

Proceedings on Adjournment Motion

communications. Or is the Post Office Department to become a Crown corporation, to disappear as a government department, and is the minister from Longueuil merely conducting a holding operation? If this is the case and he is merely conducting a holding operation, I think it is too bad because neither he nor the department deserve such an ignoble end.

I think that if the minister from Longueuil would read the speeches of the Minister of Communications and his strictures upon his predecessors, including the minister from Longueuil, he might be extremely well equipped to take on the long-harrassed department. With the ability he professes to have, and which I believe he has, he may make great improvements. I hope the status of the minister and the department will be made clear as soon as possible so that the remedial operation may soon be undertaken by the minister from Longueuil. In his earnest efforts and heavy task I wish him well.

Mr. Barney Danson (Parliamentary Secretary to Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, it is with particular respect that I make my maiden speech in this role—apart from a dramatic performance the other day in the question period—to reply on behalf of my minister to the hon. member for Hillsborough (Mr. Macquarrie) whom we all regard so highly.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): That is a good beginning.

An hon. Member: Keep it up; you are doing fine.

Mr. Danson: The Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) himself, when the question arose, answered the hon. member adequately in the House. It is true that the portfolio of the Minister of Communications and the Postmaster General is still a united portfolio. But in the speech from the Throne and in the Prime Minister's reply to the hon. member on October 9, which is recorded on page 19 of *Hansard* of that day, the Prime Minister said:

... we did announce yesterday through the mouth of the Governor General that we should be asking the House to approve a minister of state system, and it would be my intention to ensure that my hon. friend from Longueuil shall at that time be a minister of state in charge of the Post Office.

I think it is agreed by all members of the House that he is an excellent one. The ministers without portfolio have been assigned rather imaginatively by this government because they have not been locked into inflexible positions. Perhaps this degree of flexibility is unknown or inconceivable to some hon. members opposite, but it reflects the flexibility and imagination of this government.

As I indicated legislation will be introduced, as I believe the Prime Minister indicated, at the first opportunity and, hopefully, before the end of this year.

Of course, this is subject to urgencies that might arise, and we hope we will not have any more of the type we are now experiencing. It is also, of course, subject to the co-operation of hon. members in all parties in the House. However, I do not think we need have any real concern

[Mr. Macquarrie.]

about that matter because following the Prime Minister's comment in the House on October 9 which he ended by saying: "I hope the opposition will co-operate with us in expediting this arrangement", the hon. member for Prince Edward-Hastings (Mr. Hees) said: "Don't you worry about us". So I suggest we have nothing to worry about, and I thank the hon. member for Hillsborough for raising this matter.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): You have learned the lingo awfully fast.

AGRICULTURE—PESTICIDES—DDD—REASON FOR ONE-YEAR EXTENSION ON USE—NOTIFICATION OF CHANGES

Mr. John L. Skoberg (Moose Jaw): Mr. Speaker, on October 13 a question was asked with regard to the extension of time given to the pesticide DDD. I think in *Hansard* it appears as "DDT." The relation between the two chemicals could be considered to be one of sister to brother or brother to sister, but the pesticide in question is DDD and I hope that whoever answers my question has that in mind.

The press release was printed on October 10 in the *Ottawa Citizen*. It contained the first information we had obtained that the government intended to extend the period for the use of DDD by one year, to January 1, 1972. At that time it was pointed out that in the United States there had been an investigation in 1969 and a decision that these pesticides should be eliminated within two years, for public health reasons.

The Canadian Department of Agriculture put out a news release on April 5, 1968, which set what they considered to be the national example for the use of DDD. It was pointed out that science did not yet know enough about the properties of this poison to allow its regular use, and the hope was expressed in the news release that a new and less dangerous chemical could be found. This indicated that the officials of the department were well aware in 1968 of the dangers of DDD which they themselves were using.

I suggest that civil servants cannot be blamed in so far as the use of DDD is concerned because, after all, they take orders from the government and sometimes the government does not know the hows and the whys of pollution problems and does not take the advice of the civil servants. It has been proven, also, that the use of DDD has resulted in the killing of water birds which had eaten fish contaminated by DDD.

• (10:10 p.m.)

It has also been proven that in many cases governments know the harm that can result from the uncontrolled use of poisons like DDD, and not only do not condemn them but the public is left completely unaware of the danger. This is one of the reasons the question was asked at that time. Why was the public not made aware of the situation, and why was advice not given by the government? It is the government's duty to let the people know the dangers of all pesticides, including