

INTERFOR Assaults Peaceful Environmentalists



The Interfor Attack

In 1999, almost 100 Interfor workers and friends took the law into their own hands, and confronted local environmentalists in British Columbia's Elaho Valley. They vandalized a camp and assaulted several individuals, three of whom were hospitalized. Subsequently, five Interfor workers were charged with assault and are now awaiting trial. Even more alarming than the acts of its employees is the role of Interfor itself. The employees carried out the assault using Interfor logging trucks. A company vice-president and three directors were in the region at the time but did nothing to stop the vigilante attack. Interfor trucks and radios were used to co-ordinate the violence.

How the Supreme Court of British Columbia, Canada Found Interfor's Actions

The following quotes were taken from a Supreme Court ruling issued on June 6, 2000 (Ruling number: 2000-BCSC 888), where the Honourable Mr. Justice Vickers found Interfor partly to blame for this vigilante attack.

Interfor Supports 'ethnic cleansing': "On September 15, 1999, Sayle and Haffey [Interfor employees in charge of the logging operation] were aware that all TFL 38 employees were converging on the area where a tree sit was in progress... They saw 20 or more men proceed over the bridge and destroy the PATH [People's Action for Threatened Habitat] camp and the private property of campers. They saw injury inflicted on some campers. Their efforts to dissuade the men from these illegal acts were feeble and ineffective. In his diary, Sayle records the event as 'ethnic cleansing'. That entry gives considerable insight into his view of what took place." [page 41, section 69]

Interfor Does Not Take Effective Action Against its Violent Employees: "All Interfor employees who left their place of work on September 15 were docked two hours pay. No additional penalty was imposed on those who destroyed the PATH camp and, in particular, no additional penalty was imposed on those who had taken part in the activities of August 11 and September 15. The principle of progressive discipline, well understood in labour relations, appears to have been ignored." [page 42, section 69]

Interfor Destroys Evidence then Lies in Court: “Haffey videotaped the destruction of the PATH camp and later, on the instructions of Sayle, threw the tape over the bridge and into the deep canyon of Lava Creek. The RCMP have been unable to retrieve this evidence. Haffey, in recalling the events of that day, lied to counsel, the police and this court.” [page 43, section 70]

B.C. Supreme Court finds Interfor Responsible for its Employees Actions: “It is no answer to say that the actions of employees are not the actions of the plaintiffs. In these circumstances the plaintiffs must take full responsibility for the actions of their employees and staff. Since these events, Interfor has taken steps to disavow and condemn these actions. It is not sufficient to acknowledge and condemn these errors in judgment and not be held accountable for them on this application to consider whether the interlocutory injunction should continue.” [page 43, section 71]

Supreme Court Denounces Interfor’s Vigilante Actions: “The court must denounce vigilante actions, misrepresentations and lies in the strongest possible way in order to preserve the integrity of its own process.” [page 43, section 71]

Interfor Does Not Have Clean Hands: “I have reluctantly concluded that the plaintiffs, on this application, are not before the court with clean hands.” [page 44, section 72]



Which one of these people has been sentenced to a year in jail for their actions in Canada’s Ancient Rainforest?

Betty Krawczyk, a 72-year-old great grandmother, and Barney Kern, a 36-year-old environmentalist, have recently been sentenced to one year in jail each for peacefully protesting Interfor’s ongoing clearcut logging of 1,000 year old trees in the Elaho Valley. Meanwhile, Interfor employees have yet to face trial for their vigilante style assaults on environmentalists as described by the Honourable Mr. Justice Vickers.

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