

I endorsed this press release on behalf of
CELA in Ottawa this week.

Pls. circulate + return to TV

~~TV~~, SS, ~~AB~~, ~~AK~~, SM, DM, MV, BG, YS,
~~CB~~

June 9, 1986

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEW NIELSEN REPORT SHOCKS ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS
FROM ACROSS CANADA

OTTAWA - AT THE END OF ENVIRONMENT WEEK, REPRESENTATIVES OF ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS FROM ACROSS CANADA LEARNED OF THE RECOMMENDED DISMANTLING OF ENVIRONMENT CANADA. AN UNRELEASED TASK FORCE REPORT COMMISSIONED BY DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER ERIK NIELSEN, AND KNOWN AS THE DEFOSSE REPORT, RECOMMENDS THAT THE DEPARTMENT BE STRIPPED OF MOST OF ITS RESPONSIBILITIES FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND MANAGEMENT, AND BE LEFT WITHOUT THE POWER TO DRAFT AND ENFORCE LAWS. THIS WOULD REDUCE ENVIRONMENT CANADA TO NOTHING MORE THAN A PUBLIC RELATIONS AGENCY.

IRONICALLY, THIS REPORT IS BEING CONSIDERED BY CABINET AT THE SAME TIME AS THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE GATHERED IN OTTAWA TO ATTEND THE FATE OF THE EARTH CONFERENCE; AND THREE OTHER INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES THAT CANADA HOSTED ON THE ENVIRONMENT DURING ENVIRONMENT WEEK.

AT A TIME WHEN OUR COUNTRY IS FACING MAJOR ENVIRONMENTAL CRISES, WE EXPECT OUR FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO BE EMBELLISHING AND STRENGTHENING ITS ADVOCATE FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT --- NOT SEEKING ITS DEMISE.

WHAT COULD BE THE POSSIBLE MOTIVATION FOR DISMANTLING ENVIRONMENT CANADA WHEN IT IS COMMON KNOWLEDGE THAT PUBLIC OPINION POLLS, INCLUDING THOSE COMMISSIONED BY GOVERNMENT, CONSISTENTLY DEMONSTRATE THAT CANADIANS SUPPORT STRONGER GOVERNMENT ACTION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION?

THE ANSWER MAY LIE WITH CABINET'S SINGLE-MINDED, AND NARROW APPROACH TO DEFICIT REDUCTION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. SINCE THE CONSERVATIVES CAME TO POWER, THEY HAVE BEEN EATING AWAY AT ENVIRONMENT CANADA'S BUDGET, STAFF, AND PROGRAMS WITHOUT ANY CONSIDERATION OF THE ECOLOGICAL DEFICIT THAT WILL RESULT.

THE SORRY STATE OF OUR ENVIRONMENT, AS DOCUMENTED IN CANADA'S RECENTLY RELEASED REPORT CARD ON THE SUBJECT, DEMANDS THAT ENVIRONMENT CANADA BE STRENGTHENED, NOT RENDERED IMPOTENT AS THE DEFOSSE REPORT REVEALS. THIS IS WHAT THE CANADIAN PUBLIC DESERVES. THE DEFOSSE REPORT IS A DISREGARD FOR THE PUBLIC'S CONCERN OF SCANDALOUS.

THE CURRENT GOVERNMENT'S POLICY AT THE EXPENSE OF ENVIRONMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL AND ECONOMIC HEALTH.

THE DEFOSSE REPORT, IF ADOPTED BY THE FEDERAL ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY HERE TODAY, AND TO A MAJORITY OF CANADIANS, THIS IS PATENTLY UNACCEPTABLE.

WE CALL ON THE CABINET TO RESPOND TO THE WISHES OF CANADIANS, AND TO CANADA'S OBLIGATIONS TO THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY, TO MEET THE CHALLENGE OF PROTECTING AND ENHANCING THE ENVIRONMENT WHICH SUSTAINS US ALL.

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For more information, contact David Coon (613) 235-3860.

See attached list of environmental groups endorsing this statement.

N.B. CORRECTION - 'Defosse' should read 'Desfosses' throughout

Fish picture bursts myth, studies say

Canadian Press
OTTAWA

The image of pristine Canadian waters laden with hefty fish ready for plucking is a myth shattered by the reality of pollution, overfishing and shrinking wetlands.

That picture is revealed in two massive reports released last week by Environment Minister Thomas McMillan. The reports took five years to research and compile.

They show — down to the last goldeye, lobster and Arctic char — that the size of fish caught now is smaller than ever before, fewer are breeding and many breeding grounds are being lost to pollution and reclaimed land for farming and urban sprawl.

None of the information is particularly new, but it is the first time it has all been assembled.

In Lake Ontario, for example, the average weight of a fish is about 500 grams. In 1800, a five-kilogram lake trout, northern pike or whitefish

SIGNATORIES TO THE PRESS STATEMENT

PRESS CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS

Canadian Environment Network (Janice Harvey)
Wilderness Society of Newfoundland (Jean Harding)
Ecology Action Centre - Nova Scotia (Liz Archibald Calder)
Conservation Council of New Brunswick (David Coon)
Val Nature - Quebec (Henri Jacob)
Manitoba Naturalist Society (Bill Goddard)
Saskatchewan Natural History Society (Jim Elliot)
Alberta Environmental Law Resource Centre (Linda Duncan)
West Coast Environmental Law Association - British Columbia (Bill Andrews)
Yukon Conservation Society (Tom Munson)
Ecology North - Northwest Territories (Jill Pangman)
Pollution Probe - Ontario (Janine Ferreretti)
Pembina Institute for Appropriate Development - Alberta (Rob MacIntosh)

ENDORISING GROUPS IN ABSENTIA

Coalition Against Pesticides - Cape Breton
STOP - Montreal
Alberta Wilderness Association
Valhalla Wilderness Society - British Columbia
SPEC - Vancouver
Tomorrow Foundation - Edmonton
Earth Care - Kelwona, BC
Concerned Citizens of Manitoba - Winnipeg
Crossreads Resource Group - Winnipeg
Coalition For Forest Spray Alternatives - Hinton, Alberta
Citizen's Network on Waste Management - Kitchener, Ontario
Association of Peel People Evaluating Agricultural Land - Ontario
Save the Rouge Valley System - Ontario
Solar Alternative to Nuclear Energy - British Columbia
Ontario Public Interest Research Group - Toronto
Algoma Manitoulin Nuclear Awareness - Ontario
Temiskaming Environmental Action Committee - Ontario
BC Coalition for Alternatives to Pesticides - British Columbia
Nuclear Awareness Project - Ontario
Urban Resource Centre - Manitoba
Friends of the Earth - Canada

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