

LUMBER INDUSTRY DECLARED FULL OF CONTRADICTIONS AND PROBLEMS

Cooperation Said Key to Success in Some of Phases

Local Organization Cited as Example

By ERIC ALLEN JR.
Mail Tribune City Editor

The lumber industry is full of contradictions.

It is one of the most highly competitive of all industries. At the same time, it is utterly dependent on cooperation for much of its long-range success. It is an industry of little "one-horse" operators, called "gyppos," and of mammoth timber empires, and of operations somewhere in between.

It is an industry dependent on unstable markets, on the weather, on actions of government, and on a public which, generally, is unfamiliar with its problems, and is frequently unsympathetic.

Its foes include fire, bugs, disease, and, sometimes, the inability of industry members to get along with each other.

Jumble of Ownership

Companies formed to harvest the vast timber stands of the Pacific Northwest are a strange jumble of partial ownerships, interlocking directorships, and obscure hierarchies of companies within companies, holding companies, operating companies and sales companies.

The industry also has a tangle of tree organizations, which sometimes conflict, sometimes cooperate and sometimes ignore each other. They range from such huge and powerful groups as the West Coast Lumbermen's association down to small, specialized and local groups of loggers or millmen.

The attitudes of lumbermen vary as much as they themselves do—and they are, by and large, a bunch of individualists. A declining number still operate on the "cut out and get out" philosophy which denuded the hills of the midwest, and robbed future generations of a continuing source of wealth.

More and more, the industry is coming to realize that it owes an obligation to the future—an obligation to see that continuing "crops" of lumber will be available, in time, bear the green gold of timber.

This attitude is known by several names; sustained yield and tree farming are two. They are not synonymous, but both the sustained yield program of the state and federal agencies and the tree farms of the industrial operators are dedicated to the same end—a perpetual harvest of mature trees, and a careful protection of the growing, immature trees.

"Conservation," to a modern forester, does not mean forests sitting idly, while over-ripe lumber rots, and bugs and fires destroy the economic values that took centuries to develop.

Meaning of Conservation

Instead conservation means harvesting ripe or overripe timber, thus employing thousands of men in what is Oregon's biggest single industry.

It means protecting the streams and watersheds so vital to the growing cities and industries.

It means the safeguarding of the forests from the ravages of bugs and forest fires.

It means the perpetuation of wildlife and fish.

In short—it means the fullest use of the forest lands for their greatest possible long-range productivity, for the benefit of the greatest number of people.

This type of conservation at the governmental level goes back to the days of President Theodore Roosevelt and Gifford Pinchot. It is more recently that, however, that lumbermen began to realize that their own best interests lay along the same lines.

Takes Hold Recently

And only in recent years, particularly since World War II when timber was heavily overcut, has the idea taken hold strongly.

Because the lumber industry is so important to southern Oregon, furnishing more than half the money in circulation, a look at conservation in this area would seem appropriate.

The governmental agencies here which manage timberlands—chiefly the Bureau of Land Management and the Forest Service—operate under regulations which have long required the observance of the sustained yield principle.

While privately-owned lands are under no such strict regulations, here too the ideal of perpetual forests is growing. It is best exemplified in tree farms of Jackson county, which now cover more than 200,000 acres of the country's best forest land. There are nine such tree farms, ranging in size from 80 acres to



TREE FARM CERTIFICATES—Four Jackson county tree farms were certified at ceremonies here recently. Shown above are Floyd Hart, vice-president of the Industrial Forestry association, who presented IFA certificates; J. W. Fitzgerald, of the 3B Tree Farm; William Schmidt, of the Oregon Switzerland Tree Farm; L. L. (Doc) Simpson, secretary-manager-forester of the Southern Oregon Conservation and Tree Farm association; B.

L. Nutting, manager of Medford corporation which owns the Medco Tree Farm; Albert Straus, of the Sams Valley Irrigation Association Tree Farm, and U. R. Armstrong, president of the Western Pine association, which presented his organization's tree farm certificates. The 81,000 acres of tree farms dedicated brought the total acreage in Jackson county up to more than 200,000, on nine tree farms. Medco's 80,000 acre unit is the largest. The smallest is about 80 acres.—(Brainerd photo.)

80,000 acres.

The educational and "missionary" work which led to this auspicious start toward a stable forest economy was done by an organization with the ponderous but descriptive name of Southern Oregon Conservation and Tree Farm association.

SOCFTA was organized in 1947 when about 12 companies decided they needed a group to represent their joint interests. Before it was out of the formative stage, some 40 firms had joined. There are now between 90 and 100 member-companies, and the membership fluctuates slightly as firms come and go.

Only one of the major lumber operators in the county does not belong. The member-companies account for about 80 per cent of the lumber production in southern Oregon.

The original objective of SOCFTA was simply to encourage the long-range conservation and use of forest land. But as time went on and as members found that the organization could serve as a "sounding board" for their points of view, and as a service and coordinating agency, its activities expanded.

The man who has served SOCFTA as executive secretary, manager and forester since its inception is a wiry, decisive former federal forester named Lewis L. (Doc) Simpson, whose single passion is service to his members—whether this involves tangling with some government bureau (the state highway commission is a good example), or getting a replacement for a broken part to a remote forest operation quickly.

To anyone familiar with SOCFTA over a period of time, it is obvious that Doc's personality has had much to do with welding the organization into a functioning and useful entity. It is equally obvious, however, that no one, not even Doc, could have done it without full and willing cooperation on the part of the members.

Radio First Service

The first major service project undertaken was the radio network, which SOCFTA operates under the name of Roxy Radio, named after Roxy Ann Butte where its major transmitter is located. About 20 companies joined this service at first, putting up funds for the purchase of the transmitter equipment and for the mobile units placed in the vehicles of the members. There are now about 80 mobile units in Jackson County, plus another 50 in the affiliated Sexton Radio in Josephine county, for a total of 130 units, serving 53 different companies.

In practice, the radio network receives its greatest use for administrative purposes—ordering parts, finding out where such-and-such or so-and-so can be located, and so on. It has frequently been used to call ambulances for accident cases. During fire season, however, its primary and most important function is in getting the news of fires around—and fast.

Fire Control Plan

As for fire control, SOCFTA has a hand in that, too. It was two years ago that the organization set up within its own membership a cooperative fire agreement, which requires signers to assist in fighting fires, and sets forth how the costs of the job shall be apportioned.

Equally important are three caches of firefighting equipment located in Medford, Ashland and Grants Pass, which are readily available when needed. All equipment is standardized so there will be no confusion or uncertainty when a crew gets on a blaze.

A newer service being performed by SOCFTA is a clearing house for truckers, where they and loggers can register. When a truck is needed, SOCFTA heads a truckers' check its registry and get a truck on the job with a minimum of delay, benefiting both the logger who needs the work done and the trucker who needs the job.

In addition, the organization is an effective lobbying group,

and keeps a sharp eye on legislation which might affect the forest industry. In recent months it also has been working on freight rates, attempting to insure its members that they will not have any added handicap from rates which would discriminate against this area.

Three fields which SOCFTA has left strictly alone—so far—are labor relations, market surveys, and trade promotional activities.

But in the fields where it does operate, it has had notable success in bringing a bunch of hard-headed, individualistic loggers into agreement on the basic tenets of conservation, and into cooperation in the day-to-day job of harvesting Jackson county's forests—with an eye to the future.

A Nichol's Worth of . . .

Comment On This and That

By HARMAN W. NICHOLS
United Press Feature Writer

Washington — (U.P.)—What's new in Washington: Some of the better bars around town did something pretty nice for the down-trodden this yuletide.

When a tippler said he'd like "one for the road," the waiter suggested that instead he con-

tribute the price of his drink to the needy. Most drinkers went along with the idea. Welfare groups picked

up the kitties every day and used the money for food, clothing, and toys.

Vice-President Richard M. Nixon got a folksy little note from an eighth grade boy in Oklahoma. "We have been studying aviation in our school," the boy wrote. "We need an airplane in our schoolyard. I have read that our country has lots of planes left from World War II. We need one pretty bad because there are so many things we want to learn about planes. We will invite other schools to look at our plane. Answer soon, Loren." The vice-president answers his mail.

Sen. Alexandria Wiley, the other Republican from Wisconsin, is asking his constituents for advice. In his Christmas letter to the folks back home, the senator says:

"May I have the benefit of your views on legislation which you feel I should advance in the coming session of Congress?" The senator also invited "any criticism you may have of my newsletter."

The FBI doesn't go in much for office parties. The gang, instead, puts away the pistols and gives a lot of parties for the benefit of poor kids around the country, and also for sick FBI employees.

Guards around the halls of Congress, stuck around, but didn't have much to do but drink coffee and chat with visitors. And there were not many visitors. Mostly, all the out of towners found to do was to walk through the halls and gawk.

Cardinal Spellman arrived on the western front by helicopter with Col. John A. Dunn of Baltimore, chief chaplain of the Far East Army Forces.

"The American soldiers themselves have been missionaries to the Korean people," Cardinal Spellman told servicemen.

Cardinal Spellman was referring to a church built at Uijongbu with funds donated by U. S. soldiers.

Soldiers are Missionaries

"Even in time of war the American soldier is a missionary of peace because the United States wages war only to save our country and Christianity from destruction," the cardinal said.

Cardinal Spellman, military vicar of all American servicemen, cited the great work accomplished by U. S. military and naval personnel in helping the Korean people.

Before mass, Cardinal Spellman visited every patient in the 43rd Mobile Army Surgical hospital, passing out Christmas gifts he had brought with him from the United States.

Vancouver Murder Suspect in Custody

Vancouver, B. C. — (U.P.)—Police said Saturday they were holding a suspect in the brutal slaying seven weeks ago of newspaper printer Robert Hopkins.

Further evidence was being awaited before laying a definite charge against the suspect, police said. He is now being held in the city jail.

The unidentified suspect was convicted of another charge a few days ago and is now being held under close guard, police added.

Hopkins, a printer at the Vancouver Herald, was murdered Nov. 8 under bizarre circumstances. He was shot through the head, strangled with an electric cord, and a necktie, and his feet were bound with rope.

The 47-year-old victim lived alone in a small bungalow.

Back Stairs: Eisenhower and Reelection

By MERRIMAN SMITH
United Press White House Writer

Washington — (U.P.)—Backstairs at the White House: Some of the President's close advisers are disturbed by expressions of opinion that he will not seek reelection in 1956. This may account for the current rash of flat-footed statements by big fellows in the GOP that the chief executive must and will run again.

The storm of political words concerning the President's future rolls over his head at this point. In about a year, however, he will have to face up to an important decision. Any forecast of his decision before early 1956 probably will represent a personal opinion of the forecaster, including this one who believes that the human burdens of life in the White House may outweigh the considerations of prestige, power and the future of the Republican party.

On the side of logic: The elder statesmen of the GOP will bring all kinds of pressure on Mr. Eisenhower to run again.

On the human side: After more

than 40 years in federal government service, Mr. Eisenhower may decide that his new farmhouse in Gettysburg looks more inviting than another lease on the White House.

The arguments between these two schools of thought will provide interesting reading and listening until the day that Mr. Eisenhower announces a decision.

Public Misconception

Probably one of the greatest misconceptions of the public regarding life in the White House is the glamor allegedly involved in living and traveling with a president.

People outside the presidential orbit seem to think that moving in the Eisenhower cavalcade is akin to high living and a very big deal. It doesn't work out that way, however.

Here is what a Christmas in Augusta looks, sounds and smells like to the members of the Eisenhower staff and press-radio entourage who move with him:

Christmas Eve is about the loneliest night of the year. The Christmas tree at the Bon Air Hotel where the staff lives will be gay enough, but driving

through the neighborhood outside the hotel, will see family groups gathered around Christmas trees that have a warmth and familiarity impossible to achieve in a hotel lobby.

Taxi Drivers Stir

Outside, sleepy taxi drivers will stir against the sound of their short wave radios, hoping for a cushy job somewhere in the country club section of Augusta.

The liquor store owner in the basement of the hotel will stay open as long as the law allows, hoping for a late customer.

Secret Service agents will stride into the hotel long about midnight as they change shifts around the President's cottage, shaking off the midwinter cold and wishing they were back on more comfortable jobs of chasing counterfeiters.

A bellhop will say "Merry Christmas." The elevator operator will say "Good night."

And, on Christmas Day, when most people are contemplating too much turkey, the people who travel with a President will say, "wouldn't it be wonderful to be home for Christmas."

Unidentified Man Dies

In Portland Accident

Portland — (U.P.)—An unidentified man was killed early Saturday when he was struck by an automobile at SE 174th avenue and Powell boulevard in Portland.

Police said the accident occurred about 12:30 a.m. The victim, who police say was about 60 years old—was hooked onto the hood ornament of the car by his jacket.

Driver of the car was Dale Fred Mitchell, 23, of Portland. He told police he dimmed his car lights for an oncoming car and saw the victim standing in front of his car when he switched the lights on bright again. He said he didn't have time to avoid hitting the man.

Prior to 1913, robins were classed as game birds in some southern states.

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Acts like his dad . . .

Chances are, he'll grow up to think

like his dad. For Pop's the hero . . . and the way he does things, the way he acts, is "the right way."

Think of that next time you're tired when it's time to go to church or

synagogue . . . and you'd like to grab forty extra winks. You can't blame him, years from now, if he hasn't faith in God . . . in life . . . in himself . . . if you haven't shown him where to look for it.



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Medford Mail Tribune

BRING THEM TO WORSHIP THIS WEEK