

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE  
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES  
6<sup>TH</sup> COUNCIL, 38<sup>TH</sup> SESSION**

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Boreal Press Ltd

PUBLISHER OF



HAY RIVER, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

January 28, 1969

## BRIEF TO THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES COUNCIL

Yellowknife Publishers Ltd. have very kindly placed at our disposal a copy of the Brief which it has submitted to the Northwest Territories Council at the current session. Having studied it we would greatly appreciate an opportunity to express our own views and observations concerning government printing, advertising and information services.

## PRINTING

Since the Territorial Administration moved from Ottawa to Yellowknife in September 1967, Boreal Press Ltd. has received one printing order from the various branches of the Territorial Government. This was a rush order for the Territorial Library for which we charged \$24.00.

Prior to September 1967 we grossed in the neighborhood of \$150 to \$200 per year in printing for the Territorial government by bidding successfully when tenders were invited by the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

Because we were approached several times by Commissioner Stuart Hodgson and other Territorial officials during the summer and fall of 1967 with assurances that we were very shortly to receive "all the printing we could handle" from the Territorial government, we took steps during the latter part of 1967 and spring of 1968 to upgrade our printing capacity, in terms of new equipment, additional staff and staff training.

During the early part of 1968 we received the one rush order for the Territorial Library, mentioned above, and declined to do one other rush order. The latter was for a small supply of library cards to tide the Library over until the arrival of those it had ordered from a southern supplier. We had not been invited to bid on the larger order.

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During the spring of 1968 we were invited to bid on one printing order which we might have handled by purchasing an additional accessory for our press. However the amount of the order was too small and the prospects of receiving other work of a similar nature so slim that we did not submit a bid.

There was one or perhaps two other orders on which we were invited to bid but which we could not handle, either because it was too elaborate for our shop or because of the pressure of other work for our steady customers.

In November and December of 1968 we received invitations to bid on a considerable amount of Territorial Printing. One or two of these were obviously not intended to be printed in the Territories at all, as the requirements were well beyond anything that any of the print shops in the Territories can handle.

We considered very carefully one order which called for the printing of 58 different forms, as these were forms we had been shown during a visit to Yellowknife to discuss government printing and other matters. We indicated that we would have no difficulty handling such forms. However, the order contained a couple of forms which we could not handle and we were thereby prevented from bidding on any part of the order.

This procedure of lumping several types of printing into one order was one which we had been assured would not be adopted by Territorial authorities. Because of our inability to bid on any part of that work on the initial order we are thereby placed in a position where we will be unable to bid competitively against the printer who received the initial order (and will have plates on file) at such times as any of the items are reordered.

Our inquiries respecting territorial printing work through the spring and summer of 1968 were met with assurances that this would be materializing "right away" and that Boreal Press Ltd. would have an opportunity to bid on all work which was let out to private printers.

Evidently this has not been the case. We have not been invited to make any plates for the Territorial Government, nor to do any of the other reproduction work, as have Yellowknife Publishers.

We have not been invited to do any printing work for the Recreation Division of the Territorial Government, and would be most interested in learning how it became customary for this to be done by Yellowknife Publishers. We are not aware of the exact nature of the other order (in green ink) which Yellowknife Publishers is also accustomed to doing, but it is evidently one on which we were not asked to bid either.

We would, of course, be most interested in knowing how much government printing is "customarily" placed with other northern print shops because there is no printing of that kind placed with Boreal Press.

We have not been invited to do any printing work for corporations such as the Arctic Winter Games Corporation, which were set up and financed by the government, although it is evident that their printing requirements have been satisfied somewhere.

We were not invited to bid on any portion of the considerable amount of printing that has been done with respect to Travelarctic promotion.

We have not been invited to bid on any letterhead work, about which Yellowknife Publishers speaks.

We might also observe with respect to many orders that even if we had been successful in obtaining the printing contract we would have been deprived of much of the revenue involved. All the typesetting and layout work had already been done by some other printing establishment, and this is a phase of the operation which Boreal Press is extremely well geared to handle. As we pointed out earlier we have not been invited to bid on any of the reproduction work that leads up to the actual running of the press, and this in many instances constitutes most of the revenue producing portions of an order. Paper cost, freight, etc. are merely costs which are added to revenue producing aspects such as typesetting, darkroom work, press operation.

In general, we are ill advised if we go into printing work which requires a large investment in "out of pocket" expenses but little earned revenue, as this ties up considerable amounts of capital which we simply do not have at our disposal. The revenue producing aspects of printing go to pay for overhead costs such as salary, rent, heat, etc. and these have to be paid whether the plant is busy or idle. We therefore give precedence to work which involves less out of pocket expense and a greater degree of revenue producing activity.

In short, we are interested in doing "work" and much less desirous of juggling "receivables" against "payables".

We are anxious to develop and improve the printing aspect of our business and would be most happy to include the Territorial Government among our steady customers. But this is not likely to occur as long as we

are called on only for the "rush orders" which printers in the south were unable to ship on time, or the nuisance orders which tie up a lot of our capital but provide us with little actual revenue, or orders which are too elaborate for the government's printing department, or as long as government orders are "customarily" placed with any other print shop but ours.

For those who are steady customers, Boreal Press has undertaken to handle printing jobs which are beyond the capability of our plant. These are subcontracted to a firm in Edmonton. While we have incurred losses in that respect due to telephone, handling and carrying costs, this procedure has helped to build up a steady clientele and increased the amount of printing which we are able to handle profitably in our plant.

Customers who formally brought us only the simpler jobs which they thought we could handle, and sent others out to Peace River or Edmonton, now bring us every order. We can handle much more in our plant than was generally realized, as well as effecting savings for the customer in the placement of orders with outside printers. This is because we are better acquainted than the layman in the matter of eliminating unnecessary but very expensive frills from orders. (e.g. unnecessary bleeding, overly-complex design, etc.)

Evidently Territorial authorities are alarmed at the prospect that Boreal Press might subcontract a portion of an order, even though this is being done by the Territorial Government itself in such matters as typesetting and platemaking. On one invitation to tender the specifications called for the government to supply the ink, and it has been suggested to us that on some future orders it will supply the paper so that even these aspects of a job are being placed beyond our control, much to our detriment.

It would seem that purchasing authorities would sooner place an entire job with an Edmonton firm than give us a portion which we can do more economically. Even those jobs which we are to be allowed to handle have first been denuded of as much revenue producing work as possible.

As far as ink, paper and other supplies are concerned, we are not anxious to tie up large amounts of capital in these expenses. However, the prices we pay for these articles are dependent on the quantities we purchase. We do not purchase large amounts of paper simply to take advantage of discounts, thereby tying up capital and storage space. But if the flow of work through our plant is increased significantly (for instance as a result of regular government orders) then we certainly intend to couple the stock for that order with the requirements for our other work and thereby obtain discounts which can be passed along to all our printing customers, both public and private. If stock for government orders is not reckoned along with our other purchases, then the cost to private customers must of necessity be higher.

When we are excluded from much of the government printing that we might be doing, then the prices which we must charge our other customers in order to make ends meet are higher. The cost of the product or service which they offer is correspondingly higher and they, like us, find it impossible to match prices with some firm in the south which ends up getting the government contract. The circle gets more and more vicious and frustrating for all Territorial business people.

The printing firms in Edmonton which evidently have been getting the bulk of printing which the government does not handle in its own shop, do not, as far as we can determine, pay so much as a penny into the Territorial Treasury or into the coffers of the municipalities in the north in the way of taxes, licence fees, etc. Boreal Press does and so, we assume, do all the other printing establishments in the Northwest Territories. Boreal Press does pay monies to the Alberta Treasury and the city of Edmonton. But we never have been afforded an opportunity of bidding on any of the printing work for those jurisdictions. In the unlikely event that we were able to underbid Edmonton firms for that work we would be amazed if political pressure did not rapidly result in our disqualification as a bidder.

We feel that no orders for printing, or work related to printing (typographit, platemaking, artwork, darkroom, bindery, etc.) should be placed by the government with any firm other than those established in the Territories. Nor should it be handled through any advertising agency or similar body which is located outside the Territories.

It may be necessary for northern printers to subcontract many jobs, or portions of jobs to outside firms. But even in the process of doing so they will of necessity learn much more about the trade and be in a position, through constant involvement with the flow of work, to be able to add to the capacity of their northern print shops as the demand for certain types of work becomes great enough. As things stand we are mere spectators, without even a good view of what is going on between the government and the printing establishments in the south.

It may also be necessary for those who are designing government printing orders and preparing specifications to cultivate some regard for what can be produced in northern shops and what can not. Madison Avenue is a long, long way from Yellowknife. The Territorial government will find nobody in this part of the world who is trying to compete with the elegance and lavishness of its present printing requirements. Even the provincial governments are more modest about most of what they produce.

We are aware of many of the problems that would descend upon us if what we are proposing were the policy adopted by the Territorial government. However, we have never shied away from the immense difficulties which are thrown in the path of progress in the north.

We did, as we mentioned earlier, take the appropriate steps to improve the quality and capacity of our printing output in anticipation of the heavy load of government printing which we were advised would shortly follow the arrival of the administration in Yellowknife in September, 1967.

The losses which we suffered as a result of that imprudence were considerable. We do not intend to place ourselves in jeopardy again by hiring staff and spending time and money training them for work which does not materialize. We do not intend to waste any more effort arranging the purchase and financing of additional equipment, and then have to cancel the deal. We do not intend to install any more expensive equipment in our plant and have it sit idle most of the time.

We have been recuperating and building up our operation again on the basis of new and dependable customers from the private sector as well as certain other government agencies.

As things stand, we fully realize the dangers we are courting by further dealings with Territorial officials with respect to printing, and the same can be said for Territorial advertising. We feel we should mention these things lest the extreme caution which we feel we must now exercise should be mistaken for timidity or lack of initiative.

#### **GOVERNMENT PRINTING UNIT**

Boreal Press will subscribe without qualification to any recommendation calling for the abolition or decimation of the government printing unit.

We can envisage no government printing requirement beyond that which might be classified as "office duplication" which could not be more efficiently and less expensively handled by private printers.

Perhaps a case might be made for some modest printing facilities for a very large government establishment, but certainly not for one which we are assured is not going to grow beyond 300 odd souls. One printer could not be kept busy.

Although we have not had the opportunity to peruse the report of the Royal Commission on Government Administration in Saskatchewan, of which mention is made, we are well acquainted with the situation in Regina and the province generally as respects the printing industry.

None of the suppliers of printing equipment and graphic arts materials (other than those which cater to the office duplicating trade) maintain an outlet in Saskatchewan. It is virtually impossible to get high quality process work done anywhere in the province, and even some of the major printing firms must send to Calgary or Winnipeg to get their camera work done. The printing firms which have struggled along with little or no government printing are poorly equipped in comparison with similar establishments in the major cities of the other prairie provinces. We are aware of at least one publication, a large circulation weekly newspaper that has since gone out of business, which had to be sent to Calgary for printing-not because of cheaper rates, but because there was no offset press in the city outside the government printing office which was large enough to handle it. (It could have been printed by Yellowknife Publishers.)



Aside entirely from the costs of government printing when handled by a government printing unit, is the blighting effect which it has on the private sector of the economy. Private concerns in Saskatchewan too often have had to send out of the province to get their printing done because the growth of the printing industry there has been stunted and held back by refusal of the government, in years gone by, to participate fully in the industry. Lack of adequate printing services, as well as other services which the government had undertaken to supply itself with, has been cited by several firms among reasons for moving from Saskatchewan to one of the other prairie provinces.

The few dollars which the Saskatchewan government claimed it was saving taxpayers by doing its own printing were eclipsed long ago by spiraling costs and the effects of blight on private industry.

The same became true of many of the proper functions of private enterprise into which the former government of Saskatchewan plunged, including the field of journalism and news distribution, which we shall deal with next.

#### INFORMATION SERVICES

Printing is regarded by Boreal Press as a subsidiary function to that of publishing a weekly newspaper, rather than the reverse. We are therefore somewhat less concerned about developing the printing side of the business as with improving the quality and the content of "TAPWE" and such other publications as we intend to produce when circumstances permit.

We therefore view with the utmost concern and foreboding those developments which have taken place with respect to government information services.

We must take a very strong and contrary stand to that of Yellowknife Publishers with respect to material produced by the Information Services Division and which that firm has classified as "news releases."

We are shocked to learn that a newspaper with which we are in competition has been receiving from Information Service officers copies of news releases some three weeks in advance of when they released the material to Boreal Press and, presumably, other northern publishers.

We can understand that the Publisher of News of the North is very pleased with this arrangement, but we can assure you, gentlemen, that such courtesies have instilled in us an emotion very far removed from pleasure.

We are not in the least enthralled by thoughts of a government agency which is maintaining itself to the tune of \$94,400 per annum in order to hand us that sort of handicap, in addition to others which we shall mention in due course.

It is necessary that the government have some sort of machinery for distribution to the news media of certain specific material—announcements pertaining to changes in government policy, institution or discontinuation of programs, details re special events, and factual data such as reports . . . in their entirety. A synopsis of the views of some information writer concerning any of the foregoing is worthless except, of course, to those editors who are not concerned about the value of what appears in their news columns.

Virtually all of the news releases we have been receiving from the Territorial Government have been worthless—either because they were not in the least new, or because they consisted mainly of the opinions of an unidentified writer and were lacking in usable facts, or were quite obviously false.

Information writers are paid to give government officials and government activities a nice pure image, and they pick and choose their facts and their adjectives accordingly.

A newspaper is failing in its duty to the public when it starts filling its columns with the rubbish they produce.

Coverage of partizan political events and activities—and this includes sessions of the Territorial Council, visits of campaigning politicians—are no proper concern of the government information officer.

Yet the Information Services division of the Territorial Government is most active on just such occasions. The bias it has repeatedly demonstrated on behalf of one political party is blatantly obvious and happens to coincide with the preference of the Chief of Information Services, Ted Horton, during a long and active political career which, evidently, is far from finished.

Even setting personalities aside, no government official has any useful or worthwhile role to play in covering and reporting upon a session of a legislative body such as the Territorial Council. He is compromised from the very start by the fact that his job hangs from the slender thread of everything he writes. He cannot even report events as he sees them if what he reports might be offensive to the administration.

Reporters and editors in the private sector of the economy are biased to some extent in what they report. No two reporters ever report the same story with the same emphasis on every aspect of it. But where there is free competition and reporters with different points of view participate, the pro-bias of one is generally balanced by the anti-bias of the other. That is not possible when everything is channeled through the hands of one government information officer.

We observe in the Commissioner's annual report for 1967 - 68 that the Information Services Division claims that it "steps out of its normal role and acts as a press gallery for northern newspapers."

We wish to state as forcefully as we are able that this statement is absolutely and totally false. Nobody appointed by the government—any government—ever has or ever will act for Tapwe in this or any other delegation of the responsibilities of the editor. If other newspapers are willing to abdicate their responsibilities, that is a matter beyond our control.

Prior to the advent of the Information Services Division, as some of the senior members of the council may recall, Boreal Press made a practice of attending and covering the sessions of the Territorial Council. This involved a considerable expenditure on our part. We rejected absolutely the repeated offers of Territorial and federal officials to pick up the tab for our expenses, and will be very disturbed if we ever learn that they have been doing so for others in the north who claim to be practicing the profession of journalism.

It was obviously not possible for us to have someone in attendance at some sessions because of their location in centres which offered no private accommodation, no communication facilities and unsatisfactory transportation access. But even then we succeeded in making some arrangements for coverage, or provided belated coverage via the council debates as they became available.

With the arrival of the Territorial Information Services division and its intrusion into the "press gallery", it became increasingly difficult and unrewarding for us to cover sessions properly.

We had done so previously because our investment in expenses gave us a salable product. But what worth is a good product when the market is flooded with an imitation?

Our competitors, who had demonstrated little interest or initiative in covering the council sessions, are provided free of charge with a commodity which it has cost us a good deal to produce. Well, naturally they are very happy that the government has come along with its considerable resources in money and manpower to negate an advantage which we had earned through investment of our own hard earned money, our effort and our initiative.

However, we were still able to do a reasonably adequate job of reporting on the council sessions from the Debates. When this became apparent it did not take long to arrange that the copies of the Debates reached us several weeks or several months late, or not at all. No such problems existed several years ago before a large staff of information officers were hired to expedite such matters.

We shall never under any circumstance use any of the material which the Information Services branch sends us in its role as a "press gallery."

To do so would be to allow a ball and chain to be placed on what is often referred to as a "free press." When the question is asked: "Free from what?" there is only one answer . . . free from government control and government interference. It does not mean freedom from work, freedom from worry, freedom from privation or hardship, because even with those and other handicaps there can be a "Free Press." There is no such thing as a "free press" which is imprisoned and manipulated by government functionaries.

The press can be strong or weak depending on many factors, but regardless of its strength or weakness it has ceased to be a "free" press when it abdicates its duty to report to the public on what the government is doing and turns this responsibility over to a propagandist in the employ of the government. The press may do a good job of reporting, or a bad job. But even an atrocious job of reporting by a free press is better than the most elegant efforts of a team of government men.

Those who are eager to accept and rely on the copy of the government information writer must be unaware of the certain disaster they are inviting.

We are aware that there are those in the field of journalism who may be tempted to use or rely on such "news" produced by government. But the Territorial Government and the Territorial Council are doing a grave disservice to the northern press and to the public if they fail to take steps to eliminate this poisonous activity. It poisons initiative and it destroys integrity. If the flow of poison is allowed to continue or progress there will be no free press in the Territories, and the red carpet will be rolled out for every sort of impropriety, atrocity and injustice.

The flow of information which we received from the Territorial government at one time in the way of papers, reports, statistics, etc., has dwindled to a trickle and even most of that arrives ages late. At one session we received a copy of the commissioner's opening address more than a week after we heard it broadcast on the radio. This session it came a couple of days later. Formerly we received an advance copy and were able to include it in Tapwe in its entirety before it became ancient history. Other sessional material has followed a similar pattern.

Instead we are inundated with news releases which have been carefully purged of facts and injected with fatuous opinions, and most of these do not arrive until after we have read them in some other newspaper or heard them on the radio.

The situation that is developing in the Northwest Territories is in many respects similar to that which we experienced in Saskatchewan some years ago when the information officers of the government and its various branches, agencies and corporations outnumbered legitimate newsmen by three to one or better at any function of even mild political significance.

At press conferences, for example, they were particularly abundant and ready with leading questions, carefully prepared in advance, and quick to interrupt any reporter whose questioning became too incisive.

At other times they were busy seeing to it that reporters did not get hold of material that was not carefully screened and vetted.

They were also very eager to promote conferences of newsmen for the purpose of arranging greater "co-operation" and uniformity in the handling of the requirements of news outlets which had individual and distinct requirements, and only one desire in common—that the information branch and its cousins in each of the government agencies would exercise some alacrity in staying out of the path between newsmen and the sources of information.

One such conference of editors and reporters gathered from all over the province and representing every shade of political opinion, including the Communist Party of Canada, unanimously joined in discarding a lengthy agenda prepared by the government and passing a single terse resolution which told all the information officers to "get lost." Those were people who had experienced over a number of years the debilitating effects of a government machine that sought to oversee and control the flow of information concerning government activities.

Under that system those legitimate journalists who were weak, were bought with cocktail parties and fancy junkets or "consultant fees" and government information writers eager to help ease their work load, and the strong were bashed about with the hammer of the government's monstrous advertising budget.

These same techniques are being employed in the Northwest Territories today.

Find out who is getting the lions share of the Territorial government's advertising budget and you will know those who are willing and eager to print more government handouts. Find out who dutifully prints what Information Services tells them to print and you will see who is being invited on government junkets with their expenses paid. You will not find Tapwe in either of those categories.

If you wish to have a press that is shackled and subservient to the whims of the administration, continue these activities and you may achieve those ends. It will not be a free press and it will not be of any benefit to the public. It may convey information of a particular sort, to the public, but it will have avarice as its only motivation and it will serve only the personal interests of those in authority. As their activities become shaded and finally obscured from scrutiny by a free press, and thereby an aware public, faults and vices take root and multiply.

We have been talking of principles which we are certain are neither new nor difficult to grasp for men of broad experience, as the members of the council have shown themselves to be in their debates. We might not have felt the necessity of dealing with them at such great length at this time except for one fact: they are principles which the Territorial government has clearly indicated it is unwilling to grasp or practice.

There are a number of persons in the publishing field in the Northwest Territories with little training or experience in journalism that is worthy of note and they say they would like the government to perform their responsibilities for them.

There are more of them than there are of the other kind of publisher, who has received training under skillful professionals and risen to positions of authority over other professional journalists and has in the course of many years experience learned the pitfalls and the responsibilities of the profession.

Because there is an overabundance of fledglings who say yes and a deficiency of veterans who say no, the government presumes to intrude its presence into areas where it has no right to be.

This is wrong and it must be stopped before the situation deteriorates any further. Even those publishers who are happy with the activities of Information Services at present, because they are shortsighted and see only that they have been singled out for special treatment and special privilege; they will learn that they were wrong . . . after it is too late to undo all the mischief that they have invited.

This is a sickness that advances with ease and rapidity and can be forced back only with vigorous and steady repulsion. Already the government is putting out "newspapers" in the eastern and central Arctic. How long before its appetite drives it in search of some imagined publishing deficiency in the Mackenzie, in addition to those it has already plugged with "Norpinion" and whatever it decides to call its own version of "North."

The gentlemen of the press, and any others who are concerned, had best realize right now that they are going to be around only as long as Information Services feels no need for additional elbow room. At the rate it is growing and expanding, that won't be long.

The Branch has undertaken to supply the Eskimos with "news reports" in syllabics—not stories from Tapwe, or News of the North, or the Journal or the CBC, or the Canadian Press but those which are turned out faithfully by its own people, who can be counted to have the "right slant" on everything.

Nor is it limiting its activities to the Territories. It has taken upon itself the responsibility of giving the rest of Canada and the world an "accurate" picture of the north, and its government. Obviously it must correct the "inaccurate" version that is being disseminated by the northern newspapers, the Edmonton Journal, other publications in the south, and scores of individuals, including members of the Territorial Council.

It has, or will soon have, squads of information officers to shepherd southern visitors around the north—to the nicer sections of Yellowknife and Inuvik—so that they, too, get an "accurate" picture of the north. Money will be no object, because after embarking on the project of keeping the administration free of embarrassment and criticism the need for that activity increases by leaps and bounds.

Incidental to earlier remarks it should be pointed out that experienced and capable Journalists do not go looking for a difficult or impossible area in which to practice their profession. We can guarantee that the Northwest Territories is not in a position to attract such men at present, and future prospects are looking even dimmer. Turn the Information officers loose and prospects become nil.

It is sheer folly to suggest that such dire consequences as we have been suggesting could not befall the Northwest Territories. It has happened, in many areas and countries and in jurisdictions large and small. It happened in places where public sophistication was higher, where the press was stronger, where society was settled and guarded by traditions of democracy. It has happened in cities, states, provinces and countries on this continent. Given half a chance and it can and will happen here. In the north, where the balance between public and private is so heavily weighted in favor of the bureaucrat, the flame of a <sup>FREEL</sup> ~~few~~ press flickers weakly. Any more heavy breathing by the Information Services people, and that light may be extinguished.

### GOVERNMENT ADVERTISING

The Territorial administration is in a better position than we to supply the statistics that show the imbalance that has developed during 1967 and 1968 in the amounts it is spending for advertising in the various northern newspapers.

There was no indication of any such imbalance in 1966 or prior years.

The government can, perhaps, offer a better explanation than it has to us of how its promises of equal treatment and fair play for northern newspapers, in the matter of government advertising (and printing) became such a fiction.

The government advertising budget has been used as a big stick—a powerful instrument of political vengeance, reward and inducement. And not only are public monies involved. By order of the administration private firms were compelled to place large sums of revenue into the hands of one designated northern newspaper, News of the North.

We notice that Yellowknife Publishers, in referring to that "controversy," had no complaint about the situation, and even hints a return to those days when, for a period of about eight lucrative months, it enjoyed a position of very considerable advantage over the other northern publishers.

Yellowknife Publishers has expressed a wish not to be placed ahead of other northern publishers. We on the other hand have managed, courtesy of the government, to have achieved the status which that firm desires. We would gladly trade places, for it is our wish not to be placed behind the other publishers—at least not so far behind.



Since then the Territorial Gazette advertising has been extended, with one exception, to the other northern newspapers, including Tapwe. However, we have no way of knowing how long that little "experiment" will last and the government finds a new method of distributing its bounty in a more lopsided fashion, which is in no way related to any recognizable scale of merit.

Boreal Press has taken great pains to do a neat and professional job in setting up and reproducing government advertising copy. This has been recognized, even by Information Services. But recognizing the superiority Boreal Press had been able to achieve in typesetting and preparing advertisements, the Information Services Division immediately took steps to eliminate that advantage. It provided our competitors with reproduction proofs so they would get the finished product without expense or effort. Once again we are robbed of the fruits of our initiative, effort and investment.

It has clearly been the policy of the Information Services Division to throw its considerable resources into the elimination of any advantage or any slight sign of superiority which Boreal Press has striven for and won by means of financial investment, hard work, imagination or skill.

It has made no effort of any sort or description which might conceivably help Boreal Press to achieve parity with other publishers in respect to those areas where we may lag behind them. We neither ask for nor would we accept such help, but find it significant that none was offered. Gentlemen of the Council, we need hardly point the destination to which this massacre of initiative must lead. What will be left if the northern publishing field is stripped of enterprise?

Our every effort at honest enterprise is frustrated and defeated by the officers of the Territorial government. What are we to do?

We have not endeavoured to mooch out of the government any special favor or dispensation that gives us an unfair advantage over other publishers. We are quite content to stake our chances on our ability to thrive in a freely competitive atmosphere.

As you will see, we have survived adequately through the past year and a half even when the atmosphere has not been free and not been competitive, and because activities of the Territorial government have made it thus.

This has been costing us thousands of dollars--not as a financial loss, fortunately--but as a gain we might have otherwise made in improving our operations.

The Territorial administration knows all that has been happening--with respect to printing, information services, advertising. It has been made aware of our thinking on these matters.

We fully understand that it is useless to address ourselves further in that direction.

The administration and its information staff are determined--unless they will heed stronger voices than ours--to continue along a road that will see the crippling of the northern printing industry, the death or disfigurement of a free and a strong press in the north, and the descent into a morass of political machination, corruption, and worse.

The pure and grandiose "image" of itself which it seeks is not what it will find at the end of that road.

All of which is respectfully submitted,

Don Taylor,  
Publisher & Editor.

dt/jm