

Water Resources

money where its mouth is. There is no provision for financial support and I can assure him, on the basis of the brief summary I have made here, that if there is no promise of financial support from the federal level of government then there will be no action on the part of the provincial governments. They are concerned, they are greatly exercised on the matter, but the federal government has been withdrawing its financial support from so many areas of joint participation and co-operative federalism that I am sure it will be almost impossible, as it has been over the previous two decades, to get them to take leadership in the field. The leadership responsibility lies solely and entirely with the federal government. This was demonstrated beyond the shadow of a doubt at the Resources for Tomorrow Conference, Mr. Speaker, and this is the point I emphasize in bringing my remarks to a close.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Béchard): It being one o'clock, I do now leave the chair to resume same at two o'clock.

At one o'clock the House took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 2 p.m.

Mr. P. V. Noble (Grey-Simcoe): Mr. Speaker, I believe a water act could be one of the most important pieces of legislation to be put on the statute books of this nation. There will not be a dissenting voice in this House or in the country in respect of setting up an adequate water policy. However, there will be much resentment if this Bill C-144 is not amended so that it is meaningful and effective. In a few words, it lacks teeth, strength and direction.

Water pollution should be an offence in any part of the country by any person or company, and effective deterrent measures should be prescribed in the bill. Financial support to the provinces should be specified where joint programs can be arranged; and these should be uniform. In fact, our amendment pretty well covers this field and should be accepted. If we can proceed from there without undue delay some relief from the serious pollution situation might be forthcoming.

Time is of the essence and this has been forcibly brought home to us when we realize that DDT now pollutes all waters. It has been found in the penguins of the Antarctic and

the polar bears of the Arctic. The Great Lakes are polluted with DDT to a point where the Cohoe salmon caught in Lake Huron were condemned for food because they contained DDT beyond the tolerance of the human body. The pollution in some areas of the Great Lakes such as Lake Erie has reached a point where some species of fish have been eliminated.

Much of the pollution, Mr. Speaker, in the Great Lakes could be corrected by the installation of sewage disposal plants in some of the cities. The city of Owen Sound in my constituency is one of those municipalities that values and enjoys a clean environment and is making use of such a plant. The Georgian Bay area, which constitutes much of my constituency, enjoys comparatively clean water when one thinks of the conditions in Lake Erie. We do not have large cities dumping raw sewage into the lakes in our area and our municipalities are progressively accepting and using sewage disposal systems.

The extreme pollution in Lake Erie is the result of run-off from the tobacco producing areas where large amounts of DDT are used, along with nitrates and phosphates which are used in fertilizers on all farm lands. Added to this, there is the sewage from several large cities on the United States side of the lake. The result is massive mats of algae covering as much as 800 square miles and fouling most of the beaches of Lake Erie. These conditions are not conducive to the production of fish or clean water. Georgian Bay is not plagued with the growth of algae. However, it is not free of DDT, as we have over 3,000 acres of orchards bordering the south shore which use pesticides in their operations. The residues no doubt find their way to our water. We have other pollution, but to a minor degree compared to the country-wide picture.

• (2:10 p.m.)

Water is undoubtedly the most important of the four renewable natural resources because the other three namely, soil, forests, fish and wildlife, are dependant on it; but all four are inter-related. For example, forests and good farming practices prevent the carrying away of the topsoil which silts into the lakes and reservoirs. It is, therefore, obvious that conservation work in all its phases should be co-ordinated, and the unit in which it can best be co-ordinated is the river valley. At this point the people are closest to their river. They know its vicissitudes best and, helped