



Forestry and Logging Group

January 27, 1993

Letters To The Editor
The New York Times
229 West 43rd Street
New York, New York, U.S.A.
10036

Dear Sir:

On January 12, 1993 your newspaper ran an advertisement from several U.S. Conservation groups urgently asking the American people to intervene in British Columbia forest policy issues. I refer to "Will Canada Do Nothing to Save Clayoquot Sound..." in which my company was described as being notorious for its flagrantly destructive logging practices.

This assertion is "flagrantly and notoriously" untrue. In fact our environmental program is one of the best in the Province and with the help of our workforce will soon be the best in Canada. It is incumbent on those who place such ads to first come here to investigate and talk to the people of British Columbia -- a broad cross section of them -- and find out what Interfor and other forest companies are doing with respect to environmental protection. I know of no such visits from the organizations who placed that ad.

Furthermore the contents of that advertisement point out the need to explain to your readers the nature of forest planning in British Columbia. Forestry in Canada, and in British Columbia has changed considerably in the past decade. The days when regulations or the concerns of other forest users could be ignored are long gone. Forest planning, even in non-contentious areas, is extensive and all inclusive. Companies must show how and where they will log, that they have included the concerns of affected communities, that they have followed stringent guidelines to protect streams, fish and wildlife populations and, most importantly that specific plans for reforestation are in effect. Interfor must comply with these plans both during and after logging has taken place.

The planning that goes on in contentious areas is even more extensive. In these cases, an additional planning process is required. In it the workers, aboriginal and non-aboriginal communities, government representatives and any other interested groups sit down with the company to determine exactly how much of the forest will be cut, where the cutting will take place and how and where the roads will be built. The logging plans are developed through consensus and are not approved by government without solid recommendations by the committee of citizens. The ad in your paper did not mention any of these aspects of decision-making in our Province.

International Forest Products Limited

The Clayoquot Sound Sustainable Development Committee was one such planning group. A majority of local people decided among themselves how much, where and through which practices the Sound should be logged. (A summary of their recommendations to government is attached). The process took three and one half years of hard work, frustration and stress. A report which includes recommendations that 28% of the land base be totally protected and that 32% become working forest was finally presented to government.

The ad in your paper urges the American people to involve their federal government in this issue. Is it fair to ask a distant and insufficiently informed public and government to overturn all the work that the citizens of British Columbia and of Clayoquot Sound have done? I think not. Our forest policies and practices are under the legal and moral jurisdiction of the people of British Columbia and rightfully so.

I sincerely hope that the American people and government realize that Canadians are a thinking people, capable of making their own decisions on environmental protection. Our economy, culture and future depend on sound forest practices and environmental protection. The people of this country are well aware that total liquidation of old growth will prevent future generations from enjoying the logging community culture, the health, spiritual and global environmental benefits of wildlife and biodiversity and the research potential to be found in old growth.

Yours truly,

INTERNATIONAL FOREST PRODUCTS LIMITED



F. Lowenberger, R.P.F.
Vice President
Forestry and Land Use

FL/ej