

*Water Resources*

House by the government is quite inadequate to accomplish the objectives and purposes that are intended.

Ordinarily, I do not take time to reply to members who have spoken, but earlier this evening the hon. member for Burnaby-Seymour (Mr. Perrault) made some of his customary non-political observations. I sincerely feel that some of the observations he made should not be left completely unanswered inasmuch as he referred to the previous Conservative government with which some of us were associated. The hon. member said nothing whatsoever had been done at that time with regard to pollution control. A great many things were done, including granting loans to municipalities for sewage disposal.

There is one matter I feel should be brought to the attention of the hon. member for Burnaby-Seymour and other hon. members who were not in the House at the time. I refer to what the government of the day did at the United Nations in connection with worldwide pollution. I believe we were the first government in the world to take steps at the United Nations to control pollution. In the early sixties, as I am sure many here will recall, there was a great fear throughout the world about fall-out from nuclear testing. All of us remember movies like "On the Beach," and the general apprehension throughout the world about what would happen because of the constant testing of bombs by the major powers, the United States, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom and France. There was great concern about what would happen to nuclear fall-out. People asked: Where does it go? Does it fall uniformly around the world? What will happen to the soil, air, basic foodstuffs and the like? We were very concerned about this problem.

At that time I had the honour of looking after our country's affairs at the United Nations. We put forth a resolution at that time requesting the United Nations to insist that all member nations take samples of soil, water, air and basic foodstuffs for analysis so that the effects would be known throughout the world. There was a great deal of opposition to our resolution. The Soviet Union objected to it. As a matter of fact, even our good friends to the south, the United States, were not very enthusiastic about it. Many other countries were enthusiastic. We received great support after long and prolonged negotiations and we finally succeeded in obtaining unanimous passage of the resolution

[Mr. Nesbitt.]

at the United Nations. I believe this fact should be remembered.

At that time the then Leader of the Opposition, who later became Prime Minister, the Right Hon. L. B. Pearson, was very enthusiastic and supported our project. I think it had the support of all Canadians at that time. I mention that in passing because I do not think it is fair to say that the former Conservative government did nothing with regard to pollution. I think it took a major step at that time.

I now wish to deal with the details of this bill. It is always interesting to look at legislation that is placed before Parliament to see what is really intended to be done. As is often said, Mr. Speaker, you can lose sight of the forest when looking at the individual trees. It is necessary to take a good look at legislation such as this to see what is expected.

This measure was vigorously promoted and received much publicity. Nice green pamphlets were sent out stating what was to be done. The measure received all the publicity available from the government's publicity resources. Naturally, we expected a great deal would be accomplished. There were some misgivings. Many of us found that very little action was proposed. Other of my colleagues have already pointed out many of the shortcomings of the legislation and the reasons we feel the government should withdraw this bill, reconsider it and present to Parliament a bill that has some teeth in it, not one that has all the appearances of a propaganda effort.

One of the implications inherent in this legislation is that in matters of pollution the government does not have jurisdiction, and therefore it has to make agreements with the provinces with regard to water. This is getting into the legalistic aspects of our constitution. I am rather surprised the government would present this point of view. All that is necessary is to look at the Fisheries Act, the Navigable Waters Protection Act and the Canada Shipping Act to see that the government has already assumed complete jurisdiction in all sorts of matters which, from a *de facto* point of view, affect pollution.

In the first session of this Parliament legislation was presented with respect to amendments to the Navigable Waters Protection Act. At that time I had a responsibility on behalf of my party to look after these matters. I remember the highly detailed discussions that went on in committee. I have the committee reports in front of me, but I will