

Forestry Department

Mr. Hamilton assured the lumbermen gathered at the Queen Elizabeth hotel that the new federal department would not usurp any of the rights and prerogatives of the provincial governments.

The federal minister made this statement after Hon. Jacques Miquelon, Q.C., Quebec minister of lands and forests, declared:

"We have good reasons to fear this federal initiative and would have to oppose it if it constitutes an encroachment on the undisputable and exclusive rights of the province of Quebec on forestry matters."

If I may so, I am very happy that this bill meets with the approval of all parts of this house if for no other reason than it is going to do away with a great deal of confusion which has existed in the minds of many people as to whom to apply in search of forestry information. Up to the present time it might be the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Harkness), the Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources, or even the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. Churchill). I have had a little experience myself in that regard in trying to seek out information. It took two or three weeks before I finally got down to the proper place, so to speak. Anyway, when a new forestry department is in operation all of this information will be readily available in one place.

Another very good reason for the establishment of the department of forestry is the fact that the pulp and paper and saw mill industries taken together rank No. 1 in Canada in the selling value of their products; also in salaries and wages paid and in the number of people employed. In the year 1958 the value of their exports equalled 29 per cent—I think someone said 30 per cent, so my figure is not very far out—of all the exports from Canada. Also, at page 607 of the minutes of proceedings of the standing committee on mines, forests and waters of May 18, 1959, Mr. W. A. E. Pepler, manager of the woodlands section of the Canadian Pulp and Paper Association, said:

Currently the federal government draws tax revenues from the forest industries of the order of \$200 million annually."

This is a very good return for the \$10 million put out at the present time. I should now like to deal with forestry matters as they concern the province from which I come, and I hope I shall not be called out of order. I have been engaged in the lumber business in the province of Quebec for over 30 years. The small company for which I work has been in operation for 67 years. Since 1920 this company has practised selective cutting, and has been able to maintain and operate on a sustained yield basis.

In 1958 there were some 55 pulp and paper mills in Quebec and about 1,600 saw mills in the province. The saw mills cut 955 million

[Mr. Stearns.]

feet that year. A few years ago there were over 2,000 saw mills; I think the present count is 1,613.

In the province of Quebec there are 80,000 square miles of provincial forest land under licence to operators. Ninety per cent of this land is under strict forest management plans. Under these plans the limit holder is obligated to have prepared at his own expense an inventory of his limits and a working plan. He is restricted to cut quantities not exceeding the annual growth, and at the end of each 10-year period he is compelled to have another inventory made to show how well or how badly he has carried out the plan. This is good forest practice because barring losses from fire, disease and insects a limit holder may plan for the future and provide steady employment in the mills and in the woods. This plan also tends to provide abundant water supply in the watersheds.

The measurement of all wood cut on crown lands is done by qualified government scalers who are graduates of a very good practical forest rangers school at Duchesnay. This school is operated by the government, and also instructs in saw milling and forest protection.

The protection of the forests of the province of Quebec against fires is under a government authority established in 1924 as a part of the department of lands and forests. It is undoubtedly one of the best managed in Canada, and the chief of this service has been in charge for more than 35 years. This gentleman has also found the time to help to organize and direct the Quebec forestry association, which association in turn has organized over 400 4-H clubs in the province. The clubs in the province of Quebec operate a little differently from 4-H clubs in other parts of Canada. In Quebec the boys are taught forest conservation principles and encouraged to establish tree farms and in some cases to operate small private nurseries for the production of plants and trees. Every year the limit holder must submit to the province a detailed plan for the protection of his limits. These plans contain maps, lists of equipment, names of fire rangers and their assistants, and their addresses. Failure to do this results in the province taking over the limit for protection purposes and the cost is charged to the limit holder.

I have gone into some detail regarding the management of the forests in Quebec as well as the cutting and measurement of wood and the protection of the forests against fires. All of these things I believe are the sole responsibility of the people of Quebec and outside interference would not be appreciated.