

*Water Resources*

The reference was to the fact that the International Joint Commission had urged that there must be a ban on phosphate detergents by 1972 to save Lake Erie and 1975 at the latest to save Lake Ontario from eutrophication, which is a polite word for death.

The *Montreal Gazette*, on November 5, quoted the past president of the Quebec Wildlife Association as saying that it was crazy that the city of Montreal got its drinking water from the polluted St. Lawrence. He is quoted as saying:

In New York they get their water from lakes 100 miles away, but here we drink sewage.

It is not only the Great Lakes which are in jeopardy. Many members have been reading about what is happening to the lakes and waterways from one end of the country to the other. With regard to Placentia Bay, where the Electric Reduction Company of Canada is located, last winter because of a proliferation of algae this plant killed the fish, thereby taking away the livelihood of the fishermen.

I read the other day that Lake Osoyoos in the beautiful Okanagan is today well on the way to eutrophication and the other nearby lakes are close behind. Housewives all across Canada are appalled at having been made accomplices to the twin crimes of murdering the lakes and rivers and poisoning the water that people have to use. There have been many letters on the subject. One appeared not long ago in the *Globe and Mail* and I quote most of it:

I would like to ask if we women are ignorant, stupid or criminally selfish.

If we are none of these, why is it that despite the terrible effect of detergents on our streams, rivers and lakes, and the life they support, we continue to use these products? Would we deliberately pour poison, if it were clearly marked "Poison", by the millions of gallons into these dying waters, to the increasing detriment of ourselves, our children and their children, if any, not to mention wildlife?

I think not—then what are we waiting for?

I have already mentioned what consumers near Montreal have had to say. In my opinion, legislation is required along the lines suggested by the International Joint Commission, including a ban on phosphate detergents. This Commission states that these must be banned by 1972 in order to save Lake Erie and by no later than 1975 to save Lake Ontario. I see no reason why the other rivers and waterways should not receive equal consideration and I urge that there should be a Canada-wide ban.

Naturally, the producers of detergents and other large firms do not want a ban, but if it is a matter of deciding between helping two

[Mrs. MacInnis.]

or three large industrial firms or preserving the life and health of our people and the beauty of our country, I know what the decision of the government should be. What is the hold-up in banning these detergents? I think the reason is obvious. It is because of detergent companies such as Lever Brothers, Colgate-Palmolive-Peet and the Proctor and Gamble Company of Canada Limited. I have copies of correspondence that has been sent to these firms asking why they apparently have not been working hard on getting a substitute. Two of these replies are very similar, the one from Lever Brothers and the one from Proctor and Gamble. They both point out that at the present time there is no replacement. I may say these letters were sent prior to finding a replacement which I shall mention in a few moments.

These companies point out that it is going to take a long time to develop a replacement, although they must be aware that in Sweden there has been a replacement for some time which is working very well. They advocate that the best plan is to have the municipal sewage plants remove the phosphates after the detergent has been used. It is this statement that makes me wish I could have been a fly on the wall to watch their extra-sensory perception arrangements with the minister who drafted this legislation. He could not have drafted anything more in line with the thinking of the big detergent companies as to what is required in the Canada water act. It is interesting to note that the vice president of the Electric Reduction Company, the firm which manufactures all phosphates for detergents in Canada, the same firm which has been pumping pollution into Placentia Bay, killing the fish and taking away the livelihood of the Newfoundland fishermen, also happens to be the Chancellor of Toronto University and the president of the Science Council of Canada.

On December 20, 1969 an announcement was made by Dr. Philip Jones, a pollution specialist at the University of Toronto, to the effect that he had discovered a non-phosphate, non-toxic substitute for phosphates in detergents. A group of housewives had been trying out these detergents made with non-phosphate compounds for three months and found them to be eminently satisfactory as a substitute for phosphate detergents and in some respects they were better cleaners.

• (4:20 p.m.)

Dr. Philip Jones announced that this was safe and had been thoroughly researched; the