

Water Resources Programs

raise this even at this late date. The only thing I am ashamed of is that I did not raise it earlier. Perhaps I was too remiss or too trusting in hoping that a remedy would be found.

Before sitting down, Mr. Speaker, may I make this one point? I believe I am leaving with you a thorny but very important problem. The only word I can find which even comes close to referring to the quality of water is the word "conservation". I suggest there are so many differences between the idea of conservation and the idea of quality that one cannot even see a relationship between them. So, I present this point to you, Mr. Speaker. I think the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor General, on the advice of Her Majesty's advisers, simply is not sufficient to cover what we have here this afternoon.

I also suggest that I do not intend to allow myself, any member of Her Majesty's loyal opposition, our friends to my left or our friends even further south of us in this chamber, to be caught in the bind that we did not raise this point now so that Your Honour might rule on it and so that the recommendation which must accompany this bill might be put in order. Perhaps while I am on that particular point I might say it illustrates that while we did not give up too much when we said we should not debate the resolution incorporating these recommendations, this is a very positive example of a situation in which we could be giving up a great deal in this Parliament or in any future parliament if we should allow something like this to pass without being questioned.

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, we do not take any objection to the grouping of the amendments you have discussed. We also think there is common sense in the suggestions you have made about the divisions that would be necessary. However, I confess we do have a real concern about your reservations with regard to some of the proposed amendments. If I made my notes correctly, I understand that you question motions Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, and 16. I shall not argue that all of these in their entirety are procedurally admissible. It does seem to me, however, that some of them are procedurally admissible and that there is a fundamental point close to the point the hon. member has just made which Your Honour should take into consideration.

As we all know, this bill is entitled an act to provide for the management of the water

resources of Canada. But the recommendation from His Excellency the Governor General includes a reference to planning and implementation of programs relating to conservation, development and utilization of water resources. I know the word "conservation" could be given a very narrow meaning of merely holding onto a quantity. But surely, that is not the only meaning of the word "conservation". Surely, if water is a concern it must be a concern in respect of quality as well as quantity.

Lest Your Honour should think I am still trying to bring in something that is not already here, I draw your attention to the words in the preamble of the bill. In particular, I ask Your Honour to read the first part of paragraph 2 of the preamble which reads as follows:

• (3:20 p.m.)

And Whereas pollution of the water resources of Canada is a significant and rapidly increasing threat to the health, well-being and prosperity of the people of Canada and to the quality of the Canadian environment at large and as result it has become a matter of urgent national concern that measures be taken to provide for water quality management in those areas of Canada most critically affected;

I ask Your Honour to put that paragraph in the preamble to the bill alongside the title, and alongside the reference to conservation. It seems to me that you should agree with us that the subject of water quality, the subject of preserving or conserving the quality of our water, is within the four corners of this bill.

It is on that basis that I think some of the amendments which Your Honour questions should be allowed. One never likes to admit that any part of what he is proposing has any weakness, but in the hope that the stronger ones will stand I am prepared to admit that there are one or two places where an expenditure of money seems to be involved and there is a reference to a federal grant. I suppose that a reference to an expenditure of money, or even a suggestion in the interpretation section that there be created a certain board which would seem to involve an expenditure of certain money, might make Your Honour feels we are going a little too far. I am not prepared, even yet, to concede that, but when I look, for example, at motion No. 2 which seeks to write into the interpretation section a subclause having to do with water quality standards, I plead with Your Honour to think some more about it.