

*Government Organization*

no co-ordination and no direction. I think the hon. member for York South (Mr. Lewis) dealt with this matter earlier in the debate.

It is not just a matter of opposition from the Conservative party. It is the fact that many of us who have sat on the treasury benches, and probably will again, wonder whether any progress is possible unless the key question is met in trying to give some chain of communication down through the departments, and back through the departments to this house. This chain is not strong in one place, and that is the Privy Council. Too many things are gathered in the Privy Council under the theory that everything depends on the Prime Minister, who reports to the house and accepts questions in the house. But because he is a busy man, no one asks the questions and as a result these things suffer. There is no clear-cut channel of communication with regard to science. On May 5 the Minister of Industry said the Privy Council would be appointing a minister to report for science, and it would not necessarily be the Prime Minister. We heard nothing of that today, so you can understand why those of us who have been interested in trying to streamline the operations of government as outlined in this reorganization, say improvement is needed. In our opinion it is a mere shuffling of assorted Grits into assorted portfolios. It looks as though the government simply made up these portfolios in order to find places for people.

• (7:10 p.m.)

Now for the next question. In my remarks at the resolution stage, I pointed out I thought there would be some improvement if groups of ministers could be collected around clear headings. Those dealing with human resources do have occasion to meet often to try to resolve things which are facing their departments. Those dealing with material resources should have an opportunity to meet also. I listed three or four headings around which groups of ministers could be collected, and there should be a place in the Privy Council to bring together these three or four groups of ministers who would be working toward co-ordinated approaches of policy and action. This is the sort of thing we wanted to hear during the discussion of the principle of this bill at second reading stage, but we heard nothing about it.

A classic example of the confusion and chaos which is going to result was given by the Prime Minister (Mr. Pearson) when he dealt with the department of Indian affairs

and northern development. He defined the boundaries between that department and the so-called new department of energy, mines and resources. The Prime Minister made it clear that the Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources is now to be relegated to a person who is only an acting provisional provincial minister. In the Prime Minister's words, all his duties are in trust for the future provinces. He is therefore relegated from a position of federal minister to one who temporarily carries out the duties of the provincial minister until the northern provinces of the future have assumed responsibility.

When you look at his junior position, and then go on to the next step, which is related to the handling of the division of powers related to the continental shelf, you see how confused the minds of those who drafted this legislation must have been. I cannot quote the Prime Minister's words directly, but I think I can accurately paraphrase them. As I understood him this afternoon he said the continental shelf would be divided roughly north and south on the basis that the minister of Indian affairs and northern development would have responsibility for that part of the continental shelf which was north of a southern boundary formed by the southern boundary of Southampton island and Baffin island. The minister of energy, mines and resources, would have responsibility south of that line. He got mixed up in the phrases, wet lands and dry lands.

My point, Mr. Speaker, is this: One of the most vital issues before this federal state is the question of the continental shelf. First of all, I question the knowledge of the ministers on the treasury benches as to the meaning of the continental shelf. I do not believe there is a single minister in the government who could stand up in this house and define the continental shelf, or this type of statement would not have been put in the Prime Minister's hands today. Normally the continental shelf is a part of the federal responsibility. If anyone looks at the boundary act of Manitoba, the boundary act of Ontario, the boundary act of Quebec, one finds there is no question about who owns the lands underneath Hudson bay, James bay and Hudson strait. It is written in the statute, and even an elementary school child could understand it.

This matter has been put before the courts, and they have been asked to make a decision. When you put a matter before the courts, one assumes that there is one side contending for