

INFORMATION

Ontario New Democrats **NDP** Nouveau Parti Démocratique

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Statement by Michael Cassidy, Leader, Ontario NDP, on the
Interim Report of the Hartt Commission on the Northern
Environment

We want to express real disappointment with the recommendations of Justice Hartt that his royal commission's terms of reference be divided into three--a study of the West Patricia planning area, where Reed Paper's proposed timber limits are located, a task force on northern alienation, and a tripartite negotiating body to try to resolve the problems of native peoples.

Such a division into three makes it very unlikely that the purposes for which the commission was originally set up will ever be achieved--that is, to find ways that needed northern development can be reconciled with environmental protection and the rights of native peoples north of the 50th parallel. In fact, the three groups proposed by Justice Hartt will apparently be working almost independently and there is no guarantee of any coordination between their efforts.

We welcome the creation of the tripartite body of provincial and federal ministers and representatives of native peoples to resolve native peoples' problems and trust it will be used to expedite solutions and not to further delay them.

Provided this condition is assured, however, we agree with the proposal to continue the review of the West Patricia planning