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CONTENTS

Forests and Canada's National Welfare	1
Power Equipment to East Pakistan	2
From School to Work	3
Canadians in Yemen	3

Digging up Ontario's Past	3
Duty-Free Airport Shop	4
New Harbour Grain Elevator	4
Muskellunge for Western Lake	4

FORESTS AND CANADA'S NATIONAL WELFARE

"To find the key to optimum use of the renewable resources of North America may well be the most significant and crucial search in our history," Mr. John R. Nicholson, Minister of Forestry, told the North American Forestry Commission at the Government of Canada Dinner in Ottawa on June 20. "The future of our society could well depend on its success." Mr. Nicholson developed his theme as follows in part:

"...Possibly in no other member nation of the Commission is the national welfare so dependent upon the success of its forest communities. Here, our annual forest harvest amounts to some 3.2 billion cubic feet per year; this supports a highly complex and diversified export and domestic industry directly employing more than 300,000 persons and paying out \$1.2 billion in salaries and wages annually.

"No other single Canadian industrial group approaches the forest industry in these respects. Here our forests support industries first in the nation in terms of employment and wages paid, in the value of freight loaded, in new capital investment, and in the net value of the output product in dollars.

"In the most vital economic field of domestic exports, forest products account for approximately 30 per cent of Canada's total exports and have consistently throughout the years been our leading earner of foreign exchange with which we buy required imports.

SINEWS OF THE ECONOMY

"Thus, when we in Canada declare an interest in the solution of Nature's mysterious equation, we

declare an interest in a major fact of survival. For, if steel forms the sinews of the United States economy and agricultural products those of Mexico, then surely wood is the natural stuff out of which Canada's hopes and destiny are fashioned.

"Two features that appear to underly the basic philosophy of the North American Forestry Commission are of particular interest to me, as Canada's Minister of Forestry. First is that we accept the forests of North America as one forest entity - that is, one great forest under three flags. Having accepted this, we then have the basic framework upon which to build co-operative studies, plans, and programmes to combat the many natural and man-made influences destructive to our mutual forests.

"When one is dealing with such forest enemies as disease, insect attacks and forest fires, no one of which has any respect for international boundaries, the logic of such a concept is most apparent. When, however, we consider such other aspects as multiple use of the forests, management policies, harvesting methods, insect, disease and fire control techniques, each within our separate social climates, the picture becomes much more complex.

"Let me illustrate with a point that comes readily to mind. Forest insects and diseases are recognized amongst the foremost forest industry problems affecting all three member countries of the Commission.

INSECTS AND DISEASE

"In Canada, forest losses due to insects and disease have been particularly heavy, partly because foreign insects and fungi have flourished here, but

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