

S.O. 29

me that there will be no mutation in BT, I will give it my wholehearted support. However, they must explain why other organisms do, in effect, develop resistance to the drugs which mankind has made for control.

There are biodegradable pesticides on the market which would be effective. When they become biodegradable, the residual effect and impact of them is negligible if at all important in the environment in which they exist and in which they will be sprayed. The trick is to learn how little we can use to control the population, how little carrier or solvent we need to distribute the insecticide, and how often we have to spray for it to be effective. These are the things which the Government of Canada, the pesticide corporations, the pulp corporations and the provinces have never intensively attacked.

For instance, not long ago I read in one of the Ontario papers that 57 million acres of forest in the Province of Ontario is infected with budworm to one degree or another. That is probably more forest land than all of Atlantic Canada can claim. That is a multibillion dollar capability for economic benefit of the country which is threatened if it is not addressed in some way. We are farming the forests of this land and if we are to maintain the economic viability of the industry, we have to address it as a farming operation from here on in. This is particularly true in New Brunswick which, for somewhere between 10 and 15 years, has been cutting more than natural growth has regenerated. We are looking at losing a billion-dollar industry in that province, or at least a significant part of it, if we do not have policies which are going to guard the value of that forest land and keep it growing.

● (2330)

We may attack the spraying program of the 1950s but it killed at least 95 per cent of the bugs. When that was done the forest needed spraying only every three to five years. We do not know what percentage of the bugs is being killed by existing sprays, and this is carelessness on the part of Government, regardless of who is the Prime Minister of the day. We do not know the degree of control we are getting because we are not monitoring as effectively as we did in the 1950s. This is not acceptable.

My plea is that we now address the issue of how we can protect the environment in every way. Flora and fauna have been mentioned in the debate tonight. What flora and fauna is there in those burned-over acres in New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island or Newfoundland? There are a lot of dead bodies, a lot of burned-up blossoms and no birds. We have to find a balance between the ecology and the economy. We have to get to a position where we respect the flora, the fauna and the economy. I am convinced that this can, should, indeed must be done. The corporations, the provinces and the Government of Canada must join forces.

This tragedy is not over tonight even where the fires are out. The tragedy continues in a province which is deficient in wood production and has now lost a full year's production. We are one year closer to the critical point where unemployment starts

to occur. Do we know what trees should be planted in these burned-over areas? Do we know how much of the soil has been destroyed? How can the soil be restored? Are we going to plant a tree in soil which will grow a 10-inch pine stump in 75 years? I have seen one of those stumps in an area of New Brunswick which had been burned over after the budworm infestation of the early 1930s. Fire swept through New Brunswick at that time, too. There was a 75-year old pine about that big when it should have been much bigger. The soil would not produce effectively the pine species on that burned-over land.

The Hon. Member for Gander—Twillingate (Mr. Baker) is not very far away from where I stand on this. He gave my speech for me. He mentioned Matricile, a biodegradable pesticide. It is effective and has little if any residue. Some of the others he named are not acceptable to me or the ecology groups who are so adamantly against spraying. I do not know about the rest of Canada, but there has been roughly \$3 billion in gross product loss in Atlantic Canada. These fires have been fed in part at least by the kindling left behind by the budworm. They created an inferno which was virtually unstoppable. The wood was absolutely dry and ready to burn. Another reason is that the ground was not covered by the foliage which ordinarily grows there. The soil dried out far earlier than it otherwise would have. Now this fire has destroyed the soil as well and I do not know how long it will take to replace that growth.

In conclusion, I want to congratulate my friend and colleague from Fundy—Royal for moving the motion and the Speaker for accepting it. I think it is a very critical moment. Perhaps it is a disaster only in Atlantic Canada at the moment, but it can be a disaster in any province in Canada. It is a situation which demands an outright attack on the silviculture policies of this land and the preservation of the forest for future generations. We cannot continue the silviculture practices that were in use when we had wood running out of our ears, wood far in excess of our needs. That situation no longer exists in Atlantic Canada. We are getting close to a shortage in other provinces in Canada. We have to look at how many water bombers we need, what research we need, what kind of forest protection and silviculture practices we need. We have not done this in the past and I am very disappointed that we have not attacked it up to this point in time.

It has not been a political discussion this evening and I commend those who have discussed the matter in this debate for their constructive ideas. Those who have suffered losses have my sympathy. Not all of them are in Gagetown and they have little if any hope of compensation. They have my sympathy. To those fire departments which worked so hard in New Brunswick, whether it is Saint John, Gagetown, St. George or wherever, it made no difference. They worked on behalf of their fellow man to the very best of their ability and, in many instances, at the risk of their lives. To all those I offer my sincerest congratulations.

Mr. Lawrence I. O'Neil (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso):
Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the Hon. Member