

*Water Resources*

tion measures in Manitoba. The standards are spelled out in the Water Pollution Prevention Act enacted in 1954.

In Saskatchewan, the ministers of Health and of Natural Resources are responsible for control of water pollution. They must approve the construction of sewage treatment plants and the disposal of industrial wastes.

The Minister of Health in Alberta has the necessary authority to compel municipalities to instal sewage plants.

In British Columbia, under the anti-pollution legislation, a five-member committee was created to approve the discharge of sewage water into the Columbia and Fraser Rivers basins as well as on the East coast of Vancouver Island.

In the province of Quebec, the Quebec Water Board is being reorganized with a view to give it full authority in matters of surface and underground waters. Under the new legislation, municipalities may allow private companies to build and operate sewage treatment plants.

The Quebec Water Technology Association has been studying for several years the various aspects of the water question in the province.

According to the studies which have been conducted, it does not follow that it is compulsory nor even desirable for the federal government to take upon itself the responsibility of the whole water problem but that it should take a strong interest in all the aspects of the problem with regard to the whole country.

In my opinion, the water problem may be divided into three parts:

(A) Supply of municipal and industrial waters.

In this regard, it is recognized that provincial jurisdictions have been adjusted and that they are generally accepted in Canada.

(B) We should consider waste treatment.

It is a relatively new problem the solution of which rests mainly on the collective will to take the necessary action.

The total cost of waste treatment remains essentially the same, whether the means to do so are provided by federal, provincial or municipal governments and private industry.

From this point of view, the federal Government can and must contribute financially to eliminate certain regional disparities and provide the required incentives.

Water as a basic environmental element.

[Mr. Dumont.]

I feel that the quality of the environment must go with the way of life of all Canadians. There may be some different concepts from one province to another. However, a general concept of the minimum requirements is necessary and the federal government can and must play a constructive role in channelling objectives.

With regard to all these aspects of the management of water resources, each government level must take its own responsibilities within the framework of Canada's political institutions, and that in a spirit of co-ordination and co-operation.

Any federal initiative or action liable to interfere with the provincial jurisdictions would have effects contrary to those which are sought. Furthermore, any more by Quebec to refuse federal co-operation would also indicate short-sightedness and regression.

Bill C-144 clearly shows the federal government's intention to establish new administrative methods of water management in co-operation with the Canadian provinces. I fear, however, that the measures suggested go beyond the legislator's intent. From our experience with the evolution of administrative methods with regard to water, we are led to believe that in practice the rigid enforcement of this act may result in the complete control of water by the federal government and in the consequent lapse of the provincial powers.

Besides, the Quebec Water Association, comprising the titular heads of state Health Engineering Services in the U.S., has clearly expressed its disapproval of the American government's intention to replace the states' jurisdictions in the fields of supervision and inspection. Its point of view is shared by most experts in the field of water management and sanitation on the North American continent.

The action taken by the federal government ought, on the one side, to be very energetic in the fields where it holds an individual role and, on the other side, to be complementary only in the fields pertaining by tradition to the provincial jurisdiction.

Therefore, we strongly oppose the establishment of Crown agencies to operate in mixed federal-provincial undertakings in the fields of services operation or water quality management. We cannot see any benefit deriving from direct or indirect participation of the federal government or its representatives in these fields.