

Mr. Herridge: Mr. Chairman, I speak under some handicap this afternoon because I have a bad cold, but I cannot resist making some remarks in view of the fact that forestry, farming and rural development have been lifetime interests of mine. I can truthfully say I know something about all of these subjects. I staked my first timber limit when I was 17 years of age. I got a man who was over 21 years of age to actually stake the limit for me, and he sold me the limit back when I was 21 for \$1. I had an early interest in this operation.

I have operated a tree farm for some 50 years on a sustained yield basis, so I have more timber today than I had 50 years ago. I am sure the hon. member for Victoria-Carleton will know something about this. I look forward to that hon. member's speech during this debate because he knows what it is to meet a payroll and handle a sawmill operation. I had some experience for a number of years in the operation of a small sawmill. This mill cut about 30,000 feet of lumber during an eight hour day. I know of the difficulties in connection with such an operation.

For some years I have been interested in farming generally, tree farming in particular, and in raising cattle. I have always been interested in rural development, as have other like minded people who live in small communities. Even today I find a number of people living in the district from which I come who are interested in these subjects. They are particularly interested in the rural development operations which fall within the minister's responsibility. I speak as the president of the Canadian Tree Farmers Association, which is really a group of individuals who have a philosophical approach to the development of natural resources which come from the soil, the forests and the water. The majority of our members are not primarily interested in forestry to make their living. Mainly they are individuals with an income who have purchased property in the country for development along sound resource management lines.

For many years I have been interested in the public and private sectors of the development of forest economy. I listened with great interest to the remarks of the hon. member for Qu'Appelle, to whom I give full credit for all he did when he was minister of agriculture. His department undertook the most progressive program of any department of that government in respect of resources, and he was directly responsible for calling the

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resources for tomorrow conference, as well as for the establishment of the ARDA program.

Let me thank the present minister for his personal attention to the matters I have brought to his attention. I have appreciated the work done by his staff in respect of forestry and rural development. The estimates now under consideration involve a total expenditure of some \$50 million, so we are discussing matters of considerable importance. In years to come I am sure we will find that these estimates will increase as a result of the knowledge that these moneys are being spent for the sound development of our economy.

The committee on agriculture, forestry and rural development studied these estimates and had every opportunity to listen to and ask questions of the minister and his officials. The meetings of the committee were among the most interesting I have attended in recent years. That committee, the sittings of which were both interesting and informative, recommended the approval of these estimates, I think rightly so.

The tone of the minister's speech was pleasing because he was non-partisan in his approach and willing to compliment former ministers for what they had achieved. We do not often find ministers taking this attitude, but I believe when someone has done something of value he should be complimented. The minister was generous enough to do that today.

The minister said today that the federal role of the forestry department is largely restricted to research. He is right in that contention, but I believe that the officials of his department could, as a result of obtaining this knowledge and without transgressing upon the rights of the provinces, give further leadership in the development of the programs in which they are interested. I am sure they could do so and retain good relations with the provinces.

The minister said that his officials are developing technological consultations with the officials of the provincial governments. I should like him to explain why vote 23 was dropped. For the information of hon. members vote 23 related to contributions to the provinces, pursuant to agreements entered into with the approval of the governor in council, in respect of forest inventories, reforestation, forest fire protection, forest access road construction and stand improvement. I would like to hear an explanation of why this item has been eliminated, and I look forward to what the minister has to say.