

26 Edgarley Terrace  
London SW6 6QD

17 June 2004

**TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN**

Re: Doug Copp, American Rescue Team International

First, in the interests of clarity, let me make it clear that you have my permission to quote from this letter *only in a context which makes clear my own precise intended meaning*. You expressly do *not* have my permission to use my words in any other context.

Doug Copp has drawn my attention to your plans to run an article concerning him in a New Mexico newspaper, asserting that he and his rescue team ARTI are fraudulent and that Mr Copp has not in fact been involved in rescue and retrieval after large-scale disasters. I, and hundreds of others, can testify that these assertions are absolutely untrue. I have included all possible contact details below so that you can discuss this further with me - i.e., someone who knows. I am a producer of high-prestige international science TV programmes, with a string of awards and high-profile hits to my name (my CV is attached).

I *know*, first-hand, that these assertions are utterly untrue. In fact, under other circumstances, the allegations would be laughable. I spent several months in close association with Mr Copp in the latter half of 2002. He was kind enough to advise me on the topic of disaster management and rescue for a TV programme called *Future Storm* for Discovery Europe. After that, I spent time with him developing the concept for an autobiographical project. I have travelled with him around the regions of Peru worst hit by El Niño, and around Britain. I have spent weeks poring over every detail of his life. I have viewed extensive quantities of video material (upwards of fifty hours) of Mr Copp and other ARTI members in rescue situations, in disasters ranging across the world.

Here are a few facts that you may wish to consider:

1. *All* the footage I have seen of Mr Copp and ARTI in action at disaster zones is, in my very *expert* opinion, genuine. I have worked extensively on programmes with a huge content of manipulated imagery and special effects: these are not altered pictures. Don't take my word for it: take the word of *any* expert producer. They will tell you the same thing. Whilst it is technically possible to fake a *small* number of such images, it is expensive, time-consuming, and requires a careful selection of brief and suggestive-but-not-definitive shots. Even then, some will fail to convince – and the expensive would be prohibitive on anything other than a full-blown movie budget. From assessing

not faked. I will be glad to explain in more detail when you contact me - as I trust you will. *There is no doubt about this whatsoever.*

2. When Mr Copp travelled with me to Peru for the TV documentary *Future Storm*, I met members of the rescue services from many of Peru's northern towns. They enthusiastically told me many accounts of rescues where they had worked alongside him, and where he had shown exceptional bravery. In addition I saw *Peruvian* footage of rescues in which he was involved. Unless you choose to believe that Peruvian state television is collaborating with Mr Copp in faking impossible-to-fake rescue footage, the only conclusion is that Mr Copp was really there.
3. In Peru, Mr Copp was given an official hero's welcome. He was greeted with open arms by the head of the Peruvian Fire and Rescue Service, and offered every facility, including free transport and a driver for the duration of his visit. In Trujillo, I lost a day's filming to the mayor's insistence on holding a special ceremony to welcome him. Simply because I was there with him, I too was given an honorary doctorate from Trujillo University. I subsequently lost another afternoon's filming to the fact that he was requested to give a lecture on rescue to several hundred people in Chiclayo. These events had not been organised in advance. They were spontaneous gestures of gratitude. The level of regard in which he is held is incontestable.
4. I found Mr Copp through an extensive process of research, during which he was repeatedly recommended to me *by rescue experts* around the world as the best-qualified person to talk to about coping with disasters. *They* recommended him. They know what they are talking about.
5. Mr Copp was involved in several live reports from the site of the 9/11 disaster on Fox News. No one can deny this. The footage is readily available. Fox has had a long relationship with Mr Copp, which has led them to trust him as a genuine and reliable source - through disasters across at least a decade, through production and camera crews that were actually *there* with him.
6. I have been told that you have raised questions about his health. I spent many weeks in his company. On many occasions he was struggling to stay conscious. On a good day, he could walk about twenty yards before needing a ten-minute rest. On more than one occasion we had to spend evenings outside because a single person had been smoking in the pub we were using as a base for talking. (For the record, he was entirely unable to consume alcohol.) A single waft of smoke, at a substantial distance, was enough to precipitate protracted and violent coughing fits - fits so bad that on one occasion I was genuinely convinced that he was about to die. Five minutes in an atmosphere where I couldn't even smell the smoke was sufficient to induce a coughing seizure that lasted the best part of twenty-four hours. I know what asthma sounds and looks like, from life-endangering attacks suffered by my son. This emphatically was not asthma. Mr Copp is lucky to be alive.

There is much more that I could tell you. I am sure that your journalistic ethics are unimpeachable, so I will doubtless be hearing from you shortly, and have confidence that you will use what I have to say responsibly and in context. In the meantime, I

trust that the above information helps you understand that, at the very least, a story such as the one you apparently propose requires a far more intensive period of detailed and unbiased research than it has currently received. To make such extraordinary claims of fraud requires extraordinary proof – and, I am afraid, that there are many hundreds of witnesses worldwide who know Mr Copp well, and will gladly provide proof that your claims are false.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Bunker". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal stroke.

cc: Congressman Tom Udall

# Richard Burke-Ward

26 Edgarley Terrace, London SW6 6QD  
+44 (20) 7736 7662 // +44 (7799 142 565)  
richard.bw@btinternet.com

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## Writing

- 2003      Writing 2<sup>nd</sup> novel, working title **Redemption** for Orion  
1<sup>st</sup> novel, **Frozen**, published by Orion, Christmas 2003

## TV and Writing

- 2002      **Unlocking the Past** for Readers Digest TV  
*Series Producer*  
**FutureStorm** for Discovery Europe  
*Producer / Director*
- 2000 - 2001      **SPACE** presented by movie star Sam Neill for BBC1 / TLC  
*Series Producer*  
Wrote 2<sup>nd</sup> draft of novel, **Frozen**
- 1999      **TALKING WITH ALIENS** for Equinox, Channel 4 and TLC  
*Producer / Director*  
Wrote 1<sup>st</sup> draft of **Frozen**
- 1998      **EXTREME MACHINES, INTERNATIONAL RESCUE** for TLC  
*Writer*  
Wrote 2<sup>nd</sup> draft of novel, **The Signs of Life**  
(Now given a decent burial in a swamp at midnight)
- 1995 - 1997      **RAGING PLANET** for Discovery USA (+ Channel 4 presale)  
*Series Producer*
- 1995      **DESIGNING DREAM MACHINES** for Equinox, Channel 4  
*Producer / Director*  
**AVALANCHE** for Equinox, Channel 4  
*Writer*  
Wrote 1<sup>st</sup> draft of **The Signs of Life**
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# Richard Burke-Ward

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- 1994            **ELECTRIC SKIES** for Equinox, Channel 4 and TLC  
***Producer / Director***
- 1993 - 1994    Development Producer, TV6  
1989 - 1993    AP, BBC Science - Tomorrow's World, and other delights

## Awards

Several each for    **SPACE, RAGING PLANET, ELECTRIC SKIES**  
                          - *RTS, New York, Banff, ICA*

## Pre-Television

*Investment Banker for 2 years, Eng. Lit. at Oxford (scholar)*

*D.O.B. 31 August 1963*