

Government Orders

The experience in other countries shows that such kind of management regimes I have outlined could produce much higher yields and much higher earnings for our industry. In fact, in some areas of the United States, and in Sweden and Scandinavian countries generally, well-managed commercial forests produce up to three times more the volume of fibre from a certain area of land.

I should point out here that in the United States and Sweden it is the practice to engage one professional forester for every 15,000 hectares of forest land while in Canada we have one for every 450,000 hectares of forest land. That points to yet another urgent necessity; the training of highly qualified people and the experts we will require to do the work.

This is something the opposition might like to keep in mind, particularly those people who always thought that all we have to do is throw money at a problem and it will go away. Even if we did have \$5 billion to do the work which perhaps needs to be done on the forests, we would not have the people who could direct this work properly. Money is not a good nutrient by itself. In fact, when the Liberals managed our money it was biodegradable but that didn't make it a nutrient for our forests.

In the manifesto which I published in 1983 entitled "A Green Ghetto" I promoted the concept of putting more emphasis on private management of small woodlots. I promoted the concept of community forests, and I hope that the new department, together with the provinces, can give impetus to that objective as well.

The fact is that it will take the combined efforts of private and public sectors, federal and provincial governments, universities and labour, the mobilization of a national thrust and a national commitment to meet the challenges of simultaneously increasing the annual allowable cut for our industry—and some say it can be doubled with intensive management—supplying more fibre for the industry so that they can meet the opportunities and challenges that offer themselves in the national market-places, regenerating the forests, accommodating new demands for multiple use, even setting aside pristine areas for wilderness preserves, and doing all this in an environmentally sound way.

Provinces, I can report today, are spending more. Nine of the ten provinces today spend more on silviculture and forest management than they take in as revenue from the forests. They need our help and I am here to commit our help to them.

In some parts of our country it will take some time for us to correct the sins that we have inflicted upon our forests in the past. There are some regions in the country where it is too late. In most of Canada, particularly in my part of British Columbia and the west generally, we have the good fortune of being able to exercise all of the options that are still available and cash in on all the exciting opportunities. But we also must exercise strong federal leadership, particularly in developing and implementing creative national strategies which sense new trends, respond to new standards, meet strong challenges and realize attractive opportunities. As we deal with these realities in keeping Canada healthy we must be conscious of a rapidly shrinking globe. Every 10 years 100 million new souls are added to the population base of the planet; that is a new Mexico, a new Bangladesh every year. All of these people will be putting their demands on the scarce resources that are available.

• (1550)

Our Prime Minister has emphasized that all our national policies and strategies should henceforth be built on the principles of sustainable development. If there is any sector which lends itself to sustainable development it is forestry. We can exercise world leadership with a policy framework designed to meet the requirements of our own generation without depriving future generations of the opportunity to meet theirs.

So, Sir, I invite my friends opposite, and I invite all Canadians, to join us in mounting the effort and the thrust which is required to meet all the objectives in Canadian forestry. And I ask the opposition to join me in giving this Bill passage, in correcting the sins of the past that led to the demise of a department in the past. To do that we will need a federal department of forestry which is described in this bill. Again I ask this House to give this legislation speedy passage.

Mr. Guy H. Arseneault (Restigouche—Chaleur): Mr. Speaker, the forestry minister told us that his new department will give the forest industry the cabinet clout it deserves. Not only does he believe that it will provide national leadership in the development and co-ordination of forest policies and programs, he actually thinks