

The Editor,

Some years ago the Rideau Waterway was moved from the jurisdiction of Transport Canada into that of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and found itself being administered by Parks Canada.

This didn't just happen. It came about because thousands of people had become concerned that this largest piece of Canada's heritage and Canada's history was about to fall prey to the cult of modernization and electrification. Part of it, Newboro locks and Black Rapids locks, had already been electrified.

Now we find that, for at least 10 years, Parks Canada has been quietly selling "made land" to the upland landowners. This is where fill has been introduced along the shoreline by some lake shore landowners in order to extend or "improve" their lots. It is one of the worst possible uses of shoreline.

The natural shoreline vegetation provided a natural, resilient protective barrier against damage from ice and wave erosion and shade from the heat of the sun. It and the tree, shrub or natural grass cover extending back from it, will be replaced by an attractive looking and carefully manicured lawn which will offer little protection to the shoreline waters.

The shallows will now be exposed to both the heat of the sun and that radiating from the warmed retaining wall. The warmer water will no longer support aquatic life such as fish or frogs, but it will provide an excellent environment for the growth of algae.

And, of course, those lawns will have to be fertilized and treated with herbicides to kill the weeds. And watered, well certainly. So the fertilizers, the herbicides and the minerals from the disturbed soil will all be washed into the water, poisoning it and covering the bottom of the water with a layer of silt to nicely prevent the lower forms of life that would normally thrive in those waters.

These sales occur where a cottage owner has extended his shoreline or built a retaining wall and filled behind it - an illegal act. Of course it was! Now, by its latest policy and actions, Parks Canada is willing to sell off shoreline and in at least one instance, the bed of the lake itself. This, to those who by an illegal act have enlarged and increased the value of their properties.

The ancient equitable doctrine of estoppel which provided that one could not benefit from an illegal act has, after centuries, been superseded by a new doctrine that says, "You broke the law, but that's all right, just give us a few dollars and we'll forget all about it. You can now get a deed

to that land which you misappropriated and own it outright." Not even a penance is imposed.

The shoreline from high water mark to the water's edge must remain in the possession of the Crown and this policy of Parks Canada must stop, right now.

Patrick J. McManus

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IN FLANDERS FIELDS

John McCrae [1872-1918]

*In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.*

*We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.*

*Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.*

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