

STRINGENT CONTROLS NEEDED

The Government of Canada has been giving close attention to the Great Lakes pollution problems and fully recognizes that stronger control measures by both federal governments, as well as the province of Ontario and the Great Lakes states, are necessary. Within Canada, wide-ranging measures are already being taken to combat pollution in the Great Lakes and elsewhere. Important legislation has already been introduced in Parliament, which would be used to implement several of the report's recommendations.

One of the amendments to the Canada Water Bill now before Parliament would give the Federal Government authority to limit the use of phosphorus content in detergents and control the input of other nutrients into Canadian waters. It is the intention of the Government to use this authority to achieve a reduction in the phosphorus content in laundry detergents to 20 per cent by next autumn and to work towards its elimination, probably in 1972.

Also, there are amendments before Parliament to the Fisheries Act, which will strengthen existing provisions that prohibit the deposit of deleterious waste substances of any type.

Amendments to the Canada Shipping Act were adopted by Parliament in June 1969. These empower the Governor in Council to make federal regulations for preventing the pollution by oil, chemicals, garbage, sewage or any other substances from ships within Canadian waters.

The Government of Ontario and its Water Resources Commission has also made a major contribution to the abatement of pollution in the Great Lakes, in particular through programmes for the control of harmful waste discharges into the Great Lakes and for financing and construction of municipal sewage treatment plants.

I should like to emphasize the importance of Canada and the United States taking co-ordinated action to deal with the pollution problems of the Great Lakes. The IJC has shown us what needs to be done. A meeting at the ministerial level between United States and Canadian Government representatives is planned for June in order to discuss urgent transboundary Great Lakes pollution problems including, in the first instance, implementation of the recommendations of the International Joint Commission Special Report. A preliminary meeting between Canadian and United States Government officials will be held in Ottawa on May 25.

PRICE RISE SLIGHTLY SLOWER

Evidence of a slower rate of increase in consumer prices during the past few months was cited by the vice-chairman of the Prices and Incomes Commission Mr. Paul Gérin-Lajoie in a recent speech to the Richelieu Club at the Queen Elizabeth Hotel in Montreal. Since the summer of 1969 he stated, the consumer price index in Canada had risen at an

average annual rate of about 4 per cent, compared to a rate of over 5 per cent earlier last year. In the United States, the consumer price index has risen at an average annual rate of more than 6 per cent since last summer.

PROFITS CURBED BUT NOT WAGES

The recent slowing of the rate of price increase in Canada was associated with a squeeze on profits. The size of wage and salary increases, however, had continued to rise both in Canada and the United States. The average increase in base rates of pay under new contract settlements in Canada during the first three months of 1970 was 9.1 per cent, compared to 7.2 per cent a year earlier. Unless this trend was reversed, the speaker declared, progress toward more stable prices could not be maintained.

"This is why," Mr. Gérin-Lajoie observed, "I have referred to clearly disproportionate wage and salary increases which have hindered the efforts of other groups in society in the fight against inflation."

The Commission vice-chairman stressed the importance of the Commission's modest but growing public information effort as a means of influencing community attitudes toward the size of wage and salary increases. He hoped that increased public awareness would contribute to better understanding and acceptance of the need for restraint if inflation was to be overcome with a minimum loss of production and jobs.

MEDIC-ALERT MONTH

Mr. John Munro, Minister of National Health and Welfare, who recently designated May as "Medic-Alert Month", in Canada in support of the Life Underwriters Association of Canada's public information program, recently issued the following statement:

Wearing a Medic-Alert bracelet on your wrist is like an ocean-liner carrying life-boats. In both cases, the protection offered in the event of an accident or other emergency can mean the difference between life and death.

The Medic-Alert system has been used in Canada since 1961 and, today, over 40,000 Canadians wear the Medic-Alert bracelet which lists their hidden medical problem, allergy or drug requirement. This information can avert serious complications and is vital to the doctor, nurse or hospital attendant especially if the person requiring treatment is unconscious and unable to provide the information.

During May, members of the Life Underwriters Association of Canada are conducting a program to publicize the life-saving work of the Canadian Medic-Alert Foundation so that everyone knows about it and how to secure the identification bracelet which may save a life. I would like to add my endorsement to this program and its simple but effective message "Be Prepared".