

Water Resources Programs

encouraging greater concentration of industry, particularly those whose effluent is difficult to purify, in those areas which have low water quality standards or no standards at all.

We believe it is essential that a uniform, high standard of quality be established for all the waters of Canada.

I shall not read more from that brief. Again, I say to the minister that almost one year ago this day, on May 30, 1969, the Standing Committee on National Resources and Public Works brought in a unanimous report, which reads in part:

Your Committee recommends that the government draft a code of standards for the cleaning up of and the future protection of all Canadian waters; that provincial approval of such code be sought; and that the federal government provide an enforcement procedure—if necessary by means of an amendment to the Criminal Code.

Here, we find that one year ago the Standing Committee on National Resources and Public Works, after a year of study, recommended the introduction of national standards to be enforced, if necessary, through an amendment to the Criminal Code.

I realize other hon. members may wish to say a few words on these amendments. But may I again appeal to the minister to consider the amendments. While we feel critical of the government's approach to the question of national standards, we think it is not yet too late for the minister to accept the amendment which would give him the power, under this act, to set national standards. I also say this: unless these types of standards are set up, we shall find that those provinces and areas throughout Canada in which quality management areas are established will become havens for those who would evade pollution controls. We shall find, too, that unless provinces and areas can be assured they will not have to compete with areas tolerating lower standards than theirs, the fight against pollution will not get off the ground. That is because many of these areas and provinces will be reluctant to adopt higher standards if by doing so they may lose their industries and lose jobs for their people. As I have said, that is the reason for the need to establish these broad standards which a number of members in this House have requested.

● (3:30 p.m.)

Mr. Arnold Peters (Timiskaming): Mr. Speaker, I listened with interest to the debate the other day. I was surprised that the discussion on this amendment was similar to a discussion we had the same day in a committee which was dealing with a different subject.

[Mr. Harding.]

The committee was discussing the reluctance of the government to set standards for quality control on items such as electrical appliances. The committee was setting up a new standards control council. The committee members felt that the CSA should set standards and that, although the government was not going to underwrite standards, there was room to institute various controls which would allow the establishment of standards in areas where no one else is involved.

It was indicated in the discussions that there should be mandatory measurements which are not flexible in any way, shape or form. The measurement of inches, yards, pounds and other weights and measures should be mandatory, not negotiable or flexible. These standards must be set. The minister has not indicated the standard he is going to establish. However, I imagine there are now measurements set by the federal government which cannot vary because they are exact measurements.

There should be a similar type of measurement for water, one that does not vary. There should be a standard of 100 per cent pure and from there down the scale to the point where it lacks those qualities which permit its use for drinking, washing, and as a coolant or lubricant in the industrial sense. These standards must be set by the minister. Standards should be established for water just as there are for grain. There is the No. 1 northern grade, No. 1 northern with rocks in it and No. 1 northern with weeds of all types. Each is given a designation. These measurements do not change. They mean exactly what they say. If you know the code, you know what is in that particular grade of grain. You know whether it has been windburned, sunburned, whether it is damp or whatever else may be wrong with it.

There must also be a water standard that cannot be varied. The top of the scale would be 100 pure distilled water. The standards could vary according to the impurities. However, the basic measurement would not vary. This would be an exact, scientific measurement. I do not see how the minister can refuse to set a standard for the quality of water.

When we talk about water quality control, we talk about many things. This matter is obviously open to negotiation. For example, the standard for water for drinking purposes would obviously not be 100 pure. Distilled water is very unpalatable and, in my opinion, is unsuitable for drinking. There are a