

*Supply—Forestry*

vary in the different parts, in bringing together the forestry associations and the forest communities as well as the governments of the provinces, I think we constitute a unit through which you can seek joint solutions of common problems. Perhaps the greatest contribution that the federal Department of Forestry can make lies in the continuing development of this new department as a meeting place for the exchange of ideas on problems of mutual interest. Equally important, it may well serve as a clearing house for the flow of information that is necessary, not only for the well-being of forest resources but of other industries that are so dependent on these particular resources.

Having regard to the importance of forestry to the national economy and to the role that the federal Department of Forestry plays, I think that those of you who have had an opportunity to study the estimates will agree that, to say the least, they are modest. If anything, they are on the low side.

The current estimates, as you will see, total less than \$18 million, \$17.8 million to be exact, of which roughly \$16.5 million form the main estimates and only about \$1 million the supplementary estimates. This total is less than \$1 million—some \$900,000—higher than it was in 1962-63. It is less than \$7 million higher than 1960-61, the year in which the department was established. This is the year in which the department functioned for approximately five months. It is worthy of note, I think, that of the \$6.9 million which represents the increase over the first partial year of the department's operation, \$4.5 million has been allocated to federal-provincial forestry agreements. This leaves only \$2.4 million for administration, capital expenditures and an increase in research.

I see here some members of this house, who were members of parliament, when the Department of Forestry came into being. I see one hon. member opposite who played a very important part in bringing the new department into existence. As you will see from a reference to *Hansard*, the *raison d'être* for bringing the new department into existence was research. The significant thing is that although the department has been in existence now for roughly three years, the budget for research has been increased by less than \$1 million per annum. In contrast I refer to the debate which took place on July 11, 1960, when the hon. member for Qu'Appelle introduced the bill establishing the forestry department. In the speech introducing the bill, he expressed the hope—more than a hope, the decision—that within five years the research appropriation of the department would be doubled. In contrast

with that hope, when we are now approaching the end of the year, the increase is less than 15 per cent.

In citing these figures and in dealing with the estimates tonight I would ask the members of the committee to recall that these estimates were prepared by the first minister of forestry, the distinguished member for Victoria-Carleton. When I say that there has been this very modest growth, I am not in any way reflecting on my hon. friend the member for Victoria-Carleton. We have been friends for many years and I have a high regard for his abilities, and his good intentions. I want to express appreciation for what he did during the first year or so that he was in office. But his difficulties—and they were not circumstances which he could control—arose out of the so-called austerity program that was introduced just when the new department was getting going. There was a freeze and the department was not able to recruit the staff which was needed. My reason for mentioning the slow growth is because I want to emphasize to members of the committee the fact that the accomplishment has fallen far short of the hopes expressed by the hon. member for Qu'Appelle when he, in his capacity as minister of northern affairs and national resources, introduced the legislation which brought the department into existence.

If one examines the staff estimates of the department's research element, I am sure one would find that there is real cause for concern. In 1960-61 the research element of the department numbered 826 positions. This year the number is 943, an apparent increase of 117. But I would point out that 44 of these were transferred during the second year, 1961, from the Department of Agriculture. Therefore the real increase is 73, or less than 9 per cent. The research staff has certainly suffered a withering process during the intervening period. As a result, at the end of April or first of May this year the research element numbered less than 850 persons; and allowing for 44 transfers from the Department of Agriculture the adjusted figure of 804 is 3 per cent under the authorized establishment of 1960-61.

Happily, Mr. Chairman, I can record some progress in this area, because some weeks ago treasury board authorized recruitment up to 93 per cent of our current establishment, and the department is now working actively to fill the vacancies. We have had some encouraging responses and it is our confident expectation that within a few months the additional support which we need will be available.

Turning now, for a few brief introductory comments, to the votes themselves, vote No. 1