

IS \$500,000,000 A YEAR WORTH SAVING?

This is the Question to be Answered by the People of Canada

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IN the last analysis, adequate fire protection resolves itself down to the question of whether or not the people of this country wish to save their wood-using industries. Let us look into the service of these to the country. The value of the manufactured pulp and paper products is \$250,000,000 per annum. The various companies have invested in the business some \$375,000,000. They employ 33,000 men in the mills and in the forest, and they pay them each year \$40,000,000 in wages.

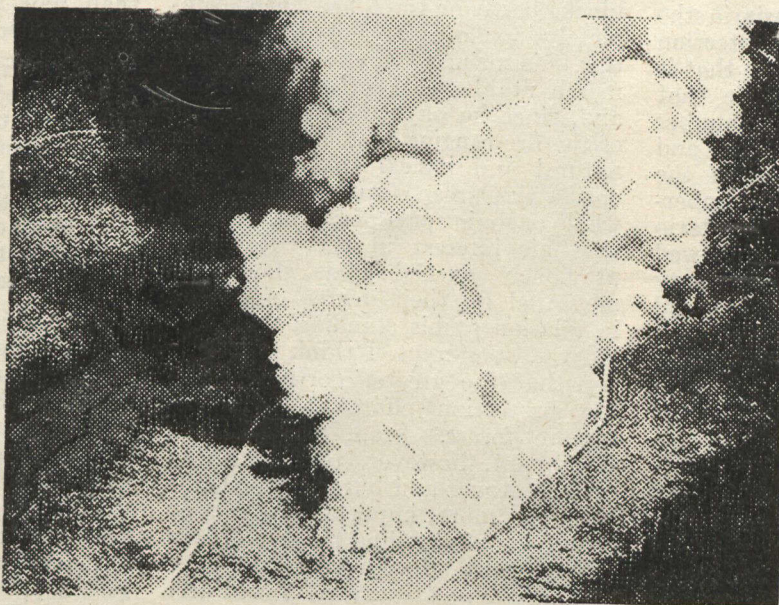
Isn't that business worth saving?

The value of lumber, lath and shingles produced in one year is \$150,000,000. Lumber means boards and deals, dimension stock—not the finished product, as in the case of paper. I can't find just how much is added to this value by the various minor wood-using industries. With reservations, I will say that the minor industries, which depend entirely upon wood, produce products to the value of \$60,000,000 annually. They have an invested capital of over \$50,000,000. They employ 13,000 people and pay annually in wages around \$14,000,000. Is it not worth some effort to keep these industries going?

To these should be added the industries that depend in essential part, but not entirely, upon forest products. These, such as the horse-drawn and motor-drawn vehicles, produce each year products valued at \$86,553,314. The capital invested totals over \$65,000,000. The employees number over 9,000, to whom are paid wages amounting to nearly \$12,000,000.

Going back to the lumber industry proper, we find that its invested capital reaches \$250,000,000. It employs 55,000 men, and gives them \$60,000,000 in wages annually. That business is worth saving, too, is it not?

There are more than 100,000 people in Canada at work converting the forest products into wealth in some form or other. They are chiefly heads of families or the bread winners of families, thus



they represent probably a half million people dependent upon the forest for a livelihood. Are they worth while in their work? Are they worth while to the country?

Must Invest in Protection

Let me emphasize that our great pulp and paper companies, the great lumber concerns will not exist many years longer unless there is more effective fire protection. In order to get more effective protection, the public must invest more money in it.

When we consider the area actually under license or pulpwood concession, the amount expended on it as a whole, averages less than one cent per acre per year. In other words, we spend less than a cent an acre a year as an insurance rate on forest lands whose supplies at the present day yields us products to the value of \$500,000,000 annually.

When we consider the total forest area of Canada capable of producing marketable materials and divide such area into the amount paid for fire protection, then we find we are investing less than one-fifth of one per cent per acre each year to insure the continuance in the future of the second largest wealth producing industry in the country. The amount invested in protecting the supply of our wood-using industries is entirely inadequate. If the people of Canada think it advisable to keep these industries going, they must pay more for forest protection than they are paying at present.

An Erroneous Attitude

A few years ago a government official in charge of the forest fire ranging in his province, in reply to a criticism of the efficiency of his force, made a statement to the newspapers, acknowledging that a certain fire had burned over several townships, but stating that no real damage had been done because no standing timber had been killed, since the townships had already been logged, and much of the area had been burned

