

*Water Resources*

the members to the agency. The agency will then prepare its administrative structure, hire personnel and start holding meetings. It will then start to prepare plans for water quality control within its boundaries, and such plans will require a great deal of consideration, surveys and research. After plans have been promoted they must be submitted to the federal department for approval, and presumably to the provincial government. Both these governments will have to review the plans, which no doubt will require a further feasibility study within the federal and provincial departments.

I could point out many of the other problems that will be faced when getting into the business of pollution control, but the main point I am trying to make is that this bill adds to jurisdictional red tape rather than taking away from it. While the relationship between the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources and the water control agencies is fairly well spelled out in the bill, there is nothing in it which sets out the relationship of these agencies with other significant federal departments which have jurisdiction, such as fisheries, transport and health, and with the provincial and municipal agencies. In other words, the water quality management agencies will in a sense be foundlings and will not have very much assistance or support from anyone else. Their connection with other federal departments and with provincial departments is not defined.

I could point out further inadequacies in the bill, but others of my colleagues will be taking part in the debate and the bill will be studied clause by clause in the standing committee. It is fairly clear, from the preliminary reaction, that some provinces will not easily be persuaded of the federal government's good faith in this bill. I can foresee interminable negotiations with the provincial governments over many of the local agencies. There will not be just ten agreements; there will be many more than that—one for each of the local agencies.

The federal government's austerity measures at the present time, and the minister's own words, give no assurance of concrete financial support for this whole concept, without which I believe no province could reasonably be expected to make an agreement. The lack of a cost-sharing formula and the complications of the bill itself must make many provinces suspicious. But nothing effective can be done under this bill within a province except by a negotiated agreement. Where the

[Mr. Aiken.]

agreement fails, the effect of the bill is diminished, and in the meantime pollution problems will mount.

Having made these very broad and severe criticisms one may properly ask whether we have a better solution or a reasonable alternative. I believe that we have. First, we would set up a national department or agency to co-ordinate pollution control efforts in all departments and to deal with water quality as part of this over-all approach. The proposed Canada Water Act is not part of any integrated plan to deal with pollution control; it is just another of the bits and pieces of pollution control legislation that we now have in Canada.

Second, we would deal with water quality as part of a national priority for pollution control, and commit the necessary funds from federal taxation. Third, there is clear and well defined federal jurisdiction over and responsibility for pollution control and water quality management within the provinces, independent of provincial jurisdiction, as well as in the territories and coastal waters. The federal Parliament should be asked to assume this jurisdiction and to act upon it directly.

To be specific, Mr. Speaker, the federal Parliament has strong powers through its jurisdiction over sea coast and inland fisheries, navigable waters, national health, transportation, agriculture, national research, international and interprovincial works and undertakings, the criminal law and law for the peace, order and good government of Canada.

• (8:10 p.m.)

The scattered and widespread federal powers in regard to pollution control—which it has been so difficult to manage—could be the strength of the federal case, not its weakness. These powers, many already exercised independently by numerous departments could, if welded together, form a strong base for a federal pollution control bill. It could assume powers concurrent with, but not superseding, provincial powers. Where provinces are acting, the federal agency could work with them to prevent duplication. Where provinces are not acting, the federal government could proceed within its own field of jurisdiction, at its own expense and on its own initiative, to deal with pollution control as a matter of federal and national concern. I cannot see any province objecting to the federal government going about its own business within a province.