

*Forestry*

talked about how it is our job, our responsibility to do what we can to draw the importance of the forests to the attention of this House and in turn to all Canadians. There are a number of people whose occupations and lives depend on the forests in many communities across our country.

I know our forestry committee will undoubtedly be dealing with this further and discussing it as we go along.

The problem is not confined just to central or eastern Canada. We now have some indications of acid rain being suspected in British Columbia. The evidence I have here is a very recent news report in the *Vancouver Sun*, which reports about some arbutus trees and the problems of acid rain on those trees. I gather there is some question about just whether it is in fact acid rain that is causing the problem. Nevertheless, there is evidence from the previous record and some of the problems that have been talked about certainly in the Lower Mainland of British Columbia, where the provincial minister of the environment has finally recognized the fact that that is a major problem. This problem will continue to grow unless we deal with the problem of acid rain on our forests, and many of the problems in general that are related to forestry in the country.

What has been done or what is being proposed? That is the subject of my motion where I call on the Government, as I say in it, to produce a sustainable forest industry that takes action on reducing acid rain and its impact on our forests.

Members will know that in our country there are a number of joint federal-provincial forestry agreements. There has been a lot of debate in this Chamber and in our forestry committee about those agreements and their importance, as well as the importance of what those agreements can do, to the provinces, to the industry and labour and all of the people involved in the forestry industry. In fact, I make reference to one particular agreement in eastern Canada that the federal Government has in the Province of Quebec where they are going to be spending some funds for accelerated research program—and I am quoting from the Estimates—which will include the examination of fertilization as a means to treat affected areas.

I think that directly ties in with the debate that has been in this House and in the committee as of late about the importance of the forestry agreements.

In the few minutes that are remaining to me I would like to tie in the major concerns about acid rain and its impact on our forests with some of the vehicles and chosen methods that we can use to try and solve with that problem. That is a forestry agreement that has been proposed between the federal and provincial governments, in this case Québec.

I would suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, and to the House, that these agreements have proven to be effective vehicles for the different levels of Government to achieve various aims, and in this case in our forest industry. Those FRDAs, as they are called, and this is a particular FRDA, a Forest Resource Development Agreement, is a vehicle to achieve sustainable development and some planning in our forests.

In the case of Ontario, we have a forest agreement that is in limbo right now. The Minister in the committee the other day suggested to us that he would not release his criteria that he wants to use to negotiate a new agreement with Ontario and the other provinces. I would suggest that in Ontario there is a role for this committee and for the House to know exactly what criteria this level of government can use in co-operation with the province to try and resolve the problems that we have with acid rain in the Province of Ontario and other provinces.

As you probably know, Mr. Speaker, the Minister has talked a lot about long-term planning in forestry. We have been pursuing that with the Minister in committee, in terms of what he mean by that. Does he have the 20-year plans in place from the provinces that the initial FRDA agreements called for.

We are looking forward to that, and we hope that the Minister deals with the six provinces that are due. We know that he has called an early meeting of the forestry ministers across the country for June. I suggest that June is time for some action so that we can deal with this. The reason I mentioned the forestry agreements is because that is one of the most important ways that this Government and our provincial governments can attempt to implement some of the policies and the research that is needed to solve and deal with acid rain's impact on our forests.