

**The
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Blacks Rated Lower Than Animals
by Jonathan David Farley, D.Phil.
Guest Commentator

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"All head lights and glass smashed, all electrics and air lines, oil lines cut, tires slashed, fuel tanks, oil and transmission tanks contaminated, cab controls smashed up, approx one hundred power cables supplying site electrics were chopped through. Fuse boxes and other bits of electrics smashed, fuel pumps damaged, fuel tanks spilled, all site conveyor belts slashed beyond repair. Slogans painted everywhere, estimated cost [\$500,000]."

It reads like a report from Cent Com. But it is a report issued by the insurgents themselves, on a website. Not the insurgents in Iraq – the insurgents in England: the Animal Liberation Front (ALF). They are protesting a company, RMC, that is involved with the building of an animal research laboratory at Oxford University.

"On the night of Wednesday June 30th members of the Animal Liberation Front mounted a daring raid on the RMC site at their international HQ.... Powerful incendiary devices were left on site and resulted in the destruction of three [trucks], the site office and severe damage to associated industrial buildings and machinery.... This attack is a warning to RMC that collaboration in animal torture at Oxford or anywhere else will not be tolerated, and a further warning to all involved in building the Oxford laboratory to expect similar ruthless treatment. You have been warned."

RMC's crime? The sadistic mutilation of kittens and rabbits? No. All RMC did was *supply the concrete to build the lab.*

I've often been baffled by the boldness of animal rights campaigners. In the century of lynchings since the end of slavery, when did African–Americans so boldly defend *black* rights? These white ALFers are willing to destroy property to protect chimpanzees, while black Americans would never think of doing anything similar, not even to protect their own daughters from being raped or blown up by bombs at church. Compared to the ALF, black Americans are as docile as trained monkeys.

I'm not advocating vandalism or terrorism. In fact, I disagree with the animal rights campaigners. I just find the comparison interesting.

The Black Commentator – Blacks Rated Lower Than Animals

Black Americans do not even have a spokesman (we can safely disregard the National Association for the Advancement of Cowardly Pawns), while animals do: an organization called SPEAK. The ALF also has a website, where they describe their successful acts of violence. Black Americans do not even have a website where we can catalog violent attacks perpetrated against *us*.

There's also a Vegan Prisoners Support Group. How many members of the Black Liberation Army are rotting in jail – unknown to the vast majority of Kobe Bryant and O.J. supporters – while *Jet* Magazine runs weekly profiles of celebrity weddings and MIT mathematics professors? Heck, if you want news about Black Panther political prisoners, don't ask the Urban League – go instead to the Earth First Action Update, a website run by white liberals.

Unlike black Americans, animal rights activists honor their heroes (and not just the ones officially stamped for approval by the majority society). "The souls of the tortured dead cry out for justice, the cry of the living is for freedom," said Barry Horne. "We can create that justice and we can deliver that freedom." Horne died in prison in 2001, after his fourth hunger strike. 700 animal rights activists attended his funeral. Not one black American I know of has ever engaged in a hunger strike. Certainly not Martin Luther King, despite his professed admiration for Gandhi. Gandhi was skin and bones, whereas Martin Luther King loved black people, non-violence, and chicken wings, not necessarily in that order.

One can't say that Horne was willing to sacrifice himself because he had nothing to live for: he had two children and a grandchild. Nor was he mad – government psychiatrists declared him of sound mind. The reason he did it, according to one funeral attendee, was simple: "Animal rights is a war...[and] we need to make sacrifices...." Horne received as many as 40 letters of support a day while he was in prison, serving time for a two-year campaign of firebombing attacks.

Resistance doesn't have to be violent. One animal research scientist worries that anybody can find out who he is by doing a scan of the scientific literature. Funny, in America, any black group can find out the personal details of people who treat *us* like animals – whether they are Klansmen, scientists at Tuskegee, or people with 41 extra bullets in their guns – but nobody ever does it.

Resistance doesn't have to be violent. The Animal Liberation Front wrote shareholders of the company building the Oxford lab, suggesting that they might want to sell their stock. The day the letters went public, share prices fell 19%. Whatever you think of the ALF, that's smart.

This is not an apology for violent acts. I abhor violence and terrorism. (Did I forget to mention that I abhor terrorism and violence?) Indeed, I violently disagree with animal rights campaigners: I want the lipstick I wear to have been first tested on something other than myself – not that, er, I use lipstick. (You know what I mean.) But it is astonishing that animals, in the minds of black Americans, are more deserving of physical protection than black people themselves. Until that changes, the soul of the tortured slave will still cry out for justice, and the living for freedom.

You have been warned.

Dr. Jonathan David Farley is the winner of Harvard University's "Harvard Foundation Distinguished Scientist of the Year Award." He can be contacted at (lattice@math.harvard.edu).