

Water Resources Programs

Be that as it may, if the Prime Minister is not going to place a specific minister in charge, I think the House should insist that one minister be so designated. The minister we have picked is the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. We have not picked him on a personal basis or because he is the best of two or three ministers who have some responsibility for these matters; it is merely because he is the minister of the department that seems to have the main responsibility for water pollution control.

I think that the lack of co-ordination of federal, provincial and local efforts, including municipal efforts, will lead only to continuing squabbles over jurisdiction, authority and enforcement. While the government appears to have some vague idea that pollution control is necessary, the means with which to carry out and enforce the various pieces of legislation has not been set up. I hope that all of these pieces of legislation dealing with pollution control are not just a gigantic public relations job and that there is no real intention of enforcing them. However, if the government refuses to accept this amendment, we can only assume that it does not intend to co-ordinate these efforts, that it does not intend to put money behind pollution control efforts, and that it does not intend to enforce the various acts that have been passed this session, that are in the process of being passed or that have been promised.

I should like to conclude by making brief reference to what is just about the best example of how diffusely the various aspects of pollution control are spread among the departments. This came to light quite by chance this afternoon when the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Sharp) tabled the third report of the International Joint Commission. Although I have not yet had the opportunity of reading that report, but hope to very shortly, I assume that it is a well thought out, well studied and researched report. The IJC has been holding hearings all over Canada and the United States on the problem of pollution of the Great Lakes, so as I say I assume it is a good report.

What I am wondering, Mr. Speaker, is who is going to enforce and carry out the recommendations contained in that report? Although I have not read it, I am positive there is something in the report about phosphate detergents. There is also a provision in the Canada Water Act dealing with phosphate detergents. The report also makes mention of oil pollution, and I am positive there

[Mr. Aiken.]

will be some reference to the dumping of oil by ships on the Great Lakes. This matter comes under the jurisdiction of the Department of Transport. I am equally sure that the report will have reference to the deleterious substances that are causing damage to the fisheries, a matter that comes under the jurisdiction of the Minister of Fisheries and Forestry (Mr. Davis). As I say, the report itself was tabled by the Secretary of State for External Affairs.

I should like to see the International Joint Commission given the responsibility for carrying out the recommendations in the report. I should like to see the federal and provincial governments of Canada, and the federal and state governments of the United States, delegate authority to some body. In the committee we were told that the International Joint Commission does not want this responsibility, that it does not want to be an enforcement or control agency. Therefore, it seems to me that some other agency should be set up to which all of these powers are delegated. As I have said, a minister should be designated to co-ordinate pollution control efforts. An international body should be set up with the authority to carry out instructions given to it.

That is the burden of my argument, Mr. Speaker. Since other amendments have been ruled out of order or withdrawn and this is the only remaining amendment dealing with this particular question, and since it is a reasonable and well thought out amendment, I hope the government will see fit to accept it.

I recognize that if there is a jurisdictional conflict between one minister and another, it will be difficult for one minister to accept full responsibility. However, I am very happy to see the Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Acting Prime Minister, in the House at the moment because he is the only minister, I suggest who could do something about this situation. Perhaps while the Prime Minister is away he will settle any jurisdictional conflicts existing between his colleagues. If he is prepared to take that responsibility, perhaps he would suggest to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources that this amendment should be accepted.

Hon. George Hees (Prince Edward-Hastings): Mr. Speaker, this afternoon we are being given a first hand example of the interest that this government takes in this most important matter of pollution. The Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) has made some very pious speeches about the tremendous importance of this matter to the country, how it