

Supply

energy and wood supply costs gave little incentive to producers to re-equip. Thus, by the mid-1970s, a significant investment backlog had developed. Producers faced rising energy costs, tighter pollution control regulations, and machinery which was rapidly reaching the end of its productive life. The need for public action is obvious; today even more action is called for.

In its March 1983 report, the Science Council of Canada warned that the forests are essential to our social and economic wellbeing, yet we have allowed them to degenerate to a dangerous point. We have been felling, selling and shipping timber for so long and at such a rate that today a \$23 billion industry is facing economic stagnation.

The comments of the Council and its report were welcomed. Concerned citizens, politicians from all sides of the House and spokesmen for industry have been warning the Government for many years that careless exploitation of the forest resource would mean its destruction. Today, despite improved utilization of the forest in the mills and efforts toward replacing the forest, the warnings have become more frequent. The real problem as I see it is that none of the forests we see around our urban areas are marketable.

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Why are our forests disappearing? The first big attack on them is logging. We cut about 2.6 million acres each normal year. Of this, at least one-third is not sufficiently restocked. Each year, 400,000 acres are added to the National Science Research inventory. About 12 per cent of our forest land is now in this category. If we had this to cut again, we could sustain our present harvest for about 30 years on this land alone.

The forests are also diminished by pest and disease. At its height, the spruce budworm epidemic had defoliated more than 150 million acres of forest land, about two-third the size of Ontario. Annually we lose about \$1 billion in potential forest trade because of insects. Something can be done about this. Fire is another major factor in forest loss. In the last few years we have lost up to six times the annual harvest to fires. Acid rain is becoming a great concern as far as it affects growth in our forests. On this matter, the Europeans are now bringing evidence of their concern. To all these factors we must add the withdrawal of the forest base for parks, reserves, roads, hydro lines, urban expansion and agricultural expansion. Finally, better co-ordination between the forestry organizations and Government Departments would help on this account.

What then is to be done? This morning we heard the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Caccia) outline what the Government has done and is doing and laud his accomplishments. Without sounding disrespectful, I commend the Minister. However, this is not enough. It is only a beginning. As he pointed out, there are still many priorities that remain. They are, more research and development which is essential for protection and a further increase of funds for the Canadian Forestry Service. To this list may the Official Opposition add a few of its own concerns or areas that the Minister can

consider when he approaches his colleagues for additional funds.

The Minister should enhance forestry to a higher prominence as a distinct federal ministry, eliminate areas of federal-provincial overlap and, where desirable, develop further joint management jurisdictions. In conjunction with the Provinces, he should encourage improved management and protection of the forest resource with the intention of increasing productivity by at least 50 per cent by the year 2000.

The Minister should consider accepting a share of forest-related costs consistent with the benefits received by Governments from the forest sector, linking federal funding to a set percentage of the federal revenue, averaged over five years, taken from that sector. Through tax measures, he should encourage industry involvement in more intensive forest management, regeneration and product research and, finally, manage more effectively the large federal lands currently being neglected.

It is rather a coincidence that in the *Sunday Star* the lead editorial was headed "Our Threatened Forests". I quote the editorial:

The forest industry is Canada's largest. One out of every seven of our manufactured goods is a forest product. And the industry is responsible, directly or indirectly for about a million jobs.

Obviously, it would be an unbelievable catastrophe to lose this resource through waste, mismanagement or neglect. Yet apparently we're doing just that.

Our forests are threatened. As Patricia Orwen reported in *The Saturday Star* recently, large areas of once-lush land already are barren. Canada's trees are being lost while much of the public believes that the supply is endless and that Government and industry are taking measures to protect that supply.

These beliefs are mistaken. The evidence says we're harvesting our trees faster than we replace them.

According to the Science Council of Canada, one-eighth of the country's productive forest area has become useless and will remain so for the next 60 to 80 years. And a 1981 federal discussion paper says Ontario's timber industry faces widespread shortages this decade, unless we do a better job of managing our forests. And we dare not wait.

Basing its calculation on the Ministry of Natural Resources' own figures, a New Democratic Party task force says we're writing off 37 acres of forest an hour. In 1980 and 1981, almost 30 per cent of what was cut—about 270 square miles—was laid to waste and not replanted. That's an area larger than metropolitan Toronto. Some forest will regenerate itself. Some of the waste land, it's true, is not suitable for replanting.

But the conclusion seems unescapable that, overall, a much greater effort is needed to replenish what has been cut throughout the Province.

Clearly, a new effort is needed. Ontario has made a start by entering into new forest management agreements with a number of large lumber companies. These agreements provide the companies with provincial money and require them to replant in areas they harvest.

Such agreements are good, and there should be more of them. But agreements alone are not enough. We need to treat forestry like farming. Trees are crops that must be tended and nurtured before we move down the road to look for more.

And we need to spend more money. The Science Council says we should more than double our funding for reforestation and research. Ottawa, Queen's Park and the timber industry may quibble about who should pay more for what, but there is no doubt more should be spent.

Otherwise we may squander the future of a \$23 billion industry.

As a member of the Special Committee on Forestry, a few years ago I visited the forestry station at Pembroke. At Kemptville we saw the new hybrid poplar which is being