

Mr. SIMPSON: Mr. Minister, in regard to water pollution of an inter-provincial stream, going back a few years ago you will recall the trouble on the Saskatchewan river when I think it was eventually decided that there was industrial waste from the city of Edmonton. Do you know if this question was officially resolved strictly through the provincial bodies, or did the federal government come into the picture at all? I ask this question because I have seen something of the same nature in other districts, and I was just wondering how to get a solution of it in connection with interprovincial waters.

Mr. HAMILTON (*Qu'Appelle*): With the same qualification that I stated as a prelude to my answering the previous question, I am not an expert in these matters. But if my memory serves me correctly, first of all the federal government has firmly stated, I think, that they disclaimed responsibility in the case of Alberta and Saskatchewan; and I believe, if I remember correctly, that the Alberta government was rather reluctant to take steps—strong steps. But I think the final solution came when the company did take certain steps which tended to reduce the amount of pollution.

I might say that because of the touchiness in this type of thing, and the responsibility between the provinces and upstream and downstream users, that it bears out my contention for the need for more cooperation between the provinces in these problems, when we might sit in as an honest broker, trying to arrive at an equitable decision of these matters. Everyone who hears of it in Canada accepts the proposition that the province should have control over its own natural resources. But the fact is that such things as pollution do not always stop at meridians, longitudes, or provincial boundaries. They go across; they cut across river basins and through regions.

Therefore the time has come in the eyes of people of the twentieth century to sit down and work out cooperative solutions for these problems. It may be that the answer in the west lies in giving the water to the prairie provinces to a water board, a quasi judicial board, to which all governments and individuals could refer problems, which board would see that orders were carried out. That is, the province would still control its own waters, but it would delegate part of its rights to a quasi judicial body.

The other solution of course is the far-reaching solution to set up a river authority, and to place matters relevant to the use of waters in that river in their hands, with very large powers. These seem to me the two alternative courses that any solution would tend to follow, or would tend to recommend.

Mr. KORCHINSKI: Did I understand the Minister to say that it was in 1930 that the prairie provinces were given the rights to their own natural resources?

Mr. HAMILTON (*Qu'Appelle*): The two provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan.

Mr. KORCHINSKI: What act or agreement was it that set that out?

Mr. HAMILTON (*Qu'Appelle*): There was federal legislation. I think it was called the Natural Resources Transfer Agreement. I understand that Manitoba was also in there. This was an act of the federal government and it was confirmed by an amendment to the British North America Act.

Mr. KORCHINSKI: Is there someone here who could give us a rundown of the agreement that was set up at that time?

Mr. HAMILTON (*Qu'Appelle*): That is a very difficult question, but while my people are getting their information collected, I can give you what I know of it historically.

In 1905 when the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan were carved out of the territories, their natural resources were reserved to the federal government.