

*Water Resources Programs*

This is a Canadian problem. It is immediate and it is desperate. I am confident that the adoption of this amendment would go a long way toward making sure that the phosphorous content was reduced sharply, and I urge hon. members to endorse it.

**Mr. Keith Hymmen (Kitchener):** I should like to make a short intervention at this point. Some criticism has been forthcoming from members of the opposition on the grounds that members on this side of the House, particularly those who served on the standing committee, have not taken part in the debate. With all due respect, I would point out that a great deal of the discussion which has been carried on during the last few days is simply a repetition of the debate which was carried on in the committee. I would remind the House that no less than 36 meetings of the committee were held and that the report of the evidence runs into well over 700 pages.

I do not think any member of the committee would disagree that the phosphate content should be reduced. I believe it should be done through the powers allotted to the minister by the regulations. The first stage of the reduction would be to a content of 35 per cent sodium tripolyphosphate and 20 per cent  $P_2O_5$ . This is something which the soapers and the detergent manufacturers can live with. The soapers are very ingenious manufacturers; they can do anything, and they will abide by any legislation which Parliament decides to pass. I think we should give them a little time, though, to enable them to find a proper solution. The only suggested alternative for STP is NTA, a product which has been used to replace phosphates in Sweden. NTA itself possesses some questionable qualities; it has a corrosive effect which will have to be buffered in soap powders for household use and I understand it has some hygroscopic qualities. There are other factors, too, which should be investigated.

With due respect to the hon. lady who introduced this motion, there are a lot of questions to be asked before we move to the second stage. I, personally, agree with the first stage. There has, of course, been a great interest in phosphates as a cause of pollution. Phosphates, detergent phosphates, have been labelled the No. 1 offender. But there is the other half of the matter to be considered—the other 50 per cent of the sewage which goes into our waterways through domestic treatment plants, as referred to in the report of the International Joint Commission. I fear

[Mr. Harding.]

that by concentrating on the effect of detergents we may tend to ignore the real problem, or the equally important problem, and fail to proceed with the installation of the equipment needed to treat domestic effluent flowing into our waterways. Many municipalities presently lack primary treatment facilities. Some interesting studies have been carried on with regard to this whole question of phosphates and pollution. One of them was carried out by the Ontario Water Resources Commission which found that it was quite feasible to treat domestic sewage at the primary level and not only to remove phosphates but to remove other undesirable ingredients as well in the course of the regular treatment process.

I said earlier that I did not wish to speak at length. I certainly do not wish to delay the passage of this important piece of legislation. My hon. friends and I strongly support a reduction in the phosphate content but we have reservations as to the second stage; we want the minister and his officials to have time to carry out the necessary consultation and to allow the manufacturing industry, which, after all, is turning out a product of importance to the housewife and to industry, to look into alternatives. The clause which enables ministerial regulations to be made provides an opportunity to proceed with the second stage, and I think this arrangement will better serve the needs of the Canadian people than an attempt to implement a standard which will be almost impossible to achieve.

**Mr. R. J. Orange (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources):** I suppose this particular subject of phosphates might be likened to motherhood. Everybody is in favour of banning all phosphates; the basic argument concerns the way in which this can be brought about. The intent of the motion moved by the hon. lady is one with which we agree in principle. The Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Greene) announced his intentions in this regard during the debate on the second reading stage. Regulations to take effect on August 1, 1970, will ban the manufacture and importation of phosphates in Canada according to the 20 per cent formula. Amendments were introduced during the committee stage permitting control and manufacture of these nutrients containing cleaning agents and detergents for sale and use and their import