

The province of Ontario has very definite views and enforcement privileges in the establishment of abatement work before licences are issued to all new industries. So that with the growth of new industry in Ontario, this is looked after as well as is possible with our present level of technology. I think on the other side of the river many of the older industries are perhaps the major problem.

However, to return specifically to the question, I would not be able to tell you what the specific municipalities are doing.

Mr. McCUTCHEON: If I might interrupt, there is no earthshaking development that they are taking and doing over there vis-a-vis what we are doing here then?

Mr. PRINCE: Nothing that I know of, no.

Mr. McCUTCHEON: I am told one of the big offenders in our part of the country is fennel wastes from the chemical valley area in Canada. Is this being controlled satisfactorily?

Mr. PRINCE: One of the problems with fennel wastes, Mr. Chairman, is the fact that extremely low concentrations in the very low parts per billion or less range are detectable by taste and odour, and to scavenge out the very last traces of these is virtually beyond the possibility of present technology. The amounts are not considered dangerous from the health or lethal point of view, but mere traces of these can give objectionable odours and tastes to water which would put its potability out of all proportion to the amount present. I think there are problems in this area. I would hope that there may be means for further abatement, but I am not familiar with what is going on.

Mr. McCUTCHEON: In other words, it is not considered a danger factor as much as—

Mr. PRINCE: Yes.

Mr. McCUTCHEON: I have one more question in this vein, if I might, please. How much warning did we have of the development of the situation as far as the area west of Pelee Island is concerned, that is the lower Detroit River and western Lake Erie?

Mr. PRINCE: Well, I could not really answer this question precisely, Mr. Chairman. I think there have been rumblings for a number of years. I think some of the university investigators were aware that certain things were happening, but I do not think until such time as these manifestations, such as the tremendous algae blooms, and so on, broke out that one realized the time had arrived. I would think that some warning of this might have extended back for perhaps three to five years, but again the question of interpreting what has happening in terms of its ultimate manifestation just was not known. So we are now looking at the product of this build-up over the many years.

Mr. McCUTCHEON: This, of course, is what I was particularly interested in namely to find out when a program should have been instigated, and if it should have been done a few years ago, why was it not done?

Mr. PRINCE: Well, I do not know what the answer is for that. I suppose the communication and the warning of the impending trouble were not adequate to energize action. I hope by now it is not too little and too late.