

Chapter 11: I Knew Nothin' Till I Met Judi



*Now there's one thing she really did for me, (did for me),
Was teach me all 'bout labor history, (history)
So now I can relate to the workin' slob, (workin' slob),
Even though I never had a job.*

—Lyrics excerpted from “I Knew Nothin’ Till I Met Judi”, by Darryl Cherney, ca. 1990.

Judi Bari (ne Barisciano), the second of three daughters, was born on November 7, 1949 in a working class neighborhood in a suburb of Baltimore, Maryland, where most of the nearby families were employed in the local steel mills. Bari's mother Ruth, however, had made history by earning the first PhD ever awarded to a woman studying mathematics at Johns Hopkins University. Bari's father, Arthur, was a diamond setter, and from him, Bari developed extremely steady hands, which later became a boon to her considerable artistic skills. Bari's older sister, none other than Gina Kolata, became a famous science writer for the *New York Times* and *Science* (although many Earth First!ers, including Bari herself, would argue that Bari's older sister's "science" is distorted by corporate lenses), while her younger sister, Martha, was, by Bari's description, "a perpetual student". Judi Bari's upbringing may have been "Middle Class" by most definitions, but her parents, survivors of the McCarthy era in the 1950s, passed on their closet radicalism to their receptive middle daughter, including teaching Bari old IWW songs (and admonishing Bari not to reveal her source) and lecturing all of their daughters against racial and ethnic prejudice. From the get-go, Bari had radical roots.¹

Judi Bari, in spite of her background as a "red diaper baby", became politically radicalized on her own accord, having at first been apolitical, even into her first years at the University of Maryland, choosing at first to follow the high school football team, even seeking dates from some of the players as her primary social activity. However, Bari soon became disillusioned with the sexist and racist culture of high school football, having been told not to date an African American player by some of the white ones, who threatened to ostracize her socially if she did. Bari gave in to this threat, an act she later regretted, though this was her first and only capitulation to the status quo. From that point onward, Bari grew increasingly radical.²

At first, Bari primarily ventured into the late 1960s countercultural scene, but as time progressed she began to take notice of events in Vietnam and Cambodia, joining antiwar protests with fellow student radicals at the University of Maryland, which frequently attempted to take over US Highway 1, then the main highway into "War Maker Central", Wash-

ington DC. Bari was at first enamored with the "Sex, drugs, and rock & roll" and hippie culture, but as she became more politically astute, she began to more deeply understand the roots of systemic exploitation. She realized that the uprisings of the black community, the resistance of third world peasants to first world colonialism, the feminist movement, and the struggle by the working class against wage slavery were all one struggle of the oppressed many against the elite few.³

Bari's journey was by no means direct. She struggled with the contradictions of the so-called "free love" movement, which was often used by hippie men as an excuse to continue to justify the continued subjugation of women, and she stopped dating men for a year because of it.⁴ She was heterosexual in orientation, noting that sexuality was something she was born with, but she also discovered that men, by their cultural upbringing were often incapable of intimacy.⁵ She was initially attracted to Maoism, but her parents talked her into jettisoning that philosophy for more indigenous radical traditions, arguing that it was strategically foolish to tie the antiwar movement to a foreign power, in this case China. Bari later agreed that this was sound wisdom, herself reasoning that an American radical left was superior (in an American context) than looking overseas for a model. She was also drawn to the Yippies, but grew disenchanted with them after meeting Jerry Rubin, a man she described as "a real pig, a disgusting human being, and a complete phony."

Bari's most significant realization, both personally and politically came after she flunked out of college. As a student worker, in the school cafeteria, she had been allowed dress casually, and she was treated as one of the students; but, as a non-student worker, she was required to don a uniform, and the students now treated her with contempt, even throwing food at her at one point.⁶ Having flunked college, she didn't have a marketable skill she could use to exercise her middle class privilege.⁷ This was Bari's first real introduction to class discrimination, and she noticed that the students, even the supposedly radical

³ Anderson, November 11, 1989, op. cit..

⁴ Anderson, November 11, 1989, op. cit. and "Judi Was No Cheerleader; She was a 'Jock Sniffer'", letter to the editor by Judi Bari, *Anderson Valley Advertiser*, November 22, 1989.

⁵ "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.

⁶ "Bari Reflects on an Activist Past", by Keith Michaud, *Ukiah Daily Journal*, May 21, 1990.

⁷ Bosk, May 1990, op. cit.

¹ "From Cheerleader to Earth First!: Judi Bari", by Bruce Anderson, *Anderson Valley Advertiser*, November 11, 1989.

² Anderson, November 11, 1989, op. cit., and "Judi Was No Cheerleader; She was a 'Jock Sniffer'", letter to the editor by Judi Bari, *Anderson Valley Advertiser*, November 22, 1989.

ones, treated the workers with contempt. Bari quickly became a class struggle activist both on and off campus.⁸ This was in part driven home by the fact that Bari's entire adult working life was spent performing unskilled manual labor, through which she developed a deep sense of empathy for all workers.⁹

Bari continued her political education and antiwar activism, participating in a group called the "Mad Dogs", who functioned as a Marxist equivalent to an affinity group. They "lived together, rioted together, and studied Marxist literature together," and, often times, they were arrested together in nonviolent demonstrations. Through this process, Bari realized that the establishment relies heavily on the police and military to maintain order. And while the 1960s and early 1970s were a heady time, with some rioting carried out by the protesting youth, the police and National Guard were not only not the preventers of violence, they were usually the *perpetrators* of violence. Bari experienced a good deal of police brutality, including one incident where she was thrust up against a wall and a gun was shoved into her side by policemen who then ransacked her apartment.¹⁰ She witnessed several of her friends being clubbed in the streets, and one who was tossed down a flight of stairs on his skull and suffered permanent brain damage as a result.¹¹

Bari noticed that her fellow student radicals, who came from privileged backgrounds often failed to understand the gravity of their situation, even upon being subjected to police brutality¹², especially given the fact that African-Americans suffered police brutality on a much deeper and more fundamental level.¹³ Bari had several run-ins with the FBI (as did many radicals in the 1960s), including at least one case where she was set up by an undercover agent provocateur.¹⁴ Yet Bari remained undaunted in her efforts to overthrow a system she saw as inherently corrupt, violent, and unjust.¹⁵

Bari's workplace experiences also steadily radicalized her. For two years, she involved herself in rank and file activity in the Retail Clerks Union in the course of her working in a bakery and a grocery store, devoting almost as much time to the union as the

job.¹⁶ Bari encountered the same corruption in the union's hierarchy as she did in society as a whole, having many confrontations with the official leadership, including one incident where, from the floor, she denounced the incumbent union chief as being full of "bullshit." The latter responded by grabbing the microphone away from Bari, still in mid-speech, and yelling "watch your language young lady!" in retort. The largely African-American rank and file started yelling from the audience, "Leave her alone, mothafuggas! She can say whatever she wants!" thus foreshadowing a pattern Bari would experience from then on in dealing with labor fakirs, in which she would have the support of the masses much to the indignation of the annoyed leadership whom she challenged. As it was then, and as it would be, Bari would usually have truth as well as popular support in her corner, and in this case, the corrupt leadership attempted to buy her off, which she unhesitatingly rejected.¹⁷

Instead, following what was to become yet another consistent life pattern, Bari and her fellow rank and file militants began publishing a dissident newsletter, the *Union Hot Sheet*, to battle corruption (including MAFIA influences) and provide a means to network with other dissidents far away, as the local actually encompassed three states (foreshadowing a trend of business unions in the 1990s to consolidate over large areas and stamping out rank and file democracy in the process). The paper was popular among the rank and file and, as can be expected, reviled by the leadership. Bari was wrongfully terminated four times over the course of the next three years, and reinstated, in spite of the leadership's corruption, due in no small part to the rank and file organization she and her fellow dissidents had built. This culminated in a strike vote in 1974, and during the strike, many of the rank and filers picketed during the day en masse, and at night some of them engaged in direct action, deflating scab tires and putting glue in the company locks. However, the union's leadership's corruption was too great to overcome, and being desperate to prevent a rank and file opposition, they openly collaborated with management and broke the strike.¹⁸ Bari later attributed this failure to "boring from within" following the model once proposed by

⁸ Anderson, November 11, 1989, op. cit..

⁹ Bosk, May 1990, op. cit.

¹⁰ Anderson, November 11, 1989, op. cit..

¹¹ Bosk, May 1990, op. cit.

¹² Anderson, November 11, 1989, op. cit..

¹³ Bosk, May 1990, op. cit.

¹⁴ "Exposing the FBI", by Judi Bari, *Anderson Valley Advertiser*, June 12, 1991.

¹⁵ Anderson, November 11, 1989, op. cit..

¹⁶ Bosk, May 1990, op. cit.

¹⁷ Anderson, November 11, 1989, op. cit..

¹⁸ Ibid.

William Z. Foster and the Communist Party.¹⁹ Bari was discouraged, but soon recovered to fight again.²⁰

Bari's workplace activism continued. After working in the construction trade, where she learned carpentry skills, she took a job working for the US Postal Service in the Washington Bulk Mail Center in 1976.²¹ Bari's job was to load and unload trucks.²² This facility was one of twenty such centers in the United States and functioned more or less like a factory. It handled no letters, only packages, and, as was the case in Bari's previous experiences, the unions were corrupt and usually sided with management.²³ The government attempted to institute several efficiency standards and install equipment that would automate tasks to meet their goals, but these efforts failed. Seeking to conceal their failures and maintain a projected budget for political reasons, management refused to hire additional workers and forced the current employees in the facility to work overtime, sometimes as much as sixty hours per week during normal periods, expanding to eighty-four during the holiday rush in December.²⁴ Additionally, harassment, micromanaging, and inadequate safety measures (no doubt made even more lax by the drive to "efficiency"), resulting in industrial accidents were rampant. One worker was even sucked into one of the machines and killed, and what made this incident worse,

¹⁹ Bosk, May 1990, op. cit. Foster was actually an IWW member, having joined in 1909, when he took part in one of the IWW's free speech fights in Spokane, Washington. He became a committed syndicalist after touring Europe in 1910 and 1911, and criticized the IWW for not working within established unions or within the workshop in any event. He urged American leftists to enter the AFL unions (thus boring from within), rather than establish rival unions, as the IWW had tried to do. He also denounced electoral politics as a dead end that smothered the revolutionary ardor of these groups by channeling their energies into pursuit of office, with all the compromises that entails. Foster lost the battle, however, and soon thereafter left the IWW and formed his own organization, the Syndicalist League of North America (SLNA). Foster's political perspectives gravitated more and more towards Stalinism however, and he jettisoned his syndicalist views. It's not clear whether or not his belief in boring from within came from his syndicalist or his Stalinist experiences, but his admonishment to the IWW to "bore from within"—a call that was echoed by the Stalinist Red Trade Union International just a few years later—was not a strategy generally advocated by syndicalists.

²⁰ Anderson, November 11, 1989, op. cit.

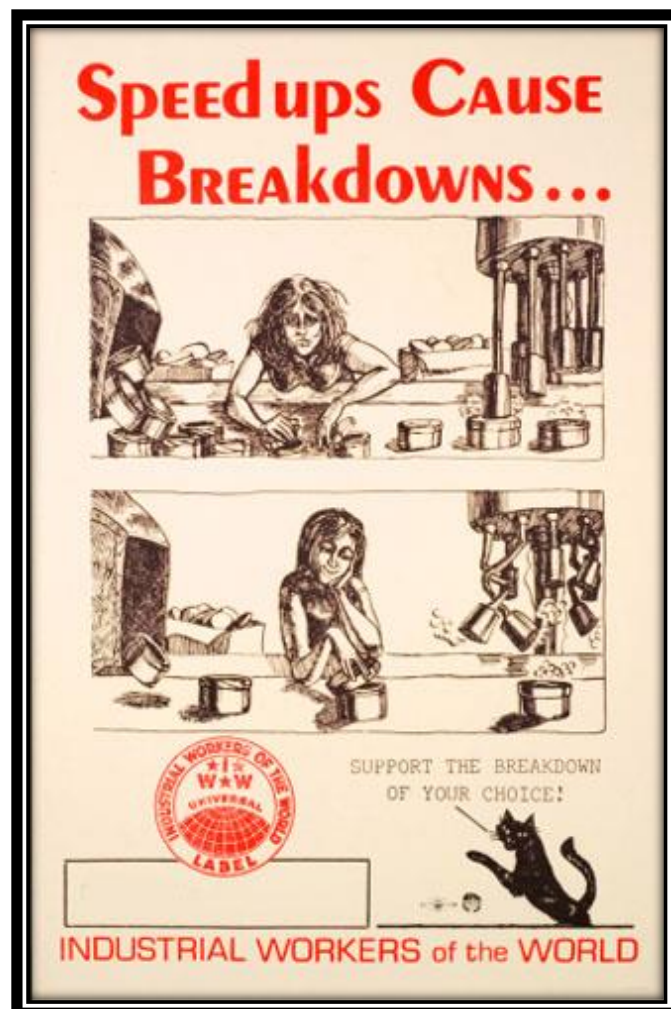
²¹ Bosk, May 1990, op. cit.

²² Anderson, November 11, 1989, op. cit.

²³ Bosk, May 1990, op. cit.

²⁴ "Dear Molly MaGuire and Nedd Ludd: Mail Handler Judi", by Judi Bari, *Industrial Worker*, August 1992; although this entry wasn't fully credited to Judi Bari, it was most definitely her account, because the descriptions here match the descriptions of this history in the other mentioned sources, and the spelling of "Judi" is also a clue. The column took its name from the "Dear Nedd Ludd" columns in the *Earth First! Journal*, as by 1992, Earth First! and the IWW working together on was the rule, rather than the exception.

was the feeling that most of the workers had that such an event had been inevitable.²⁵ The conditions were horrible enough to draw the interest of Jack Anderson who consented to Bari and her coworkers smuggling in one of his reporters to expose the atrocities.²⁶



While their situation was unenviable, it also afforded the workers certain advantages, including the fragility of maintaining the frantic pace and the tendency of the machinery to break down. Having only heard of the IWW through her parents' folksongs, Bari (and her coworkers) proceeded to exploit the bulk mail center's weaknesses, essentially engaging in a "strike on the job", much like the IWW timber workers of old.²⁷ The workers engaged in sickouts, collective marches on the boss (who, being white, were largely intimidated by the predominantly black workforce), deliberately keying the machinery to incorrectly sort packages (which gummed up the works

²⁵ Bosk, May 1990, op. cit.

²⁶ Anderson, November 11, 1989, op. cit.

²⁷ Bosk, May 1990, op. cit.

significantly), and even refusing to work overtime on holidays by all quitting their shifts at the same time.²⁸

The tactics escalated as the workers began to realize more and more of their collective power, and gained confidence each step of the way.²⁹ Some of the tactics the workers used could have come from the pages of *Ecodefense*, though that publication hadn't yet seen the light of day. Instead of boring from within, the workers were adopting the model followed by the IWW. The workers operated completely outside of the official union structure, ignoring the grievance procedure, abstaining from union meetings, and publishing a dissident newsletter. Called *Postal Strife*, it satirized the postal service's official publication, *Postal Life*, the latter of which, featured a marijuana joint smoking buzzard, instead of the familiar American eagle. This time, Bari and her coworkers were successful, and broke the power of management.³⁰

Their efforts yielded quick results. Within a year, the overtime was eliminated in the Washington Bulk Mail facility, the safety conditions improved, and accident rate decreased. The year after that, the officialdom of the union collapsed, and Bari and her fellow dissidents took over the leadership of their union local. Bari was elected chief shop steward (the highest union position in the plant), and expedited grievances, which had formerly lingered in limbo. Their collective strength made it possible to get rid of the worst supervisors, as management attempted to quell dissent by replacing the former with friendlier management to appease the union and restore order.³¹

Bari was not fooled into thinking that this was a complete victory, because she understood that this was but a battle and not the war itself, as it barely scratched the surface of systemic corruption, and to drive home the point, one of her African-American fellow workers pointed out that she was able to get away with the direct action more easily because she was white. From this experience, Bari learned that one of the most powerful ways she could help others realize their power was to put her privilege to use in aiding those without it (Bari understood this from both ends, being a woman, though one of middle class upbringing). Through this process, she realized a certain joy in discovering collective power and overcoming oppression. Bari was especially drawn to movements (like the IWW and Earth First!) that had

strong cultural traditions, especially musical ones, and noted that the antiwar movement was greatly enhanced by rock and roll.³² Bari worked at the Washington Bulk Mail Center until 1979 when she met her husband to be, a fellow union organizer named Mike Sweeney, who convinced Bari to relocate to Santa Rosa, California.³³

Bari was reluctant to move to the west coast, but Sweeney had children from an earlier marriage already living there, so she ultimately consented. After arriving in Sonoma County, she worked in the wineries, often advocating for workers' rights there as well.³⁴ Bari and Sweeney had two daughters of their own, Lisa and Jessica, but their marriage wouldn't last more than half a decade. Sweeney was becoming increasingly mainstream politically, whereas Bari maintained her radicalism, this time joining in the local chapter of Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES) and Pledge of Resistance, through which she would eventually meet Betty and Gary Ball of Mendocino County, who were also involved in Earth First!.³⁵

Bari and Sweeney split, more or less amicably, and Bari relocated to Ukiah. She sought employment to help take care of her two daughters, and she tried, unsuccessfully, to get a job working in one of the lumber mills.³⁶ Failing that, she sought employment as a carpenter and—having hung drywall at the newly opened Mendocino Environmental Center for her friends, Earth First!ers Betty and Gary Ball, whom she had recently met—Bari found a job working for California Yurts, where Gary Ball was the bookkeeper. She started as a mud and taper, but soon revealed she had much greater skill as a carpenter. Bari, already familiar with forest preservation and environmentalism grew increasingly furious that she was using old growth redwood to build a vacation homes for wealthy executives, and the fact that this one in par-

³² Bosk, May 1990, op. cit.

³³ "Earth First! and COINTELPRO", by Leslie Hemstreet, *Z Magazine*, July / August 1990.

³⁴ Michaud, May 21, 1990, op. cit.

³⁵ "Judi Bari Dies, but Her Spirit Lives On", by Nicholas Wilson, *Albion Monitor*, March 2, 1997; and "Symbolic Protest at City Businesses", by Peter Page, *Ukiah Daily Journal*, May 22, 1987 (the article details a joint protest by Earth First! and CISPES over the clearcutting of Central American Rain-forests. Betty Ball is quoted as a spokesperson for Earth First! Although not mentioned in the article, Judi Bari is clearly visible on the left side of the accompanying photograph.)

³⁶ "Earth First! in Northern California: an Interview with Judi Bari", by Douglas Bevington, reprinted in *The Struggle for Ecological Democracy: Environmental Justice Movements in the United States*, edited by Daniel Faber, 1988, New York, NY, and London, Guilford Press., page 255.

²⁸ Bari, August 1992, op. cit.

²⁹ Bari, August 1992, op. cit.

³⁰ Bosk, May 1990, op. cit.

³¹ Bari, August 1992, op. cit.

ticular reminded her of the *Playboy* mansion particularly offended her.³⁷ According to Bari:

“I was working in Boonville as a carpenter, putting old growth redwood siding on some rich asshole’s house up near Faulkner Park: 2,500 square feet for a single man. Ugly goddam house, too. I looked at these beautiful twenty-foot long redwood boards—tight grain, no knots—and I said to Gary Ball, the bookkeeper for California Yurts at the time, ‘Is this old growth redwood?’ He told me it was. He also told me it was a thousand years old. So I’m putting thousand year old trees on this rich prick’s dumb house!”³⁸

Bari soon discovered, much to her chagrin, that the wood had come from the old growth redwoods Humboldt County—quite likely from one or more of the groves currently being contested by Earth First! and EPIC.³⁹

Bari, who had been trained on the violin in classical music as a child, wrote her first of many protest songs in response⁴⁰, and in one instance in 1987, she chance to perform some of them live in a benefit that also featured Darryl Cherney, though the two didn’t formally meet then.⁴¹ Her efforts didn’t stop there, however:

“I got a photo of the clearcut from which the redwood came, and I put it on the man’s living room wall. But that didn’t make me feel better...every day I had to drive over the Boonville grade to get to work and see the bee-line of trucks hauling redwood going the other way. The contradiction was too great. I felt a strong pull to do something for the forests.”⁴²

Bari was aware of Earth First!’s existence, through her associations with the Balls and others who were active in Mendocino County Earth First!, but she was initially hesitant to join the radical environmental movement. Bari recounts, “I was deeply offended by their beer-drinking, baseball hat macho bullshit. I also didn’t like Earth First!’s reliance on these...men

whose statements on AIDS and immigration completely turned me off.”⁴³ That was logical; Bari was also an ardent feminist, and had already made a name for herself for challenging sexism, even among the local back-to-the-landers in the local green movement.⁴⁴

However, Bari was open to the deep ecology and conservation biology promoted by Earth First!, as she later recalled:

“A forest is much more than trees. It’s an entire interrelated ecosystem...there is no way of replacing an old growth forest. They say, ‘Well, the tree grows back.’ But a forest ecosystem took tens of thousands of years to evolve. And if you go into an area that has been logged, you don’t see the ferns on the ground, the wildlife...Right now our society is based on the notion that we will take everything we can from the earth, we will get the earth to give us everything we can possibly suck out of it. Instead, we need to scale down our needs to what the earth can produce on a sustained level... The very concept of leveling these ancient beings so a couple of gluttonous millionaires can get rich is obscene. We have to look at this in a longer term review. What are we doing to the earth’s ability to sustain life?...

“I think that all beings are equal—not just that all humans are equal. I don’t think that

⁴³ Anderson, November 11, 1989, op. cit.

⁴⁴ This saga is detailed in a series of letters written by Bari to the *Mendocino Commentary* protesting what she perceived to be demeaning images of women in suggestive attire and poses drawn by another woman named Judi (Judith Brown). Brown’s “femlins” were advertisements for “The Chocolate Mousse”, a local Mendocino business.

Judi Bari’s letters of protest appeared in issues 315 (December 17, 1987, on page 2—Judi Brown responded defending her work) and 316 (January 7, 1988, page 4). “Blue Jay” penned a letter in support of Judi in issue 317 (January 21, 1988). Howard Weiss and W. J. White added their support to Bari, while William James Kovanda, Eleanor Cooney, and Douglas Roycroft (himself an IWW member) defended Judith Brown on the grounds of “free speech” in issue 320 (misidentified as 310 on the cover of the March 3, 1988 issue; the letters appear on page 4). Judi Bari wrote a third letter arguing her position in that same issue. There were a substantial number of varying responses in issue 321 (misidentified as 311 on the cover of the March 17, 1988 issue; the responses appear on pp. 4 – 5).

Judi Bari also made significant waves by defending the Planned Parenthood clinic in Ukiah that same year against rabid anti-abortion demonstrators (“Save the Unborn or We’ll Kill You”, by Bruce Anderson, *Anderson Valley Advertiser*, November 30, 1988). Bari probably stirred up a hornet’s nest by cowriting the song *Will the Fetus Be Aborted* with Darryl Cherney (to the tune of *Will the Circle Be Unbroken*) and performing it at this demonstration in defiance of the anti-choice crowd. One of these anti-choice activists present at the demonstration was none other than Jack Azevedo.

³⁷ Bosk, May 1990, op. cit.

³⁸ Anderson, November 11, 1989, op. cit.

³⁹ Bosk, May 1990, op. cit.

⁴⁰ Anderson, November 11, 1989, op. cit.

⁴¹ Interview with Darryl Cherney, August 21, 2008.

⁴² Bosk, May 1990, op. cit.

anything has the right to destroy the entire planet, or any other ecosystem...

"I was raised back East, and my parents were very progressive, but the life in which I was raised was not connected to the earth...people go from their air conditioned house to their air conditioned car to their air conditioned job."⁴⁵

But Bari's concept of deep ecology went *beyond* that of many Earth Firsters, and she was not blinded by misanthropy:

"The way that the companies treat the workers is neither separate from nor subordinate to the way that they treat the forests. These companies are anti-life. They are not just anti-trees. They destroy the life of the forests. They destroy the life of the workers. And they destroy the life of people in Third World countries.

"And I see it all as being interrelated. I don't think that all humans are guilty. Most of us are born into this and don't support it. It's not to our benefit. It's only to the benefit of a very few. But we are under the control of a very few, very rich people who are so selfish that they care only for themselves...

"Ultimately, the timber workers are not the beneficiaries of this deforestation, this stripping nude of the forest that is going on. And not only are the timber workers not the beneficiaries, they are even more the victims than we are because their lifeblood is being exploited to do this.

"They aren't paid what they are worth. They are not paid the value of their labor. The corporations make their profits so that Harry Merlo can have his Shangri-la and Charles Hurwitz can have his twenty million dollars. And those profits are made in two ways: they are made by extracting value from the workers (in other words, by not paying them the amount of value of what they produce), and it's made by extracting value from the earth, by not replacing what we take from the earth."⁴⁶

Bari didn't see the environment or the workers as separate concerns and felt that the biggest obstacle to the success of Earth First! and the ecology movement

in general was a middle class arrogance that treated workers as willing pawns:

"The reason that the timber companies have been so successful in convincing workers that environmentalists, rather than the corporations, are their enemies, is because of our middle class arrogance, our dehumanizing of them. There have been as many Earth Firsters who say it is the loggers to blame as there are loggers who say it is the Earth Firsters to blame. We have fallen right into this timber company trap of setting us against each other, of creating a contradiction amongst the people, people who should be in alliance with each other. Our interests, even in the short term, are the same.

"For example, clear cuts are capital intensive not labor-intensive. Clear cuts are a way of eliminating loggers jobs...as are herbicide sprays—which also (injure) the loggers—as are computerized green chains, which have appalling accident rates because they are so dangerous.

"And of course the company's attitude towards the workers are no different than their attitude towards the trees...

"The workers are in much better position than we are to do something about it, because they have their hands on the machinery and if they don't work, the trees don't go. We don't have that power. The workers have much more power than we do, and that's why the companies put so much more effort into brainwashing them than they do the public in general. The subjugation that they have to face to work there is enormous...It's a question of taking direct action on the workroom floor. Of doing it (themselves). The only justice is the justice (they) make (themselves)."⁴⁷

This was especially true in the case of George Alexander, whom, Judi Bari observed, was sympathetic to the issues raised by Earth First!, but in general, Earth First! hadn't paid attention to this and (at least the prominent spokespeople) had responded to his injuries insensitively:

"I feel for the forest as well as for the man, but I felt for the man too. And he from his hospital bed said, "I'm against tree spiking, but I'm

⁴⁵ Bosk, May 1990, op. cit.

⁴⁶ Bosk, May 1990, op. cit.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

against clear cutting too.” And Earth First! (outside of northwestern California) didn’t reach out. They just arrogantly grumbled, “We’re going to keep tree spiking, but we didn’t do that particular spike.” I felt that wasn’t taking responsibility, because (Earth First! does) endorse tree spiking—I personally don’t endorse tree spiking, by the way. I think the danger to mill workers is real, and I think the number of mill workers who would be on our side otherwise, who we alienate, exceeds the number of trees that we save.”⁴⁸

Bari was also deeply offended by Dave Foreman’s, Edward Abbey’s, and Christopher Manes’s comments about immigration, starving Africans, and AIDS, even if taken out of context or meant as dark humor, though she would later discover that the vast majority of Earth First!ers were equally offended by these comments and the main spokespeople were not representative of Earth First! in general.⁴⁹

Nevertheless, it seemed either by fate or by circumstance, Judi Bari would eventually join Earth First!, which is precisely what happened, and it was in the course of her second encounter (and first formal meeting) with Darryl Cherney that this took place. As he recalls it, Cherney was having trouble designing a brochure for his own campaign for Congress. Bari walked into the Mendocino Environmental Center, in May of 1988, where Cherney happened to be working on the project. MEC coordinator Betty Ball knew Bari was a talented graphic artist, and quickly dispatched the latter to assist Cherney.⁵⁰ Bari had used this talent for many years, at first making signs for football rallies, but later using it to design leaflets and dissident union newsletters.⁵¹ Ball introduced the Bari and Cherney to each other and suggested Bari might help with the layout. Darryl remembered how Judi worked ably on the layout, all the while making fun of him for his conceit in running.⁵² Darryl eventually responded to this humorously, penning yet another song, *Running for my Life*,⁵³ but at the moment he instantly fell in love with her, and they became for the next two years a romantic couple.⁵⁴ He also convinced her, finally, to

join Earth First!. As Bari later recalled, “Darryl said something to me that stuck: ‘Well, you can start a Mendocino group (independent of Earth First!), but you’ll be starting from scratch. Or we can (join the) local Earth First! (group) and we can have the corporations shaking in their boots.’”⁵⁵

Judi Bari was neither aware of the dialog currently taking place between Earth First!ers and the IWW, nor did she fully realize that the IWW still existed. However, in one of the very first conversations Bari and Cherney had (after dinner at her house and in between his guitar playing and her fiddle playing), she told him much about IWW history and how it applied very closely to the campaigns being waged currently by Earth First!.⁵⁶ The next thing Bari did as an Earth First!er was propose hosting a labor history workshop, prominently featuring the IWW’s history, at the annual California Earth First! rendezvous to be held that September.⁵⁷

What happened after that is a matter of legend, and how the actual events unfolded depends largely upon who recalls it. Having borrowed Bari’s copy of *Labor’s Untold Story* by Richard Boyer and Herbert Morais of the United Electrical Workers—which contains a brief history of the Wobblies, or at least the early history of the Wobblies—Cherney came to the realization that Earth First! was the direct descendant of the IWW, and to this day he sometimes refers to Earth First! as the “Latter Day Wobblies”.⁵⁸ That Dave Foreman, Ed Abbey, and others had already made this connection might not have initially dawned on either Cherney or Bari, since the former didn’t propose any connection beyond the IWW’s cultural influences.

Bari announced her intentions to hold the workshop somehow to some or all of the contacts on the Earth First! mailing list featured in the *Earth First! Journal* (though there is no record of such an announcement *in* any of the issues between May 1988 and the time of the rendezvous).⁵⁹ According to some

⁵⁵ Anderson, November 11, 1989, op. cit.

⁵⁶ Harris, David, *The Last Stand: The War between Wall Street and Main Street over California’s Ancient Redwoods*, New York, NY, Random House, 1995

⁵⁷ Bosk, May 1990, op. cit.

⁵⁸ Interview with Darryl Cherney, August 21, 2008

⁵⁹ Bosk, op cit.; Bari could not have made her announcement in the *Journal* itself, because a careful examination of all three issues of the newsletter between May 1988 and September reveal no announcements about the IWW workshop. The California Rendezvous is announced in the Lughnasadh (August 1), 1988 issue, but there is neither any mention of Judi Bari nor the IWW workshop there. It’s most likely the an-

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Bosk, May 1990, op. cit.

⁵⁰ Wilson, op. cit.

⁵¹ Anderson, November 11, 1989, op. cit.

⁵² Wilson, op. cit.

⁵³ Featured on the album, *They Sure Don’t Make Hippies Like They Used To*, by Darryl Cherney, 1988.

⁵⁴ Wilson, op. cit.

accounts, including an occasional recounting by Utah Phillips—whose career as a folk singer featured the spinning of colorful yarns—Bari referred to the IWW in the past tense and was surprised to learn that the IWW still existed, when various dues paying IWW members in the various Earth First! groups informed her of her error.⁶⁰ Whether or not this is true is unknown, as there is no known proof of this happening. Judi Bari *did* recount, two years later, that she was contacted by IWW members offering helpful suggestions, including Utah Phillips, who told her then, “The Earth isn’t dying, it’s being killed, and the people who are killing it have names and addresses.”⁶¹

Darryl Cherney recalls that he came across or was given a copy of the May 1988 *Industrial Worker* (which had been distributed in large numbers at the annual Earth First Round River Rendezvous that summer) after having read *Labor’s Untold Story*, and offered a copy to Judi—who was already planning her workshop on the history of the IWW—and suggested they contact the IWW. Cherney was amazed to find that Bari *already* had a copy of the issue, but doesn’t know how she had obtained it. Bari then contacted the IWW’s General Headquarters—then still located in Chicago—and asked for assistance in organizing her “history of the IWW” workshop at the California Earth First! Rendezvous in September 1988. The specific details of how or when Judi contacted the IWW, and the specifics of that conversation are not entirely clear, but according to Cherney, it happened very quickly.⁶²

nouncement was made in a local, north coast Earth First! newsletter, and then mailed out to the list of contacts featured in the *Earth First! Journal*.

⁶⁰ If there is any truth to this legend, there’s no proof of it, other than anecdotal accounts and individuals’ memories.

IWW and general labor history are replete with legends and folk tales assuming the character of actual history. For example, the late Archie Green has argued (in *Wobblies and Pilebutts*), that there is no conclusive or solid evidence that the term “Wobbly”—which is considered an officially recognized moniker for a generic IWW member—originated from sympathetic Chinese restaurant owners in the Pacific Northwest who had difficulty pronouncing the letter “W” in IWW; but this folk legend is often cited as gospel nevertheless.

Likewise, the notion that the word “sabotage” derives from workers throwing wooden sabots (shoes) into machines to thwart their operation by disgruntled workers, cited favorably and heroically for example in Hollywood movies, such as *Star Trek VI, the Undiscovered Country*, is apocryphal.

The source of such legends varies, from romantic IWW members (such as in the example of “wobbly”) to employing class propaganda, whose anti-IWW rhetoric painted pictures of Wobblies burning crops, murdering politicians, or collaborating with the Central Powers in World War I—all accounts known (even at the time the propaganda was issued) to be blatant falsehoods.

⁶¹ Bosk, op cit.

⁶² Cherney, op. cit.

Gary Cox recounts that Utah Phillips contacted the IWW’s General Executive Board and requested that they help finance Cox’s travel expenses. Phillips also contacted his long time friend and fellow IWW member and musician, Mark Ross, in Butte, Montana. Ross, in turn, contacted Montana IWW member Art Nurse who had joined the IWW in 1918 and had paid dues consistently since then. Nurse had been the veteran of many IWW campaigns and no doubt knew many of the loggers and millworkers who had won the eight-hour day by striking on the job in 1917. He had also helped keep a Missoula IWW office open for many years through his work and donations of his pension (he had been a union longshoreman in Texas for many years). Nurse agreed to help finance sending an IWW member to California for the conference. Mark called Gary Cox, and Cox—who was already sympathetic to Earth First!—agreed to go.⁶³ Cox flew to San Francisco and was met by Utah Phillip’s friend, Earth First! folk singer Dakota Sid Clifford. Clifford, Cox, and a third Wobbly named Billy Don Robinson (from Oregon) then met with Bari, the workshop was organized.⁶⁴ The event was announced in the local mainstream press, though no mention was given by them of the IWW.⁶⁵

Meanwhile, as if to drive home the point that Earth First!, in Mendocino County anyway, was not going to hesitate to build bridges with unionized workers, Judi Bari and Betty Ball contacted the United Farm Workers (UFW) to support them in their boycott of pesticide sprayed grapes. The UFW very enthusiastically welcomed Earth First!’s participation, and on the evening of August 26, 1988, a group of ten activists, including Bari, Cherney, Ball, and Eric Fried, demonstrated inside and outside of the Safeway in Ukiah, in solidarity with the affected grape-pickers.⁶⁶ Echoing the joint pickets of L-P by the IWA, Carpen-

⁶³ Interview with Mark Ross, held October 13, 2009. Art Nurse never expressed any strong opinions for or against Earth First!, but he believed anyone who was inspired enough to call on the IWW was worthy of support. Ironically, for many years, former Montana Republican Senator Conrad Burns had a campaign office that shared a wall with the IWW office, and Mark Ross recalls hearing Burns campaigning from his office next door!

⁶⁴ Various interviews with Gary Cox, held between July – August 2008. Cox does not recall the details of how Judi Bari contacted the IWW, nor do Allan Anger, Darryl Cherney, Barbara Hansen, Franklin Rosemont, or Penelope Rosemont. Unfortunately, Judi Bari and Utah Phillips died long before this part of this book was conceived, and quite likely the actual details are likely lost in the depths of time.

⁶⁵ “Earth First! Plans Campout”, staff report, *Eureka Times-Standard*, August 22, 1988.

⁶⁶ “Local Grape Protest Ends Peacefully”, by Randy Foster, *Ukiah Daily Journal*, August 28, 1988.

ters Union, and Mendocino Greens against herbicide aerial spraying of loggers, these workers, the UFW, and Earth First! were protesting against the growers' use of toxic pesticides, such as phosdin, parathion, methyl bromide, dinoseb, and captan. Evidence suggested that the children of the farmworkers exposed to these chemicals experienced an alarmingly high rates of birth defects, and both the adults and children experienced increased rates of cancer. The activists drew the connection between poisoning the workers as well as the Earth, and tied the issue to similar conditions experienced by timber workers.⁶⁷ The protest lasted about 15 minutes before the Ukiah police ordered the demonstrators to disperse, which they did with no arrests.⁶⁸

song title unknown
By Judi Bari, ca. August 26, 1988

*Don't eat those grapes, they ain't good for you,
 Made the farmworkers sick, in the fields, it's true,
 And their killing off the birds, and the wildlife too,
 So if you eat them, who knows what they'll do.*

*Those grapes are sprayed with the poison Phosdrin,
 Parathion, Methyl Bromide, Dinoseb and Captan,
 They gotta stop using poison and until then,
 Don't eat those grapes again.*

* * * * *

The California Earth First! rendezvous, which was held September 16-18, 1988, turned out to be very well attended and highly successful.⁶⁹ Judi Bari offered an equally positive account as her first article to the *Earth First! Journal*,⁷⁰ and Crawdad Nelson, who also attended and participated (conducting a workshop on how Earth First!ers can most effectively dialog with timber workers), reported on the conference for the *Anderson Valley Advertiser*.⁷¹ About 200-300, most (but not all) of them Earth First!ers, and a handful of curious supporters camped in among old-growth Douglas

⁶⁷ "Environmental Group Joins UFW in Grape Boycott", by Judi Bari and Darryl Cherney, *Country Activist*, Mid-September 1988 and *Industrial Worker*, October, 1988 (the latter edition was abridged slightly; Bari wrote an untitled protest song against herbicides which appeared in both editions).

⁶⁸ Randy Foster, August 28, 1988.

⁶⁹ "Wobs Conduct IWW Workshop at Environmental Conference", staff report, *Industrial Worker*, October 1988.

⁷⁰ "California Rendezvous", by Judi Bari, *Earth First! Journal*, Samhain / November 1, 1988.

⁷¹ "Earth First! Meets the Wobblies", by Crawdad Nelson, *Anderson Valley Advertiser*, December 7, 1988.

Fir stands in the Marble Mountains of the Siskiyou National Forest, in nearby Siskiyou County.⁷² The overwhelming attendance was no doubt bolstered by the triumphant news from Humboldt County that a California state appeals court judge had overruled Judge Buffington's overturning of the TROs on P-L THPs at Lawrence and Shaw Creek.⁷³

The gathering itself began ominously, but finished well. Several local breweries rescinded their offer to donate kegs of beer after learning that it was an Earth First! gathering, not wanting to enable "tree spiking terrorists," and the Hoopa, Karuk, and Yurok tribes were initially upset that the event took place on their land during the week of sacred ceremony, however the latter softened their perspective somewhat and actually sent representatives to address the activists, who welcomed them with open arms.⁷⁴ Veteran Earth First!ers were impressed with the level of planning, outreach, and organization done by Judi Bari.⁷⁵ Bari, in turn was impressed with the absence of male machismo and sexist behavior by the local Earth First!ers. Bari credited this to the strong feminist contingent of the local groups and because the "worst known offenders didn't show up". Bari gave special mention to Greg King and Darryl Cherney who made particularly strong efforts to include women workshop leaders and performers.⁷⁶

Several well attended workshops took place, including one on tree spiking (controversial though it was), taught by Mikal Jakubal (the very first Earth First!er to conduct a tree sit), who was watched the entire time by two "Freddies" (forest service employees), who stood in the audience and took Jakubal's pictures. The activist insisted the workshop was "just for fun", to which the Freddies responded, "the photos would be just for their own scrapbooks". Other workshops included Holistic Forestry, led by independent logger and woodworker Jan Iris; the aforementioned workshop by Crawdad Nelson; combating offshore oil drilling, led by none other than Lionel Gambill; and Tree Sitting, led by Kurt Newman and Greg King, and many others. Of course, for Judi Bari, the most important workshop was that on the history of the IWW, led by herself and Gary Cox.⁷⁷

⁷² *Industrial Worker*, op. cit.

⁷³ "P-L: Worker Control", by Andy Alm, *EcoNews*, September 1988.

⁷⁴ Bari, November 1, 1988, op. cit.

⁷⁵ "One Crucial Detail", by Crawdad Nelson, *Anderson Valley Advertiser*, December 14, 1988.

⁷⁶ Bari, November 1, 1988, op. cit.

⁷⁷ Bari, November 1, 1988, op. cit.

The IWW workshop was attended by over 120 participants and well received by all, and most of the attendees were enthralled by Gary Cox's oral history of the Wobblies in the Pacific Northwest, particularly in the lumber industry. One logger even declared he was going to go back to the woods and organize his crew, though nobody knows what became of him or his efforts. Cox was likewise equally impressed with the Earth First!ers present. Many of the points of contention that were currently being batted back and forth between the likes of Ed Abbey and Louis Prisco (among others) were discussed in great detail, and while the debate was heated at times during the workshop, most found common ground, and Cox agreed that it would be a mistake to paint all Earth First!ers with a broad brush, also sensing that there was much the Wobblies could learn from Earth First!. Cox also noted that Earth First!ers were just as concerned about the lack of accountability to the rank and file by the *Earth First! Journal* as were the editors at *Libertarian Labor Review*, and Earth First!ers in attendance even asked if the IWW could provide some ideas on how to introduce democratic control over it.⁷⁸

Cox also admonished the assembled Earth First!ers to emphasize respect for workers and to deal with them as equals, rather than from a position of moral superiority, even if they seemed like they have been "brainwashed" by their employers.⁷⁹ One question on many minds was "What kind of lessons do you think we of Earth First! can learn?" to which the Wobbly speaker responded, "You have to realize the levels that they are going to go to repress you. This isn't polite. You give up your privilege when you really challenge their power."⁸⁰ He cited some of the repression (including hangings, beatings, shootings, and jail sentences), faced by Wobbly organizers in retribution for their effectiveness, but reminded all that this never dampened the IWW's spirit.⁸¹ Cox concluded on an uplifting note, intoning that solidarity was the movement's best weapon and encouraging the crowd to remember the Wobbly motto, "An Injury to One is an Injury to All", noting also that Earth First! took that to a deeper level, applying it to all species, not just humans, a message that was well received.⁸²

⁷⁸ *Industrial Worker*, op. cit.

⁷⁹ Nelson, December 7, 1988, op. cit.

⁸⁰ Bosk, May 1990, op. cit.

⁸¹ Nelson, December 7, 1988, op. cit.

⁸² Various interviews with Gary Cox, held between July – August 2008. Cox does not recall the details of how Judi Bari contacted the IWW, nor do Allan Anger, Darryl Cherney, Barbara Hansen, Franklin Rosemont,

The rendezvous concluded well. Proving that "the singing union" and "the singing environmental movement" could sing in good harmony, music also played a big part in the gathering.⁸³ As a special treat, Cherney and Dakota Sid performed a set devoted to the IWW, including the songs *Hallelujah I'm a Bum*, *Preacher and the Slave*, *Casey Jones the Union Scab*, and *50,000 Lumberjacks*.⁸⁴ As Judi Bari relayed to the Earth First!ers, "The IWW is not your typical AFL-type union; the AFL-CIO wouldn't be caught dead at an EF! Rendezvous." She also noted that, "Not only is Earth First! engaged in serious political work, but we also know how to throw one hell of a party," (even without beer).⁸⁵

Judi Bari expressed interest in further support from the IWW, including sending more organizers, to which Cox responded that *she* should be that organizer, explaining that she had the ability to join the IWW and convince others to do so as well. Bari was initially skeptical about joining the Wobblies herself, but Cox convinced her to overlook any shortcomings with the contemporary IWW and utilize the union's potential to organize a working class environmental movement. Judi Bari and Darryl Cherney and a few others were then officially initiated by Billy Don Robinson. Cox later recalled that he thought that Bari was one of the best organizers he ever met.⁸⁶

The editors of the *Earth First! Journal* enthusiastically welcomed joining ranks with the IWW (at least at first), and finally acknowledged the connection in the Samhain / November 1, 1988 issue, noting both the May and September issues of the *Industrial Worker*, a new IWW campaign to organize canvassers at Greenpeace, and the California Rendezvous.⁸⁷ Earth First!ers Dale Turner and John Davis noted that potential benefits of such an alliance could lead to joint campaigns, such as port blockades of old growth log exports (and imports of rainforest logs), Japanese fish, and American shrimp. They noted that, at the very least, the coalition of the two could undermine jobs versus the environment rhetoric issued by the employers' PR machine.⁸⁸

or Penelope Rosemont. Unfortunately, Judi Bari and Utah Phillips died long before this part of this book was conceived, and quite likely the actual details are sadly lost in the depths of time.

⁸³ Bari, November 1, 1988, op. cit.

⁸⁴ Nelson, December 7, 1988, op. cit.

⁸⁵ "Bari, November 1, 1988, op. cit.

⁸⁶ Cox, op. cit.

⁸⁷ "Wobblies Fight for the Environment", by Dale Turner, *Earth First! Journal*, Samhain / November 1, 1988.

⁸⁸ "From the Vortex", by John Davis, *Earth First! Journal*, Samhain / November 1, 1988.

We're All Dead Ducks

By Darryl Cherney; featured on They Sure Don't Make Hippies Like They Used To, 1988.

I was walking 'long the beach, I came upon some ducks,
A mother and her babies, they were out of luck,
Their beautiful feathers were black and spoiled,
I realized to my horror they were covered with oil.
Then I looked out on the ocean and to my dismay,
An oil rig was drilling right there in the bay,
Then I turned to those poor little ducks half dead,
And these are the words they said...

Chorus

*We're all dead ducks (quack, quack),
We're all dead ducks (quack, quack),
'Cause if they put oil rigs off our coast,
Ain't no one escaping the muck,
We're all dead ducks (quack, quack),
We're all dead ducks (quack, quack),
It don't matter if you've got a million bucks,
We're all gonna be dead ducks.*

Well I picked up a rag to wipe that oil away,
But those ducks they died in my arms that day,
So I called up my Congressman and said,
Hey man that oil is something to dread.
It's a warming the planet with the greenhouse effect,
And it spills in the ocean when their tankers wreck,
But that Congressman's answer gave me quite a scare,
He said we've got to drill and do our share.

Chorus

Well now they're doing these seismic tests,
Sonic booms under water make the whales go deaf,
So I went back to the beach and screamed into the night,
Say if they want to play dirty let's give 'em a fight.
Let's blockade their seismic boats at sea,
And sue those bums into eternity,
And in memory of the ducks who are dead,
Let's have that Congressman's head.

Last Chorus

*Don't be dead ducks (quack, quack),
Don't be dead ducks (quack, quack),
'Cause if they put oil rigs off our coast,
ain't no one escaping the muck.
Don't be dead ducks (quack, quack),
Don't be dead ducks (quack, quack),
It don't matter if they've got a billion bucks,
We're not going to be dead ducks.*

*It don't matter if they've got a trillion bucks,
We're not going to be dead ducks.*

*It don't matter if they've got a quadrillion bucks,
We're not going to be dead ducks.*

Only Earth First!er George Draffan, of Spokane Washington, (who had once been a dues paying IWW member himself) expressed any public skepticism, noting that while he supported the joining of labor and environmental movements, the Wobblies were now a very small union, and that many timber workers in the US and Canada were no longer unionized anyway. Draffan concluded by mentioning, as an aside, that Weyerhaeuser, based primarily in Washington State, suffered approximately \$10 million annually in equipment sabotage, but that sabotage was primarily carried out by disgruntled workers acting individually under cover out of disgust and revenge for the union busting by the employers. He noted that a traditional strike was unlikely to succeed in any case, because the employers were in the habit of stockpiling as much as two years worth of timber in advance for various economic reasons.⁸⁹ Something more effective would be needed, but Draffan didn't offer a solution, never considering that the most effective weapon might have been a strike on the job, as was done by the IWW in 1917. There remained much the IWW and Earth First! could learn from each other.

According to already established Earth First! tradition, a direct action or series of them always followed a rendezvous, and this most recent example was no exception. Immediately after the event, the organizers, including Judi Bari, Darryl Cherney, and IWW member Billy Don Robinson staged a daylong series of actions targeting "criminals responsible for the greenhouse effect." Judi Bari described it as "an all day roving picket line," following another storied IWW tactic. The organizers drafted a series of indictment forms with blanks to fill in the company's name and quickly created some banners reading, "GUILTY, GUILTY: GREENHOUSE EFFECT VIOLATOR." Deciding to use their time most effectively, they chose the Simpson Pulp Mill in Arcata, Pacific Lumber in Scotia, Eel River Sawmills, and a public hearing on offshore oil drilling.⁹⁰

The first action targeted Simpson and was highly dramatic. A caravan of 100 arrived at the pulp mill in Arcata in the early morning. The "raggedy mob" blockaded the mill entrance and ambushed sev-

⁸⁹ "What's Really Going On in Timber", letter to the editor by George Draffan, *Earth First! Journal*, Samhain / November 1, 1988, and *Anderson Valley Advertiser*, November 16, 1988.

⁹⁰ "Guilty! Guilty!: Earth First! – IWW Greenhouse Demo", by Judi Bari, *Earth First! Journal*, Samhain / November 1, 1988, *Industrial Worker*, March 1989, and *Mendocino Commentary*, October 6, 1988; in fact all three articles are slightly different, and the version that appears in the *Commentary* is substantially abridged, suggesting that all of them derive from a common press release.

eral truck drivers, “howling like coyotes”. The first driver was receptive to the demonstrators, and proceeded to “kick back and enjoy the show”. The second driver was not so sympathetic and charged the blockade. The demonstrators chanted “Stop Mr. Block” (referring to the cartoon blockhead, created by IWW artist Ernest Riebe, who lacked class consciousness and who naïvely and continually aligned himself with the employers no matter how many times his experiences should have taught him otherwise). Earth First!er Corbin Soloman dove under the front wheels of the moving semi, and the driver halted his advance within inches of the prone Earth First!er. Robinson jumped up onto the truck’s running board attempted to dialog with the driver, who remained unreceptive and threw a punch at Robinson. After a 30 minute standoff that backed up trucks on the highway in both directions, police arrived and the demonstrators willingly dispersed. Successfully misdirecting the sheriffs, the demonstrators shouted “Eel River Sawmill’s next!” but proceeded to Scotia instead.⁹¹

At Scotia, the demonstrators sang Darryl Cherney’s songs *You Can’t Clearcut Your Way to Heaven* and *Where Are We Gonna Work When the Trees Are Gone?* but no trucks were running that day, for reasons unknown. They were soon greeted by counter-demonstrators, most of them women mobilized by TEAM and WECARE, yelling anti-Earth First! slogans. The Earth First! women quickly organized a delegation, instructing the men to stay back, approaching each counterdemonstrator one-on-one, which calmed down the latter. With the help of a local minister, who was receptive to both sides, the two groups scheduled an upcoming dialog to discuss common ground and try and resolved differences.⁹²

Moving on to the next two targets, the demonstrators hung a banner on an Eel River Sawmills log deck on US 101 without incident, and then proceeded to the public hearing. There, after listening to bureaucrats pontificate about the benefits of offshore drilling, the Earth First!ers and IWW members responded, led by Darryl Cherney with his guitar in hand, singing a song he penned, called *We’re all Dead Ducks*, while the rest of the demonstrators quacked at the appropriate moments in the song’s chorus. The

demonstrators put their literal exclamation point on the hearing by shouting “Sonic BOOM!” in response to one speaker claiming that sonic booms don’t affect marine mammals, which certainly effected the mammalian bureaucrats assembled in the meeting.⁹³ Though this was a promising beginning indeed, these actions were not yet full-on shop floor organizing; that was still to come, but come soon it would.

There were immediate ripple effects of the IWW-Earth First! dialog that were felt throughout the Pacific Northwest, though. Billy Don Robinson had been an employer at Steven Daubenspeck and Stevenson (SDS), a logging corporation based in Oregon, who was rapidly clearcutting forests there much like Maxxam was in Humboldt County (a practice that had disgusted Robinson), until he had suffered an accident in 1986. He returned to Oregon in time to take part in joint protests organized by a coalition including Earth First! and the IWW against clearcutting a stretch of virgin old growth oak trees along the White Salmon River. The actions culminated in protests over environmental destruction and worker exploitation, including a picket of a hotel owned by SDS, that took place on October 24, 1988, including one arrest.⁹⁴

Not long after that Earth First!ers and IWW members joined striking members of Sawmill Workers Local #2929 in Roseburg, Oregon. This action was part of a two state strike against Roseburg Forest Products involving members of the IWA and WCIW in Anderson and Weed, California, and Roseburg, Oregon that began on January 2, 1989.⁹⁵ The company’s demands had included a dollar per hour wage cut, even though owner, Kenneth Ford, was then one of the 400 richest men in the world, worth over \$230 million. The company was expanding and making record profits, thus the concessions it demanded were more of the same intensified class war against timber workers begun by L-P and Harry Merlo in 1983.⁹⁶ The strike lasted five months, and though the workers were supported by the local businesses in the community, the strike was essentially lost when the 3,500 members of the Western Council of Industrial Workers (WCIW) and the 800 members of the IWA in-

⁹¹ “Guilty! Guilty!: Earth First! – IWW Greenhouse Demo”, by Judi Bari, *Earth First! Journal*, Samhain / November 1, 1988, *Industrial Worker*, March 1989, and *Mendocino Commentary*, October 6, 1988.

⁹² “Guilty! Guilty!: Earth First! – IWW Greenhouse Demo”, by Judi Bari, *Earth First! Journal*, Samhain / November 1, 1988, *Industrial Worker*, March 1989, and *Mendocino Commentary*, October 6, 1988.

⁹³ “Guilty! Guilty!: Earth First! – IWW Greenhouse Demo”, by Judi Bari, *Earth First! Journal*, Samhain / November 1, 1988, *Industrial Worker*, March 1989, and *Mendocino Commentary*, October 6, 1988.

⁹⁴ “Wobblies & Environmentalists Take on Tree Nazis...and Win!”, by Lisa Loving, *Industrial Worker*, December 1988.

⁹⁵ “GP Workers Want Change: Federal Mediation in Fort Bragg”, by Crawdad Nelson, *Anderson Valley Advertiser*, July 26, 1989.

⁹⁶ “Friends Indeed”, letter to the editor, by Gene Lawhorn, *Industrial Worker*, May 1989.

volved in the strike ultimately settled at a \$0.60 per hour wage cut and reductions in benefits.⁹⁷

All was not lost in this struggle, however. One striker, a millworker named Gene Lawhorn, observed that the vast majority of the scabs used by the company during the strike sported yellow ribbons on their automobile antennae. Yet, Lawhorn also noted that Earth First!ers were marching in solidarity with his fellow workers on the picket line, a trend that would continue for some months. Lawhorn's view of environmentalists and the yellow ribbon changed drastically as a result, and he became an environmentalist himself.⁹⁸ Through these direct experiences Earth First!ers and timber workers were indeed beginning to realize they needn't be enemies.

⁹⁷ "GP Workers Want Change: Federal Mediation in Fort Bragg", by Crawdad Nelson, *Anderson Valley Advertiser*, July 26, 1989. Initially the IWA members rejected the compromise, and that action represented the first time in 26 years that the WCIW and IWA had failed to vote the same way in joint bargaining sessions.

⁹⁸ "Prelude to Compromise", by Gene Lawhorn, *Earth First! Journal*, Litha / June 21, 1993.