

Clean Air Act

legislative program in a much better fashion, so that we could have been given the opportunity to criticize this or any other type of legislation objectively.

Another thing to which I object is that, according to the cover of Bill C-224, the minister who introduced the bill was the Minister of Fisheries and Forestry (Mr. Davis). Inside the bill, however, we find that "the minister" means the minister of the environment. There is no such man as the minister of the environment. I almost raised this as a point of order at the beginning of the debate, but I did not do so because I suspected that Mr. Speaker had a look at the bill and, therefore, I thought I might be wasting the time of the House. But I wish to point out, if only for my own satisfaction, that the minister of the environment has not yet been created. The government organization bill has not yet been passed. This points out the lack of planning of this government with respect to its legislative program.

There was a public relations announcement with respect to the establishment of the new department in which it was mentioned that the minister of the environment would be introducing the clean air bill. However, there is no such thing as the department of the environment at present. Perhaps the time to change the wording will be when the bill is before the committee, but I point this out merely to show that the minister takes everything for granted. The government takes it for granted that the government organization bill will be passed. The government and the Minister are so sure they are not going to accept any amendments that they are able to say, "Even though the department is not established as yet, we will mention it in this bill". At this moment the department of the environment is not established. If it is not, then the government has no right to tell us that it will not accept any amendments with respect to the government organization bill, and it has no right to include the name of the new department in this bill.

● (12:30 p.m.)

Mr. Pepin: Today you are against planning, another day you say, "They don't plan." You don't know where you are going.

Mr. Comeau: You are absolutely right, Mr. Minister, when you say you don't plan. A member only needs to look at the Order Paper to see what is there. There may be ten pieces of legislation that have to be introduced. This is one that has been coming for a long time. It just points out the arrogance of the government and the contempt it has for Parliament. Ministers don't give a darn about debate on the government organization bill. They say, "It is going to pass. If it passes next year that will be all right, but we are not going to accept any amendments."

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is the minister rising on a point of order?

Mr. Davis: May I ask the hon. member a question. Is he aware of the fact that if the government organization

bill does not pass, or if it has not passed in time, it will be imperative to change the name to "Fisheries and Forestry"? This presumably would be done in the standing committee, and I assume the member would have an opportunity to attend that committee and discuss every clause in the bill.

Mr. Comeau: But that is what I was saying. We hope the members of the committee will have an opportunity to change the name. That is why I did not raise a point of order at the outset. But I know very well, as do other hon. members, that the government will not change it anyway.

Mr. Davis: But it will have to.

Mr. Comeau: That is the way it operates. But do we have any assurance that this bill will not be completed before the reorganization bill is passed? The way the organization bill is moving at the moment it does not look as though it will get an easy third reading.

However, Mr. Speaker, this bill incorporates seven main ideas. It proposes to establish, operate and maintain a system of air pollution monitoring stations throughout Canada. As I understand it, data obtained from these monitoring stations would be compiled and published on a regular basis. At present there are 25 monitoring stations across the country covering all provinces except Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island. What will happen with respect to those two provinces? There is nothing in the bill which says that additional stations will be built in them.

The minister dealt at length with the question of national standards, and started off by saying that the word "national" appears in several places throughout the legislation. It is true that it does, but what does it say? The bill gives authority to set national air quality objectives, not standards, and to set national emission standards where there is significant danger to health, or where international agreements on air pollution control are involved. It also gives authority to set national guidelines. So, the word "national" appears many times but there seems to be confusion, and there certainly is confusion in my mind. Are there real national standards, or what is all this talk about guidelines and objectives?

As I understand the bill, national emission standards may be set if emissions constitute a significant danger to human health or violate international agreements into which Canada has entered. I shall deal with the problem of international agreements later. Not long ago an IJC report was filed dealing with this matter. These standards will specify the amount of any pollutant allowed from any stationary source or coming from any federal premises.

As I understand it the federal government may also publish national emission guidelines, and these will be different from standards because they will be enforced through persuasion rather than by law. As I understand it, guidelines will be used in those provinces which do not conclude special agreements with Ottawa. These are