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**Publisher**.....A. Sandy Harbinson  
**Advertising Mgr**.....Linda R Harbinson  
**News Editor**.....Robert Cotton  
**Admin. Asst**.....Gayle Fournier

## Working together to prevent crime

The laws of a country are designed to allow people to live their lives with a certain degree of security and happiness.

Such laws are effective only when the majority of people believe that they are necessary to maintain a secure environment in which the country can grow and prosper.

It is the strength of this belief, on the part of the people, that is the key to crime prevention. Law enforcement agencies alone cannot prevent crime.

Crime prevention starts with an attitude - the idea that working together with neighbors makes a difference.

This idea, when put into practice, can make a difference because it strengthens the common belief in the law and the reasons the law is necessary.

Crime prevention means looking out for a neighbor, getting involved in community programs like Crime Stoppers, Block Parents, Telalert, and Neighborhood Watch. It means involving yourself with children by helping provide them with real challenges in both education and recreation.

It is about working together. Parents working with teachers to reduce vandalism, educators working with media to combat child abuse, women working with women to fight rape, letter carriers watching out for seniors, pharmacists working with parents to fight drug abuse and citizens of all ages working together to stop drunk driving.

Working together to make a community an enjoyable and safe place to live shows how advantageous an active belief in the law can be. It might also reduce the necessity for creating new laws.

Robert A. Cotton



## Pouliot welcomes mines portfolio

**Dear Editor**  
It is with great pleasure and humility that I introduce myself to Ontario's mining community as the new Minister of Mines.

Every member of this important community, be they prospectors, developers, managers and employees of companies, big and small, public servants or legislators, has a role to play in formulating mining policy

and legislation in this province. As someone who has worked 20 years in Northern Ontario mines, I accept my nomination to this office with immense pride and an enthusiastic sense of purpose. My experience in the mines and my years of service as a Member of the Legislative Assembly at Queen's Park have made me acutely aware of the pressures facing the mining industry today, and sensitive to

the needs of the industry in order not only to survive but thrive.

The Ontario mining industry is a major driving force of the provincial economy. Any initiative undertaken by this ministry shall continue to take this important fact into consideration.

Premier Bob Rae has clearly expressed his intention to administer a government which

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# Rifles to be used as medicine

Regarding the federal government plan to slaughter all the bison in Alberta's Wood Buffalo National Park:

Could someone run that by me again?

The way I understand it, there are some 4,200 bison wandering around in the wilderness area 'way up on the subarctic forehead of Alberta. The bison comprise one of the last - and the largest - free-roaming herd in the world.

Our government wants them dead. All of them. Why? Because, according to the government, about 50 percent of the herd is infected with either bovine brucellosis, tuberculosis or a combination of the two. They're concerned that the diseased could jump from the afflicted bison to healthy domestic cattle herds - and ultimately, to you and me.

A legitimate concern if Wood Buffalo National Park sat in the dairy country of rural southwestern Ontario, or if it bordered on cattle range

near the foothills of the Rockies.

It doesn't. Wood Buffalo National Park is 17,500 square miles of primal wilderness between Lake Athabasca and Great Slave Lake. Finding a holstein or a hereford in Wood Buffalo Park is about as likely as finding a herd of bison grazing on the astroturf of Skydome.

Even if there was a cattle ranch next door, it would be a lot cheaper and simpler to string a fence or clear a buffer zone around the park than to try and track down and destroy such a colossal herd of animals.

Think of it: four thousand, 200 shy and survival-savvy wild animals with a wilderness area almost as big as Nova Scotia to hide out in. How many hunters will the government send in? How will they possibly know if they killed every last buffalo? They've allocated 20 million dollars for this macabre massacre. If they miss just one infected buffalo, they

might as well have thrown the twenty million bucks in Great Slave Lake.

Ecologists are protesting Ottawa's apocalyptic approach to the "bison problem", not just because it's obscene, but



**Arthur Black**

because it's stupid. After all, the government's been aware of the situation for some time. Since 1925, in fact, when government officials knowingly introduced infected bison to the area.

That was 65 years ago. The bison, infected or not, have thrived. And today, after the better part of a century, there has not been a single documented case of one cow or one human being contracting brucellosis or tuberculosis from the animals in the park.

Ecologists point out that the destruction of the herd will wipe out the largest, most diverse American bison gene pool on the planet. Gene diversity is what keeps whole species from vanishing. Once the government rifles fire and the bison die, there is nothing government scientists can whip up in their petri dishes to recreate those genes.

It's ironic. When white men first came to the western plains they found them carpeted with herds of buffalo as far as the eye could see. Our rifles soon fixed that. People used to shoot the buffalo from moving trains, not even stopping to take the meat or the hides. In no time,

the huge herds were just a memory. Soon the only place you could see bison was in zoos, or stuffed in museums or, in winter, rendered into coats to keep Winnipeg cops warm. That's partly why Wood Buffalo National Park was created - as a refuge for the largest remaining herd of bison in the world.

Now we're bringing out the rifles again - for the animals own good. Of course. You bet.

What of the wolves in the park? What are they supposed to eat once the bison are gone? Well, the feds say if the wolves turn to moose or furbearing (read commercially valuable) animals then the wolves too will be slaughtered.

This is wildlife management?

A suggestion to Ottawa: why don't you end the controversy over Wood Buffalo Park once and for all? Why don't you just pave it?