

TELEPHONE TREE

During early February 1990 the Telephone Tree had its first real test. The results were successful.

Ever since the mobile shelter first arrived at the National Emergency Training Center (NETC) 15 months ago certain anti-civil-defense bureaucrats have been trying to suppress the FEMA mobile shelter display. We have had a continual running battle with these people to keep the shelter on display.

First, the NETC bureaucrats asked the FEMA director for permission to paint over the four-foot-in-diameter Federal seals on each side of the shelter, so that visitors would not know that it was a FEMA display. Permission was denied.

When we put the shelter on display near Washington in October 1989 someone did paint over both seals during one night. However, Jane Orient and I worked through the following night with solvent and toothbrushes. We managed to lift off the new paint and restore the seals. One highly placed FEMA official told me that he would guess that the vandalizing was arranged by the display's enemies within FEMA.

Second, numerous bureaucratic roadblocks were put in the way of display of the shelter to students at NETC. Gradually these were overcome, and the display is now a regular part of courses there.

However, in one additional shot at the shelter, these bureaucrats diverted money that was earmarked to pay for additional mobile shelter displays into a "shelter park" project. The park is to be underground in an obscure place. Its first and only currently-planned occupant is designated to be the mobile shelter.

Their plans call for the mobile shelter to be half-buried in the side of a gully on an obscure part of the campus. Dirt is to be thrown entirely over the back entryway and no entry tubes are to be provided. This will prevent public display of the shelter at prominent Washington, D.C. locations, move it to a location in which it will rarely be seen by visitors to NETC, and install it as a dim, poorly-ventilated, one-entryway death-trap.

We thwarted this scheme in October when we discovered that an amazing \$40,000 contract had been awarded to bury the mobile shelter (that amount would properly install 10 such shelters) and that there were substantial irregularities in the award of the contract. An investigation was started by the Inspector General's office and the burial project was halted.