

Mr. Whelan: The article reads in part:

Federal and provincial officials met behind closed doors in Ottawa last week and agreed to continue a pact which will result in the spending of \$500 million to fight water pollution from municipal sources along the lower Great Lakes.

The article goes on to say that according to sources in Ottawa there is a "99.9 per cent chance" that President Nixon will sign this agreement "when he visits Prime Minister Trudeau . . . April 13 to 15." Let us talk about what has been done in the Great Lakes.

Mr. Benjamin: That shouldn't take long.

Mr. Whelan: More has been done in the Great Lakes than most people are aware of. I am speaking of cleaning up the Great Lakes, Mr. Speaker. I am not condemning anyone. What has been done by those in authority? We know that pollution in the Great Lakes has been caused mainly by our American neighbours. I was going to say, neighbours to our south, but some of them live to the north of me.

Generally speaking, the pollution began in the Great War when no one paid attention to anything except production. There have been attempts to clean up the river, especially from our side, and there have been attempts to clean up the Great Lakes. Take the city of Windsor, for instance. Every bit of its sewage now goes through some kind of treatment plant, whether primary, secondary or tertiary: not one bit of sewage from Windsor goes untreated into the Detroit River. In some of the surrounding areas plans are being made for primary and secondary treatment plants and in some areas tertiary treatment plants are being planned.

These installations have been built within the time limits set by the federal government and the municipalities doing the work will receive substantial reductions both in interest rates they must pay and in the size of loans they can obtain. Both the city and county have made good use of such funds. Also, Mr. Speaker, we do not use as much salt in our part of the country as others. One would expect us to use less because of the warmth of our climate; even so, the use of salt has been drastically curtailed. I am told we are using less in our area than ever before.

Let me talk a little about the country, Mr. Speaker. The town of Amherstburg in the last three or four years has installed a sewage treatment plant. The town of Kingsville has installed a sewage lagoon. The town of Leamington, which is practically a city, has installed a treatment plant. Essex has installed a sewage lagoon. Belle River, Harrow and some of our other smaller communities have plans on the drafting board or are in the process of letting tenders for sewage treatment facilities. Talk to the people of my area; they may not be 100 per cent satisfied but they recognize that much has been done.

Those in positions of administration and those directly aware of water pollution—for instance, the Lake Erie fishermen—know how much has been done both by federal and provincial authorities. For instance, fishermen on Lake Erie know that two years ago if they cast their nets they lost sight of them two or three feet under water. Today they can see them 15 or 20 feet beneath the surface without difficulty. Talk to the aqualung divers; they will

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tell you that today they can see for 30 feet when 60 feet under water, whereas before when they were 50 feet under they had to feel their way around salvage operations. Let us see what industry has done to overcome pollution. Under pressure from federal and provincial governments, firms like Chrysler, one of the largest concerns in the area, have cleaned up their operations.

Mr. Howard (Skeena): That is because the polluter must pay.

Mr. Whelan: The pollution coming from that plant is at a very low level, practically zero. They have taken advantage of new depreciation provisions applying to pollution abatement equipment.

Mr. Howard (Skeena): The polluter must pay.

Mr. Whelan: The same has happened with Ford. No more oil comes from the plant; they have changed over to natural gas, I believe. GMC has done the same. Actually, GMC has done so well in filtering effluent and in removing oil that used to come from the transmission plant that the waterways around the plant are now full of tropical fish. I do not know what is being put into the water, but the fish are propagating more quickly than biologists expected. I am pointing these things out because many people are trying to get the idea across that there is no program for fighting pollution and nobody is following up pollution problems. For years the Allied Chemical plant in my area was one of the worst polluters. That plant is not causing any more trouble because they have switched to bunker-C oil and their chemical wastes are being dumped into large settling bins.

Mr. Benjamin: You had to pay them off to do the right thing.

Mr. Whelan: That project meant 600 jobs in the area. Some of these programs that were worked out between federal and provincial authorities may have been a little late, but they were carried out.

Mr. Howard (Skeena): Yes, when the minister said the polluter must pay.

Mr. Whelan: I know that pollution is damaging. However, directly or indirectly the government has helped to curb the sort of pollution I have mentioned. I have heard hon. members suggest that the federal government should administer more of these anti-pollution programs and should be given more authority in this area. I am inclined to think that the federal people should be given more authority. We talk about great distances in this country as if everybody in Ottawa was far away from everybody else. I do not think that viewpoint is right, especially when we can in a relatively short time cross this nation by aircraft or reach somebody by telephone in a few minutes.

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When we reflect that in this modern age we can cross this nation and back in less than 24 hours it is difficult to realize the need for having so many different offices in various parts of the country all with authority to deal with one phase or another of this subject. One of the main