

Agreements Respecting Marginal Lands

This applies also to Israel. I also had the opportunity of visiting that land and seeing the great efforts they are putting forth there to bring fresh water to the Negeb desert. Therefore, Mr. Chairman, the problems of conservation of water, timber and soil in our country are great. Many years ago a sage, whose name I cannot recall at the moment said: "Show me an eroded soil and I will show you an eroded people".

The county from which I come, namely Middlesex, has less than 7 per cent of its land area in timber. Consequently water conservation has been and is a continuing and, in fact, a worsening problem. Neither has there been enough attention paid to nor have there been sufficient rewards for those farmers who have attempted to retain some bushland. Bush cover is basic to water conservation. Dams are spectacular—I have said this before—and they may be corrective to a degree but they are not fundamental.

While what I have to say is probably pertinent to the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources it also applies to this resolution. There is pending an agreement between the federal government, the provincial government and the Thames valley authority at Fanshawe. This agreement providing for the rounding out and developing of the Thames valley authority conservation project will be signed on Saturday next. It will be signed by the Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources and for the province of Ontario by Mr. John Robarts, the minister of education for the province of Ontario and also the member for London North.

This project which was commenced many years ago resulted in the Fanshawe dam as the first major step. The proposed work now being undertaken will attempt to round out this development scheme and will cost approximately \$10 million. This has been welcome news to the area and I emphasize that fact. I also want to endorse the project wholeheartedly. I do not want any misunderstanding about this matter. I want it thoroughly and distinctly understood that I endorse the project. However, in so doing, may I say that there are some remarks I wish to make and some points I wish to bring to the attention of the two ministers.

However, before embarking on this Thames valley project, may I say that there are some local problems which deserve consideration at the federal, provincial, municipal and Thames valley authority level. The Canada Water Conservation Act envisages the wise use of natural resources. When the Fanshawe and Thames valley project began the federal government of that day contributed 37½ per

cent to the cost but it was distinctly understood that federal money was not available for municipal water supply systems. However, the result has been that Fanshawe lake has become a city water reservoir. Flood control, while certainly a part of conservation, is not intended to be a flood control system for primarily one municipality. I refer you, Mr. Chairman, to an editorial in the London *Free Press* of July 30, 1956, which was some time ago. It states in part as follows:

A. M. Snider, chairman of the Ontario water resources commission, has warned the London public utilities that the city has no priority on water from Fanshawe lake—

However, in spite of these warnings and this knowledge there were incorporated in the Fanshawe dam facilities for the withdrawal of water that was impounded, and since that time up to 3½ million gallons per day have been taken out of Fanshawe lake and put into the area adjacent where the public utilities commission of the city of London have deep wells. In other words, they are using the area as a filtration system and they are removing, as I said, 3½ million gallons of water per day or 2,275 million gallons of water a year. I ask this question: What does the public utilities commission pay to the Thames valley authority for this water?

The story told at the time was that the increased flow of water by conservation methods would provide a greater flow of clean water down the Thames river through the city of London. However, what has actually happened is that the flow has not been increased to any great extent but the water was used, as I mentioned before, as a domestic supply, loaded with sewage in the process and dumped back into the river below the city to the detriment of everyone below.

The polluted Thames is a local disgrace. Local municipalities, local members of parliament and local M.L.A.'s believe that the solution to this problem is a pipe line from lake Huron or lake Erie. For over 50 years the city of London has depended on deep wells adjacent to the city for a municipal water supply. There are 57 wells, over 20 miles of pipe line and a filtration plant built during the past year at a cost of \$993,000 or almost \$1 million. Back in 1873, during the second session of the second legislature of the province of Ontario, there was passed a bill entitled "An act for the construction of water works for the city of London". Among the provisions of that act I want to bring this particular one to your attention:

5. It shall and may be lawful for the said commissioners, their agents, servants, and workmen,