

Water Pollution

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 which prohibit the deposit of deleterious waste substances of any type.

• (2:10 p.m.)

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 have also made a major contribution to the abatement of pollution in the Great Lakes, in particular through programs for the control of harmful waste discharges into the Great Lakes and for financing and construction of municipal sewage treatment plants.

I would 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.

Mr. G. H. Aiken (Parry Sound-Muskoka): Mr. Speaker, in commenting on the statement the minister has just made may I say I have not, of course, seen the report the minister has tabled, but if it is as complete and useful as the first two reports of the International Joint Commission I believe it will be an effective vehicle in continuing the fight against pollution of the Great Lakes.

One point the minister did not touch upon was the method the federal government intends to use to deal with the United States

[Mr. Sharp.]

government, the individual states of the United States and the provincial government of Ontario, although he did say there would be ministerial meetings. But one great weakness in the structure we have in Canada at the moment for dealing with this type of problem, in this instance water pollution, is that no one in the federal government has any co-ordinating authority. The only minister who has some semblance of authority is the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. Other ministers have responsibilities in their own special fields. I hope the government will give serious consideration to bringing new legislation before the House or at least setting up a body within the government to co-ordinate the federal effort and to take the lead nationally.

I point out that the International Joint Commission as such has no authority whatever. The commission has been doing a good job in investigating pollution and making reports, the present one being the third, but it has no authority whatever to take any action, nor has any other international body dealing with the Great Lakes or international waters. So I take this opportunity to urge the minister to consider the necessity of the International Joint Commission having its authority extended so that it may make regulations and enforce them and thus exercise control, or to consider the setting up of a new body which could act on behalf of all the governments that have an interest in the control of pollution in the Great Lakes. The statement that has been made today is a good foundation on which the federal government can take effective action in either of these ways. But until the government recognizes, first, the need to have somebody running the show in respect of pollution and, second, that somebody has to have some authority over the international waters, I believe that all these reports and all the legislation that has been brought in will be forgotten.

Mr. Randolph Harding (Kootenay West): Mr. Speaker, in commenting on the statement the minister has just made I would like, first, to thank him for his courtesy in supplying us with a copy of his remarks prior to opening of the sitting.

We welcome the tabling of the International Joint Commission's special report on pollution in the Great Lakes. The minister indicated that the report deals with the extent, the causes, the locations and the effects of pollution in the waters of Lake Erie, Lake Ontario