

*Government Organization Act, 1970*

A department of the environment is something many of us would like to see and would support. But, Mr. Speaker, I have some reservations about putting these kinds of responsibilities in the hands of the Minister of Fisheries and Forestry because I represent an area of Canada where the commercial fisheries are very important. Other hon. members who participated in this debate have said this is true of their areas also. There is the latent fear in the minds of many of us that the minister will become so interested in making airy-fairy kinds of speeches about the environment and about underwater marine parks in the Strait of Georgia that he will no longer accept as a major responsibility the enhancement and development of the commercial fisheries of Canada.

In his speech, the Minister of Fisheries and Forestry mentioned some of the things that had been transferred, but he did not give us any reason why responsibility for the national parks was not being placed in his new department, when general control over renewable resources is included. In other words, why should the Wildlife Service go into the hands of the minister of the environment who is concerned with renewable resources, and the national parks system of Canada, which many of us regard as part of the keystone to maintaining our natural environment for the enjoyment of future generations, be left outside the ambit of the responsibilities of this minister? We cannot really debate that question because the government has said: We have already set up this department in all but name.

I noticed that this transfer of powers is the kind of continuing process to which the President of the Treasury Board referred. To give some perspective to what has happened, I look at the introduction to the first—and I am not sure whether it will be the last—annual report of the Department of Fisheries and Forestry. This is how it reads in the introduction:

A major change in departmental organization occurred early in the fiscal year resulting from an Order in Council dated July 12, 1968, under which the forestry branch, together with certain advisory, administrative, and technical support elements from the Department of Forestry and Rural Development, were combined with the Department of Fisheries.

Co-incident with the announcement of this re-organization was the appointment of the Hon. Jack Davis, Member of Parliament for Capilano, B.C., as the minister responsible for fisheries and forestry.

Following the establishment of task forces to study the restructuring of the department as a result of the fisheries-forestry merger, the new Department of Fisheries and Forestry officially came into being on March 28, 1969, with the enactment of the Government Organization Act, 1969.

Now we are sort of undoing that exercise and starting on a new exercise, and I suppose new task forces will spend their time reshuffling the various elements of this new department. This may be an interesting and perhaps even necessary technical exercise, but it does not give Parliament the opportunity to assess what the government really has in mind in relation to a department of the environment, the controlling of the environment against pollution and its preservation for future generations of Canadians. In other words, all we have is a reshuffling of the machinery, which we are being asked

[Mr. Barnett.]

to rubber-stamp. We have had no real indication from the minister who introduced the bill, from the Prime Minister, from the Minister of Fisheries and Forestry, or from anybody else over there, as to the direction in which future policies should move and how much money will be put into the pot to back up those policies.

May I call it ten o'clock, Mr. Speaker?

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**BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE**

**Mr. MacLean:** Before we proceed with the adjournment debate, Mr. Speaker, perhaps the House leader would indicate what he proposes to place before the House tomorrow and at the beginning of next week, and for as far into next week as he can tell us.

**Mr. MacEachen:** Mr. Speaker, if I may deal with tomorrow first, I would like to call the bill that has been under discussion today. I suggest that if tomorrow at any point we reach the stage that no further members wish to speak on second reading, and if at that point there is a desire for a recorded vote, we would agree to put off the vote until Monday. It may be that there will be no wish to have a recorded vote, but if there is we would have it on Monday. If, following that point, there were time available before four o'clock we would complete the day by dealing with other items such as the omnibus loans bill, the Canada-Jamaica tax agreement and, finally, the New Zealand-Canada trade agreement.

• (10:00 p.m.)

On Monday I would call the government organization bill, continuing it from whatever stage it had reached and, hopefully, completing it. Then I would call the Canada Development Corporation bill and the bail reform bill. Any of the items that I have mentioned for tomorrow left uncompleted would follow that bill.

**Mr. MacLean:** Mr. Speaker, may I ask a question to clarify one small point? I presume that if the second reading debate were to end tomorrow, the three items that were mentioned would be proceeded with in the order in which they were mentioned, with the loans bill coming first.

**Mr. MacEachen:** Yes, Mr. Speaker, that would be the order of calling the bills. After the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre has expressed his views on the matter, I wonder whether the House will accept my suggestion with respect to the recorded division and, if so, whether that agreement might be put into the form of an order of the House.

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** Yes, Mr. Speaker, we would agree to such an order. I do not know what the minister would say if we were to suggest that nine votes ought to be taken instead of one. That, however, is another matter. We will agree to that order. While I am on my feet, may I ask if the minister intends, once we have dealt with the second reading of the bill and brought it into committee of the whole, to continue