

Water Resources Programs

House. In committee we had 25 days and 36 hearings on this bill. To date, on the report stage, we have spent two days so far and we do not know how much longer we will be. There are 140 pages of *Hansard* in respect of first and second reading of the bill in the House. There are 571 pages of the committee reports dealing with the deliberations of the committee on Bill C-144. There are 58 pages in *Hansard* dealing with the report stage. In total, including both *Hansard* and committee reports we have 769 pages of debate in respect of the deliberations on this bill. A total of some 693,450 words have been spoken in respect of this matter to date.

Mr. Brewin: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker; I suggest that the minister is out of order. You quite properly called to the attention of this House that we are debating specific amendments. All these statistics, interesting though they are, have nothing whatever to do with the amendment introduced by my hon. friend that we are now discussing.

Mr. Speaker: The point raised by the hon. member is well taken. I had taken the liberty a moment ago of interrupting one hon. member who was taking part in this debate. I suggested at that time that, in my view, some members taking part in the debate had gone somewhat beyond the terms of the very specific amendment now before us. I would have to make the same observation in relation to the contribution of the minister. What he is saying now may be relevant when we reach third reading. I am not sure whether it would be then, but I judge it is quite clearly beyond the terms of the amendment now before the House.

Perhaps the minister might keep this in mind. At the same time, I judge these remarks were introductory in character, and I assume that by this time he would wish to reach the meat and substance of his argument for the consideration of the House.

An hon. Member: He does not have any.

Mr. Dinsdale: There is no meat or substance to it.

Mr. Greene: Mr. Speaker, with respect, I understand the gist of the amendment is a single standard and the one single standard which seems to have applied to date is verbosity. I think that is the point I wished to make.

Mr. McCleave: Yours or somebody else's?

[Mr. Greene.]

• (4:00 p.m.)

Mr. Greene: Again, if we are serious about our intention to get ahead with cleaning up pollution, I think we all want to make this legislation available to the authorities as soon as possible. The longer it is delayed here, the less likely it is that they can get ahead with it at an early date.

As I said, we all agree this is an important bill, and we have given it close scrutiny in the past months. I hope sincerely that we will soon get ahead with the passing of the bill so that we can start the process of cleaning up our lakes and streams.

We heard last week and again today several speeches on motions Nos. 7 and 14. First, however, I would like to reply to my friend, the hon. member for Prince Edward-Hastings (Mr. Hees), who made some suggestions. I always look very carefully at the words of the hon. member. He stated that there was need for co-ordination. The hon. member had some kind things to say about the bill, and particularly kind things to say about me which I very much appreciated. As I said, I always look carefully at his words. I am sorry he is not in the House today as he was so kind as to refer to my absence when he spoke. Whenever he is here we hear him, so I can tell he is not here without even looking. I want to say but a word with regard to the criticism he made with respect to my absence. I think it was inferentially a criticism of my parliamentary secretary (Mr. Orange) who was conducting the debate on the bill on behalf of the government, as he is very properly supposed to do. He was carrying it out admirably, and certainly not only his constituency but the country, and I, are all most fortunate to have such an able representative.

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): Yes, he is very able.

Mr. Greene: I certainly think that, in so far as the words of the hon. member are concerned, he implied that the Parliamentary Secretary was not carrying out his duties properly. I say that he is certainly very well able to do so and it is the function of the Parliamentary Secretary to carry bills through the House of Commons. However, as I say, I looked at the words of the genial buffoon of Her Majesty's loyal Opposition, and I strained very hard to see if I could find but a modicum of worthwhile argument in his speech.

Mr. Aiken: May I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker, and point out to the minister