

Adjournment Debate

Finally, I should add on behalf of the President of the Treasury Board that in view of the government's overall legislative agenda the preferred approach to Public Service pension reform is to proceed with it as a package. I do wish to assure members of this House that the hon. President of the Treasury Board has indicated to me that work is proceeding well on pension reform. It is probable that the legislative proposals will be ready for introduction early in the new year. I assume that is good news to my colleague, the hon. member, and to those whom he represents.

Included in those proposals will be appropriate enabling provisions to put in place a program which will address the particular retirement concerns of correctional employees. I know that they will welcome that news.

FORESTRY

Mr. Brian L. Gardiner (Prince George—Bulkley Valley): Mr. Speaker, on November 2, I rose in this House to ask a very important question about the state of our forest agreements that have gone unsigned, particularly in British Columbia, my home province, and in the other three western provinces.

Last week, when Parliament was not sitting, we learned that the federal government had reneged on promises to guarantee adequate funding for a forest agreement. We also learned last week that this government was only going to be able to contribute some \$100 million to a forest agreement, which is less than the agreement that expired on March 31 of this year. We have yet to hear what are the results of those forest agreements in the other provinces where they have expired.

I am angry. I do not want to understate it because I think it represents some of the attitudes and views of people in British Columbia who frankly are furious over this government's refusal to get on with the job of signing any of these forest agreements.

These agreements are the foundation of the federal effort in forestry, which gives us the vehicle to talk to the provinces and to work with our forests. One just has to take a look at some of the recommendations from an earlier forest committee report which we tabled that are now rendered useless because of this government's failure to renew and deal with these agreements. I am referring to the recommendation which I strongly sup-

port about the protection of 12 per cent of Canada's forest lands. How can we do that without support from the federal government?

That is now a rejection. We now have to reject that report, because we have to send a strong message to this government about how serious we are about the needs of our forests.

What can we do, with some of the recommendations about forest management on National Defence lands and those forest lands administered by and with the Indian people of this country? Without those forest agreements and those abilities to use those funds and resources, the ability of the federal government to participate and share is gone.

Those recommendations, as I said, will also have to be rejected because they will not be doing the job. I am emphasizing this because I have put my soul into talking about these forest agreements since being elected. I have reason to.

In my part of British Columbia, 40 per cent of the NSR land that has been left from harvesting has to be addressed by these agreements. If we had these agreements, they would make a contribution toward adding to our annual cut. They are not in the plans, projections and recommendations of the forest committee report.

I now feel that we have been let down by this government and by members on the opposite side, to the point that when we want to send a strong message to this government we now have to do that. We have to reject these recommendations.

• (1815)

They will not work, especially in the case that I have presented. We have relied on these forest agreements to see that we have Indian lands available to Indian people to harvest and to manage properly.

Forestry Canada has to work with some of the other departments like Parks Canada and others to efficiently manage our forests. We must reject those ideas now, because we cannot implement them in an adequate manner because of the lack of these agreements.

I say to you, Mr. Speaker, just how important those have become. I said in the House earlier today that some 100,000 jobs in British Columbia are likely to be lost due to the lack of these forest agreements being signed. Forestry Canada cannot operate because of the lack of