

*Supply*

with a proposal for a possible half-a-billion plus investment, allocating to each of our six constituencies whatever can be done by the Canadian Government over the next five years in the area of forestry. If we had been satisfied to sit and weep as did the NDP Members, we would never had gotten this paper. What we did was to pack our bags and go round to see our constituents. We met with companies, we sent them information about what the Government planned to do, we asked for their advice and for some answers, and we worked with them to put together an integrated forest development program.

Today, we know that what the Canadian Government can do unilaterally will be done in our region because we cared and did our job fully aware that 65 per cent of the lumber produced in Quebec came from our region; this means 2,030,000 fbm a year, Mr. Speaker. We also knew that 25 per cent of the pulp and paper industry is located in our region. We were aware of the billions of dollars this meant for our people. We did our homework and made some recommendations, some of which have already been implemented, such as asking the Government to become directly involved in the private industry through programs such as Canada Works, and to spend so many dollars per man-week both for non-profit corporations and the private sector.

The recommendations which came from our caucus and ourselves as representatives of our constituents have been implemented. What we did, Mr. Speaker, was to understand that we must represent those who sent us here. In this context, far from being satisfied to simply make speeches, we went to see these people. We asked them for their opinions and wishes and we worked a year and a half at preparing a paper. We then gave this paper to the Government which now takes this material into account as the development takes place, because we are involved.

This is what the Hon. Member for Skeena and his colleagues should do. The same is true for the Progressive Conservative members. Unfortunately, as I have already said, it is a well-known fact that they show a lack of interest in forestry. It is not their fault. Their constituencies probably have mostly oil and mineral resources or else fishing resources, and so on, but it is a fact that the whole country benefits from our forest industry. It is extremely important that we can now sit down and express our views as Members of Parliament not only orally, but also by writing to our Government.

● (1720)

This leads me to mention another aberration which came to my mind earlier when I was listening to the Member of the Official Opposition, namely the creation of a new Federal Department of Forestry. I am not automatically opposed to the creation of such a ministry. Constitutionally, Mr. Speaker, forestry comes under provincial jurisdiction, and the way my colleague was talking a few moments ago, I got the impression that the provinces had disappeared and did not even fit in the

picture. I think that the existing structures enable us to do everything we can to improve the situation, fully develop our forests and help our forest industry pick up steam, but perhaps a federal or interprovincial body might be required to coordinate everything. That may be the shortcoming I can notice. Given that context, it is not up to the Canadian Government or any Member of Parliament to twist the arms of the provinces. They own their resources, they can decide who will have cutting rights, they have their own logging operations and forestry development is their responsibility. The federal Government has no business telling them what to do. Even if I, Pierre Gimaiel, wanted to pass myself off as an expert in British Columbia forestry, I would not fool anyone because a tree in British Columbia is 25 times bigger than a tree in the Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean area, because the entrance of a British Columbia sawmill must be huge, a lot more so than the entrance of a Lac-Saint-Jean sawmill. We must keep in mind the technical constraints, the different climates, and the fact that Canada is a continent bordering on two oceans. That being said, I think it would be an aberration as well as a constitutional encroachment to create a new federal forestry ministry.

I would much rather leave things as they are—we have a Department of Environment which includes the Forestry Service. That service can play a larger role, as it has been doing for two years in cooperation with various federal Departments to coordinate the activities of Manpower and Immigration and Industry, Trade and Commerce, or, if you will, regional and industrial development in forestry and silviculture. There is nothing to stop us, provided we respect the various jurisdictions.

It would be unfortunate if we went to war over our forests. We have had the experience of this department which the Government of Canada had set up to deal with urban affairs, which had to be abandoned because of its overlapping with provincial organizations here there and everywhere.

I am surprised at the attitude of the Official Opposition, especially as this Government has spent hundreds of millions of dollars over the past few years under various agreements with the provinces. The more so because most premiers except the creditist premier of British Columbia and the PQ premier of Quebec, are representatives of each of the parties in this House. Therefore it is easy for Hon. Members of both the Official and NDP opposition to have their say about their parties policies in their own provinces. Moreover, I suggest that in this area the Government of Canada should let the various provinces find their own solutions to their particular problems. What it should do is allow them to rely on the huge resources of the Canadian Government. That is what our job is all about. We are not supposed for instance to force a solution devised here in Canada, upon the Government of British Columbia but rather to urge the people, as I have done myself in the Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean area, to come to Ottawa and