

Adjournment Debate

● (1825)

The Minister intends to put before his Cabinet colleagues federal-provincial agreements which would implement the forest renewal policy. Indeed, officials of the Canadian Forestry Service began negotiating such a deal with officials of the B.C. Ministry of Forests close to a year ago. As of January, 1984, it became obvious that it would not be possible to conclude any new agreement with B.C. which would allow us to launch a major forest renewal program before March 31. Since both the current intensive forest management agreement and the general development agreement expire on that date, the Minister agreed with provincial officials that an extension of the current agreement was the best course of action for now, thus avoiding a costly interruption of the federal-provincial co-operative forest management programs in British Columbia.

Earlier today the Minister tabled before Cabinet a proposal to obtain the \$5.5 million required to carry the current agreement for one more year. A decision is expected momentarily and I do not foresee any difficulty in obtaining approval. This extension does not in any way preclude our reaching an agreement with British Columbia which would involve substantial levels of funding over a five-year period.

The proposal I just mentioned would see both Governments spend \$11 million jointly this year, mainly on reforestation and silvicultural prescriptions as well as research and development. This would lay the groundwork for further initiatives to be

undertaken with the Province and industry of British Columbia, within the framework of a new forest renewal agreement that could be implemented as of 1985-86.

I take this opportunity to remind the Hon. Member that this Government has steadily increased its financial support to forestry in B.C. over the past years. Through the ongoing research and development work of the Pacific Forest Research Centre, the current intensive forest management agreement, the UI/JC-Forest Sector Program and Co-operative Overseas Market Development Program, unique to B.C., we have brought federal expenditures in B.C. from \$10 million in 1979-80 to \$35 million in 1983-84, totalling over \$112 million over the last five years. A few examples of this are, increased funding to the Faculty of Forestry at UBC, the upgrading of the Pacific Forest Research Centre in Victoria, and a current innovative study to develop an economic timber supply model for B.C.

Let me conclude by assuring Members of the House that this Government will maintain its commitment to the forest sector, in B.C. as well as in the rest of the country, as expressed in our policy on forest renewal.

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Herbert): The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 2 p.m.

At 6.28 p.m., the House adjourned, without question put, pursuant to Standing Order.