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THE GOOD OLD DAYS Well, they had some hard times too.... But when the crops failed or the fishery was bad or the mine closed, they could always count on the woods for some cash. Ship? building, lumbering and other for? estry ventures helped build a struggling pioneer province into the society we know today. Yet all this took a lot out of our forests. When the early lum? bermen cut those big pine and spruce and birch they were cash? ing the accumulated dividends of centuries of slow growth which they had done nothing to produce. By the early 1900's when this pho? tograph was taken in central Nova Scotia, the best logs were a long ways from home. Woodsmen lived most of the winter in camp, often getting home only for Christmas. While some camp foremen and wood- lot owners were farsighted enough to harvest with an eye to the fu? ture, most did not. Then, as now, the marketplace usually had the last word. Besides, little was known of silviculture. Cutting practices inadvertently encour? aged smaller, faster-growing trees. Widespread forest fires and farm abandonment speeded this process, abetted in some areas by insect attack. That is our legacy. Because the forest helped sustain our fore? bears and must sustain us too, it deserves our special care and con? cern. It's time to put something back. Since 1977 some 3,000 woodlot own? ers and many large landowners have cost-shared with government the job of forest rehabilitation. Renewing old boundary lines. Building access roads. Bulldozing fire ponds, thinning, salvaging, planting. Also under the Canada/Nova Scotia Subsidiary Agreement for Forestry, the province's reforestation capa? bility has been raised close to the long-recommended 28 million seedlings a year. The nursery at Strathlorne is an important part of that program. So is the Tree Breeding Centre near Truro. Such investments not only provide jobs and wood now; they're help? ing to safeguard a resource which today supports four pulp and pa? per mills, one hardboard mill and some 350 sawmills. Those plants, well dispersed through the prov? ince, account for some 8,000 dir? ect jobs and 16,000 more in relat? ed employment. Apart from such in? volvement, considerable value is generated by a vigorous Christmas tree industry, a developing maple products industry and the sale of fuelwood, not to mention self-em? ployment on farm woodlots. Alto? gether, forestry earns over \$600 million a year for Nova Scotians. In terms of export it outranks farming, fishing and mining. There are serious challenges fac? ing forestry, but with good sense and a good will we can work them out. The forest is our greatest renewable resource. If we look af? ter it, it'll look after us. Just like in the good old days--only better. Nova Scotia 'r" Department of "V' Lands and Forests Hon. Ken Streach Minister