

Government Organization Act, 1970

Mr. Forrestall: Mr. Chairman, may I continue for a minute?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Drury: Mr. Chairman, I think we all agree to the minute the hon. member is requesting.

The Chairman: Does the committee give its unanimous consent?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Forrestall: Mr. Chairman, I conclude by saying that although it would be lovely if the Maritime provinces could undertake this project on their own, I do not think they can do it. Some complain that the Maritime provinces are given too much by way of subsidies and that the rest of the country does not wish to carry the burden. I am afraid that we shall have to continue accepting assistance, even though we may not like it, in the absence of maritime marketing regions sufficiently large to attract and support secondary manufacturing. In the absence of that, we shall need some continuing form of help. We shall need such assistance, for instance until we get on with the job of developing projects like the Minas Basin project and until we realize our investment in the exploration for oil deposits off the coast of Nova Scotia.

Not until we obtain benefits from investments in such projects can we expect to get out from under in the Maritimes. Nova Scotia has no hinterland. By the same token neither has Prince Edward Island, and will not have unless my hon. friend from Hillsborough can convince Joey Smallwood that Newfoundland should unite with Prince Edward Island. That would give the island province a hinterland. The hinterland of Nova Scotia, so to speak, is the ocean and the vast resources of the ocean floor and continental shelf. Of course, not until these areas have been developed will we realize the benefits of these resources. Not until then will we obtain the full benefit of the hinterland that is the sea. Until that happens, the rest of the country will need to help us in transportation and other fields.

I say in closing that the Bay of Fundy development could be the greatest single engineering project ever undertaken in North America. Its size staggers the imagination and fires some people with enthusiasm. That type of project would get Nova Scotia going and get New Brunswick going. The spin-off effects would be felt in Prince Edward Island. Prince Edward Island would look much more attractive from the viewpoint of Newfoundland. In short, the lot of the Atlantic provinces would be improved.

The Chairman: Shall clause 8 carry?

Mr. Douglas: Mr. Chairman, I thought the understanding was that we would have an opportunity, while discussing this clause, to discuss the powers that are to be given to the minister and that the minister would make a statement. We had hoped that he would do so on Friday, but I suppose we took too much time and he was unable to make the statement. I think he should make the state-

[The Chairman.]

ment now, while we are discussing this particular clause. That should be done before we pass this clause.

Mr. Greene: Mr. Chairman, that, I thought, was the arrangement. I was not aware that hon. members opposite had finished so promptly, and that is why I did not get up. I will be very pleased to make such a statement, and to answer such questions as have been asked in committee to the best of my ability.

First, Mr. Speaker, may I point out that the bill itself, and I think some hon. members were concerned about this, does not give any new powers to the department. I believe the hon. member for Kamouraska, in particular, asked why hydroelectric energy was included in the bill, and whether the words in paragraph (a) of clause 8 "energy, including energy developed from water," had any particular significance. I believe other hon. members also asked why mines and other non-renewable resources were included, and whether that part constituted new powers. I think it might be useful if, at the outset, I tried to clarify that point. May I emphasize that no new powers are envisaged with respect to energy, mines, resources and technical surveys in the bill as it is constituted.

• (3:30 p.m.)

The purpose of clause 8 is to clarify the relative responsibilities of the new department which is acquiring the water expertise that was formerly in the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources and what is left in the continuing Department of Energy, Mines and Resources. The problem is that, although formerly most of the water expertise within the government was included in the department and now most of that expertise is going to the new department, the words "including energy development from water" are included in subclause (a) of clause 8 in order to indicate that while water generally is going to the new department in its aspect vis-à-vis the development of hydroelectric power, that particular expertise will remain within the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources. That is the reason those words are included there. When it refers to mines, minerals and other non-renewable resources, again this does not connote a new power to the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources but is merely indicative of the fact that the basic line of demarcation between the new department and the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources will be that distinction between renewable as opposed to non-renewable resources.

The renewable resources generally will be in the new department of the environment, if this House sees fit to pass the bill. The non-renewable resources generally will be continued in the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources. While I say there will be no new powers, and that that is not the purpose of clause 8, I think it is inherent within the division of powers as envisaged by the demarcation between renewable and non-renewable resources that the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources will be more inclined than it has been in the past to be an economics department. I think hon. members here have indicated some concern that there is not