

WILL CANADA DO NOTHING TO SAVE CLAYOQUOT SOUND, ONE OF THE LAST GREAT TEMPERATE RAINFORESTS IN THE WORLD?



Only recently has the world come to know the horrific deforestation that has taken place in the westernmost Canadian province of British Columbia, bordering the state of Washington. In the past 45 years, commercial logging companies, aided and abetted by provincial authorities, have engaged in the systematic liquidation of one of the richest and most diverse forest ecosystems in North America. While global concern has been mainly directed at the alarming destruction of tropical rainforests in Brazil, few people realize that an even greater level of environmental devastation has taken place in British Columbia. Today just a small portion of this once magnificent rainforest legacy remains.

Last year, the old provincial government responsible for the massive clearcutting of B.C. forests was thrown out of office. Elected in its place was the New Democratic Party of Premier Michael Harcourt, with a promise to protect the best remaining temperate rainforest ecosystems along British Columbia's Pacific coast.

In just a few days, the new government will face its first major environmental test when it decides the fate of Clayoquot (pronounced clak-what) Sound, a spectacular mosaic of islands, fjord-like inlets and lush coastal rainforest covering 850,000 acres on the west side of Vancouver Island. Premier Harcourt will either act to protect the Clayoquot Sound ecosystem, or throw the doors wide open to the eager chainsaws of MacMillan Bloedel and Interfor, two Canadian companies notorious for their flagrantly destructive logging practices.

Those who know Clayoquot Sound understand what's at stake. As one of the last and largest

intact temperate rainforests left in North America, Clayoquot Sound may be the most accessible ecosystem of its kind for research and conservation. Its magnificent landscape supports numerous shell and finfish populations, including five species of Pacific salmon, hundreds of thousands of migrating waterfowl and shorebirds, marine mammals, including two types of whales, the second largest shark in the world, and some of the continent's largest predators, such as wolves, bears and cougars.

It is ironic that British Columbia, which touts its "supernatural" beauty in its tourism promotional campaigns, has allowed so much of its original forests to be destroyed, in such a callous and haphazard way. It is a further irony that the spectacular beauty of Clayoquot Sound — which attracted over a half million visitors last year, generating badly-needed tourism revenue in a region hit hard by recession and job loss — may be destroyed by clearcutting.



Will Premier Harcourt do the right thing and finally act to save British Columbia's most important asset? Or will Clayoquot Sound suffer the same fate as so much of the rest of British Columbia, which increasingly appears to visitors flying overhead to be suffering from a catastrophic attack of mange, with ugly bald spots spreading where dense primal forest once stood?

Canada's dirty, secret war against its forests is about to reach a critical watershed. This time, the whole world is watching and waiting. Whatever you do, Mr. Harcourt, be prepared to explain it to the world. And to your children and ours.

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HELP SAVE CLAYOQUOT SOUND

Send an urgent mailgram to Premier Michael Harcourt and Vice President-Elect Albert Gore. Cost is \$9.75 and will be billed to your phone. Please call **1-800-854-4747** now.