

*Supply—Forestry*

the department's particular attention, that is the reseeded of suitable woodland.

And here, I want to say a few words about my district—my constituency—because we are partly a farming area, but mostly a forest district. When we look at this expanse of land—where, 20 or 30 years ago, there were only forests, a hundred miles around, and where today there is only desert and waste land—we may wonder why it should be so. The answer is simple enough. People and governments without foresight failed to look after the reseeded of our forests. Whether the woods were razed by lumberjacks or by fire—and more particularly in the latter case—I would like the government to intervene and transform those wide plains again into forests which tomorrow will give food and work to our people.

Mr. Chairman, we are 30 years behind the times in the field of forestry. If, thirty years ago, we had taken the steps we are taking today, instead of having waste lands now where there used to be fine forests, we would have timber available and that product would play a role in our economy, that of supplying our paper mills. That goes to show that the seeding of land which now seems unproductive is of major importance for the forest industry.

Previous speakers have pointed out that something has been done through ARDA. That is a first step towards the recovery of our land because if ARDA is useful to agriculture, I think it should be used more extensively in the case of forests.

I should not want to imply that the federal government should impose its views on the provinces in the field of forestry. Far from it, but I feel that there should be closer co-operation and that seminars should be held, courses given and interprovincial conferences called more often to give a more efficient orientation to the seeding operations under ARDA. Since, as the hon. member for Kootenay West (Mr. Herridge) stated a while ago, costs are divided equally between the federal government and the provinces, I feel that the latter should take advantage of the offer made by Ottawa.

A few minutes ago, it was stated that the province of Quebec has a fine plan for the restoration and improvement of our forests which is already being put into practice. I must agree that the province has an excellent plan to that effect.

But when you visit the province of Quebec, you will notice that we will lag behind for a long time. This is the reason why, as I said earlier, the federal government should pursue its educational campaign, I do not mean its imperative action, but its educational action

[Mr. Gauthier.]

and this in order to accelerate this promotional work in the forestry field in every province, especially in the province of Quebec.

I am convinced that with proper co-operation the province of Quebec will know how to use one of its most important resources without leaving those large expanses of treeless lands to grow wild.

We are now supposed to log 30 year old stands, but to find thick stands, we have to go hundreds of miles north, because we have neglected reforestation.

I would like to point out another aspect of the question, that is, the squandering of our forest resources. Thirty years ago—I am going back 30 years, because I am a little bit younger than the hon. member for Kootenay West—I myself cut down trees in the forest while attending high school. It was my holiday exercise; and every year I spent two months in the forest cutting down trees. It is an excellent exercise; I would advise our young university students to try it for themselves, having improved their minds, they will soon find out that such an exercise strengthens muscles and steadies nerves.

However, I must point out that there is a drawback. If you work in the forest during the summer, beware of mosquitoes of all kinds; close your eyes, protect your hands and your face, otherwise, after a little while you will be bleeding from numerous bites.

As I was saying, 30 years ago I worked in the forest, and during my holiday period I became an apprentice lumberjack. I saw woodsmen, as they were then called, bring down the forest tree by tree; however, they were very careful to spare young shoots, and our foremen never tired warning us not to damage them. When we had cleared the way in given areas of the forest, the young saplings were untouched, ready to grow and to allow a new cutting in ten, 11, 12 or 13 years at the most.

When I look at the cutting methods of today, and compare them to the methods of 30 years ago, I feel that in days gone by, people did not cut a forest, they harvested it. If you went into the woods today, you would soon see for yourselves what I mean. I went back myself last summer, and I must confess that I was confronted with a terrifying sight. Modern machinery has played havoc. First of all, where you had 300 or 400 workers, you only have 75 today, because machines do everything, sweep away everything. For one spruce tree cut down, 25 are destroyed.

Government officials do not seem to be aware of that slaughter, either because they do not go themselves in the field to see the