

*Water Resources*

areas in the world, equal to the Alps. If you travel there today you will see that it is blackened like the Ruhr Valley. You might think you were in Birmingham, England on a foggy day. You cannot see the sun for the smoke. All the rivers have been polluted from the mines and the fish in the creeks are dead. The trees on the mountainside are dying and turning brown because of the polluted air.

We have done this and I think we are going to continue to do it unless we solve this problem before 1971. One university professor suggested that we could not get around to doing anything significant about this problem until 1981. One of the articles I read contained the statement that, because of the increasing tempo of pollution, we may not have ten years of reasonable life left on this planet unless we do something about it.

I am told that the DDT we are putting into the ocean today has already made serious inroads on the existence of plankton. As most of you know, this is the microscopic green plant life floating around in the ocean. It is responsible for renewing the oxygen we breathe. As we cover more and more square miles of our planet with concrete this process of renewing the oxygen is being left almost entirely to our oceans. If we continue to destroy our forests by covering the surface of the land with concrete buildings, we will double the burden of the plankton of the ocean. We are already wearing down the ability of the plankton of the ocean to reproduce that green material which in turn produces food for the fish and oxygen to replenish the air we breathe.

Some scientists say we may not have ten years left at the present rate of pollution. Last week I drove through Pittsburgh. About five miles out of the city the air was not fit for human beings to breathe. I wondered that my automobile operator could even see the road through the smoke, sulphur and fumes. This was a foggy, overcast day and all the poisons going into the air were trapped between the cloud banks and the earth. We were coughing and sputtering and we had to turn on the headlights at two in the afternoon. It was difficult to see the road. This is what we are doing to our atmosphere.

● (2:40 p.m.)

This pollution in the atmosphere is going into our plants. We are putting these poisons into our sewers and eventually into our oceans. I thoroughly approve of the idea of attacking the pollution problem, but this bill represents only a bit of flag waving. At the

[Mr. Bigg.]

present time a non-partisan and non-political attitude is required. This is a problem in respect of which every province of the country will have to co-operate and one in respect of which the Prime Minister will have to give leadership. This is not a situation in which we should find it necessary to sit here and make fun of the Prime Minister. The bill may have to be strengthened, completely revised and brought up to present standards. It is not necessary that we should wait until we have all the knowledge and information available. Let us use the information and knowledge we do have, and use the power we have, to stop pollution and to bring the provinces together to work on this problem immediately. If we cannot obtain agreement from the factory owners and shareholders, then we will have to be tough and tell them they will no longer be in business unless proper action is taken.

I am one of the strongest free enterprisers you are ever likely to meet, but I do not believe free enterprise should be permitted to destroy the air I breathe and the water I drink. The air and the water which support the trees, the game and the marine life in the provinces of Canada are very vital to their survival. It would be a very short-sighted premier of a province who would not co-operate with the minister in respect of this water bill if it were a bill which would offer a real solution. He would find he would be very popular for having given this kind of leadership. I, for one, would say "Good luck, Mr. Minister". If he can make this bill work I will be one of the first to stand up and give him the proper kudos. However, I want to make sure that he does not take a wooden attitude toward Pollution Control. I want him to convince his colleagues in the cabinet that this bill is far from being adequate in its present form.

We should welcome aid from every source. We should welcome every ounce of co-operation in order to prevent a national and international disaster. If we think big enough we may well be able to do this. We still have the water resources here. The task involved would not be an impossible one but would require a good deal of courage in the initial stages. The very factories and industries which may have to be disciplined, and perhaps taxed, in order to make this scheme work would thank the government in the end because they would then have a chance of being around on this planet for another 100 years or so. Many people are thinking about this. I like to think some of them are here. I