

Mr. PRINCE: Well, I think it is possible for it to be cleaned up by 1970, Mr. Chairman. Whether it will be or not, I do not know. Even if it is cleaned up, there is still the inherited pollution which already exists in the western basin of the lake. This is something which I do not think we can expect to be dispensed with without considerable passage of time.

The clean-up of pollution is going to be an extremely costly and an extremely slow operation. I think in certain areas of pollution on the industrial side the question of clean-up is not fully understood with regard to what can and what cannot be done. The problem as compared to the cleaning up of normal sanitary effluence, sewage, and so on, is fairly well established. However, where certain industries are creating pollutants of an unusual type, this throws it really into a chemical engineering operation which is very costly and for which perhaps some of the parameters are not even known at the present time. No pollution abatement procedure is 100 per cent effective; a certain amount is always bound to get by in the process. So it is a complex problem and, to a considerable extent, we do not know all the answers to this area at all. This is one of the things we are hoping to study quite intensely over the next few years.

Mr. McCUTCHEON: Doctor, might I ask further, what does the director mean when he says the United States side of the river will be cleaned up? Does this mean then that they will not be putting in pollutants? And does it mean that with no more pollutants added, the western end of Lake Erie, through course of nature, will eventually clear itself?

Mr. PRINCE: I think this is what he means, and I hope he is right. I think again, if I can come back to it, that if one establishes certain minimum tolerances for pollution, this may be the target toward which they are working for 1970. I hope that whatever the minimum water quality standards are, that these will be effective in achieving what they hope will be the case, that it will abate and allow restoration to occur by natural processes. I think this will take many decades in order to be fully effective, if ever.

Mr. McCUTCHEON: Would you care to comment on what steps the United States municipalities, et cetera, are taking on their side as compared to what we are doing over here?

Mr. PRINCE: Well, if I were to comment on it, Mr. Chairman, I would not be fully fortified with the knowledge of what the specific municipalities are doing over there. I really do not know.

Mr. McCUTCHEON: Are they ahead of us?

Mr. PRINCE: In my view they are not ahead of us, looking at the southern lobe of Ontario as a whole. I think their tremendous concentration of industries there as compared to ours presents problems of a totally different order of magnitude. I believe there are a few soft spots on the Canadian side, not far from Detroit, which are being looked after, I think, as expediently as possible. I think further up the river our petrol chemical industries are doing quite a remarkable job of pollution abatement. These are essentially new plants designed to cope with this sort of thing.