

S.O. 29

for Fundy—Royal (Mr. Corbett) for moving this motion, as well as Members of Parliament from Atlantic Canada for their fine comments on the importance of our forestry sector. It is a \$30 billion industry in Canada and accounts for more than \$500 million of the gross provincial product of Nova Scotia. Forests cover three-quarters of the Province of Nova Scotia, and 92 per cent of that is considered productive. That is nearly 3.8 million hectares of usable forests. For every thousand cords of wood harvested and processed in Nova Scotia, we get approximately five direct jobs and up to 10 more are created elsewhere in our economy. Obviously, to get the maximum return from the development of our forests, we must manage them properly.

Our Government has made a concrete commitment to Canadian forestry and its improved management. We have named a Minister of State for Forestry (Mr. Merrithew) to ensure that the industry has a voice at the cabinet table. We now have in place across Canada more than \$1 billion in federal-provincial agreements for forest management activities. In the case of Nova Scotia, more than \$18 million has been spent to date for forest improvement under the current Canada-Nova Scotia forest resource development agreement. In Cape Breton this represents \$2.5 million in forest management activity. That is a wise investment in an important resource. Recently we announced that \$10 million under a special Nova Scotia-Canada agreement would be directed to the Cape Breton forests alone.

One of the vehicles we have been using in Nova Scotia to improve management of our forests is the group venture vehicle. It began in 1975 with a group of interested citizens who formed a limited company to prepare and implement forest management plans on the company's shareholders' properties. In 1978, eight group ventures were operating, and today 16 such group ventures are operating covering more than 60,000 hectares and involving 900 members.

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This year these groups received \$1.7 million in forest improvement assistance from the Canadian Forestry Service. These groups are funded under the FRDA group venture program. Each will receive approximately \$200,000 in federal support and another \$100,000 in provincial funding by 1987. It is hoped that each of these groups will provide about ten to 13 permanent jobs.

These programs are different in that they bring together private woodlot owners and give to them the responsibility to manage their lands to ensure that the maximum economic and social benefits accrue to their communities.

In my riding, in particular, we have a large pulp and paper producer who is really an important part of our economy. This industry employs 800 to 900 people directly, both on the plant site and in the forests. This company has been a leader in forest management techniques imported from Sweden, such as silviculture techniques. This company has been a leader in dealing with badly infected hectares resulting from spruce

budworm, which devastated the Highlands area of Cape Breton and eastern Nova Scotia over the last decade.

It is the success this company has shown which has permitted the federal Government to work with the province to put in place many more initiatives that will result in a far healthier resource, and one from which we can get long-term benefits.

I know there are many other Members from Atlantic Canada who wish to comment on our forestry industry, and for that reason I will close now and emphasize the importance of the Government responding to the compensation needs of the land owners and people affected by the recent disastrous fires in Atlantic Canada.

Mr. W. R. Bud Jardine (Northumberland—Miramichi): Mr. Speaker, I also welcome this opportunity to say a few words at this late hour in the emergency debate. It is something that has affected all of Atlantic Canada. The hockey game is over, it is a quarter to one in Atlantic Canada, and most of the people are asleep. It is the sleep of peace, Mr. Speaker, because in the last few days very few of them enjoyed it. My riding of Northumberland-Miramichi is the largest geographical riding in the country and the forest fires threatened literally the length and breadth of the riding.

I had the opportunity yesterday of being airborne in a helicopter and had a chance to see, firsthand, the damage and the devastation that a forest fire can cause, not just in one location, but in many up and down the river, the homes that were destroyed, the fishing camps, the lodges and the cottages. People had to evacuate communities like Newcastle, Douglastown and Northumberland-Miramichi. There were people who did not want to leave their homes and the mayors literally had to go out and force them out in order to protect their lives. We are grateful, of course, that there was no loss of life. When people did get back and looked at their property, the lucky ones saw that, indeed, the fire on many occasions encircled them, and others came back to see nothing but ash.

One would be remiss if one did not speak of the co-operation that took place during this crisis, the co-operation between people in Lands and Forests, Natural Resources and the Department of National Defence. I would have to mention names like Hayward Sturgen, who was responsible for coordinating the over-all firefighting effort. I was airborne with Bill Stewart, Department of Natural Resources who, for the last 72 hours or so, was able to subsist on four hours of sleep at night. I flew along with him as he surveyed from the air the continual flare-ups. He co-ordinated the over-all attack, landing here and there to help direct the fire-fighting effort on the ground. Without the co-operation of the base commander, Canadian Forces Base Chatham, without the use of his equipment, the foam trucks, many, many homes would have been lost. Some of the areas affected by the fire were Newcastle, 13,000 plus acres that had been burning out of control; Kirkwood in the Barnaby River area, 1900 acres; Trout Brook, over 80,000 acres; Quarry Ville, 500 acres; Barryville, 5 acres; Burnt Church, 150 acres; Otter Brook, A. Daigle, Escuminac,