

*Suggested Lack of Urban Policy*

In this session the government has paid a certain amount of attention to pollution problems. I have said time and again that there are many shortcomings in the action taken by the government, that there is no co-ordination of effort, that there is no money provided to do what requires to be done. I have criticized the legislation brought forth by the government both in principle and in detail, and so have many other members. Some very broad amendments have been made to the Fisheries Act, but again I noted very little attention given to them in the press, particularly from the pollution angle. This House has also been debating the Canada water act, another fundamental measure, one which I think is badly misunderstood by the public. The public does not realize what is the intent of the act or what its effect will be.

I think the newspapers pay more attention to what I would call the fermentation of ideas rather than their fruition. All one has to do to get attention is to protest on the street by waving banners around; in this way people are told what you are trying to do. Lots of attention can be had by participating in marches, making street corner speeches, by holding conferences, conventions and seminars. The subject of pollution has been covered so many times in so many places, by so many people and has received so much attention that it has now become, as many have said, the "in" thing. Some have commented that this is the bandwagon on which a lot of politicians are climbing, and this may be true. Perhaps I myself have been guilty of this, along with others, though I have been on this bandwagon for some years.

But to parliamentary debates, this public fermentation of ideas, very little attention is paid. In cases where people have already won their point and legislation has been introduced to deal with the problem, they continue to protest simply because they do not realize that such measures have been passed into law. On the other hand, in other cases, particularly in the case of the Canada water act, people feel they have won their point whereas in fact it has hardly been dealt with at all.

This is the cry that I am making this evening and I want to register my concern because it is here where the action is. It is not a very exciting place. I often stand up and make a speech and then wonder whether there will be any result. I can give a good example of what I mean by something that happened today. The sponsor of this motion dealing

with urban affairs, having made his speech found it necessary to issue a press release. I find that this sort of thing is happening more and more: you do not receive any attention unless you issue a press release. I do not know why this is. I think that the speeches made here should be sufficient in themselves to attract attention.

**Mr. McGrath:** But no one listens.

**Mr. Aiken:** I did not realize until a few moments ago that this had occurred in this case, but I understand the reason for it. I think many other hon. members have encountered the same problem. However, perhaps we should not cry about it. I hope eventually it will become evident to people really concerned about pollution matters and our environment that the decisions that are made, are made here. As far as I can gather, in large measure the public does not know that these decisions are made here.

I should like to make a few remarks about co-ordination and jurisdiction. These are two words that make me weep. Co-ordination should be the means by which the federal government gets under way its program to control pollution. There should be co-ordination and the co-ordination should be here, but it is not. The problems of urban affairs, water pollution, air pollution, soil pollution and so on are fragmented to the extent that no one really knows with whom in the federal government they ought to deal. People write and ask me who in the government they should contact about pollution. I have to reply that I do not know; that it depends on the sort of pollution they are talking about and in what context. I tell them that if they give me a whole page on their particular problem I might be able to figure out to which minister to refer the matter. This is why we need co-ordination. We need leadership at the federal level, and this we are not getting.

The other matter I wish to raise relates to jurisdiction. It is my belief that at the time of confederation the powers of the federal government and of the provinces were divided in such a way that there could be a co-ordination of effort in this country to deal with almost any subject that arose. Although some tried their best to say it was better for the provinces to deal with one subject and for the federal government to deal with another, it was greatly hoped that the constitution would be the means of achieving results rather than