

### Summer Recess

they be private citizens, legislators or governments, simply cannot see the lack of forest for the trees. Again, being everywhere it is seen to be nowhere.

This is beginning to change, to the point where all levels of government are now beginning to pay at least lip service to the importance of that industry, the need for action and expanded private and public investment. However, the dollars are still far short of the minimum required, although they have finally stopped shrinking. While it is a subject which lacks political sex appeal, it is a vitally important industry and is extremely relevant to Canada's future. As the coalition of forest management, labour and professionals solidifies and expands—a process which is well under way in British Columbia and beginning in other parts of the country—it may well become increasingly relevant in a political sense. I would urge all members and the government to begin taking it more seriously.

About a year ago, a Mr. Les Reed was appointed associate deputy minister responsible for the Canadian Forest Service. That appointment was seen as a symbol of change and was welcomed by industry management, labour and professionals right across the country. However, we have been waiting and waiting. While there are some good, sound recommendations coming from that service and the deputy, again supported by the industry, we have yet to see meaningful action come out of Treasury Board or the Department of Finance which will give the go ahead to these recommendations so vital to the industry's future. I would urge all members of the government to take these proposals very seriously.

I suspect one of the problems in cabinet is that the forest industry, in spite of the fact it is number one in so many ways in this country, is totally outgunned when it comes to the inner circles of government where the decisions are made. As I said earlier, the forest industry contributes more to our net trade balance than mining, agriculture, fisheries and energy. Yet if you compare those five sectors with forestry, you find they have five ministers as opposed to a half or one third of a minister responsible for forestry because the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Roberts) has several other key responsibilities. He is outnumbered about 15 to one, in fact, in cabinet when it comes to pressing the case of an industry which has so much more to contribute in terms of growth. They are talking now about the possibility of the doubling of real forestry revenues in Canada by the year 2000. That is a possibility if we get our act together soon. However, because it is outgunned in cabinet to that extent, and because of the relative invisibility of that important industry, we are not getting results and people are getting more and more impatient.

In April of this year, Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Forestry Association sent a letter to the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) which I would like to quote from very briefly. It said:

At the recent annual meetings of the Canadian Forestry Association and our national forestry forum, there was unanimous agreement that I write to you requesting formation of a forestry task force or special forestry subcommittee of the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Forestry.

The letter goes on:

The proposed Forestry Task Force or special sub-committee would allow selected members of the House of Commons to develop an in-depth picture on forests and forest use across Canada. It should be concerned with the resource as well as its many applications to society, particularly as the latter relates to present and future employment and development, as well as to its other direct and indirect values to our country.

This Forestry Task Force or special sub-committee should be small enough to form a viable working group, should include the Minister of Environment or his designate, the official forestry critics from the Opposition Parties, as well as at least three other members of Parliament who have demonstrated interest and a knowledge on the subject. They should have sufficient funds to enable them to travel (primarily in Canada), to meet key people and visit representative as well as outstanding examples of forestry in practice.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier):** Order, please. It being four o'clock p.m., the House will now proceed to consideration of private members' business as listed on today's Order Paper, namely, public bills, notices of motions, private bills.

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## PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS

[English]

Items Nos. 18, 22, 29, 31, 32, 34, 36, 41, 44, 47, 49 and 51 allowed to stand by unanimous consent.

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## THE CONSTITUTION

### AMENDMENT RESPECTING TIMING OF FEDERAL GENERAL ELECTIONS

**Mr. Arnold Malone (Crowfoot)** moved that Bill C-252, to amend the Constitution of Canada (federal general elections), be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections.

● (1600)

He said: Mr. Speaker, perhaps I might say at the outset that this is a good time for a motion such as this one to come before the House. It has been a somewhat comfortable period of time since the last election. I would not want to deceive anyone by telling him that the atmosphere in the House has been comfortable, but certainly the amount of time since the last election has been adequate. Yet, it will be some time in the normal course of events before the next election is called.

I should like to talk about including predictability in the government's calling of federal elections. Going back to the times of Sir John A. MacDonald, the first Prime Minister of Canada, during the Riel rebellion, in the heat and discomfort of that summer, dissolved Parliament for the calling of a federal election. The last election was actually called as recently as 1979, since the one forcing out the Conservative government was caused by a loss of confidence in the House of Commons. People can reflect back upon the last election call in 1979. There were expectations in early 1977 that we were