

MEARES ISLAND NEWS

Summer 1985



COURT SAVES MEARES — UNTIL NOVEMBER — *Hopes Soar for Tribal Park*

A three to two decision by the Appeals Court of B.C. has delayed the possibility of logging on Meares Island until after the Native Land Claims trial, set for November 4, 1985. On June 25 the Supreme Court of Canada heard preliminary arguments on yet another appeal by MacMillan Bloedel and the B.C. Government, deferred its decision on whether or not to go ahead and review the B.C. Appeals Court ruling.

The 8,000 ha Meares Island stands as a green oasis in a growing desert of clear-cuts. In the heart of Clayoquot Sound, Meares is 98% untouched by man. It remains virtually in the same "virgin" state it was when the first Europeans set their eyes upon it.

Several decades ago, MacMillan Bloedel bought the eighty-year-old logging rights on Meares. But perhaps because of the island's sensitive location directly adjacent to Tofino, the most picturesque village on the Canadian Pacific, they deferred logging.

In 1980 "looming lumber shortages" prompted the company decision to "get on with" the logging of Meares.

Forceful opposition to the imminent logging started with a few local residents. It has grown steadily to become a national and international outcry.

Strong passions fuel the confrontations over the fate of Meares Island. For some Tofino

residents at issue is the sanctity of their fresh water supply, all of which comes from Meares, and the sea resources which provide them with an income. For others it's the view from their village—the magic of Meares dominating the skyline. For environmentalists Meares' importance rests on the unbroken chain of thousand-year growth cycles, each unique thousand-year-old tree harbouring the secret of longevity, storing the mother lode of genetic diversity that "has the answers and questions yet unasked by mankind." For the Clayoquot Indians Meares is their sacred home and way of life. For MacMillan Bloedel at issue is not only their right to log on Meares, but the legitimacy of their right to log other places where the aboriginal ownership has not been extinguished by lawful treaty. (And, underneath it all, the legitimacy of their logging practices which are eroding the landbase, forest resource and salmon streams.)

So far no one has been arrested protecting Meares, but the battle has cost millions of dollars. During the confrontations last winter, when people occupied the woods which MB was preparing to log, helicopters buzzed the skies over Meares and a dozen lawyers debated in the courtroom at injunction hearings.

The loggers for MacMillan Bloedel boast that the company has already spent nearly three million dollars to "protect their rights to Meares," and will spend whatever it takes

to win, even if it costs more than the trees are worth.

The Indians and environmentalists have spent an estimate of \$100,000 to save Meares. Donations from concerned citizens continue to pour in.

They are equally determined to win.





Forest protectors waiting to meet an expected logging crew at Tisaquis (Heelboom Bay) on January 30th, a few days after losing the injunction hearing in the B.C. Supreme Court. MacMillan Bloedel helicopter circles the bay (photo on left taken by MB from helicopter) but loggers never arrive.



Bark Affidavit Helps Win Court Case

Margaret Joseph, a weaver of Optisaht, provided key evidence of continued use and occupancy of Meares Island by the Clayoquot. She testified at the Appeal hearing, explaining how the best cedar bark grows from Heelboom bay to Mosquito Harbour because it gets the morning sunlight.

She has gathered products growing on Meares since she was a little girl. Joseph swore she has never been prevented from freely going onto the land and taking things she needed.

Because she is now elderly, relatives help her collect the cedar bark that she needs to make baskets. In July of 1984, when the sap ran in the cedar, she sent her nephews and grandsons as a bark gathering party to Heelboom Bay. She told them exactly where to find the good bark.

Jack Woodward, one of the lawyers representing the Clayoquots, said such evidence helps prove aboriginal title, use and occupancy of the land continuing to be exercised at the present time.

World Famous Forest Authority For Meares

In an affidavit to the B.C. Supreme Court Vladimir Karjina, a world renowned forest ecology expert and former University of British Columbia professor, spoke out for the protection of Meares Island. He testified that if Meares is logged its "unique ecosystem" will be "irreparably harmed and irretrievably lost."

After 40 years of involvement in the field of forest ecology, numerous awards and honorary appointments, and two N.F.B. films about him, Karjina has the experience and knowledge to back his Meares testimonial. He swore under oath that it will take "a minimum of 500 years" to return the island to its natural state after logging damage.

He also stated that "the water on Meares Island is exceptionally pure and is purer than that of Vancouver. "This water is the drinking supply for the village of Tofino.

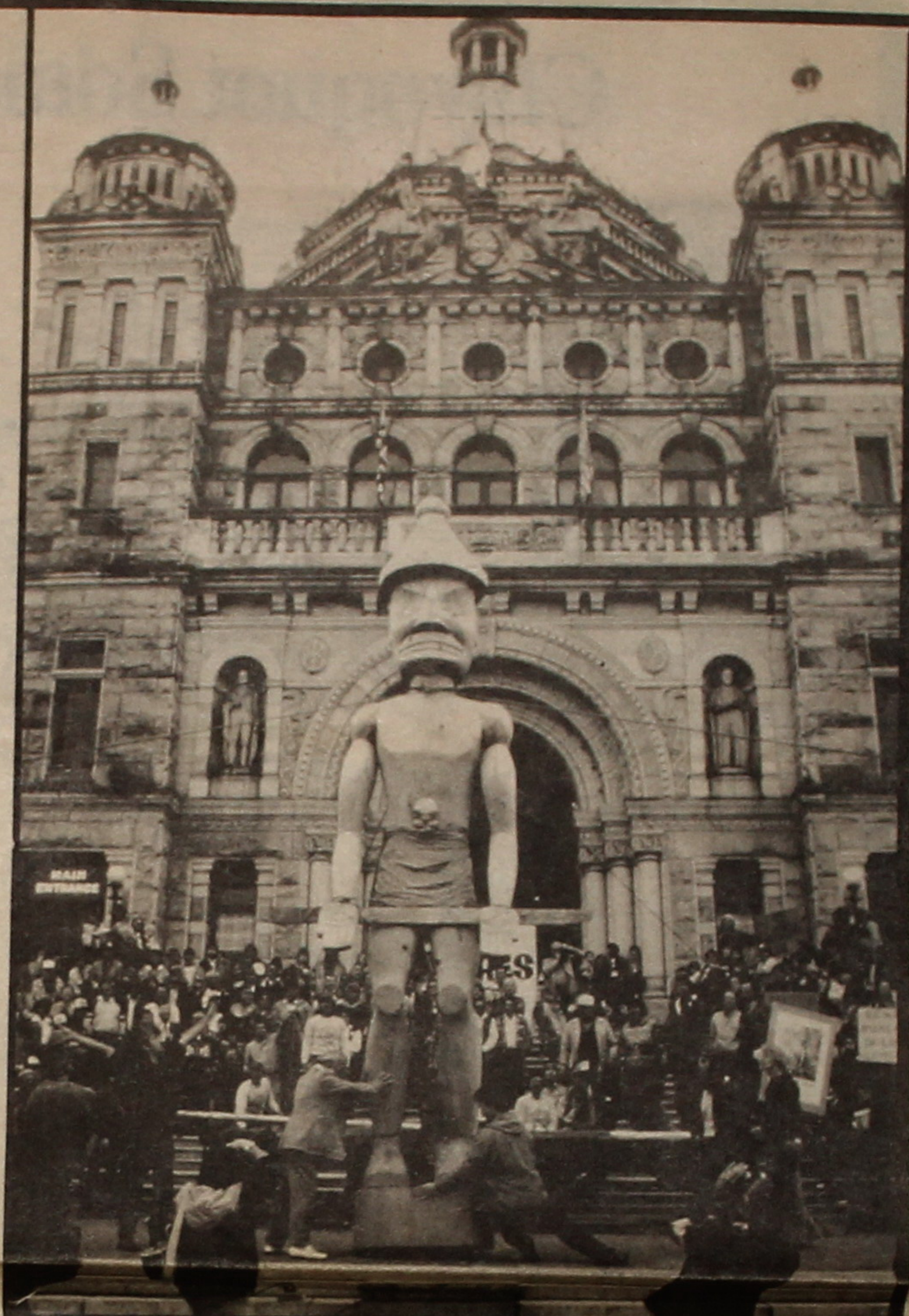
In his affidavit Karjina included the little known fact that one of the largest cedar trees known to man grows on Meares. Some of the trees are over a thousand years old.

Karjina concluded that with its immense trees, pure watershed, and island ecology, Meares is a complete self-supporting ecosystem. In British Columbia few such unspoiled areas remain. The expert testimonial of Vladimir Karjina will play an important role in the Court's decision on the fate of Meares Island.





On October 20, 1985 over 1200 people gathered before the British Columbia Parliament Buildings to rally support for the Meares Island Tribal Park. The raising of Cedar Man, a carving by Clayoquot artist Joe David, highlighted the ceremonies.



The statue, symbolizing the power of nature on Meares, will eventually be raised on Meares Island. It now stands at the entrance of University of British Columbia's Anthropology Museum in Vancouver.

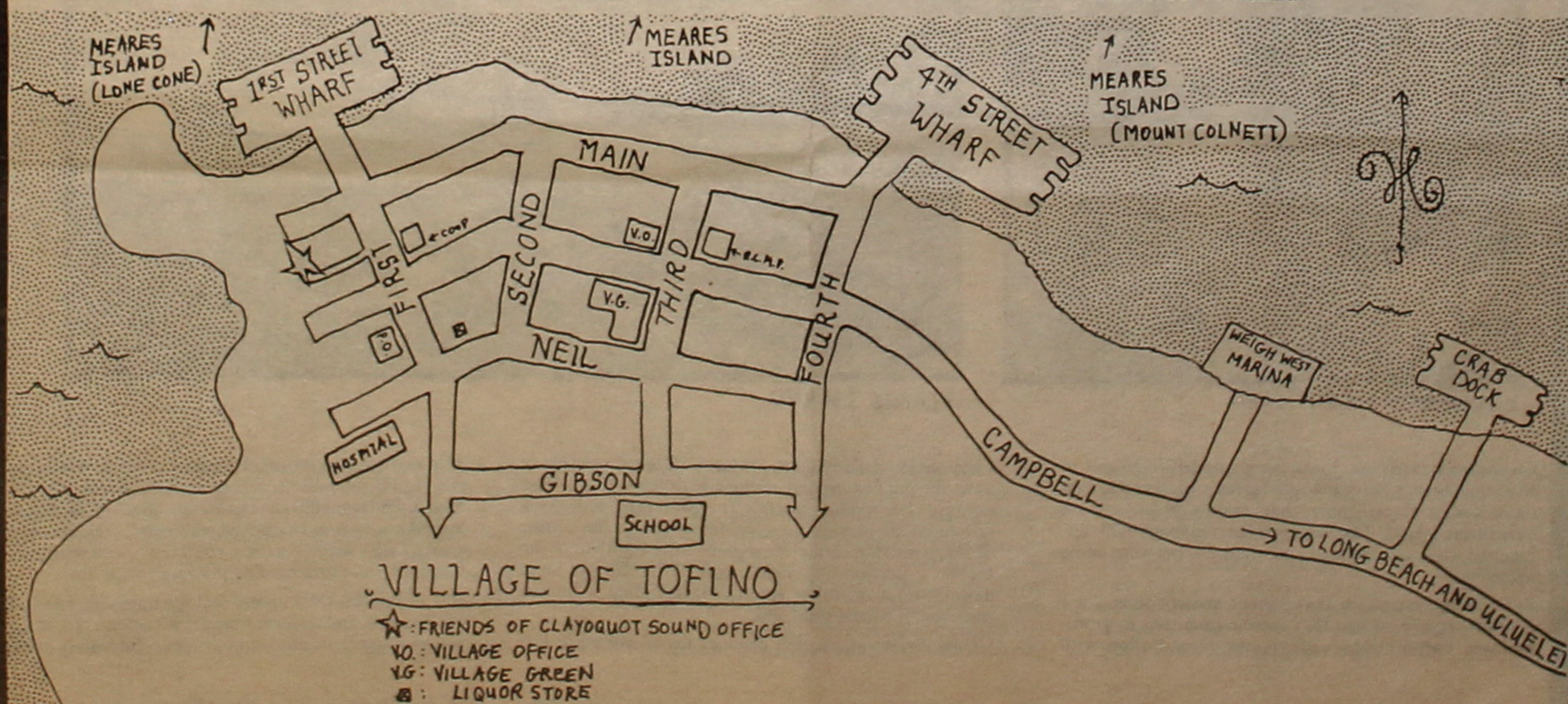
BE SURE TO VISIT MEARES



The best way to get involved in the Meares Island controversy is to visit the Island yourself. Once you walk among immense stands of cedar and spruce and experience the beauty of the forest you will be convinced the Island must be protected.

Many boat tours will be available from Tofino

to Meares Island this summer, leaving from almost all the wharfs everyday. Drop in at the Friends of Clayoquot office, marked by a star on the map, to get information about tours, buy t-shirts, books, posters, buttons and tape of songs written especially for Meares and find out how you can help protect Meares Island.



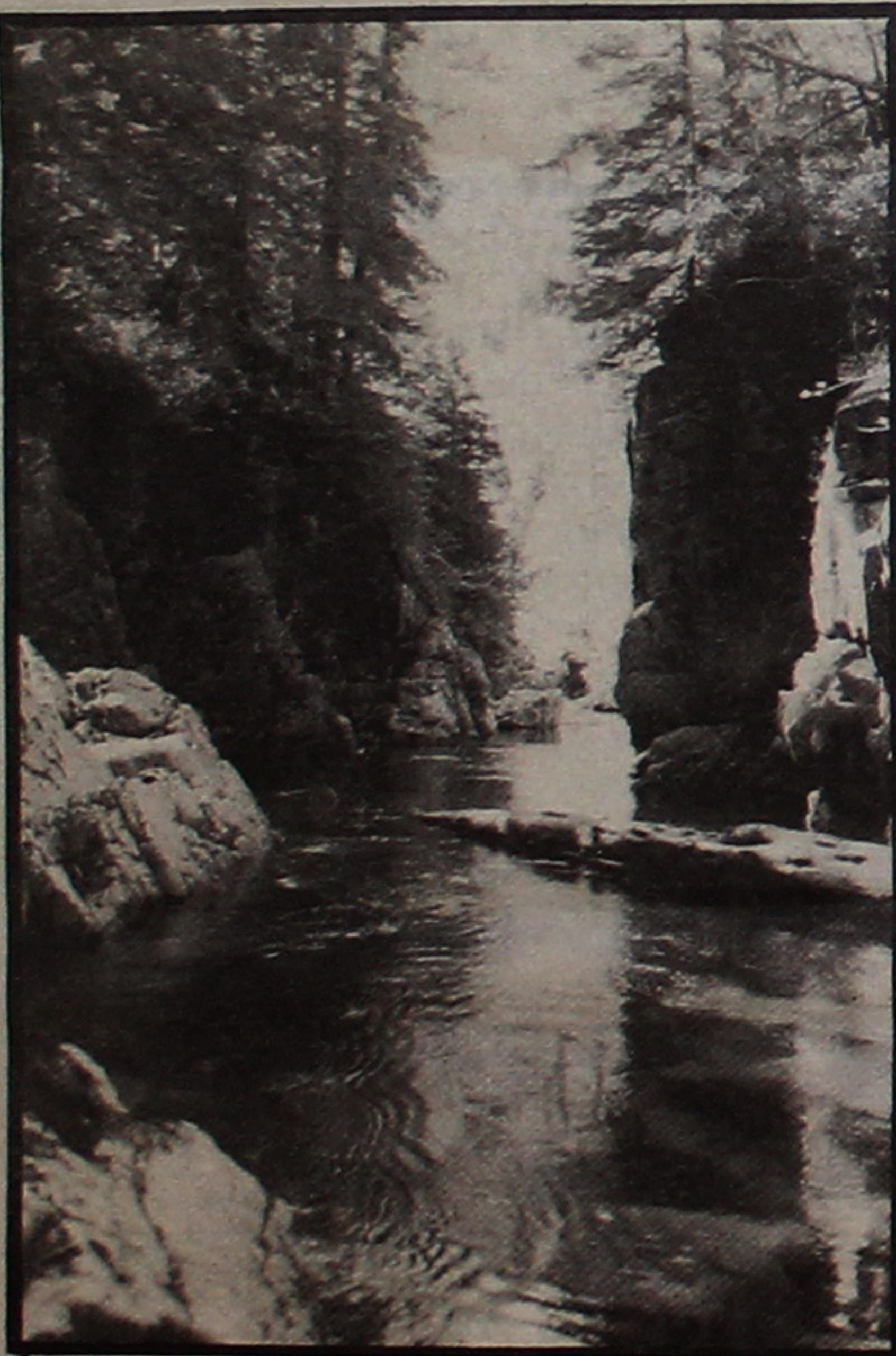
Clayoquot Sound a Priceless Heritage—Time to Manage With Loving Care



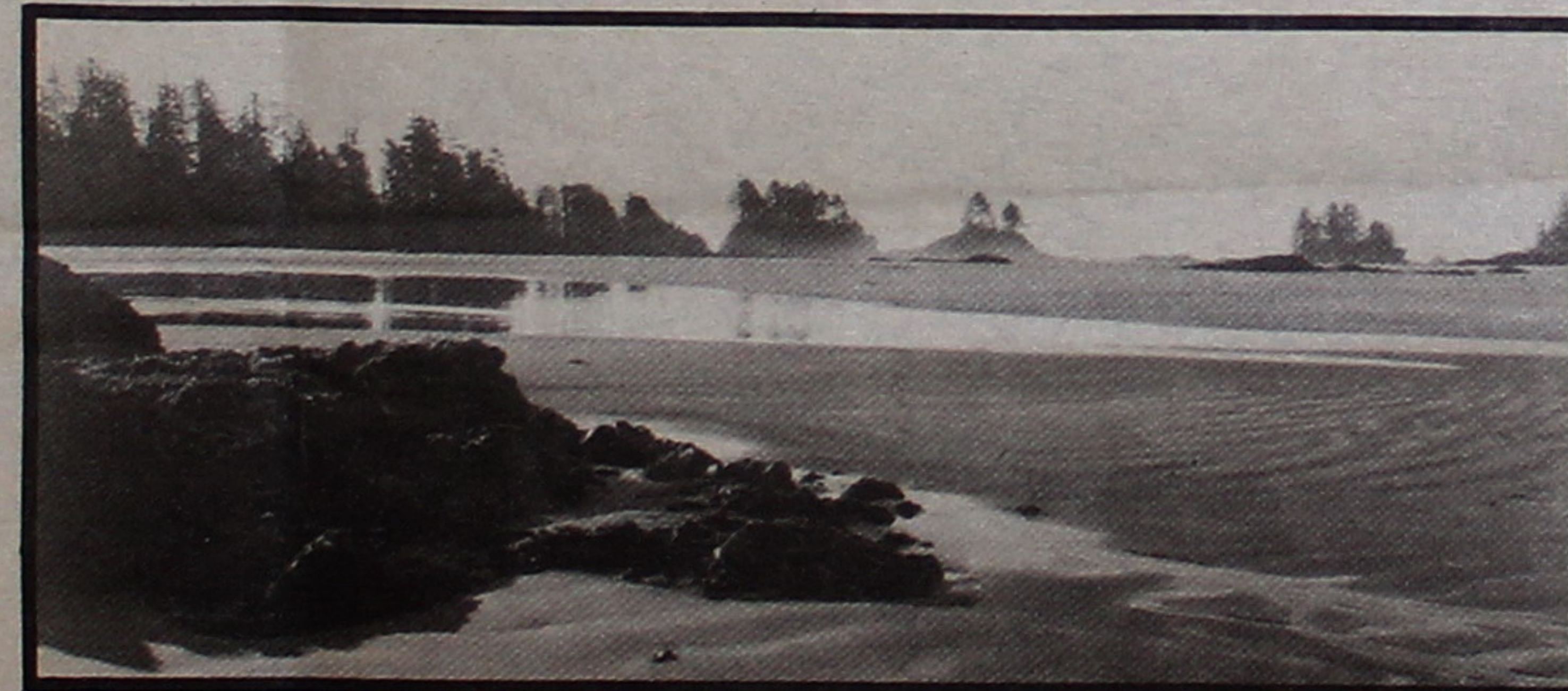
MEARES ISLAND



MEGIN RIVER



ENTRANCE TO MEGIN LAKE



FLORES ISLAND



CLEARCUTS SHOWING EROSION IN CLAYOQUOT SOUND



RUINED CREEK NEAR HESQUIAT LAKE



BEACH NEAR KANIM LAKE



MEGIN LAKE



Chainsaws haven't cut down every original rainforest in Clayoquot Sound. Large unlogged areas exist, shaded green on the map above, more than remain elsewhere on Vancouver Island. The Sound remained essentially untouched while less isolated and remote areas were being logged out.

But without exception these uncut ancient forests are condemned. Years ago they were committed to multinational corporations without any consultation with

Clayoquot's local residents. Provincial Government's gave away the priceless natural heritage in exchange for a false promise of economic stability. The gift was made under a now outmoded ethical principal that regarded the cutting of old growth forests and consuming their wealth to be the highest social good. This ethic ignored the effect of rapid deforestation on other resources, including a human resource, the local residents.

Unless democratic action changes the situation, in less

than two decades these corporations will wastefully clear-cut log all the valleys and mountainsides in Clayoquot Sound. The harm this will cause is already evident. Adjacent logged out valleys are racked with erosion; their streams, choked with logging debris, run brown with their mountainsides' soil every hard winter rain.

If you suppress the thought that the untouched areas left are doomed, and take the time to visit at least one of them, you will experience the ultimate peaceful feeling of being

part of a timeless natural panorama. You will be blessed with views of God-grown forested mountainsides unbroken by large scars of patchy clear-cut. Your lungs will drink the purest air remaining on Earth refreshed on its journey across the mighty Pacific. Your soul will taste nature's perfect liquid, fresh water, filter through mosses of the thick rainforest, oxygenated in splashing of clean mountain brooks. You'll hear tranquility.

As these beautiful forests disappear, one by one, as roads

advance and logging trucks haul the giant trees away, that which remains becomes more valuable. Meares is just the first battle to save outstanding areas in Clayoquot Sound.

It is time for change. The rate of deforestation must be reduced. Control of logging decisions must again reside with the local residents who live with the results. Herbicide and pesticide poisons must be eliminated. Slash burning must be phased out. Logged areas must immediately be planted and young trees tended during their youth. Locally

controlled, small scale "true" tree farms must replace existing giant so-called tree farms with absentee landlords. Extremely sensitive and beautiful places like Flores Island and the Megin Watershed must have special protection. Environmentalists don't want to stop all logging—they only want a tiny percentage stopped. At least 5% of the natural forests that once covered B.C. must be saved. Only 2% are protected today. Good management on the 95% reserved for logging makes it affordable.

LETTERS

The following excerpts were taken from some of the many letters of support received by the Friends of Clayoquot Sound during the Winter/Spring of 84/85.

"I have read of the giant cedars on Meares Island and I have watched the disputes on the news. Please send me more information, who knows I might show up! I would like to see the island stay the same."

Oroville, Washington U.S.A.

"Congratulations to all of you on winning the court injunction! I can assure you that many Albertans were delighted to hear the news of the court injunction."

Alberta Wilderness Association
Calgary, Alberta

"The Meares Island issue has brought forth several vital issues, especially Native land rights. Your side has very effectively shown the absurdity in Mac-Blo's and the Ministry's argument. Good luck to you."

Big Bend Resource Council
Golden, B.C.

"Meares Island is a part of Canada which can benefit us much more as a natural wonder than a bunch of 2" x 4" s bound for Japan. What can I do to help save the trees? Please give me more information as I teach outdoor education and want to inform my students as best I can."

Winnipeg, Manitoba

"I am writing to express my support for your recent stand and actions with regard to Meares Island. I support whatever action is necessary (so long as no one is injured, of course) to prevent MacBlo from logging this incredible island."

Kamloops, B.C.

"What you are doing is really important—not just for the preservation of Meares Island but also for the inspiration you give to us working on some of the other struggles to preserve our schools and keep Canada nuclear free."

Bowser, B.C.

"Please find enclosed a donation to assist the Meares Island Tribal Park Support Coalition in your battle to save Meares Island from logging. At a recent meeting, our membership endorsed a similar resolution to that passed by the Coalition."

United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America
Vancouver, B.C.

"I am with you in your fight to save Meares Island. What can I do to help?"

Red Deer, Alberta

"Our council supports the people of Ojishat in your struggle to keep your land healthy; we support your right to protect your traplines and bush harvest and spawning streams."

Village of Pinehouse, Sask.

"We are solidly behind you on the issue and wish you well with your efforts."

Vancouver Natural History Society
Vancouver, B.C.

"I would like to add my personal thanks, and wish you the best of luck, and urge you all to keep up the good work."

Little Mountain N.D.P. Constituency Association
Vancouver, B.C.

"It is imperative that a civilization such as ours realize that the future of the world as we know it depends on our decision makers beginning to see beyond the dollar signs and recognize and acknowledge some of the basic values and responsibilities! As a member of the Board of Directors of the Saskatchewan Environmental Society and as a lover of both man and nature I urge you to seek God's guidance in this matter and hold these two relatively small areas (Meares Island and South Moresby) as a sacred trust for the generations yet to come!"

Anglin Lake, Saskatchewan

"Meares is important not only for its beauty, but because of its importance to the indigenous people of the area. Their rights and the rights of all living things and all of the people of Tofino need to be respected."

Olympia, Washington

"Short term logging bucks may be more attractive now, but in the long run tourist dollars go further. After all tourism is the second largest industry in B.C. and requires some protection for its future."

Ottawa, Ontario

"We are writing to add our support to the request made by the Friends of Clayoquot Sound, the Clayoquot Band Council, and the District Municipality of Tofino, B.C. that a moratorium be put on any logging of Meares Island."

We do so for two reasons. First of all, we share the same concern of the Tofino Council and population that logging Meares Island poses a threat to their long-range economic well-being. The Provincial Government refused to allow an economic cost-benefit analysis to be done in order to determine if the Tofino Council's fears are well grounded. In effect, they denied citizens the right to a full review of the facts.

Secondly, we agree with the claim of the Clayoquot Band Council that Meares Island is a tribal park and that its logging is threat to their traditional lifestyle."

Sisters of Saint Ann
Kakawis
Tofino, B.C.

Dear Friends:

Although we will see one another on occasion from time to time, I have had the pleasure of meeting your members and have become true friends in the true sense of the word. I want to take this opportunity to express my gratitude for your co-operation during my mandate while representing my people and I know that you will extend the same will to the new Chief and Council.

My wife and I were deeply honoured by your recognition and presentation of the beautiful print at the Schooner the other night. As I stated, we will always remember the effort and support you have found in your hearts to give. I think the unity between our two Nations is great, but to me, personally, I will always cherish the true friends I have gained within your organization. Again, Kleco! Kleco!

May the good Lord bless us all with the good will with one another in the years to come and may He also bless you all with good health and the guidance for your families. I remain:

In Brotherhood,

Moses Martin, Chief Councillor
Clayoquot Band Council
P.O. Box 489
Tofino, B.C. V0R 2Z0



At the June, 1985 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the Friends of Clayoquot Sound, the following people became the current DIRECTORS of the Friends.

Linda Baril; Tom Curley; Maureen Fraser;
John McNamee; Moses Martin; Michael Mullin;
Al Pineo; Carl Rising-More.

"The Victoria Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends is opposed to the permit granted to MacMillan Bloedel to log on Meares Island. We find it reprehensible that the Provincial Government has ignored the recommendations for further economic analysis and environmental impact studies, as forwarded by its own Planning Team. Furthermore, we would like to see a reorganization of overall forestry policy with emphasis on environmental quality and the initiation of adequate reforestation programs."

The Victoria Friends Meeting supports the Nu-Chah-Nulth Tribal Council, the Clayoquot and Ahousat Indian Bands, and the Friends of Clayoquot Sound in their non-violent effort to preserve Meares Island as a Tribal Park.

The concept of a Tribal Park as a natural area lightly used by natives and non-natives, seems to use appropriate. Throughout all time, Meares Island should be a sample of wilderness rainforest—a resource for answers to questions we do not yet know how to ask."

Religious Society of Friends
Victoria, B.C.

"Our members sail this coast, and handle the logs and wood products that are moved by water. They are well acquainted with logging practices and are calling for a complete ban on the logging of Meares Island."

They also wished to make known their support for the Friends of Clayoquot Sound and the local Indian Bands in their struggles to stop the logging on Meares Island."

Canadian Brotherhood of Railway,
Transport and General Workers
Vancouver, B.C.

"This letter is in support of the Clayoquot Band and their attempts to preserve Meares Island. We affirm their claim to Meares Island and that this claim is related to their aboriginal ownership."

Our support for the Clayoquot Band is a part of the larger concerns about the inadequate land base for aboriginal people and the continued destruction of the environment."

National Native Council
United Church of Canada
Winnipeg, Manitoba

"In this, the year of Parks Centennial, the emphasis should be on the preservation of areas such as Meares Island, NOT in working towards their eventual demise."

Whitehorse, Yukon

"We would like to offer a few words of support and encouragement to the 'Friends of Clayoquot Sound.' Though we are snowed-in, in the southern interior, we are with you in heart and spirit. It is a significant time in the evolution of man and we must all do our utmost to preserve the vanishing wilderness. Meares Island is both a symbolic and down to earth holy place for its natives and its visitors."

Peachland, B.C.

"I am deeply concerned about the fate of the Island as one of the last preserves of virgin forest on our West Coast, and about the apparent increasing willingness of the B.C. government to abandon its duty to conserve and manage the province's natural and cultural heritage in favour of short-term economic gains."

Vancouver, B.C.

"Bless you for taking the stand on Meares Island. Only people like you and your action can save our country. I can't be there and the donation is small but you have a friend pulling for you."

Victoria, B.C.

"Your determination and non-violence are a shining example to all who love justice."

Victoria, B.C.

"I am writing on behalf of the Yalakom Ecological Society. We would like to express our solidarity with the Friends of Clayoquot Sound in your valiant efforts to save Meares Island."

Yalakom Ecological Society
Lillooet, B.C.

"The government must immediately stop all clearcutting in the remaining virgin and old growth forests, and permit only selective cutting. Special areas such as Meares Island and South Moresby Island should be preserved in their natural state for the sake of the environment and future generations."

Chester, Nova Scotia

"Hoping that our fight gets to a happy end, I am forwarding my best wishes to you."

Le Chesnay, France

"I wish you success in conserving Meares as your home and for the trees and the people to survive. Canada is such a beautiful country with a forest that seems to be endless, and it makes me sad to see that the destroying of nature has started going the same way it goes in Germany for a long time."

Hamburg, F.R. Germany

"I am with you (cannot be physically due to distance, but morally most certainly) in this battle to save Meares Island."

Arma Di Taggia, Italy

"How can I help stop the logging on Meares Island?"

Cottonwood, Arizona, U.S.A.

"The Yukon Conservation Society wishes to fully endorse the concept of a Meares Island tribal park as a means of preserving the integrity of the island from logging by MacMillan-Bloedel Company. Our organization supports the efforts of native and non-native peoples in their struggle to preserve Meares Island."

Yukon Conservation Society
Whitehorse, Yukon

"I was very moved by certain reports in the press about your stand against the proposed logging and would like to offer you my distant support. I think its high time the Indians' wishes were honoured and that the trees are left alone as a treasure worth far more than if they are cut down."

Cornwall, United Kingdom

"Having long been involved in the forest industry, and having long deplored both the extraction of forest resources and the agribusiness attitude to silviculture, I am fully supportive of the residents of Clayoquot Sound. Not all loggers are as dimwitted as Jack Munro; but there is still a lot of work to be done showing the people of this province how their interests can best be served."

Vancouver, B.C.

"Hang in there friends, fight for this beautiful forest."

Cranbrook, B.C.



Why a Tribal Park?

On April 21, 1984 the Clayoquot Indian Band proclaimed Meares Island a Tribal Park. It isn't the first Tribal Park to be declared. On a Reserve larger than all the Indian Reserves in B.C. put together, the Navaho in New Mexico have their Tribal Park. It was established to preserve their culture, is run by the tribe and allows the general public to recreationally use the area.

The Clayoquot Declaration asserts a similar kind of park. In the Meares Island Tribal Park, the Nuu-Chah-Nulth continue to carry on traditional "low impact" activities, such as the cutting of an occasional giant cedar for construction of a canoe, the stripping of bark for baskets, and harvesting of seafoods and plants for food and medicinal purposes. Hunting is allowed for subsistence and shared by both native and non-native local residents but conforms to the "Laws of their Forefathers" which prohibited overharvesting. Everyone is permitted to camp and hike on the Island but may not take away resources when leaving. The watershed for the greater Tofino area is protected, water being the only resource exported in quantity from Meares.

To secure the Meares Island Tribal Park it must be entrenched in law as part of a Land Claims settlement. In its natural state, administered as a Tribal Park, Meares provides a healthy economic base for growing native and non-native local cultures.



Meares Island — Tells the Story

The Friends of Clayoquot Sound and Western Canada Wilderness Committee are working together intensively to print a book telling the Meares story through 32 pages of colour pictures and 32 pages of hard hitting text. It will be available in the middle of July.

The forward, written by Moses Martin, elected Chief of the Clayoquot Band during the confrontation last winter, explains the importance of Meares to the people who have lived on the Island for over 5,000 years.

Only \$12.00, with all the proceeds going to help save Meares Island, the

book provides a superlative description of the biological significance of Meares' beautiful virgin forests, the story of current mismanagement of the forests in Clayoquot Sound, and a summary of the political battle, culminating in the recent precedent-setting court cases, to save Meares Island.

The book concludes by comparing this effort to protect Meares' old growth with world-wide efforts to save the Rainforests — for the health of the planet. Copies can be ordered, while they last, from either the Friends or the Wilderness Committee.

PHOTO CREDITS: front page top — Elizabeth Cameron; bottom — Adrian Dorst; second page top three and middle left and right — Bob Cockburn; lower right — MacMillan Bloedel Limited, Exhibit "J," affidavit of William Ohs, Appeals Court Registry No. CA003529 Filed Feb. 1, 1985; bottom right — Adrian Dorst; third page — Friends of Clayoquot slide show; page four and five — Steve Lawson and Susan Hare except page four lower right — Vicky Husband; page 7 top left — Bob Cockburn; top right — Adrian Dorst; bottom — Husband/Pothier; back page — Paul George.

Special thanks to the hundreds who are generously donating money to help save Meares and who are specifically helping pay the printing cost of this newspaper, to the Friends who are dedicating thousands of hours of their time in order to save the magnificent rainforest on Meares, to the hundred who went to Meares to hug the trees in the middle of last winter when active logging was about to begin, to the dozens of groups and many thousands of concerned citizens who are taking the time to write letters in support of the preservation of Meares, and finally to the unity of B.C.'s aboriginal people and the local non-native people on this issue. Kleko! Kleko! MEARES WILL BE SAVED!

Published and produced by Western Canada Wilderness Committee, 1200 Hornby St., Vancouver, B.C. V6Z 2E2 in cooperation with the Friends of Clayoquot Sound, Box 489, Tofino, B.C., V0R 2Z0.



Stop this from happening to Meares Island



☐ YES, I will help save MEARES ISLAND.

Here is my:



☐ Friends of Clayoquot Sound membership (\$10 individual, \$25 family).

☐ Donation. If you require a tax deduction receipt make your cheque payable to:
Western Canada Wilderness Committee
MEARES ISLAND FUND

☐ I would like to order a copy of the MEARES ISLAND book. (\$12.00)

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postal Code: _____

PLEASE RETURN TO: Friends of Clayoquot Sound
Box 489, Tofino, B.C. V0R 2Z0

WRITE the Premier of British Columbia asking him to stop advocating the destruction of Meares' ancient rainforest and to begin helping to create Canada's first Tribal Park.

Premier Bill Bennett
Parliament Buildings
Victoria, B.C.
V8X 1X4

(No postage required if mailed in B.C.)

Don't delay — write today!