

INFORMATION

Ontario New Democrats **NDP** Nouveau Parti Démocratique

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Text of remarks by Jim Foulds (MPP Port Arthur) at the Annual Meeting of the Kenora NDP Riding Association, held at the North Dryden Community Centre, 8 p.m. Friday, November 26th, 1976.

The present deal by the Ontario Conservative Government to give Reed Paper cutting rights to 19,000 square miles must not go through. It must not go through because no single company should have the sole rights to the last remaining timber stands in Ontario. No single company, whether it be Reed, or Abitibi, or Domtar, or Ontario Minnesota Pulp and Paper Company, should be able to corner the market on 19,000 square miles of our land and our resources - on an area the size of Nova Scotia!

Those resources belong to the people of Ontario, and they should not be turned into the private preserve of the fifth largest corporation in the world.

There are a number of basic reasons why the resources should not be alienated to Reed.

Reed, of all companies, has dealt in bad faith with the people of our province, and especially with the people of Northwestern Ontario.

First, it was and remains unforgiveable that for a five-year period, Reed continued to pollute the English-Wabigoon River system with mercury

In other words, Reed's record gets worse instead of better!

Moreover, J. R. Cary, the unit forester in the Dryden area, pointed out in a paper presented in Thunder Bay at the Ontario Professional Foresters Association annual meeting in August:

"Uncontrolled clear cutting in boreal soft woods and partial high grade practices in the boreal mixed wood stands occur not only in Dryden, but across Northern Ontario....

"If Dryden is a representative microcosm of Ontario's coniferous forests, the awesome spectacle of huge acreages going out of production annually must alarm all foresters."

I think that the prospect should alarm not only foresters but all of us in the North; and indeed all of us in the province of Ontario.

Third, Reed has dealt in bad faith with the people of Dryden in another way. You and I know that Reed is the largest single employer in this town. Last year, Reed was the agent that caused the largest single unemployment that Dryden has experienced.

You will recall that throughout Ontario, we had a long, hard strike in the pulp and paper industry, as the Canadian Pulp and Paper Association tried to break a newly formed Canadian based union - the Canadian Paper Workers Union.

The strike in Dryden dragged on long after virtually every other mill in Ontario had settled with its workers. Why? Because Reed would not offer the pulp and paper workers of Dryden the same wages, working conditions, and fringe benefits that had been achieved in the rest of the province. Why should the workers of Dryden be

"It should be obvious even to the uninformed that we cannot afford to leave nature to its own devices on most sites in our boreal forests and on our productive forest lands.

"In 1974, it cost us \$8.8 million to regenerate 136,000 acres. It is estimated that the demand for wood fibre by the year 2020 will be in the neighbourhood of 12 million cunits, which would require an expenditure in excess of \$30,000,000. But in order to meet this target we must start immediately to rearrange our priorities."

Even more alarming, the present method of artificial regeneration is not doing very well. In a Ministry report entitled "Survival and Growth of Tree Plantations on Crown Lands in Ontario, 1974", the results of a regeneration survey, five years after planting showed the following:

1. in four northern districts, 6% of nursery stock black spruce was classified "good" by height, 27% "fair" and 31% "poor". Failure was an astounding 50%!
2. in three northern districts, 3% of tubed seedling black spruce was "fair", 31% "poor". Failure was an astronomical 66%.

As I understand that, even in the one third of the areas which we do treat to regenerate or reforest, we have a failure rate as high as 66% in tubed seedling black spruce and a failure rate as high as 50% of nursery stock black spruce.

What this shows is that our reforestation and regeneration program in the province of Ontario is heading down the road to disaster. Until that reforestation and regeneration program is in order, no allocation of the remaining 19,000 square miles of Ontario's forests should take place.

How many jobs did the Conservatives let go from the north when they allowed Hawker Siddely in Thunder Bay to transfer the tree-farmer operation production to Toronto and Windsor?

How many jobs have the Conservatives created by pouring literally millions into Minaki Lodge? How many jobs have the Conservatives created with the millions poured into the Big Thunder Ski Jump in Thunder Bay, when Canada no longer has a national ski jumping team?

How many jobs are the Conservatives providing by forcing the Dryden Hospital to cut back on hospital beds?

Not very many!

When those limits in the present Reed Proposal Area are ready to be developed, we must insist that a fully developed forest industry results. It could well be that there will be a pulp mill. If so, there should be paper production as well. But there should also be the spinoff industries, using the so-called weed species of poplar and birch. We must insist on the secondary manufacturing in our area of hockey sticks, toboggans, sleighs, skis, etc.

We must insist that the way of life of the 1,300 to 2,000 people presently living in the proposed timber tract not be obliterated or dislocated.

We must insist that the number of jobs and the amount of income arising from the area through tourism, trapping, wild rice harvesting and other activities, not be reduced. For example, did you know that out of that area last year alone, came furs worth half a million dollars?

Indeed, we must insist that these other activities and industries be encouraged and developed. Then and only then will we have a chance of developing a rounded economy for the Dryden/Ear Falls/Red Lake area.

In order to achieve that, it may very well mean that the proposed limits should be managed and harvested by a Crown Corporation, not by a