggart: "When I was environment minister, we were deliberating on our tricks together. It was fun. David was representing Greenpeace and I, the French state."

The files are, of course, used for lobbying purposes, but, as Vermont puts it, "They are so detailed that they look very much like spy services' cards." The author indicates that Greenpeace also carries out brainwashing operations: Members go to politicians, presenting themselves as scientists, and of course, omit mentioning that they are part of Greenpeace, thereby lending more credibility to the false information that they disseminate. There are also many, almost humorous stories about Greenpeace's infiltration of the media, which would be too long to report here. Two basic methods are used: the ideological conversion of a journalist to Greenpeace's environmentalism or the infiltration of a sympathizer into a media structure. Vermont cites examples from *Le Monde*, *Libération*, the *London Times*, and Radio France, although he does not give names, probably out of professional courtesy.

At one point, Vermont discovered in a secret file belonging to his boss, an extremely precise map of the Presidential mansion, the Elysée Palace, complete with the location of the President's office and the hall where foreign guests are welcomed. A three-dimensional map of the President's office is so detailed, it shows the location of the President's chair. Handwritten notes explain how to most rapidly gain access, such as, "Take the small stairway on the left." The route is carefully timed: It is estimated to take one and a half minutes

to get from the outside steps into the President's office. Another document lists the different security procedures, where the guards are posted, when the changing of the guard takes place, and when there are inspection tours—basically everything you need to run an assassination or other terrorist operation. It's very interesting to relate this high-level documentation to the British film "The Day of the Jacques," a Greenpeace/WWF parody of "The Day of Jackal," a film about the attempts to kill Charles de Gaulle, but directly threatening French President Jacques Chirac, which was shown during the 1995 campaign against France's nuclear tests (see *EIR*, Sept. 8, 1995, "British Assassins' Bureau Targets Chirac and Clinton").

Relations with terrorist movements

The author points to many ties between Greenpeace and the terrorist movements of different denominations—separatist, extreme-leftist or ecologist.

Take the case of the Brittany Democratic Union (UDB): On Jan. 30, 1974, the Brittany Liberation Front (FLB) was dissolved by decree of the prime minister. Four days later, the UDB appeared, co-signing a declaration with the Basque terrorist ETA and the Irish Republican Army, against "colonialism in Europe." Of course, terrorist actions continued after the dissolution of the FLB. Among others, there was a bombing of the offices of the nuclear company Cogema, a well-known target of Greenpeace. In April 1992, UDB members were arrested for having safe-housed top ETA leaders, including ETA's treasurer, Sabino Euba Genarruzabeita, who was arrested in the Paris airport as he was about to depart for Mexico. On the list of the 200 Bretons arrested, there are green and "pacifist" militants with ties to Greenpeace.

More interesting is a detailed account of Vermont's participation in the anti-nuclear commando operations at the nuclear waste plant in Gorleben, Germany. Through his seduction of a Dutch woman working for Greenpeace in Amsterdam, he learned that operations were planned. He travelled to the villages Castornix and Beladoenix, with the aim of stopping the transport of nuclear waste coming from Cogema, in The Hague, Holland, to the Gorleben waste site. Vermont presented himself as a French member of Greenpeace, "ready for some tricks." He gained the confidence of "Wolfgang," the leader of the anti-nuclear "autonomists" in Gorleben, by referring to a commando action he had participated in at The Hague, with one Pierrick, an acquaintance of Wolfgang's. Wolfgang (who goes by the *nom de guerre* of Helmut), told Vermont: "Officially, we are organizing strictly non-violent anti-nuclear demonstrations. We are supposed to be hit in front of the TV cameras, and not the contrary. No direct provocation with the cops or the army, even though it's very exciting. But our position is flexible. We say to the media that between the risk represented by the nuclear waste in Gorleben and the risk represented by sabotage to stop the transport, everybody is free to choose. You, the French autonomist,

you're free. Is that clear?"

Of course, it was very clear. The next night, Vermont participated in a sabotage operation against an electricity tower near Gorleben. After this action, it was proposed for him to participate in eco-warrior training. The following dialogue took place between a German militant named Klaus and Vermont:

Klaus: Frankly, what do you think of Greenpeace?

Vermont: Frankly? They are too soft. Good, but too soft.

Klaus: Do you know any Greenpeace members?

Vermont: I started off with them. . . . But after a while, you feel the need to be really efficient. Radical. You know what I mean.

Klaus: Uh huh. . . . It's rare to see a Frenchie like you. Usually, the British, the Irish or the Germans talk like that. . . .

Vermont: And what do you think about Greenpeace?

Klaus: Me? I am from Greenpeace!

Vermont: Oh. . . . Too bad for me.

Klaus: Don't worry, I'm joking. Like you, I was in Greenpeace. It's nearly mandatory when you're German, and you're involved in the environment. It's cool. But, you see the limits of their fight. They are f—ked every time, because of their non-violent facade.

Vermont: Facade? What do you mean?

Klaus: Never heard about Greenpeace's dirty tricks?

Then "Klaus" gave a detailed story of the operation run by Greenpeace in September 1980 to re-possess its vessel *Rainbow Warrior*, which had been impounded by the Spanish Army. "The operation necessitated months of rehearsals and paramilitary training. It would have never been possible without the participation of 'qualified persons,' specially prepared for terrorist-style actions. You see what I mean." Klaus proceeded to detail the content of the collaboration between Greenpeace and the terrorist Earth First U.K., to stop the construction of a highway in England around Twyford Down. His account is scattered with lines such as, "One cop more, one cop less. How important can that be, compared to the danger to the planet?"

Klaus then invited Vermont to Greenpeace's training center, located at Hamburg harbor. He described a very rigorous military training, "worse than the paratroopers." "You're locked in a room without heating, woken before dawn, cold shower, hot coffee, and hours of marching with military equipment. Then you have the workshops. For example, you must form a human chain and withstand the blows [feet or bludgeon] of other militants. In the end, you're covered with blood. Another exercise consists in climbing up a crane and rappelling down it alone. It's very risky. More than one person gives up at that point. Another example: You have to build your raft and cross a river, coming back with something. . . . They forbid you to sleep through the night. You become a zombie, ready for everything, and if you pass all tests, you become eligible for commando actions." Klaus continued, saying that this training takes place every month, with a group of 50 volunteers, under

the direction of Harald Zindler, who has been responsible for training more than 1,000 eco-warriors.

This reviewer doubts that such a dialogue really took place, although some parts are identical to precise information which has already been published in the press. Still, it bears checking, and I give some credibility to Vermont's description of the characters in Greenpeace-France, who are very similar to those with whom I've had experience.

Greenpeace's money trail

Vermont had access to the secret accounts of Greenpeace-France and of Greenpeace International. Some 60% of the money goes to salaries. Between 1994 and 1995, when Greenpeace-France had a deficit of roughly \$400,000, the leaders nevertheless decided to raise their salaries, which increased from \$300,000 to \$500,000 between 1994 and 1995! According to the figures copied by Vermont, only 6% of the income goes to field operations. Compare that to the 11% spent on legal expenses, to attack the organization's media critics, or to defend Greenpeace members charged with breaking the law. His description mimics the picture that came to light in Canada and Norway, through the film documentaries of Magnus Gudmunsson.

Vermont stole a dossier from Greenpeace International offices in Amsterdam, concerning "confidentiality clauses."

Under these clauses, Greenpeace pays huge amounts of money to former leaders, on condition that they never speak to the press after they leave. Australian Paul Gilding, the former director of Greenpeace-Sydney and former executive director of Greenpeace International before Thilo Bode, received \$160,000 when he left. Doug Faulkner, fundraising leader for 13 years, got \$200,000 when he was sacked, and signed the "confidentiality clause." Since 1993, Greenpeace has paid over \$600,000 in four confidentiality clauses—a strange procedure for an organization which always demands "transparency" and the "right to know."

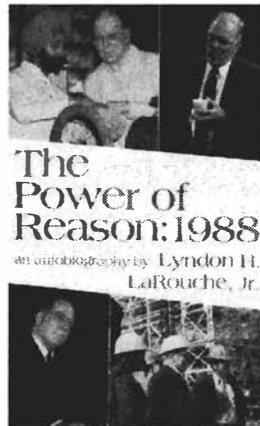
Environment of paranoia

Finally, a small anecdote which says a lot about the mood inside Greenpeace. A German student of commerce, studying for a year in a French school, spent three months with Greenpeace for training. She was put in charge of the merchandizing operation. Immediately, one militant suspected her of being a "spy" for Thilo Bode (nicknamed "Big Smurf" by the French members), infiltrated into the French office to provide the executive director with information about what is going on there. In the complex web of internal power politics, everyone in Greenpeace—whether paid members or volunteers—is suspicious of everyone else. Not exactly a "healthy environment."

Books by Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr.

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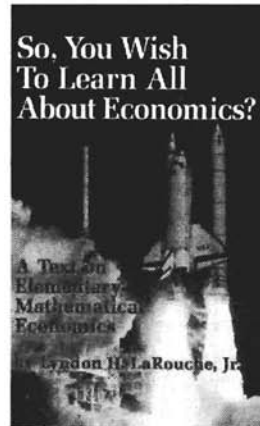
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