

are not given a lot of publicity by the Government, but they are effective policies that affect a great many people.

● (1710)

In my riding, for instance, the sawmill at l'Ascension belongs to Abitibi Price, which started the mill a few years ago. The mill's several hundred employees were trained with the help of federal funds made available to the company by the Department of Employment and Immigration. The same is true of other facilities belonging to the same company at Saint-David-de-Falardeau. The same also applies to another company for which the Canadian Government has just earmarked \$1 million to modernize facilities at Saint-Fulgence and Sainte-Rose, in another part of my riding, which belong to Consolidated Bathurst, and the same may be said for many other sawmills and companies involved in the forest industry, whether they are manufacturing particle board or pulp and paper, where Government involvement has taken place in ways other than through direct funding by the Department of the Environment.

And when people accuse . . . Earlier, I heard the Member of the Official Opposition accuse the Department of the Environment of playing a negative role in the development of the forest industry, and attribute this negative attitude to the Government itself. I think it is unfortunate the Hon. Member should have such a limited view of what is being done by the Department of the Environment. In fact, this Department is trying to meet one of its increasingly important responsibilities, which is perceived as such by all Canadians and especially our youth, for protecting the Canadian environment and doing so in conjunction with the economic development of our country. I think these objectives have been achieved. There has been a kind of specialization so that the Department of Regional Economic Expansion, created in 1968, has tended to be more often involved in the financial side of developing the forest industry, including pulp and paper, the lumber industry and related activities. Why? Because the majority of these industries are located in resource areas. Because until the middle of the 1960s, these were areas whose economic development had been somewhat neglected. The resources were taken out, and I am reminded here of a quote by the Hon. Member for Skeena of what Sir John A. Macdonald said several decades ago, the resources were taken out and that was it.

DREE, however, started developing local industries that would use these resources, in order to create employment in areas where this was a tremendous problem for young people, and so forth. Hundreds of millions of dollars were spent by DREE on converting sawmills to making particle board in Saguenay Lac-Saint-Jean, Abitibi, Northern Ontario and all the Western Provinces, including British Columbia, and on all kinds of industrial development, plus various infrastructure projects. In fact, even if the DREE Act prevented the Department from getting involved in the infrastructure area through the Regional Development Act, DREE did so in 1978 through

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agreements signed with the Provinces. The agreements dealt with forest development, forest access and developing forest regeneration. And in that respect, in the Province of Quebec alone, DREE contributed \$190 million to forest development over the last five years. This is not to mention certain special agreements that led to the development of plants, such as the Donohue-Normick facilities in Amos and the Donohue plant in Saint-Félicien. These plants produce either pulp alone or pulp and paper. Without that investment by DREE, it is unfortunate to say that this probably would never have been accomplished. The best proof of this is the Saint-Félicien case where, after a 12-year wait, the project finally could proceed when DREE said: "Yes, we will provide the \$30 million". And I am proud to mention this because at the time I was Executive Assistant of the Minister who signed that agreement with the Province of Quebec. I can certify that this agreement has been instrumental in creating a number of industries, in achieving a rationalization of the entire forest industry in a large section of my constituency of Saguenay Lac-Saint-Jean, and the consolidation of a number of mills and, to wit, in the maintaining of many very important jobs.

Therefore, to blame the Canadian Government for not discharging its responsibility in the area of forestry is in my view, quite misleading, because if Environment Canada did protect the environment as it is required to do, the other departments, whether Industry, Trade and Commerce, or CIDA the Hon. Member for Skeena (Mr. Fulton) a short while ago drew a fantastic picture of the extent to which the Canadian Government is involved in the development of forestry. All the examples he gave show that in this country, we have the best qualified people in matters relating to forestry and also in the area of servicing the forest industry. Those people who went ahead and built sawmills, pulp and paper mills—they are still doing it all over the world—are considered to be the best engineering firms, the best manufacturers of sawmill equipment, the best builders of pulp and paper mill facilities. This is why they are sought after, because in that area of federal jurisdiction, the Government has done what was required for us to become the most qualified people in the world and so we are fortunately, from whatever province we are. Because I can say, for instance, that the engineering firms which built a sawmill, rather a pulp and paper mill in my area were from British Columbia. The Hon. Member for Skeena forgot to mention that fact, which tells a lot about the people of British Columbia; that small detail is being ignored.

There are proposals in the air. Indeed, my colleagues from Abitibi and Saguenay-Lac Saint Jean, the Hon. Member for Chicoutimi (Mr. Dionne), the Hon. Member for Jonquière (Mr. Marceau), the Hon. Member for Roberval (Mrs. Beauchamp-Niquet), the Hon. Member for Abitibi (Mr. Gingras) and the Hon. Member for Témiscamingue (Mr. Tousignant), and I did not simply wait for the Government to act, Mr. Speaker, this last year. You see this bulging file? It has to do