

Chapter 6 : If Somebody Kills Themselves, Just Blame it on Earth First!



"I was the perfect victim ... I was nobody."

—George Alexander, 1992.

*Haul it to the sawmill, Got to make a buck,
Your blades are worn and dangerous, Better trust your luck,
Don't stop for the workers' safety, Never fear the worst,
'Cause if somebody kills themselves, Just blame it on Earth First!,
L-P...*

—Lyrics excerpted from *L-P*, by Judi Bari, 1990.

"Anybody who ever advocated tree spiking of course has to rethink their position."

—Darryl Cherney, June 1987.¹

¹ "Tree Spiking Splinters All in Timber Wars", by Eric Brazil, *San Francisco Examiner*, June 21, 1987.

Earth First! received much negative press for its advocacy of biocentrism, the notion that all species (including humans) were intrinsically valuable. Their slogan “No Compromise in Defense of Mother Earth!” was forceful and militant, and given the misanthropic leanings of some of its cofounders, it was often taken to mean that they valued the lives of nonhuman species above humans—even if it meant the suffering or death of the latter—which wasn’t actually the case. The situation was complicated further by Earth First!’s advocacy of monkeywrenching: industrial “ecotage” which included everything from deflagging roads to putting sugar in the fuel tanks of earth moving and/or logging equipment. Earth First! cofounder Dave Foreman described monkeywrenching thusly:

“It is resistance to insanity that is encapsulated in Monkeywrenching... (it) fits in with the bio-regional concept. You go back to a place and you peacefully re-inhabit it. You learn about it. You become a part of the place. You develop an informal and alternative political and social structure that is somehow apart from the system... it’s also a means of self-empowerment, of finding alternative means of relating to other people, and other life forms... there is a fundamental difference between ecodefense resistance and classic revolutionary or terrorist behavior.”²

Such a description, while informative, was hardly likely to silence critics on the right. The most controversial of these controversial tactics by far, was Earth First!’s advocacy of “tree spiking”, the act of driving large nails into standing trees in order to deter timber sales.³ As described by Dave Foreman in *Ecodefense*:

“Tree-spiking is an extremely effective method of deterring timber sales, which seems to be becoming more and more popular. If enough trees are spiked to roadless areas, eventually the corporate thugs in the timber company boardrooms, along with their corporate lackeys who wear the uniform of the Forest Service, will realize that timber sales in wild areas are going to be prohibitively expensive.”⁴

There was much confusion over the origins of tree spiking. It is, in fact, a very old tactic, predating Earth First! by at least a half century. Indeed, the IWW, itself, was credited with inventing it—and many of its contemporary members accept this as historical fact⁵—although truthfully, the notion that the IWW used tree spiking was a scare story concocted by the employing class to discredit the IWW in its fight for the eight-hour day in 1917.⁶ Logging employees sometimes did spike trees in many locations, during the early days of the IWA, including the North Coast, but there is no proof that the tactic was ever actually used or even advocated by the IWW.⁷ This knowledge escaped some Earth First!ers who held to their own theories on its origins. Dave Foreman believed that environmentally conscious loggers devised the tactic in 1983 to protest clearcutting and the destruction of Elk habitat.⁸ Fellow Earth First!er and Sea-Shepherd Society founder “Captain” Paul Watson claimed to have invented tree spiking *himself*, but either this was a statement made in ignorance or an outright fabrication.⁹ In all likelihood the origins of tree spiking predate the twentieth century, but nobody for sure knows by how much.

The first known *Earth First!* tree-spiking happened in the Siskiyou Mountains of Oregon in 1983, on the Woodrat timber sale on Bureau of Land Management (BLM) land. Notice was given of the spiking, and some of the trees were marked with yellow ribbons to make them easy to locate and verify. In 1985, in southern Oregon, as part of Earth First!’s campaign to save Cathedral Forest in the Middle Santiam Wilderness—which had already seen road blockades, occupations of sites scheduled to be dynamited (where some of the Earth First!ers actually sat on the charges), and the first ever “tree sits”—Earth First!

⁵ For example, Judi Bari believed this to be the case, as she states in “Judi Bari Answers Rob Anderson”, by Judi Bari, *Anderson Valley Advertiser*, Sept. 13, 1989 and “A Lesson for Environmentalists: The Earth First! Split, Part 1”, and “Part 2” by Russell Norvell – *Anderson Valley Advertiser*, Nov. 7 and 14 (respectively), 1990. See also, Foner, Philip S. *Volume VII: Labor and World War I 1914-1918*, New York, NY, International Publishers, 1987, Chapter 12, *The IWW in Lumber*, pp.246-63.

⁶ Chaplin, Ralph, *Wobbly: The Rough and Tumble Story of an American Radical*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948, pages 206-7.

⁷ “Why Were Trees Spiked?”, by Otter G’Zell, *Country Activist*, June 1987.

⁸ “Tree Sabotage Claims its First Bloody Victim”, by Dale Champion, *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 15, 1987. The author misidentifies the mill worker as “George Anderson”.

⁹ “In Defense of Tree-Spiking”, by Captain Paul Watson, *Earth First! Journal*, Mabon / September 22, 1990.

² “Tree Perching, Part 2”, Jane Cope Interviewed by Beth Bosk, *New Settler Interview*, Issue #26, November 1987.

³ Foreman, Dave and “Bill Haywood” editors; forward! [sic] by Edward Abbey, *Ecodefense: a Field Guide to Monkeywrenching*; (third edition), Chico, CA, Abzug Press, 1993, pp. 17-50

⁴ Foreman and Haywood, op. cit.

co-founder, Mike Roselle, sneaked into one stand of this forest and spiked several trees there. He then sent a letter announcing the spiking to the timber company awarded the cut signed “the Bonnie Abzug Feminist Garden Party” in reference to the heroine of The Monkeywrench Gang. The incident received much fanfare, but in spite of it, the spiking was ineffective, because the trees were cut (which Mike Roselle later admitted). Worse still, the tactic backfired, because the local press used it to discredit Earth First!, and Mary Beth Nearing, until then a dedicated Earth First!er, began distancing herself from the movement, as a result of the backlash.¹⁰

Over the next two years, tree-spiking took place primarily in Oregon and Washington, but also in Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Illinois, Kentucky, Maine, Montana, New Jersey, New Mexico, and British Columbia. Earth First! defended the tactic proudly, but in almost every case, tree spiking didn’t actually work. Usually the Forest Service or timber company responded by dispatching workers with metal detectors and—turning the tables on Earth First!—they would remove the spikes in a media circus. The tactic wasn’t very effective at driving up the price of timber sales either, because—since most spiking occurred on publically owned lands—it was the US Forest Service, and by extension the taxpayers—who bore the brunt of the costs, not the timber companies. Even in the case of spiking on private lands, the economic argument in defense of tree spiking failed, because the price of lumber was variable, and thusly, an increase in production costs usually caused no appreciable drain on profits.¹¹

Earth First!ers who advocated tree spiking claimed that it was not unsafe. The section on tree spiking in Ecodefense urges would-be spikers to take every precaution *against* careless acts that could potentially injure loggers or millworkers. Foreman, et. al. recommended against one type of tree spiking where the spiker aims for the base of the trees which is where the sawyer usually makes their cut, because of “the possibility, *however remote* the sawyer might be injured, either by the kickback of the saw striking the nail, or by the chain should it break when striking the spike.”¹² They also urged that spikers “(issue) a blanket warning after marking a few trees for demonstration purposes (with a spray painted white ‘S’), and

spiking every tree in the potential logging area,” presumably because widespread spiking mitigated the potential risk associated with an isolated tree spike discovered inadvertently by a logger or mill worker.¹³ Yet, most of the incidents of tree spiking, in Oregon in particular, were primarily angering timber workers, and by no means were they causing any deterrent to logging, and that was partly due to the employers’ willingness to sacrifice their *mill employees’* safety to the sake of making a profit.¹⁴

Should a spiked tree make it all the way to the mill before being discovered, an affected log (could) literally bring operations to a screeching halt, at least until a new blade (could) be put into service.” Foreman, et. al. cavalierly assumed that no worker would be injured by this, because “in large mills, the blades are either operated from a control booth some distance from the actual cutting, or are protected by a Plexiglas shield.”¹⁵ Foreman, however, admitted in 1987 to the *Christian Science Monitor*, that he had never actually seen the inside of a sawmill, and it went without saying that employers often cut corners in matters of safety (especially in nonunion mills). In most cases, the Plexiglas guards weren’t even used, and when they were, they were incapable of blocking all shrapnel that resulted from a sawblade hitting a spike, and in any case, workers were often forced to make adjustments to the machinery, while it was in operation, even though technically they were required to stay behind the glass shield.¹⁶

The primary motivator behind the timber industry’s lack of regard for its workers’ safety was profit, but they had other considerations in mind as well. Oregon millworker Gene Lawhorn once declared, “The timber industry doesn’t give a damn about the safety of its workers. They will knowingly run a spiked tree in there so they can point their finger at the environmental activists and say, ‘See, not only are they trying to take your jobs, they’re also trying to kill you.’”¹⁷ In one particular instance, at a Boise-Cascade sale in the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest, some spikes were missed by the metal detectors and those trees made it to the mill. There, the spiked trees damaged the milling equipment, breaking teeth off of several sawblades—which, in turn, car-

¹³ Foreman and Haywood, op. cit., page 27.

¹⁴ Bari, March 8, 1993, op. cit.

¹⁵ Foreman and Haywood, op. cit., page 18.

¹⁶ Bari, March 8, 1993, op. cit.

¹⁷ “Earth First! and COINTELPRO”, by Leslie Hemstreet, *Z Magazine*, July / August 1990.

¹⁰ “The Secret History of Tree Spiking, Part II”, by Judi Bari, *Anderson Valley Advertiser*, March 8, 1993 and *Earth First! Journal*, Brigid / February 2, 1995.

¹¹ Bari, March 8, 1993, op. cit.

¹² Foreman and Haywood, op. cit., page 18; emphasis added.

omed across the mill. Though no workers were injured, they were terrified and angered. Naturally they directed the blame at Earth First! (and no doubt, that was encouraged by their employers).¹⁸ Given the negative publicity generated by tree spiking towards Earth First!, (which was encouraged by the Corporate Timber barons) it was not at all inconceivable that eventually a timber company might be crass and unscrupulous enough to use an injury of one of their own mill workers as a further P.R. weapon against Earth First.

Sure enough, on Friday, May 8, 1987, in the Louisiana-Pacific sawmill in Cloverdale, sawmill worker George Alexander was nearly decapitated when a tree spike shattered his sawblade. Alexander was but 23 at the time and recently married. He was a lifetime resident of Mendocino County and the son of a Willits logger. His wife, Laurie, was three months pregnant on that fateful day. Alexander was the off-bearer, whose job it was to perform the first rough cut on freshly cut logs, using an enormous band saw, to produce slices of wood that would in turn be sectioned into standard lengths and planed for commercial lumber. It was one of the most dangerous jobs in the mill. Alexander's saw was a behemoth, sized for old growth logs, at 52 feet in diameter and 10 inches thick made of high tensile steel. If that blade should hit a hard knot or metal debris, the saw teeth were prone to breakage.¹⁹ Such debris was actually quite common—not so much from tree spikes, though a few of those were likely to be left over from the 1940s during the IWA union loggers' struggles with the employers then—from old nails, barbed wire fence fragments, insulators, even chocker chains from previous logging efforts, and the like that were overgrown as trees aged.²⁰

Alexander was aware of the dangers of his job, but he was skilled in his profession and had an intuitive sense of the machinery, including every potential sound the saw might make. He was not, however, a company man. In fact, Alexander was rather disdainful of L-P and corporate logging in general; he saw L-P as an uncaring, greedy master, but more than that he opposed clearcutting.²¹ Alexander said of L-P, (years later), "we're not even people to them...all they care about is production." Specifically, he protested

L-P's lax safety standards in the mill, and butted heads with dayshift foreman Dick Edwards, who was very much aligned with L-P's corporate ethic. In the weeks leading up to the accident, conditions in the mill and the equipment had deteriorated beyond the company's usually mediocre practices. Alexander's band saw blade wobbled when it operated and cracks began to appear in it revealing metal fatigue. Edwards kept insisting that new blades were on order, but not yet available.²² To make matters worse, the mill possessed metal detectors, but weren't using them, despite their use being the company's professed standard practice.²³ On top of that, L-P had already removed one spike from the log, but had sent it to the mill anyway.²⁴ On the day of the accident, Alexander almost elected to stay home from work.²⁵ As fate would have it, had he done so, his story—and perhaps history—would have turned out differently, because the replacement saw blades arrived the very next day.²⁶

The trees being milled on the day of the incident had come from an especially controversial L-P cut on Cameron Road near the rural coastal southwestern Mendocino County hamlet of Elk. They had been cut as early as February, according to Mendocino County sheriff's investigator Roy Gourley.²⁷ Residents and workers alike had condemned the cut, complaining about L-P's liquidation of the forest as well as threatening their local water supply.²⁸ Loggers Kenneth and Walter Smith described the cut as shameful even by L-P's standards (though both of them were opposed to tree spiking),²⁹ and Mark Hughs, who lived on Cameron Road stated,

"We're really shocked. I've lived here 17 years and never seen anything like it. I drive down the road and hardly recognize it. I can see clear to Covelo through the clear cuts and skid roads. Loggers usually leave a buffer stand along the

¹⁸ Bari, March 8, 1993, op. cit.

¹⁹ "The Secret History of Tree Spiking, Part I", by Judi Bari, *Anderson Valley Advertiser*, February 17, 1993 and *Earth First! Journal*, Yule / December 21, 1994.

²⁰ G'Zell, op. cit.

²¹ Brazil, June 21, 1987, op. cit.

²² Bari, February 17, 1993, op. cit.

²³ "L-P Hypocrisy", letter to the editor, by Larry Tanager, *Anderson Valley Advertiser*, June 3, 1987.

²⁴ "Darryl Cherney: a Conversation with a Remarkable Candidate", by Michael Koepf, *Anderson Valley Advertiser*, (in two parts) April 27 and May 4, 1988.

²⁵ Bari, February 17, 1993, op. cit.

²⁶ "Spiking: Scapegoats Still Sought", *EcoNews*, August 1987.

²⁷ "Lou-Pacific, Environmental Group Trade Accusations", by Peter Page, *Ukiah Daily Journal*, May 15, 1987.

²⁸ Bari, February 17, 1993, op. cit.

²⁹ "Kenneth O. Smith and Walter Smith: Gyppo Partners, Pacific Coast Timber Harvesting", Interviewed by Beth Bosk, *New Settler Interview*, Issue #21, June 1987.

roads, but here there are just stumps. They're taking out anything over six inches, leaving nothing but straggly little twigs. Here you buy this beautiful scenic property, surrounded by trees, and all of a sudden you find you're living in the middle of a wasteland."³⁰

George Alexander, himself, would likely have been especially appalled at the Cameron Road slaughter, but being an expectant father, working in a non-union mill, in a timber dependent community, he had little choice but to do his job.³¹

Alexander's saw was sized for much larger logs, but the spiked log was a relatively tiny, slightly less than 12-inches in diameter—what North Coast loggers derisively refer to as a “pecker pole.” He chose to make his cut down the middle. Halfway through the log, which measured 10-feet in length, the saw hit a 60-penny nail, exactly the sort described by Foreman, et. al. in *Ecodefense*. The nail had been placed and countersunk. Alexander had checked the log before cutting it, and saw no sign of the metal, and because his saw hit the nail square on, Alexander heard none of the familiar telltale warning sounds. Instead he heard a resounding “BOOM!” and then found himself lying on the floor practically drowning in his own blood.³²

Although Alexander was partially protected by a helmet and plastic face shield, he was struck in his lower left jaw when a large, 12-inch piece of the shattered blade hurtled towards him. The fragment sliced completely through his left jawbone, severing his left cheek, cutting into his jugular vein, and knocking out most of his front teeth.³³ The blade fragment was wrapped around Alexander, and his coworkers had to cut it with a blowtorch while meanwhile preventing him from bleeding to death.³⁴ Russ Owsey, the Cloverdale plant manager described the accident as the worst he'd ever seen in his entire 16 year career.³⁵ Although L-P had no doubt already propagandized against “tree spiking Earth First! terrorists” long before this incident to the workers in the Cloverdale

mill, Alexander's initial reaction was to wring Dick Edwards' neck.³⁶ He later explained, “If it had been a good saw, it would have handled the spike better.”³⁷ The mill, which employed 175, was shut down for a day while Alexander was taken to an emergency hospital at the University of San Francisco.³⁸

The incident eventually caused quite a stir, and with it much condemnation from L-P. Oddly enough however, they didn't issue a press release until *one week after* the incident.³⁹ But once they did, there was no mystery—as far as L-P and the Corporate Media were concerned—as to the perpetrators. An “unnamed” male L-P spokesperson connected the incident to Earth First!.⁴⁰ This was an odd accusation indeed. Tree spikings happened in California much less frequently than anywhere else, with *no* tree spikings—at least none by Earth First!—taking place in Humboldt and Mendocino Counties.⁴¹ In fact, the North Coast Earth First! groups had consciously made the decision *not* to use the tactic for strategic reasons, reasoning that it could alienate potential supporters.⁴² Nevertheless, Lois Busey, another L-P spokesperson declared that Earth First! was “the type of group known for terrorist activities” like tree spiking, and in the same breath she also stated. “One of Earth First!'s mottos is ‘No compromise in defense of Mother Earth,’ as if that statement were somehow automatically implicated them for the injury to George Alexander.”⁴³

In spite of all of the claims to the contrary, there was no conclusive proof that Earth First! had actually perpetrated the act. There was only L-Ps assertion that the act “may have been carried out by Earth First!”, the fact that Earth First! was known for tree spiking and monkeywrenching, and an unnamed L-P spokesman's declaration that a Caterpillar wheel tractor-scraper at the site of the spiking had been damaged by someone filling in its fluid cavities with concrete.⁴⁴ The lack of any solid evidence confirming

³⁶ Bari, February 17, 1993, op. cit.

³⁷ *EcoNews*, August 1987, op. cit.

³⁸ *Champion*, May 15, 1987, op. cit.

³⁹ *Tanager*, June 3, 1987, op. cit.

⁴⁰ “Sabotage Suspected in L-P Injury”, by Enoch Ibarra, *Humboldt Beacon and Fortuna Advance*, May 16, 1987.

⁴¹ Bari, March 8, 1993, op. cit.

⁴² “Liquidating the Last Redwood Wilderness”, by Greg King, *Earth First! Journal*, Lughnasadh / August 1, 1987.

⁴³ “Earth First! Blamed for Workers' Injury”, by Marie Gravelle, *Eureka Times-Standard*, May 16, 1987 (Gravelle erroneously identifies Edward Abbey as the author of *Ecodefense*, among various other mistakes.)

⁴⁴ Ibarra, May 16, 1987, op. cit..

³⁰ G'Zell, op. cit. Hughs was engaging in hyperbole to make a point. Just so the reader understands the gravity of the clearcuts, Covelo is a small village in the northeastern corner of the county and is about as far away from Elk (located in the southwestern corner of the county on the coast) as one could get.

³¹ Bari, February 17, 1993, op. cit.

³² Bari, February 17, 1993, op. cit.

³³ “Earth First! Didn't Do It”, by Bruce Anderson, *Anderson Valley Advertiser*, May 20, 1987.

³⁴ Bari, February 17, 1993, op. cit.

³⁵ Brazil, June 21, 1987, op. cit.

that Earth First! (or any environmental activist for that matter) had committed the act didn't stop Mendocino County Sheriff Tim Shea from issuing a widely quoted press release full of doublespeak stating,

“This heinous and vicious criminal act is a felony offense, punishable by imprisonment in State Prison for up to three years. Still undetermined in the investigation is the motive of the suspect or suspects, to deter logging operations or inflict great bodily injury and death upon lumber processing personnel”⁴⁵

The absence of any proof of a connection to Earth First! didn't prevent L-P spokeswoman Glennys Simmons from distributing the tree spiking chapter of *Ecodefense* to reporters.⁴⁶ Not to be outdone, Harry Merlo, announced that L-P was prepared to offer a \$20,000 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of perpetrator of the spiking.⁴⁷ He explained, “I hope the reward helps law enforcement officials arrest whoever is responsible for this act. I also hope this horrible demonstration of the outcome of their action will lead these individuals to abandon their potentially lethal activities.”⁴⁸ Though he didn't name them, Merlo was also convinced that environmentalists, specifically Earth First!ers were responsible, declaring, It was only a matter of time before this terrorism in the name of radical environmental goals caused serious injury.⁴⁹

The media ate it up. “Earth First! Blamed for Workers' Injury,” declared the *Eureka Times-Standard*⁵⁰ and “Tree Spiking ‘Terrorism’ Blamed for Injuries,” screamed the headline of the *Santa Rosa Press Democrat*.⁵¹ The *San Francisco Chronicle* announced, “Tree Sabotage Claims its First Bloody Victim”.⁵² The local, small-town press was not much better parroting the corporate press almost word-for-word.⁵³ Although

they acknowledged there was no proof Earth First! had spiked the tree, they nevertheless *implied* that Earth First! had done so. Enoch Ibarra's article in the *Humboldt Beacon and Fortuna Advance* bore the headline, “Sabotage Suspected in L-P Injury”, which itself didn't necessarily single out Earth First!, but the penultimate paragraphs in the article did.⁵⁴

Nancy Barth, a regular columnist for the Mendocino Coast based *North Coast News*, who described herself as a “moderate” and “concerned about the environment,” yet never seemed to actually support local environmentalists on any issues—outside of opposing offshore oil drilling—compared Earth First! to a rogues gallery of despicable characters and lunatics, such as Jim Jones (mass murderer of his People's Temple cult in 1978 in Guiana), serial killers Charles Manson and Leonard Lake, and child kidnapers Kenneth Parnell and “Treefrog” Johnson—all of who had passed through Mendocino County at one time or another. Barth sneeringly referred to Edward Abbey as Earth First!'s “Chief Guru” and Dave Foreman as Abbey's “Assistant Guru”, not even once acknowledging that Earth First!'s innately anarchistic organizational structure meant that said movement perceived—amongst its ranks at any rate—that it had no leaders, let alone gurus.⁵⁵

Unfortunately, a handful of Mendocino County environmentalists hurt themselves almost as much by reacting to the accusations ambiguously, inadvertently adding weight to the claims that Earth First! might have indeed have been guilty. For example, Ron Guenther warned that tree spiking was likely to increase as outrage over L-P's type of forestry and pursuit of profit continued unabated. He also stated:

“If L-P cares one iota about the long-term welfare of its workers, it will either get into responsible, sustained-yield, select-cut forestry or install some heavy-duty worker-protective equipment in all of its mills. I just feel a tremendous sorrow and empathy for anyone who is so desperate to get beans on the table that they would feel compelled to take a job with this awful Earth and people-hating corporation.”⁵⁶

⁴⁵ Gravelle, May 16, 1987, op. cit.

⁴⁶ Page, May 15, 1987, op. cit.

⁴⁷ “Huge Reward for Info on Spiking”, by Peter Page, *Mendocino Beacon*, May 20, 1987.

⁴⁸ Gravelle, May 16, 1987, op. cit.

⁴⁹ Page, May 15, 1987, op. cit.

⁵⁰ Gravelle, May 16, 1987, op. cit.

⁵¹ “Tree Spiking ‘Terrorism’ Blamed for Injuries”, by Steve Hart, *Santa Rosa Press Democrat*, May 15, 1987.

⁵² *Champion*, May 15, 1987, op. cit.

⁵³ See, for example “Heinous Acts”, editorial, *Mendocino Beacon*, May 20, 1987; (this same issue also included comments from one of its regular columnists, Jaques Helfer—a self described “conservationist” who rarely sided with any actual conservationists (for example, he had taken L-

P's side in the Garlon spraying at Juan Creek) who took it as a given that the spiking was the work of environmentalists).

⁵⁴ Ibarra, May 16, 1987, op. cit..

⁵⁵ “Eco-Terrorism is Not Environmentalism”, by Nancy Barth, *North Coast News*, June 4, 1987.

⁵⁶ “Coastal Waves”, by Ron Guenther, *Anderson Valley Advertiser*, May 27, 1987 and *Mendocino Commentary*, June 4, 1987.

Although he insisted that Earth First! hadn't spiked the tree, Don Morris still argued that spiking was acceptable as a guerilla tactic to be done covertly, which allowed for all sorts of unintended consequences.⁵⁷ Kim Moon Water, responding to the local press's quickness to blame Earth First! for a tree spiking they likely didn't commit⁵⁸ may have caused more harm than good by making pro-spiking statements that seemed to suggest that the ends justified the means.⁵⁹ This touched off a firestorm of debate that divided the community for months, in which environmental activists and family members of timber workers (most of them sympathetic to the environmentalists on most issues) debated over economics, the lack of power felt by timber workers, how deep ecologists could be so concerned with all species except humans, and whether or not one worker losing (part of) his face was as bad as thousands upon thousands of acres of slaughtered old growth forests. Most of the participants agreed on 95 percent of the issues, as usual, but the tactic of tree spiking created an emotional wedge between would be allies, even though, as Betty Ball pointed out, the tragedy at least forced the discussion.⁶⁰

The reaction of most local residents, however, including many environmentalists was one of condemnation. Two years previously, just as Earth First! was getting going in Mendocino County, some prominent spokespeople for the Mendocino Greens had cautioned against spiking.⁶¹ Even those sympathetic to Earth First! acknowledged that the latter would be blamed whether or not one of their own had spiked the tree, simply because they had advocated the tactic.⁶² Even many of those critical of the Cameron Road cut expressed dismay at the tree spiking. For

⁵⁷ G'Zell, op. cit.

⁵⁸ "Inappropriate" letter to the editor by Kim Moon Water, *Mendocino Beacon*, May 27, 1987.

⁵⁹ Letter to the editor, by Kim Moon Water, *Mendocino Commentary*, June 4, 1987.

⁶⁰ "Response to Ron Guenther and Kim Moonwater", by Gail Goldoor, *Mendocino Commentary*, June 18, 1987; (Editor) "Carol Root's Response to Gail Goldoor", *Mendocino Commentary*, June 18, 1987; "Coastal Waves", by Ron Guenther, *Mendocino Commentary*, July 2, 1987; Letters to the editor by Wayne C Raabe, Betty Ball, Jean Holt, and Russel Hill, *Mendocino Commentary*, July 2, 1987; "From the Editor's Desk", by Carol Root, *Mendocino Commentary*, July 2, 1987; Letters to the editor by Eric Fielder, et. al., Randy in Gualala, Trish in Gualala, and Bob Wonacott, *Mendocino Commentary*, July 16, 1987; and an unsigned letter to the editor, *Mendocino Commentary*, July 30, 1987.

⁶¹ See for example, "Publisher's Corner", by Harry Blythe, *Mendocino Commentary*, February 21, 1985.

⁶² "Dead Meat!", letter to the editor, *Anderson Valley Advertiser*, June 3, 1987.

example, Mark Hughs stated, "We think (spiking is) a terrible thing, as bad as the clear cutting. That's not the right way to go about it."⁶³ Charlie Acker, who operated the Elk County Water District declared,

"People in Elk who know where that log came from are against (tree spiking), but on the other hand there's a certain frustration. How do you get to these guys [L-P]? We're losing our topsoil up there (on the ridges) and we're down at the bottom of the watershed. Every year we watch (the Navarro River) turn the color of coffee with a lot of cream in it, because of L-P's logging."⁶⁴

Long time forest activist Helen Libeu, who doubted that any Earth First!er was the guilty party in any case, stated, "spiking trees and such is in my view immoral, dumb, and counterproductive."⁶⁵

Earth First!'s cofounders who were regarded by the corporate press as "leaders" (whether intended or not) were no less ambiguous in their sensitivity to Alexander's plight. For example, Dave Foreman said, "It was unfortunate that this worker was injured and I wish him the best."⁶⁶ He also said, however, "I think it's unfortunate that somebody got hurt, but you know I quite honestly am more concerned about old growth forests, spotted owls, wolverines, and salmon—and nobody is forcing people to cut those trees."⁶⁷

Likewise, Mike Roselle declared (writing under the pseudonym "Nagasaki Johnson"):

"Spiking is dangerous to fellow humans, and should never occur without warning! I think even the most misanthropic among us would agree with that. If it is indeed a defensive tactic, and not an offensive one, then we owe it to the unfortunate laborers who must slave away for corporate greedheads at a job that is already the most dangerous in this country."⁶⁸

But he also said, publically (using his own name), "This is probably the first time we've made interna-

⁶³ G'Zell, op. cit.

⁶⁴ Brazil, June 21, 1987, op. cit.

⁶⁵ "More on Tree Spiking", by Helen Libeu, *Anderson Valley Advertiser*, May 20, 1997.

⁶⁶ *Champion*, May 15, 1987, op. cit.

⁶⁷ Bari, February 17, 1993, op. cit.

⁶⁸ "Dear Nedd Ludd: Tree Spiking", by Nagasaki Johnson, *Earth First! Journal*, Litha / June 21, 1987.

tional news, and we weren't even involved in it."⁶⁹ He further declared, "The bottom line here is that as a result of all this unfavorable coverage regarding spiking, people on the West Coast are acutely aware of the crisis that exists with our forests, and our role in trying to prevent it."⁷⁰ Which risked leaving the impression that Earth First!, like L-P was willing to sacrifice a worker as a pawn (even as much as they sent Alexander their sincerest condolences), whether that was intended or not.

For their part, *North Coast* Earth Firstlers denied that they had spiked the tree. The Redwood Action Team condemned both L-P's accusations and reiterated their abstinence from the tactic of tree spiking:

"North Coast California Earth First! strongly condemns the timber industry's recent heavy-handed tactics designed to bring woodworkers wrath upon environmentalists. *Our efforts have not and will not involve tree spiking, destruction of private property, or devices that threaten harm to any life form, including humans.* Industry's spring media blitz, which inaccurately associates Earth First! efforts with malice toward woodworkers, is a blatant ruse."⁷¹

Greg King noted that his Earth First! chapter, at least, had not engaged in any campaigns against L-P, at least not yet, and that tree spiking was a tactic that they did not use, though he clarified that he was not sure what Earth First!ers or environmentalists elsewhere might do.⁷²

Darryl Cherney specifically added:

"Timber Companies such as L-P have traditionally blamed environmentalists for their shortage of timber lands. Now they are blaming environmentalists for their worker safety hazards. They should be ashamed of themselves for using the injury of this poor man to further their own political and economic motives."⁷³

⁶⁹ Brazil, June 21, 1987, op. cit. Judi Bari erroneously attributed this quote to Dave Foreman some years later.

⁷⁰ Johnson, Litha / June 21, 1987, op. cit.

⁷¹ "Earth First! Responds to Timber Industry Propaganda Assault", North Coast EF! Press Release, *Country Activist*, July 1987. Emphasis added.

⁷² Ibarra, May 16, 1987, op. cit.

⁷³ Gravelle, May 16, 1987, op. cit.

The *Ukiah Daily Journal* sneered at these statements, claiming that they were sure that George Alexander would agree with them (which, as it was ultimately proven later, was not true), and further opining:

"The radical environmental organization Earth First! has yet to denounce tree spiking, a tactic described in the book *Ecodefense: A Field Guide to Monkeywrenching*, written by two of its leading members. Instead (Darryl Cherney), when queried about this incident, accused the timber companies of 'blaming environmentalists for the safety hazards in their mill operations.' That's like saying Americans on Middle East cruise ships deserved to be killed by terrorists because they were too stupid to pack a bullet proof vest."⁷⁴

This was ridiculous. While some Earth First!er's reactions to the condemnation may have been poorly chosen, *none* of them would have made such a callous and unfeeling statement. The *Ukiah Daily Journal*, however, was not one to ever accept that capitalist driven, profit oriented timber practices *did indeed* incentivize cutting corners, particularly when safety precautions were directly counterposed to the bottom line.⁷⁵

* * * * *

While the debate on spiking raged on, the Cameron Road tree spiking story took even more bizarre turns. To begin with, According to L-P security chief Jack Sweeley⁷⁶, several mutilated animals, including pigs, a beheaded deer hanging from a tree, and a skinned dog draped over a bulldozer⁷⁷, had been found along Cameron Road and deliberately placed there by an obviously deranged individual.⁷⁸ Though this happened several days before L-P had begun cutting, the company hinted that these actions were also the work of Earth First! and attempted to link them to the spiking itself⁷⁹, at first by withholding the information about the animal carcasses, and then raising the issue at the same time they condemned Earth First! for Alexander's injury in the mill. L-P miscalculated in their thinking, however, because though many might be-

⁷⁴ "Timberland Terrorism", editorial, *Ukiah Daily Journal*, May 19, 1987.

⁷⁵ Bari, February 17, 1993, op. cit.

⁷⁶ Page, May 15, 1987, op. cit.

⁷⁷ Bari, February 17, 1993, op. cit.

⁷⁸ Bruce Anderson, May 20, 1987, op. cit.

⁷⁹ "Mutilation Link Probed: Animals Killed Near Spiked Trees", by Mike Geniella, *Santa Rosa Press Democrat*, May 16, 1987.

lieve Earth First! had spiked the trees, almost *nobody* would buy the story that Earth First! would deliberately kill and disfigure pigs, deer, and dogs.⁸⁰ Such actions were entirely inconsistent with any Earth First!'s actions up until this point. Mendocino County Earth First!er, Betty Ball, declared, "I have never heard of (Earth First!ers carrying out) animal mutilations before. You can look through (Ecodefense) and you won't see *anything* about (them)."⁸¹ Nevertheless, L-P did what they could to establish the connection in people's minds anyway. Both Tim Shea and Glennys Simmons cited as "proof" a vandalized sign near the logging site covered with obscenities, but no actual calling card, let alone anything connecting it with Earth First!⁸²

L-P and Mendocino County law enforcement also tried to link the tree spiking incident to other unrelated acts of equipment sabotage to logging operations whether or not they were directly connected to L-P or even to the Cameron Road cut. Glennys Simmons drew backhanded connections to an incident at Rockport, in the northwestern corner of the county—far away from Cameron Road—where an unidentified party left incendiary statements on a comment form in response to the company's pamphlet describing their logging in a nearby "demonstration" forest. The comments read, "Leave the trees alone. A tree walk (sic) in the woods...God is watching and knows what you are doing—Earth First! (sic) will be here soon."⁸³ Whether or not the anonymous note was an attempt to implicate Robert Sutherland, "The *Man Who Walks in the Woods*" is unknown, but the lack of an exclamation point—something dedicated Earth First!ers *always* insisted on including after "Earth First!"—should've been an obvious clue that the attribution was false. Sheriff Shea drew connections to an incident that took place on March 31 involving local gyppo operator Charles Hiatt at a cut 20 miles to the west of Ukiah on Low Gap Road.⁸⁴ Neither incident had anything to do with the other let alone the Cameron Road THP, but truthfulness was evidently not as important to either L-P or Mendocino County as it was to find anything even remotely plausible to solidify the notion in people's minds that Earth First! was Public Enemy Number One.

⁸⁰ Johnson, Litha / June 21, 1987, op. cit.

⁸¹ Page, May 15, 1987, op. cit.

⁸² "New Turn in Tree-Spiking: Dead Animals Left as Hexes", by Dale Champion, *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 16, 1988.

⁸³ "L-P Offers \$20,000 Reward on Tree Spiking", by Enoch Ibarra, *Humboldt Beacon and Fortuna Advance*, May 20, 1987.

⁸⁴ Page, May 15, 1987, op. cit.

Many of Earth First!'s fellow travelers were quick to defend the radical environmental movement by pointing out that this particular spiking did not fit the patterns of similar acts elsewhere. "Woods" Sutherland declared, "There are so many unanswered questions. I also find it strange that only one or two spikes were found. If someone was interested in tree spiking they would spike all the trees."⁸⁵

Bruce Anderson, editor of the coincidentally named *Anderson Valley Advertiser*, pointed out that the location of the spike itself made it highly unlikely that this an Earth First! spiking:

"Earth First! does not spike downed trees. The point of tree spiking is to keep trees standing by spiking them, then informing the media they have been spiked. Driving a spike deep into a downed tree plainly risks injury to both mills and workers and is a tactic repudiated by Earth First!."⁸⁶

Willits Earth First! activist, Don Morris, declared:

"(This particular spiking) was a loony operation. Earth First! goes overboard on security, safety, (and) making sure people know of dangers. Spikers paint a white 'S' on trees...the object of spiking (is to) prevent trees from being cut. (You) notify the logging operation, mill and media, or there'd be no point to it. Spiking is not done just flippantly."⁸⁷

The spiking itself had been so carelessly done, that it violated all of the safety standards suggested in Ecodefense. In fact, it was just as likely, given the forensic evidence of the spike's placement in the tree, about nine feet up from its base, *that the tree had been spiked while lying on the L-P log deck after it had been cut*.⁸⁸ Certainly it was unlikely that the tree had been spiked while standing unless, as Bruce Anderson humorously suggested, "(an) average sized person teamed up with a midget, (and) the midget got up on the shoulders of his partner to hammer in the spikes."⁸⁹ In all of the cases of Earth First! tree spacings, no spiking had occurred *after* the tree had been cut, and contrary to all

⁸⁵ Gravelle, May 16, 1987, op. cit.

⁸⁶ Bruce Anderson, May 20, 1987, op. cit.

⁸⁷ G'Zell, op. cit.

⁸⁸ Bari, February 17, 1993, op. cit.

⁸⁹ "Here and there in Mendocino County", by Bruce Anderson, *Anderson Valley Advertiser*, May 27, 1987.

of the anti-Earth First! propaganda, it was unlikely that they would have deliberately risked injury to a mill worker, despite any insensitivity expressed by some of their spokespeople. Earth First!ers, in general, were strategically smart, and spiking a downed tree would have been regarded as colossally stupid in any case, not only because of it being a pointless act, but it was an unnecessary risk to the spiker, never mind the worker. It would not have benefitted anyone wishing to preserve the forests to have spiked a down log.⁹⁰

* * * * *

As it turned out, the prime suspect was a man in his middle fifties, named Bill Ervin, a registered *Republican* from Southern California, who was not only *not* an Earth First!er, but in fact a right wing survivalist who died his hair, mustache, and eyebrows a vivid blonde; he also had a sizable collection of guns. Ervin was no fan of L-P however, and he had made several threats against the company within earshot of the residents of Cameron Road, who were aware of Ervin's erratic and belligerent behavior which made them nervous.⁹¹ He openly admitted to spiking several trees on his own property, which he flagged with yellow tape, to prove a point because L-P had a reputation for cutting and taking trees several feet beyond their property line (as Greg King had once documented). He had borrowed the hammer he used to spike the trees from a neighbor (to whom he explained his reasons) and also bragged about it to an L-P truck driver and a California Highway Patrol officer. Ervin justified his actions to Sheriff Shea stating, "I may be in error, but I understand that one can spike trees on one's own property."⁹² When this new information came to light, the press (quietly) recanted their accusations that "Earth First! terrorists" had spiked the trees.⁹³ In stark contrast with his earlier actions, the Sheriff issued no press release condemning Ervin and eventually dropped the case with little notice and without filing any charges.⁹⁴ Glennys Simmons declared, "We never have accused Earth First! (of causing Alexan-

der's accident) We have accused them of supporting terrorism by supporting tree spiking."⁹⁵

It was no less impossible to prove Ervin spiked the tree in question, however, and the only reason why he represented a credible suspect *at all* was that the evidence against all other suspects was even weaker. Ervin maintained that he used only 16 penny (six-inch) nails on the trees he spiked, no other sized nails were found when the sheriffs and L-P security examined the trees in the area, and there is no evidence suggesting that Ervin had access to larger spikes, yet the spike found in the log that resulted in Alexander's injury was a much larger 60 penny (11 inch) nail. Ervin submitted to a polygraph test, and though he answered in the negative when asked "did you spike the logs at the deck on Cameron Road?" and "Did you spike any trees outside your property?", he failed the test on both questions.⁹⁶ The reliability of polygraph tests in general is now considered to be very doubtful, but there is no other conclusive evidence that Ervin spiked the tree that ultimately injured Alexander. All of the trees Ervin *did* spike were consistent with the methods outlined in Ecodefense, but the one that injured the millworker *wasn't*.⁹⁷

Clearly, the entire incident was a media circus from start to finish, and it seemed a perfect PR coup for Corporate Timber, almost *too* perfect. Indeed, there were some who went as far as to suggest that the spiking had been planned by the industry itself, since Ervin's story was full of inconsistencies, and the evidence indicated that spike had been placed in the tree after it had been cut. Crawdad Nelson even suggested that L-P *itself* was the most likely suspect.⁹⁸ It is highly unlikely, however, that even the Louisiana-Pacific Corporation was so crass that it would deliberately injure one of its workers, and it would have been impossible to plan for events, particularly the injuries to Alexander, to unfold exactly as they did. Nevertheless, L-P's supposed outrage about their workers' safety was nothing but posturing, given their lack of attention to safety conditions in the mill prior to the incident, or their insistence in continuing to run spiked logs through the equipment *after* it.

Indeed, L-P made no substantial changes to its safety standards immediately following the accident. Glennys Simmons insisted, "We thought long and hard about revealing this spiking incident. We

⁹⁰ Letter to the editor, by Crawdad Nelson, *North Coast News*, July 18, 1987. Nelson is a former G-P mill worker, who retired early due to work-related injuries, and the son of IWA Local #3-469's Don Nelson. The younger Nelson was sympathetic to Earth First! and was arguing in defense of them here in response to Nancy Barth, *op. cit.*

⁹¹ Bruce Anderson, May 20, 1987, *op. cit.*

⁹² Bari, February 17, 1993, *op. cit.*

⁹³ Johnson, Litha / June 21, 1987, *op. cit.*

⁹⁴ Bari, February 17, 1993, *op. cit.*

⁹⁵ Brazil, June 21, 1987, *op. cit.*

⁹⁶ Bari, February 17, 1993, *op. cit.*

⁹⁷ Bruce Anderson, May 20, 1987, *op. cit.*

⁹⁸ Crawdad Nelson, July 18, 1987, *op. cit.*

decided it would be in our best interests to go public, to deter others. We're concerned about the safety of our employees," but this was a bald-faced lie.⁹⁹ To begin with, two more spiked logs made it into the mill after Alexander's nearly fatal injury.¹⁰⁰ The company continued to refrain from using metal detectors until, on May 12, after yet another spiked log pass through the band saw. This time, fortunately, nobody was injured.¹⁰¹ The mill was nonunion, but IWA Local 3-469 made a public statement condemning both tree spiking, but also asking for metal detectors to be used at all times.¹⁰² In doing so, the union noted that the vast majority of metal found in milled logs was incidental, rather than deliberate sabotage.¹⁰³ Simmons had claimed that metal detectors couldn't reliably detect tree spikes (even metal ones), but this claim was disputed by the California State Occupational Safety and Hazard Administration.¹⁰⁴ Evidently L-P only claimed to give a damn about safety in order to shift the blame for Alexander's injury to Earth First!. The *Ukiah Daily Journal* had no comment on these revelations, however.

Further demonstrating that this was purely propagandistic kabuki by L-P, the company had made a huge noise about offering a \$20,000 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of perpetrator of the spiking.¹⁰⁵, but George Alexander had to file a lawsuit against the company just to get them to cover his medical expenses, of which L-P ultimately only paid \$9,000. They didn't even offer to fund an extensive hospital stay for Alexander, who was discharged on May 13, less than a full week following the incident, even though he still required extensive reconstructive surgery. Simmons indicated that the company had received several donations for the reward money from various individuals already (and

one might wonder if the company had any qualms about accepting it in lieu of lowering their own obligations further).¹⁰⁶

Literally adding insult to injury, L-P continued to use Alexander as a poster child for their continued denunciations against Earth First!, repeatedly offering TV news programs footage of him speaking through his bandages from his hospital bed, even though Alexander himself didn't consent to being used this way. Alexander and his wife, Laurie, had told the press that they held L-P responsible for the accident, that they opposed clearcutting, and that they bore no ill will towards the environmentalists, but these comments were all but ignored. "Some woman from Humboldt County" whose name Alexander couldn't recall tried to convince the injured millworker to go on a tour denouncing Earth First!, but Alexander refused. After that, Alexander was forced to return to work, out of economic necessity, still recovering from his injuries, and was involuntarily transferred to the night shift.¹⁰⁷ Ironically, the Cloverdale mill was slated to be upgraded soon, and Alexander's job was to be automated, thus eliminated.¹⁰⁸

One possible theory suggests that while L-P didn't plan for the injuries to Alexander, they *did* intend—with foreknowledge—to run spiked logs through the Cloverdale mill in order to blame Earth First! and create a negative image of the environmental movement in the minds of the public. Earth First!ers were convinced that the timing of the announcement, certainly, was intended to turn the workers and the general public against the upcoming Week of Outrage.¹⁰⁹ Although the incident took place in Sonoma County at an L-P mill, rather than in Humboldt County at a P-L facility, it was known that both L-P and P-L participated in an industry front group called the West Coast Alliance for Resources and the Environment (WECARE), and the unnamed woman who had called Alexander may have been one of their spokespeople.¹¹⁰ Upper management representatives of both corporations routinely communicated with each other and collaborated to undermine

⁹⁹ G'Zell, op. cit.

¹⁰⁰ "Third Spiked Tree Discovered at Mill", McClatchy News Service, *Santa Rosa Press Democrat*, May 19, 1987, and "Earth First! Didn't Do It", by Bruce Anderson, *Anderson Valley Advertiser*, May 20, 1987,

¹⁰¹ Tanager, op. cit.

¹⁰² "Timber Union Asks for Metal Detectors", *Ukiah Daily Journal*, May 25, 1987; "Union Seeks Metal Detectors in Sawmills", by Chris Smith, *Santa Rosa Press Democrat*, May 28, 1987; and "IWA Asks Worker Protection" / "Union Wants Detectors", by Katherine Lee, *Fort Bragg Advocate News / Mendocino Beacon* (respectively) June 3, 1987.

¹⁰³ "Earth First! Didn't Do it", *EcoNews*, June 1987. The title is the same as Bruce Anderson's article, because the article featured in *EcoNews* summarized the piece in the *Anderson Valley Advertiser*, even though the NEC added a few additional details of their own.

¹⁰⁴ "Here and There", by Bruce Anderson, *Anderson Valley Advertiser*, June 10, 1987.

¹⁰⁵ "Huge Reward for Info on Spiking", by Peter Page, *Mendocino Beacon*, May 20, 1987.

¹⁰⁶ Ibarra, May 20, 1987, op. cit.

¹⁰⁷ Bari, February 17, 1993, op. cit.

¹⁰⁸ Brazil, June 21, 1987, op. cit.

¹⁰⁹ "Dear Nedd Ludd: Tree Spiking", by Nagasaki Johnson and "Tactical Thoughts on the Maxxam Protests", by Socratrees, *Earth First! Journal*, Litha / June 21, 1987 ("Nagasaki Johnson" is actually Mike Roselle).

¹¹⁰ "Tactical Thoughts on the Maxxam Protests", by Socratrees, *Earth First! Journal*, Litha / June 21, 1987 ("Socratrees" is actually Darryl Cherney).

the environmental movement.¹¹¹ Right after L-P's press conference, P-L public affairs manager David Galitz expressed "concern" about the tree spiking, declaring, "We are going to be extremely vigilant about trespassing on our property in order to protect our people."¹¹²

* * * * *

It wasn't the first time that tree spiking had been used by the industry to generate negative press against environmentalists, and it would not be the last time that Corporate Timber or their enablers would blame Earth First! for things it didn't do. Several months later, in the absence of any evidence whatsoever, Humboldt County's Second District Supervisor, Harold Pritchard, accused Earth First! of two separate incidents of vandalism against a logging truck, calling it "terrorism, pure and simple." Greg King angrily responded,

"(Pritchard) mentions nothing of the terror and destruction handed North Coast watersheds by greedy, denuding, corporate money-grubbers, nor does Pritchard seem to care about suffering woodworkers laid off due to industry's refusal to practice sustained-yield logging."¹¹³

Two months later, the Sonoma County Coalition to Stop L-P, claimed to have spiked trees at the Silver Estate near Guerneville in Sonoma County, immediately south of Mendocino County. To their credit the coalition was emphatic in their abiding by the safety precautions suggested in *Ecodefense*, (including spray painting a white letter 'S' on some of the disputed trees), expressing regret for Alexander's injuries, and calling spiking without warnings "irresponsible".¹¹⁴ But the warning turned out to be a bluff, and no spiked trees were ever found. This didn't stop L-P from claiming that it had located a suspect who was, by their own description, "a black man with a bone through his nose who rides a bicycle and carries bows and arrows". Such incidents didn't alleviate the tension caused by spiking, and in some cases made the situation worse.¹¹⁵

Despite all of this, Earth First! *outside* of Northern California continued to advocate the tactic of tree spiking, and while they were absolutely correct in pointing out that L-P was the real culprit in Alexander's injury (a point to which Alexander himself wholeheartedly agreed), it *was* highly irresponsible to suggest that Earth First! deserved absolutely no blame. In any case, as L-P spokeswoman Glennys Simmons had stated, spiking was "not a deterrent to logging,"¹¹⁶ and even though Earth First! certainly didn't spike the Cameron Road trees cut by L-P, L-P's anti Earth First! P.R. still had its desired effect, because for years after the incident, the timber bosses continued to repeat the lie, and many loggers and millworkers believed it.¹¹⁷ The resulting animosity between timber workers and Earth First!ers only helped Corporate Timber drive further wedges between them.

If there was one silver lining to be had, it was that this incident would ultimately lead to the IWW returning directly to the struggle, though that process would take some time.

¹¹¹ "The Palco Papers", By Judi Bari, *Anderson Valley Advertiser*, March 27, 1991.

¹¹² Gravelle, May 16, 1987, op. cit.

¹¹³ "Spiking: Scapegoats Still Sought", *EcoNews*, August 1987.

¹¹⁴ "Spikers Threaten L-P Land", staff report, *Eureka Times-Standard*, July 16, 1987.

¹¹⁵ Bari, March 8, 1993, op. cit.

¹¹⁶ G'Zell, op cit.

¹¹⁷ Bari, March 8, 1993, op. cit.