

Supply

Timmins-Chapleau in northern Ontario is really the microcosm of the forestry sector of Canada. We have in our area lumber mills, wafer board mills, pressed wood mills, pulp and paper mills and finally, I am sorry to say, we also have in our forestry sector wastage in the same way that there is in the rest of the country. When a person walks through the forests in northern Ontario, it is almost shameful for that person to see whole timber tracts, hundreds and thousands of hectares, wasting in the bush. It is a shame for that person to see mature trees that are standing ready to fall because they are rotting. Why is this so? Because at the turn of the century when the pulp and paper companies moved into the area, they were given large tracts of land. In those days, it was not a matter of cutting timber but a matter of mining the forests. There was no thought given at that time to reforestation, regeneration or forest management. It was a matter of using the forests as if they were a renewable resource.

● (1740)

What do we see in northern Ontario today, Mr. Speaker? We see that these large tracts are dying. In other areas, we see that clearcutting has taken place with no replacement planting, and we see weeds and shrubs growing in place of the forests. That is why I believe the federal Government does have a role to play but not necessarily the role as described by the Hon. Member for Timiskaming (Mr. MacDougall). He feels that the Government should do all of the work. I think he should speak to the Leader of his Party and then to officials of the Province of Ontario who have been collecting royalties on the timber lands of the Province for over a century and have not put one cent back, except perhaps in the last two or three years. Let him talk to that Government which has done nothing for the forests of Ontario.

We in the federal Government do collect income tax from the people who work in the lumber industry. We collect taxes from the wood producers. I believe that some of that money which has been going back to the lumber industry and to the forestry sector must continue to be paid to the federal Government, and perhaps the amount should be increased. However, I think it is not a one-sided affair. We will have to work with the provincial Governments and see that they put some of their royalties into regeneration, reforestation and management of the forests of Ontario.

I have looked at an agreement we made with the Province a few years ago. We wanted to turn to reforestation and regeneration, but officials from the Ontario provincial Government said: "No, no, we want roads for access to resources". We gave them roads. What did they do with those roads? Were they used for reforestation or regeneration? No. The roads were used to play their own political games with the mining companies and with certain privileged timber tract owners, and we have really not benefited from that.

I believe we must try to co-operate with the provincial Government, but we also must do some of the things we want to do. I can think, for example, of some of the things that need to be done in the transport sector of the forest industry. There

is a port in my riding, the Port of Michipicoten. If that port were to be developed, we could transport our lumber, pulp and chips out of my riding and out of the riding of the Hon. Member for Timiskaming at probably half the money we are spending now. This is what I hope the federal Government will spend its money on. I hope it will spend money not necessarily on doing what the Province of Ontario wants it to do but on what the lumber and paper producers want it to do. As well, another sector in which the Government could be of some assistance is the private forest owners in reforestation. If it is possible, I would rather put our federal money directly into programs such as those.

We must immediately begin very intensive negotiations between the Canadian Government, the provincial Governments and the producers in order to achieve a more efficient use of our forests. I have seen logs coming into certain paper mills which are 60 centimetres, 70 centimetres, 80 centimetres in diameter. These logs were to be made into pulp and paper while, in the cities of Timmins, Chapleau and Wawa, I have seen wood that is 15 centimetres in diameter being cut into studs. What a waste that is, Mr. Speaker. We must have an efficient approach to the use of the logs across northern Ontario. I believe that this is where research and development facilities can get involved, provided the Provinces wish to co-operate. We must get involved in the use of the other kinds of wood that we have in our forests. Right now we are using poplar for waferboard, but what about all of the white spruce that dies the moment the foresters come? The use of those trees must be developed.

What about tree tops? The Hon. Member mentioned that we could use tree tops as firewood. When a forest in northern Ontario is clearcut, 40 per cent of the wood remains on the floor of that forest. I think we can make better use of that wood than firewood. I think we need to have portable chippers and portable mills so that that wood can be turned into something that is productive.

The Government of Canada has done more than its share regarding fire losses. We were criticized by those dear Conservative provincial Governments across the country whose officials said: "Why is the Government trying to shove those CL-215's down our throats?" We were not trying to shove those planes down their throats. We were trying to encourage them to protect their own forest by telling them that we would buy one plane for every plane they bought.

Mr. Nickerson: You were trying to bail out Canadair, that's what you were trying to do.

Mr. Chénier: The Hon. Member says that we were trying to bail out Canadair. Maybe that is true, but does he have something to say about the Government trying to fight forest fires in his area? He is a person who comes from the Northwest Territories where there are fires every summer. He has been crying in the House that he does not get protection. We give him the planes to protect his forests, and he says that we did so because we wanted to protect Canadair. He would probably prefer us to buy an airplane from the United States