

Government Organization Act, 1970

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Richard): Is it the committee's wish to revert to clause 2?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

On clause 2—*Short title.*

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Richard): Is the committee ready for the question?

Mr. Peddle: Mr. Chairman, I do not want to be accused of perpetrating or furthering a filibuster—

An hon. Member: You used the word.

Mr. Peddle:—but there are a few remarks I would like to make before this bill passes into eternity. First, I notice the list of the various ministers of the various departments. It is significant that it contains a Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources.

Mr. Drury: Order.

Mr. Peddle: I am speaking very much to the amendment, and I will link this up, as the lawyers say. There is also a Minister of Fisheries and Forestry and a Minister of Agriculture. Here are represented three of our great primary industries. What would be the reaction of hon. members who represent agricultural areas if the Department of Agriculture were to be renamed the department of the environment? The same question applies to members who represent great mining areas if that minister became minister of the environment.

I must support the amendment of my colleague from St. John's East, but I would like to go even further. It would create the department of environment and fisheries, but that would take away from another great segment of our economy, the forestry industry. Hon. members may ask what is in a name, and I think of Shakespeare, who said, a rose by any other name would smell as sweet. But that is poetic nonsense in relation to this situation. There is a lot in a name. People on Madison Avenue spend millions of dollars trying to come up with names that will be acceptable and appealing to the public.

When the Minister of Fisheries and Forestry becomes the minister of the environment he will be known to a lot of people in Canada as the minister of pollution, or the minister of pollution control. I am not trying to be funny, but I do not want to see our great fishing industry on both the Atlantic and Pacific coasts linked directly with a department of pollution. I know that pollution control is essential to the survival of our fisheries, but I cannot agree to linking our fisheries with pollution. It has also been suggested that the name be the department of environment, fisheries and forestry, or in short EFF, and that would be the first three letters of effluent.

For the first time in many years, the department of fisheries has gained great respect not only in my province but in all provinces that have a fishing industry. I travel quite a bit in my province and I know that finally the people are beginning to have a respect for the depart-

[Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands).]

ment. But I point out that there are thousands of men engaged in the fishing industry, and I am not reflecting on them in any way, who do not even know the meaning of the word "environment". Unless the minister can come up with some solid, sensible reasons, supporting the proposed name dreamt up by somebody in a back office, I do not want to jeopardize our valuable fishing industry by having it directly linked with a department that has the responsibility for dealing with pollution.

To suggest that the same department of government which deals with air pollution in the cities of Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver should have control over the fishery in Placentia Bay, or any other fishery on the Atlantic or Pacific coasts, does not make much sense. In my own riding I have mines, a little agriculture, and a good deal of the fishing industry. There is also some forestry. These basic, primary industries fully merit continuation of recognition in the name of the department that deals with them. I think, whether we like it or not, if the bill goes through as it is, it will dilute the effectiveness of this department and the reputation that it has gained. So, the minimum that I could possibly accept is my colleague's amendment asking for the name to be changed to the department of the environment and fisheries.

• (5:30 p.m.)

I am not overly concerned about the forestry part of it. Although that is a very great responsibility, I think that not too long ago the minister assumed responsibility for forestry matters. Before that, I think that the department was known simply as the department of fisheries. Now, in one fell swoop, the name is to be changed to the department of the environment. That name will be completely without meaning for thousands and thousands of Canadians who are engaged in the fishing industry. I do not see any necessity for it, Mr. Chairman. If there is to be a change in the name, the new name ought to reflect the department's concern with the fishing industry.

I am concerned about what will happen if we just adopt this blanket name, "the department of the environment". Let us consider what might happen if something similar were to be done with the department of agriculture. It might not be so important with respect to the department dealing with mines. We must remember that when we deal with fisheries and agriculture, we are dealing with food products. I do not think I need to remind hon. members how sensitive and how "finicky" people are in their choice of these products. I do not think I need to go into that matter at all. We accept the idea that one of the main functions of the department of the environment will be the controlling of pollution. I am very much afraid that the adoption of the new name, as contained in the bill, will in some way be reflected in our markets for this food product, fish. I will say this: I much prefer the present name of the department. I am not being too conservative when I say that there is no reason for not retaining the name "Department of Fisheries and Forestry". It is a good name and the department has a good reputation in Canada and internationally.