

Non-violent direct action

What? Why? When?

Finnish Nature League / Annina Käppi, Olli Manninen & Juho Kytömäki 26.8.05

What is non-violent direct action?

- Doing something about the issue yourself, directly and without hurting anyone
- Example: If your issue is hunger, then giving someone a meal is an example of direct action
- Examples: Gandhi and Martin Luther King

What is non-violent direct action?

- “The third way” - an alternative to weak submission to wrongs and violent reaction against them
- Two common alternatives:
 - 1) people either accept the unjust situation passively or
 - 2) prepare to use force in defense of their rights

What is non-violent direct action?

- Bearing witness to raise awareness
- Blockades
- Sit-ins, die-ins, passive resistance
- Banner hanging
- Preventing bigger crimes (like logging in the wrong place)
- and so on...

Non-violent direct action

- Non-violent direct action is an option when lobbying and/or negotiation with decision-makers has failed
- Powerful and commonly used tactic
- Do not do direct action unless you have to
 - avoid inflation

Non-violent direct action means you are:

- Peaceful, non-violent
- Acting openly, with your own name and face
- Acting in the interests of the group, not in the heat of the moment
- ✓ *Loud, insulting, aggressive and dangerous behaviour is NOT a part of NVDA*

Is it legal?

- Freedom of speech and opinion
- Most legal systems recognise some variant of the Necessity Defence; "property damage to protect life is legal"
- "Someone breaking a window or door in order to rescue someone from a burning building"

Is it legal? Is it right?

- Spraying "Warning! Nuclear Weapons Inside!" on the outside of a convoy truck used to transport nuclear warheads
- Putting sugar in the petrol tank of the same truck (when the truck is empty)
- Cutting the fence of the compound housing the same truck in order to do either of the above

Is it legal? Is it right?

- Breaking a car window to rescue a baby trapped in a car on a very hot day with no windows open and no parents present
- Hammering on the train tracks which lead to Auschwitz
- Hammering on the under-carriage of a military aircraft to prevent it being used to bomb people

Is it legal? Is it right?

- Hammering on the Berlin Wall on the night it came down
- Someone is in a remote country area with no-one around. They see a car full of explosives which they know will shortly be driven in to a major city and blown up. They slash the tires.

Martin Luther King sums it up:

"In any non-violent campaign there are four basic steps: collection of the facts to determine whether injustices exist; negotiation; self-purification; and direct action. People often ask, 'Isn't negotiation a better path than direct action?' The purpose of direct action is to facilitate negotiation."

NVDA and the forests

- Bearing witness
- Demonstrations
- Going near the machines
- Climbing on the trees
- Chaining yourself to trees or machines
- Spraying (use special spray!!!)
- Blockades, sit-ins, die-ins
- Hunger strikes

At the logging site:
Demonstration



At the logging site:
Camping (ground or trees)



Greenpeace activists and local residents stop roadbuilding and timber operations in an area of the Alaskan rainforest where clearcutting is taking place. Above a banner reading, "Ancient Forest Protection Starts Here," activists suspend a specially engineered structure high over logging roads in pristine forest that is slated to be cut.

At the logging site:
Spraying (use special spray!!!)



NVDA and the forests

- Target: Companies & politicians
Blockades, sit-ins, die-ins
Other...

At the logging site:
Demarcation

In a joint operation with Sámi reindeer herders, Greenpeace campaigners start demarcating the boundaries of the last remaining reindeer forests of Arctic Lapland.



Target: Companies & politicians:
Demonstrations



**Target: Companies & politicians:
"Presents" (logging residue, stumps...)**

A truck load of wood chips is deposited by Greenpeace in front of the UN headquarters of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) to highlight the fact that the Finnish government is turning reindeer forests into wood chips for pulp and paper production.



**Target: Buyers:
Demonstrations**

Hedwig the Owl visits Bloomsbury in London to ask them to print the next Harry Potter on 100% ancient forest friendly paper.



**Target: Companies & politicians:
Banner hanging**

Greenpeace Activists display a banner reading 'Stop Illegal Timber' to highlight illegal Indonesian plywood in construction



**Target: Buyers:
Performances and stuff**

Protest against New Zealand buyer of illegal timber. Two trees were arrested.



**Target: Buyers:
Performances and stuff**



Greenpeace activists joined by giant trees called Ents, that fans will recognise from the Lord of the Rings, have welcomed government delegates from around the world to the 9th meeting of biodiversity (SBSTTA).