

Water Resources Programs

al government has an important role to play in the field of research. Under the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, the Inland Waters Centre, which members of the committee had an opportunity to visit last year, is rapidly developing. It will be an important institution for continued research in the field of water and water management. There is the Bedford Institute of Oceanography which carries on studies through the co-operation of the Department of Fisheries, the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources and the Defense Research Establishment. Then there is the exemplary co-operation of that very important Nova Scotia institution, the Nova Scotia Research Foundation.

It is no secret that this bill was drawn up with both eyes on the constitution. Whether the members of this House realize it or not, until the British North America Act is changed or rewritten, we shall do our best to abide by the constitution. But the British North America Act, the constitution, makes no reference to water pollution. There are, of course, references to federal jurisdiction on the questions of fisheries and shipping and the over-all questions of peace, order and good government.

In this bill, the responsibility which the provincial governments have accepted and closely guarded over the years is recognized. It is a co-ordinating piece of legislation to support, to back up and to co-operate with the provincial and lower levels of government, in order to proceed with the program planning to reach the goal I mentioned earlier.

Although the BNA Act made no reference to pollution, I find it interesting that the Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909 mentions pollution in Article IV stating:

It is further agreed that the waters herein defined as boundary waters and waters flowing across the boundary shall not be polluted on either side to the injury of health or property on the other.

Over the years, the International Joint Commission has been given responsibility for the operation of the boundary waters treaty and has done an excellent job on an advisory basis.

One of the purposes of this legislation, Mr. Speaker, is co-operation between the federal government and the provinces and with the government of the United States to provide planning and programming directed to cleaning up and to reclaiming the waters of the Great Lakes and many other inland waters.

[Mr. Hymmen.]

• (5:30 p.m.)

I said earlier that statutes are passed, amended and finally withdrawn or superseded. The introduction of this bill will have that effect. Chapter 21 of the 1952-53 Statutes of Canada is entitled, "An Act to Authorize the Grant of Assistance to a Province for the Conservation of Water Resources." The act is known as the Canada Water Conservation Assistance Act. This measure was brought in by a former, respected member of the House who was a cabinet minister, the late Hon. Robert Winters. It has been very important to my particular area of the country in the Grand River Valley because under it seven municipalities of the Grand River were given financial assistance as a result of which three dams were constructed.

That act is now to be superseded. However, the Canada Water Conservation Assistance Act makes no mention of pollution, of consultation or of co-operation. I should like to know just how much co-operation and consultation will take place between federal, provincial and municipal governments and water agencies in the planning of these important projects which are anticipated under the Canada Water Act. Management agencies of a specific kind are to be set up under the bill. I wonder whether the project involving the Grand River, a tributary flowing into Lake Erie, will still go ahead under this bill. I hope that financial co-operation and assistance on the part of the federal government with respect to this project will still be possible.

The question of pollution is very timely. It is a subject of concern to many people. Many thinking Canadians, we might say, are downright afraid not only of the prospect of polluted water but of polluted air and of a polluted environment in general. We are considering an important piece of legislation which will assist greatly in our planning, with the full co-operation of the provinces, of water management programs for the future. Research has been mentioned. There are federal institutions devoted to research, as well as many universities which undertake research in matters involving water and water management. Being interested in this subject, I asked questions about it in committee.

In my hand I hold a clipping from the *Engineering Digest* of February, 1970, which refers to a grant awarded by the federal Department of Energy, Mines and Resources to the Department of Chemical Engineering of McMaster University in the amount of \$100,000, renewable for a period of five years.