

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, May 21, 1970

The House met at 2 p.m.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[Translation]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS

Ninth report of Standing Committee on Transport and Communications, in both official languages—Mr. Lessard (LaSalle).

[Editor's Note: For text of above report, see today's Votes and Proceedings.]

[English]

POLLUTION

LAKES ERIE AND ONTARIO AND ST. LAWRENCE RIVER—TABLING OF THIRD INTERIM REPORT OF INTERNATIONAL JOINT COMMISSION

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I should like to table the Special Report of the International Joint Commission on Potential Oil Pollution, Eutrophication and Pollution from Watercraft, which is also being released in Washington today.

This report by the International Joint Commission constitutes the third of three interim reports on water pollution of Lake Erie, Lake Ontario and the international section of the St. Lawrence River. These reports, together with the final report which is expected to be submitted to the two federal governments later this year, derive from a joint request from the Canadian and United States governments to the International Joint Commission on October 7, 1964, to investigate and report upon the extent, causes, locations and effects of pollution in the waters of Lake Erie, Lake Ontario and the international section of the St. Lawrence River and to recommend the most practicable remedial measures.

This third interim report focuses on three major problem areas—potential oil pollution from all sources, including underwater drilling; eutrophication with particular reference to the removal of phosphorus from detergents and sewage; and pollution from watercraft. The findings and recommendations are

based on the investigations of the commission's two technical advisory boards, the International Lake Erie Water Pollution Board and the International Lake Ontario-St. Lawrence River Water Pollution Board, and on the subsequent public hearings held to consider these reports.

With regard to potential oil pollution in Lake Erie, the report contains significant recommendations for action to be taken by all levels of government.

With regard to eutrophication of Lake Erie, Lake Ontario and the international section of the St. Lawrence River, the commission makes important recommendations calling for the implementation by the governments of the United States and Canada in concert, at the earliest possible date, of an integrated program of phosphorus control.

With regard to pollution from watercraft, the commission recommends that the federal, provincial and state governments in concert consider and implement at the earliest possible date compatible regulations for the control of water pollution from all classes of commercial vessels and pleasure craft using Lake Erie, Lake Ontario and the international section of the St. Lawrence River.

The International Joint Commission and its advisory boards have rendered invaluable service to both countries in helping to identify major pollution problems in the Great Lakes, in singling out particular problems for urgent action at this time and in proposing practical ways of improving the quality of these vitally important waters.

The government of Canada has been giving close attention to the Great Lakes pollution problems and fully recognizes that stronger control measures by both federal governments, as well as the province of Ontario and the Great Lakes states, are necessary. Within Canada, wide-ranging measures are already being taken to combat pollution in the Great Lakes and elsewhere. Important legislation has already been introduced in Parliament which would be used to implement several of the report's recommendations.

One of the amendments to the Canada Water Bill now before Parliament would give the federal government authority to limit the