

Written Testimony Supplied to The U.S. House Subcommittee on Forests and Forests Health for the February 12, 2002, Hearing on "Ecoterrorism"

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When a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce [the people] under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security.

The oppressed should rebel, and they will continue to rebel and raise disturbance until their civil rights are fully restored to them and all partial distinctions, exclusions and incapacitations are removed.

Thomas Jefferson, 1776

On April 15, 1972, I came into this world as a child of two wonderful parents living in Portland, Oregon. Growing up in the Pacific Northwestern region of the United States, I had the privilege of easy access to the natural world. Much of my childhood was spent in the fields and forested areas behind our home, playing and experiencing life in my time of innocence. I had no knowledge of societal problems, especially those pertaining to the natural environment.

Throughout my childhood and adolescent years, the education I received from my parents, schools, popular media and culture instilled in me a pride for my country, for my government, and everything the United States represented. I was taught about the great American history, our Constitution, Bill of Rights, and our legacy of being at the forefront of democracy and freedom. I considered myself to be just an average boy taking an active part in the popular American pastimes of competitive sports, consumer culture, and existing within a classic representation of the standard, middle-class suburban lifestyle.

Upon graduating from high school, I became exposed to new forms of education and ideas. Resulting from my exposure to people from differing socio-economic backgrounds and beginning college, I found my horizons beginning to widen. For the first time in my life, I was presented with the notion of political and social conflict coupled with the various issues contained within both categories. It was alarming yet, at the same time, invigorating as I began to feel passion burn within me.

George Bush, Sr. had just thrust the United States into what became known as the Gulf War. Now, as I was raised with a certain absolutist support of my country and government, my first inclination was to wave the stars and stripes and support unconditionally this noble pursuit of "promoting democracy and freedom" in the "less fortunate" and "uncivilized" lands. Yet, as I began to look further into the matter, I found myself asking questions such as *why are we there? Why are we killing civilians? What is the true motive behind the conflict?* After extensive research, I came to the logical and truthful conclusion that natural resources and regional power were the primary motives.

As news from independent sources slowly filtered out, I became increasingly horrified at the slaughter of Iraqi civilians by the U.S. military. With NO WAR FOR OIL as my personal guiding statement, I joined the local anti-war protests and movement existing in Portland, Oregon. Little did I realize that this first political activity would lead me to a life of devotion to true justice and real freedom.

While my anti-war involvement progressed, I also began to understand the disastrous relationship our modern society has with the many animal nations. Out of an interest inspired both by independent reading and through early college courses, I became involved with a local animal advocacy organization. At first, I attended meetings to hear the numerous arguments for the rights of animals and further my own education. The more I learned, the more compelled I felt to involve myself fully in working for animal protection. My activities went from merely attending meetings, rallies, and protests to organizing them. Of all the issues I had learned about during the six years I spent with that organization, I focused the majority of my time, research, and interest on fighting against the use of animals in biomedical and scientific experimentation.

While a great percentage of the public in the United States had been convinced that animal research progressed and continues to improve human health, I soon realized that this myth was not only untruthful and single sided, but the work of a slick public relations campaign by the pharmaceutical industry in coordination with federal agencies such as the National Institutes of Health. I also learned that just like the factory farm industry, the use of animals for human entertainment and for the fashion industry, animal experimentation was motivated first and foremost by profits. Furthermore, I learned how the government of the United States not only economically supports these various institutions of exploitation and slaughter, but how it continues to perpetuate and politically support the dangerous lie that animal research saves human lives. My support for various governmental policies was slowly fading.

And then memories of innocence were torn away. In the early 1990s, I learned that the lush natural acreage I used to play in as a child had been sold to a development firm. It intended to bulldoze the entire area and create a virtual community of homes for the upper middle class to wealthy. Within two years, the land as I knew it was no more. The visual reminder I used to appreciate, the one that would take me back to the years when the fields and trees were my playground, was stolen by a development corporation who saw more value in the land as luxurious houses than for its natural beauty and life.

I remember asking myself, *what would happen to the various wildlife who made the area their home for so many years? Where would the deer, coyotes, skunks, wild cats, mice, raccoons, opossums, and others go?* It was obvious that the developers had not even considered these questions. Rather, it appeared, the main pursuit of the corporation was working towards building incredibly large homes as close as possible to one another for maximum financial gain.

As the 1990s progressed, I became increasingly aware of the relationship between social and political problems in the United States. No single issue was truly independent but rather was affected by many others. In my work with the local animal advocacy organization, I realized that exploitation and destruction at the hands of human domination over animals also involved much more. Economics, politics, sociology, psychology, anthropology, science, religion, and other disciplines all played a significant role in understanding this unhealthy and unbalanced relationship between humans and other animals. But, by far the most important realization I made was that the problems facing animals, the problems facing the natural environment, and those affecting humans all came from a primary source. Understanding this crucial connection, I co-

founded a non-profit organization in 1996 dedicated to educating the public on this fundamental realization.

During the mid-1990s, through continued formal and informal education, I also began to understand that the history I had learned growing up was only one story of many. I gained insight into the fact that everything I had learned about the origins of the United States of America had been purely from the viewpoint of the colonists and European settlers. Thus, the history I was taught was from the perspective of the privileged white man, which not only told a mere fraction of the story, but also provided an extreme amount of misinformation as well.

I was never taught that the origins of this country were based upon murder, exploitation, and ultimate genocide. My teachers neglected to mention the fact that the white European settlers nearly annihilated the various indigenous peoples who had existed on this land for ages. Instead, I was taught about Thanksgiving and Columbus Day. I bought into this version of American history so much that I vividly recall my excitement over creating a paper model of one of Columbus' ships years ago.

No one ever seemed to provide the insight to me that the settlers, immediately upon their arrival, immediately enslaved the natives, and forced them to work and assist the European powers in their quest for gold and spices. Likewise, I failed to ever have access to a true African-American history that began when blacks were captured and shipped as property to this land to work as slaves for white men.

While I was taught about the so-called "Great American Revolution," it was never mentioned that this war for independence against the European powers only served and benefited the privileged white male. Of course, all white men were privileged to some degree; however, many were enslaved initially just like the natives and blacks. Women, natives, blacks, and, to a limited degree, poor whites were considered property, bought, sold, and owned by the affluent white hierarchy.

In school, my teachers did explain to me the importance of the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights and how our forefathers drew up these documents to serve the people. This, I learned, was the foundation of our supposed great democracy. Yet, in reality, these items were created by the white power structure and only served to benefit the privileged members of white society. Women, blacks, natives, and poor white men still were not enfranchised nor had any accessibility to self-determination and freedom. Land ownership--a notion completely foreign and absurd to most of the indigenous--became a deciding factor of power and privilege for white men. Those without land lacked the opportunity for the vote, for ultimate power and respect.

As more and more settlers pushed westward through the country, the government committed endless treaty breaches and violations, stealing land that whites had *allotted* to the indigenous. Perhaps one of the most disturbing facts was that these original agreements made between various indigenous nations and the United States government were supposed to have international standing. Each of the indigenous populations was recognized at the time each document was signed as being a sovereign nation and, yet, the U.S. government still exerted its power and domination to steal land for eventual development and drainage of resources. This genocide against the varied Native American nations by the United States continues today with innocent people such as Leonard Peltier being imprisoned for years simply due to the government's perception of him as a political threat. Free Leonard Peltier!

On July 4 annually, U.S. citizens celebrate the founding of our country, most either blatantly

forgetting or ignorant of the true issues surrounding that date. The fact that the United States as a nation systematically committed mass genocide against the indigenous of these lands, to catastrophic extremities, is certainly no cause for celebration. Rather, it should be a time for mourning, for remembrance, and, most of all for education of our children so we are not doomed to repeat the mistakes of the past.

The plight of blacks and women throughout U.S. history, although perhaps not as overtly catastrophic, still constituted outright mass murder, enslavement, exploitation, and objectification. Early on, white European settlers found that natives were much more difficult to enslave and manage due to their ability to maintain at least partial elements of their cultures. When blacks began to first arrive on slave ships, chained in the darkness below the decks, white settlers theorized they would make better slaves because they would be further removed from their cultures. Thus, the enslavement of blacks began in this land and would, in its overt form, last for a couple hundred years. During this time and well beyond, blacks were considered property to be bought, sold, traded, used, and disposed of at will.

Even after the abolitionist movement, which began in the 1820s, blacks continued to be considered second-rate citizens, restricted from voting and experiencing the free life which whites were accustomed. When the modern U.S. civil rights movement began in the 1940s, it took some twenty years of constant hardship and struggle to achieve some reform in the fascist policies of the United States. Even though blacks "won" the right to vote and exist in desegregated zones, there still was an absence of overall freedom, never any actual resemblance of equality. Today, the saga continues. While African Americans have made incredible progress in obtaining certain rights and privileges, there continues to be a more hidden, underlying discrimination that is every bit as potent. We can see a clear example by taking an honest look at the prison industrial complex and understanding who continues to be enslaved in mass to make that industry financially viable. Free Mumia Abu Jamal! Free the Move 9! Free all the political prisoners in the United States!

A similar and equally unfortunate history has and continues to haunt women in U.S. society. Also once considered property, women were not even able to vote in this country until the 1920s. Even after, they continued to be faced with a patriarchal society consisting of white men in power. While women have made many wonderful advances for themselves, they still exist today in the United States under that same sexist and patriarchal society. A quick glance at the profiles of the federal government as well as top CEOs from U.S. corporations fully illustrates this reality.

When I co-founded the non-profit organization in Portland, Oregon, in 1996, I was becoming more aware that the similarities in the human, environmental, and animal advocacy movements stemmed from this rich U.S. history, not of glory, freedom and democracy, but of oppression in its sickest forms. I began to also realize that just as the U.S. white male power structure put itself on a pedestal above everyone else, it also maintained that attitude toward the natural environment and the various animal nations existing within it. As a society, we have continuously acted towards these natural life forms as though we owned them, therefore giving us the right to do whatever we wanted and could do to them.

Particularly, with the advent of the industrial revolution in the United States, the destruction of the natural world took a sharp turn for the worse. The attitude, more so than ever, turned to one of profits at any cost and a major shift from sustainable living to stockpiling for economic benefit. This focus on stockpiling and industrial productivity caused hardship on communities, forcing local crafters and laborers to be driven out of business by overly competitive industries. Additionally, with this new focus on sacrificing sustainable living for financial gain, natural

resources were in greater demand than ever. Semi-automatic to automatic machinery, production lines, the automobile, the roadway system, suburbs, and the breakup of small, fairly self-sufficient communities all came about, at least in part, due to the industrial revolution. This unhealthy and deadly transgression of course was supported and promoted by the U.S. government, always eager to see growth in the domestic economy.

All of this set the stage for the threatening shortage of natural resources and the massive environmental pollution and destruction present today in the United States. In cities such as Los Angeles, Detroit, and Houston, the air and soil pollution levels are so extreme people have suffered and continue to face deadly health problems. Waterways throughout the country, including the Columbia Slough in my backyard, are so polluted from industries it is recommended that humans don't even expose themselves to the moisture let alone drink unfiltered, unbottled water. The necessary and crucial forests of the Pacific Northwestern region of the country have been systematically destroyed by corporations such as Boise Cascade, Willamette Industries, and others within the timber industry whose sole motive is profits regardless of the expense to the health of an ecosystem. In Northern California, the sacred old growths, dreamlike in appearance, taking your breath away at first glance, have been continuously threatened and cut by greedy corporations such as Pacific Lumber/Maxxam. The same has occurred and still is a reality in states including Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Colorado.

The first National Forests were established in the United States more than a century ago. One hundred fifty-five of them exist today spread across 191 million acres. Over the years, the forest products industry has decimated publicly owned National Forests in this country, leaving a horrendous trail of clearcuts and logging roads. Commercial logging has been responsible for annihilating nearly all of the nation's old growth forests, draining nutrients from the soil, washing topsoil into streams, destroying wildlife habitat, and creating an increase in the incidence and severity of forest fires. Only an estimated 4percent of old growth forests in the United States are remaining.

The National Forests in the United States contain far more than just trees. In fact, more than 3,000 species of fish and wildlife, in addition to 10,000 plant species, have their habitat within the National Forests. This includes at least 230 endangered plant and animal species. All of these life forms co-exist symbiotically to naturally create the rich and healthy ecosystems needed for life to exist on this planet.

The benefits of a healthy forest cannot be overrated. Healthy forests purify drinking water, provide fresh clean air to breathe, stabilize hillsides, and prevent floods. Hillsides clearcut or destroyed by logging roads lose their ability to absorb heavy rainfall. If no trees exist to soak up moisture with roots to hold the soil, water flows freely down slopes, creating muddy streams, polluting drinking water, strengthening floods, and causing dangerous mudslides. Instead of valuing trees and forests for being necessary providers of life, the U.S. Forest Service and commercial logging interests have decimated these precious ecosystems.

The timber corporations argue that today in the United States more forests exist than perhaps at any time in the last century or more. It doesn't take a forestry specialist to realize that monoculture tree farms--in which one species of tree, often times non-native to the area, is grown in mass in a small area for maximum production--do not equate to a healthy forest. Healthy forests are made up of diverse ecosystems consisting of many native plant and animal species. These healthy ecosystems are what grant humans and all other life forms on the planet with the ability to live. Without clean air, clean water, and healthy soil, life on this planet will cease to

exist. There is an overwhelming battery of evidence that conclusively shows that we are already well on our path toward massive planetary destruction.

The popular environmental movement in the United States, which arguably began in the 1960s, has failed to produce the necessary protection needed to ensure that life on this planet will continue to survive. This is largely due to the fact that the movement has primarily consisted of tactics sanctioned by the very power structure that is benefiting economically from the destruction of the natural world. While a few minor successes in this country should be noted, the overwhelming constant trend has been the increasingly speedy liquidation of natural resources and annihilation of the environment.

The state sanctioned tactics, that is, those approved by the U.S. government and the status quo and predominantly legal in nature, rarely, if ever, actually challenge or positively change the very entities that are responsible for oppression, exploitation, and, in this case, environmental destruction. Throughout the history of the United States, a striking amount of evidence indicates that it wasn't until efforts strayed beyond the state sanctioned that social change ever progressed. In the abolitionist movement, the Underground Railroad, public educational campaigns, in addition to slave revolts, forced the federal government to act. With the Suffragettes in the United States, individuals such as Alice Paul acting with various forms of civil disobedience added to the more mainstream efforts to successfully demand the vote for women. Any labor historian will assert that in addition to the organizing of the workplace, strikes, riots, and protests dramatically assisted in producing more tolerable work standards. The progress of the civil rights movement was primarily founded upon the massive illegal civil disobedience campaigns against segregation and disenfranchisement. Likewise, the true pressure from the Vietnam anti-war movement in this country only came after illegal activities such as civil disobedience and beyond were implemented. Perhaps the most obvious, yet often overlooked, historical example of this notion supporting the importance of illegal activity as a tool for positive, lasting change, came just prior to our war for independence. Our educational systems in the United States glorify the Boston Tea Party while simultaneously failing to recognize and admit that the dumping of tea was perhaps one of the most famous early examples of politically motivated property destruction.

In the mid-1990s, individuals angry and disillusioned with the failing efforts to protect the natural environment through state sanctioned means, began taking illegal action. At first, nonviolent civil disobedience was implemented, followed by sporadic cases of nonviolent property destruction. In November 1997, an anonymous communiqué was issued by a group called the Earth Liberation Front claiming responsibility for their first-ever action in North America.

Immediately, the label of *ecoterrorism* appeared in news stories describing the actions of the Earth Liberation Front. Where exactly this label originated is open for debate, but all indications point to the federal government of the United States in coordination with industry and sympathetic mass media. Whatever the truth may be regarding the source of this term, one thing is for certain--the decision to attach this label to illegal actions taken for environmental protection was very conscious and deliberate. Why? The need for the U.S. federal government to control and mold public opinion through the power of propaganda to ensure an absence of threat is crucial. If information about illegal actions taken to protect the natural environment were presented openly to the public without biased interpretation, the opportunity would exist for citizens to make up their *own* minds about the legitimacy of the tactic, target, and movement. By attaching a label such as "terrorism" to the activities of groups such as the Earth Liberation Front, the public is left with little choice but to give into their preconceived notions negatively associated with that term. For many in this country, including myself, information about terrorism came from schools and popular culture. Most often times, the definition of terrorism was overtly racist associated

frequently in movies and on television shows with Arabs and the *others* our government told us were threatening. Terrorism usually is connected with violence, with politically motivated physical harm to humans.

Yet, in the history of the Earth Liberation Front, both in North America and abroad in Europe, no one has ever been injured by the group's many actions. This is not a mere coincidence, but rather a deliberate decision that illustrates the true motivation behind the covert organization. Simply put and most fundamentally, the goal of the Earth Liberation Front is to save life. The group takes actions directly against the property of those who are engaged in massive planetary destruction in order for all of us to survive. This noble pursuit does not constitute terrorism, but rather seeks to abolish it.

A major hypocrisy exists when the U.S. government labels an organization such as the Earth Liberation Front a terrorist group while simultaneously failing to acknowledge its own terrorist history. In fact, the U.S. government by far has been the most extreme terrorist organization in planetary history. Some, but nowhere near all, of the examples of domestic terrorism were discussed earlier in this writing. Yet, further proof can be found by taking a glimpse at the foreign policy record of the United States even as recently as from the 1950s.

In Guatemala (1953-1990s) the CIA organized a coup that overthrew the democratically elected government led by Jacobo Arbenz. This began some 40 years of death squads, torture, disappearances, mass executions, totaling well over 100,000 victims. The U.S. government apparently didn't want Guatemala's social democracy spreading to other countries in Latin America.

In the Middle East (1956-1958) the United States twice tried to overthrow the Syrian government. Additionally, the U.S. government landed 14,000 troops to purportedly keep the peace in Lebanon and to stop any opposition to the U.S. supported Lebanese government. The U.S. government also conspired to overthrow or assassinate Nasser of Egypt.

During the same time, in Indonesia (1957-1958), the CIA tried to manipulate elections and plotted the assassination of Sukarno, then the Indonesian leader. The CIA also assisted in waging a full-scale war against the government of Indonesia. All of this action was taken because Sukarno refused to take a hard-line stand against communism.

From 1953 to 1964, the U.S. government targeted Cheddi Jagan, then the leader of British Guiana, out of a fear he might have built a successful example of an alternative model to the capitalist society. The U.S. government, aided by Britain, organized general strikes and spread misinformation, finally forcing Jagan out of power in 1964.

In Cambodia (1955-1973), Prince Sihanouk was severely targeted by the U.S. government. This targeting included assassination attempts and the unpublicized carpet bombings of 1969 to 1970. The U.S. government finally succeeded in overthrowing Sihanouk in a 1970 coup.

The examples continue. From 1960 through 1965, the United States intervened in Congo/Zaire. After Patrice Lumumba became Congo's first Prime Minister following independence gained from Belgium, he was assassinated in 1961 at the request of Dwight Eisenhower. During the same time in Brazil (1961-1964), President Joao Goulart was overthrown in a military coup, which involved the United States. Again, the alleged reasoning for U.S. participation amounted to a fear of communism or, more importantly, anything that threatened this country's way of life. In the Dominican Republic (1963-1966), the United States sent in 23,000 troops to help stop a coup

which aimed at restoring power to Juan Bosch, an individual the U.S. government feared had socialist leanings.

Of course, no one should forget about Cuba. When Fidel Castro came to power in 1959, the United States immediately sought to put another government in place, prompting some 40 years of terrorist attacks, bombings, a full-scale military invasion, sanctions, embargoes, isolations, and assassinations.

In Chile, the U.S. government sabotaged Salvador Allende's electoral campaign in 1964. In 1970, the U.S. government failed to do so and tried for years later to destabilize the Allende government particularly by building up military hostility. In September 1973, the U.S. supported military overthrew the government with Allende dying in the process. Some 3,000 people were executed and thousands more were tortured or disappeared. In Greece during the same period (1964-1974), the United States backed a military coup that led to martial law, censorship, arrests, beatings, torture, and killings. In the first month, more than 8,000 people died. All of this was executed with equipment supplied by the United States.

Back in Indonesia in 1965, fears of communism led the United States to back multiple coup attempts, which resulted in a horrendous massacre against communists. During this time the U.S. embassy compiled lists of communist operatives, as many as 5,000 names, and turned them over to the Army. The Army would then hunt down and kill those on the list.

The U.S. government also has had its dirty hands connected to East Timor (1975 to present). In December 1975, Indonesia invaded East Timor using U.S. weapons. By 1989, Indonesia had slaughtered 200,000 people out of a population between 600,000 and 700,000.

In Nicaragua (1978-1989), when the Sandinistas overthrew the Somoza dictatorship in 1978, the U.S. government immediately became involved. President Carter attempted diplomatic and economic forms of sabotage while President Reagan put the Contras to work. For eight years, backed by the United States, the Contra's waged war on the people of Nicaragua.

Continuing on with Grenada (1979-1984), the United States intervened to stop a 1979 coup led by Maurice Bishop and his followers. The United States invaded Grenada in October 1983, killing 400 citizens of Grenada and 84 Cubans. Of course the Libya example (1981-1989) must be mentioned. In the 1980s, the United States shot down two Libyan planes in what Libya regarded as its air space. The United States also dropped bombs on the country killing more than people including Qaddafi's daughter. Yet that wasn't enough as the U.S. government engaged in other attempts to eradicate Qaddafi. This included a fierce misinformation campaign, economic sanctions, and blaming Libya for being responsible for the Pan Am flight 103 bombing without any sound evidence. The U.S. government, also in 1989, bombed Panama, leaving some 15,000 people homeless in Panama City. Thousands of people died and even more were wounded.

Prior to the October 7, 2001, invasion of Afghanistan by the United States, the U.S. government had intervened there from 1979 to 1992. During the late 1970s and most of the 1980s, the U.S. government spent billions of dollars waging a war on a progressive Afghani government, merely because that government was backed by the Soviet Union. More than one million people died, three million were disabled, and five million became refugees.

In El Salvador (1980-1992), the United States supported the government, which engaged in electoral fraud and the murder of hundreds of protesters and strikers. These dissidents, who had been trying to work within the system, took to using guns and declared a civil war in 1980. The

U.S. government played an active role in trying to stop the uprising. When it was over in 1992, 75,000 civilians had been killed and the United States had spent six billion dollars.

In Haiti, from 1987 through 1994, the United States supported the Duvalier family dictatorship. During this time, the CIA worked intimately with death squads, torturers, and drug traffickers. Yugoslavia must also be mentioned, as no one should ever forget the United States' responsibility for bombing that country into annihilation.

In the early 1990s, the U.S. government continuously bombed Iraq for more than 40 days and nights. One hundred seventy-seven million pounds of bombs fell during this time on the people of Iraq. The remaining uranium deposits from weapons resulted in massive birth defects and incidences of cancer. Between 1990 and 1995, the United States was directly responsible for killing more than 500,000 Iraqi children under the age of five due to economic sanctions. Additionally, due to these sanctions, coupled with the continuous U.S. bombing that has occurred on Iraq since the Gulf War, more than 1.5 million innocent Iraqi people have been killed.

These few examples since 1950 of U.S.-sponsored and organized terrorism are horrendous, and, unfortunately, these massive murderous tactics continue today. On October 7, 2001 the U.S. government began a full-scale military invasion of Afghanistan without even providing a shred of factual evidence linking Osama Bin Laden or Al Qaida to the attacks in this country on September 11. To date, well over 4,000 innocent Afghani civilians have been killed by the U.S. government in this massive genocidal campaign. All along, U.S. government officials have claimed to possess concrete evidence proving the guilt of both Bin Laden and Al Qaida, but repeatedly said they cannot release this "proof" as doing so may endanger the lives of U.S. military personnel. This simply makes no sense, as there could not be any justifiable threat to U.S. personnel if they weren't already in inexcusable positions, violating the sovereignty of internationally recognized nations.

The Taliban, which the United States help put into power in 1994, have stated repeatedly to the U.S. government and the world that it would hand over Bin Laden to an international court if the United States provided proof of his guilt. The United States refused and instead claimed the Taliban was not cooperating and was therefore harboring terrorists.

Can you imagine what would have happened if, prior to September 11, 2001, a structure in Kabul were bombed and the Taliban immediately suspected CIA director George Tenet as the prime suspect? Would the United States hand over Tenet to the Taliban if requested if there was not substantial evidence provided of his guilt? Even if the Taliban supplied any shred of evidence, the United States still would refuse to hand over Tenet or any privileged citizen to an international court because the United States does not abide by them or agree to them. Regardless, the U.S. government believes that it has the right to provide no evidence of Bin Laden's or Al Qaida's guilt to the Taliban or the world before launching a massive genocidal campaign against Afghanistan civilians.

The true motives and the identities of those involved both in September 11, 2001 and October 7, 2001 are known only to a select few in power. However, evidence does exist in media sources as mainstream as the BBC (reported on September 18, 2001) that suggests the U.S. government was planning a military invasion of Afghanistan to oust the Taliban as early as March 2001. Furthermore, the intended deadline for the invasion was set for not later than October of the same year. The October 7, 2001, invasion by the United States into Afghanistan appears to have been right on schedule.

This war against terrorism, otherwise known as *Operation Enduring Freedom*, is the latest example of U.S. based terrorism and imperialism. It is clear that the events of September 11, 2001, were used as a chance for the U.S. government to invade Afghanistan, to attempt to increase U.S. regional and global power in addition to open up the much-sought-after oil reserves in the Middle East and Central Asia. The bonus, of course, was that this mission has given the United States the opportunity to target and attempt to annihilate any anti-U.S. sentiment within that region. As the war against terrorism expands, so does the possibility of more U.S. military bases and more security for the global economic powers.

If the U.S. government is truly concerned with eradicating terrorism in the world, then that effort must begin with abolishing U.S. imperialism. Members of this governing body, both in the House and Senate as well as those who hold positions in the executive branch, constitute the largest group of terrorists and terrorist representatives currently threatening life on this planet. The only true service this horrific organization supplies is to the upper classes and corporate elite.

As an innocent child, I used to have faith in my government and pride in my country. Today I have no pride, no faith, only embarrassment, anger, and frustration. There are definite and substantiated reasons why the U.S. government is not only disliked but hated by populations in many nations around the globe. The outrage and anger is justified due to the history of U.S. domestic and foreign policies.

Here in the United States, the growth of the empire, of capitalism, and of industry, has meant greater discrepancies between the wealthy and poor, a continued rise in the number of those considered to be a threat to the system, as well as irreversible harm done to the environment and life on the planet. Corporations in the United States literally get away with murder, facing little or no repercussions due to their legal structures. The U.S. government, which sleeps in the same bed as U.S. corporations, serves to ensure that the "business as usual" policies of imperialism can continue with as little friction as possible. Anyone questioning the mere logic of this genocidal culture and governing policy is considered a dissident and, more often than not, shipped off to one of the fastest growing industries of all, the prison industrial complex.

Internationally, U.S. policies have amounted to the same, often times worse, forms of violence. As I demonstrated herein with examples since 1950, the foreign policy track record has included genocide, assassinations, exploitation, military action, and destruction. Disguised as promoting or protecting freedom and democracy, U.S. foreign policies aim to directly control and conquer, while gaining power, finances, and resources.

U.S. imperialism is a disease, one that continues to grow and become more powerful and dangerous. It needs to be stopped. One of the chief weapons used by those protecting the imperialist policies of the United States is a slick, believable propaganda campaign designed to ensure U.S. citizens do not question or threaten the "American way of life." Perhaps the strongest factor in this campaign is the phenomenon of capitalism. By creating a consumer demand for products, corporations, greatly aided by the U.S. government, can effectively influence people's dreams, desires, wants, and life plans. The very American Dream promoted throughout the world is that anyone can come to the United States, work hard, and become happy and financially secure. Through the use of the propaganda campaign designed, promoted, and transmitted by the U.S. ruling class, people are nearly coerced into adopting unhealthy desires for, often times, unreachable, unneeded, and dangerous consumer goods. Through impressive societal mind control, the belief that obtaining consumer products will equal security and happiness has spread across the United States, and much of the planet at this point, like some extreme plague. The fact that the policies of the United States murder people on a daily basis is unseen, forgotten, or

ignored, as every effort is made by people to fit into the artificial model life manufactured by the ruling elite.

A universal effort needs to be made to understand the importance and execution of abolishing U.S. imperialism. This by no way refers to simply engaging in reformist efforts, rather, a complete societal and political revolution will need to occur before real justice and freedom become a reality. The answer does not lie in trying to fix one specific problem or work on one individual issue, but rather the entire pie needs to be targeted, every last piece looked upon as a mere representation of the whole.

If the people of the United States, who the government is supposed to represent, are actually serious about creating a nation of peace, freedom, and justice, then there must be a serious effort made, by any means necessary, to abolish imperialism and U.S. governmental terrorism. The daily murder and destruction caused by this political organization is very real, and so the campaign by the people to stop it must be equally as potent.

I have been told by many people in the United States to *love America or leave it*. I love this land and the truly compassionate people within it. I therefore feel I not only have a right, but also an obligation, to stay within this land and work for positive societal and political change for all.

I was asked originally if I would voluntarily testify before the House Subcommittee on Forests and Forest Health at a hearing focused on "ecoterrorism." I declined in a written statement. U.S. Marshals then subpoenaed me on October 31, 2001 to testify at this hearing on February 12, 2002, against my will. Is this hearing a forum to discuss the threats facing the health of the natural environment, specifically the forests? No, clearly there is not even the remotest interest in this subject from the U.S. government or industry. The goal of this hearing is to discuss methodologies to improve the failed attempts law enforcement have made since the mid-1990s in catching and prosecuting individuals and organizations who take nonviolent, illegal direct action to stop the destruction of the natural environment. I have no interest in this cause or this hearing. In fact, I consider it a farce.

Since 1997, the U.S. government has issued me seven grand jury subpoenas, raided my home and work twice, stealing hundreds of items of property, and, on many occasions, sent federal agents to follow and question me. After this effort, which has lasted nearly five years, federal agents have yet to obtain any information from me to aid their investigations. As I have never been charged with one crime related to these so-called ecoterrorist organizations or their activities, the constant harassment by the federal government constitutes a serious infringement on my Constitutional right to freedom of speech. This Congressional Subcommittee hearing appears to be no different, harassing and targeting me for simply voicing my ideological support for those involved in environmental protection.

I fully praise those individuals who take direct action, by any means necessary, to stop the destruction of the natural world and threats to all life. They are the heroes, risking their freedom and lives so that we as a species as well as all life forms can continue to exist on the planet. In a country so fixated on monetary wealth and power, these brave environmental advocates are engaging in some of the most selfless activities possible.

It is my sincere desire that organizations such as the Earth Liberation Front continue to grow and prosper in the United States. In fact, more organizations, using similar tactics and strategies, need to be established to directly focus on U.S. imperialism and the U.S. government itself. For, as long as the quest for monetary gain continues to be the predominant value within U.S. society,

human, animal, and environmental exploitation, destruction, and murder will continue to be a reality. This drive for profits at any cost needs to be fiercely targeted, and those responsible for the massive injustices punished. If there is any real concern for justice, freedom, and, at least, a resemblance of a true democracy, this revolutionary ideal must become a reality. ALL POWER TO THE PEOPLE. LONG LIVE THE EARTH LIBERATION FRONT. LONG LIVE THE ANIMAL LIBERATION FRONT. LONG LIVE ALL THE SPARKS ATTEMPTING TO IGNITE THE REVOLUTION. SOONER OR LATER THE SPARKS *WILL* TURN INTO A FLAME!