

*Fisheries Act*

the very least, we will therefore have to use the Fisheries Act as we have done in the past. We will have to use it pending the signing of ironclad agreements between the provinces and Ottawa, agreements which will cover all facets of water development and protect our fisheries as well.

There will of course always be rivers and seas in which fishing is the dominant activity. There will also be single industry situations along our coasts and in outlying parts of this country. In those circumstances the Fisheries Act, alone, may be sufficient to do the job. It is here, also, that we expect our people will have a dominant voice in making sure that our aquatic environment is maintained in a healthy state. Perhaps in the fullness of time, the Canada Water Act may apply in these areas as well. But, for the time being, we will have to use the Fisheries Act by itself, to police pollution as best we can. Policing may not be the right word. Co-operative action is preferable. We want to work with industry, not against it. We want to co-operate with companies building new plants and installing new processes. We know that these new firms can benefit from our expertise and we are sure that our fishery will be much healthier if we have their co-operation from the outset.

Our departmental experience on both coasts has been gratifying. Most companies intending to build new pulp mills or chemical plants are now coming to our fisheries experts and asking for advice. They ask what our standards are and how these can best be met. They ask about new treatment facilities and how they have worked out in other locations in Canada.

We have scored some notable successes. Our new pulp mills on the greatest salmon stream on earth, the Fraser River in B.C., are among the cleanest in the world. Several chemical plants built in eastern Canada are also world leaders in this respect. Our insistence on high standards has also paid off in other ways. Several consulting firms, specializing in pollution engineering have now begun to sell their expertise in other countries. I am thinking of the Sandwell and Simons companies in Vancouver. They are now looked to by the Scandinavians and the Russians as having broken new ground by marrying pollution control and economy and by making a number of chemical process industries more compatible with our environment.

Co-operation with industry in this country, in other words, has turned what might otherwise have been a local disadvantage into an

[Mr. Davis.]

international advantage. We have been able to protect our fish and develop new export industries as well. We have insisted on high standards and they have been achieved at minimum cost. Sometimes by-products have been produced, sometimes not. But our rivers are cleaner and our seas are healthier. We have taken the intelligent approach to pollution abatement and we have scored a number of successes without costing the federal treasury large sums of money in the process.

While I can report considerable progress in some instances I must, regretfully, admit continuing failures in others. Some industries have been more co-operative than others. Some provinces have also been more energetic than others in the battle against pollution. It is because of this uneven pattern of development, this permissive approach to industrial development and regional expansion that we feel we must formalize our arrangements. By formalizing, I mean making it necessary for industries which generally give us trouble on the pollution front to file plans for their construction of new facilities and the introduction of new processes.

I might also say another reason for proceeding is to avoid the unhappy development of what I might loosely refer to as pollution havens in one part of the country because legislation is not uniform from coast to coast. I am sure changing our Fisheries Act will help to eliminate these so-called havens.

Hon. members will please note that we propose to change section 33 of the Fisheries Act thereby giving this department the power to:

- (1) ask any firm about its plans for expansion;
- (2) be informed about the anti-pollution measures to be taken in each case; and
- (3) approve, or disapprove, of these plans and with the backing of the Governor in Council, in other words the cabinet, to require any modifications necessary to protect the fisheries waters of Canada.

Sometimes, we in the Department of Fisheries and Forestry will have to take the initiative. We will have to contact the firm in question. Once contacted it will be obliged, by law, to co-operate with our departmental officials in reviewing its plans for pollution control. I have no doubt that all, or nearly all, of these industries will work closely with us. I have no doubt that they will co-operate. They have been co-operative in the past. However, there may be exceptions. There may be exceptions, not only as a result of an honest