

When stars speak out

*Why a Kennedy
is making waves
for a neighbour*

BY JACQUIE McNISH
New York Bureau
White Plains, N.Y.

WHEN Robert Kennedy Jr. dips his paddle in Canadian waters, the ripples travel far and wide.

At 39, he is a committed environmental activist who has spent six years working as a senior lawyer for a major environmental group and teaching environmental law at Pace University in White Plains.

And, of course, he is a Kennedy. This guarantees him major media attention, whether he is fighting to clean up the Hudson River, which runs through this leafy, middle-class community 50 miles north of New York City, or to preserve the rain forests of far-away Ecuador.

Now he has brought the Kennedy mystique to Canada. Two years ago, after a canoe trip to James Bay with the Crees of Northern Quebec, he joined their campaign against the massive Great Whale hydroelectric project. In August, after paddling along the west coast of Vancouver Island, he championed the drive to halt logging along British Columbia's Clayoquot Sound.

In both cases, the lanky blue-eyed lawyer has drawn on his family name and extensive political contacts to mobilize public support back home. He also has sparked a debate: is a Kennedy, or any other outsider blessed with instant access to the international media, qualified to influence Canadian affairs?

So far, Mr. Kennedy's influence has been substantial. Many U.S. politicians have backed his Canadian causes, which have been featured in most major newspapers. Esquire magazine even published an essay he wrote about James Bay entitled North America's Amazon.

The results have pleased Canada's fragmented environmental and native groups.

"Because of Bobby's stature and name, we're no longer perceived as just a bunch of primitive Indians," says Matthew Coon-Come, Grand Chief of the Quebec Crees. "He elevated our fight to a whole different level."

"We are honoured to have his support," adds Colleen McCrory, chairwoman of the Valhalla Society, one of many small B.C. environmental groups fighting the decision in April to allow cutting of two-thirds of the Clayoquot rain forest. "Bobby Kennedy has given us the international profile we so desperately needed."

From another perspective, however, Mr. Kennedy's emotional depictions of dead caribou in James Bay and stripped mountains in B.C. has helped to make Canada a dirty word abroad.



Leading the way through a B.C. clearcut last summer: 'rainforest' delegates for those who area's born yet, who don't have a voice in how their legacy is being spent.

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Last summer, activists from India to Germany celebrated Canada Day by protesting outside Canadian embassies. European Community leaders are considering a boycott of B.C. timber, and pro-business publications such as Britain's *The Economist* have voiced concerns about the country's environmental policies.

This has led Mr. Kennedy's critics to paint him as a "maddening outsider" and "demagogue," who is too quick to wag a finger at "Brazil of the North" and reduce complex environmental issues to a series of emotional sound bites.

His opponents include Quebecers who see Great Whale as a key element of their province's economic well-being, and B.C. loggers appalled that he would call for a halt to the Clayoquot harvest after spending only four days in the area.

"I have very little respect for Mr. Kennedy," says Reed Scowen, Quebec's delegate-general in New York. "He has turned a legitimate environmental debate in Canada into a publicity stunt."

"I've worked hard for 44 years," says Ucluelet logger Doug Pichette, "and now I've got to listen to an outsider who had his life given to him on a silver platter tell me

'How do you battle a Kennedy?'

have branded him a "three-day expert," choosing to discount both his experience as an environmentalist and his association with the vaunted National Resources Defense Council.

The non-profit NRDC has perfected the art of mixing serious research with celebrity lustre to draw attention and financial support to its cause. Founded in 1970, it boasts 170,000 members, an \$18-million (U.S.) budget and a board of directors that includes actor Robert Redford and singer James Taylor.

But it is no political lightweight, thanks to a large office in Washington that has forged links with leading government figures and a widely respected legal and research staff. Given the Clinton administration's close ties with

His ability to influence U.S. consumers gives Mr. Kennedy a powerful weapon, and he says he won't join an environmental fight unless he feels he can use it to force a corporation or government to back down.

He says he has had to endure "vicious" criticism in Canada. For example, he denies belonging to what Mr. Scowen describes as "an elite in the U.S. Northeast that has always seen Quebec as a nice playground."

ACCORDING to Mr. Kennedy, ecological threats such as acid rain, toxic waste and a depleting ozone layer, don't respect borders, and international diplomacy

lains. "But his ideological priorities remain clear, and he jumped when approached to help native people fight Great Whale and then Clayoquot Sound.

"They are paradigms," he says, "of all the things that I have been working on: aboriginal rights, social justice, and really critical wilderness and estuaries. . . . It has everything that really interests me."

The trip to James Bay in 1991 was the first Canadian publicity coup. The media were captivated by images of a Kennedy paddling with natives in a distant wilderness.

It seemed a classic tale of David versus a plundering Goliath, and when he got home, Mr. Kennedy began his lobbying spree. He urged state legislators to cancel New York's \$17-million contract with Hydro-Quebec and help save "North America's Amazon. . . a kind of paradise."

Public support was solicited with rock concerts, full-page advertisements and postcards to NRDC members that featured Cree children in traditional garb, beluga whales and dead caribou.

Last year, New York tore up its contract with Hydro-Quebec. The state was motivated largely by the fact it no longer needed the power, but the NRDC claimed an environmental victory because the move weakened the Quebec utility's ability to finance Great Whale.

When the results shifted in Clayoquot Sound last

what's wrong with my economy and government. Who does he think he is?"

Bobby Kennedy knows exactly who he is. He knows how to use his name to hit a country where it hurts.

A major focus of his trips is public relations to bring attention to the issues, he admits, leaning back on a creaky wooden chair in the cramped Pace University office. "And the people in Canada and the governments are sensitive to criticism."

The country has its share of abuse. For as long as environmentalists have recognized the value of sprinkling a little salt on their crusades, Canada has drawn fire from celebrity activists. Fifteen years ago, it was Brigitte Barbot coddling whittos on the floes off Newfoundland to protest against the seal hunt; more recently, scotch King Basinger narrated an anti-trapping video for a Vancouver animal-rights group.

Whether the eco-stars really accomplish much is open to debate. On one hand, they put their causes into the limelight; on the other, they can be dismissed, with varying degrees of justification, as dilettantes lacking a firm grasp of a complex issue.

To this end, Canadians doing battle with Mr. Kennedy

the environmental movement, the council has enjoyed unusual support for its Canadian campaigns.

This was especially apparent last month when Mr. Kennedy accompanied a group of aboriginal chiefs from Vancouver Island to Washington. Nearly a dozen politicians and Clinton officials — such as Katie McGinty, the President's top environmental adviser, and Rafe Pomeroy, the State Department's chief negotiator on international environmental issues — agreed to bear their complaints about B.C. logging. "This never would have happened in the Bush administration," says Elizabeth Barrett-Brown, an NRDC lawyer.

Critics complain that the council, with no Canadian board members or staff, has no business pointing fingers north of the border. "It can say or do anything it wants in Canada because it has no stake or roots here," says Quebec's Mr. Scowen.

Mr. Kennedy counters with the fact that his country consumes so many Canadian resources, with the State of New York buying power from James Bay and the U.S. market taking half of B.C.'s timber exports. "In Claycoquot Sound and James Bay," he says, "U.S. consumer practices are driving environmental destruction" in a country he describes as "one of the pretest and wildest on Earth. . . . everywhere you look it's spectacular."

He says his campaign to clean up the Hudson River — the Pace clinic has won dozens of lawsuits against polluters — "gives me the standing to go elsewhere." This philosophy has taken him to the rain forest of Ecuador to limit oil drilling and the shores of the Bio-Bio River in Chile to combat a major dam.

"Environmentalists are essential for the future of our planet," Mr. Kennedy says. "We're delegates for those who aren't born yet; we don't have a voice in how their legacy is being spent."

When asked to join a crusade, he looks for an opportunity to pursue two favorite causes: native rights and water protection. Both stem from his childhood. Growing up on Cape Cod and in Virginia, he developed a passion for estuaries (freshwater arms of the sea), and was deeply moved by the native plight when he visited reservations with his attorney-general father.

Bobby Jr. also introduced him to Canada at an early age with a hiking trip to Alberta in the mid-sixties and then a visit to Expo 67 in Montreal, where his mother's grandparents had been raised.

His knowledge of the country can, like that of many Americans, be foggy. (He thinks the Yukon peak named after his presidential uncle is "either in B.C. or Alberta" and wonders whether "B.C. has snow-capped moun-

summer, Mr. Kennedy's first challenge was to bring his two interests together because local natives had spurned all overtures from the environmentalists.

They were leery on two counts, says Francis Frank, chief of the Tla-o-qui-ah First Nations. First, the Claycoquot activists had proposed such tactics as tree-spiking, which showed "no respect for our land" or the safety of natives employed in the forest industry. And, ironically, they had been turned off by the celebrity crowd.

Chief Frank cites what happened when Midnight Oil, an eco-conscious Australian rock band, arrived in B.C. to perform at a fund-raising concert last summer: "They told us they were really concerned, and that was the last we ever heard from them."

Mr. Kennedy, however, was a different story. After hearing glowing reports from the Cree about his work in James Bay, the First Nations invited him to pay a visit. "You wouldn't believe the following the Kennedys have in our community," says Chief Frank. In fact, the Kennedy name has such resonance that when the canoe carrying Bobby and his son arrived at Meares Island, it was lifted from the water in a ceremony performed only four times since the turn of the century.

After two days of lengthy meetings, Mr. Frank and four other chiefs agreed to suspend their support of Claycoquot logging. In return, Mr. Kennedy said the NRDC agreed to help the chiefs press B.C. to settle their prolonged land claims.

This union was cemented in late September by what the chiefs now describe as the most exciting week in their lives. As a friendship gesture, Mr. Kennedy took them on a walking tour of Manhattan that included Times Square and Harlem. Then it was on to Washington to lobby for trade sanctions of lumber boycott. They also stayed at Hickory Hill, the northern Virginia home of Mr. Kennedy's mother Ethel. "I will never forget that night," Chief Frank says. "We were up until 2 a.m. in a live with the history and importance of the house."

NEXT spring, the natives and Mr. Kennedy will be back on the water, hoping to paddle a 52-foot cedar dug-out christened the Spirit of Unity from Claycoquot Sound along the coast to Los Angeles. They're hoping to raise public support for sanctions and a boycott of B.C. lumber, even though enforcing such a boycott would not be easy. Most lumber sold in the United States is not labelled by country of origin, let alone province, and goes to thousands of contractors with little interest in preserving someone else's wilderness.

Still, the media are bound to be captivated by the notion of a traditional canoe filled with natives and a Kennedy. By the time the Spirit of Unity reaches Los Angeles, many Americans may no longer see B.C. as a land of mountains and beaches but, as Quebec was portrayed, a place willing to sacrifice its wilderness for a price.

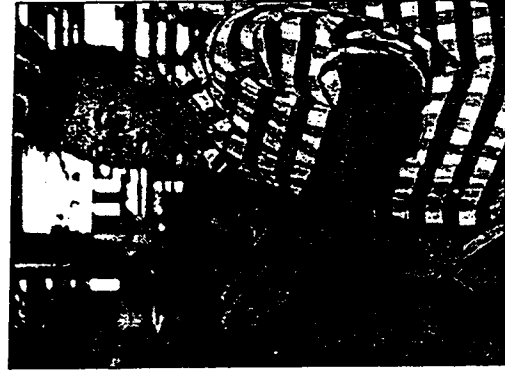
The idea is to embarrass B.C. into rethinking its logging policies to protect its tourism, and the province has already begun to work on damage control. Premier Mitchell Harcourt is to arrive in Washington on Monday to meet such officials as Interior Minister Bruce Babbin and State Department counselor Timothy Wirth. He has also agreed to meet the NRDC.

The prospect of beating a Kennedy on his home turf does not seem encouraging. Quebec has tried repeatedly to discredit him by challenging his facts, but few Americans have paid attention to the details.

This has not escaped the attention of those in B.C. who depend on logging for a living. Members of the Claycoquot Society, which supports a controlled harvest along the sound, feel the forest industry has been unjustly vilified by the foreign media, especially considering the strides it has taken in reducing wasteful practices. But they do not expect B.C. logging to lose its tarnished image in the foreseeable future.

"How do you battle a name like Robert Kennedy and a tactic like this canoe trip," asks society chairwoman Linda Monron. "People don't want to hear our side of the story, they only want to hear about Robert Kennedy."

A life that springs from a family tradition



Heading home from 'North America's Amazon,' 1991.

This led him to the non-profit Natural Resources Defense Council, where he found a niche as a specialist in water and energy rights.

It also led him to Pace University's environmental-law clinic, where he now spends most of his time sitting in a room that seems to owe its decor to an exploding filing cabinet.

Mounds of legal briefs and files spill off his desk, partly burying an empty dog cage, a tattered overnight bag and a lone, sickly cactus. The only remarkable item in the office are two Rolodexes as big as tubocase and the black-and-white photos of his late father on the wall.

His 11-acre estate at Mount Kisco, north of White Plains, doubles as a wildlife sanctuary. It is overrun with pheasants, quail, owls and geese. He is licensed to train

lawsuits and rehabilitate injured animals.

The basement of the six-bedroom colonial home is carpeted with the giant reeds that he, his son Bobby, 8, and daughter Kirk, 5, use to collect fish specimens from the nearby Hudson and Croton Rivers.

The Hudson figures in his work as well as play. Under his supervision, law students at the Pace clinic have won dozens of lawsuits to stop industries from polluting it.

He is committed to cleaning up the Hudson, he says, because it is one of the few remaining major estuaries in North America still capable of being saved. These so-called "caterpillars of the ocean" are breeding ground for millions of coastal fish. Most, such as Chesapeake Bay, are being killed by farm and industrial pollution.

Having used the law to help the Hudson, he hopes that using his name will do the same for James Bay and Claycoquot Sound. "We've managed to keep the Hudson River clean. . . . now we can go around the world and say: 'Look, this is a way to do it.'"

When he chose his career, Bobby Kennedy was following a family tradition. "Growing up in my family, it was clear that you had to give something back," says younger brother Michael, "not only to your family and your community, but your country."

Who they are and what they do:

Kathleen Kennedy Townsend, 41, runs service programs for Maryland's public schools.
Joseph Kennedy, 40, a Democratic congressman from Massachusetts.

Robert Kennedy, 39, a senior lawyer for Natural Resources Defense Council.

Dorothy Kennedy, 37, a goodwill ambassador for the AIDS Pediatric Foundation.

Michael Kennedy, 35, chairman of Citizens' Energy Corp., which provides low-cost heat.

Kerry Kennedy Cooney, 33, executive director of the RPK Center for Human Rights in Washington.

Christopher Kennedy, 26, vice-president of family-owned Merchandise Mart Properties Inc., Chicago.

Matthew (Max) Kennedy, 28, an assistant district attorney in Philadelphia.

Douglas Kennedy, 26, a New York journalist.
Rory Kennedy, 24, a documentary filmmaker in New York.

ROBERT Kennedy Jr. comes by his love of the outdoors honestly. The term environmentalist had become popular, his father took the Kennedy children on wilderness trips to instill in them a lasting respect for nature. On family holidays, Robert F. Kennedy typically led a procession of youngsters on mountain hikes, making a juvenile-water-trading trip.

"My father had a very, very strong interest in protecting the wilderness," says the third of Bobby and Ethel Kennedy's 11 children. "He saw it as a vital part of the American identity. . . . and a place also of spiritual renewal and challenge."

As a child, Bobby Jr. was especially devoted to wildlife. Growing up in Cape Cod and Virginia, he recalls, "I spent most of my time in the pond catching crawfish and salamanders." (He once took a salamander along on a visit to his Uncle John in the White House.)

But his dream of becoming a veterinarian was shattered by an assassin's bullet in 1968. "When my father died, my goals changed. I felt like I wanted to do more of what he was doing."

Like many of his siblings, he resolved to pursue community and political work. He followed in his father's footsteps by graduating from Harvard University and the University of Virginia's law school.

Contemplating a political career, he accepted a job as an assistant district attorney in New York. Once again, however, his ambitions were thwarted by what some have come to call the "Kennedy curse."

Like some of the other young Kennedys, he developed a drug problem, and in 1983 pleaded guilty to heroin possession. He received a one-year suspended sentence and lost the right to practice law.

Six months after Mr. Kennedy entered a drug-treatment center, his younger brother David, then 28, died of an overdose in West Palm Beach, Fla.

After much soul-searching, Mr. Kennedy was back on his feet by the late 1980s. He and his wife Emily (the two recently separated) had two children and his law license had been restored.

The only thing missing, he now says, was a sense of direction. "I was rethinking my life in a lot of ways, and I thought, 'This is what I really want — to do environmental work.'"

Clayoquot protests staged worldwide

VANCOUVER (CP) — While veterans and other Canadians mourned fallen soldiers on Remembrance Day, environmentalists were mourning fallen trees. The Sierra Club of Western Canada staged its own Remembrance Day ceremony yesterday, a so-called Service for the Trees.

About 40 people turned up in front of the downtown office tower housing MacMillan Bloedel Ltd., the principal company logging Clayoquot Sound on the west coast of Vancouver Island. The demonstration coincided with protests in England, Australia, Germany, and Austria.

Protesters in Vancouver strung a symbolic line of dirty laundry, representing what they see as the wrist-slapping penalties the company has received for environmental violations, said Elizabeth May, the organization's executive director.

"MacMillan Bloedel has broken laws time and time again," said May, who is based in Ottawa. "And yet they are not fined or jailed to the extent that people who oppose the practices are."

Heritage

May said the environmentalists intended no disrespect and consulted with veterans aboard their coast-to-coast Clayoquot Express rail junket before going ahead.

Rudy Haase of Chester, Lumber Co., a Second World War navy veteran who heads Friends of Nature, was among the 80 people on the two-week trip.

"Canada has this heritage of pine forests and other resources and this is something we would certainly defend if some foreign invader were coming in to destroy the environment," he said.

In London, England, Members of Friends of Clayoquot Sound gathered at the MacMillan Bloedel pulp and paper sales office in Twickenham on London's western outskirts.

Office director Martin Grover said five protesters occupied his premises at 9 a.m. but left after 30 minutes under police escort. There were no arrests.

A group of more than 20 activists protested in Richmond, west London, at MBM Ltd., a subsidiary of the forestry giant.

In Sydney, about 20 Greenpeace members staged a short demonstration Wednesday outside an Australian subsidiary of MacMillan Bloedel.

Environmentalists hold ceremony for fallen trees

By Steve Marti
THE CANADIAN PRESS

VANCOUVER

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"MacMillan Bloedel has broken laws time and time again," said May, who is based in Ottawa. "And yet they are not fined or jailed to the extent that people who oppose the practices are."

Protester Todd Geuer of Ottawa saw nothing wrong with holding the demonstration on Remembrance Day.

"The trees are dying too, right?" she said. "They're casualties of a battle on the side of greed and we want to change that."

The protest took place well away from traditional cenotaph observance and two hours after the solemn two-minute silence at 11 a.m. honoring the war dead.

But some veterans at the service were angered environmentalists had horned in on the one day reserved for their fallen comrades.

"I think it's awful," said Robert Berglund, a 78-year-old armored corps veteran. "This is supposed to be sacred for one thing, not for their political needs."

Former paratrooper Ernie Mitchell, 64, lamented the protest

"The trees are dying too, right? They're casualties of a battle on the side of greed and we want to change that."

Protester Todd Geuer

but admitted it was part of the democracy he fought for in the Korean War.

"Today is for a specific purpose and everybody should feel that way," said the be-medalled Mitchell. "But they don't and there's nothing you or I can do about it."

But not all veterans condemned the demonstration.

"If it wasn't for this ceremony, I'd probably be there too," said Tom Osborn, who served in the merchant navy during the Second World War.

May said the environmentalists intended no disrespect and consulted with veterans aboard their coast-to-coast Clayoquot Express rail junket before going ahead.

"They felt comfortable that the day is appropriate for other losses in our society, other wars," said May, who met Wednesday with Premier Mike Harcourt, Environment Minister Moe Shaqfeh and Forest Minister Andrew Petter.

Rudy Haase of Chester, N.B., agreed. The Second World War navy veteran heads Friends of Nature and was among the 80 people on the two-week Clayoquot Express trip.

"Canada has this heritage of pine forests and other resources and this is something we would certainly defend if some foreign invader were coming in to destroy the environment," he said.

About 800 people have been arrested since June for blocking a logging road into Clayoquot Sound in violation of a B.C. Supreme Court injunction. Dozens have been fined or handed jail sentences for criminal contempt of court.

Environmentalists oppose NDP government decision to allow some kind of logging in two-thirds of the temperate coastal rain forest.

HALIFAX/DAWTRMOUTH DAILY NEWS NOV 12, 1992

Tofino Journal

Two Towns Do Battle Over Canada's Rain Forest

By CLYDE H. FARNSWORTH
Special to The New York Times

TOFINO, British Columbia — "It's barbaric what they're doing," Norleen Lillico, a shopkeeper, said, arguing against the decision by British Columbia's government to allow logging in the formerly protected rain forest on the craggy west coast of Vancouver Island.

"The wild places on earth are rare enough and threatened and must be protected," she said with serene firmness behind the counter of her natural foods shop, Organic Matters, on Tofino's main commercial street, a few hundred feet from Duffin Cove.

Ms. Lillico, 30, was one of the peaceful protesters arrested last summer for carrying their opposition to the point of refusing to step out of the way of mammoth logging trucks headed into the pristine interior north and west of here.

In one of the largest mass arrests in Canadian history, nearly 800 were detained, charged with defying a court injunction obtained by MacMillan Bloedel Ltd., the region's biggest logging company. The injunction banned demonstrators from its logging sites.

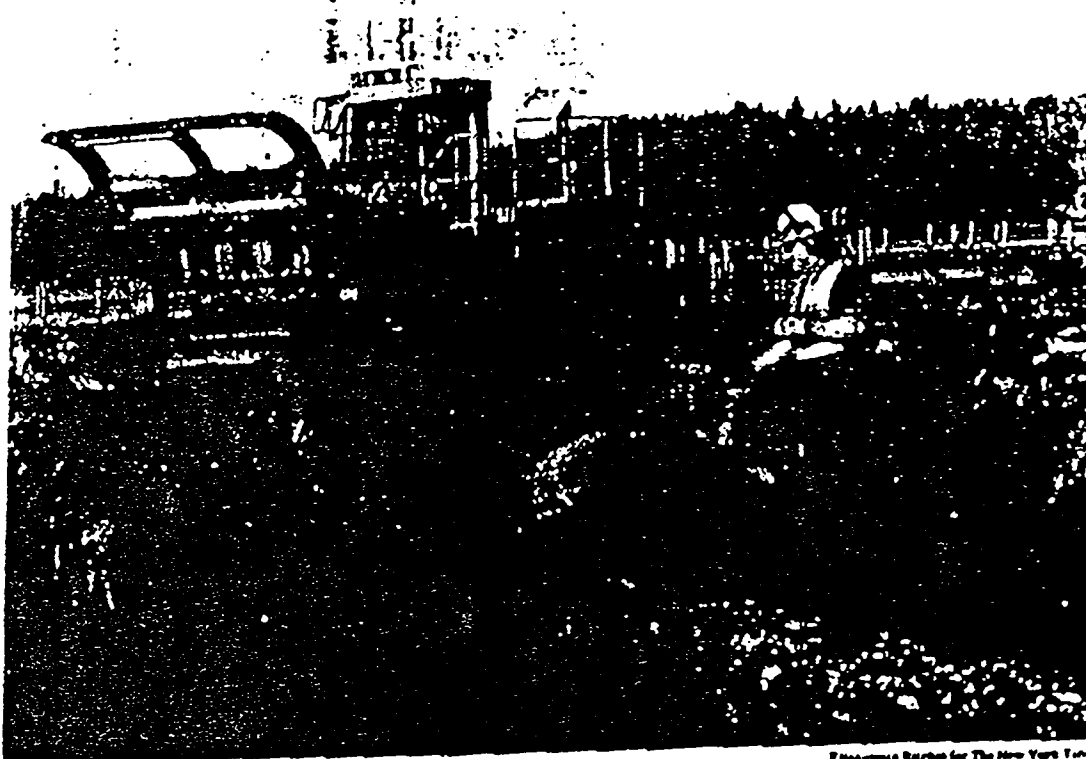
Ancient Trees and Eagles

These sites are in a domain of ancient cedar, hemlock, balsam and spruce — including at least one red cedar dating from before the collapse of the Roman Empire — of thickets of salmonberry, huckleberry and salal, of black bears, black-tailed deer, waterfowl, migratory shore birds and bald eagles.

Thirty miles down the coast from Tofino is the town of Ucluelet, at the southern end of the Pacific Rim National Park, where Dave Olson, 38, works at one of the logging stations.

He trims logs after the huge trees are felled and hauled from the interior, brands and sorts them just before they are rolled into the water, to be towed to the sawmills at Port Alberni. The logs are made into boards and shingles or mashed into pulp for newspapers and telephone books.

Nearly half the wood goes to the United States, a flow that has been increased in recent years by successful lawsuits by environmental groups against American loggers.



Dave Olson at work at a logging station in the town of Ucluelet in British Columbia. He said environmentalists protesting the government's decision to

allow logging in the formerly protected rain forest on the west coast of Vancouver Island are seeking to destroy his job and his livelihood.

Mr. Olson complains that environmentalists are seeking to destroy his livelihood. "They want me to pull out," he said. "I have a wife and three children. I need my job." He has been with MacMillan Bloedel for 18 years.

The stocky, good-natured logger pointed a thick, callused forefinger across the waters of Ucluelet Inlet at a stretch of land that was clear-cut years ago, where newly planted spruce and cedars, looking more like whiskers on a youth's chin, have many decades to go before they can be harvested.

Wilderness for Tourists

"It's ironic," Mr. Olson said. "My first job with the company was planting trees. But trees like those take maybe 60 to 100 years to grow."

Tofino (population 1,100) and Ucluelet (population 2,000) are two sides of the conflict that has been tearing at this island since April 13, when Premier Michael Harcourt allowed logging on two-thirds of a tract the size of Rhode Island along Clayoquot (pronounced klak-wit) Sound.

Tofino, a town of art galleries and inhabited by many artists, capitalizes on sports-fishing, whale-watching, wilderness-trekking and other forms of tourism.

"Wilderness is one of our main attractions," said Julie Draper, 35, a graphic artist and a director of Friends of Clayoquot Sound, the leading anti-logging group. "Clear-cut hillsides are hardly the best way to draw tourism."

Ucluelet has no art galleries. More roughly hewn, it is the home of fishermen and loggers and the headquarters of MacMillan Bloedel's Kennedy Lake division, which employs 3,000 people, including 1,000 loggers.

The division manager, Don Dowling, 50, who holds a master's degree in forestry from Yale, insisted that the government decision was a "balanced and fair one and has community support." People speaking out against it, he added, "are victims of a great deal of misinformation."

'For Sustainable Logging'

Premier Harcourt, of the Socialist-leaning New Democratic Party, linked the decision to substantially lighter restrictions on the way logging companies operate, including controls on the amount of forest land that can be cut per year, requirements for "view corridors" to keep some trees standing at the edges of denuded swaths and guidelines for protecting salmon streams.

Dennis St. Jacques, a former logger who owns Smiley's restaurant and bowling alley on Peninsula Road in Ucluelet, said: "This is a good decision. It's for sustainable logging, so that everyone can carry on his own life style. Why should one life style supersede another?"

Morley Johnsen, 35, a "faller," who makes the first wedge-shaped cut into a tree that determines the direction in which it falls, added, "We object to people forcing their life style on us."

The move to log one of the last major stands of ancient rain forest in North America has already had major political repercussions.

The decision by the New Democrats, traditionally sensitive to environmental concerns, dismayed many supporters and helped cause a rout of the party in the province in national elections in October. New Democrats went from 19 to 2 seats in British Columbia and lost all six seats they had held on Vancouver Island.

"If the decision is fully implemented," the Sierra Club of Western Canada said in a brochure urging members to protest, "74 out of every 100 old-growth trees in Clayoquot Sound will have disappeared."