

dians. The forestry industry provides the economic base for more than 300 single-industry communities across Canada.

Apart from that economic contribution, I think it is important to recognize that forests have a direct impact on the weather, something I think we have ignored in the past. The forests regulate the stream flow. I mentioned what happened in our area. Once the forest disappeared, the streams disappeared. Forests minimize soil erosion. I described what happened in our own area. It protects fish and wildlife habitat, and, of course, improves air quality.

Rain forests, together with oceanic plankton, account for 90 per cent of the world's photosynthetic oxygen. Yet I am absolutely amazed of how we waste our forests. Foresters who work in the bush in northern Ontario tell me I would be amazed at the waste in the bush, the slashing of trees and logs left that could not be hauled out.

• (1330)

You can go through parks just north of my riding where there was inappropriate husbandry of the forest. It was slash and run. There was no reforestation. Provincial governments entered into cosy deals with forestry companies. That was the whole reason for the countervail by the Americans on softwood lumber. The stumpage fees were not high enough, they charged. It was notorious in the province of Ontario that the stumpage fees charged were not sufficient to reforest what was being cut by the private sector. There was absolutely no consideration of the harm being done to the environment.

I want to say to the minister that I am personally pleased that we are finally going to have a department of forestry, promised in 1984, delivered in 1989. The Liberals would not touch it, of course. After 20 years of Liberal rule, the Liberal governments did not even recognize the importance of having a ministry of forestry. We have a ministry of fisheries and a ministry of energy and mines. But here is the most important resource to the economic well-being of this country as well as its aesthetic well-being and yet it had no ministry. I want to say to the minister that we support this bill, we support this subamendment, we are pleased that we will have a ministry. I am sure the trees are happy. I want to tell the government that I am going out to hug a tree.

### *Government Orders*

**Hon. Roger C. Simmons (Burin—St. George's):** Mr. Speaker, I say to my friend, not only are the trees happy, but if you listen, the wood is happy too. I say that to my good friend from Nickel Belt all in jest.

I support the bill wholeheartedly, without reservation. It is a good idea. The minister was there a minute ago. I am sure he is hanging on to every word I am saying while out there. It is a good idea, I say to him, because one in every ten jobs in Canada is generated by the forestry industry. That is a figure we have heard on a number of occasions in this House and so we should because I submit that part of the problem in terms of the lack of profile that forestry matters have had in government and in attracting the attention of decision-makers is that politicians of all political stripes have not cottoned onto or tuned into the marvellous impact for economic good that the forestry industry has in this country.

A few years ago when the Hon. John Roberts was the minister responsible for forestry, I had the good fortune to be his parliamentary secretary for a couple of years. In that capacity, I got to know some of the people in the forestry industry, right from British Columbia to Newfoundland. The forestry industry, of course, is extremely well served and the country is well served by the calibre of people who are involved in the industry, both in terms of the government bureaucracies federally and provincially and in terms of people who have chosen to invest in the industry and who work in the industry.

I do not want to delay the passage of this legislation. That is not my purpose in rising. It is just to get on the record one or two concerns that I have and then I want to give notice to whoever on the other side is piloting this legislation through the House that I shall be finished speaking in just a very few minutes. Oh, there is the minister. I say to him and his colleagues that it is my intention to get a couple of things on the record and then hopefully assist the administration in getting this good piece of legislation moving through the stages before we rise for the day.

I have the honour to represent a riding called Burin—St. George's. In the center of that riding geographically there is a bit of geography known locally as "Bay Despair". For the francophones among us, you would probably pronounce the it "Baie D'Espoir". It is a tribute to the Newfoundlanders who live there that they are able to take what is a foreign language term and put it into very translatable idiom, particularly given the local