

Perhaps the new department on the environment and renewable resources would wish to fund and co-ordinate the activity which is taking place. Therefore, I am sure hon. members opposite will want to see this new department established and will co-operate fully in passing the bill this week so that the department will be able to get under way early in the new year.

This motion also envisages the provision of technical and financial assistance in respect of the planning and development of solid-waste disposal programs at the municipal level. The hon. member for Hamilton West, who spoke most eloquently this afternoon, told us all about the need which exists in our great metropolitan areas. I agree with him wholeheartedly, because many of our great metropolitan areas such as the city of Montreal still pour nearly 100 per cent of their raw sewage into waterways such as the St. Lawrence River. So the need exists in our large metropolitan areas, because even cities such as Montreal with the great financial resources they should have find it too expensive to establish proper sewage or even primary sewage treatment plants.

The problem also exists in the smaller communities of the country. Ontario, which perhaps is the richest province, still is not providing an adequate program for the small communities and the 1,000, 2,000 or 5,000 people who live in each of them in respect of establishing adequate sewage treatment programs. Some communities have such programs but most communities are being badgered by the Ontario Water Resources Commission to establish these facilities, when the proper amount of money is not being made available to them with which to establish the necessary facilities.

In many districts in my constituency, if the communities were to establish proper sewage and water treatment facilities the tax load would be doubled and in some cases tripled. These communities are left in a limbo situation in which the OWRC, which is the regulatory body concerned, is demanding that such facilities be provided so that the watercourses will not be polluted, but the necessary financial assistance is not being provided.

Perhaps through increased research we would discover ways to handle waste. Perhaps self-contained units of a recycling system could be applied to each house. This would mean that the cost of sewage treatment would be reduced and the smaller communities, which after all are just as important on an individual basis as the large metropolitan areas, would not be involved in tremendous additional cost.

Recently I read of a program, I believe in Japan, in which solid waste was incorporated into building blocks for construction purposes. This would seem to be a very permanent way to dispose of solid sewage waste. I believe that in the province of Ontario a program has been developed under which it is demanded that all garbage dumps throughout the province be licensed and controlled by the department concerned with pollution. This is to make sure that the dumps are not immediately adjacent to small streams or waterways which run into areas where the water is used for drinking.

Pollution Research

In the province of Ontario a sanitary land-fill program is being developed so that garbage and solid waste produced by small communities is not only disposed of but is covered up so that it does not create an eyesore in the area. In Belleville, for example, there has been a very imaginative program involving sanitary land fill: they have been able to fill in a large marsh area and create a park. In this way, not only do you eliminate marshy, swampy areas which are infested with mosquitoes in the summertime, but you also create a park area which is of long-term benefit to the community. This is another way of disposing of garbage and solid waste while at the same time creating parkland or new industrial land for the benefit of the community.

I think the point made by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Mahoney) is very important. He suggested that we should not duplicate the research being carried on in the United States or in other countries. I think it is fitting that he should be concerned about costs, because that is the kind of Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance we want. We do not want a man who is a free spender and who would throw away the government's money; we want a man who will think of the cost to the taxpayers of this research.

● (5:50 p.m.)

Since the Parliamentary Secretary is quite alive, I do not think I should develop this speech into a eulogy; but I think it is very fitting that we should consider the question of economy because the federal government has responsibility for research in this nation. In most cases the provincial governments carry out the regulatory aspects of pollution control but the responsibility for research has always traditionally fallen on the federal government. It is therefore very appropriate that this motion be put before Parliament this afternoon so that hon. members can debate it. Certainly it would be the responsibility of the federal government to carry out this research if the motion were carried.

I do not want to be responsible for talking out the hon. member's motion, so I will conclude with the hope that when the motion is passed a suitable program will be developed to ensure that proper research is carried out into the problem of solid-waste disposal.

Mr. E. F. Whelan (Essex): Mr. Speaker, in talking on the hon. member's motion—

Mr. Alexander: Why?

An hon. Member: Let us have action.

Mr. Whelan: If the hon. member has to ask that question he has no business in this institution. I have had tremendous experience with the different departments in Ottawa that are concerned with this problem; that is why I feel I can talk on the subject and even go further than the thrifty Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Mahoney) by telling hon. members that a