

*Government Organization Act, 1970*

fishing sets up a chain reaction for the depletion of one species through uncontrolled fishing efforts brings increasing pressure on other species, and the situation has now reached the stage where, if the present trend continues, the incomes of large numbers of inshore and deep sea fishermen, as well as the jobs of thousands of shore workers, will be seriously threatened. I believe that unless positive and firm action is taken to manage our fishing resources on the continental shelf off Canada's east coast we can expect disastrous effects on our over-all industry in the not too distant future.

These are all matters of great concern to us in the Atlantic provinces and they should be the subject of strong representation by Canada's Minister of Fisheries and Forestry when he attends the next law of the sea conference, which unfortunately will not be held until 1972. A lot of fish will come over the rails of foreign fleets by that time, and since we will no longer have a minister of fisheries, a minister known by that name, my concern and my fear is that the international law of the sea conference will become bogged down in discussions about seabed mineral exploration and pollution with the real and thorny question of fisheries conservation pushed far, far into the background.

I sincerely hope this will not be the case, but if we do not hold the fishing industry in high esteem as a nation by retaining a fisheries minister, how can we expect other nations seriously to consider our claims to the fisheries resources off our coasts? With the abolition of the Ministry of Fisheries and Forestry, we will also lose a certain amount of advertising value which accrued to the fishing industry as a result of having a fisheries minister. It was always nice to visit an exhibition and to see a display put on by the Department of Fisheries and Forestry. This was helpful in the over-all marketing of fish right across Canada as well as in other parts of the world.

In my opinion, we must utilize every opportunity to impress upon other nations, especially those nations depleting our fisheries resources, the importance of this industry to Canada. I do not know the present plans of our Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) but I would suggest and urge that he include over-fishing in the north Atlantic as an agenda item for discussion when he visits Moscow in the spring. Important as pollution is, there are many aspects of the fishing industry which require study in depth and which must not be overshadowed or overlooked.

One of the essential tasks of the minister of the department of environment will be to solicit the co-operation of provincial governments in maintaining uniform standards for clean water and air. He will have the new and massive Canada Water Act in his legal arsenal and not the least of his problems will be to prepare some sort of priority list for action. In my view, it is doubtful whether this nation can afford all the pollution controls that it should have in the next several years. Therefore, a distinction will have to be made between what is absolutely essential and what is merely desirable.

[Mr. Crouse.]

I cannot help but wonder, for example, which hat the minister will wear if he pursues his proposal that Georgia Strait be reserved as an underwater national park. This would mean that pulp mills and fishing towns currently using the strait would have to clean up their operations considerably, something the provincial government has been unable to make them do. Obviously the new minister of environment is going to be a very busy man.

Turning from the west coast to the east coast, I cannot help but wonder, since technical surveys of energy, including energy developed from water, now come under the department of environment, what stand the minister will take on developing Fundy tidal power in Minas Basin for the benefit of all Atlantic Canada. Under clause 11 the minister may co-operate with provincial governments or agencies on programs enhancing environmental quality, and I know of no program in Canada that would do more to improve the environment of Atlantic Canada than the development of Fundy tidal power.

This development would provide energy without depleting a non-renewable resource; and if it were built from a point on Cape Split across Minas Basin to Cape Sharp near Parrsboro, would provide a valuable revenue-producing, shorter transportation link between the south shore of Nova Scotia, the Annapolis Valley and the markets of central Canada. It would provide power without polluting the air for as long as the tides rise and fall—and that will be a long time, Mr. Speaker—while providing much needed employment and industrial expansion in Atlantic Canada, where it is sorely needed at the present time. Obviously, the question to be decided in the very near future is not whether tidal power can compete economically, but whether any alternative to tidal power can be developed to compete with its freedom from any form of environmental pollution. I believe this project should be given top priority. I believe it deserves to be Canada's number one development project at this point in time. However, I wonder what stand the minister of environment will take on this matter, for this is only one of the many new problems he faces which must be resolved.

• (4:00 p.m.)

In my opinion, the minister designate takes his duties seriously but it had been presumed, up to this point, that the portfolio of Fisheries and Forestry was a full time job. Now, if this is so I can only conclude that the minister designate for this new conglomerate will be bogged down and overburdened, so something is going to suffer. Will it be pollution control or fisheries and forestry?

Let us face facts. With a department of such magnitude ministerial responsibility is no longer possible, because of the sheer amount of work. In addition to accounting for the activities of the department, the minister must act as parliamentary spokesman for the numerous boards, commissions and agencies associated