

*Water Resources*

ernment and the neighbouring countries should reach an agreement. The problem of pollution may indeed concern more than one country.

This is an urgent problem and it seems to us that the time has come to act rather than to indulge in endless discussions and studies.

● (2:50 p.m.)

In the many letters I receive, people often write about this problem because my riding is affected by pollution. I am talking about central Quebec, one of Canada's most attractive regions; my friends will not resent these remarks because they too are proud of their constituency. Since we also have our problems, people write to me asking why the government has failed to take the necessary steps.

The reason is that the federal government is limited in its action as a result of some futile discussions on the distribution of powers. The difficulty does exist, but it should not be given priority over another, much more serious problem involving the health of an entire nation, of the whole world.

Mr. Speaker, I have in hand a letter which I shall not quote in full and this for two reasons: First, because the remarks are not all fair and then, because it is obvious that the author is not aware of how the governments of his province, his municipality and his country work. But I think that this letter is an alarm call. Therefore, the government should take concrete action rather than getting lost in endless discussions.

Here is an excerpt from that letter:

Why don't the governments do something—

This is an alarming alternative: either we wake up around the year 2000 in a world where mankind is poisoned through water and air or in a world in which it is still good to live. I come back to the quotation:

Why don't the governments do something besides setting up royal commissions?

Instead of doing that, they merely discuss things in the house. And I replied to my correspondent that it was precisely on account of those conflicts of jurisdiction and party politics that nothing was being done.

The letter says further, and I quote:

What are they waiting for to make available to the automobile manufacturers the plans (which exist) for a hydraulic motor—?

I must say this is something new to me, which goes to show that the relationship between a member of parliament and his

[Mr. Mongrain.]

electors can be useful to him from time to time.

What are they waiting for to force, in the public interest on an international scale, all this country's industries to reduce pollution through the use of filters that would precisely eliminate most of the pollutants?

The writer of this letter may not know that this is about to be done and that we would have made much more progress without the conflicts of jurisdiction.

The letter says further on:

What are they waiting for to prohibit, again in the public interest, the use of detergents "re-enforced" with enzymes which keep on fighting against everything even once in our waters?

What can the U.N. do—?

Why are they still concerned about frontiers when pollution does not care a rap about it and attacks our whole planet without discrimination as to colour—?

As you can see my correspondent simplifies the problem. He is probably a candid innocent soul but who at last saw with his own eyes this urgent problem.

I continue to quote:

Why is the government always or nearly always late as far as its legislation is concerned—?

The reason of these delays is precisely that too many governments spend their time quarrelling with each other rather than achieving practical results. However, I must make a concession to my friends of the opposition. I said a while ago that they give us the impression that they want to protract the debate, but some of them are making positive interventions. I hope that they will continue to do so during the sittings of the parliamentary committee where the final touch will be given to this bill.

I continue quoting the letter:

Why do some people kill with "pleasure, indifference and pride" animals which do not harm anybody and which, on the contrary, destroy some of the pollutants, thus contributing to the survival of life on earth?

What can we do?

The writer speaks of bombs. He adds and I quote:

Is the status of a nation more important than the survival of the human species (4 billion people in the year 2000)?

He obviously forgets that Canada cannot solve the problems of all other countries, not even those of all the provinces in Canada without the agreement of these provinces.

Is it impossible for a supposedly rich country such as Canada to help efficiently two thirds of the population who—?

are treated to be poisoned to death.