

The Address—Mr. Hees

the invocation of the War Measures Act giving the government very wide and sweeping powers to enable the forces of justice to operate completely freely and effectively will lead to Mr. Cross' safe return to his family in the near future as well as to the blotting out of the FLQ menace from the face of this land for all time.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Hees: Mr. Speaker, I wish to speak for a few moments about a matter of great importance to this country. I refer to the fight against pollution. When the Canada Water Act was passed four months ago, the country believed that at long last we would see the government begin to take action to effectively combat pollution, which action the minister assured us was only awaiting the passage of the bill. But, after four months of waiting, there has been no sign of action, nor is there any indication that any will emerge in the near future. In strong contrast to the lethargic attitude of the Canadian government to this very pressing problem is the kind of action taken in the United States. On July 9 President Nixon announced plans for a new super agency to co-ordinate the government's fight against pollution and to clean up and protect the environment. The president put teeth in this new agency in the form of a budget for the current financial year of \$1.4 billion. This budget makes it possible for the new agency to immediately implement antipollution measures across the country.

Since the gross national product of the United States is fourteen times that of Canada, a comparable budget for antipollution operations in this country would be \$100 million a year. However, our Canada Water Act, a toothless tiger if I ever saw one, provides no funds for grants to finance antipollution projects. Although the act permits loans to be made in certain circumstances, and small amounts of money to be made available for studies, no funds have so far been appropriated for either and there is no indication that any appropriations will be made. A very large part of the \$1.4 billion which the United States government has allotted for the first year to fight pollution will be used for loans to be made to industries and municipalities to help them finance the usually high cost of antipollution machinery. The reason such financial assistance is necessary in both the United States and Canada is that small and medium sized industries and municipalities simply cannot afford the large outlays necessary to finance this expensive machinery. Such expenditures are non-revenue producing and therefore are very difficult to justify to shareholders and ratepayers. If the money to buy such machinery is not forthcoming, the machinery will simply not be installed and pollution will continue to run rampant in our country.

• (12:20 p.m.)

In order to make it possible for industries and municipalities which are polluting our air and our water to purchase the expensive machinery they need, I suggest that we employ the same method which we used during wartime to make it possible for industry to convert to war production. At that time the federal government made available low interest loans on a long term basis

[Mr. Hees.]

and allowed industry to write off the cost over a relatively short period of time. This made it easy for industries to switch to war production, and the results were, as we know, spectacular.

Loans bearing 5 per cent interest to be paid off over 15 years with a three year write off period will enable industries and municipalities, particularly small industries and municipalities which have not yet established a high credit rating to purchase the antipollution machinery they need without imposing a crippling financial burden upon them. The government should now announce that \$100 million will be made available for such loans during the next 12 months of operation of the Canada Water Act so that an effective antipollution program across the country can become a reality. After the first year of operation, it will be apparent whether this amount should be increased or decreased for the next year.

I, like all Members of Parliament I believe, was glad to learn from the Speech from the Throne that the government intends to establish a department to "co-ordinate and consolidate our antipollution efforts in an effective fashion". It is to be sincerely hoped that this co-ordinating effort will end the overlapping of responsibility and the confusion which have greatly reduced the effectiveness of antipollution efforts in this country.

I am glad to see that the minister who will be in charge of this department is in the House at the moment, and also that he is paying close attention to what I am saying. I say to him that he must not only co-ordinate the antipollution efforts of the five federal departments which presently deal with it but must also work closely with provincial ministers to ensure that the country's efforts are as well co-ordinated as possible.

One of the best ways to bring this about would be to persuade the provinces to adopt a uniform antipollution code which each would put into effect in his own jurisdiction. Such a code would remove the pressure on the province not to crack down on a polluting industry for fear that it might move to another province where antipollution regulations were not so strongly enforced. It would also make it impossible for an industry to play one province against another when deciding where to locate in the first place.

One of the minister's important functions must be to work closely with the U.S. government, and the governments of the States, with which Canada shares common waters to ensure that the legislation on both sides of these waters is as similar as possible. It is obvious that bringing in effective measures by governments on the Canadian side will be ineffective if similar legislation is not enacted on the U.S. side, and vice-versa. As we know only too well, pollution does not stop in midstream.

During the annual meeting between the U.S. and Canadian parliamentarians in Washington last March, the subject of pollution control was given the number one priority for discussion. There was complete unanimity that similar legislation must be enacted on both sides of the boundary if protective pollution control is to become