

Mr. HARRISON: There are several policies in particular fields, sir. I think this is safe to say, many of which will be channelled through this department and presumably an over-all policy can be developed. To say that there is an over-all policy now I think would be exaggeration.

The CHAIRMAN: Have you concluded, Mr. Fulton? I have seven names on the first round of questioning, the first of which is Mr. Reid.

Mr. REID: One of the problems that bothers me, Mr. Patterson, is the so-called constitutional difficulties, with the provinces claiming control of water within their own bounds. Now, does this extend to border waterways?

Mr. PATTERSON: I wonder, Mr. Chairman, if I could get some clarification of the interpretation of border waterways? Is it a water like the Ottawa River which—?

Mr. REID: Well, something like that—the Ottawa River, say, Lake Erie, say Rainy River in my particular constituency, interprovincial waterways as well as international waterways.

Mr. PATTERSON: Well, with respect to international waterways, of course, the federal government has a specific responsibility. With respect to interprovincial waterways, the responsibility of the federal government, I do not think is as fixed as on international waterways. We recently completed a study of the Ottawa River basin in which Quebec, Ontario and the federal government joined and set up a board and carried out a study of the hydrology of the Ottawa River basin, but there was full recognition that these were provincial resources. The federal government had a responsibility with respect to the operation of the storage dams, and the headwaters of the Temiscaming dam, which it acquired many years ago.

Studies were underway with respect to the navigation of the Ottawa River and in that study there was consultation with the provinces with respect to the desirability of carrying out the study. On international studies the federal government initiates studies and in some cases, the provinces may be a part of the study, may co-operate in the study, or the federal government may carry out the study on its own.

● (12.00 noon)

Mr. REID: After the study has been done, say on an interprovincial river like the Ottawa River, and certain findings are made upon which action should be taken, who has the responsibility to take this action, the provincial government, the federal government? Is it possible for the federal government to, shall we say, encourage the provincial government to take speedier action than they might otherwise?

Mr. PATTERSON: I think they would encourage them, but whether or not the province would respond to the encouragement would probably be a decision on the part of the province.

Mr. REID: In other words, if we found there was serious pollution in the Ottawa River, the federal government can only discover this. Remedies are in the hands of the provinces?

Mr. PATTERSON: I think that has been the case up to the present time at least.