

is fresh water and Canada's fresh water flowage is about six per cent of the world's total.

Recent suggestions by Americans that surplus Canadian water be exported to the United States has focused Canadian attention on the need for a national water policy. It is doubtful if the federal Government in Ottawa is constitutionally in a position to dictate a national water policy. However, even if it cannot dictate a policy, it is in a position to initiate such a policy by co-ordination and consultation with the provinces. There are many arguments advanced in favour of such a policy:

(a) water is a commodity that is just now in transition from a free to a scarce good. A national water policy was not needed in the past because water has been a cheap resource and sufficiently plentiful that serious conflicts for its use had not arisen. But this is no longer the case.

(b) Just as the need for a national manpower policy has been recognized, so a national water policy will be needed to co-ordinate and weight the alternative uses of water against each other: municipal and industrial uses, irrigation, recreation, fishing, aesthetic, etc.

(c) Water will be allocated to its best use or combination of uses only if there is some clearing house in which competing demands can be systematically weighted against each other. It is obvious that this cannot be done by the existence of eleven varying, unco-ordinated and often conflicting policies.

(d) A national policy would not deal only with the alternative end use of water, for example between its use for agricultural irrigation or recreation, but it would also deal with the problem of alternative supply: desalinization, re-routing of northern rivers such as proposed by the United States Department of the Interior in the Rampart project for the Yukon River or by Mr. T.W. Kierans and Major O.K.H. Kierans in the GRAND project (Great Replenishment and Northern Development Canal) to divert water from the Harricanaw River and tributaries to the Great Lakes, and North American Water and Power Alliance (NAWAPA).

(e) A national water policy would also be a prerequisite for establishing an equitable and adequate pollution preventive policy. If a national policy is not adopted, provinces will compete with each other by offering the least stringent pollution controls so as to attract

industry. Some members of the New Brunswick Water Authority have said that its work and that of similar agencies would be assisted by federal-provincial co-operation in the development of standards for pollution control. We have no such thing in this country at present.

(f) Someone must represent the public. Industry and agriculture have powerful voices that make known their needs for water in its alternative application. A national water board, or some similar agency established to co-ordinate the policies of a national water policy, would represent the interest of the public in the present and for future generations.

These are some of the basic principles with which we must be concerned if we are to evolve a national water policy.

There are people in the federal field particularly who say that in these days the provinces would look upon the establishment of a national water policy or the taking of the initiative for a national water policy as an intrusion into provincial rights because water is a provincial resource. It is true that water is a provincial resource but many of our rivers are interprovincial and some are international. The only way we can evolve a rational, logical and sound program is to get these agencies together. I suggest that the Senate is the body which can initiate such action.

I want to conclude with the summary and conclusions of a conference held recently on developing Saskatchewan's water resources. It says:

The evidence with respect to the demand and supply of water in Saskatchewan has been reviewed in a very general way. The review of this evidence as well as consultation with knowledgeable persons in Saskatchewan suggests:

1. A continued increase in the demand for water. In the future the major demands will be for domestic and industrial water supply, pollution abatement and recreation and wildlife. Water will also be used to an increasing extent for irrigation and power.

2. This increased demand can be satisfied through:

(a) better use of existing water supplies now in the Saskatchewan-Nelson drainage area, and

(b) diversions from adjoining rivers such as the Peace, Mackenzie or Churchill.