

*The Address—Mr. Foster*

solution perhaps is not in the stars; it is in ourselves. Young people see the adult generation using other drugs and setting a premium on false values, and are inclined to say, "Hypocrites, who are you to talk?"

Mr. Speaker, at a time when there is so much concern with our environment I was pleased to see forecast in the Speech from the Throne a department to be concerned with the preservation of the environment and our renewable resources. This new department will combine most of the activities of the federal government in the fight against pollution. Last year many of us spent several months in committee discussing the Canada Water Act. This will be a major federal statute to co-ordinate the activities of the various levels of government agencies in Canada. There were also four other bills passed last session to deal with pollution control, including action to control pollution in the Canadian Arctic, in the oil and gas-drilling rigs offshore on the continental shelf, and amendments to the Canada Fisheries Act.

I am pleased to learn that a bill respecting air pollution will be introduced this session. This is long overdue. Although some provinces have air pollution laws, not all have. I hope that the Canada clean air bill will follow the same tack as the Canada Water Act, that is, that we recognize that much of the responsibility for pollution control in our society is a provincial responsibility. The two levels of government, by acting jointly to resolve the problem, can share resources, expertise and responsibility.

● (9:20 p.m.)

However, if the province fails to act, or if it cannot afford the cost of taking action, the federal law will give the federal government power to act and the finances to carry it through. This way we have a continuity across this great land on the levels of despoilation that are permitted to our land, our water and our air. It is unacceptable to Canadians to see the interprovincial bidding for new industries that has taken place in the past because our province's pollution standards were lower than those of others. Ontario has not had a new pulp and paper mill established in it for the last 20 years. One of the reasons for this is that pollution standards here are higher than in some of the other provinces. Many people think they are none too high even in the province of Ontario.

The federal government has a responsibility to provide maximum, optimum standards throughout the land for water and air which will ensure a good-quality environment to pass on to future generations of Canadians. The combining of many federal government activities into a department charged with responsibility for our environment, as outlined in the Speech from the Throne, is a step in the right direction.

The Algoma federal riding combines many endeavours, including farming, forestry, mining and tourism. On reading this list of activities of the Algoma riding one quickly realizes that these are primary industries. No public debate concerns us more than the current one on the foreign domination of our industry and of our land.

[Mr. Foster.]

The present uncertainty in the uranium mining industry is an example of the immense complexity of drawing up rules for Canadian ownership. Last year at this time there were some 20 diamond drills operating in the Elliot Lake area. Today there are practically none. Exploration activity is at a minimum across Canada. This represents millions of dollars of lost development. Now that the uncertainty regarding foreign ownership of uranium mines has been raised, it should be resolved as quickly as possible so that future exploration in Canada will continue.

Fortunately, the government did establish an assistance policy last July to aid uranium mines through the next three to four lean years of markets for uranium oxide. Everyone in Elliot Lake is depending on both the government and Denison Mines' representatives, who are currently negotiating assistance to keep the mine operating, to come to an agreement very soon. The value of this assistance policy will only be proven, so far as this community is concerned, if a successful conclusion is reached.

The ramifications of the current public debate on foreign ownership in Canada are far reaching. For example, we have been searching for several years now for a company to establish a pulp and paper mill in the Algoma riding to utilize our wood fibre. One U.S. company which had started a study of the area, and of the feasibility of building a mill, decided not to proceed partly due to the uncertainty as to the foreign ownership of Canadian resource industries.

I think we must approach economic nationalism in Canada with great care. Any decisions made to limit foreign investment must be well thought-out with regard to repercussions on the communities which will be affected. If rules are developed rashly and without careful study, the results could be disastrous for the resource industry areas of Canada. It happens that many of the resource industry areas are also areas of Canada which are designated for secondary industry grants by the Department of Regional Economic Expansion. It would be stupid to establish foreign ownership rules which would stop development in these areas of Canada when the Department of Regional Economic Expansion is spending hundreds of millions of dollars to promote expansion and the development of secondary industry.

Nothing that this government has done since it took over in 1968 has been more fruitful in the underdeveloped areas of our country than the establishment of the Department of Regional Economic Expansion. The incentive grants for new manufacturing industry have meant a great deal to the Algoma riding. So far this year we have commitments for three regional development grants to industry amounting to over half a million dollars, which will provide much needed new jobs to our area and broaden our economic base. This kind of development reassures people that the government is concerned with establishing industry in our area. I am sure that this is only the beginning. More grants and more applications are pending, and further development will take place. There is a need in the Department of Regional Economic Expansion for a larger staff to handle the