



## Opinion: Jack Stokes speaks in the legislature

# 'What a hell of a way to manage a resource'

We have frittered away over the last 50 years an opportunity to be world leaders in forest management.

Let me get to some more particular aspects of forest management. Most members will recall we had an honest, sincere, dedicated and professional forester who, because he was interested in the kinds of things I have been trying to say over the last 15 or 20 minutes, was fired for his trouble.

What has happened in the interim? We had the Crown Employees Grievance Settlement Board that is responsible for looking into such matters. It recommended this honest, sincere, dedicated, youthful and professional forester should be penalized one week's wages for having acted in a different way. They said there was nothing wrong with what he did, but they found some minor fault with the way he did it.

That young, professional forester is now back on the payroll of the Ministry of Natural Resources and has been, except for that one-week period around April 1. He is being paid \$2,100 a month and they will not even let him inside the office. He is being paid \$2,100 a month to say at home and not bother his district manager, his regional director or the Ministry of Natural Resources at all. They told him to stay away.

I know Mr. MacAlpine and how dedicated he is. He goes out on a regular basis in the unit he was responsible for and carries out on his own initiative silviculture treatment of the area that presumably he is being paid to manage, although he is not allowed to do it; but he goes out and he does it.

Since distance is a consideration, he asked his district manager, who will not let him inside the office, if they would consider paying him his time to commute back and forth in his own truck to the place where he has chosen to work to put something back for the \$2,100 he is getting. They will not even do that. He has written to the Minister of Natural Resources explaining his plight, his own particular circumstances, saying: "I am still a professional forester. I am still committed to managing the forests." The ministry will not allow him to do it.

**Mr. Bradley:** Is this Mr. MacAlpine?

**Mr. Stokes:** Yes. Why did he get fired? It was because he could not get the interest and the attention of his district manager. He could not get the interest of the regional director. He could not get the attention of the assistant deputy minister in Thunder Bay. He could not get the interest of the deputy minister in the Whitney Block or the minister himself. He made the mistake of telling me what was wrong. He said, "Give me time and give me the necessary resources to do an operational cruise on the area you want me to make recommendations about in terms of the inventory of timber, the age classes, the

species and how we can allocate those timber values to maximize the benefit not only for local users but ultimately for the economy in Ontario."

He knew he was working with data, a forest resource inventory that was 20 years out of date. He said, "Let me do an up-to-date operational cruise, and whatever comes out of it I will make those recommendations and you can make the ultimate decision as to how you want to dispose of those timber values." I said: "Never mind that. Just give me a recommendation that there is sufficient timber to satisfy the traditional users."

We have 30 or 40 traditional users between Nipigon and Thunder Bay and we want to satisfy the needs of Buchanan Forest Products Ltd., which had just acquired a sawmill in Thunder Bay to add to the one it has at Hudson under the name of McKenzie Forest Products Inc., and the one Mr. Buchanan owns in Sapawe that he acquired two or three years ago from Domtar.

This is what he was attempting to do. They would not let him do it and they fired him for his trouble. Since then they realized they had to have that information, that data, before they could realistically allocate any of those timber values to traditional users or any additional users whom they had hoped to satisfy.

They put a tender out for the notice of professional foresters saying, "We require the services of professional foresters to do" — guess what? — "an operational cruise", on the area that was the responsibility of our friend Donald MacAlpine. He and another forester bid on it, because at that time he was without work. He was the lowest bidder and the most competent, but what did they do? They cancelled the contract.

That is not the end of it. They still had to have somebody do that. What did they do? They got a bunch of technicians, some forestry students from Lakehead University, and they said: "Go down there and do that inventory. Give us some data that we can reach some conclusions on."

About a month ago the Ministry of Natural Resources unveiled a 10-year operating plan for the Port Arthur crown management unit. Essentially they said, and I am quoting from memory, there were about one million cubic metres of wood on that crown management unit available for harvesting over the next 10 years. I attended the open house and I said: "Break this down for me. Tell me how many of those cubic metres of wood are on the Black Bay Peninsula." They said, "Just a minute now."

The forestry supervisor and a student put their heads together, got out their little pocket calculator and said, "Roughly about 195,000 cubic metres of wood are available on the Black Bay Peninsula over the next 10 years." I said, "That

is about just under 20,000 cubic metres of wood a year to be divided between the traditional users and these others like MacMillan Bloedel and Buchanan Forest Products." They said, "Yes, that's it." So I said, "Fine, thank you very much," and asked them several other questions.

5:40 p.m.

When the traditional users went to look at the particular stands or plots that were allocated to them under this 10-year operation plan, one of the stands was one that one of the traditional users had planted five years ago. Now we know in the boreal forest how long it takes to grow a tree. If one planted something five years ago and if one got a good catch, it would be about as high as this desk.

Another chap was quite happy. He had been allocated a 55-year-old stand of jack pine. They were about six to eight inches in diameter and there were a good many stems per acre and he could make a good living. He went, unloaded his bulldozer — there was still snow on the ground — and started pushing in a winter road to gain access to this area that had been allocated to him. He no sooner got the bulldozer off the flat-bed when they said: "No, no, we made a mistake. You cannot have this. You are going to have to look for another area." He asked, "Where is the other area?" I can see it out my window. In Nipigon, they have a cluster of trailers and right in the background there is a hill. He was told that if he went on top of this hill, that would be the alternative.

He cruised it that weekend. He thought that at best it would be eight or 10 cords to the acre. Of course, anyone who knows anything about harvesting of small-dimensional mixed stands in the north would know one cannot make his living on it, but he went in and had a look at it. Before he got a chance to even tell them that it was not economically feasible, they withdrew that from him.

This is a plan that is three weeks old, so what have we got? We have a reduction on the Black Bay Peninsula of 195,000 cubic metres of wood over the next 10 years, reduced by one quarter to 145,000 in just three weeks. We have one fellow who was asked to harvest an area that he had planted five years ago. We have another chap who was given two areas that have since been withdrawn and the only alternative offered was another one across the Canadian Pacific Railway tracks, and through a swamp in the middle of summer, so he does not have the resources to harvest it.

Now the ministry is saying, "Well, if we can stir up the money from Toronto, we will try to assist you in building a road so you can continue with your traditional livelihood of harvesting timber." What a hell of a way — if you will pardon the expression — to manage a resource.

## Arthur Black

# Future Shock

Abraham Lincoln once said: "The best thing about the future is that it comes only one day at a time."

True enough in Honest Abe's day. It's true no more. Nowadays, The Future crashed over all of us like one huge, perpetual breaker. Things move so fast that the greatest anxiety faced by "experts" of every stripe is the fear of waking up tomorrow morning to find themselves and their theories totally obsolete. Wiped out by The Future.

Arthur C. Clarke is several kinds of expert. He's a Futurologist, a scientist and a best-selling author. He gave us 2001: A Space Odyssey.

A few days back, Mister Clarke was musing aloud about the future, in an address to a United Nations Symposium. Gazing into his crystal ball, if you like.

Clarke predicted, by the turn of the century, you and I and most

other upright members of the genus Homo Sapiens will have two new distinguishing characteristics.

We'll all be wearing wrist watches and carrying attache cases.

The wrist watch won't be any run-of-the-mill Timex though. No, Mister Clarke says it'll be a two-way telephone transceiver, a la Dick Tracey. And the attache case won't be filled with old hydro bills, advertising flyers and a dog-eared back issue of *Nucleans*.

Nope, the case will be full of wires and diodes and transistors and silicon chips. It'll be an extremely sophisticated two-way communication unit that will link the people carrying it to their homes, offices and data banks via any convenient satellite that happens to be winging through the heavens overhead. The unit will provide voice, telex and video

facilities, including among other things, the capacity to produce still photos and even live television coverage.

And the way Mister Clarke sees it, we will all have this magic gizmo, right in our hot little hands.

Ah yes, the computer. If there's one foreseeable droplet in the Future Wave that's crashing over all of us, it's the continuing predominance of the computer. Thirty years ago, computers took up whole floors of office buildings. Today, they're not much bigger than typewriters. Tomorrow? Well, why not attache cases?

I saw a small story in the paper the other day which indicates at least one homebuilder in California has read his tea leaves or chicken entrails and is planning accordingly.

This guy's building a subdivision near San Francisco in which

all the homes are pre-wired for computers. The houses have built-in stations so an owner whose work involves sitting at a computer terminal can do it in the comfort of his living room instead of fighting rush-hour traffic to get to an office downtown.

'Smatter?  
All too Brave-New-Worldish for you?

Well, not to worry. We're not there yet. There was another small story in the same paper about McArthur High School in Florida. The folks that run the school had a "computerized" system for taking care of students who played hookey. What happened is that the computer would scan a print-out of all students who were present, note the absentees, and automatically phone the parents of the absentees with a recorded message, asking the parents to call the school. This would all happen



between 5 p.m. and 9 p.m. of the same school day.

At least ... that was the way it was supposed to work.

What actually happened is that someone forgot to tell the computer the difference between night and day.

Thus it was that several parents of McArthur High School students were roused from blissful sleep by a ringing phone at 5 ... A.M.

McArthur's High School principal says the parents returned the calls alright. He says in the past few days he's been called "everything under the sun."

The computer at McArthur High School has been temporarily disconnected.