

Environmental Pollution

and the international portion of the St. Lawrence River. There is no doubt that the report outlines the gravity and extent of the pollution problems which face Canada in these waters. This party also welcomes the idea of co-ordinated, joint action by Canada and the United States in meeting the pollution problems in these international waters.

I should also like to point out to the minister, as did the previous speaker, that the International Joint Commission does not have authority to implement laws and regulations. This is something which members of this House will have to consider and upon which early action will have to be taken.

The minister also indicated that much stronger measures are needed to control oil pollution and eutrophication as well as pollution from water craft. I certainly agree. I point out to the minister that this government has failed dismally in the enforcement of pollution control measures to date. We have a large number of federal acts on the statute books now and a large number of regulations under each act, but the reason we have such a pollution problem facing us, not only in the Great Lakes but all over Canada, is to be found in the fact that these laws and regulations have not been properly enforced by the departments concerned.

I suggest to the minister and to his colleagues that although, as the minister said, some legislation in this field has been brought before the House of Commons in this session, the government has not yet brought forth any legislation to establish an over-all co-ordinating body in Canada to implement the legislation already on the statute books of Canada. Until such a co-ordinating body is set up, one that can do the job of bringing together the departments, the legislation and the agencies, there will not be proper pollution control in this country.

As my last point I should like to indicate that what is lacking in the existing statutes and in the legislation before us is federal financial assistance, for which there is a great need. There is no such provision in any of the acts and we will need it if pollution problems are to be attacked in the most efficacious way. I urge the minister and his colleagues to look into this problem and ensure it is rectified before this session is adjourned.

• (2:20 p.m.)

[Translation]

Mr. Réal Caouette (Témiscamingue): Mr. Speaker, the minister has just said that the

International Joint Commission has indicated what needs to be done. About pollution in the Great Lakes, it recognizes that the government of Ontario and its Water Commission have made a major contribution to the abatement of pollution in the Great Lakes, in particular through programs for the control of harmful waste discharges into the Great Lakes.

This means that while the International Joint Commission of which Canada is a member was saying what to do, Ontario was doing something. This province took the necessary measures to eradicate pollution in the Great Lakes. Now, on May 25 next, Canadian and American officials will meet in order to discuss this report of the International Joint Commission pointing out the measures to be taken.

However, they were careful not to invite the government which took constructive steps in this field, namely the Ontario government. It is not mentioned in connection with the meeting scheduled for the end of May, but the government has announced that senior American and Canadian officials will meet soon. Unfortunately, although it did act in this field, the Ontario government has not even been invited to attend.

I think that the minister's statement is paradoxical. Parliament has been hearing about water pollution for nearly ten years, yet nothing has been done to date to fight it. Now, senior officials will get together on May 25 to tell the various governments what they should do.

Mr. Speaker, I sincerely believe that the government of Ontario should be represented at that meeting in order that the American and the Canadian governments take position and, at least, follow the example of the Ontario government, which has already adopted some measures to check pollution in the Great Lakes.

[English]

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CONCURRENCE IN FIRST REPORT OF SPECIAL COMMITTEE

Mr. David Anderson (Esquimalt-Saanich) moved that the first report of the Special Committee on Environmental Pollution, presented to the House on Tuesday, May 19, 1970, be concurred in.

Motion agreed to.