

Animal rights, animal wrongs!

May 29th 2009

Ten animal rights protestors were arrested last night after a scientific laboratory in South England was broken into. The protestors were caught red-handed in the act of releasing animals from their cages. A spokesperson for the police said, 'Ten people were arrested last night and questioned overnight. They will appear in court later today charged with criminal damage and one with assaulting a police officer.' This is the third such incident in the past two months as animal protestors step up their campaign against the use of animals for testing cosmetic and medical products. It's believed that the ten people arrested - three men and seven women - had cut through the perimeter fence and entered the building through a fire exit. The alarm was triggered and a security guard called the police.

One of the scientists at the laboratory told us, 'These people just don't understand what we are trying to do.

The experiments we carry out lead to breakthroughs in medicine and may well help us find cures to diseases such as cancer. The animals are treated very well and we try to make them as comfortable as possible.'

A spokesperson for The Animal Freedom Group, one of the leading Animal Rights groups in the UK, said, 'How can anyone say the animals are treated well when they are injected with poisons, have tubes inserted in them and are kept locked up in cages for 24 hours a day? It's barbaric.' The laboratory, which opened almost ten years ago, employs more than two hundred people from the area. It conducts research for pharmaceutical companies for both medical products such as new drugs for illnesses and beauty products such as make-up and shampoo. Some of the people who work there fear that the place could close if the break-ins continue. One senior scientist said that he also fears for his family as he's received a couple of threatening letters.

Role cards

A Scientist

You work at the laboratory that was broken into last night.

You think your work is really important as you are trying to find cures to help people and make sure that cosmetics such as shampoo, etc. are safe for people to use.

You are worried about your family. You have two children who go to the local school and you don't want them to be in any danger.

B Animal Rights Protestor.

You are an ordinary person with a normal job, but you don't like to see animals hurt.

You think that there are other ways that products could be tested and that it is cruel to use animals.

You also don't think it is useful. Even if something works or is safe for animals it does not necessarily mean that it will be okay for people.

C Police Officer (Optional)

You were one of the police officers involved in the arrests last night.

You do not have an opinion on the subject of animal rights but think that the protestors should find other ways of making their point / views.

You are also angry as one of the protestors hit you and you think this was totally unjustified.

D Reporter

You are a reporter. You simply want a story so you are there to provoke people and see if you can get a reaction.

Try and ask as many difficult / awkward questions as possible.

E Local resident

You live locally and are worried about what is going on.

You know people who work at the laboratory and who are worried they might lose their jobs.

On the other hand, you don't really like what is going on at the laboratory. You think animals have some rights, however, you are worried by the tactics being used by the protestors. You think they should always be peaceful and you are very upset that they tried to release these animals into the wild. What would happen if they had diseases?

F Government representative

You have been sent by the government to decide what should happen to the laboratory. There are a number of options including closing it, keeping it open, changing what it can do, etc.

You will try to listen to all the arguments before you come to a decision.