

*Government Orders*

forestry-related legislation that we will see for some time. If it has taken five years for a bill that is comprised of 10-15 paragraphs, how much longer will we have to wait for a bill that really addresses many of the needs and concerns of forestry all across the country?

• (1630)

We have been joined by a number interest groups that support the call for this committee to travel; the Canadian Institute of Forestry, for one, and the International Woodworkers of America, have also made representations.

That is the general framework that I see for this bill and some of the discussions that we are going to have in the committee when this legislation gets there from this chamber.

But before that, if we go on to some of the specific issues in forestry that should define a bit what we are talking about in terms of the forests what they mean to our planet and to our country. We should, of course, refer to some of the figures about what forestry means to us in economic terms and also to touch on some of those issues that we have to deal with when we talk about forestry in an environmental sense.

We checked to see what would be a good definition of a forest. The Canadian International Development Agency, CIDA, provided a descriptive paragraph on forests. They were talking about forestry in a global sense, and when we talk about the definition of a forest I think that is how we have to think. There is an old phrase, as you probably know, Mr. Speaker, about "thinking globally and acting locally". Well, locally for us is our country, our provinces, and our ridings. But let me read this into the record, Mr. Speaker, because I think it is important to give us a sense of what we are dealing with. "Ranging across some 30 per cent of the planet's land surface forests have been described as the climax ecosystems of a green and flowering world. The most exuberant expressions of nature, forests perform protective, productive and regulative functions. They play a vital ecological role in the planetary recycling of oxygen, nitrogen and carbon. They influence temperature and rainfall. They act as enormous sponges, water and wind

erosion is protected. They maintain biological diversity and they actively contribute to economic development."

That shows just how critical our forests are, not just to us, but to the world. I think there is a new awareness of forestry. There is a short note in today's *Globe and Mail*, where it states that the former President of the United States thought that trees actually contributed to pollution. Now, I suppose, Mr. Speaker, the new President and his awareness of forestry gives us some hope in that there is an awareness at the highest level of our adjoining nation, the United States, of the importance of forestry.

What does it mean to us in the chamber today? Before we started this debate, there was a brief discussion about having our householders through which we communicate with our constituents printed on recycled paper. That is something that all members in this House would like to do.

Let us take a look at how else people read and hear about what we do. With the co-operation and the quick action on behalf of the *Hansard* staff this morning, Mr. Speaker, I asked just how many copies of today's speeches as printed in *Hansard* will get out to Canadians. We are looking at roughly 10,000 copies. I did a quick calculation. How many trees have to be cut down today so that our words in this chamber can be read by Canadians? My calculation, as we speak, is that some 35 trees will have to be cut down to ensure that today's English and French *Hansard* is printed. That means that our words should be economical and to the point. But there is also the hope that the words we say in this chamber today can help replant those forests and plant some additional trees for those wide areas of some of our provinces that need to be reforested. Let us think about that in our proceedings, about the 35 trees that will be used for today's *Hansard*.

Of course, that gets us into what are our forests: the products that they provide and the coverage they give. Half of the total land area of Canada is covered by forests; 79 per cent of the area within the 10 provinces; 60 per cent of forest land is productive, some 243.7 million hectares, by comparison to agricultural land of some 67.8 million hectares.