

EUROPEAN CONSERVATION ACTION NETWORK

VISIT TO HUNGARY

MAY 9th - 29th 2009

Dear Sir,

I am writing to express my horror and concern about a significant threat to our society as we know it. It has come to my attention that there are certain organisations that are involved in disseminating pernicious information - indeed, even actively assisting in orchestrating perverse behaviour. There seems to be an undercurrent running counter to what I regard are the mainstays of a decent British, traditional community, where hard work is rewarded by good pay, taxes are paid and expenses fiddled.

These cells of individuals have a tight-knit but ephemeral organisation, relying heavily on internet use for sharing of information and coming together occasionally, to indulge in tasks that I feel undermine decent society. Such subversive behaviour might include interacting with foreigners, drinking too much locally-brewed spirit alcohol, getting along with each other, even inducting youngsters into working for free and 'saving' the environment.

As if this wasn't bad enough, it seems they have found some way to give their dastardly agenda some degree of administrative 'authenticity' by setting up small charities that have in some cases been able to tap into European tax-payer's money.

I felt it my duty, as an upstanding member of society to inveigle my way into one such group in order to expose such terrible goings-on. In this way, I found myself jammed into a minibus (have these people not heard of aircraft?) with a group of total strangers, of all ages, shapes and sizes; they were old, young, married, single, straight and gay, from wealthy and from poor backgrounds. There was even someone from Wales. Apparently, and I found this hard to believe, they all have jobs in the UK (this is one of the qualifying criteria - presumably so that when they return with their freshly indoctrinated minds, they are in a position to contaminate those they work alongside).

My bag was shoved into a trailer with a tokenistic tarpaulin and we were promptly driven across a dismally wet Europe, having spent the first night of what was apparently some exotic 'adventure' in a field in Kent, where everyone banged on about what countries they'd already visited. In some cases, freely admitting to having done other conservation work in the past!

In such company I spent three days driving from one service station to another, where our European brethren somehow manage to serve edible, healthy food at less-than-extortionate prices. Thankfully, we appear to have laws in England that ensure blandness, even distastefulness in service-station food and over-pricing.

These folk then spent two and a half weeks based in an old Hungarian border control post near Slovakia, populated by house martins, swallows and lesser horseshoe bats. They are so committed to

their mission they were prepared to put up with communal rooms of bunk beds, no less - breathing the flatulence of strangers and indulging in snoring competitions, with shared showers and all-too-soon-smelly toilets.

They got up to a hearty breakfast that none appreciated, turning up their noses at sausage in all manner of guises and deep-fried carbohydrates, preferring coffee and toast and bemoaning the lack of Marmite. As the most important meal of the day, little wonder many behaved oddly during the trip by being out identifying moths or searching for birds at dawn before eating properly.

It concerns me greatly that so devout are these people, that insect stings, sun-burn, Lyme's disease from ticks, twisted joints, wild-boar charges and allergic reactions apparently did nothing to dampen their desire to catch butterflies, write on them with felt-tip pens and release them, only to catch them again elsewhere. I lost track of how many man hours were spent in this ridiculous game that could otherwise have been devoted to real work back home to help in the struggle to beat the recession.

If it wasn't butterflies, it was something else. On rainy days these people simply focused their fervour on to some other aspect of the environment such as botany or wolf-tracking. If it was dark, they simply went out looking for moths or catching bats. They were insatiable.

They also somehow manage to make our taxes finance their time off from this so-called work, visiting local beauty spots, cave systems, sites of cultural or historical importance, even horse-riding.

I feel my account of my trial speaks for itself and no more need be said about the threat these organisations present. Let Conservative with a large C outdo conservation with a small c. We must not let these people hamper progress and economic growth.

Yours faithfully,

Mr A. S. Ole, masquerading as J. Bradley during the trip

The European Conservation Action Network was established in 2007 by The Kingcombe Trust, a charity based at The Kingcombe Centre in west Dorset, dedicated to conservation and environmental education (Reg. Charity no. 1054758), in association with the Dorset Branch of Butterfly Conservation. The project is funded through the Leonardo da Vinci section of the European Union Lifelong Learning Programme and has partners in France, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Poland. Further information can be obtained from www.kingcombecentre.org.uk or from Nigel Spring (tel: 0044.1963.23559; email: nigelspring@yahoo.co.uk).