

ECO-JOURNAL

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March-April, 1994

Who's buying up the forest now?

One of America's ten least wanted comes to Manitoba

by Toby Maloney

The Province of Manitoba is preparing to hand over forest rights in an area the size of PEI to a company cited as one of America's Ten Least Wanted for its environmental record.

Louisiana Pacific, a multinational corporation based in Portland, Oregon plans to establish an Oriented Strand Board (chipboard) operation in Swan River, similar to 14 of its U.S. facilities that were collectively fined a total of \$11.1 million by the Environmental Protection Agency in 1993.

The New York-based Council on Economic Priorities cited Louisiana Pacific as one of "the lowlights" in its 1993 Campaign for Cleaner Corporations based on an extensive survey of the company's environmental, health and safety practices. Louisiana Pacific was six on a list which also included nuclear weapons producer General Electric, CFC's producer Du Pont, petrochemical company Exxon and pulp and paper giant International Paper.

According to the Council on Economic Priorities, Louisiana Pacific:

- had the second worst record in toxic waste management,
- paid the largest civil penalty under any environmental law ever in May 1993 (\$11.1 million) for failing to obtain appropriate air emission certificates for 14 of its facilities (as a result of the Clean Air Act charges Louisiana Pacific was forced to install \$70 million of emission control equipment);
- settled two outstanding lawsuits with the Environmental Protection Agency for \$14 million;
- Paid \$2.9 million in fines (Sept. 1991) under the Clean Water Act for its Sonora, California pulp mill;
- was cited for Occupational Health and Safety Act charges including one considered wilful.

The plant proposed for Swan River uses a similar process to the 14 that were cited for air emission violations in the U.S. and a controversial plant in

Dawson Creek, B.C. The plants use formaldehyde and diisocyanate (MDI) for bonding the wood. The chemicals are heated and sprayed onto the wood, causing mists containing chemicals in the isocyanate group to become suspended in the air. The product is used as a cheap substitute for plywood in framing houses, a business that is booming thanks to increased housing starts in much of the United States.

Louisiana Pacific representative Dan Dilworth said in an interview that his company was unfairly singled out by the EPA and that the technology it was forced to install in the United States won't be used here.

"No were going to build to the standards set by the (Manitoba Department of Environment)."

That rankles environmentalists here and in Dawson Creek who insist that means a cheaper and easier regulatory path for Louisiana Pacific because Canada does not currently set standards for emissions of the chemicals in question.

In Dawson Creek opponents of the facility have related the emissions to a higher

Don't forget ...

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Send in your nominations for Manitoba's 4th annual grassroots environmental awards recognizing citizen action

SEE PAGE 5 FOR DETAILS

Please see DIVIDED page 14

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ECO-BRIEFS

Round Tables showcase for NACE bid

The self-congratulatory overtones at the first "Joint Meeting of Manitoba's Community Round Tables" March 18 were probably evidence of the Conservative Government's stumping to get the North American Commission on the Environment (NACE) headquarters for Winnipeg. NACE is the by-product of opposition to the North American Free Trade Agreement in the U.S. Congress and elsewhere. A side agreement on the environment led by President Bill Clinton will establish the commission, ostensibly to guard against the likely environment impacts of trade decisions. At the Manitoba conference Environment Minister Glen Cummings said our province has "some bragging rights in how we've been able to bring together all of the communities." Premier Gary Filmon said "we must see our neighbours not as competitors, but in cooperation for a sustainable future" and went on to express Manitoba's interest in hosting the NACE office. It seems other political concerns won out - NACE will instead establish an office in Montreal.

Sustainable Development act proposed

The province released its proposals for a Sustainable Development Act in a discussion paper by the Manitoba Round Table on Environment and Economy. The discussion paper is in the same workbook format as earlier consultations through the Manitoba Round Table. Response to the workbook will determine whether public hearings will be held.

At a first glance the Act would enshrine principles of sustainability in existing and future Acts; provide for "sustainability assessments" and consolidated licensing and approvals; adopt criteria or checklists for policies and administrative activities including budgets and funding; and to allow for the formalization of both the provincial Round Table and local round tables as advisory bodies.

In all 104 current or proposed pieces of legislation are cited as a high priority for "achieving sustainable development." A likely objection from environmentalists will be that economic considerations already play the deciding role in most government activities and that the legislation could allow further penetration of economic consequences into environmental protection legislation. The other issue, of course, surrounds interpretation and enforcement. The government claims it is guided by principles of sustainable development now, but basic elements such as "integration of environmental and economic decisions" and "public participation" and "distributive justice" (benefits should be proportionate to impacts suffered) have not been in evidence in recent projects or decisions by the province. More on this in upcoming issues.

Get a copy of the workbook from the Sustainable Development Coordination Unit (945-1124) or see a copy at the Eco-Network Environmental Resource Centre.

Funding for environmental industries

The federal government has announced some serious funding for the four western Environmental Industry Associations to provide technical assistance, regulatory

Continued on next page

advice and business and financial counselling to "small and medium-sized" companies. The headquarters for the Canadian Environmental Technology Advancement Centre (CETAC) will be at the Winnipeg offices of the Manitoba Environmental Industries Association (MEIA) (501-D Weston Street) with sub-offices at the industry associations in Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia.

The federal commitment from Environment and Western Diversification is \$4 million over four years according to a MEIA representative. MEIA also receives funding from the provincial Sustainable Development Innovations Fund and several of its member businesses also receive funding from the Environmental Industries Development Initiative part of the fund.

UPDATE

Diversion diversion?

"Get me rewrite!"

You can be forgiven for being confused about the latest word on diverting water from the Assiniboine River after reading the last *Eco-Journal*. Although the Pembina Valley Water Co-op announced in January that they were withdrawing their proposal to take water from the Assiniboine (see *Diversion Plans cancelled: Coalitions still mobilized on related issues*, ECJ January-February) activists from Manitobans Against the Diversion note that the developer has retained reserve rights for the Assiniboine equivalent to their original proposal.

Some say that leaves the door open for the Water Co-op to do in increments what wouldn't pass muster as a larger project. Even though the current plan proposes a smaller project utilizing the Red River, diversion foes tried, to no avail, to get the reserve rights issue on to the record as part of the latest Clean Environment Commission review.

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Calendar of events

April 15: Manitoba Benefit for Clayoquot Sound. Wyrd Sisters and others perform at the West End Cultural Centre.

April 17: Transcend '94 offers Music, Style and Rhythm at Le Rendezvous 8 p.m. Buick 6, Tanglefoot, Skingerbreadman, and Ragamaroons plus a Drum Jam (Bring Your Own Drum). Sustainable fashions by Divine Decadence, Dream Weaver, and Las Manos. Tickets available at the three stores and at the door.

April 19: Co-Housing Information Evening hosted by Prairie Housing Resources, 7:30 p.m. Crossways Centre 222 Furby at Broadway. Co-Housing is a form of housing that originated in Denmark and combines the autonomy of private dwellings with the advantages of community living, including conservation of land without loss of amenity space. Characteristics of co-housing include participation in design and operating structures, self-financing, benefits in energy efficiency. Co-housing can be designed in a variety of forms -- new homes, converted warehouses, clusters of existing homes.

April 22: Earth Day! Organize your own observance in your neighbourhood. One idea is to promote a personal Energy Fast for

the day. Forego the use of electricity, gas, hot water etc, for the day. Eat food that doesn't require cooking (refrigeration excepted so you don't waste food). In the evening use candles (beeswax not petroleum-based) instead of electric lighting. Unplug your phone if you can get away with it.

April 22-23: Waste Reduction: Making it Work in Manitoba: A Manitoba Conference and Trade Show in Winkler sponsored by Recycling Council of Manitoba and the Pembina Valley Recycling Network. For more information or to register call Gladys Terichow 1-822-5372.

April 22: Community Recycling Drive for Operation Eyesight International and the Children's Hospital Book Market. Collection depots for books and used glasses at Pembina and Corydon interchange in the Time Zone parking lot from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.

April 23: Osborne Village celebrates Earth Day with a pancake breakfast, eco-trade fair, and eco-fashion show.

April 23: Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society presents Blue-Wilderness Manitoba: A National Park Struggles to Be Born, a multi-media show on the Little Limestone Lake/Long Point National Park Candidate Site, 8 p.m. Walker Theatre in Winnipeg. Discover an unknown country in the heart of Manitoba. The bluest waters north of the Caribbean. Spectacular limestone cliffs and caves! Admission \$5.

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Business Meeting from 1 to 3 p.m.

- *Steering Committee Elections*
- *Selection of delegate to the Canadian Environmental Network*
- *Member groups info swap*

Vegetarian Potluck Dinner 6 - 9 p.m.

- *Dessert Auction and Silent Auction*
- *1994 Environmental Awards Ceremony*
- *Presentation on The Future of Manitoba's Parks by CPAWS*

May 28 St. Paul's Anglican Church, 830 Point Road and North Drive in Fort Garry

TICKETS (\$5 ADULTS, CHILDREN FREE) AVAILABLE BY PHONING 772-7542

April 24: Interfaith Sunrise Service at St. Boniface Cathedral 6:19 a.m. Earth Day at the Forks starts at 12 noon and includes Earthshops (workshops for the whole family from 12 to 4), Trade Show/Environmental Information Fest (12 to 5 Forks Plaza) Families of the Past, Teaching Lodge (12 to 5 Forks Historic Site) and a Concert from 12 to 5 at the Forks Plaza.

April 29-30: St. Benedict's Educational Centre hosts Council of All Beings: An Earth Justice Workshop. Facilitators Freda Rajotte, Sharon Lawrence, and Catherine Labinowich lead an exploration to identify more deeply with all beings in creation. Play, music, art, meditation, prayer, ritual and worship are the methods to assist participants to deepen understanding and compassion as a step to stopping the destruction. Call 339-1705 to register.

From the Network News File ...

Election Ecology

What would you like to ask Manitoba's politicians about the environment? A provincial election could be called as early as this Spring or as late as next winter, but the Manitoba Eco-Network is getting ready now to help educate Manitobans about environmental issues. Traditionally the Network organizes election debates or a leaders forum accompanied by a questionnaire to the parties.

Get involved in the upcoming provincial election now by submitting your questions and concerns to Election Questionnaire, Manitoba Eco-Network, Box 26007, 116 Sherbrook, Winnipeg, R3C 4K9.

Grassroots Recognition

Do you know an environmental activist (or group) who has laboured selflessly without thought of compensation? Here is your chance to recognize that contribution by nominating someone for one of Manitoba's grassroots environmental awards. The 1994 Manitoba Eco-Network Environmental Awards will be awarded at our May 28 Potluck Dinner. Send your candidates, with a paragraph or two to support your nomination, to Awards, Manitoba Eco-Network, Box 26007, 116 Sherbrook,

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Conversion or diversion:

Local perspectives on the future of defence industries

by Ian Heisey

It is now a shared priority among defence industries, the federal government, and disarmament groups alike. The subject is economic conversion, but it seems that each camp has its own reasons for pushing it and also ideas for just what the concept means. Defence companies need to find other buyers to counter shaky military markets, politicians want to free up defence money for other civilian needs, and peace groups see conversion as a way to curb arms exports and replace weapons manufacturing with products that are socially useful and environmentally sound.

But just how easy is it for defence-based companies, which for years have been served contracts and capital from the government, to simply switch a template and begin producing tractors instead of tanks? Another question raised by Project Ploughshares David Jackman, speaking at a workshop on

economic conversion at Project Peacemakers anniversary festival in Winnipeg, is what exactly does the peace and justice community want these companies to produce instead of armaments? Will the products be sustainable or simply sappers of nonrenewable resources and pollution-producing?

Chris Young, an employee at Bristol Aerospace in Winnipeg responsible for the company's conversion strategy, a position created last August which is being funded by the Department of National Defence and Bristol, said conversion conjures up various definitions from people with differing agenda.

"Everyone has their own idea of what it means," he said, explaining that it is becoming more difficult to clearly distinguish what products will be used in the military industry and what will be exclusively for civil use.

He said this is more evident in Canada than in the U.S. because there are fewer major defence companies in Canada which base their operations solely on defence production.

"It's becoming very blurry as to what is a military product and what is a civilian product," he said.

Young said that although it is a long process for defence companies to transfer the base of their production to commercial uses, the highly educated personnel and sophisticated calibre of technology could make it possible eventually.

"The problem is selling the damn stuff," he said, adding that most defence companies have, for up to 40 years, been supplied by the government with contracts and research dollars and have no experience in advertising, building up a distribution network, and breaking into new markets. "They don't know anything about distribution, period," he said.

Defence companies have built up a certain culture of dependence on the government, said Young, although he emphasized that Bristol is diversified and is presently involved in contributing to the development of small satellites.

What the government considers peacekeeping production may not be that different from conventional military-based production, said Young, citing that 15 of the EH 101 helicopters would have been dubbed "peacekeeping" production. He said when talking conversion the government has supplied more rhetoric than ideas and initiatives.

"Conversion is a relatively new concept," he said. "There have been very few success stories."

Companies such as Bristol will succeed by forming strategic alliances and supplying companies that are situated in the commercial market with components, rather than attempting to break into markets in which they have no prior experience, he said.

Young said there is little previously established direction for pursuing conversion, and he added that groups such as Project Ploughshares have focussed their advice on technological possibilities and have neglected the distribution and marketing problems that face defence companies.

According to

Young, grass-roots peace groups in the city can push for conversion by pressing the government to place priority on developing medical and environmental technology, which could be viable options for traditional weapons producers.

One development that Bristol is researching, which Young highlighted as an example of conversion potential, are small satellites that Bristol's space division has presented. Young said the satellite's civilian applications could include surveillance of environmental degradation whether it be through monitoring of forests, soil or oceanography. Young said other options for conversion are related to the medical industry. Young said that although the military market has been reduced, and it is difficult to break into European markets there is an emerging region seeking weapons.

"For us the big market is Asia," he said,



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Some examples of conversion attempts

Until recently very few examples of conversion or specifics about potential conversion were available. For the last few decades conversion proponents have mostly been part of the peace and disarmament movement and therefore marginal to public policy decisions. There are, however some specific instances where conversion potential is being or has been seriously considered:

- The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is considering the transformation of 15 nuclear weapons bunkers at Pease Air Force Base in New Hampshire into a bat cave. Most species of bats are threatened by habitat loss. Part of the base has already been turned into a wildlife sanctuary, but the bunkers remain.
- Research into the field of magnetic levitation transportation could provide a bridge for displaced aerospace workers to work on mass transit applications in the U.S. Private consortia including defence contractor Grumman Corporation are designing systems based on the technology which has been developed thus far by the Departments of Transportation and Energy and the Army Corps of Engineers.
- Signal processing used for so-called smart weapons may be used instead to detect small tumours on mammograms due to research at the Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Ohio.

- Edo Corporation which developed lightweight composite fuel tanks for the Canadian F/A-18 fighters and helicopters is planning to develop vehicles fuelled by natural gas using the same technology.

... *Press for Conversion*

- Grumman Corporation is proposing the use of its sensor capability to monitor and detect excessive emissions from automobiles and identify the vehicle for follow up.
- Farmers in eastern Washington State have claimed a 30 year old missile complex in the middle of a grain field for storing combine harvesters in the long cavern which formerly housed Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles.

... *Manchester Guardian Weekly*

- The North Dakota Peace Alliance has been studying prospects for conversion of air force bases in Minot and elsewhere for wind power generation. At the International Peace Festival at the International Peace Gardens south of Boissevain, last year a representative referred to the prairie region as the Saudi Arabia of wind generation. A former Boeing engineer said aerospace technology has direct applications to wind farm electrical generation.

explaining that continuing regional conflict is a high priority for Asian countries with escalating defence budgets.

Cutbacks in the defence budget affect more than just the bottom line numbers, and many people have been shocked to find themselves highly trained and possessing valuable experience but out of work.

Fred King, who lost his \$50,000 per year at Paramax as a logistics manager responsible for mission avionics, said Paramax was hit hard by the demise of the EH 101 helicopter program, which he didn't think would actually happen.

"We didn't think anybody would cancel the program," King said. He thought the Liberals would reverse their thinking once they realized the cost of cancelling to taxpayers because of all the subcontracts. "They kept their word."

King, who says he voted Liberal in the election, is nonetheless sceptical of the Liberal plan to create jobs through infrastructure projects because they are labour intensive instead of skills based. When asked whether military production is any more sustainable, King said there will be a continual need for some military production.

"I don't have that much faith in my fellow man. I think there is going to be a need for military presence."

Layoffs at Bristol Aerospace have been no less harsh with more than 100 since November and 31 more due for termination on February 25, contributing to a projected total of 450 layoffs in the span of a year and a half, according to a Bristol machinist who asked not to be identified.

continued on next page



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Continued from previous page

He said that Bristol has continued to invest in defence technology, has no interest in retraining people and in fact subcontracts out much of their work to smaller shops in Winnipeg such as Franklin Enterprises, a machine shop on Bunting Street that employs about 65 people.

"At work right now you have a series of rumours -- people don't know what to do. Right now nobody is safe -- people go to work afraid," he said.

Having worked at Bristol for ten years, making \$19.25 per hour before being let go, he said there are other people who have worked at Bristol for 20 years who are now getting laid off. He also said that Bristol has undertaken anti-union antics, such as pushing workers for overtime instead of creating new shifts and not investing in apprenticeships or employee training.

"It is sad that for a company that receives so much help from the government we don't even have apprenticeships," he said.

Cecile Cessita, representative for the Canadian Auto Workers Local 3005 said she is hoping Bristol will agree to take part in a Labour Adjustment Program designed to create an opportunity for workers who have been let go to be retrained, re-educated, and relocated to get them back into the labour force. The funding for the retraining and education program would be split into 25 per cent from the province, 25 per cent from the federal government, and 50 per cent from the employer. The program is completely voluntary for the company and has not historically been part of any collective agreement, said Cessita.

"Certainly I think (inclusion in the collective agreement) should

be a mandatory provision," she said, explaining that the government could take a more aggressive role in helping preserve the existing workforce.

A version of this article titled "From Swords into Stilettos: Has Economic Conversion Become a Smokescreen" first appeared in *Peace Projections* published by Project Peacemakers in Winnipeg (775-8178). Ian Heisey is a Voluntary Service Worker for the organization.

Peace debt blocking work for peace dividend

Peace Alliance Winnipeg is working to re-establish a coalition of peace groups in Winnipeg. As well as the Walk for Peace, scheduled for June 18 this year, the group is working to respond to the federal review of Defence and External Affairs and other conversion activities.

A debt of approximately \$4000, much of it rung up during the local response to the Gulf War, is owed by the Winnipeg Coordinating Committee for Disarmament which was the predecessor of Peace Alliance Winnipeg and the former organizer of the Walk for Peace. PAW is making a last push to retire this debt so peace activists can get on with their important work.

If you are someone who has participated in a Walk for Peace over the last ten years or someone who has appreciated the efforts of activists please help to get this off our backs. Send your contribution to Peace Alliance Winnipeg, c/o Project Peacemakers, 745 Westminster Ave. Winnipeg, R3G 1A5.

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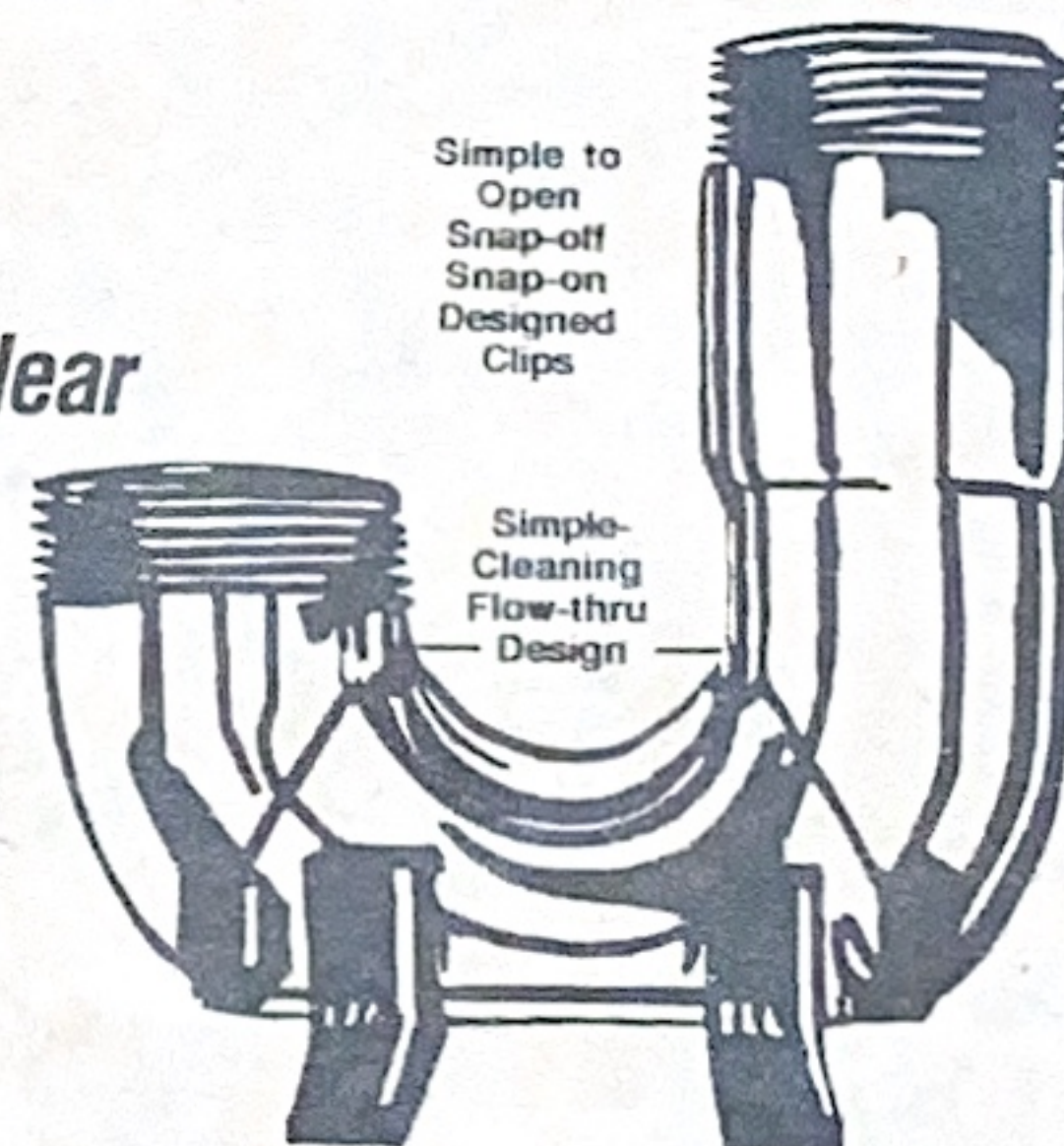
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Eco-Scam: The False Prophets of Ecological Apocalypse

(Ronald Bailey St. Martin's Press, 1993)

Reviewed by Nick Carter

I recently stumbled upon *Eco-Scam* at the local library. I was surprised that it had not been displayed with the new books acquired in the fall of 1993, given the eclectic tastes of the staff. The book is important because it encapsulates disagreements about environmental degradation which are seductive to many in industry and government, and increasingly popular with the public as the economic pinch tightens.

Bailey attempts to debunk the so-called millenarians, doom sayers and alarmists who allegedly predict early catastrophic consequences for the world if we do not mend our environmental behaviour. He has done us a service by providing six hundred references to ten short chapters. *Eco-Journal* readers who suspect that we plunge too fast on too little evidence in some areas (my own doubts centre on climate change) will find a responsive chord. *Eco-Scam* should be read at speed, but the reader should have on hand a couple of recent compilations; for example, "Clearcutting" (see story page 15 - ed.) and "Vital Signs, 1992" from the Worldwatch Institute (reviewed in *Eco-Journal*, November-December - ed.). The following is a sampling, not a systematic journey through the pages:

Chapter 5, "The Refrigerator Effect" describes the responses of some scientists to the global trend of decreasing temperatures that began in the 1940's, and which, in Bailey's terms, gave rise in the 1970's to a long series of popular doomsday books predicting global climatological disaster. His alarmists are Stephen Schneider, Reid Bryson and Lowal Ponte.

Schneider's advocacy of planning institutes for handling worldwide crises, one of which was global cooling, together with his search for an "ecological faith," are labelled elitist egalitarianism. After a useful account of climatic fluctuations over the last 10,000 years, to which humankind has "adapted beautifully," Bailey takes satisfaction from the fizzle the new ice-age theory suffered when the current warming trend began to be noticed.

But what is certain about global warming? I found Chapter 9, "The Sky is Falling" to be the best in the book. First, Paul Erlich, the doom-sayer par excellence in the chapters dealing with hunger and resource depletion, is again held up for scaremongering. Then the argument is built that the scare stems from the "quest for prestige and money," from a choir whose members conspire to sing the crisis song which will secure them research programs from government.

Whether or not many scientists have succumbed to such a lure, much in this chapter feeds scepticism about the strength of the evidence for warming. I hope, however, that we shall not be diverted from increasing efforts to reduce greenhouse gases. The author fails wholly to counsel precaution.

Data is sparse and patchy across the globe. Models are far from sophisticated. Perturbations such as the Pinatubo eruption are frequent. Too little time has passed to establish trends managed by modern instruments. Yet all in all, it is plain sense, in my view, to curb the use of our atmosphere as a gaseous dump.

The final question of the chapter: "After the balloon bursts on global warming" has been incorporated like overpopulation, re-

source depletion, bio-tech plagues, and the ozone hole into the conventional wisdom of doom, to what new doom will the millenarians turn to next" will be found contemptuous and undeserved by environmentalists, however they come by their "environmentalism."

"Dr. Frankenstein's Dream" is the title of Chapter 6. "Bio-Luddite". Jeremy Rifkin is cast as the bete noire. Rifkin is said to deify nature; we sin when we tamper with it. Government, the author claims, has listened too willingly to the activists, rushing to impose regulation. Thus the pace of recombinant DNA research has been slowed at the cost of what could have been achieved in the prevention and cure of genetically based diseases.

For similar reasons, beneficial progress in plant and animal modification has been delayed. The fights over Frostban and Bovine Growth Hormone are described at some length. Man has always engineered micro-organisms. We just know how to do it better with modern bio-technology. Bailey says switching genes between species is a logical extension of the frontier. If an already hypersensitive regulatory system imposes onerous new requirements, "the losers will be consumers and patients who never get a chance to learn about the tremendous benefits of new bio-tech products and medicines rejected by timid, ass-covering regulators."

Read the book and perhaps share the author's belief that there is nothing out there that humankind cannot handle. But beware of the waste, misery and flotsam we create in a world driven by self-interest and profit, placing faith in the market as a substitute for conscience.

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Tenacious river watchers defend eco-system under stress

by Anne Lindsey

With all the publicity and focus on the Red and the Assiniboine, citizens of Winnipeg might be forgiven for their lack of familiarity with the other waterways of "River City." But a local group, Save Our Seine (or SOS for short) is out to change all that, at least as far as one such "unknown" river is concerned.

SOS Chair, Jean Dunmire, says that public education and awareness is going to be an increasingly important component of the group's mandate to enhance and preserve the Seine River. SOS began in 1990 when citizens of St. Boniface and St. Vital met to discuss the deplorable state of the Seine River. The founding members of SOS discovered public interest in the river was high, and people were ready and willing to go to work to protect what they saw as a valuable

Member Group Profile: Save Our Seine

natural resource.

Much of the citizen concern with the Seine River was sparked around 1980 when residents joined forces to oppose a City of Winnipeg development plan for a "Seine River Parkway." Dunmire says the plan was ambitious and inappropriate to the relatively small size and overall situation of the river. Lack of citizen consultation was a major downfall of the original plan, which was eventually scrapped. However, the City has once again revived the Seine River Parkway Plan and this time, has invited the SOS to join a Citizens Advisory Committee. The planning began in February and will conclude in May 1995.

contributing factors: loss of water into the Red River Floodway (the siphon which carries the Seine below the floodway is cracked and in need of repair), increased agricultural use for irrigation,

the simultaneous irrigation of three urban golf courses, and pumping from unauthorized wells to name but a few. Combine these with drought conditions in some years, and the flow is reduced in places to a mere trickle, causing fish to die off and the formation of smelly, stagnant pools.

Illegal dumping is another serious problem facing the Seine. SOS suspects untreated sewage may be entering the river before it reaches the city, and has actually discovered illegal sewer hook-ups from apartment buildings in St. Boniface.

Plenty of garbage gets tossed into the Seine - everything from household waste to old cars to enormous cement blocks. Storm sewer run-off is added to the witches brew - this may include all manner of automobile-related toxins. (Dunmire says that one resident actually saw the river "on fire" one evening which would suggest that oil is one of these ingredients). Other forms of pollution include run-off from agricultural, residential lawn and golf course chemicals.

SOS has not sat idly by while this onslaught continues. The group tests water quality to monitor the problem and in 1990, they carried out the first of a series of annual river clean-ups. Volunteers outfitted with rakes, shovels, hip-waders and gloves have laboured to pull garbage out of the river and remove log jams and other impediments to the flow.

For removal of larger obstructions requiring heavy equipment, SOS has been successful in obtaining a variety of community and government grants. Recently they applied for Federal Infrastructure program money to repair the siphon which carries the Seine under the Red River Floodway.

The group has organized Town Hall meetings to share information about the River, and has worked co-operatively with various levels of government to rectify problems such as the apartment sewer dumping, and on projects such as construction of a log

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Continued from previous page

boom at the Floodway. They also sponsored a detailed study of the river by a Natural Resources Institute student, Morley Smith.

But clearly much more remains to be done, and SOS appears to be entering a new phase with its agreement to participate on the Advisory Committee to the Seine River Task Force - a group struck by the City to study the water quality, hydrology, vegetation, soils, history and existing land use of the Seine River. The eventual goal of the Task Force is to recommend future uses and development of the Seine River basin.

SOS feels that a commitment to an open and public process, backed by comprehensive data, will go a long way to avoiding the pitfalls of the earlier City plan. However, in its position paper, the group insists that a pre-requisite to any development plan must be guaranteed action on the water level and quality concerns that have been identified.

To this end, they are lobbying for a Seine River Water Management Authority which will be able to "cut through the web of jurisdictional problems faced in implementing....(the necessary) strategies."

In addition, research into the potential legal infractions which occur along the Seine's length will be needed.

For example, are there dams or other structures which require licensing? Are existing license conditions being followed? Will proposed river bank development plans be detrimental to the river eco-system? Dunmire says the group may be seeking legal advice on these questions before long.

SOS has a comprehensive list of recommendations. Some are straightforward, for example, immediate inspection and repair of the siphon to remedy water loss, and the implementation of a watering schedule and water storage tanks at the golf courses. Others are more complex and challenging -- reclamation of some of the 285 sq.km. of lost watershed area, for instance.

SOS emphasizes its desire for the Task Force to "go

beyond identifying the jurisdictional responsibilities, and actually start exerting appropriate pressure and taking concrete measures to correct the water flow problems." Jean Dunmire and the group look forward to the

day when the Seine will again be a navigable waterway. They suggest that it could eventually be declared a canoe corridor with an adjacent trail and small park network, connecting to Promenade Tache, and existing trail systems. They are proposing restoration of lands along the river, and the designation of appropriate parcels of riverside property as natural preserves as integral to any long-term plan for development along the Seine.

At 250 members strong, SOS is a determined group of people who are committed to making a difference in the urban environment. They have a strong track record for action and the City is fortunate that they

have agreed to participate in the Seine River Task Force.

For more information about Save our Seine call 233-8404.

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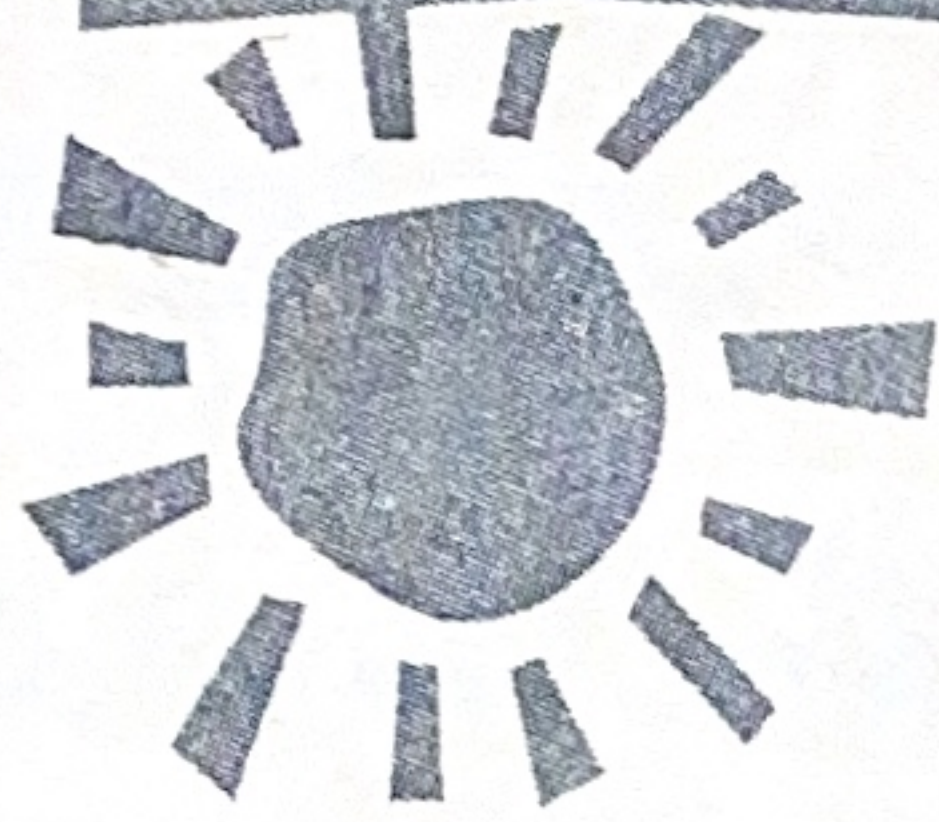
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Blue Wilderness Manitoba

CPAWS slide show events to gather support for new national park site

by Roger Turenne

Are the names Little Limestone, Long Point, Kawinaw and Katimik familiar to you? If you are like most Manitobans, the answer is probably no.

On the other hand, you likely have heard of Clayoquot Sound. Yet there is a Clayoquot Sound right here that few people are aware of. It is an area of tremendous beauty, of great ecological significance, and under serious threat by short-sighted resource extraction activities. It is also the prime candidate for Manitoba's next national park.

This ecological treasure can be found in the 8000 square kilometres north and south of Grand Rapids, Manitoba. It does not even have an official name yet, so it is referred to as the Little Limestone Lake and Long Point national park candidate area.

It contains 200 kilometres of the most spectacular shoreline of Lake Winnipeg, with fine sandy beaches ten times the size of Grand Beach, and with towering limestone cliffs which, in winter, create enchanting ice sculptures as water seeps through the porous limestone and then freezes.

There are lakes with the bluest waters north of the Caribbean and a network of caves which provide the most northerly bat hibernacula in Canada. It is a unique place where all the major ungulates of North America — moose, caribou, deer, elk and bison — live together in a complex interrelationship. There are vast numbers of colonial nesting birds and large wetlands which are the world's most productive ecosystems.

Unless Manitobans know about this place and take appropriate measures to protect it now and for future generations, it will not remain unimpaired for very long. Creating a national park is the best way to protect this area, but sadly, the provincial government



It is an area of tremendous beauty, of great ecological significance, and under serious threat by short-sighted resource extraction activities ... Creating a national park is the best way to protect this area, but sadly, the provincial government does not want this to happen.

does not want this to happen.

This is why the Canadian Parks and Wilderness society (CPAWS) has prepared a multi-media slide show on this region which will tour the province in the coming months, starting with a premiere in Brandon on March 24. The show, titled Blue Wilderness Manitoba—a national park struggles to be born, will be a highlight of Earth day in Winnipeg (at the Walker Theatre,

April 23, 1994, at 8:00 p.m.) and will also play in Brandon, Thompson, Grand Rapids, The Pas, Selkirk, Gimli and Ashern.

It is family entertainment with a message and with wonderful music, photography, and prizes. So come along on a journey of discovery to a place no one knows, to the Blue Wilderness right here in the heart of Manitoba ... before it is too late.

Divided community faces forest proposal

continued from page 1

incidence of chronic obstructed pulmonary disease and raised questions about a link to Downs Syndrome in newborns.

Dilworth protests that no one can prove emissions of formaldehyde are harmful and that Oriented Strand Board (OSB) plants are forced to try and hit "a moving target" for control technology. "We actually have been reacting to a lot of sensationalized statements with no factual data," he said going on to say that no one can say at what rate emissions become harmful to health.

"If these (formaldehyde and MDI) are dangerous when they are properly handled, why in the hell do (government regulators) allow the usage of them?" he asks.

Dilworth isn't shy to counter attack saying that the criticisms are "bordering on slander ... We're not going to sit back ..." he says before stopping in mid-sentence.

Other concerns about the project abound. Ken Sigurdson, a farmer who represents Concerned Citizens of the Valley which

includes the National Farmworkers Union local, loggers, trappers and environmentalists in the Swan River area says his group is opposed on three fronts including the concerns about air emissions (the proposed plant site is about two miles from Minitonas) and the company's past record but also on issues surrounding forestry.

The province is preparing to trade off some of the Forest Management Licence

previously awarded to Repap (in exchange for not pressing the terms of Manitoba's contract with Repap, which is in default of a 1989 agreement to expand its operation). Forest Units 11 and 13 (which includes Duck Mountain Provincial Park and the

Roaring and Shell Rivers) from the Repap licence would be allocated to Louisiana Pacific Hardwood rights to Repap's Forest Units 12 and 14 and hardwood rights to Forest Unit 43 would also become the domain of the newcomer.

The smaller logging operators, many of them farmers who supplement their income

by logging seasonally for their own mini mills have already been squeezed out of the best cutting

areas by the deal with Repap, says Sigurdson. Signing over the forest management units to Louisiana Pacific will "deny local operators any future" Sigurdson says.

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If these chemicals are dangerous when they are properly handled, why in the hell do they allow the usage of them?

... Louisiana Pacific Operations Manager Dan Dilworth

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As well Louisiana Pacific is said to be planning to cut 900,000 cubic metres of hardwood per year, which would exceed the annual allowable cut (489,000 m³) by almost double. The company, however has expressed an intention to cut trees with a diameter as small as four inches in diameter (instead of the usual nine). To Sigurdson that means mechanized clearcutting of blocks of Aspen will displace the owner operators in the forest now.

Sigurdson said that the yield of Aspen will deteriorate with each generation and potentially the destruction of microbes in the soil could disrupt stand growth altogether after the third cut.

"There's nothing sustainable about clearcutting Aspen," says Sigurdson. "Once the forest is allocated then we have no opportunity to develop the forest in a different fashion."

The company is pushing to begin construction by mid-June

so it doesn't miss a construction year, but Dilworth's guess is the environmental impact statement prepared in consultation with government departments won't even be completed for "the next 60 to 90 days." At the same time Dilworth denies the company is precluding any real scrutiny of the proposal.

"We're not saying shorten this up or take shortcuts ... all we're saying is have everyone work to a (June) deadline," he said, noting the public meetings that have been held in the local area.

It has submitted its plant proposal for licensing as a Class 3 development (a pulp mill that draws water and has liquid effluent would require a more rigorous Class 1 licence) and sees the forest issue as something to settle later.

"The forest issue which is really separate from the plant ... is a more integrated and time consuming exercise."

But environmentalists don't see the forest as separate and know that once the investment is made and jobs are on the line the pressure will be there to provide enough wood regardless of forest ecosystems.

A coalition calling itself the Manitoba Future Forest Alliance including Sigurdson's group, CHOICES, TREE, Greenpeace, Sierra Club Agassiz chapter, the 1992 Committee, Western Canada Wilderness Com-

mittee, Manitobans Against the Assiniboine Diversion, and the Manitoba Naturalists Society is demanding a comprehensive public assessment that would put the forest first. Don Sullivan, CHOICES activist who represents the group said his group will push for the company to adopt the same standards it has been forced to meet in the United States and that the company record should be examined as part of the official assessment process.

The impact assessment should also include First Nations concerns, the status of public parks, the higher U.S. standards and

There's nothing sustainable about clearcutting Aspen. Once the forest is allocated then we have no opportunity to develop the forest in a different fashion.

**... Ken Sigurdson
Concerned Citizens of the Valley**

intervenor funding to conduct independent analyses of the issues. Process is likely to become a major issue because of previous battles over logging in provincial parks, and because of the province's history of rigidly narrow scoping of the assessments. Participant funding is provided for under the Clean Environment Act but is at the discretion of the Minister of Environment.

Meanwhile the pressure is on in Swan River, where the company has been organizing tours for residents to one of its plants in Segula, Michigan. Sigurdson says supporters of the Louisiana Pacific proposal have been told by the company to "challenge the challengers." He was met with boos and jeers at a meeting in Minitonas when he tried to raise questions and concerns and then he heard a rumour the next day that he had been so violent that the RCMP had escorted him out of the meeting.

"It seems to be rolling on this kind of rumour and community division. This is typical of the way (Louisiana Pacific) operate(s)."

Behind the scenes environmentalists and opponents of the proposal are working to gather support

from labour representatives and the Opposition NDP to join the struggle. There's a chance that may happen or at least labour won't get involved because of Louisiana Pacific past experience with labour. For instance the company was described as a "low wage union bashing employer" in a 1988 edition of the IWA newsletter *The Lumberman*.

According to Sigurdson, it took three drives to unionize the plant in Dawson Creek and at one point in the struggle the company threatened to leave town if it was certified. Then the company mobilized the mayor and town council to fight the certification bid.

For his side, Dilworth claims to have the support of 95 to 97 per cent of the community for the project.

"The frustrating thing is someone should pick up their cause rather than

the cause of the four or five that object."

Sigurdson agrees there is a lot of support for the project, although not that much, but he also says that some supporters are beginning to get uncomfortable about the derision that is being directed at him.

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The politics of dissection in the classroom

by Elizabeth Carlyle
Manitoba Animal Rights Coalition

Dissection is a nice word for cutting up dead animals. Dissection is part of the high school curriculum in Manitoba. Many students think that dissection is "icky", and yet receive little support when it comes to find-

ing alternative ways of learning about life.

Every year, millions of animals are bred under often frightful conditions, then killed, packaged and transported to high schools across the continent for the purpose of being

essary nature of dissection and vivisection (cutting up live animals) is that, in England,

surgeon training programs are forbidden to include this waste of life. And England's surgeons are among the best-trained in the world.

OPINION

disrespectfully cut, probed and prodded. Frogs, rats, mice, worms, cat foetuses, pig heads ... the list goes on.

And the saddest part of this whole scenario is that there are other ways of learning about living systems. Aside from the blatant disrespect for life inherent in the whole notion of dissection, and despite the arguments, tenuous at best, that serve to defend the cruel practice, perhaps the greatest affront to humane living in the whole dissection debate is the system's refusal to admit that inexpensive, expedient alternatives do exist.

A convincing example of the unnec-

With a bit of imagination, high school curricula could incorporate many different options to replace dissection. If the purpose of dissection is supposedly to explore living systems, how is a dead specimen any better than a synthetic model, a film, a research project?

Justifications for dissection that rely on the assumption that other-than human life is there for the taking simply do not suffice. Nor does the illogical and hopelessly conservative statement that "in the past, we learned from dissection; therefore, we should continue to do it, regardless of any logical opposition to it."

Some schools, such as Winnipeg's Glenlawn, have had the foresight and understanding at least to offer a choice to its students in terms of enrolling for a biology course that does or does not put dissection on the program. But the overall reaction of teachers and other officials in North America to dissent on the question of dissection has been discouraging and even frightening.

Students are often made to feel "weird" or like "troublemakers" and may suffer academic penalties for refusing to perform a task that is immoral to them. The following

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excerpts from an exchange of letters written by a teacher and student illustrate the climate in which the issue is being decided.

The student refused to do dissection, requesting to be assigned an alternative. (It is, by the way, a student's legal right in Manitoba to refuse to dissect without academic penalty.

The retaliation against this student was unpleasant, even though full marks were achieved on the project, which was to construct a model of a pig.

The teacher's comments were as follows:

"Your pig creation is very well done. The circulatory part is not spatially correct, but spatially good. You have put a lot of effort into your work. But, I have to say I am concerned about your attitude towards dissection. First of all it is not senseless. Without dissection, and practise most surgery to save human lives would not be possible.

I agree that animals are important and I truly love them, but they do not have a soul. Human lives are more important than animals for that reason. God has given us animals to rule over. But that does mean that we need to be responsible in our use of them ... they need to be protected and saved. But using pigs that are raised specifically for the purpose of dissection is not wrong. They experience no pain, and they provide important knowledge for many students.

If you wish to fight for animal rights good. But an attitude of intolerance to other sides (in this situation) will get you nowhere. Animals need protection, but human lives also need to be saved."

The student's letter to the faculty of Education at the University of Manitoba:

"I am writing to you to bring your attention to a matter that I feel needs to be addressed by the instructors of future teachers. You will understand what I am talking about when I tell you of a recent experience of mine that I found very disturbing.

I have just completed the Biology 200 course. I enjoy the study of life and was considering a career in the sciences. However, I will not be taking Biology 300 next school year because I do not wish to dissect, and my teacher will not consider any alternatives to dissection, such as computer images and diagrams.

Although this is an issue that must be looked into more, that is not what I want to bring to your attention. I want to ask you to teach future biology teachers that some people do have legitimate reasons not to dissect, and those students should not be ridiculed or subjected to any humiliation because of their choice.

This past year, I arranged with my teacher to make a plasticine replica of a dissected fetal pig instead of dissecting a real one. However, after I enrolled in the course, I found that I would be taught not by him, but by a student teacher who had just graduated from university. I had a hard time convincing her that it would be more beneficial for me to make a plasticine pig than to EW a pig, complete with velcro organs that could be removed - Which is the silliest project imaginable.

All went relatively well, and my pig turned out to be so good that

she asked to keep it, and I agreed, hoping that she would use it to show other students that there are options to dissecting. However, the day after she left, I received the above letter - a letter that I feel is insulting and that far overreaches a teacher's right to influence a student.

I object to the way she seemed to interpret my dissection refusal as an attitude problem. I had tried to make sure that she understood that I was willing to do as much, if not more work, as the dissecting students, and that I objected to dissection for moral reasons, that were very important and serious to me.

The way that she refers to God infuriated me, because I felt that she was wrong, but mostly because she seemed to think that since she is a teacher, she has the right to shove her religious views on me.

Please, when you train future teachers, make them aware that objecting to dissection does not make a student lazy, or an irrational trouble-maker. Teach them to respect students' beliefs, and consider proven alternatives to dissection. Please note that I don't name this teacher. I'm not trying to get anyone in trouble, I'm just trying to raise some awareness in the classroom."

As these two pieces of correspondence make clear, those opposed to dissection have an uphill battle. The subjects of dissection need your help.

Only by refusing to dissect, for reasons ranging from the "ickiness" of it to the complete disrespect for life involved, will animals be saved.

For more information contact
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Grieve for the stumpscapes, then Act for the forests

by Anne Lindsey

I won't easily forget a conversation I had once while awaiting the Queen Charlotte Islands ferry at Prince Rupert, B.C. A burly and middle-aged fellow, a resident of Queen Charlotte City, on Graham Island.

"The view from my home out over the narrows is one of the most beautiful in the world" he boasted. Now granted, this fellow worked for a logging company (I forget which one) but I was nevertheless shocked to discover (once in Queen Charlotte City) that his view was of what can only be described as a "stump-cape" - the totally logged-off mountainside that is the northern shore of North Moresby Island.

There's a photograph of this slope on page 84 of *Clearcut, The Tragedy of Industrial Forestry*, a new large book published by Sierra Club Books and Earth Island Press. The shot is preceded by, and followed by, hundreds of magnificent and moving photographs of similar scenes from all over the North American continent, including one of a huge clearcut in Manitoba's Nopiming Provincial Park, taken by Defenders of Nopiming activist Hendrik Herfst.

Paging through this book is unsettling. "Sad" and "depressing" are other words I've heard used to describe it. The experience reminds me of travelling through Vancouver Island - at times every turn in the road

Clearcut: The Tragedy of Industrial Forestry

Bill Devall, Editor (Foundation for Deep Ecology)

Sierra Club Books/Earth Island Press,
San Francisco, 1994, 294 pp

reveals yet another bare mountainside, yet another scene of devastation, until one starts to wonder just what manner of creature we humans are. The outrage that follows upon wit-

nessing this kind of abuse has led many lovers of the wilderness into the path of activism to protect what remains of the Earth's precious forests. And it was with this goal in mind that *Clearcut* was originally conceived. Not everyone has the opportunity to see first-hand massive clearcuts of the kind that are illustrated in this book, especially since it is accepted practice in most areas to leave narrow "beauty strips" along travelled highways and waterways (Vancouver Island being one exception to this custom).

Clearcut is an exhibit-format, full colour book, artistically designed and crafted. In this way, it follows in the footsteps of an earlier generation of "coffee table" books - the brainchild of David Brower - depicting the exquisite beauty of wild places in the photographs of Ansel Adams, Eliot Porter and others, combined with the words of poets such as Nancy Newhall and Robinson Jeffers. The idea behind those books was to inspire people to save wilderness. And that work continues, but the creators of *Clearcut* are confronting us with the sad fact that we must do more, that the giant experiment called industrial forestry is inexorably destroying those wild places we have come to love, and in many cases the lives and cultures of the indigenous peoples who call the forests home.

To our various local battles, *Clearcut* brings the incontrovertible evidence that industrial forestry has done enough damage, and that if we want to continue to use the forests' resources, now and into the future, we have to adopt new ways (or perhaps relearn old ways) of thinking about our relationship to the forests.

Clearcut provides us with many tools to begin that relearning process. Along with the photographs, the moving words of modern poets, and the prose describing the problems, there are equally compelling passages setting forth different models, such as the holistic forestry proposed and described by BC forester, Herb Hammond.

The editors of *Clearcut* urge us to read carefully through all the text in order to get a good overview of where we stand, and where we can go from here, and that's good advice. But allow plenty of time for reading - the text is comprehensive. And I would add that having read the book and studied the photographs, one should set aside a space of time to grieve for what has already gone, for the loss is enormous.

Grieve, then act.

Manitoba Eco-Network Member Groups working on forest issues in Manitoba include:

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The struggle to make the case for rail

by Jeff Lowe

Rail activists, environmentalists, and others turned out for an event in March that will be seminal in determining whether the provision of local or transcontinental rail passenger service is to have any future in Canada.

The occasion was a one-day open hearing and round-table discussion hosted by Human Resources Minister Lloyd Axworthy's two Parliamentary secretaries -- Ron Duhamel (M.P. for St. Boniface) and Elijah Harper (M.P. for Churchill). The meeting attracted 50 rail activists, environmentalists, government officials, unionists, the NDP's federal and provincial transport critics Bill Blaikie and Darrell Reid (both of whom hail from Transcona ridings) and members of the unaffiliated (but, nonetheless, interested public).

Noteworthy by their absence were any representatives of the City of Winnipeg - or, organizations speaking on behalf of local business interests.

In January, Axworthy responded to continuing reports out of Ottawa of personnel cuts and shifts and service cutbacks that would further downgrade Manitoba's stature in VIA's national administrative and service network by anointing the two MP's as a sort of "mini-Royal commission" into the future of VIA Rail in Manitoba.

The discussion led to debunking the notion, inculcated by the popular media, that only government money given to the railway industry constituted subsidization; whereas, money more lavishly dispensed to its competitors in the transport realm instead amounted to strategic public investments. The two MP's likewise indicated their sensitivity to the vast extent to which subsidies (both direct and indirect) are being channelled to the trucking, intercity bus, airline, and maritime sectors - while rail alone is compelled to pick up the tab for all of its infrastructure provision and maintenance requirements.

Among those presenting, concurrence was evident as to immediate steps to salvage the role of passenger rail. At the top of the list is the need for VIA Rail to be furnished with a legislative mandate (mirroring the one that laid the groundwork for AMTRAK's outstanding, ever-widening success in the United States).

Calls were aired for the prompt dismissal of the Tory-appointed presidents of VIA and C.N. "North America" - Terry Ivany and Paul Tellier (thus far retained in office by the new Liberal Federal Government) both of whom are regarded by rail advocates as personally promoting an agenda geared to reducing the role of railways within Canadian transport affairs.

While some felt local and regional passenger rail service has become a hopeless cause, there were unanimous demands for the return of daily service on the surviving, northern transcontinental route - as well as the restoration of the southern transcontinental route (the scrapping of which, in 1990 left Regina, Calgary, and Thunder Bay devoid of passenger rail connections to the remainder of the country).

Fears were expressed about the Government's flagging commitment to maintaining adequate Bayline service resulting (sooner or later) in Churchill's loss of one of its key functions as a supply depot for isolated central Arctic communities in the newly-designated territory of Nunavut in favour of Montreal. All, in addition, argued that VIA's marketing efforts should in future be more high-profile and assertive than they have been in past.

Barely a week following the soul-searching session in Winnipeg, however, Duhamel and Harper seemed to have the rug rudely yanked out from under their mission by Federal Transport Minister Douglas Young. Young was reported on March 11 by CBC Radio national news to have made comments in a public speech to the effect that "transcontinental rail passenger service represents a romantic dream of the past, that has no place whatever in the Canada of the future. I plan to take steps to dispense with what remains of it as soon as can possibly be done - a move which has, in my view, been long overdue."

Reacting angrily upon being informed of these remarks (and, to the aspersions on his efforts they entail), Ron Duhamel vowed that "I and Elijah do not intend to permit ourselves to be swayed in whether we accomplish our work, or in how we handle it, in the slightest."

Young's opinions certainly come as no great surprise to critics who have tracked his

public expression of personal philosophical views over the course of his political career. In a previous incarnation as Liberal Party Leader in the New Brunswick legislature, he staked much of his reputation upon advocating that his home province trade in VIA Rail service for Federal funding assistance toward the twinning of the Trans-Canada Highway within New Brunswick. (Appearing to have borrowed a great deal from the example set by his predecessor, current Premier Frank McKenna has made the Roads for Via Trade his Number One priority in dealings with Ottawa on federal transfer payment programs).

Precisely because of this history, the coalition of rail supporters greeted the appointment of Douglas Young as Transport Minister with considerable trepidation. It appears now their worst fears may have been realized.

It is to be wondered why a form of transport avidly being pursued in virtually every other nation on the globe (on both economic and conservation grounds, ironically including the United States) finds so little favour with the leadership of this country. Canada by dint of climate, resources, topography, size, distribution of population and development lends itself more favourably to a rail-dominated transport set-up than does almost any other country on earth.

When it comes to rail roads, Canadians "wrote the book."

It is therefore shocking that our federal Minister of Transport could be so lacking in elementary patriotism as to fail to grasp the special importance of passenger rail service in the forming of this country; and the importance of its continuation to the country's cultural, economic and environmental health. His approach also betrays his evident lack of understanding of the need to craft a balanced national transportation network adequately emphasizing and deploying resources to all modes in an integrated way.

Jeff Lowe is a transportation activist in Winnipeg working with CHOICES. He has called upon the Prime Minister and cabinet to fire the Minister of Transport for his "prejudicial attitude" to rail transport evident in recent remarks. A copy of the letter is available by calling 775-6106.

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