

Pollution Control

the cleaning of the lakes which have suffered such damage as a result of acid rain? I hope the minister will address himself to that question.

In addition, the minister referred in his statement to the reciprocal reductions by the United States and the need to achieve an understanding between Canada and the United States with regard to further reductions. I suggest to the minister that when he attends this meeting and talks about the reduction in the amount of acid rain which falls on the province of Ontario and, indeed, on other parts of Canada, he also raises one point which is of considerable concern to people in the Niagara area. We seem to experience a lot of difficulty getting the government of the United States and the companies under its jurisdiction to understand that we cannot afford to have them dumping their garbage into the Niagara River. It matters not whether it is acid rain or whether it is effluent from manufacturing processes; the fact is, on the surface at least, there is long-term damage suffered by the Niagara River and also to the area of Lake Ontario where the river enters the lake, as a result of a lack of enforceable regulation and the absence of an enforceable reciprocal agreement between Canada and the United States.

I suggest to the minister that as he talks about the further negotiation of the bilateral working agreement and about the bilateral working groups which are being set up, he keeps in mind that in any discussion about the effects on either country of pollution emanating from either jurisdiction, what is happening to the Niagara River, its effect on people who live downstream in the Buffalo and Niagara area and the effect of pollution spilling into Lake Ontario be one of his primary concerns. Just as acid rain is detrimentally affecting life in our lakes, so there is no question that a lack of adequate regulation is detrimentally affecting the Niagara River and the portion of Lake Ontario which is affected by the spill-out.

I hope that whatever negotiations are undertaken will be undertaken with this in mind, and that whatever the detrimental effect has been—and it will likely be long term in terms of acid rain fall-out in southern Ontario and in the Muskoka area—there be a commitment by both the federal government and the government of Ontario to do whatever is required in order to reclaim those lakes and the surrounding foliage. We must do everything possible to restore them to full use for recreational purposes because they afford by far the finest recreation potential which Ontario has to offer; they are certainly in the forefront of Canadian recreational potential as far as the possibility of their use by families in the immediate metropolitan areas of southern Ontario is concerned.

As I said earlier, I really would have liked to see the control order. The reference made to it does not give me a lot of confidence. I have dealt with Harry Parrott before. I do not know whether the minister has. If the minister has dealt with Harry Parrott, the minister of the environment of Ontario, he will understand that at times his word is perhaps questionable.

● (1550)

I can distinctly recall statements made by the minister with regard to sanitary land fill and with regard to the disposal of liquid industrial waste and many other areas of environmental concern. Just not many weeks ago there was a statement about the closing of a sanitary land fill site and an industrial waste site in the area I represent. Just yesterday he announced that it is going to open again, and I really do think we need to adopt a measure with more teeth in it. Perhaps a minister with more teeth would be helpful. I am not talking about our minister here in this House, but I would suggest to him that he require of the provincial minister a clear indication not only of what his hopes are—because I think we probably all share his hopes—but also how he intends to implement measures to protect the environment in Ontario and how he intends to stand up to industry that undoubtedly will tell him that the costs are far too great and it will have to shut down.

That is the inevitable result of everything that is said when it comes time to sit down and negotiate the industry's financial involvement in the protection of the environment. Inevitably the response is that they can find the sources necessary for their ongoing manufacturing processes in other parts of the world. International Nickel has effectively done that in the last few years, has moved its operations substantially and reduced the emphasis that Sudbury once had in the world community for the production of nickel.

International Nickel Company will, I am sure, over the course of time, plead poverty and be prepared to run some serious risks with that community and its economy in an effort not to live up to its responsibilities. That has been the pattern; that has been the history. I think that to whatever extent this government has power in the field—and there is some question as to how much power one can exercise—legislative power or other power, it should be exercised to the fullest extent in order to extract from International Nickel the cost of cleaning up that which International Nickel itself created.

Mr. McMillan: Madam Speaker, I wonder if the minister would entertain a question about his statement. I acknowledge the contribution of the federal government in connection with the case that Ontario made against Inco as far as levels of acid rain pollution are concerned and, in particular, the studies made available to the government of Ontario by the federal minister and his department which made the Ontario case pretty formidable. But the clear impression from newspaper reports, in any event, is that the studies to which the federal government had access, and which it in turn made available to Ontario, were very much fortuitous. The federal government practically stumbled upon certain information, certain leads, and certain "deep throat" connections, as the newspaper reports described them.

Would the minister indicate whether, in his view, his department now has the research capacity it requires to proceed with all due dispatch, for example, in its negotiations with the United States, or does he think there is a case to be made for a substantial increase in federal funding for acid rain research?