

# the State of the Forest

## The Canadian Landscape as PROPAGANDA

by Oliver Kellhammer

THREE P.M. ON A LEADEN AFTERNOON on Vancouver Island. Fat raindrops are pelting down from a sullen sky. A chilling mist is rolling in from the Pacific. I am standing in the midst of a "clear-cut"—a vast expanse of scorched earth, charred tree stumps and rubble strewn gullies in which pristine mountain streams once flowed. My hiking guidebook, which is out of date, tells me that I'm in an area of "old-growth" forest which is "currently" embroiled in a controversy between environmentalists and the logging industry. It is clear who won. A large plywood sign advises that the sea of destruction stretching out in front of me is a Western Forest Products Ltd. "tree farm" and that the scorched ground has been "treated"—with chemical herbicides—to "encourage the growth of young conifers." Judging by the surrounding stumps, most of the trees (hemlock, cedar and some Sitka spruce) were hundreds of years old when cut or "harvested" (as it is called in the industry). If this was indeed a "tree farm," who planted it in the first place hundreds of years ago? Clearly the reality of the devastation in front of me did not corroborate the language used on the corporation's sign. Soon I learn that such absurd dichotomies between physical reality and the corporate worldview have become a hallmark in the debate over Canada's forests.

THE FOREST . . . Canada's "mantle of green." To many of us, this concept still invokes memories from schoolbooks of stalwart lumberjacks, dwarfed by the vastness of primeval wilderness. Perhaps we imagine a trapper's cabin, amidst towering pines, or perhaps the sight of a moose by a lake at sunset or the "drip-drip-drip" of sap into the buckets of a maple grove in late winter. No matter what particular image comes to mind, our concept of "forest" is clearly archetypal and one that is deeply ingrained in the Canadian psyche.

The forest has often been a defining factor in Canadian social and cultural history. To aboriginal peoples, it provided (and in many cases, continues to provide) food and shelter as well as a context for complex cosmologies and aesthetics. It shaped the patterns of the European colonization/subjugation process, aspects of which continue to this day. It was the forest which fuelled the fur trade and the shipbuilding industry—factors essential to maintaining the power base of the invading Europeans.

At present the forest is serving the needs of corporate capital. The result of these needs is wholesale forest destruction. The corporate sector, in collusion with various levels of government, has sensed the potential for public outrage over this escalating ecological catastrophe. As a result, it has launched a sophisticated propaganda campaign aimed at denying the catastrophe and attempting to reprogram our basic forest concepts. Thus, by the time the catastrophe is complete, most Canadians will no longer possess the frames of reference necessary to describe forest destruction in a meaningful way.

## HEWERS OF WOOD AND SPLITTERS OF WORDS

Canada's rapacious forest products industry has found it difficult to hide its visible effects from an increasingly sceptical public. Canada's deforestation has been compared to that of the Amazon.<sup>1</sup> The clearcuts on Vancouver Island and in Northern Ontario have become so vast as to constitute a dominant landform feature, which is clearly visible in satellite photographs.<sup>2</sup> The forest industry is aware of its image problem and has resorted to various propaganda techniques in order to continue its agenda. It has tried to shift basic terms of reference regarding the natural environment toward the corporate viewpoint through the skilful use of language.

One method is to invent a new language. Preferably, this language should have a limited vocabulary and employ superficially familiar terms to mean new things. Consequently, industry advertisers and public relations consultants expend a great deal of time and effort making sure that the language of the debate is completely under control. As soon as a given dispute can be stated effectively in the coded language of the corporation, it is ready for a public hearing—the corporation being secure in the knowledge that even the more radical expressions of public opposition will be constrained by the linguistic framework which it has imposed.

In our office, there is a team of experts rewriting our vocabulary.

—Frank Oberle (Federal Minister of Forests), Vancouver, November 1991.

## THE VOCABULARY OF DESTRUCTION: "ForestSpeak"

A typical example of this language distortion and invention is the forest industry's use of the term "tree-farm licenses" (TFL's) for areas of virgin timber on crown (i.e., public) land over which they have been granted control. When an environmental or aboriginal group contests the right of the corporation to denude a piece of landscape and the watersheds that it may contain ("landscape" and "watershed" are terms which connote public interest), the industry simply responds that its "tree-farm" licenses are being threatened ("farms" connote areas of "private" interest, "farm" being an archetypal concept of "property" and a cornerstone of North American capitalist myth). Inevitably, this strategy arouses the sympathy and support of the legal system which is already strongly predisposed to emphasizing property rights over human rights.

Recently, a right-wing British Columbia politician (in a complete capitulation to the corporate line) decontextualized the term "tree-farm" further, inventing the term "fibre-farm"<sup>3</sup> which, thankfully, did not gain public usage. In point of fact, "tree-farm" licenses represent more than just a linguistic privatization of public space. Key information concerning corporate activities on these public lands is kept rou-

tinely secret by provincial governments on the grounds of "commercial confidentiality."<sup>4</sup>

It continues to be more expedient financially for corporations to respond to public concern over abuse of the environment with linguistic obfuscation than to entertain any real reform. The corporate "P.R." machinery has developed a new language with which to inoculate a compliant mass media. What emerges is a strange new Orwellian language which we might call "ForestSpeak." The federal government explicitly promotes this approach. At a recent Vancouver silvicultural conference, federal forestry minister Frank Oberle advocated "rewriting (forest) industry vocabulary" through a "public education campaign" to eliminate any terms that might "have an emotional impact on the layman," thus enabling government and industry to "assure everyone of the high standards of Canadian forest management practices."<sup>5</sup> The following is a brief glossary of some "ForestSpeak" terms cross-indexed with their (above) more common definitions:

CONVENTIONAL ENGLISH	"FORESTSPEAK"
propaganda	"public education"
environmentalist	"ecoterrorist"
forest	"tree-farm" or "fibre-farm"
old-growth/virgin forests	"over-mature timber" "decadent forest"
conservationist	"preservationist"
clear-cut logging	"the working forest"
clear-cut logging with camping allowed afterwards	"multiple use"; also, "sharing the forest"
log shortage	"mill overcapacity"
park	"heritage forest"
wilderness	(no equivalent)
anticipated regional economic/ecological collapse due to industrially instigated deforestation	"fall-down effect"
Areas not wanted by forest corporations due to poor quality or relatively inaccessible timber	"recreation-potential" "heritage forest"
Nitrogen fixing trees (alder, etc.) vital in the process of forest succession but of lower commercial value	"weed trees"
Anyone not in full agreement with forest industry policies	"interest groups"
pro-corporate view	"balanced"

## ELIMINATING POINTS OF COMPARISON

Winston: "But it did exist! It does exist!  
It exists in memory. I remember it! You remember it!"

"I do not remember it," said O'Brian.

—George Orwell, 1984.

While these examples of "ForestSpeak" exhibit some simple language coding techniques employed by corporate propagandists aimed at "industrializing" our forest concepts, they are just an adjunct to a much larger and more insidious arsenal of psychological warfare.

To achieve the maximum conversion of public forest resources into private capital (with a minimum of public interference), the forest industry has prioritized destruction of potential public rallying points, i.e., areas of forest wilderness which have developed special cultural significance. These forest icons or archetypes hold certain qualities which contribute towards a "forest concept" in the popular consciousness. Their very existence serves as a link to a pre-industrial, non-mediated past and can often arouse deep-seated emotions incompatible with contemporary mass-industrial paradigms. Corporations are very eager to tamper with such concepts.

Perhaps the nearest physical manifestation of the "pure" forest concept is that of the "old-growth" forest. This is a forest that has reached a state of dynamic equilibrium, spanning long periods (in Canada as far back as the last ice age and in the case of some tropical rain forests, possibly much longer). Because of a relative lack of disturbance, the plant and animal communities contained within such old-growth forest can, over time, become very complex and for the same reason, individual trees within these forests can, under certain conditions, attain great age and size. If such an ecology remains intact over a fairly large area and is relatively free from industrial effects, it approximates many people's concept of forest "wilderness." As old-growth forest ecosystems become increasingly rare, changing from environmental ground to environmental figure in only a few generations, their symbolic and cultural value becomes more significant to Canadians.

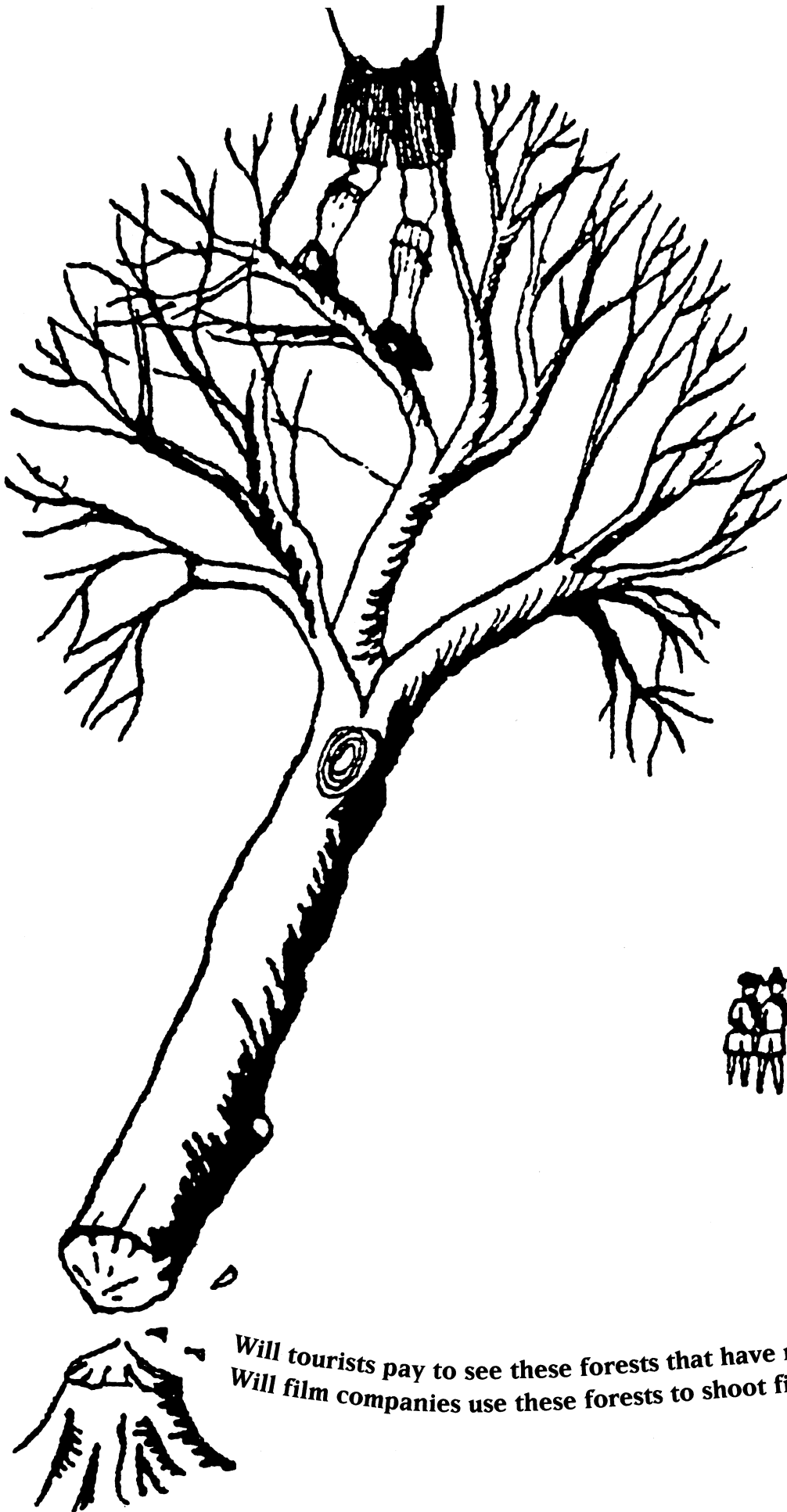
It is precisely because of their symbolic value that the last contiguous examples of old-growth forest are being systematically destroyed. The arguments put forth by industry to justify their deforestation practices ("x" number of jobs, "so and so" many millions of dollars into the local economy, etc.) have become largely unsustainable. The real short-term monetary value of the "resource," i.e., logs and jobs, is now often exceeded by the long-term expense of extracting the timber and dealing with the litigation that environmentalists and native groups initiate when these last stands of old-growth are threatened. However, massive government subsidies have been injected into the industry as face-saving measures. The Temagami wilderness of Ontario is a case in point. Here, the contro-

versial "Red Squirrel" logging road has become the most heavily subsidized logging road<sup>6</sup> in Canadian history—all in order to assure the destruction of a small, yet highly symbolic, remnant of Ontario's original old-growth pine forest.

For the forest industry and David Peterson's<sup>7</sup> Liberal government, the Temagami wilderness represented far too important an environmental rallying point to be left intact. It was one of the most significant stands of old-growth forest left within easy access to Canada's industrial heartland. Furthermore, it is home to the Temagami Anishnabi, an aboriginal people who have long claimed title to the land. In keeping with tradition, the province's ruling capitalist elite was eager to marginalize these people further; it feared setting "altruistic" precedents that might limit profits. In addition to spending over 3.5-million<sup>8</sup> in tax dollars to construct the logging road, the province footed the bill for over 370 arrests<sup>9</sup> and detentions of protesters—a staggering policing cost and totally out of proportion to the potential benefits in revenue expected from the logging process itself.

It has become evident that this push to open up 80 per cent of the Temagami wilderness to logging was more than just a simple entrepreneurial venture or a job creation exercise for an economically marginalized area. The "Red Squirrel" road was a concerted effort to re-write Ontario's ecological history by destroying one of the last symbols of an ecological past. As these last forest wildernesses are impinged by corporate activity, any existing reality not controlled in some way by corporate culture will be unimaginable. Public opposition to the corporate world view will become a moot point because the only paradigm of pre-corporate reality available—wilderness—will have either been eliminated as a non-mediated form, or at best, enshrined and "museumized" in public parks. The major challenge for the corporate propagandist, then, is to assuage the public's fears about corporate control over (formerly) public wilderness and downplay the land's destruction by concealing the effects or presenting them as desirable and ultimately inevitable.

Industry's fragmentation of the wilderness has already been achieved with phenomenal success throughout much of this country. Most of the areas now in dispute are at the periphery of corporate exploitation, such as the few remaining unlogged watersheds on Vancouver Island or the aspen parklands of northern Alberta. All other areas have been turned into a corporate "Kulturlandschaft" at least to some degree. For example, British Columbia's tourism ministry, eager to capitalize on its "Super-Natural" image, recently had ferry cruise ads photographically retouched to remove evidence of ubiquitous "clearcutting" on coastal mountainsides.<sup>10</sup> Presumably, realistic depictions of the landscape could be detrimental to the potential tourist dollar.



Will tourists pay to see these forests that have never been logged?  
Will film companies use these forests to shoot films about life long ago?

## MACFOREST —THE THEME PARK

When photographic retouching fails, the forest industry presents its large-scale destruction of wilderness as an improvement. In the ever-evolving wonderland of corporate advertising, the industry appears as the "steward" and "custodian" of Canadian forests—a new and improved surrogate for a beleaguered Mother Nature whose trees are (according to one corporation's literature) rife with "insects" and "disease," requiring the interjection of "intensive forest management" and the "Designed Forest System."<sup>11</sup>

In order to make the radical transformation of forest wildernesses into charred stump fields and chemically sprayed "tree-farms" more palatable, the corporate identity is being transformed into the identity of nature itself. To achieve this objective, it is necessary to replace the public's concepts of "forest" with those of the corporate agenda. Reminiscent of Disneyland, the industry is eager for Canadians to view our forests as a sort of generic theme park—a sanitized framework in which the corporate image and worldview can be promoted relentlessly.


The proposed tree-cutting in Vancouver's Stanley Park epitomizes this "theme park" mentality. Stanley Park, logged by primitive methods in the 1860s and 1880s, miraculously retains a few stands of exceptionally large old-growth conifers. In addition, a lush secondary-growth forest of massive alders and big-leaf maples has emerged on the sites originally logged, resulting in a rich, mixed forest of ecological diversity exceptional for an urban park. All was well until, in a proposed 3-million dollar "forest regeneration plan," forestry giant MacMillan Bloedel ("Mac-Blo" in B.C.'s vernacular) offered to "clear-cut" 5,000 mature deciduous trees in order to replace them with evergreen seedlings to create "a forest typical of our native coastal forests with as natural an appearance as possible."<sup>12</sup> "Mac-Blo" also kindly offered to "chip in" 1.5-million dollars—half the cost of the program, in order to ensure its completion. However, due to the region's natural forest ecology (an irritating detail to the "high-tech" oriented industry), the presence of the deciduous alders is vital in providing the soil nitrogen required for the proper growth of the very evergreen seedlings scheduled to be planted. Consequently, the plan also calls for the dumping of 200 kilograms per hectare of artificial chemical fertilizers so the seedlings can grow into the "natural" forest envisioned. Although there was considerable public outcry, the plan was passed in a slightly modified form in June of 1990, by a municipal parks board.

But what could "Mac-Blo" possibly hope to gain by chopping 5,000 trees out of the heart of Canada's most environmentally conscious metropolis? The timber value of the park's alders and maples is clearly negligible and the cost for the project is exorbitant by logging industry standards. As a public relations gesture of corporate charity, the plan was incomprehensible because it predicated obvious and sustained public outrage. The only plausible rationale remaining is that of corporate brand identification. "Mac-Blo" wants to place its corporate identity or trademark on the only bit of nature



Will modern n  
Can you imagin  
and no worker

left for most Vancouverites—so much so, that it is willing to fork over 1.5-million dollars to do it. By performing these large scale and highly visible alterations to the park's vegetation (presumably sign-posted with "forest management brought to you by MacMillan Bloedel"), the park is transformed from a relic of intact ecological process into an artifact in which nature becomes a "theme" with which to promote the corporation. In addition, by putting itself in the position of redefining what is "natural" about Stanley Park, the corporation neutralizes the park's value as a rallying point for environmentalism, a movement which derives the bulk of its support from urban dwellers. Tragically, Stanley Park's conversion to a forest industry theme park suggests, to some, an inevitability of corporate control and privatization of public green spaces.



present a blatantly pro-corporate view on contemporary forest issues. A Grade 5 social studies text, *Explorations*,<sup>14</sup> with a "unit" on "Exploring the Forest Resource" discusses possible future scenarios for the province's forests, such as, "trees planted in straight rows" with "radio-controlled robots spraying the pests," "genetically engineered supertrees" and "mills completely run by computers in which NO WORKERS ARE NEEDED" (author's emphasis).

Any information on alternative forestry practices is conspicuously absent. Such concepts as ecologically sustainable forestry, producer co-operatives, and community land trusts are completely ignored—apparently deemed too antithetical to the existing corporate oligarchy for young minds.

In this same book, elementary school children are presented with the inevitability of wholesale destruction of the environment. In a double page spread extolling the "wages, taxes and exports" that the forest industry provides, the hapless child is confronted with an imposing chart entitled "Good Times and Bad Times in the Forest Industry,"<sup>15</sup> a simplified version of the right-wing "trickle-down" theory of economics. In "Option 1," "Bad Times," "Very few houses are built in the United States," our forest industry makes "less money," "less taxes are paid" and your school won't get any "computers or soccer." If, on the other hand, "Option 2" prevails; and "Canadian forest companies sell a large amount of lumber to the United States," "more tax money is paid" and there will be "good times for your school," if you like computers or soccer. Why the forest companies or the United States are allowed to dictate community economic conditions in Canada is an issue which is never addressed, nor is our chronic need to develop viable secondary industries in order to avoid being held up for this kind of ransom.

For older children, the forest industry provides "scientific" brochures to help children with their school projects. "Mac-Blo" 's *HOW THE FOREST GROWS* booklet is typical. It describes botanical facts such as the "five principal conifer species of the west coast" but it also warns students that "it is in the interest of all Canadians to assume that the forest industry is regulated on a scale not greater than that of other countries . . . (or else) . . . we ("Mac-Blo") will be in no position to supply the new jobs that the growing Canadian labour force will need." In other words, unless the forest companies are allowed to proceed with a minimum of environmental accountability, all economic hell will break loose and students won't get a job after high school. In addition, students are taken on subsidized field trips to monocultural "demonstration forests" where sanitized versions of contemporary forestry practices are relentlessly flogged by government and industry spokespeople. Unless steered elsewhere by enlightened teachers, British Columbia's youngsters are presented with marginal choices in their economic and ecological future by a corporate propaganda system dedicated to maintaining the status quo.

completely run by computers and robots?  
mill where logs go in one end, finished paper comes out the other.  
needed?

As long as some places remained free and wild, the idea of free and wild could still live.

—Bill McKibben, *The End of Nature*.<sup>13</sup>

### THE HIDDEN FRONT: FOREST INDUSTRY PROPAGANDA IN THE SCHOOLS

More frightening than clearcutting parks and "share the forest" ad campaigns is the forest industry's influence on school curricula. For example, in B. C., the logging interests and their sympathetic levels of government have used elementary school textbooks in order to

## THE WORKERS AND THE "WORKING FOREST"

Any discussion of Canada's forests would be incomplete without examining the role of forestry workers. Nationwide, the forest industry employs a considerable number of people (one in ten Canadians),<sup>16</sup> both directly and through secondary industries.

Unfortunately, in many regions of Canada, forest jobs are the only income available to workers. Thus, minor downturns in international demand for forest products can result in dramatic increases in regional unemployment. The "one industry town" is a familiar byproduct of such a resource-based economy, as is seasonal employment. It is not surprising then that environmentalists (or "preservationists" in industry parlance) are perceived with some hostility as a "threat to jobs" by many forest industry workers, as are aboriginal people. How did we get to such a sorry state of affairs where unionized workers are co-opted by the corporate agenda, away from what might seem to be more natural political alliances with environmentalists and aboriginal people?

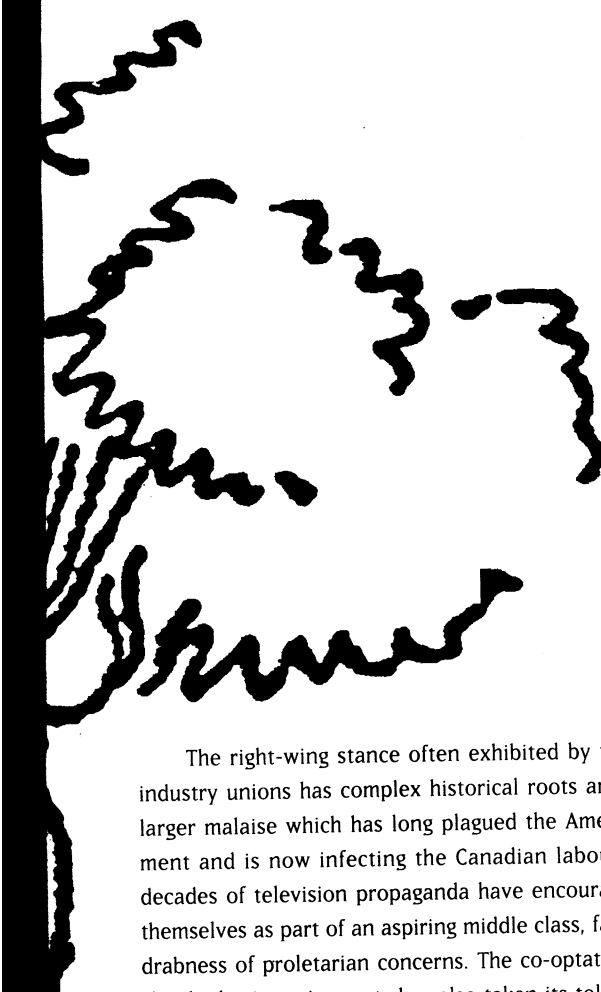
Aboriginal people are commonly treated with scorn by forest industry workers, especially when asserting land claims for areas slated for logging. Natives must endure the deep-seated racism endemic in Canadian society as well as suffering significant semantic injustices against them inherent in our European-based legal system. Anti-aboriginal viewpoints are actively encouraged by the corporate bosses who (in British Columbia) give loggers days off with pay to protest at courthouses and legislatures against aboriginal efforts to secure land titles or against environmentalists advocating wilderness preservation.

Many Canadian communities have become deeply divided over these forest land use issues. The confrontation at Oka was precipitated through differing visions of forest land use—Mohawk homeland versus a private golf course. In the West, loggers have threatened British Columbia's Lil'wat people with guns and "blood going to be spilled"<sup>17</sup> over a logging road blockade. In addition there have been media reports of environmental activists being run off the road by loggers on Vancouver Island as well as having their pets poisoned. Loggers have been used by police to "beat up" protesters arrested at logging road blockades, most recently at the controversial Tsitika/Robson Bight site on Vancouver Island.<sup>18</sup>

It is difficult to completely understand the sheer animosity directed by forestry workers toward environmentalists. Part of the blame can be placed at the feet of the environmental movement itself, which has shown a lack of class analysis/consciousness in dealing with forest industry workers. Environmentalists are perceived (with some accuracy) as urban, middle-class, well-educated persons who are quite unfamiliar with the day-to-day concerns of the average logger. The Canadian environmental movement has not been successful in convincing forestry workers that it is wasteful logging practices and ruthless implementation of job-destroying technological changes that most threaten their future and not conservation efforts, which only mark small areas of forest unavailable for commercial exploitation. The corporations, of course, have capitalized greatly on the workers' paranoia generated by the current economic recession.



*Will people of the future grow trees that are free of knots, crooked sections  
Will forests look like orchards, with trees planted in straight rows?  
What other qualities might these "super-trees" have?*



The right-wing stance often exhibited by the Canadian forest industry unions has complex historical roots and is indicative of a larger malaise which has long plagued the American labour movement and is now infecting the Canadian labour climate. Perhaps decades of television propaganda have encouraged workers to see themselves as part of an aspiring middle class, far removed from the drabness of proletarian concerns. The co-optation of union leadership by business interests has also taken its toll on any progressive movements developing within the rank and file. This is particularly evident in the I.W.A., one of the largest unions representing forest workers in Canada, until recently under the leadership of the flamboyant and tactless Jack Munro.<sup>19</sup>

Despite these daunting preconditions, there are signs for optimism. For example in 1989, members of I.W.A. local I-80, working for Fletcher-Challenge corporation, formed what they called "a woodworkers survival task force [to] fight wasteful and environmentally damaging logging practices on Vancouver Island."<sup>20</sup> More recently, a group of loggers working for "Mac-Blo" near Campbell River (again on Vancouver Island) refused to cut a magnificent stand of old-growth Douglas Fir on these grounds: "We have nothing left in [this] watershed, where you can take your family to . . . We've cleaned everything else out of there."<sup>21</sup> Although, in the words of logger Dave Morrison, "[Mac-Blo] wasn't too happy," the majority of the local union representatives and area residents expressed solidarity with the loggers' action.

Unfortunately, these are isolated incidents. The Campbell River situation, for instance, wasn't controversial because the stand of

trees was only 27 hectares, inconsequential in terms of job loss to the loggers or corporate profits. When larger areas are in dispute, such as in the recent controversy over the Tsitika/Robson Bight region of northern Vancouver Island, the workers have consistently followed the company line, declaring themselves "Economic Hostages of Native Land Claims"<sup>22</sup> as well as verbally and physically attacking protesting environmentalists.

One would like to think that the isolated acts of foresight shown by members of forest industry unions indicate a groundswell of consciousness emerging which is still drowned out by the vociferous presence of a right-wing, pro-corporate minority. Many people working in the tree-planting industry, for example, are strongly supportive of the environmental movement, perhaps because they have first-hand experience with the mess that the forest corporations leave behind. It remains a fact however that in many communities dependent on forest jobs, considerable social pressures ranging from ostracization to the threat of physical violence are put on anyone known to profess sympathy for environmental reform. This factor must be taken into account when examining the appalling lack of environmental leadership shown to date by organized workers within the industry.

## THE FUTURE FOREST

Both nationally and internationally, people realize that the Canadian forest industry is exacting a terrible price in return for the benefits that it provides. European foresters balk at our ecologically disastrous practices, claiming that they would "go to jail"<sup>23</sup> if they participated in the "forestry devastation" that has become routine in the Canadian woods.

According to one reporter, Canada's timber industry is "more highly subsidized than any of its main international competitors, yet is among the most irresponsible when it comes to environmental accountability."<sup>24</sup> Another points out that our governments "grant control over vast tracts of public and aboriginal lands to multinational consortiums in perpetuity—for free,"<sup>25</sup> even though these tree farm licenses become valuable and saleable corporate assets.

In addition to being obscenely wasteful, the forest industry is poisoning us. It is responsible for "half the water pollution in Canada"<sup>26</sup> (according to a leaked Environment Canada report). This has resulted in the closure of many productive fisheries and the elimination of countless jobs associated with them. It is also becoming obvious that the increasing number of landslides and floods associated with bad forestry practices is draining the public purse.

Although an important job source, the industry willingly uses these jobs as bargaining chips and threatens to eliminate them if forced to adopt, for example, pollution controls. In terms of actual forest jobs created, Canada ranks significantly behind its competitors (the U.S., New Zealand, and Sweden), creating a paltry 1.67 jobs for every 1000 cubic metres of wood cut.<sup>27</sup> This is due, primarily, to an unconscionable lack of corporate investment in secondary industries which could provide stability for workers dependent on the forest.

The state of the forest is at a crossroads in Canada and we must now collectively decide on its future. The present situation is (in the words of one spokesperson for professional tree planters) "a gigantic feudal structure."<sup>28</sup> We must now choose between the style of resource exploitation used in the Third World by the multi-nationals or smaller scale, community-based development models that are sustainable. Forest industry "information management" is a hindrance to this much needed and fundamental reform.

As a response to this crisis, there have been some encouraging signs of coalition building between environmental groups and aboriginal communities as well as some landmark community initiatives. The town of Hazelton in northern British Columbia, for instance, has issued what it calls a "Forest Industry Charter of Rights" which advocates "a more holistic view of how the environment, economy and politics should interact,"<sup>29</sup> through ecologically sustainable forestry practices under community control. Typical of the "new forestry," the Hazelton charter promotes the settlement of native land claims as a necessary part of its envisioned implementation—in marked contrast to present corporate policies. The Hazelton initiative appeals to many other groups pressing for industry-wide reform.

On a global level, there are indications that changing conditions in the world marketplace will make it more difficult for the forest industry to go ahead with "business-as-usual." Canada's negative "Amazon-like"<sup>30</sup> environmental image is already having repercussions in Europe, which currently imports 3.6-billion dollars<sup>31</sup> worth of Canadian forestry products per year. Canadian forest products could be boycotted like tropical hardwoods, but on a larger scale. Germany has already begun purchasing pulp products from sources that it considers more environmentally-friendly than Canada.<sup>32</sup> Proponents of the Canadian industry have taken this threat seriously and commissioned both a 58,000-dollar "media content analysis"<sup>33</sup> of its European image problem along with an anti-boycott propaganda campaign designed by a prestigious Ottawa ad agency. Apparently, European buyers can obtain their requirements from Russian and Scandinavian sources which are becoming more attractive due to the exigencies created by European economic union and the dissolution of the U.S.S.R. Politicians are also particularly eager to garner support from the powerful "Green" lobby present within the European Parliament. On this continent, the rising demand for recycled paper products is causing the larger corporations to move south of the border, away from the Canadian forests and close to big American cities which provide the market, raw materials, and cheap, non-union labour. These developments will create economic and cultural havoc in our forestry-dependent communities, unless progressive forestry reforms can be implemented in time.

Canada has always been a land dominated by its forests. The forest has served as a context for both our history and culture. The land's abuse by corporate culture parallels our abuse by the right-wing agenda. We must understand the propaganda that is used to justify the devastation in order to defend against it. By exposing the corporate remanufacturing of our ecological history, we can at least

open the door towards building a sustainable future. If we do not act then future generations will be cheated out of an essential part of their natural and cultural heritage.

Oliver Kellhammer is a visual artist whose work deals with ecological/political issues. He currently divides his time between Toronto, Vancouver, and gardening. His last piece in *Fuse* was entitled "Corporate Money Laundering through the Arts." The author would like to acknowledge the assistance of Anita Cudmore, Zoe Lambert, and the Canada Council in preparing the research for this article.

#### ENDNOTES

1. In fact, "The Brazil of the North." Timothy Egan, New York Times; reprinted in the Vancouver Sun, 22 April 1990.
2. Martin Mittelstaedt, The Globe and Mail, 11 December 1990.
3. Dave Parker, former Social Credit Minister of Forests, in a televised speech, Victoria, B.C., 25 May 1989.
4. Catherine Caufield, Vancouver Sun, 18 June 1990; excerpted from The New Yorker.
5. Ben Parfitt, Vancouver Sun, 19 November 1991. Also, Zoe Lambert, Squamish Times, 26 November 1991.
6. Canadian Press, 4 April 1990.
7. Premier Bob Rae was arrested for protesting on behalf of this wilderness (blocking the logging road). The full ramifications of the new NDP environmental policy on the Temagami wilderness are not yet clear but there are indications of at least some half-hearted attempts at reform.
8. See endnote 6.
9. *ibid.*
10. Personal communication.
11. Excerpted from various MacMillan Bloedel "Forest Management" literature.
12. Glen Bohn, Vancouver Sun, 9 December 1989.
13. Bill McKibben, The End of Nature (New York: Random House, 1989).
14. "Exploring the Forest Resource," unit 1, Explorations (Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre, 1983).
15. *ibid.*
16. Ken McQueen, Ottawa Citizen, 25 November 1990.
17. Steve Berry, Vancouver Province, 4 November 1990.
18. BCTV News Broadcast. Interview with protester who was arrested.
19. Famous for his involvement in the 1983 "Kelowna Sellout" which effectively disemboweled an emerging BC-wide general strike, called to protest the repressive social and labour policies of the (then) Social Credit provincial government.
20. Wendy McLellan, "Island Forest Waste Alleged," Vancouver Sun, 30 August 1990.
21. Larry Pym, Vancouver Sun, 5 November 1990.
22. Larry Pym, Vancouver Sun, 31 October 1990; and televised coverage.
23. Canadian Press, 28 May 1990.
24. *ibid.*
25. Catherine Caufield, *op cit.*
26. Glen Bohn, Vancouver Sun, 15 March 1989.
27. WCWC Educational Report, November 1990.
28. Interview with editor of SCREEF Magazine, on "The Rational," Vancouver Co-op Radio, 14 March 1989.
29. A Forest Industry Charter of Rights, Corporation of the Village of Hazelton, 1990.
30. Ken McQueen, Ottawa Citizen, 25 November 1990.
31. Dennis Buekert, Ottawa Citizen, 25 May 1990.
32. Ben Parfitt, Vancouver Sun, 19 November 1991.
33. Dennis Buekert, *op cit.*

Will Canadians change their attitude towards the forest?  
Can you imagine yourself walking through a forest 50 years from now?  
What do you see?