

*Water Resources*

In contrast to the industry briefs were submissions from the city of Buffalo, the town of Hamburg, N.Y., and Toronto Alderman Anthony O'Donohue, all of which called for a moratorium on drilling.

Harold Baumler, counsel for Hamburg, said the greatest danger posed by drilling "is not an oil spill such as recently occurred in California but an accidental leak of salt brine".

He said experts have warned that a spill of salt brine from an oil well "would be one of the greatest natural catastrophes that could strike the Great Lakes". Within 48 hours of a major spill all of Lake Erie would be polluted with salt.

"If enough salt water got into the lake it would kill every fresh-water fish and plant."

I am sure that the minister has jurisdiction in this area and I hope he will take immediate action to call an immediate moratorium on oil drilling in Lake Ontario and Lake Erie.

I cannot do better than to quote from the main speech by the member from our party who led off the debate. He said:

(1) There are no uniform water quality standards, nor a set of various plans to meet specific situations. This means that in areas of Canada where public opinion is not well organized, pollution control agencies will follow the path of least resistance and allow industry and hesitant municipalities to dictate policy.

(2) The bill will allow industry to pay a fee for the right to pollute. The people of Canada want clean water, not money.

(3) Many municipalities do not have the finances to make a serious effort at pollution control. The government's vague promises about loans are not sufficient if Canada is really going on a clean up campaign.

(4) There is little scope for the influence of citizens' groups and popular opinion generally to affect the plans of local pollution control agencies. Industry will maintain powerful influence and this should be balanced by the organization of public committees.

May I say in conclusion that my reading of this bill leads me to the belief that all we have really is a new administrative framework for overcoming federal-provincial conflicts, and that we have not taken a hard look and come forth with solutions to meet the problem of pollution. We have to help municipalities financially, tighten regulations applying to industry, set national standards and, above all, we have to have federal leadership in the enforcement of this act.

I look forward to having the minister before the committee to resolve some of these problems and come forth with solutions which will make Canadians proud of their clean air, clean water and clean environment.

**Hon. W. G. Dinsdale (Brandon-Souris):** Mr. Speaker, at this stage of the debate, it has been made crystal clear by the various mem-

[Mr. Gilbert.]

bers who have contributed to the discussion that there are great inadequacies in Bill C-144. I will not be repetitious at all in the contribution I want to make because I think that the inadequacies and deficiencies have been clearly defined. As you are well aware, the members of this group have felt so seriously about the matter that we endeavoured to have the bill referred back to the government, so that the obvious inadequacies and inefficiencies could be eliminated. It was because there have been such long delays in moving to deal in forthright terms with the problems of renewable resource management that we felt the most strenuous action available in this House should be taken. It is not for me to judge why the government has failed to come to grips with the vital aspects of pollution in our environment.

However, there is a new report that has become public which indicates that perhaps the explanation is that the government is not fully aware of the nature of the problem. The Minister of Fisheries and Forestry, the Hon. Jack Davis, speaking yesterday to the North Vancouver Chamber of Commerce—and I am reading from the press despatch—said that he does not subscribe to alarmist talk about pollution. Quoting directly from the speech, I read:

● (12:40 p.m.)

"I don't believe all that I read about dying lakes and sickening seas. Most of it is poppycock . . . written by novices who are reaching for headlines . . ."

Mr. Davis said there are pollution problems in Canada "but the ecological situation is still basically under control."

The minister called for a national water quality code, with regional guidelines drawn to meet regional needs.

In this statement, delivered as recently as yesterday, we have the reason for the half-hearted, half-baked approach to the problem of dealing with the control of water pollution outlined in the bill that is before us.

As I indicated in my opening remarks, Mr. Speaker, I am not going to repeat the problems in the legislation that have been outlined by earlier speakers in this debate. We shall have an opportunity to deal with those in some considerable depth when the legislation finally comes before the committee. But in the light of the statement made by the Minister of Fisheries, a minister who has basic responsibility in the field of our renewable resources, it is important to underline that the legislation will in no way deal with the fundamental problem that he has outlined, the necessity of establishing a national water