PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS ¹

By W. A. E. PEPLER ²

This is our 47th Annual Meeting, i.e., it is the 47th national annual meeting of foresters in Canada. Actually, under our present charter we are only four years old.

Our meeting is being held under historic auspices. We are here in Saskatoon helping to celebrate the 50th Birthday of Saskatchewan. I would like to say to those who have so cordially invited us here that we are very happy to be sharing in the celebrations and, coming closer to home, we are proud to be sharing in Saskatchewan's pride in the accomplishments of its comparatively young forest service.

I find myself in an odd position, as a past president delivering a president's address. However, although our elections are in June, you as members, must have an accounting of the affairs of the Institute from the man who was President, and this annual meeting in October is the first opportunity for it.

I use the word an "accounting" advisedly because you placed certain responsibilities in my hands two years ago, and I must account to you for what I did with them.

Most of the activities of your Executive have been concerned with Institute affairs, i.e., internal affairs. We are still growing up as a profession, and we must continue for some time yet to look frequently at our organizational set-up, our committee procedures and other internal matters. The smoothness and efficiency with which the Institute operates within itself is the measure of its ability to serve its members in what I believe to be the main purposes for its existence, i.e., to advance its members in their knowledge of the science and practice of forestry and to support them in their constant endeavor to ensure confidence in the profession by maintaining a high standard of integrity in their daily work.

In the category of Institute Affairs the following matters have been given consideration and have been acted on, or otherwise, as noted. I am only going to make a brief reference to each item because I merely want to put them on the record at this time. We will be having a business meeting later and the Executive would welcome more detailed discussion.

STUDY OF MEMBERSHIP QUALIFICATIONS

Almost immediately following our adoption of a new set of bylaws four years ago, questions were raised concerning the membership qualifications. It was decided then that we should operate for a time to get the feel of the changes, but last year a special committee was appointed and, under the able chairmanship of Bernie Sisam, it has drafted an excellent report in which was recommended more liberal practice without any loss of the high standards envisaged when we made the change from wide open to closed membership four years ago.

¹The address of the President, C.I.F., made at the 1955 Annual Meeting held in Saskatoon, Sask., October, 1955.

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INSTITUTE MANUAL

We must be very grateful to Ken Fensom who has prepared a draft of a manual for the Institute. This manual will contain historical sections covering a condensed review of the history of the Society, lists of its officers, annual meetings, and membership 1908 to 1954, the bylaws, the code of ethics, instructional sections covering the method of applying for membership, procedures at annual meetings, resolutions, preparations of manuscripts for the *Forestry Chronicle* and others (not too numerous to mention but too comprehensive to grasp). It is really a monumental work and, added to the many, varied services that Ken Fensom has performed for the Institute, makes our indebtedness to him very great indeed.

The manual will be of great help to all members in their understanding of their Institute. It will be a must as a reference book and, along with a compilation of the unwritten bylaws or practices and procedures which have been accepted over the years, will save each new Executive hours of research and prevent each new Board of Directors from deciding what has already been decided. Silly isn't it, but a volunteer Board, meeting only once a year and with new faces every year, has a good chance of making a decision exactly opposite to one it made two years previously, simply because it doesn't know the thinking that was behind the original decision.

COMMITTEE PROCEDURE REPORT

I call it the Committee Procedure Report because, although I used its official name frequently over a period of a year or more, I never liked the title Committee on Committees. It had the same connotation as the War to end all Wars. This report was made to the Board at its last annual meeting and has since gone to all Sections and Committees, and with minor revisions resulting from the comments received, will be published in the coming year. It will, I hope, serve as a manual for committee procedure, help committees to perform their functions usefully and provide for automatic review of their organization. As stated in the report itself, it is intended to serve as a blue print for future committee appointments, functions and activities.

CHANGE IN SECRETARY-TREASURER

After six years of valuable and untinted service to the Institute in his own time, Dave Love resigned as Secretary-Treasurer. Jim Coats has been appointed in his place, and I am sure that Jim is going to make his own solid contribution to the Institute's welfare. In making this change we have taken a step towards a full-time Secretary-Manager in that we recognize that the expanded duties of Secretary can no longer be performed by someone who has another full-time job.

Jim is working part-time for two organizations, the Institute and the Canadian Forestry Association of Ontario. Our agreement with him and with the Forestry Association is that at the end of a period of four or five years the Institute will be taking up all his time and paying him his full salary. We are very grateful to the C. F. A. of Ontario for working with us and facilitating suitable financial arrangements.

I am particularly happy to announce to you that, at its meeting yesterday, your Board of Directors reappointed Mr. Coats for another year providing

for an increase in the allotment of his time to the Institute and taking over a proportionate share of his salary. This step is a concrete expression of our interest to carry out the four-year plan I mentioned .

COMMITTEE ON SECTION BY-LAWS

The Institute Bylaws include the following one—"A Section may adopt such rules and regulations for its own government as are not inconsistent with the bylaws of the corporation". Over the years Sections have been formed and adopted bylaws for themselves. Some have made no change when the Corporation Bylaws have been amended, and others have made changes from time to time without reference to the Corporation Bylaws. Such things may be done many times and no harm arise, but we have had cases of a gradual spread in a particular Section away from the national procedure and a critical situation arising. To avoid this we have appointed a committee which is reviewing all Section Bylaws and we expect to set up procedures that will, as automatically as possible, keep us all on a straight track. This is going to be more important in the future than it has been in the past because as we grow in stature, and as we take more part in external affairs, we must have workable procedures that will ensure retention of national professional opinions without hamstringing sectional professional opinions or smothering them in red tape.

Other Institute Affairs which have been dealt with which are perhaps not as generally important but which are of importance to some of us, are:

- (1) Arrangements for the collection of section dues by Head Office.
- (2) Reduction of dues for retired members.
- (3) Certificates and Pins.
- (4) Improvements in our official organ *The Forestry Chronicle*—and—
- (5) Committee appointments.

On this last item I want to apologize to those concerned for delays which have occurred for one or other reason; these delays have resulted in officers not being relieved of their charge when they should have been, and in other cases, lags in Committee work. I must accept the blame for these, and I ask your forgiveness.

One other item of Institute business I want to mention is the make-up of the Board of Directors. At the General Meeting on Friday, you will be asked to approve a Bylaw amendment increasing the permissible number of Directors so that we can have representation from all Sections. We look forward to the continued formation of new sections and we would eventually arrive at the point where our Board was too large and unwieldy to handle the business of the Institute efficiently. At its meeting last year the Board gave consideration to the question, and the proposed amendment has been prepared to meet the situation temporarily. At the same time the Board decided that a thorough study should be made of our administrative set-up and of methods of providing for a smaller executive body which could have more frequent contacts and thus handle our affairs more efficiently. I am pleased to announce to you that Kenneth Fensom has consented to head up the Committee that will be charged with this duty.

Now for a few minutes I want to deal with external affairs,—items dealt with which concern those outside our membership. It is difficult to know which

of these to mention first, but I will get around that problem by saying to you that the order of mention is not necessarily the order of importance.

C.I.F. GOLD MEDAL

The C.I.F. Gold Medal Awards were distributed for the first time in 1954 and they have been very well received indeed. The occasions of their presentation in 1954 and again in 1955 have been, in most cases, important university or forestry events, and they have served well their purpose of recognizing outstanding achievement at the student level. But they have done more than that. They have also served to improve the relationships between the Institute and the Universities and between the Institute and the students themselves.

FOREST RESEARCH SURVEY

Two jobs of work have been done for our sister association, the Society of American Foresters. They made a survey of forest research in North America, a sequel to one made 25 years ago. A team of C.I.F. members edited, amended and added to the Chapter on Forest Research in Canada. The American Society project was an ambitious one. The result is excellent. I want to throw out the suggestion that perhaps we should give some thought to preparing a full statement of Forest Research in Canada and not be content with a Chapter prepared by our neighbors.

A committee of the Institute prepared a report on Forest Cover Types on a request for assistance from the American Society. The report by A. S. L. Barnes was a valuable addition to our forestry literature. It was presented to the General Meeting in Victoria.

NATIONAL RESOURCES CONFERENCE

You are all familiar with the 1954 Renewable Resources Conference in Ottawa and the presentation at that time of our recommendation to the Federal Minister that the Canada Forestry Act be implemented further for the purpose of expediting effective fire protection.

We have had reports from five sections with regard to their follow-up of this recommendation, along the lines of the resolution passed at the 1954 Annual Meeting:

You will recall that the resolution called upon each Section to consider the desirability of contacting the local member of the Federal & Provincial legislatures, calling to their attention the national need for concentrated action to improve the standard of forest protection and of further implementation of the Canada Forestry Act to achieve this object. It is quite evident from the sad experience in Ontario and Quebec this year that the protection of the forests falls far short of being effective, and I urge the sections to review the situation again and take action where it is required.

You are all aware also that the Canadian Forestry Association, the public voice of forestry, is organizing a National Forestry Conference for 1956, and that they have invited us to co-sponsor this conference with the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, the Engineering Institute of Canada and themselves. The holding of such a conference was a unanimous recommendation of the 1954 Resources Conference. In fact a forestry get-together was conceived as one of a series planned when the general conference was organized.

Institute activity in this project has been lukewarm up till now. To me it seems ridiculous that a national forestry Conference should be organized by any organization without its having the whole-hearted support of the national body of professional foresters.

There is still some misunderstanding of the objectives of the conference. While I have spoken of these on former occasions, I feel it is worthwhile to repeat them again.

At all times we must keep in mind that the main purpose of this conference is to increase the information available to the Canadian Public on the perpetuation and management of Canada's forests, and to increase the spread of this information to the public. A conference such as is contemplated, and such as is possible, cannot decide what policies will be adopted or what management methods will be employed. These things are decided by owners—the owners in this case are the Provincial Government, farmers and other woodlot owners, corporations, and the Federal Government. All these owners will make the best decisions when the general public of Canada is best informed. When the voter, the farmer or businessman, the shareholder and the federal voter are well advised as to what is best and indicate their support, the owners, particularly in the case of governments and corporations, can make the decisions that we think ought to be made.

To sum it up, I agree with Josh Billings who is credited with this remark; "It is not that people are ignorant; it is that they know so much that ain't so." That is why I believe the Institute should give the Canadian Forestry Association full support in a proposed National Forestry Conference in 1956.

There are also some projects that have been on the cards which have not been done. A revision of the Statement of Forest Policy was authorized at the 1953 Annual Meeting. Nothing has been done on it. I accept full responsibility for the default, or perhaps I should say delay, as I believe it will be done.

It is not a big project, but it is an exceedingly important one, particularly if it is handled the way the original Forest Policy Statement was handled, i.e., discussion first by a large committee, compilation of revisions by a small committee, active study by each section in draft form, and final editing by the small committee. This procedure takes time as we all know, but it is absolute guarantee that every member has a crack at each item whatever it is, and also that the result is a truly national expression.

Ken Fensom, as author of the Manual now in draft form, has suggested that it be processed in this way, and I am in full agreement.

That covers the highlights of my tenure of office. Some progress has been made, but I am sincere when I say I have been dissatisfied because much more has not been done.

Before I close I would like to leave three suggestions with you:

First, at the last Annual Meeting, the retiring Secretary-Treasurer, Dave Love, told us of a critical look he had taken at our Institute. Dave put a great deal of thought into it, and while I do not agree with his conclusions, I believe it would be a healthy thing for the Institute if each section devoted a meeting or a session to a discussion of his remarks.

Second, there is in our files a very complete appreciation of a research project to survey Forestry Education at both University and Ranger School

levels. A considerable effort was made to obtain funds for this project without success. I suggest that the Institute have another look at the appreciation with the thought that we either make another try for funds or perhaps distribute the effort within the Institute to see if something might be done.

Third, the suggestion has been made that a survey of forestry practice in each region of Canada be made. This has not got much farther than the suggestion stage yet, but I think it might be a worth-while project for the Institute to tackle, the work to be done by individual members in each section.

Gentlemen, it has been a very great pleasure to serve as your President. I am grateful to you for having given me the opportunity to do so. I turn over the job with mixed feelings of regret and relief. I turn it over to Bernie Sisam with the utmost confidence that Institute affairs both internal and external will be handled to bring honor to our profession.

I close by saying a very sincere thank you to him, to Jim Coats, to Ken Fensom, and the Directors who have all been of immeasurable help to me. Thank you.