

Chapter 33 : The Ghosts of Mississippi Will be Watchin'



*Now when the timber barons heard the news they geared up for the fight,
And we laughed away the death threats and we cried to sleep each night,
And the media walked right into our homes,
As if they really were one of our own.
Now Goodman, Schwerner, and Chaney left this little racist town,
Drove down that Mississippi highway to the place they would bed down,
But in the mirror they could see the Sheriff's light,
No, they never did make it home that night.*

—lyrics excerpted from *Ghosts of Mississippi*, by Darryl Cherney, 2004¹

*Now Judi Bari is an Earth First! organizer,
The California Redwoods are her home,
She called for Redwood Summer,
Where the owl and the black bear roam;
Charlie Hurwitz he runs Maxxam out of Houston,
Harry Merlo runs L-P from Portland town,
They're the men they call 'King Timber',
They know how to cut you down;
And Shep Tucker spewed their hatred,
As Candy Boak laid out their scam,
John Campbell called for violence,
It was no secret what they planned...*

—lyrics excerpted from *Who Bombed Judi Bari?*, by Darryl Cherney, 1990²

¹ *Real American*, by Darryl Cherney, 2004

² *Timber*, by Darryl Cherney, 1991

Judi Bari didn't have time to be frightened. Even though the organizers of the coming season of protests shortened the name "Mississippi Summer of the California Redwoods" simply to "Redwood Summer," the situation—she thought—was starting to more and more resemble the violent and threatening conditions of the original Mississippi Freedom Summer anyway.

While the Public Interest and Environmental Law Conference was in progress in Oregon, the representatives of Corporate Timber on California's North Coast were in the process of polishing their image. Louisiana Pacific, Pacific Lumber, and Simpson through the auspices of yet another front group known as the "North Coast Forest Industry" (NCFI)—which had existed quietly for twelve years—created a series of advertisements promoting themselves as "good neighbors", "economically beneficial to the local economies" of Humboldt and Mendocino Counties, and "careful stewards" of the region's forests. The campaign included radio spots and full page ads in the region's local and corporate newspapers. The NCFI didn't merely limit itself to representatives from the three corporations and the local gyppo firms, however. It opened up its membership to other local businesses, ostensibly because they depended upon the timber economy for their own viability, but more likely because the NCFI also functioned like the "good citizens' leagues" of old ensuring loyalty to the dominant power. One such business owner speaking approvingly of the effort declared, "The only way that the timber industry makes the newspaper is if somebody is sitting in one of their trees or chained to the back of one of their logging trucks."³

The NCFI campaign was ironic, given the fact that the north coast timber corporations had been producing such ads already *for years*, particularly in the *Eureka Times-Standard*, *Santa Rosa Press Democrat*, *Ukiah Daily Journal*, and (naturally) the *Humboldt Beacon and Fortuna Advance*. In fact, the bias was so blatant, that even a few readers of the last publication had already been incensed enough to accuse the editor of "shameless corporate bootlicking".⁴ The effort nevertheless

brought many local employers into the fold, and following the ads, the NCFI's membership increased by 30 to 40 members from its original membership of barely one dozen.⁵

Two days after the NCFI announced its campaign, the *Santa Rosa Press Democrat's*, Ukiah bureau chief and head timber reporter, Mike Geniella, wrote a fairly extensive article about the Mississippi Summer of the California Redwoods, or "Redwood Summer" as it was now being called. One week previously, Bari, Cherney, and other North Coast Earth First!ers had made their presentation to the Student Environmental Action Coalition (SEAC) who had held a conference in Sacramento. The SEAC organizers had been so inspired that they agreed to include the Redwood Summer organizing call out in their newsletter. "They (sent it) to thousands of colleges in the United States", commented Betty Ball.⁶ Over the course of the next two weeks, the story made national press wires, and thousands of people suddenly began showing interest in what was happening behind the so-called "Redwood Curtain".⁷ The Timber Association of California, a supporter of the NCFI was not pleased. Speaking on their behalf, Kevin Eckery declared, "(it) trivializes the real sacrifices made in Mississippi as part of the Civil Rights movement. The situation (here) doesn't hardly seem to be the same."⁸ He would soon be proven very wrong, and in a sense, he was wrong from the get-go. Candy Boak continued to call Judi Bari and let her adversary know that she was still being watched, which was an ominous—even threatening—gesture. This would only be the start of things to come.⁹

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By all appearances, however, things were going relatively auspiciously for Earth First! – IWW Local #1 in the middle of March. At the Redwood Region Logging Conference in Ukiah, which took place two weeks after the Oregon Public Interest Environmen-

Simmons if "Charles Hurwitz faxed it to (him) verbatim." That Simmons probably believed his own rhetoric is all the more pathetic.

⁵ "Timber Media Blitz Seeks Public Favor", by David Forster, *Eureka Times-Standard*, March 11, 1990.

⁶ "Summer of Disobedience in the Woods", by Mike Geniella, *Santa Rosa Press Democrat*, March 13, 1990.

⁷ "Redwood Wars Ready to Escalate: Coast Braces for Influx of Protesters", by Mike Geniella, *Santa Rosa Press Democrat*, March 25, 1990.

⁸ "Summer of Disobedience in the Woods", by Mike Geniella, *Santa Rosa Press Democrat*, March 13, 1990.

⁹ Harris, David, *The Last Stand*, New York, NY, Times Books, Random House, 1995, page 298.

³ "Timber Media Blitz Seeks Public Favor", by David Forster, *Eureka Times-Standard*, March 11, 1990.

⁴ For example, in response to "Headwaters Forest = Mumbo Jumbo", editorial by Glenn Simmons, *Humboldt Beacon and Fortuna Advance*, Feb. 1, 1990, a sneering, condescending, and frankly nasty dismissal of Earth First! and their desire to preserve Headwaters Forest, replete with theocratic Christian Fundamentalist overtones such as, "I did not realize the land had a 'will' I thought that was reserved for humans, who were created by God and have souls.", letter writer Dean C Rudd of Fortuna took Simmons to task for his "shameless corporate bootlicking", asks

tal Law Conference (PIELC), they finally had their opportunity to demonstrate against one of the two remaining Louisiana-Pacific's feller-bunchers being used by Okerstrom Logging. The second "Killa Godzilla" was to be proudly displayed on the grounds of the event, and those that had planned the demonstration against the first feller-buncher were not going to let this opportunity go to waste.

The conference itself was the usual carnival-like display of logging equipment and technology. Thousands of people, including several local school classes attended during the event's three-day stretch. Bosco, Keene, and Hauser all attended and again urged timber industry leaders to accept the "Timber Pact" reached with Hurwitz and Merlo. Shortly after the conference, the three lawmakers conducted an "intense and wide ranging" meeting with a group of environmentalists, most of whom were litigants in lawsuits against Maxxam, in Santa Rosa to try and urge them to support the "Timber Pact" also.¹⁰



The organizers of the conference expected the Earth First!ers to be coming, and so they ensured that the security at the event, including around the feller buncher, was tight, but on March 17, 1990, the Earth First!ers were able to carry out their plans anyway. A

group of "hippie-looking" Earth First!ers, including Bari and Cherney, created a diversion at the base of the machine, singing songs like *Where are We Gonna Work When the Trees are Gone* and *Tonka Toys*.¹¹ Meanwhile, two loggers, Brent Waggle and Joe Keating¹² climbed up onto the top of the machine and hung a banner, which read, "THIS THING KILLS JOBS & FORESTS: Earth First!". Waggle, a logger from Springerville, California, said, "This feller-buncher will put my family out of work. We can't afford \$700,000 machines, and my family is set up for saw logs, not pecker poles."¹³ The two loggers were eventually arrested and charged with trespassing.¹⁴

Two weeks later, this feller buncher *also* caught fire, while engaged in logging operations south of Chamberlain Creek in the Jackson State Demonstration Forest. The Mendocino County Sheriff's Office conducted investigations which revealed that the fire started accidentally at about 2:20 PM on April 4, 1990, due to misuse. Okerstrom had been using it to log L-P property near Jackson State Forest west of Willits when it ignited and its internal fire suppression systems failed. The sheriff's office had been asked to investigate specifically because of the growing tensions over Redwood Summer.¹⁵ "Either this thing is a \$700,000 lemon, or there are some heroic people out there in the woods," opined Judi Bari.¹⁶ When asked if she was responsible, Bari declared, "It wasn't me; I was home in bed with five witnesses."¹⁷ She reiterated, again, that she did not know or want to know who was engaged in equipment sabotage (if that had indeed been what had happened, which it later was discovered, was not), stating, "Our approach in this area is public awareness...I neither engage in sabotage myself or want to hear about it...if it had been sabotaged, it probably would have been by loggers."¹⁸

¹¹ "Ukiah Burning", by Darryl Cherney and Judi Bari, *Earth First! Journal*, Beltane / May 1, 1990.

¹² "Thousands Visit Logging Conference", staff report, *Willits News*, March 21, 1990.

¹³ Cherney and Bari, May 1, 1990, op. cit.

¹⁴ "Activists Arrested at Ukiah Meeting," staff report, *Eureka Times-Standard*, March 19, 1990. The *Ukiah Daily Journal* described the pair as being from El Cerrito, in the San Francisco Bay Area, misspelled Waggle's name, and did not identify them as loggers. See "Two Arrested in Logging Protest", *Ukiah Daily Journal*, March 19, 1990.

¹⁵ "Fire Called Accident", *Santa Rosa Press Democrat*, April 5, 1990; "Logging Equipment Fire Accidental", *Ukiah Daily Journal*, April 5, 1990; and "Feller Buncher Burns", by Lillian Brown, *Willits News*, April 6, 1990.

¹⁶ Cherney and Bari, May 1, 1990, op. cit.

¹⁷ "Here and There in Mendocino County", by Bruce Anderson, *Anderson Valley Advertiser*, April 11, 1990.

¹⁸ "Feller Buncher Burns", by Lillian Brown, *Willits News*, April 6, 1990.

¹⁰ "Thousands Visit Logging Conference", staff report, *Willits News*, March 21, 1990.

Bari added, however, that she was not saddened by the second behemoth's demise, nor were any loggers likely to oppose the destruction of the job killing "fascist robot." Walter Smith confirmed the appropriateness of the description, by noting that it not only replaced fallers, but choker setters also, and that the feller buncher could double production with half of the crew.¹⁹ At least one reader of the *Willits News* was puzzled by the framing of the incident which, from the headline, suggested that the machine had been sabotaged by Earth First! That it wasn't, and that this was the substance of the article, was not evident in the headline.²⁰ Once again, careless (or deliberately misleading) reporting had imparted sinister motives to Earth First! - IWW Local #1 that didn't exist.



Image by "M"

That's not to suggest that Earth First!ers didn't occasionally choose their words poorly. In early March, Darryl Cherney inadvertently served up the ultimate fat pitch to Earth First!'s detractors. While being in-

terviewed by Mike Wallace on *60 Minutes*, Cherney flippantly stated, "If I had a fatal disease I would definitely strap a body bomb to myself and blow up the Glen Canyon Dam or the Maxxam building *at night after everyone had gone home.*" An estimated 10 million viewers witnessed Darryl's words—at least those not in italics, which (had they been broadcast) might have lessened the seriousness of his statement. That *60 Minutes* saw fit to exclude the last part was something that Cherney should have anticipated, and reportedly he was chewed out soundly by everyone in Earth First! for his careless choice of words. According to Judi Bari, Cherney would never even get close to a bomb. He had never even lit a firecracker (in fact, he was afraid of them).²¹

Indeed, the activist may have been set up. Cherney maintained that the CBS producer who interviewed him said that his initial, far more mild, response was too bland and asked for something "more punchy."²² Still these words had their impact, and it provided fodder to political reactionaries and apologists for corporate timber who never tired of describing Earth First! as "terrorists".²³ It also gave Earth First! a black eye politically in the eyes of many *60 Minutes* viewers nationwide. One even went as far to suggest that the tree Cherney's guitar came from should have been saved and the guy who played it (Cherney) should have been cut down.²⁴ As it was, no Earth First!er was likely to do this. Dave Foreman was quite clear in his stance on the matter, stating, "I've always discouraged the use of explosives and guns... That's in an entirely different realm than pulling up survey stakes."²⁵ Even *Ecodefense* had a very short entry on the use of explosives. It simply stated: "Explosives should... usually be avoided."²⁶ Furthermore, in too many places to count, *Ecodefense* admonishes the would-be monkeywrencher to "never

²¹ "The Earth First! Car Bombing", by Judi Bari, *Earth First! Journal*, Brigid / February 2, 1994.

²² Colemanhoax.info, response to Kate Coleman, page 143.

²³ See, for example, "Other Forms of Protest needed", letter to the editor by Leonard Shumard Jr., *Eureka Times-Standard*, March 4, 1990.

²⁴ "Short Stuff", *Santa Rosa Press Democrat*, March 13, 1990.

²⁵ "Was it a Government Plot?", by Richard Johnson, *Mendocino Country Environmentalist*, May 29, 1990.

²⁶ Foreman, Dave and "Bill Haywood" editors; forward! [sic] by Edward Abbey, *Ecodefense: a Field Guide to Monkeywrenching*; (third edition), Chico, CA., Abzug Press, 1993, page 10. Some might quibble over the inclusion of the word "usually" opening up a wide latitude for monkeywrenchers to use explosives anyway, but there is no entry in the book that calls for their usage.

¹⁹ Brown, April 6, 1990, op. cit.

²⁰ "With a Little Help From...", anonymous letter to the editor, *Ander-son Valley Advertiser*, April 18, 1990.

hurt anyone” and to “respect all life” (including human life).²⁷

Darryl Cherney *did* surrender to authorities at the Humboldt County Jail in Eureka on March 20, 1990 to begin a ten day jail sentence, along with fellow Earth First!er and musician George Shook. The two had pled no contest “(to) the heinous crime of tree sitting,” the previous year, after Pacific Lumber reactivated an old lawsuit against them.²⁸ Cherney and Shook described themselves as “prisoners of war in the fight to save the redwoods.”²⁹ Before the two began their internment, approximately 40 protesters rallied on the sidewalk in downtown Eureka at the jail and courthouse. Demonstrating the class bias of the justice system, Cherney read from a computer printout—based on the LSA Report—all of the convictions brought by the CDF against those that broke environmental laws over the previous two years. Most of their crimes included serious crimes against nature, such as clearcutting in riparian protection zones or logging without even filing a THP at all! In every instance, the perpetrators had their jail sentences and most of their fines suspended. Humboldt County DA, Terry farmer, was singled out in particular for his pro-corporate bias, as demonstrators shouted “Jail Hurwitz!” Bari, Cherney, and Shook led the crowd in protest songs, including Jerry Leiber’s and Mike Stoller’s classic *Riot in Cell Block Nine* and *Oh Freedom* (complete with Earth First! specific lyrics). A group of determined Earth First!ers attempted to surround Cherney and Shook, but the police twisted the would be saviors’ arms behind their backs thus preventing the tiny group from preventing the jailing of the activists.³⁰

Mysteriously, Cherney and Shook only served five days of their ten day sentence. With no advance warning, the Humboldt County sheriffs released the pair at about 4:00 AM on the cold, foggy morning of Sunday, March 25. Cherney and Shook contacted their designated jail support person who did not answer. Not knowing what else to do, they prepared to hitchhike back to Arcata, six miles to the north. Just then, a woman called Darryl’s name from a nearby vehicle. It was Candy Boak. Feigning affability, Boak announced that she and her husband John lived nearby, that she couldn’t sleep, and that she’d come to

town to buy a Sunday paper from a local minimarket. Then, completely contrary to her past behavior, she offered the pair breakfast and a ride to Arcata. Having few other options, Cherney and Shook obliged and climbed into Boak’s minivan. At breakfast, Boak—still pretending to be seeking a temporary truce—asked the two a large number of questions about Redwood Summer, including logistics and ideology. Though careful not to reveal any sensitive information, Cherney and Shook answered her. After all, Earth First! was planning to be aboveboard on the summer campaign anyway, so there was little sense in hiding anything. Boak then drove the two back to Arcata before returning home.³¹

Upon hearing of Cherney’s experience, Judi Bari was incensed. She was already very angry about his having mouthed off on national television. Now she had to question his sanity entirely. Had it even occurred to him that it was the *least* bit odd that the Humboldt County sheriffs—who had absolutely no love for Earth First!—had let them go after only serving half their sentence? Did it not seem just a bit *too* convenient that Candy Boak was the *first* person that Cherney and Shook encountered upon their release? Was it just possible that Boak had maybe, just maybe, been tipped off about their discharge? Was it not even *remotely* suspicious that Candy Boak who had made it a matter of pride to “monkeywrench the monkeywrenchers” had probed the pair for the entire Redwood Summer playbook? He may as well have called Charles Hurwitz and Harry Merlo and told *them* everything. Cherney was taken aback and told Bari that she was paranoid. This annoyed Bari even more. As a woman, she was far too used to her opinions being discounted by her male comrades. After Candy Boak called Bari again and informed the latter that she had revealed all of the plans Darryl had shared with her to her allies in Mother’s Watch and WECARE, Bari ruefully informed Cherney in no uncertain terms, “I told you so!”³²

Relationships between activists are almost always tenuous and difficult due to the external pressures of public life that inevitably invade the private and personal realm. The strain of a rapidly increasing workload demanded by the upcoming Redwood Summer combined with the brewing backlash in all of its manifestations (Candy Boak being but one of them) was taking its toll on the couple and they were

²⁷ Foreman, Dave, op. cit., passim.

²⁸ “1990: A Year in the Life of Earth First!”, by Judi Bari, *Anderson Valley Advertiser*, January 2, 1991.

²⁹ “Earth First! Members to Surrender”, by Mike Geniella, *Santa Rosa Press Democrat*, March 20, 1990.

³⁰ “The Boys Go To Jail”, by Lincoln Pierce, *Country Activist*, April 1990.

³¹ Harris, David, *The Last Stand*, New York, NY, Times Books, Random House, 1995, pages 300-01.

³² Harris, op. cit., page 301.

fighting often to the point which Bari doubted aloud that the two had a future as such. This drove Cherney nuts, but there was little that could be done about it.³³

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Publically at least, however, the two presented a united front out of necessity. Response to the call for Redwood Summer from potential supporters had been overwhelmingly positive and larger than anyone had expected. Betty Ball reported, "We've been inundated with calls from colleges and community activists all over the United States."³⁴ Darryl Cherney described similar experiences, saying:

"Rapidly, lots of people became interested and the media started publishing reports about our plans, before we'd even finalized them..."

"We also called a meeting in Ukiah that attracted a lot folks, right around the same time. We were attracting 60 to 70 people per meeting. Media was calling. You knew it was obvious that this was an idea whose time had come. There was almost no stopping it from the very beginning."³⁵

"It's going to be a long hot summer," stated Judi Bari; "the eyes of the nation will be watching us."³⁶ Mike Roselle added, "Redwood Summer promises to be the biggest national mobilization of Earth First! activists ever," and this was coming on the heels of over one-hundred direct action type demonstrations that Earth First! and/or the IWW had organized in Humboldt, Mendocino, Sonoma, and Marin Counties thus far. "The destruction wrought by the timber industry is unknown to most Americans," declared Darryl Cherney. He further added:

"Besides the wholesale slaughter of thousand year old trees, they leave toxic dumps from their preservatives and eroded soil that can barely support new growth. Reduced precipitation, ruined rivers, treeless hillsides and a decimated salmon population is the legacy the timber industry has left us. The multitude of forest

fires we've been getting are due to the smaller, more vulnerable trees that have grown back, as well as from malfunctioning logging equipment. They've devastated small communities with their boom and bust logging, and when they've stripped the land bare, they'll often sell to a developer for tract housing and condos."³⁷

Redwood Summer's organizers agreed that they needed to convey unequivocally that they were going to remain steadfastly nonviolent, no matter what dangers or threats they faced. Taking a page out of the annals of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), they adopted the following code:

"All demonstrators will follow a strict nonviolence code, including the following provisions:

- We will use no violence, verbal or physical, towards any person
- We will carry no weapons
- We will not damage any property.

"Additionally, please do not bring dogs, weapons, drugs, and alcohol.

"If you don't want to be nonviolent, please don't come to Redwood Summer. Tensions are extremely high here, as people's jobs and lifestyles are being destroyed along with the forest. Although our actions are not directed against the timber workers, it is often easier for them to blame the protestors than to blame the giant corporations who are actually at fault. Last year there were several instances of violence against protestors, and the only way we can prevent a repeat of the attacks is to stand by the nonviolence code.

"This is not a picnic. It is a life-and-death struggle. But our actions have always been high-spirited and fun, and by our numbers and nonviolence we can succeed. Your coming here could make the difference we need to prevent the destruction of one of the most magnificent species on earth."³⁸

³³ Harris, op. cit., page 301.

³⁴ "Redwood Wars Ready to Escalate: Coast Braces for Influx of Protesters", by Mike Geniella, *Santa Rosa Press Democrat*, March 25, 1990.

³⁵ "An Interview With Redwood Summer Strategist and EFL Musician Darryl Cherney", by Sharon Seidenstein, *Ecology Center Newsletter*, October 1990.

³⁶ "Mississippi Summer in the Redwoods: Freedom Riders Needed to Save the Forest", By Judi Bari, Darryl Cherney, Pam Davis, Greg King, Mike Roselle, et. al., *Anderson Valley Advertiser*, April 25, 1990 and *Earth First! Journal*, May 1, 1990.

Greg King emphasized that all participants would be required to take a nonviolence training which addressed most of the alleged concerns raised by Don Nelson in his hysterical letter accusing the organizers

³⁷ Bari, et. al., April 25, 1990, op. cit.

³⁸ Earth First! Nonviolence Code, adopted early May 1990, featured on various leaflets.

of Redwood Summer of endangering students' and workers' safety. "Any participant not in full agreement with non-violence as *the* principle concern during the actions will not take part in Redwood Summer." The incoming "freedom riders" for the forests would be required to check in at hospitality houses and then dispatched to campsites or lodgings. Sonoma County Earth First!er and IWW organizer Pam Davis stated, "We've had an incredible response from people opening their doors and their land, from small office spaces to 320 acre forests...there's still a need for more lodgings and land, however, and we're putting out the call from Santa Rosa to Crescent City."³⁹

Redwood Summer drew upon the support of locals as much as it intended to bring in support from the outside. Two of these local organizers included Anna Marie Stenberg's son, Zack Stenz, and Supervisor Liz Henry's daughter, Lisa. Lisa Henry recalls how she became involved in the efforts:

"It started in February...when Judi came over to Anna Marie Stenberg's house and talked about Redwood Summer. I got a phone call on my answering machine. Zack (Stenz) said, 'You've got to come over. Redwood Summer is going to be really big and we have to be in on it. Come meet Judi Bari'...

So I went over to Anna Marie's and I met Judi Bari. Later Judi said to me she liked me from the minute we met, and all I had said to her was [brightly], 'Hi!'

"The ironic thing was that I had lived in this county for seventeen years (my dad's a forester, my mom's a politician) and I didn't know anything about forests or forests practices.

"I assumed that the Noyo Harbor got muddy when it rained, and I took for granted all the trucks on the road that were a pain in the butt, but I'd never really made the connection between deforestation and what was going on in the harbor and on the roads."⁴⁰

Stenberg welcomed her son's involvement, but Liz Henry struggled with her daughter's participation. Though she was not entirely unsympathetic to the goals of Redwood Summer, the supervisor firmly believed that the campaign would further polarize an already severely divided community. Lisa Henry's protestations that it was Corporate Timber that was caus-

ing the polarization did not change her mother's mind. Additionally, the supervisor felt—with some justification—that taking too strong a stand against working within the system, no matter how imperfect, could seriously jeopardize her standing as an elected official and that she was doing what she could within the confines of the system to demand reform. This divide between radical and liberal, revolutionary and reformist, perspectives was a source of great strain between many would be allied critics of Corporate Timber as Redwood Summer approached.⁴¹

REDWOOD SUMMER

Action Pledge 1990

This summer the big timber companies in Northern California will be cutting the redwoods faster than ever, trying to take every last tree they can before legislation can be passed next fall to restrict them. If we want to anything left worth saving, it will take an all-out effort. We need people to come to Northern California for a week or more this summer and help us save the redwoods. Please check how you can help:

- ☐ Non-violent civil disobedience (tree hugging, tree sitting, log road blockades)
- ☐ Support for demonstrations, but not willing to risk arrest
- ☐ Organize my school, community, affinity group, etc. to come to Northern Calif. and do a redwood action this summer
- ☐ Organize a redwood action in my local area
- ☐ Other _____

☐ Enclosed is my donation of \$ _____

NAME _____ PHONE NUMBER _____

ADDRESS _____ TOWN _____ ZIP _____

Earth First! 106 West Standley, Ukiah, CA 95482 (707) 485-0478

Redwood Summer Nonviolence Pledge

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In spite of the nonviolence code, the prejudice against Earth First! remained. Already, on March 8, at an environmentalist protest at the Fortuna CDF office (a very frequent target of such demonstrations), where fifty Earth First!ers had blocked the sidewalk outside the building, local high school students alternated between shouting obscenities and launching eggs and other projectiles at demonstrators. Even TEAM spokesman, Ray Miller, who was also present, challenging the Earth First!ers directly by giving them redwood seedlings and accusing of them of not knowing how to plant them properly—as if such knowledge qualified one to hold an opinion on P-L's over harvesting of the old growth redwoods—waxed disdainful of the students, arguing that the environmentalists had a right to protest and that opponents of them should not "cower."⁴² Miller's opinion was not shared by Fortuna Police Chief, Lee Evanson, who—rather than admonish the students to refrain from violent counterdemonstration, instead blamed Earth First!, declaring:

³⁹ Bari, et. al., April 25, 1990, op. cit.

⁴⁰ "Lisa Henry on her 22nd Birthday", Lisa Henry interviewed by Beth Bosk, *New Settler Interview*, January 1991.

⁴¹ Bosk, January 1991, op. cit.

⁴² "Fortuna Draws Mild HSU Rebuke on Protest Issue", staff report, *Eureka Times-Standard*, March 20, 1990.

"These demonstrations are designed to attract media exposure. Earth First! uses unscrupulous tactics, looking to cause trouble so it will get more exposure. It's not surprising that there will be counterdemonstrators, but we don't want it to escalate to violence. From there it only grows, and we'll find the city smack in the middle. With the possibilities of injuries and lawsuits and the police overtime costs, there's no way the city, Police Department, or anyone from Fortuna can win."⁴³

His only defense of such one-sidedness was to opine, "It's getting very emotional. The locals here"—(as if the demonstrators weren't local themselves, an all too common prejudice)—"see these kind of people as the enemy, because, after all, timber still puts the bread and butter on the table around here."⁴⁴

The City of Fortuna carried the anti-environmentalist prejudice a step further. The council instructed City Manager Robert Brown to write to Humboldt State University President Alistair McCrone, "to help with the situation." Brown explained, "We're not saying that all the demonstrators came from HSU, but in the letter I just want to say that the city is interested in the safety of the students and our citizens. We don't want to deny anybody their rights to free speech. We just want to make sure no one gets hurt."⁴⁵ HSU didn't take very kindly to being implicated as the primary source for the protests or the suggestion that they were the breeding ground for Earth First!ers however. HSU vice president of student affairs Buzz Webb responded that it was "inaccurate" to connect Earth First! with the institution adding, "Some people unfortunately have the wrong idea (that) the university's function is to be substitute parents," as if political protest were equivalent to juvenile behavior and not a time-honored method for redress of grievances.⁴⁶

Redwood Summer's organizers set out to challenge such growing prejudice against environmental activists. Two teams of attorneys, one based in Humboldt County and the other based in Mendocino County had volunteered their services to combat legal repression against the organizers and the incoming

"forest riders".⁴⁷ The latter team was led by attorney Barry Vogel, who described civil disobedience as a legitimate form of protest, "(which) began with the Boston Tea Party (and) went on to establish religious freedoms, women's rights, civil rights, and perhaps now the rights of people willing to defend one of the natural wonders of the world." The legal teams were joined by San Francisco based attorney Susan B. Jordan, who expressed similar sentiments, declaring, "(Redwood Summer is) a brilliant tactic...I'm honored to be a part of it."⁴⁸

Mendocino County officials only seemed to watch and wring their hands anxiously at the prospect of the summer of protests. Many of them didn't take too kindly to the increasingly apt comparisons between Redwood and Mississippi Summer. "I have no intention of becoming the 'Bull Connor' of California," declared Mendocino County Undersheriff Alvie G. Rochester, "Both sides have mavericks, and these mavericks are going to create incidents...We're just hoping cooler heads get together and get these timber issues worked out before summer comes." Meanwhile, even Norm de Vall, a harsh critic of L-P and G-P, lamented that the lack of available law enforcement might require the county to call upon the National Guard thus creating a "Mississippi Summer in Mendocino."⁴⁹

Redwood Summer's organizers strongly felt that the comparison between Redwood Summer and Mississippi Summer was directly relevant, because both called for outside assistance, and both were intended to oppose bigotry. In the case of Mississippi Summer, the freedom riders challenged Southern racial prejudice against black southerners by the entrenched white power elite. In the case of *Redwood* Summer, the bigotry being challenged was "speciesism". As Darryl Cherney described it:

"Many humans see the Earth and other species as something to be conquered and enslaved...We believe that the Earth deserves civil rights the same as people do...A redwood, a spotted owl, a black bear all have a right to exist for their own sake, irrespective of what value they may have for human profit."⁵⁰

To be certain, for their part, the Redwood Summer organizers went out of their way to emphasize that

⁴³ "Fortuna Wants End to Protests: City Fearful Anti-Logging Actions Could Spur Violence", by Ed Lion, *Eureka Times-Standard*, March 20, 1990.

⁴⁴ Geniella, March 25, 1990, op. cit.

⁴⁵ Lion, March 20, 1990, op. cit.

⁴⁶ "Fortuna Draws Mild HSU Rebuke on Protest Issue", staff report, *Eureka Times-Standard*, March 20, 1990.

⁴⁷ Bari, et. al., April 25, 1990, op. cit.

⁴⁸ Geniella, March 25, 1990, op. cit.

⁴⁹ Geniella, March 25, 1990, op. cit.

⁵⁰ Bari, et. al., April 25, 1990, op. cit.

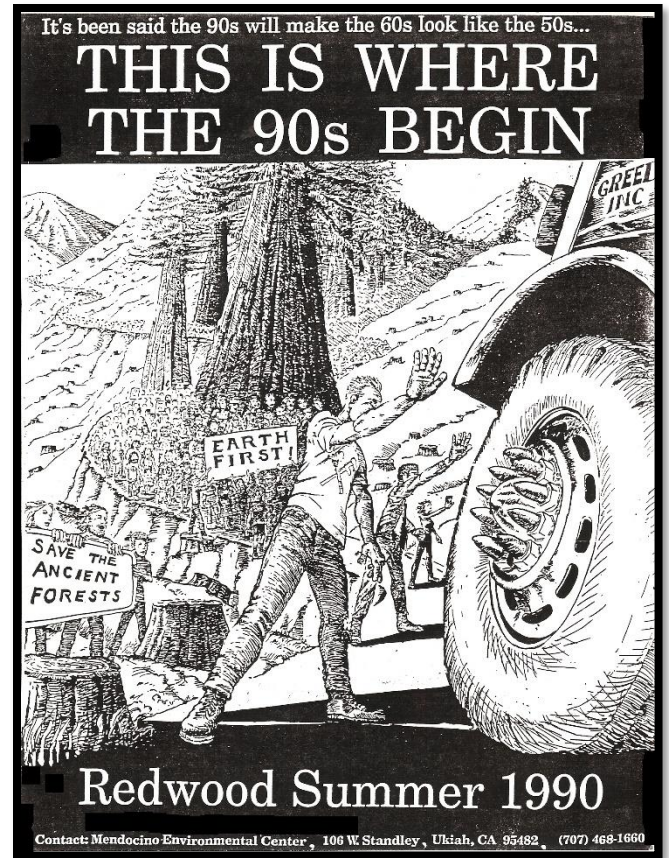
there should be no prejudice against timber workers, even those that were prejudiced against environmental activists. Judi Bari stated, “the battle is not between timber workers and the environmentalists. It’s between giant logging corporations and our community.”⁵¹ In a guidebook being prepared for Redwood Summer participants, the organizers made it clear that it was the corporations, not the workers, who were the enemy:

“When you’re sitting in front of a bulldozer or walking a picket line and an angry logger is screaming at you to ‘Get a Job!’ and ‘Go Home!’ it’s easy to forget that timber workers are not our enemies. And when they see thousands of college students and other environmental activists from out of the area coming to the Northcoast threatening their livelihoods (as they see it), it’s easy for them to see us as the enemy too.

“This is a tragic mistake, for workers and environmentalists are natural allies. Loggers and mill-workers are victimized by the giant timber companies. Since their whole way of life—their jobs, homes, families—depends on unsustainable forest practices, we must make the timber companies pay for the education, retraining and job placement needed to cushion the blow of conversion to ecologically health timber practices. It’s easy for us—since our future and our kids’ future does *not* depend on continued over-logging—to demand others to sacrifice for the good of the planet, but without concrete support to make change possible; they will not listen seriously.”⁵²

As for violent behavior, the environmentalists (and IWW members) had already been on the receiving end of it, at least three times in the past year, and law enforcement had turned their heads the other way. “I don’t care what anyone says; this represents a pattern of allowing violence against radicals,” complained Judi Bari. Alvie Rochester dismissed the criticism, simply declaring, “I just don’t see that.”⁵³ As for violence on the part of potential loose cannons on the demonstrators’ side, Darryl Cherney stressed that the nonvi-

olence code and trainings were specifically intended to weed them out. He indicated that one man had already been instructed to leave after the organizers learned he had incited violence at a previous, unrelated protest.⁵⁴



* * * * *

In spite of all of these efforts, Corporate Timber and its front groups only grew more steadfast in their opposition to Redwood Summer and *Forests Forever*. The corporations’ rhetoric, which sought to divide timber workers and environmental activists grew steadily *more* violent and threatening. This was due in no small part to their very real fear that *Forests Forever* would be approved by the voters, that new regulations would be enacted due to the Northern Spotted Owl, and that Earth First! - IWW Local #1 might actually succeed in organizing a large swath of dissident workers. As a result, G-P, L-P, and P-L were logging at an unprecedentedly frantic pace. According to the Sierra Club state forestry practices chair Gail Lucas, “every available feller, Cat operator and log-truck driver is working full throttle. Workers are coming in from as far

⁵¹ Bari, et. al., April 25, 1990, op. cit.

⁵² “Workers, Corporations, and Redwood Summer: Whose Side Are We On?”, by the Redwood Summer Coalition excerpt from the Redwood Summer Handbook, second edition, ca June 1990. Emphasis in the original.

⁵³ “Logging Protesters Claim Pattern of Violence”, by Mike Geniella, *Santa Rosa Press Democrat*, March 28, 1990.

⁵⁴ “Lumber Showdown Feared This Summer”, by David Forster, *Eureka Times-Standard*, April 22, 1990.

away as Colorado and Idaho.”⁵⁵ Judi Bari agreed, confirming that logging on the North Coast was “going full-tilt-boogie.”⁵⁶

If anything, it was Corporate Timber who had a monopoly on violent and divisive rhetoric. John Campbell was especially full of fire and brimstone. In early April, he convened a company meeting in the Winema Theater in Scotia, addressing the assembled workers with a speech intended to incite fear and mob hysteria. The normally defiant Kelly Bettiga, this time seated in the back of the theater, could only sit and watch, his stomach churning at the witch hunt that was being stirred up in front of him. Campbell warned the workers that if the “radical Earth First! initiative”—meaning *Forests Forever*—were passed by the voters, there would have to be layoffs, perhaps as much as half of the workforce. He declared that Scotia had been a happy place before the Earth First!ers had stuck their bloody nose into the town’s business. He described Redwood Summer as the biggest threat to the stability of the Pacific Lumber company and its workforce imaginable. He denounced the “freedom riders for the forest” as being nothing more than watermelons, green on the outside, but all red on the inside.⁵⁷ This was a standard Corporate Timber and Mining talking point⁵⁸, but many of the workers, including the older veteran employees who had lived through much of the Cold War, accepted it with cheers and applause. Then, Campbell revealed that he was prepared for the impending “communist” invasion: he had hired a private security firm full of former CIA and FBI agents.⁵⁹

Not to be outdone, the *Humboldt Beacon and Fortuna Advance*’s Christian fundamentalist editor, Glenn Simmons, wrote a sneering dismissal of Earth First!’s nonviolence pledge, asking “what if the Earth First! demonstrations themselves are the cause of violence?” which was akin to an apologist for rape asking “what if the victim brought it upon themselves?” and was an all too common right wing response to organized resistance to the status quo from political forces on the left.⁶⁰ Simmons, naturally, continued to accept

full page advertisements from both P-L and L-P, showing precisely where his loyalties lay.

TEAM geared up for more counterdemonstrations at Earth First! rallies, particularly in Humboldt County.⁶¹ WECARE, meanwhile, published a letter to its members entitled “A Word to the Wise” denouncing Redwood Summer with falsehoods and half truths such as:

“There are indications that the event has been in the planning stage for three years, with some 1,200 letters sent to Universities nationwide. Training sessions are now occurring and activities are to begin with the end of the school year (the last week in June)... You should be alerted to the fact that at recent protests in Oregon, films have shown the same faces as have been noted in Humboldt County. This appears to be a well-orchestrated production.”⁶²

Redwood Summer’s organizers could only dream about being so lucky or fortunate. Their efforts were exceptional given their incredibly limited shoestring budgets. The notion that the organizers and demonstrators were part of some roving band of marauders that traipsed around the Pacific Northwest like a mob of heavies was a myth that had been applied to dissidents for generations, and not just environmentalists. The idea that Redwood Summer had been devised some three years previously was laughable, though, certainly the vision of being able to mobilize thousands of supporters within the area, let alone more from outside was always in the back of the minds of many Earth First!ers, though never in their wildest dreams did many think they could actually achieve it.

WECARE urged its members to not engage with demonstrators, instead suggesting that the former use surveillance to keep tabs on the latter:

“Be aware of strange vehicles in the area where you are working. Note description and license numbers.

“Note flyers announcing an activity. Notify the Sheriff’s office of these, do not assume they know about them... Keep a camera in your vehicle and take pictures of same. People occupying offices, using glue in office machinery, disrupting operations.

⁵⁵ “Lost in the Woods”, by Greg Goldin, *Los Angeles Weekly*, September 7, 1990.

⁵⁶ “Redwood Summer Timeline”, by Karen Pickett, *Earth First! Journal*, Samhain / November 1, 1990

⁵⁷ “Harris, op. cit., page 310-11.

⁵⁸ Deal, Carl, *The Greenpeace Guide to Anti-Environmental Organizations*, Berkeley, CA., Odonian Press - The Real Story series, 1993, pages 7.

⁵⁹ “Harris, op. cit., page 310-11.

⁶⁰ “Actions, Words Denote Hostility”, editorial by Glenn Simmons, *Humboldt Beacon and Fortuna Advance*, March 29, 1990.

⁶¹ “Timber Workers Demonstrate”, by Thomas Johnson, *Humboldt Beacon and Fortuna Advance*, March 29, 1990

⁶² “WECARE About Violence...”, by WECARE, reprinted in *Country Activist*, June 1990.

“We have been advised that violent reaction may do more harm than good. The authorities must remain neutral until the law is broken and you may be the target of their actions if you break the law. Earth First! would gain sympathy if they were the target of violent reaction.

“We have also been advised that the media does not have the right to trespass on your property. Landowners can notify the media in advance that they do not have permission to trespass. This can be done in writing, preferably by registered mail.”⁶³

While this may have seemed like an appeal to reason, directed at the loose cannons on the right, if one read between the lines in the last paragraph it could easily be interpreted as a roundabout way to urge that the vigilante elements keep their activity “underground”.⁶⁴

In Mendocino County, embattled IWA Local 3-469 representative Don Nelson continued his further realignment into the Corporate Timber camp by dispatching two of loyal followers, grader Dave Bowman and machinist Richard Hargreaves, to the *nonunion* Harvest Market to intimidate two young women who were gathering signatures for *Forests Forever*. The nearby Albertsons had illegally chased away fellow signature gatherers after a mere seven phone calls from alleged loggers complaining about it.⁶⁵ Nelson claimed that Bowman and Hargreaves were distributing educational materials and were themselves threatened by “one of the so-called IWW spokesmen” and demanded a retraction from Bruce Anderson who had alerted his readers to Nelson’s actions in the *Anderson Valley Advertiser*.⁶⁶ The “supposed IWW spokesman” that Nelson complained of was, in fact, Anna Marie Stenberg, who was approximately “half the size of each” of the two mill workers, and for whom Nelson had an intense dislike due to her role in exposing his collaboration with G-P over the PCB spill. Stenberg had asked the two millworkers on whose authority they were acting and was ignored, at which point she contacted one of the IWA dissidents whom the IWW had been assisting in their OSHA hearing. Stenberg’s source revealed that Nelson had not received sanction by a vote from Local 3-469’s

membership and was acting autocratically. Stenberg presented this information to Bowman and Hargreaves who—lacking any further recourse—stomped off in a huff.⁶⁷

Doug Bosco was more than willing to add his voice to the chorus condemning Redwood Summer, for numerous reasons. These included his vulnerability in the upcoming election, the increasing popularity of *Forests Forever*, and the threat that the campaign posed to his now increasingly vain efforts to resuscitate the failed timber “pact.” The congressmen accused the incoming “freedom riders” of increasing tensions in the timber dependent communities of the North Coast, stating, “They will be intruders and outsiders, and we don’t need them or want them. If they come, they’ll cause trouble...we have more than our supply of activists. Let them find causes elsewhere.” Dan Hauser concurred, proclaiming, “The tensions are so high now, I don’t understand why more people haven’t been hurt. Adding large numbers of people to the scene is dangerous.”⁶⁸

Stoking the fires still further, on March 28, L-P announced that they would be laying off still more mill workers—this time in their Covelo, Ukiah, and Oroville facilities.⁶⁹ This announcement came on the heels of the company announcing *yet another* quarter of record earnings.⁷⁰ Joe Wheeler informed several L-P mill workers that, beginning in November, the graveyard shift would be cut from the Ukiah facility. The 93 acre Covelo mill would be shuttered for two months, and the Oroville plant would eliminate a shift. Rumors were circulating that the Willits stud mill would also close, but Tucker denied them.⁷¹ Tucker barely even tried to deflect the inevitable chorus of resentment opining, “I know the political timing is lousy...but business and politics at this juncture don’t mix.”⁷²

⁶⁷ “Bruce Anderson’s Reply”, by Bruce Anderson, *Anderson Valley Advertiser*, April 11, 1990.

⁶⁸ “Timber Talks Dying, Lawmakers Say: Environmentalists Take No-Deal Stance”, by Mike Geniella, *Santa Rosa Press Democrat*, March 28, 1990.

⁶⁹ “L-P May Cut Shift at Ukiah Mill: 200 Workers Facing Layoffs Countywide”, by Maureen Connor-Rice, *Ukiah Daily Journal*, March 28, 1990; “LP Cutting 195 Jobs: Announcement Shocks Timber Communities”, by Mike Geniella, *Santa Rosa Press Democrat*, March 29, 1990; and “Valley L-P Mill Closures Shock Lawmakers and Locals”, by Keith Michaud, *Fort Bragg Advocate-News*, April 5, 1990.

⁷⁰ “Stockholders Get Better News: L-P Reports Record Earnings”, by Mike Geniella, *Santa Rosa Press Democrat*, March 29, 1990.

⁷¹ “Louisiana-Pacific Layoffs Announced in County”, staff report, *Willits News*, March 30, 1990.

⁷² Bari, January 2, 1991, op. cit.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Bari, February 2, 1994, op. cit.

⁶⁵ “Here and There in Mendocino County”, by Bruce Anderson, *Anderson Valley Advertiser*, March 28, 1990.

⁶⁶ “A Word from Mr. Sell-Out”, letter to the editor by Don Nelson, *Anderson Valley Advertiser*, April 11, 1990; the title of the letter is obviously an addition by Bruce Anderson.

It was hard to see what part of this business decision *wasn't* political, however. As if that weren't bad enough, Eel River Sawmills was planning to shut down their mill in Alton, at the junction of Highways 36 and 101 in Humboldt County, near the site of the recent Earth First! log truck ambush.⁷³ At least the L-P and Eel River workers were warned of their plight. On April 12, the Redwood Empire owned lumber mill in Philo shut down without any notice to the workers or even a hint that its closure was imminent.⁷⁴ There were even rumors flying that the Miller-Rellim mill in Del Norte County would cease operations.⁷⁵ In a "see, we told you so!" moment, the *Santa Rosa Press Democrat* went in to Corporate Timber talking-point autopilot very quickly and excoriated the environmentalists for refusing to compromise, but they had spoken too soon.⁷⁶

These mill closures came in spite of the unsurpassed logging rates then currently underway, and there is little doubt these actions served to either increase Corporate Timber's bottom line, incite divisions between millworkers and environmentalists, or both. Not surprisingly, L-P spokesmen, including both Tucker and Wheeler, blamed the eminent listing of the spotted owl as an endangered species, challenges to THPs, and the expansion of park and wilderness areas for the closures⁷⁷, charges that were blatantly false, and—in least in the case of the Covelo facility, easily debunked.⁷⁸ L-P even admitted that some of the jobs were being replaced by automation, which had zero connection to environmental factors.⁷⁹ "Woods" Sutherland declared that the corporation, "seem(ed) to be thumbing its nose at the rest of the industry with its patently callous decision." Gail Lucas suggested that the actual reason for the layoffs was clearly a result of the company's quest for cheap,

Mexican labor, and she debunked L-P's claim that it was logging sustainably, arguing, "State figures for Mendocino County clearly show industry already has been cutting at more than twice the growth rate."⁸⁰

As far as Hauser and Keene were concerned, these companies, especially L-P, had now pushed the envelope too far. It was bad enough that the environmentalists sought to use the initiative process to make an end run around the legislative process (and the inside deals that such implicitly allowed). Now L-P was violating the spirit of the so-called "Timber Pact" by attempting an end run around the political process from the other direction. (Couldn't they see that this was an election year?) Incensed, Barry Keene lashed out at both L-P and Earth First!, declaring:

"(This is) an all-out war between extremists...Once again, innocent workers and their families are caught in the crossfire of hostile artillery.

"The workers and families are suffering at the hands of some pursuing profits at whatever human cost, and of others desiring to end all human activity in the woods...With its recent manufacturing moves into Mexico, L-P's timing couldn't be worse. I can't imagine that people won't regard the two events as related.

"It looks to me like the company is engaging in Kamikaze public relations...Many who live in timber-dependent areas are beginning to feel cornered by non-negotiable initiatives and strident environmentalists who they perceive are aiming to wipe out their jobs...and now the jobs are going.

"Add the recent calls by environmental extremists for a summer of civil disobedience and you begin to see the real potential for physical harm."⁸¹

Dan Hauser was no less angry. He rightfully criticized L-P for its greed, stating, "These giant corporations have absolutely no notion of moral responsibility to their employees...It was a stupid move on (L-P's) part."⁸² He too worried that the corporation's arrogance would doom the "Timber Pact".⁸³

Doug Bosco also weighed in on the closures, and for once, did *not* shift the blame to the environ-

⁷³ Geniella, March 29, 1990, op. cit.

⁷⁴ "Philo Mill to Close, Workers Told", by Keith Michaud, *Ukiah Daily Journal*, April 13, 1990; (Redwood Empire owned this one); "Landmark Phil Mill Shuts; 35 Out of Work", by Mike Geniella, *Santa Rosa Press Democrat*, April 14, 1990; "Philo Mill Closes, Leaves 40 Workers Without Jobs", by Keith Michaud, *Mendocino Beacon*, April 26, 1990.

⁷⁵ "Miller-Rellim Denies closure Plans, by Andrew Oppmann Jr., *Crescent City Triplicate*, May 9, 1990.

⁷⁶ "In Timber Battles, Workers Always Lose", editorial, *Santa Rosa Press Democrat*, March 30, 1990.

⁷⁷ "Ecologists Blamed for Timber Layoffs", by Jeff Peline, *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 29, 1990, and "Eminent Domain Seizure Proposed", by Les and Genny Nuckolls, *Willits News*, April 6, 1990.

⁷⁸ "Trucker Says, 'Good Riddance'", by Mike Geniella, *Santa Rosa Press Democrat*, April 16, 1990.

⁷⁹ "Automation Taking 15 Jobs at L-P Mill" ("L-P Letter Points to Automation: 15 Workers to be Gone in 1st Round of Layoffs" in some editions), by Mike Geniella, *Santa Rosa Press Democrat*, April 2, 1990.

⁸⁰ Geniella, March 29, 1990, op. cit.

⁸¹ Michaud, April 5, 1990, op. cit.

⁸² Michaud, April 5, 1990, op. cit.

⁸³ "Hauser Blasts L-P's Sawmill Closure Plan", by Andrew W Oppmann Jr., *Crescent City Triplicate*, April 4, 1990.

mentalists. “L-P went out of its way to make a cut-and-dried corporate decision and then tried to use the usual whipping boys to make its case,” he declared, and he had good reason to do so; politically he had much to lose.⁸⁴ He faced political challenges from the left by Lionel Gambill, again, as well as another one of Judi Bari’s friends, Darlene Cormingore, an up and coming Peace and Freedom Party candidate from Sonoma County. He also faced challenges ostensibly from the right by two potential Republican challengers, Frank Riggs and Tim Stoen.⁸⁵ However, Tim Stoen, a Ukiah attorney who was most famous for his association with Jonestown and the People’s Temple, argued that when a corporation like L-P makes “huge profits by extracting resources from a community, that company owes it to the community to maintain jobs, as a moral issue,” thus staking out a position to Bosco’s *left* politically leaving him nowhere to go, except further to the right where Frank Riggs awaited him.⁸⁶

The revelations about L-P’s “Mexican Adventure” shocked workers (and all of those who claimed to speak for them) as well. Trucker Wally Edwards who had hauled logs around the North Coast for a quarter century angrily interjected, “I’m glad they’re leaving. A big corporation like L-P has never done anything for this country. Small businesses are what built this country, and now the corporations are tearing it down. It’s not just L-P, it’s *all of them*!”⁸⁷ Even TEAM spokesman Don Stamps found himself in a position of rare agreement with the environmentalists, and he expressed public disdain at Tucker’s crassness, although for entirely different reasons: L-P’s actions were driving potential recruits into the Earth First! - IWW Local #1 camp instead.⁸⁸ Sure enough, Gyppo Owner Walter Smith—though he had been grumbling about L-P privately for years—now decided to openly criticize L-P.⁸⁹ Although he seemingly stood alone, Smith knew he had the tacit support of many of his fellow timber workers:

“My position is, as part of the industry, that I’m anti-corporation and pro-industry. The industry is really us: the workers and the gyppos, not the

corporations. The corporations have come here and are shipping out all the money to other places, and they’re so diversified that they’re not just timber companies; they have holdings and interests in other things. We’re really the industry, and it’s our community that’s at stake here, and the workers need to put up a united front against the corporations. They need to say, “Get out of here. We will buy you out; we will run it ourselves, and we will do a much better job, because we know what’s out there, and we know what needs to be done to keep it around.”

“The workers have to be able to control their own destiny. At this point, the corporations and the individuals that have the money and the power have all gone kind of hog wild, and they really don’t worry about us at all. We’re just incidental to their making money.”⁹⁰



Image by “M”

As Bruce Anderson had suggested, Walter Smith was by no means alone in his sentiment, stating, “Lots of other loggers, log haulers, millworkers, and gyppos agree with (him), but have to keep quiet because L-P will definitely not hesitate to cut them off at the

⁸⁴ Geniella, April 16, 1990, op. cit.

⁸⁵ Geniella, March 29, 1990, op. cit.

⁸⁶ “Louisiana-Pacific Action Condemned”, by Keith Michaud and Lois O’Rourke, *Fort Bragg Advocate-News*, April 5, 1990.

⁸⁷ Geniella, April 16, 1990, op. cit. Emphasis added.

⁸⁸ “Agreeing With Tucker’s View”, letter to the editor by Don Stamps, *Eureka Times-Standard*, February 23, 1990.

⁸⁹ “Here and There in Mendocino County”, by Bruce Anderson, *Anderson Valley Advertiser*, January 24, 1990.

⁹⁰ “A Logger Speaks Out – An Interview with Walter Smith”, by Bruce Anderson, *Anderson Valley Advertiser*, July 4, 1990.

knees.”⁹¹ Smith agreed, stating, “It’s a united front when you talk on the landing, but it’s a different united front when you talk in public.”⁹² Sure enough, Smith had faced blacklisting by L-P and its front groups for his criticisms.⁹³ So, in an effort to protect his seven workers and partner Ken Smith from further retaliation, he had sold his share of the company to his now ex-partner in January.⁹⁴

However, in this case, more than a few L-P workers *were* angry enough to denounce the company secretly. One anonymous L-P employee from Ukiah even contacted Judi Bari and told her, “We need to have a demonstration and I don’t know how to organize one. Will you?”⁹⁵ As a result, Earth First! – IWW Local #1, as Judi Bari described it, officially “came out” at the April 3, 1990 Mendocino County Board of Supervisor’s meeting, reiterating the still unanswered demands that the County exercise its power of eminent domain to seize L-P’s holdings and operate them in the public interest.⁹⁶ Joining Judi Bari, Darryl Cherney, Betty Ball, Louis Korn, and Rick Cloninger was Walter Smith.⁹⁷

Don Nelson sought a piece of the action himself, but Judi Bari wasn’t buying it. Nelson made a public appearance prior to the Board of Supervisor’s meeting, joining Bari, Betty Ball, and Supervisor Norm de Vall for a press conference condemning L-P’s move to Mexico. When Nelson reported that he had sent a letter to Doug Bosco asking the congressman to intervene to thwart the company’s outsourcing, Bari denounced him as “a wimp, a simpleton, a company hack, and an all-around corporate collaborator for being so silly as to approach a corporate lackey like Bosco for assistance.” Nelson, left in disgust, accusing Bari of lacking credibility and describing her as a liar, a charge that more accurately fit Nelson himself. Supervisor de Vall’s own performance at this event was largely inert, though he seemed mildly sympathetic to the call for eminent domain.⁹⁸ The normally more conservative Jim Eddie, by contrast,

whose district included the already struggling community of Covelo, which was located near the Round Valley Indian reservation, lamented that L-P’s decision would “devastate Covelo.”⁹⁹

The Supervisors’ meeting itself was a hitherto unprecedented public display of unity between timber workers and environmentalists. Judi Bari reminded the board about the eminent domain proposal, arguing that it was not even that radical a measure, that L-P was committing corporate crimes, and “sucking the life blood out of the community.” She declared, “You thought we were pretty much off the wall. Now (you must realize) it’s probably the only way to save our county.”¹⁰⁰ She also cited the case of Fortunado Reyes as specific proof that L-P treated its workers as exploitatively as they treated the forests. “It’s not environmentalists versus timber—it’s corporate greed versus the local community,” she said.¹⁰¹ Bari described the inherently destructive and unsustainable nature of L-Ps “logging to infinity” forestry, warning that this year they would hit the “timber gap” where they would run out of marketable logs. She admonished the board, “Are we going to wait until they finish or are we going to stop them now?”¹⁰²

Bari was very quickly followed by Betty Ball, who disputed the rhetoric that environmental activists were responsible for the mill shutdowns:

“It’s not the environmentalists who have been overcutting...How stupid do they think we are? There could have been forests forever here. There could have been jobs forever. Logging is one of the oldest and finest professions on the North Coast, but the industry has ruined it for everybody...It’s outrageous what they’re doing.”¹⁰³

Anna Marie Stenberg read the Georgia-Pacific mill-workers statement, issued the previous December in response to Don Nelson, to emphasize the point that the latter did not adequately represent the interests of front line mill workers.¹⁰⁴

⁹¹ Bruce Anderson, January 24, 1990, op. cit.

⁹² Bruce Anderson, July 4, 1990, op. cit.

⁹³ Bruce Anderson, January 24, 1990, op. cit.

⁹⁴ “L-P Critic Sells Logging Firm, Cites Pressure”, by Mike Geniella, *Santa Rosa Press Democrat*, January 17, 1990. L-P of course denied that they had put any pressure on Smith.

⁹⁵ “Redwood Summer Bombing: Police Framing, Not Investigating”, by Richard Johnson, *Mendocino Country Environmentalist*, July 1, 1990.

⁹⁶ Bari, January 2, 1991, op. cit.

⁹⁷ “Louisiana-Pacific Roasted by Activists”, by Rob Anderson, *Anderson Valley Advertiser*, April 4, 1990.

⁹⁸ “Here and there in Mendocino County”, by Bruce Anderson, *Anderson Valley Advertiser*, April 4, 1990.

⁹⁹ Geniella, March 29, 1990, op. cit.

¹⁰⁰ “Earth First! Protests L-P Layoffs; Mill Irked at Criticism: Still ‘Good Citizen’”, by Mike Geniella, *Santa Rosa Press Democrat*, April 4, 1990.

¹⁰¹ Rob Anderson, April 4, 1990, op. cit.

¹⁰² “Eminent Domain Seizure Proposed”, by Les and Genny Nuckolls, *Willits News*, April 6, 1990.

¹⁰³ “Louisiana-Pacific Action Condemned”, by Keith Michaud and Lois O’Rourke, *Fort Bragg Advocate-News*, April 5, 1990.

¹⁰⁴ “Stop L-P – Supervisors Told”, by Tom Fristoe, *Mendocino Observer*, April 5, 1990. It should be noted that Darryl Cherney’s first name is misspelled “Darrel” in the article.

Rick Cloninger informed the Board that L-P was now shipping even its wood chips—produced primarily from pecker poles, baby trees from the local forests—to power biomass plants in Tracy and Samoa. He accused Barry Keene of being in the pocket of corporate timber and that his attempts at “compromise” were nothing but a smokescreen.¹⁰⁵ “Our trees are being used to provide power for the Sacramento Valley. Don’t let L-P chip their way to another year of record profits,” implored the Laytonville resident.¹⁰⁶ “L-P must stop seeing everything with dollar signs,” he said.¹⁰⁷ Cloninger noted that two trucking operations, Dutra and Poole, were most likely transporting the chips out of the county. His spouse, Kathy Cloninger, who operated a recycling center in Laytonville, said that they had learned of this, because L-P’s biomass plant in Tracy was located right next door to Owens-Rockway where the Cloningers took their glass for recycling.¹⁰⁸

True to his word, Walter Smith charged L-P with logging the land to death. He drew a contrast between land he had logged in sustainably in 1982, and L-P’s recent “moonscaping” of that very same land nearly eight years later.¹⁰⁹ He was eloquent in his condemnation of the corporation stating, “L-P says the reason (for closing its mills) is that environmentalists are preserving the forests. The truth is that they are logging off the land and then subdividing and selling it... The forest service is giving up as much timber as it can.” Smith submitted that the reason L-P was closing its Covelo facility is that there were no more trees there. He revealed to the board that when he had worked for L-P that they had accused him of “not being a team player.” Smith countered that his “team” was the L-P mill workers. “The latest assault is the most painful since it comes from the very people who should be most concerned for our welfare—our employers,” declared Smith. Continuing, he admonished:

“(They have) exported logs to Mexico, exported jobs to Mexico, closed mills, and (made) meaningless agreements... the Millworkers are the economic backbone of this County. The forest is the heartbeat of rural nature in this

county. Join my team and ban raw log exports and stop the liquidation of our forests.”¹¹⁰

After all of this, Darryl Cherney once again proved to be the show-stopper reprising his performance of *El Pio*¹¹¹, which, according to Judi Bari, made everyone, except Supervisor Marilyn Butcher, smile.¹¹²

Don Nelson was also not smiling in the wake of the meeting, declaring:

“In the recent article on the occupation of the Mendocino County Supervisor’s [sic] chambers by ‘Earth First’, [sic] repeated reference [sic] is made to labor leaders as being a part of that group. Did anyone in fact see any bonafide labor representative in that group?...

“The so called [sic] IWW representative has no workers to represent. She was told that quite clearly by Judge Goldstein when she tried to intervene in the Georgia Pacific PCB incident, when he said that ‘The International [sic] Workers of the World, Local Union No. 1 do not fall within the definition of a labor organization.’...

“As a matter of policy the IWW does not seek to organize workers and negotiate contracts because they believe in the complete abolition of capitalism and the complete abolition of the wage system. They are not representatives of organized labor nor of lumber workers. On the other hand, the International Woodworkers of America is a bona fide labor organization.”¹¹³

Nelson’s claims were preposterous and untrue. His dismissal of the IWW was no doubt lifted from the pages of various (poorly researched) history books whose command of the facts were suspect to say the least. The IWW had, in fact, negotiated *many* contracts over its history and still does so. The rest of Nelson’s statements were, of course, only true on paper at best. And if the IWA was “bona fide” it left a lot to be desired, even as far as class collaborationist unions go. Bruce Anderson, at least, responded to Nelson and reminded him that nowhere in his screed did he actu-

¹¹⁰ Nuckolls and Nuckolls, April 6, 1990, op. cit.

¹¹¹ “Earth First! Sings Protest at L-P Layoffs”, (“Earth First! Protests L-P Layoffs: Mill Irked at Criticism: Still ‘Good Citizen’” in some editions), by Mike Geniella, *Santa Rosa Press Democrat*, April 4, 1990.

¹¹² Bari, January 2, 1991, op. cit.

¹¹³ “Bona Fide Labor Leader”, letter to the editor, by Don Nelson, *Anderson Valley Advertiser*, April 11, 1990; *Willits News*, April 11, 1990; *Mendocino Commentary*, April 12, 1990; *Ukiah Daily Journal*, April 13, 1990; *North Coast News*, April 19, 1990; and *Country Activist*, May 1990.

¹⁰⁵ Rob Anderson, April 4, 1990, op. cit.

¹⁰⁶ Nuckolls and Nuckolls, April 6, 1990, op. cit.

¹⁰⁷ “Board Asked to Take Over L-P: Request Triggered by Cutbacks”, by Keith Michaud, *Ukiah Daily Journal*, April 3, 1990.

¹⁰⁸ Fristoe, April 5, 1990, op. cit.

¹⁰⁹ Rob Anderson, April 4, 1990, op. cit.

ally address any of the issues raised by Bari, Earth First!, or the IWW at the meeting.¹¹⁴ Nelson spoke favorably of Walter Smith's presence, but he might have wanted to ask the former gyppo owner before invoking his name, because the latter was in near solid agreement with Bari on the issue.¹¹⁵ And, if the IWW was not a "bona fide" labor union, they sure as hell sounded a lot more like one than Don Nelson's IWA in their declarations of support for Redwood Summer:

"The exploitation of natural resources by the lumber companies is inevitably linked to the exploitation of labor...The Wobblies are pleased to work with Earth First! and local community groups in this campaign to save trees and jobs...

"We support real democracy in the workplace by putting all decision-making (and profits) into the hands of those who actually do the work. This is also the best assurance against environmental destruction, for the workers have an overwhelming self-interest in promoting safe and sustainable forms of production. After all, it's the workers and their families who, under our current for-profit system, suffer the worst effects from pollution and other work-related health hazards."¹¹⁶

Judi Bari fired back against the anti-Redwood Summer rhetoric in a guest editorial in the *Santa Rosa Press Democrat*, declaring:

"This type of doublespeak seriously misrepresents the very real and intense struggle that is going on in the redwood region. It is time to set the record straight...

"According to the Mendocino County Forest Advisory Committee, L-P is cutting at more than twice the rate of growth in our county's forests...In 1975, the Oswald Report predicted that, if harvest rates continued, a sharp fall-down in saw-timber supply would hit in 1990. Young stands would be growing but there wouldn't be enough mature trees to keep the area's mills going. This prediction was right

on target, but no one predicted L-P's unconscionable response to the problem...

"The loggers know this as well as the environmentalists and are no happier about it. 'We're killing babies,' one logger told me. 'I can't feel good about what we're doing anymore.'

"L-P is engaged in a mop-up operation in Mendocino County, stripping our children's trees and jobs and threatening our area with the collapse of our forest ecosystem. Earth First! could disappear tomorrow and the mills would keep closing."¹¹⁷

Bari went on to explain the call for Redwood Summer:

"Our call for mass protest this summer is a last ditch attempt to slow the corporations down to sustained yield before there is nothing left to save. It is not directed against the timber workers—every day we slow the corporations down is another day employees can collect a paycheck before the final layoff.

"But Barry Keene, Don Nelson, and others have been portraying this struggle as a 'war' between workers and environmentalists. They have been making statements that would incite people to violence against us, and this must be stopped.

"We are calling only for nonviolent protest this summer. We will be providing nonviolence training and strict nonviolence guidelines. We stand by our unbroken record of four years. We have held hundreds of protests, and, although violence has been directed against us, we have never initiated violence against others...

"The real reason they are so upset with Earth First! is because we have proposed a strategy that just might work."¹¹⁸

Don Nelson couldn't bear to let Bari have the last word, so he fired off a guest editorial of his own, which the *Press Democrat* published two weeks later. Once again, however Nelson mostly engaged in ad hominem attacks and peppered those with no shortage of self aggrandizing half-truths aimed to make himself look like the *real* voice of the timber workers on the north coast. His first shot was to once again

¹¹⁴ "Bruce Anderson's Reply", by Bruce Anderson, *Anderson Valley Advertiser*, April 11, 1990.

¹¹⁵ "Face Timber Facts", guest editorial by Walter Smith, *Santa Rosa Press Democrat*, April 8, 1990.

¹¹⁶ "The Redwood Summer Coalition", from an undated IWW leaflet, published, ca. May 1990, courtesy of Allan Anger's personal archives.

¹¹⁷ "Earth First! Replies to Critics", by Judi Bari, *Santa Rosa Press Democrat*, April 10, 1990.

¹¹⁸ Bari, April 10, 1990, op. cit.

accuse Bari of misrepresenting the facts, which was a clear case of the pot calling the kettle black, because his very next statement was, “No one has accused Earth First! of being responsible for Louisiana-Pacific Corporation’s actions.” Evidently Nelson was unaware of the dozens of comments uttered by WEC-ARE, Candy Boak, Harry Merlo, Glennys Simmons, Shep Tucker, and Joe Wheeler—all unsavory characters with whom he was now associating—over the course of the previous two years saying essentially just that. Nelson then took credit for publically denouncing L-P’s overcut, which was not really earth shattering news, because practically *everybody* had done that. He then went on to credit Barry Keene for attempting to craft legislation against over-cutting since as early as 1973. While that may have been technically true, Keene’s language was always based on the notion that corporate timber was a given, and in any case his legislation had been weak and ineffective.¹¹⁹ At this point Nelson went completely over the edge, stating:

“To further insult us, they claim that they are the true representatives of the people. Who are they? When were they elected by anyone? When have they shouldered the responsibility for their actions? Why are they trying to cause workers to lose money and work? Why are they trying to provoke the workers? Is it because they still really believe what their mentor, Dave Foreman, thinks and promotes? Bari has proclaimed herself as taking a nonviolent approach to resolving an overcut problem by L-P and Pacific Lumber. However, she attacks everyone.”¹²⁰

This was, of course, absurd; there was absolutely *no record* of Judi Bari having attacked *anyone*, let alone *everyone*, unless Nelson was equating legitimate criticism of half-truths, falsehoods, and unethical behavior, something Nelson had developed a penchant for by this time. Nelson’s repeated insistence that Bari “had not been elected” deliberately distracted attention away from the open secret that Nelson had utterly lost any credibility he had with his own rank and file, let alone anyone else other than the apologists for Corporate Timber. Naturally he neglected to mention any of this in his response to Bari. Instead, Nelson regurgitated a series of statements from various Earth First!ers, including Dave Foreman, Paul Watson, and

Darryl Cherney, taken from an article by Michael Parfit in *The Smithsonian* and quoted grossly out of context.¹²¹

Nelson’s attempt to isolate the Redwood Summer organizers didn’t work, however. At least one reader, M. Martin, in a letter to the editor of the *Press Democrat* took Nelson to task for the latter’s letter excoriating Judi Bari and attempted to remind him that it was L-P that closed the mills, not Earth First!.¹²² Potter Valley resident Michael B. Ward also revealed the shallowness of Nelson’s statements, drawing attention to L-P executives’ “fancy...multi-million dollar, tan and orange, corporate jets that fly in and out of the Ukiah airport,” and the “even fancier looking Ranger helicopters L-P executives use to fly out of the local mills,” which was ironic given the corporation’s cries of poverty. He made it clear that he was, “happy to see environmentalists and loggers working together,” and guessed that “they (were) really fighting for the same thing: more trees.”¹²³

Meanwhile, Don Nelson found *his* list of allies shrinking steadily. On April 23, the Mendocino County Democratic Party Central Committee voted 10-3 to endorse *Forests Forever*. The three votes against the endorsement came from Don Nelson, Harry Bristrin, and Dan Hoy. Bristrin’s dissenting vote was likely made via instructions from Doug Bosco for whom the former was a newly appointed local representative. Bristrin also excoriated the majority for not endorsing Bosco’s reelection campaign, choosing instead to support Lionel Gambill. That a majority of the committee had refused to endorse Bosco was a testament to growing rank and file opposition within the Democratic Party to his unfettered allegiance to corporate timber.¹²⁴ Nelson’s opposition to the majority was also inevitable, as he had clearly embraced the role as the “union” front-man for big timber, and to drive the point home, he made a huge production out of “resigning” from the committee, declaring the majority a collection of “non-working elitists.”¹²⁵

Nelson’s “resignation” was no less ineffective at turning folks against either Redwood Summer or *Forests Forever*. Another one-time Nelson ally, Roanne

¹²¹ Don Nelson, April 26, 1990, op. cit.

¹²² “Nelson’s Disservice”, letter to the editor by M. Martin, *Santa Rosa Press Democrat*, May 23, 1990.

¹²³ “L-P: Our Largest Unemployer”, by Michael B. Ward, *Anderson Valley Advertiser*, April 11, 1990, and *Ukiah Daily Journal*, April 13, 1990.

¹²⁴ “Here and There in Mendocino County”, by Bruce Anderson, *Anderson Valley Advertiser*, April 25, 1990

¹²⁵ “My Resignation”, letter to the editor by Don Nelson, *Mendocino Beacon*, June 3, 1990.

¹¹⁹ “Who Elected Earth First!”, by Donald R Nelson, *Santa Rosa Press Democrat*, April 26, 1990.

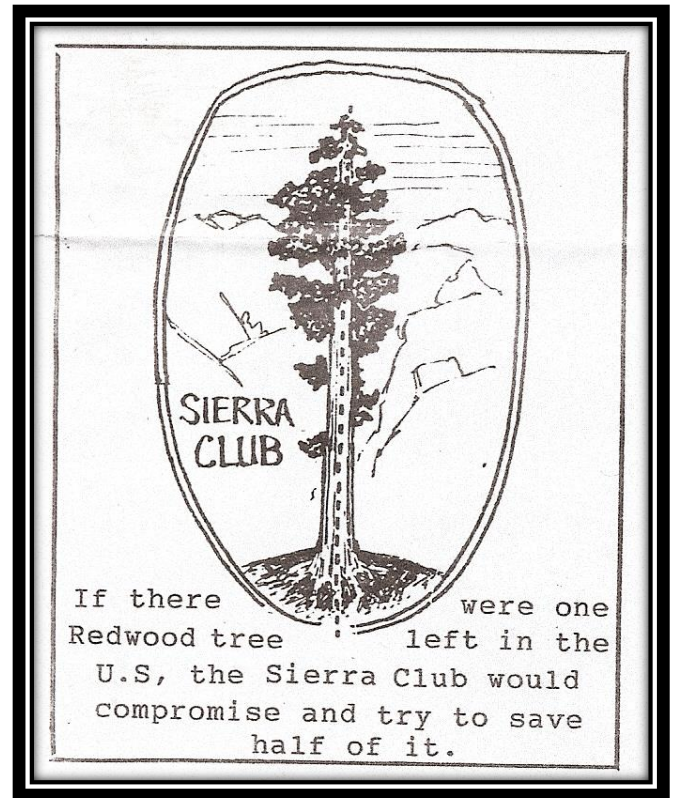
¹²⁰ Don Nelson, April 26, 1990, op. cit.

Withers, who was a fellow Democratic Party Central Committee member declared (in a letter sent to the *Santa Rosa Press Democrat* which the latter refused to publish), that Nelson's resignation was "the only positive thing he has done for his labor constituents in a long time", citing all of his past betrayals of the same, from his refusal to honor the UFCW picket lines in Fort Bragg to the abandonment of the G-P mill workers hit by the PCB spill as evidence. She also debunked Nelson's declaration of the majority's "elitism" by pointing out that they consisted of "a union shop steward, a bookkeeper, a typesetter, (multiple) attorneys, an innkeeper, an auto-mechanic, and Mendocino County Supervisor (Norm De Vall).¹²⁶ Earth First!er Bill Evans went one step further and dismissed Nelson's resignation as grandstanding.¹²⁷ Nelson's bark once again proved to be worse than his bite, however, as he rejoined the committee ("slunk back" in the words of Bruce Anderson) one month later.¹²⁸

* * * * *

There was one important figure who *was* swayed by the negative rhetoric against Redwood Summer, however. Shortly after the Mendocino County Supervisors' meeting, Gail Lucas issued a public statement condemning the Mississippi Summer of the California Redwoods, proclaiming:

"While we cannot dispute Earth First!'s definition of the problem, we do not agree with their solution... We believe that what is needed is action at the polls by the people of the state of California, not recruits who, however well-intentioned or well-briefed in non-violent protest, present a potential for violence... The planned confrontations (sic) will not save trees. They instead could generate strong antagonism from a sizable portion of the community with whom environmentalists are presently trying to establish a dialog."¹²⁹



Lucas's statement was quickly bolstered by a letter of support from Jerry Merrill, the executive director of the Planning and Conservation League.¹³⁰ The national Sierra Club, Sierra Club California, and the Redwood Chapter of the Sierra Club followed this up with a statement distancing themselves from "illegal acts, including civil disobedience" arguing that interested persons should channel their efforts into supporting the electoral campaign to pass *Big Green* and *Forests Forever*.¹³¹

Various Earth First!ers reacted to Lucas's sudden betrayal in various ways. Judi Bari quickly accused her of "spending too much time in smoke-filled rooms with Keene, Hauser, and Don Nelson instead of listening to her own membership,"¹³² and further retorted:

"This is not going to make one iota of difference in what we do, or in how many people come. We didn't ask for their endorsement, and we don't care if they condemn it. Although I respect the Sierra Club's efforts, if working through the system did as well as Gail Lucas

¹²⁶ "Thanks Don", letter to the editor by Roanne Withers, *Anderson Valley Advertiser*, May 2, 1990.

¹²⁷ "Maintain Order", letter to the editor by Bill Evans, *Willits News*, May 9, 1990.

¹²⁸ "Nelson back on Democratic Committee", by Will Behr, *Mendocino Beacon*, May 31, 1990.

¹²⁹ "Sierra Club Cuts Radicals' Plans for Logging Protest", by Mike Geniella, *Santa Rosa Press Democrat*, April 15, 1990.

¹³⁰ "Fight Over Mississippi Support; Splinter Group at 'War' Against Companies", by Mike Geniella, *Santa Rosa Press Democrat*, April 17, 1990.

¹³¹ "Sierra Club Opposes Redwood Summer", *Willits News*, June 13, 1990.

¹³² "Mississippi Summer' Stirs Sierra Club Split; Local Leaders Irked by Press Release", by Judy Nichols, *North Coast News*, April 25, 1990.

says it does, then we wouldn't be in this desperate situation."¹³³

Greg King went as far as to accuse Lucas of "environmental imperialism".¹³⁴

Darryl Cherney concurred, further suggesting that civil disobedience had created the climate making *Forests Forever* possible in the first place.

Ukiah Earth First!er Sequoia—who was passionately outspoken even by Earth First! standards—bluntly opined that Don Nelson and Gail Lucas must have been sleeping together, elaborating "It's clear to me. Their press releases are almost identical in spirit," in response to which Bruce Anderson, a staunch Redwood Summer supporter, quibbled, "I dunno Sequoia. They're already sleeping with Georgia-Pacific, Louisiana-Pacific, Bosco, Keene, and Hauser... When do they find time to sleep with each other?"¹³⁵

Taking a somewhat more diplomatic approach, Ron Guenther and Betty Ball who were both Earth First!ers and Sierra Club rank and file members publically rebuked Lucas's dismissal of populist resistance to corporate timber in an open letter:

"This is of great concern to us. The California State Forest Practices Task Force Chair is a position within the Sierra Club's bureaucratic superstructure increasingly isolated from the Club's grass roots effort, which gives it direction. The Task Force Chair does not speak for the grass roots Sierra Club. The increasing isolation of the Task Force Chair from the Club's grass roots effort is seriously threatening the accomplishment of the Sierra Club's basic forestry mission, which is protecting and enhancing, and acting as an advocate for the California forest environment. As leaders in the most directly affected North West California Sierra Club grass roots Groups and Chapter, we deplore the attack on Earth First! in the name of the Sierra Club."¹³⁶

Lucas didn't speak for anyone other than herself and skittish middle class "environmentalists" who had a good deal more in common with Harry Merlo and Charles Hurwitz than the timber workers or Earth First!. The *Santa Rosa Press Democrat*, however, spun

Lucas's statement as "proof" that Redwood Summer was "losing support".¹³⁷ Two weeks later, when the Redwood Coast Watersheds Alliance disassociated itself from Redwood Summer, the corporate press was quick to report that as major news also.¹³⁸ The media seemed wholly uninterested in the contrasting sentiments of G-P millworker Ken Cleaverwood, however, who stated:

"So the local Sierra Club shit-kickers are going to join hands with Earth First! I guess that's hopeful. Guenther, Bari, Ball, & Co. are at least honest, which is more than I can say for that corrupt, sumbitch of a union so-called business agent we've got here who sells us out to the Co. every chance he gets. The industry runs Nelson, who's been in bed with the Sierra Club timber rep ever since I can remember. Anything that breaks up this cozy nut can't help but be good for the worker. Any logger who even thinks about coming down hard on an Earth First!er this summer is one silly sumbitch. Hey, you dumb galoots, who do you think's looking out for you, the union?"¹³⁹

* * * * *

Earth First! on the North Coast had eliminated every halfway legitimate obstacle to their potential to turn timber workers against the corporations, save one: tree spiking. Although Judi Bari had personally renounced it at the Public Law conference in Oregon, it was not an official statement, and she knew that, in spite of the near unanimous support her announcement received it still represented, at best, a vocal minority within the Earth First! movement. Bari had other supporters outside of Earth First! however, especially the growing number of timber workers who she now could confidently count upon as allies, including Gene Lawhorn, Pete Kayes, Walter Smith, the G-P millworkers affected by the PCB spill, and the many unnamed anonymous L-P employees with whom she had numerous contacts. Without exception, all of them agreed that Earth First! would never achieve much more credibility until they renounced

¹³³ Geniella, April 15, 1990, op. cit.

¹³⁴ Geniella, April 17, 1990, op. cit.

¹³⁵ "Here and There in Mendocino County", by Bruce Anderson, *Anderson Valley Advertiser*, April 25, 1990.

¹³⁶ "Wishing Earth First! Success", by Ron Guenther and Betty Ball, *Mendocino Beacon*, April 26, 1990.

¹³⁷ Geniella, April 15, 1990, op. cit.

¹³⁸ "Mississippi Summer' Losing Some Support" (in some editions, "Redwood Radicals Losing Support"), by Mike Geniella, *Santa Rosa Press Democrat*, April 26, 1990, and "Summer' Support Being lost", *Ukiah Daily Journal*, April 26, 1990.

¹³⁹ "Workers of the World: Wake Up!", letter to the editor, by Ken Cleaverwood, *Anderson Valley Advertiser*, May 2, 1990.

any tactic that potentially placed timber workers at direct risk to their health and safety.¹⁴⁰

After considerable discussion and urging by Judi Bari and others who attended the conference, spokespeople for every northwestern California Earth First! Group as well as IWW Local #1 decided to call a press conference and publically renounce tree spiking. On April 11, 1990, at the Louisiana Pacific Mill in Samoa, Judi Bari (representing Ukiah Earth First!), Darryl Cherney, (representing Southern Humboldt County Earth First!), Mike Roselle (speaking as one of Earth First!'s cofounders), Rick and Kathi Cloninger (representing Laytonville Earth First!), Larry Evans (representing miscellaneous North Coast Earth Firstlers), Greg King (representing the Redwood Action Team), Pam Davis (representing Sonoma County Earth First!), Annie Oakleaf, (representing Albion Earth First!), and Anna Marie Stenberg (representing IWW Local #1 officially—though more than half of the others were IWW members as well) issued the following statement:

“In response to the concerns of loggers and mill-workers, Northern California Earth First! organizers are renouncing the tactic of tree spiking in our area. Through the coalitions we have been building with lumber workers, we have learned that the timber corporations care no more for the lives of their employees than they do for the life of the forest. Their routine maiming and killing of mill workers is coldly calculated into the cost of doing business, just as the destruction of whole ecosystems is considered a reasonable by-product of lumber production.

“These companies would think nothing of sending a spiked tree through a mill, and relish the anti-Earth First! publicity that an injury would cause.

“Since Earth First! is not a membership organization, it is impossible to speak for all Earth Firstlers. But this decision has been widely discussed among Earth Firstlers in our area, and the local sentiment is overwhelmingly in favor of renouncing tree-spiking. We hope that our influence as organizers will cause any potential tree-spikers to consider using a different method. We must also point out that we are not speaking for all Earth First! groups in this pronouncement. Earth

First! is decentralized, and each group can set its own policies. A similar statement to this one renouncing tree spiking is now being made in Southern Oregon, but not all groups have reached the broad consensus we have on this issue.

“But in our area, the loggers and mill workers are our neighbors, and they should be our allies, not our adversaries. Their livelihood is being destroyed along with the forest. The real conflict is not between us and the timber workers, it is between the timber corporation and our entire community.

“We want to give credit for this change in local policy to the rank and file timber workers who have risked their jobs and social relations by coming forward and talking to us. This includes Gene Lawhorn of Roseburg Lumber in Oregon, who defied threats to appear publicly with Earth First! organizer Judi Bari. It also includes the Georgia Pacific, Louisiana Pacific, and Pacific Lumber employees who are members of IWW Local #1 in northern California.

“Equipment sabotage is a time-honored tradition among industrial workers. It was not invented by Earth First!, and it is certainly not limited to Earth First! even in our area. But the target of monkey wrenching was always intended to be the machinery of destruction, not the workers who operate that machinery for \$7/hour. This renunciation of tree spiking is not a retreat, but rather an advance that will allow us to stop fighting the victims and concentrate on the corporations themselves.”¹⁴¹

Granting that Earth First! on the North Coast never actually engaged in tree spiking, Darryl Cherney commented, “I admit it’s a bit unusual to renounce a tactic that you haven’t used to begin with, but we’re tired of being asked to answer for something that we don’t do.”¹⁴²

The renunciation received fairly decent coverage in the local mainstream press, including the *Santa Rosa Press Democrat*, whose coverage of Earth First! and Redwood Summer was most favorable among the

¹⁴¹ This statement was printed in the *Mendocino Commentary*, April 12, 1990; the *Mendocino County Observer*, April 12, 1990; the *Earth First! Journal*, Beltane / May 1, 1990; and the *Country Activist*, June 1990. It was announced beforehand in “Timber Activists ax Tree-Spiking: Nonviolent Protests Set for Summer”, by Mike Geniella, *Santa Rosa Press Democrat*, April 9, 1990. Emphasis added.

¹⁴² “Earth First! Vows to Continue Sabotage”, by David Forster, *Eureka Times-Standard*, April 12, 1990.

¹⁴⁰ “In the Middle of Run Away History: Judi Bari, Earth First! Organizer, Mississippi Summer in the California Redwoods”, interview by Beth Bosk, *New Settler Interview*, issue #49, May 1990.

northwestern California corporate dailies.¹⁴³ Many timber workers and Mendocino County locals cheered the decision and expressed their support for Earth First!.¹⁴⁴ However, the *Eureka Times-Standard*, whose editorial policy was staunchly anti Earth First!, botched the story completely by publishing a headline which suggested the *opposite* of what actually happened, and this caused further tensions in Humboldt County.¹⁴⁵ The *San Francisco Chronicle* was even worse, editorializing favorably of the renunciation, albeit under the extremely inaccurate and uncalled for headline “Eco-Terrorists Abandon Spikes”, which was to suggest that even if Earth First! renounced *all* actions save knitting, they’d *still* be denounced as terrorists.¹⁴⁶ The national Corporate Media was equally atrocious in its coverage, and the worst example was the *New York Times* which called Bari an *advocate* of tree-spiking, in spite of Bari never having been one, even before her public renunciation in Eugene. To make matters worse, in no case did any of the press stories, even the sympathetic examples, mention Bari’s labor activism.¹⁴⁷

Those that renounced tree spiking anticipated the possibility that the announcement would not be universally welcomed by Earth First!ers outside of northwestern California and southern Oregon. Darryl Cherney, who was still the most prominent local Earth First! spokesperson at the time wrote a separate statement intended to clarify the positions of those that had agreed to the renunciation stating, among other things:

“The decision was not irreversible, should the forest situation worsen, although it is hard to fathom how much worse it can get. The decision is not made for all Earth First!ers, and as a non-organization, we are entitled to our individual opinions. We take no responsibility for

any prior spikings; our intent is to actively advocate not spiking trees at this point. This is not a retreat, nor is it an abandonment of monkeywrenching. It is an advance toward joining Northern California woodworkers in the fight to save the planet. Of course it will also take the wind out of the timber industry’s publicity sails.”¹⁴⁸



Image by Lisa Henry

The Corporate Media’s incompetence (or perhaps subterfuge) in handling the story confused matters for Earth First!. As predicted, many were confused by the incomplete versions of the renunciation they heard or read about, and some were outright hostile. Due to his prominence as a spokesperson for Earth First! in general, Judi Bari had contacted Dave Foreman personally and informed him of her decision. Foreman responded with an emphatic letter opposing Bari’s choice, though he still referred to her as a hero who would be remembered 100 years later.¹⁴⁹ The editors of the *Earth First! Journal* saw fit to preface their republication of the renunciation statement with a paragraph long disclaimer which began, “In a move that has left some EF!ers confused or dismayed, several West Coast Earth First! groups have renounced tree

¹⁴³ “Timber Activists ax Tree-Spiking: Nonviolent Protests Set for Summer”, by Mike Geniella, *Santa Rosa Press Democrat*, April 9, 1990; “Environmental Group Says it Won’t Spike Trees”, by Elliot Diringer, *San Francisco Chronicle*, Wednesday, April 11, 1990; “Earth First! Renounces Tree Spiking”, *McClatchy News Services*, republished in the *San Francisco Examiner*, April 13, 1990; “Activists Denounce Spiking”, by Keith Michaud, *Ukiah Daily Journal*, April 11, 1990; and “Activists Call for Nonviolent Protest”, staff report, *Willits News*, April 11, 1990.

¹⁴⁴ Additional Release by Darryl Cherney, *Mendocino Commentary*, April 12, 1990.

¹⁴⁵ “Earth First! Vows to Continue Sabotage”, by David Forster, *Eureka Times-Standard*, April 12, 1990.

¹⁴⁶ “Eco-Terrorists Abandon Spikes”, editorial, *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 16, 1990.

¹⁴⁷ “Earth First! and COINTELPRO”, by Leslie Hemstreet, *Z Magazine*, July / August 1990.

¹⁴⁸ Additional Release by Darryl Cherney, *Mendocino Commentary*, April 12, 1990.

¹⁴⁹ “Review: Dave Foreman’s *Confessions of an Ecowarrior*”, by Judi Bari, *Anderson Valley Advertiser*, April 4, 1991.

spiking,” and even listed a Colorado Earth First!er, Michael Robinson, so that those who wished to hear “a compelling letter in opposition to the...renunciation.”¹⁵⁰ This was typical of Earth First!’s openness, but whether intended or not, Earth First!’s lack of unity on this particular decision gave its critics plenty of ammunition to use against it.

At the same time, Earth First!’s Tree Spiking renunciation made the timber industry kulaks even angrier and louder in their denunciation of the environmentalists than ever before, no doubt because Earth First! *had* stolen their thunder. Speaking for L-P and WECARE, Shep Tucker called it a non-event and declared “(Earth First!) is dealing with semantics...they’re renouncing and not denouncing tree-spiking...They’re still terrorists no matter what they say.”¹⁵¹

TEAM spokesman Gary Gundlach, in a guest editorial in the *Humboldt Beacon and Fortuna Advance* sunk to red baiting, arguing that the tree spiking renunciation was empty and meaningless because Earth First! had “made alliances with the International (sic) Workers of the World who has well known ties with communism.”¹⁵²

Candy Boak spewed forth with her usual venom, regurgitating practically every “unwashed-out-of-town-jobless-hippies-on-drugs” talking point in the book and further opining, “(Earth First! renouncing tree spiking is) like letting everyone in jail out if they said they would never commit another crime.”¹⁵³

Irv Fletcher, President of the Oregon AFL-CIO Labor Federation argued that Earth First! had to do much more than renounce tree spiking, “They’ve got to renounce damage to workers’ equipment and what they’re doing to workers’ lives.”¹⁵⁴

Mark Rey, executive director of the American Forest Resource Alliance in Oregon called the renunciation “suspiciously timed” since it came just three weeks after the infamous *60 Minutes* broadcast.¹⁵⁵

Jim McCauley, speaking on behalf of the Associated Oregon Loggers—another Corporate Timber front group—set new standards in hyperbole,

comparing the renunciation to “the terrorists in Beirut, Lebanon (announcing that) they’re going to stop car bombings, but they’re still going to take hostages,”¹⁵⁶

William W. Alexander, in a letter to the *Ukiah Daily Journal* called the statement “a joke” and also repeated the all too common charge that Earth First! was “a terrorist organization” (even though no Earth First!er had ever been convicted—or even tried—for the crime of terrorism).¹⁵⁷ Michael D Frazier compared the renunciation to the “propaganda broadcasts by Radio Hanoi.”¹⁵⁸ B. J. Bell was even more dismissive and sneering towards Earth First! and environmentalists in particular, denouncing all of them as “hypocrites” since they “live in houses and drive cars” (as if environmentalists want to abolish either).¹⁵⁹

John Campbell dispensed with the renunciation in his usual dramatic fashion. At the invitation of the Eureka Rotary Club, the P-L exec did his best to declare the North Coast Earth First! and IWW spokespeople as blatant liars. For a visual aide as “proof” of his sincerity, he held up a foot-long section of a redwood log with an eight-inch railroad spike driven into it. A handful of the assembled Rotarians gasped.¹⁶⁰ Campbell then explained that this particular spike, along with two others of identical design, had been discovered in Mill B in Scotia two weeks earlier.¹⁶¹ He then invoked hypothetical scenarios closely matching the real experiences of George Alexander in Cloverdale three years earlier. Although he didn’t come out and actually name Earth First!, the implications, as far as the assembled crowd was concerned, were clear, and for good measure, he reminded everyone of Darryl Cherney’s “body-bomb” quote from *60 Minutes*.¹⁶²

There was, of course, no way to prove that Campbell wasn’t lying. There was no easy way to

¹⁵⁰ “Tree Spiking Renounced Behind Redwood Curtain”, staff report, *Earth First! Journal*, Beltane / May 1, 1990.

¹⁵¹ “Activists Denounce Spiking”, by Keith Michaud, *Ukiah Daily Journal*, April 11, 1990.

¹⁵² “EarthFirst! (sic) Followers Say Nothing”, guest editorial by Gary Gundlach, *Humboldt Beacon and Fortuna Advance*, April 19, 1990.

¹⁵³ “Earth First!”, letter to the editor by Candace Boak, *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 16, 1990.

¹⁵⁴ “Timber Spiking to Stop: Announcement Called ‘Non-Event’”, *AP Wire* and staff report, *Ukiah Daily Journal*, April 12, 1990.

¹⁵⁵ Forster, April 12, 1990, op. cit.

¹⁵⁶ “Timber Spiking to Stop: Announcement Called ‘Non-Event’”, *AP Wire* and staff report, *Ukiah Daily Journal*, April 12, 1990.

¹⁵⁷ “Earth First! Exposed”, letter to the editor by William W Alexander, *Ukiah Daily Journal*, April 13, 1990.

¹⁵⁸ “Insincere Propaganda”, letter to the editor by Michael D. Frazier, *Ukiah Daily Journal*, April 16, 1990.

¹⁵⁹ “A Few Definitions”, letter to the editor by B. J. Bell, *Ukiah Daily Journal*, April 18, 1990.

¹⁶⁰ Harris, op. cit., pages 305-07. *Ecodefense* says *nothing* about the use of railroad spikes.

¹⁶¹ “PL Millworkers Discover 3 Spikes”, by Lisa Shaw, *Eureka Times-Standard*, April 24, 1990; “Spikes Found in Old Redwood at Scotia Mill”, by Mike Geniella, *Santa Rosa Press Democrat*, April 25, 1990; “Spikes Found in Scotia Redwood Log”, *Willits News*, April 27, 1990; and “PL Claims Trees Spiked”, *EcoNews*, May 1988.

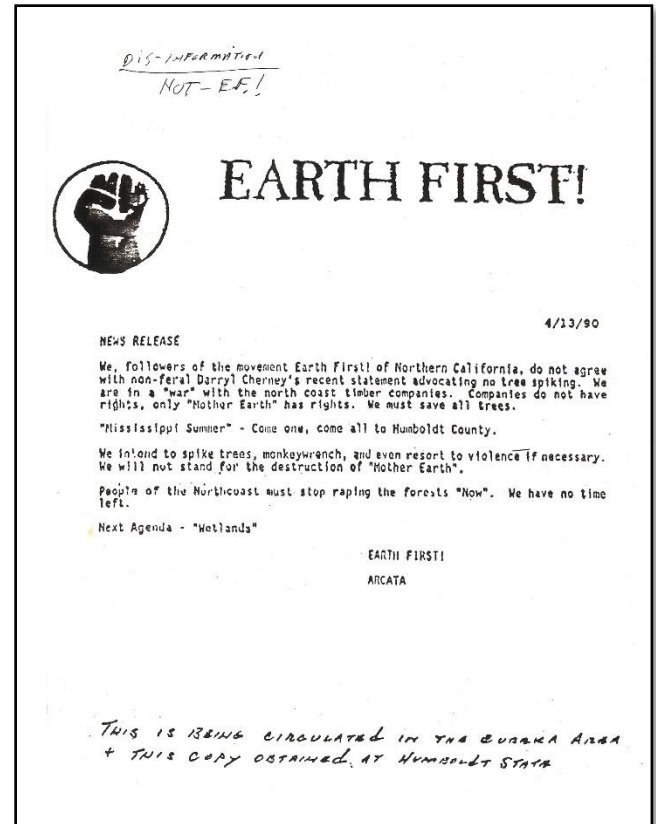
¹⁶² Harris, op. cit., pages 305-07. *Ecodefense* says *nothing* about the use of railroad spikes.

determine when the spikes had been driven into the logs, even if he wasn't. Even if there were, there was no way to prove that it had been done by an Earth Firster, let alone one or more of the supporters of the renunciation. Jeff Ringwald, the company's safety coordinator admitted that it was uncertain where the tree had been cut or how long it had been stored at the mill. He guessed that the spikes "didn't appear to have been in the tree for a long period of time," but by that he meant that the spikes were no more than a few years old, and he further declared, "We're not accusing anyone," which seemed to contradict Campbell's speech to the Rotarians.¹⁶³

Evidently there were others that feared the wind being removed from their sails by the tree spiking renunciation as well. Shortly after the April 11 press conference, some person or persons unknown, referring to themselves as "Arcata Earth First!" published leaflets stating that they disagreed with "non-feral Darryl" and tree spiking renunciation. The fliers described the situation as "an all-out war with the North Coast timber companies." "Come one, come all", said the leaflets, "We intend to spike trees, monkeywrench, and even resort to violence if necessary."¹⁶⁴ Another leaflet entitled "Some Thoughts on Strategy" was anything but, as it rambled on incoherently about sabotage, randomness, and invisibility.¹⁶⁵ The Corporate Press treated the leaflets as genuine, spinning the situation as "infighting within the Redwood Summer Coalition".¹⁶⁶ Not surprisingly the apologists for corporate timber did so as well, such as D.R. Sendak, who not only dismissed the tree spiking renunciation as "kinder gentler terrorism":

"(T)hey now say they will emphasize the destruction, of woods equipment belonging to the local timber companies...While this may or may not come as a surprise to you, Ms. Bari, the majority of the logging done on the North

Coast is by contract loggers and not directly by the large corporations you seem to despise. The monkey wrenching you encourage does not directly hurt the timber companies, but rather the small loggers who have families, monthly mortgage payments, and the desire to make a living in an honest and hardworking manner..."¹⁶⁷



Faux "Earth First!" Leaflet #1

Judi Bari, however had nothing to do with these leaflets, and neither did any other genuine Earth Firster. There was then no such thing as Arcata Earth First! nor had there ever really been an Earth First! chapter based there. The only thing closely resembling such was HSU professor Bill Devall who had, long before the days of the Redwood Action Team and Southern Humboldt Earth First!, listed his contact information in the *Earth First! Journal*.¹⁶⁸ These leaflets were obviously bogus; they spelled Darryl Cherney's name incorrectly as "Daryl" and incorrectly identified Judi Bari's home town.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶³ "Spikes Damage Sawmill Blades", by Mike Geniella, *Santa Rosa Press Democrat*, April 25, 1990. By contrast, Campbell had made no such wild proclamations the previous year, in March of 1989. Then, an unknown perpetrator set off smoke bombs in the P-L sales office in Mill Valley, and an anonymous caller describing themselves as "Smokers for Wilderness" took credit for the incident, but the person or persons responsible were never positively identified, and the incident was more or less forgotten, as detailed in "PL: Follow The Bouncing THPs", by Andy Alm, *EcoNews*, April 1989.

¹⁶⁴ "Fight Over 'Mississippi' Support: Splinter Group at 'War' Against Companies", by Mike Geniella, *Santa Rosa Press Democrat*, April 17, 1990.

¹⁶⁵ "Earth First! Activists Call Fliers Phony", by David Forster, *Eureka Times-Standard*, April 20, 1990.

¹⁶⁶ "Infighting Threatens Environmental Wins", editorial, *Santa Rosa Press Democrat*, April 20, 1990.

¹⁶⁷ Letter to the editor, by D. R. Sendak, *Willits News*, April 15, 1990; *Santa Rosa Press Democrat*, April 23, 1990; *Humboldt Beacon and Fortuna Advance*, April 26, 1990; and *Ukiah Daily Journal*, April 27, 1990.

¹⁶⁸ "Earth First! Activists Call Fliers Phony", by David Forster, *Eureka Times-Standard*, April 20, 1990.

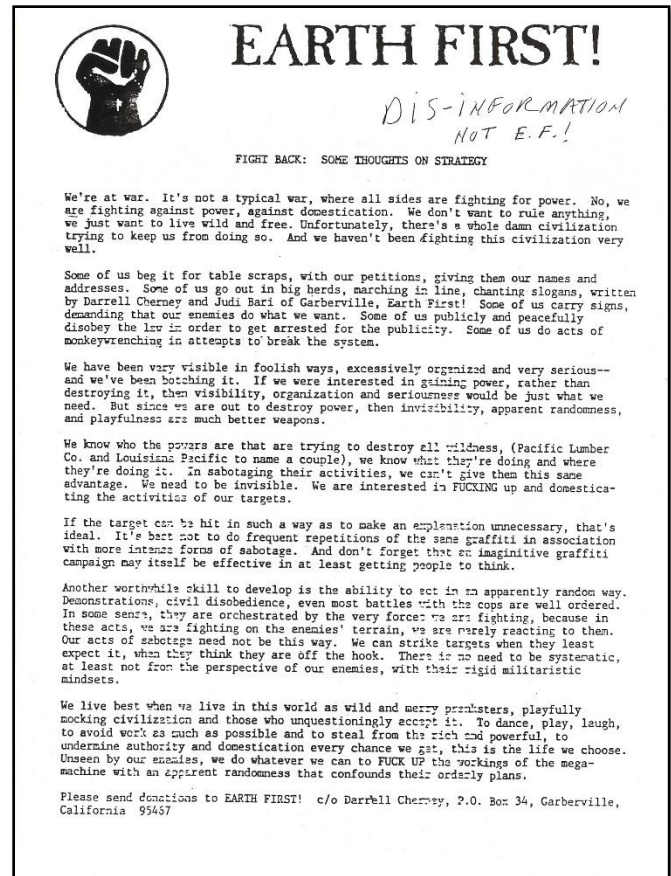
¹⁶⁹ Bari, February 2, 1994, op. cit.

There was little doubt among the members of Earth First! – IWW Local #1 who had been responsible. Bruce Anderson had even gone as far as to publicly identify Candy Boak as the culprit, and indeed this was a logical deduction.¹⁷⁰ She had by now engaged in almost two years of attempting to “monkeywrench the moneywrenchers”, even to the point of publishing false press releases during the previous year’s “Earth First! National Tree Sit Week” (Boak’s forgeries proclaimed “National Tree *Shit* Week.”) However, in this case, Boak was not alone in her efforts. Fellow WECARE and Mothers’ Watch spokeswoman Paula Langanger revealed (later that year to the FBI), that there was a core group of wise use activists who “liked to play little jokes on Earth First!”, including publishing fake press releases. She even named local Corporate Timber apologist Dave Curzon as the author of these particular forgeries.¹⁷¹

Yet, the three timber corporations not only treated them as genuine, they actually facilitated their dissemination. Louisiana Pacific went as far as to distribute the fake press releases to their workers at the Samoa pulp mill in a mandatory meeting. There, plant manager Fred Martin encouraged the employees to intimidate environmentalists by attending their meetings “with rolled up sleeves, wearing work boots and hard hats,” according to a union grievance filed against the company for the meeting by Pulp and Paper Workers Local 49.¹⁷² In fact, these leaflets had been distributed to their sawmills all over the U.S. Shep Tucker, however, lied to the press declaring that the company suspected, “a third party, perhaps a splinter group”, knowing full well who had distributed them.¹⁷³

It turns out, the bogus leaflets and press releases had been circulated by Hill & Knowlton as part of their efforts to discredit *Forests Forever* and anything remotely associated with it.¹⁷⁴ Their fraudulent nature was detectable even by those not intimately familiar with these details, including *San Francisco Examiner* columnist Rob Morse who declared, “Things are getting pretty weird up there...Not only are the trees being clearcut, some dirty trickster is turning them into fake press releases,” and revealed that Hill &

Knowlton had sent them as part of a packet at the behest of Pacific Lumber.¹⁷⁵ This was not just an isolated incident, however. In Olympia, Washington, a major coalition involving Earth First! and the Pulp and Paper Millworkers Union against raw log exports had been undermined when bogus “minutes,” of an environmentalist meeting that never actually took place, which mentioned “sabotage” were circulated.¹⁷⁶ If anyone was engaging in monkeywrenching, it was not Earth First!, but Corporate Timber.



Faux “Earth First” Leaflet #2

¹⁷⁰ “Here and There in Mendocino County”, by Bruce Anderson, *Ander-son Valley Advertiser*, April 25, 1990.

¹⁷¹ Bari, February 2, 1994, op. cit.

¹⁷² Bari, February 2, 1994, op. cit.

¹⁷³ “Threats to Activist Probed”, by Mike Geniella, *Santa Rosa Press Democrat*, April 21, 1990.

¹⁷⁴ “The Judi Bari Bombing Revisited: Big Timber, Public Relations, and the FBI”, by Nicholas Wilson, *Albion Monitor*, May 28, 1999.

¹⁷⁵ Column by Rob Morse, *San Francisco Examiner*, April 25, 1990.

¹⁷⁶ “Old Growth vs. Old Mindsets”, by Mitch Freedman, *Earth First! Journal*, Beltane / May 1, 1989.



Image by "M"

The environmentalists did not let up for a second in exposing the claim that they were anti-jobs as a lie. In response to Louisiana-Pacific's resumption of aerial Garlon spraying over 1,000 acres in the woods near the Humboldt County communities of Trinidad, Westhaven, and Fieldbrook, a group of protesters locked down to an L-P security gate on Channel Road northeast of Eureka on April 11. Several of them were arrested. The next day, several dozen activists, including Earth Firster Larry Evans, organized yet another protest in Samoa against the corporation demanding an end to the practice. The demonstrators struck a decidedly pro-worker tone by chanting slogans like, "Employ people, not poison!" These calls echoed IWA Local 4-98 representative Tim Skaggs's call for "manual release" five years previously, but L-P was not budging. Shep Tucker *again* dismissed the labor intensive practice as being "too costly" (on the order of three to five times as expensive as chemical intensive brush removal). Then, he resorted to scare tactics, claiming that the company had received anonymous bomb threats in connection with the protests, but offered no substantive proof of these.¹⁷⁷

The next day, the *Eureka Times-Standard* reported that Pacific Lumber's sales and operating gains

in 1989 had been stronger than ever. The company's end-of-year financial report to the Securities and Exchange Commission revealed that P-L reported operating income in excess of \$59.8 million for the year ending December 31, in comparison to the previous two year's totals (both of which had been records) of \$53.7 million in 1988 and \$50.9 million in 1987. Their lumber and log sales were likewise unprecedentedly bountiful, exceeding \$171 million in 1989 as opposed to the previous years' record totals of \$160.8 million in 1988 and \$150.8 million in 1987. These figures were dampened somewhat by reports of a \$7.6 million net loss, including \$24.2 million in debt payments. The report also stated, very candidly, that P-L's management believed that the pending challenges to the company's timber harvesting plans were "unlikely to have a material adverse effect on the company's financial condition." Whether P-L's statement was an accurate assessment of the company's predictions or merely a feel-good pronouncement intended to smooth-talk Maxxam's shareholders didn't alter the fact that it was substantially inconsistent from its claims that "unwashed-out-of-town-jobless-hippies-on-drugs" were going to destroy the North Coast's economy.¹⁷⁸

Revelation such as these only increased support for Redwood Summer. On Saturday, April 21, 1990, students at Lower Lake High School in Ukiah took a page out of Earth First!'s playbook and hung a banner across Perkins Street, one of the main thoroughfares in the heart of town, which read "L-P = LOGGER POVERTY", a slogan which was later made into a bumper sticker, which was sold fairly widely throughout the county. That same day, over 100 demonstrators in Los Angeles, organized by Earth First! and the IWW, held a protest at Maxxam's regional office there.¹⁷⁹ Meanwhile, the 400 member strong AWPPW union local based in Toledo, Ohio, who had been on strike against Georgia Pacific since March 2—in coordination with other unions, including the Teamsters—announced that they would be calling for a nationwide boycott of all of the company's products, including redwood lumber, starting on the Pacific Coast.¹⁸⁰ The potential for an environmentalist and worker alliance grew larger by the day in spite of Corporate Timber's subterfuge.

¹⁷⁸ "P-L Sales, Income Gains in 1989 Strongest in Years, Report Says", by Charles Winkler, *Eureka Times-Standard*, April 13, 1990.

¹⁷⁹ "Los Angeles EF! Enjoys a Redwood Summer", by Peter Bralver, *Earth First! Journal*, Samhain / September 22, 1990.

¹⁸⁰ "Georgia-Pacific Strikers Call for National Boycott", UPI Wire, *Eureka Times-Standard*, April 22, 1990.

¹⁷⁷ "Dozens Rally at L-P Pulp Mill to Protest Herbicide Spraying," by David Forester, *Eureka Times-Standard*, April 13, 1990.

Yet, it seemed that the more Earth First! proclaimed its commitment to nonviolence and building bridges with the timber workers, the more violent and dogmatic the rhetoric became from Corporate Timber and its front groups, to the point where it wasn't entirely clear if the latter would stop at mere rhetoric. As if the Yellow Ribbon Coalition, WECARE, TEAM, and Mothers Watch weren't rabidly right wing enough, a new faction joined the fray from the Mojave Desert region of southeastern California: the *Sahara Club*, founded by two southern California dirt bikers, Louis "Phantom Duck" McKey and Rick "Super Hunky" Siemen.¹⁸¹

McKey and Siemen had been angered when their annual Barstow to Las Vegas dirt bike race had been prohibited, because such activity devastated fragile desert ecosystems. The two bitterly opposed the new restrictions, and their newly founded group ostensibly organized to keep public lands open to all terrain vehicles (ATVs), certainly an issue that pitted them against just about all environmental organizations, but they also had more sinister aims in mind.¹⁸² To say that the pair disdained environmentalists was the height of understatement. McKey and Siemen had chosen the organization's name to deliberately thumb their nose at the *Sierra Club*, whom both founders despised. Their opinion of Greenpeace was no less charitable, once referring to them as "a bunch of lying, evil, cretinous, scum-sucking, larcenous, vile, money-grubbing bastards."¹⁸³ Siemen was not exactly just some random nobody either; he was the senior editor of *Dirt Bike Magazine*.¹⁸⁴

The Sahara Club was anything but ethical or polite. Indeed, they were unapologetically violent.¹⁸⁵ The Sahara Club *was* composed mainly of ATV enthusiasts, but it also had actual terroristic tendencies, and they included distributing a completely fake "Earth First! Terrorism Manual" which supposedly described how to make bombs. They claimed that they had acquired the manual from Earth First! somehow, and were offering it to their readers at a price of \$5.¹⁸⁶ Of course, there was no such manual;

the closest thing to it was Ecodefense, and that unequivocally warned *against* use of *any* explosives.¹⁸⁷ Additionally, the April 1990 edition of the *Sahara Club Newsletter* republished a list of the entire Earth First! directory from the Mabon / March 21, 1990 edition of the *Earth First! Journal*, with an introduction which read, "Here is the latest up to the minute data on where the scum are and how to reach them. In many cases, they just have a PO Box listed, but with a little detective work, we're sure you can track them down and perhaps 'reason' with them about the error of their ways."¹⁸⁸ It was not at all difficult to infer exactly what the Sahara Club meant by that statement, because that same issue also contained the following quotation:

"The Sahara Club needs about a dozen volunteers to form a special division—the Sahara Clubbers! All volunteers should weigh about 200 pounds and have a bad attitude. Big, tall, ugly desert riders preferred... Naturally the 'Clubbers' will be expected to honor all laws, but if some Earth First! scum resist a citizen's arrest in the process, it might be necessary to subdue them prior to turning them over to the authorities."¹⁸⁹

It would be easy to dismiss this as simply the acts of loose cannons on the far right, but the Sahara Club was anything but. They worked closely with Candy Boak and agreed to jointly host a workshop on how to further intimidate and harass Earth First!.¹⁹⁰ Boak's Mothers' Watch group shared members with WECARE which counted Shep Tucker among its spokespeople. The connections to Corporate Timber may have been tenuous on paper, but in reality it was no difficult task to identify the men behind the Redwood Curtain.

These coalitions weren't just deadly serious, they were also seriously deadly. Candy Boak continued to telephone Judi Bari and issue veiled threats, but these were never specific. During the third week in April, however, a leaflet consisting of a Xeroxed photograph of Judi Bari, taken from the April 4 Mendocino County Board of Supervisors' meeting with a rifle scope and crosshairs centered on her face, was found taped to the glass door of the MEC. Stapled to

¹⁸¹ "Sahara Club Attacks EF!", *Earth First! Journal*, Litha / June 21, 1990.

¹⁸² Ibid.

¹⁸³ Deal, 1993, op. cit., pages 87-88.

¹⁸⁴ "Here and There in Mendocino County", by Bruce Anderson, *Anderson Valley Advertiser*, September 26, 1990.

¹⁸⁵ Deal, 1993, op. cit., pages 87-88.

¹⁸⁶ Bari, February 2, 1994, op. cit.

¹⁸⁷ "Community Under Siege", by Judi Bari, *Anderson Valley Advertiser*, May 8, 1991.

¹⁸⁸ "Sahara Club Attacks EF!", *Earth First! Journal*, Litha / June 21, 1990.

¹⁸⁹ "The Palco Papers", by Judi Bari, *Anderson Valley Advertiser*, March 27, 1991.

¹⁹⁰ Bari, February 2, 1994, op. cit.

the flyer was a yellow ribbon. These flyers eerily matched similar threats issued during the 1960s against leftist activists and organizers by the right wing paramilitary organization known as “the Minute Men”, which had links to COINTELPRO.¹⁹¹

This was one of several that were received by Bari, Cherney, and Greg King all within a scope of a few weeks. Bari also received a postcard, postmarked April 10, typed on a manual typewriter and sent to the MEC reading simply, “Judi Bari: get out andgo (sic) bac k (sic) to where you came from...we know every thing (sic)...YOU WON’T GET A SECOND WARNING.”¹⁹²

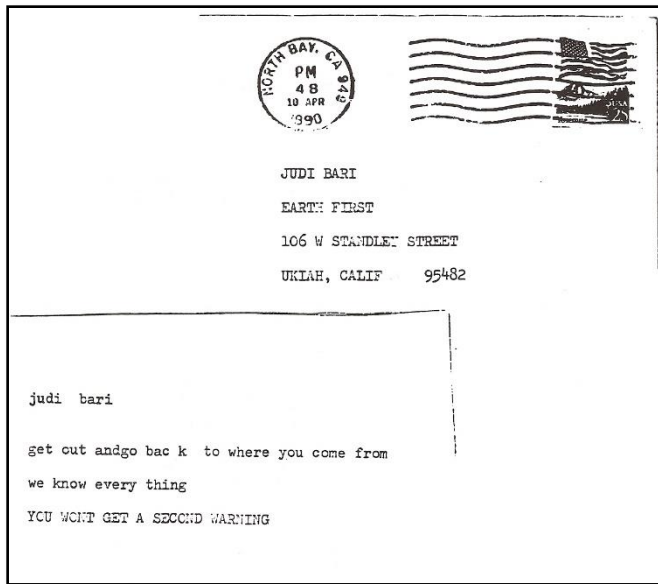


Image of the aforementioned death threat

Judi Bari, Betty Ball, Pam Davis, and Michelle Miller¹⁹³ also received a vile, homophobic, and hateful letter which read as follows:

EARTH FIRST! LESBIAN:

Dear Judi,

It has come to our attention that you are an Earth First! lesbian whose favorite pastime is to eat box lunches in pajamas.

Judi, this kind of behavior is to be expected of lesbians like you, since we have been observing Earth First! freaks like you for some time. Not on-

ly have we been watching you Judi, but we also know and have distributed your phone number to every organized hate group that could possibly have hostile tendencies toward ilk of your kind. No longer can sleazy dikes like you operate with impunity through the guise of anonymity. We know who you are, where you live, and continue to home [sic] in on you...but you don't know who we are. How does it feel, eco-freak, to have the tables turned?

We've also got your “clandestine” publications which detail how to indiscriminately hurt, maim, and kill people who are involved in legitimate, legal activities. Rest assured, Judi, that we shall not be indiscriminate in our actions against the spineless, invertebrate members of Earth First! To the contrary, we will specifically hunt down each and every member like the lesbians you really are.

—Sincerely,
Committee For The Death of Earth First!,
Brought to you by Fed Up Americans for Common Sense.¹⁹⁴

Judi Ball
106 West Standley
Ukiah, CA 95470

Dear Judi,

It has come to our attention that you are an Earth First! lesbian whose favorite pastime is to eat box lunches in pajamas.

Judi, this kind of behavior is to be expected of lesbians like you, since we have been observing Earth First! freaks like you for some time. Not only have we been watching you Judi, but we also know and have distributed your phone number [redacted] to every organized hate group that could possibly have hostile tendencies toward ilk of your kind. No longer can sleazy dikes like you operate with impunity through the guise of anonymity. We know who you are, where you live, and continue to home in on you...but you don't know who we are. How does it feel, eco-freak, to have the tables turned?

We've also got your “clandestine” publications which detail how to indiscriminately hurt, maim, and kill people who are involved in legitimate, legal activities. Rest assured, Judi, that we shall not be indiscriminate in our actions against the spineless, invertebrate members of Earth First!. To the contrary, we will specifically hunt down each and every member like the lesbians you really are.

Sincerely,

Committee For The Death of Earth First!
Brought to you by Fed Up Americans for Common Sense

Image of the leaflet described immediately above.

¹⁹¹ “Here and There in Mendocino County”, by Bruce Anderson, *Anderson Valley Advertiser*, April 25, 1990.

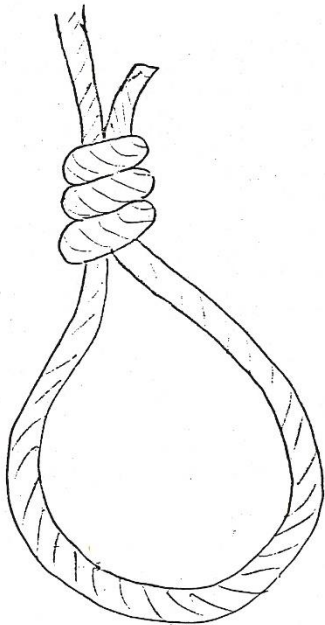
¹⁹² Bari, February 2, 1994, op. cit.

¹⁹³ “Earth First! and COINTELPRO”, by Leslie Hemstreet, *Z Magazine*, July / August 1990.

¹⁹⁴ Author unknown; reprinted in the *Anderson Valley Advertiser*, May 30, 1990 for reference.

Darryl Cherney, Bill Devall, Larry Evans, Greg King, and Daniel Barron received similarly themed letters, denouncing them as “Earth First! felatio experts who suck dicks in outhouses”, with the second and third paragraphs nearly identical to the letters sent to the women (except with the word “homo” in place of “lesbian”). An additional paragraph read, “Another thing that is bothersome, is that if you were truly interested in conservation one would think you would curtail butt slamming your buddy...and spreading AIDS, thereby conserving the lives of the rest of the normal population. Think about it dick breath.”¹⁹⁵ These particular threats bore postmarks from San Diego, making the Sahara Club a likely suspect of their source, but it would be almost impossible to prove it.¹⁹⁶ The Sahara Club was violent and rabidly homophobic, but there were no shortage of other possible sources as well.

*Humboldt & Mendocino
County's
Welcome's Dirt First to A
Mississippi Summer*



Anonymous anti Earth First! leaflet

All of the death threats bore an eerie resemblance to those issued against other leftist organizations in the past, many of which were later connected to COINTELPRO. For example, on April 25, 1990, the same group of Earth First!ers received a letter purportedly from a bunch of high school students calling themselves the “Tasmanian Teens” that included a page and a half of personal attacks and concluded with a wish that a logger would “just run you over if you get in their way,” and warned them threateningly that “accidents happen.”¹⁹⁷ That wasn’t all. Another anonymous leaflet, featuring a hand drawn hangman’s noose simply titled “Humboldt & Mendocino County’s (sic) Welcomes Dirt First to A Mississippi Summer.” Considering that the hangman’s noose was often used by the Ku Klux Klan and other southern based white supremacists to lynch blacks, the implications of the threat were all too chilling.¹⁹⁸

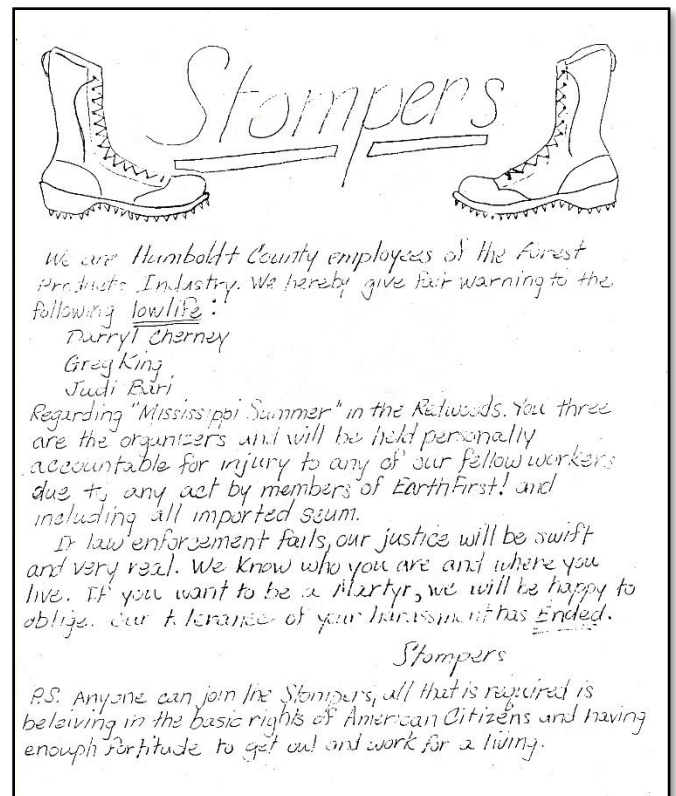


Image of the infamous “Stompers” letter

For the most part, the source of these threats couldn’t be identified, but there were exceptions. At least one group of local thugs known as the “Stompers” (who had in part been inspired by the joint workshop organized by Candace Boak and the Sahara Club

¹⁹⁵ Hemstreet, op. cit.

¹⁹⁶ “Bomb Injured Activists Arrested”, by Boni Brewer, *Contra Costa Times*, May 26, 1990.

¹⁹⁷ Hemstreet, op. cit.

¹⁹⁸ “Terrorist Strikes Earth First!”, by Alexander Cockburn, *Anderson Valley Advertiser*, May 30, 1990. The image is featured in this publication as well.

and would spend much of the summer terrorizing the Redwood Summer coalition) also sent threatening letters to various Earth First! and/or IWW organizers, such as the following:

We are Humboldt County employees of the Forest Products Industry. We hereby give fair warning to the following:

Darryl Cherney
Greg King
Judi Bari

Regarding "Mississippi Summer" in the Redwoods.

You three are the organizers and will be held personally accountable for injury to any of our fellow workers due to any act by members of Earth First! and including all important scum.

If law enforcement fails, our justice will be swift and very real. We know who you are and where you live. If you want to be a Martyr (sic), we will be happy to oblige. Our tolerance of your harassment has *ended*.¹⁹⁹

Greg King took the death threats in stride. Even before the FBI dragnet had entrapped Dave Foreman, Peg Millett, and the others the previous year, he was convinced that he and his comrades were under surveillance. It was the disinformation and the media's willingness to swallow it that bothered him most.²⁰⁰

Meanwhile, before the tree spiking renunciation, Darryl Cherney had never received a death threat. By the end of April he had received *thirty-six*, and they just kept coming. Cherney forwarded copies of each to the Humboldt County Sheriff's Department. After sending in a copy of the "Stompers" letter, Cherney called to ask them, in their opinion, if he and his comrades were in any danger. The sergeant who answered agreed that they were and even went as far as to respond that the activists would be lucky if all they received were a sound beating. Cherney then asked what the Humboldt County Sheriffs intended to do about it, to which the latter responded, "we'll fill out a report." Stunned, Cherney inquired, "That's

all?" The sergeant answered in the affirmative.²⁰¹ Evidently, Cherney reasoned, the Humboldt County sheriffs didn't like Earth First! anymore than the timber industry did.²⁰² Cherney then contacted the Eureka office of the FBI who told him that they didn't have jurisdiction.²⁰³



Anonymous "Minuteman" style death threat received by Bari.

Bari had received death threats before in conjunction with her past labor activities, but even these hadn't been *this* serious.²⁰⁴ Bari had contacted Dave Foreman and Foreman recalls that his fellow activist had been "very frightened" about them.²⁰⁵ In a separate phone conversation with IWW organizer Gary Cox, Bari recalled Cox's warning about retaliation and asked him if she should take the death threats seriously. Cox responded by telling her that he didn't think that the makers of the death threats or even the timber industry would go *that far*.²⁰⁶ Nevertheless, Judi

²⁰¹ Harris, op. cit., page 315-16.

²⁰² Hemstreet, op. cit.

²⁰³ Harris, op. cit., page 315-16.

²⁰⁴ "An Interview With Redwood Summer Strategist and EF! Musician Darryl Cherney", by Sharon Seidenstein, *Ecology Center Newsletter*, October 1990.

²⁰⁵ "Earth First! Friends Insist Victims Can't Be Suspects", by Eric Brazil and Jane Kay, *San Francisco Examiner*, May 25, 1990.

²⁰⁶ Interview with Gary Cox, September 25, 2009. In retrospect, Cox regrets having said this, wishing *he* had taken the death threats more seriously, even though he was far removed from the action.

¹⁹⁹ "Macho Men Defend Basic Rights", author unknown, reprinted in the *Anderson Valley Advertiser*, May 30, 1990 for reference; emphasis in the original.

²⁰⁰ Harris, op. cit., page 315-16.

Bari brought them to the attention of the Mendocino County Sheriff's department and Ukiah Police, but neither took any action. She reported that Lieutenant Saiterwhite responded dismissively and unsympathetically, and said to her, "We don't have the manpower. If you show up dead, we'll investigate." The Ukiah police later claimed that they put the case on hold because Bari had refused to show them the evidence²⁰⁷, which is highly unlikely considering that she shared them with the press.²⁰⁸ In fact, Bari had refused to surrender the *originals*, which Ukiah Police Chief Fred Kepplinger claimed hamstrung the investigation, because it prevented them from obtaining evidence from fingerprints. Bari's refusal was no doubt motivated by her previous attempts to seek justice for the incidents in Philo and Whitehorn which had been ignored.²⁰⁹

Indeed, in spite of all of the denunciations by the powers that be of the comparison between Redwood Summer and the original Mississippi Freedom Summer, the atmosphere on the North Coast was beginning to resemble Mississippi all too closely.

²⁰⁷ "Pipe Bomb Blast: 2 Earth First! People Injured; Car Destroyed – Injured Activists are Organizers of Summerlong Protests", by Judy Ronnigen and Paul Grabowicz, *Oakland Tribune*, May 25, 1990.

²⁰⁸ Bari, February 2, 1994, op. cit.

²⁰⁹ "Bari Had Started Laughing Off Death Threats", by Keith Michaud, *Ukiah Daily Journal*, May 25, 1990.