



editor's choice

Editorial

Ontario's Minister of Natural Resources, Alan Pope, has just released a set of land use guidelines that took more than 10 years to research and which cost the taxpayers of this province \$3.5 million.

They didn't get their money's worth. Instead of producing the strategic land use plan needed to control development in Northwestern Ontario, Pope has handed down a broad statement of objectives having no solid foundation.

According to an MNR backgrounder on the new guidelines, these measures are not controls, they have no legal status and all planning will continue to be done simply according to the Planning Act.

In other words, the planning document which was supposed to oversee and direct the development of this province's natural resources is but a toothless watchdog.

Pope has tried to accommodate everyone and has ended by helping no one. A vague set of powerless guidelines will not settle the battle between environmentalists and developers in this province. Rather than making hard choices and priorities, Pope has chosen to paper-over the dispute with recommendations that bind no one and therefore solve nothing.

In the end, all sides lose because they are left to struggle on in the hope their view will someday prevail.

The creation of six new wilderness parks, by separate legislation, can serve as an example of the minister's indecisiveness.

Within the boundaries of these "wilderness" areas commercial tourism, commercial fishing, trapping, hunting, and mineral exploration can all take place. Pope has said the "wilderness" designation of these areas is misleading and he is correct.

The future status of these parks and the activity that will take place here is even more confusing.

One of the excuses Pope has given for presenting guidelines instead of a strategic land use plan is that, since the extent of Ontario's resources is unknown, a concrete development plan would be restrictive and unwise. He points to the discovery of gold at Hemlo saying guidelines are better than a plan because they can be adapted to encompass this sort of discovery.

But given Pope's flexibility, what would be the status of a wilderness park should mineral wealth, in the nature of the Hemlo find, be discovered within its boundaries?

Would guidelines be "adapted" to allow heavy mining? Would the wilderness

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GRANDPA AND ME



BY MARK TURRIS

Northern Affairs

Home repairs

Have you ever heard of mortar mice? These pesky little creatures resurface suprisingly soon after smooth-talking sales agents dust off their contracts, paste on a smile and go knocking door-to-door selling home repairs.

These salespeople point to crumbling brick and droopy eaves troughing, (which they helped along the way by poking and prodding with sharp instruments throughout their sales pitch) shake their heads and say mortar mice have obviously been busy.

Of course, there are no such creatures as mortar mice. This is just a fabrication used to scare people into signing expensive and often unnecessary contracts.

Another common home repair or renovation gambit is the "free roof or chimney inspection." Here you find, much to your surprise that extension work is needed immediately. The cooperative salesman offers to do the work, and of course, just happens to have a contract ready for signing.

Another popular technique is to offer a "good deal just because we happen to be in the neighbourhood with our equipment and materials." Don't fall for it. First ask the salesman for references and check them out.

To avoid problems, get at least three estimates outlining the kind of work to be done, who will do it, how much it will cost,

the kind of warranty or guarantee and the starting and completion dates. Before signing, get someone you trust such as a lawyer or relative to check the contract over carefully to ensure you are fully protected.

You should also avoid progression clauses that require you to pay in installments while work is in progress, whether you are satisfied with the work or not.

You shouldn't pay more than 10 per cent down payment before work begins, to ensure you have some leverage if you are dissatisfied with the work.

As well, the Mechanics Lien Act allows you to hold back 15 per cent of each progress payment until 37 days

after the work is completed. This protects you from liability if the contractor or subcontractor fails to pay the supplier for materials.

Make sure that you deal with a reputable company and ensure the seller or contractor is registered with the ministry, as they are required to be under the Consumer Protection Act. To check a salesperson or contractor's registration, contact the nearest Consumer Services Bureau.

For further information on Home Repairs please contact your nearest Northern Affairs Office, located on the lower floor, Peninsula Building, 2 Gilbert Street, Marathon, Ontario (229-1153) or ZENITH 33160.

designation be cancelled or would the definition of a wilderness area simply be juggled some more? Would MNR officials stop the mining of a site as rich as Hemlo to preserve wilderness? If so, why claim to allow mining and mineral exploration in the first place?

There are no answers.

All that is certain is that the dispute between environmentalists and developers will rage on, just as it did more than 10 years ago, when the need for a strategic plan was voiced for the first time.

Alan Pope has solved nothing.

Arthur Black

So long CBs

Anybody out there want to buy a used book? Cheap? I have a practically virgin paperback that I'd be more than happy to unload. It's called *The Complete CB Handbook*.

The book's been gathering dust on my bookshelf for the past half-dozen years. I bought it at the height of the great Citizen's Band Radio craze — back around '77, I guess.

Remember? When everybody who had a dashboard to his name was buying one of those funny little CB units and screwing it down within arm's length of the driver's seat?

When every stranger was "good buddy" and the height of wit, departure-wise, was to drain your glass of beer, push your chair back from the table, give

your baseball cap a hitch, and intone: "We go, we go, we gone."

I never bought a CB radio, but millions did. There was a period in the mid-seventies when the US Federal Communications Commission was processing applications for new CB licences at the rate of one million per month. I don't have the figures for Canadians, but the frenzy was similar this side of the border.

Me? I never bit — and I'm not sure why.

Lord knows I'm a sucker for most passing fads and fancies (as my closet full of hula hoops, Rubik's cubes and pet rocks would attest). So how come I didn't join the hordes of North Americans honking and bleating into their microphones as they

motored along?

A couple of possible reasons come to mind. For one thing I'm not too handy, technologically speaking. My idea of a great camera, radio, stereo or lawn mower is one that has an OFF/ON switch. And nothing else. The more dials, knobs, buttons and levers there are, the less likely a thing is to work for me. CBs had SQUELCH buttons, RF GAIN buttons, DELTA TUNE buttons, and buttons marked AML, FWR and MOD.

I haven't a clue what any of them were for, and it made my head hurt to think about it.

Another reason I was never a CB owner is ... well, what is a CB radio? A primitive, barely functioning telephone, right?

And I hate telephones. One of the main reasons I go for a drive

is so that I can't hear a telephone ringing. Why the hell would I spoil my last refuge by putting one on the dashboard?

And there's a third reason I never joined the CB cult.

The CB lingo. It drove me nuts. I don't know why, but for some reason there was an unspoken rule that everybody who used CB's had to sound like a Georgia sharecropper. There is something inherently silly about a pencil-pusher from northwestern Ontario doing a bad imitation of Marlon Brando in *A Streetcar Named Desire*.

Then there were the CB clichés themselves. What good can be said about a dialect that replaces the perfectly reasonable word "yes" with an abomination like: "Affirmatory, good buddy."?



You can call me a misanthrope if you want, but I just don't want to know anybody who goes around bragging that their handle is "Bald Eagle", "Midnight Operator" or "The Shaggin Wagon."

Anyway, it's not a big problem anymore. The CB fad is fading, and that means that with any luck Citizen's Band Radio will revert to the people that really need it — truckers, emergency vehicles and folks who live or travel in remote communities.

No doubt the serious CB-ers will be relieved to get all the trendys off the air.

I'd be happy too — if I could just unload my copy of *The Complete CB Handbook*.