

Private Members' Business

With regard to the name itself I will give a brief explanation about that. In French the name is already Forest Canada and we want to make sure the translation is proper.

To give you some background on that and to my colleagues who are here today, we have support for this bill. Members from all parties have supported it. The minister responsible for forestry is supporting the bill. We hope after the bill passes that it will be Minister of Forest. The parliamentary secretary is supporting it.

The bill went to committee. At that time, the committee members reviewed the bill clause by clause. There were some amendments made proposed by the parliamentary secretary and myself in discussion. Those were accepted by the committee and the bill has been reported back to the House.

I do not want to prolong the debate here today. The idea here is to pass it at third reading, get it out of the House and go to the next step.

The only thing I would like to say is I would ask the parliamentary secretary who is going to make a few comments a little later to possibly explain the reasons behind the amendments.

[Translation]

Perhaps we will get an explanation of those reasons. I would also like to thank the minister for his support.

[English]

I would like to mention the members who were involved here, not by name, but to say the minister has supported the bill from the beginning, the parliamentary secretary and my colleagues from all parties in the House. I hope they continue to support that. I thank them personally.

[Translation]

Mr. Michel Champagne (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Forestry): Mr. Speaker, I also rise today to support passage of this bill, tabled by my colleague from Restigouche—Chaleur.

Of course, some will think that this is a minor change, but in fact, it has deep significance, because the Department of Forestry is a full-fledged department of government that has been established and Canadians have high

expectations of it. It is true that there was some discrepancy between the meaning of the English and French names of the department. The hon. member for Restigouche—Chaleur talked about it to the minister, the committee, the Official Opposition and of course the New Democratic Party and I think that hon. members agreed to make the necessary changes.

The Department of Forestry is growing rapidly. We see the increasing role that forests play, both in Canada and internationally. The recent summit in Rio was living proof of what I am saying.

We agreed on this bill in a non-partisan way, in a spirit of consensus, but as the hon. member for Restigouche—Chaleur pointed out, there were some minor technical problems with some amendments. We wanted the change of name from “Department of Forestry” to “Department of Forests” to be gradual and not expensive for the department in changing its stationery and so on.

In answer to my colleague's question, the two proposed amendments can be summarized thus: first, as I mentioned, to ensure a transfer from “Department of Forestry” to “Department of Forests” in terms of identifiable costs within the department.

The purpose of the second amendment, is to ensure that wherever the words “Department of Forests” will be used, it will be done. These minor technical amendments in no way affect the non-partisan spirit and purpose of the bill. That is why, on behalf of the minister and my colleagues, we are pleased to support such a bill.

[English]

Mr. Dennis Mills (Broadview—Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, I am going to make only a short remark to the House and our constituents because people looking in may not understand the importance of making a name change like this.

It is important for Canadians to know that my colleague from Restigouche, ever since he came to this House, has had a very tight focus on the area relating to the forests of our nation. He was the member of Parliament who had the definition of sustainable development put right into the interpretive section of Bill C-29, which went through the House.