

## 1A. CHANGING FOREST VALUES

*There now exists a clear uneasiness over the present utilization and management of our forest resources. There has been a rapid change in societal values as it relates to the economy and the environment. This change has seen public views and values move out in front of both the actions of government and the forest industry. — A.L. (Sandy) Peel, Chairman, British Columbia Forest Resources Commission (Correspondence to the Committee, April 12, 1990).*

As we consider the role of the new federal Department of Forestry, we should first contemplate the meaning today of Canada's forests to Canadians, in traditional terms to be sure, but more particularly with respect to the increasing and conflicting demands which will be placed on the forests of the future. We must then develop a vision of those forests for *tomorrow*, because most assuredly forest values are changing and they will be far different in the years ahead than they were yesterday, or even than they are *today*.

The economic values of Canada's forests have been enjoyed for centuries, and in the judgement of our Committee will continue to be an essential and growing expectation in any future vision. Today our forests contribute over \$40 billion value of shipments each year to our economy, and directly or indirectly are the source of almost one million jobs.<sup>1</sup> Our forest products industry is the single largest industrial sector in Canada, and accounts for a trade balance surplus of nearly \$20 billion, an amount which *exceeds* the total trade balance of agricultural, fisheries, energy and mining sectors *combined*.<sup>2</sup> In some 350 communities across Canada, forests are practically the *only source* of economic well-being; in addition, there are many other towns and cities where forestry constitutes a large part of the total industrial mix.

*I would simply like to stress in the beginning that industrial forestry is extremely critical to regional economies. I would like to mention as well that for this reason we must never forget the contribution it makes to economies, more especially to rural and depressed areas of this country. We must always bear this in mind when we are dealing with the responsibility of the federal department. — Honourable Morris V. Green, Minister of Natural Resources and Energy, New Brunswick (Issue 22:5).*

Internationally, Canada is a leading world producer of forestry products, ranking first in newsprint production, second in pulp production, and third in softwood lumber production. This enviable position is reflected in our export sales of these items, which represent about 20% of entire world exports of forest products.