

any waste products. We could set an example in this regard which hopefully the rest of the world might follow. The responsibility I believe can best be expressed by the government taking an effective lead now in this year 1969 in the establishment of a dialogue concerning international standards. Next year there is to be an international conference on this matter. But why should we wait until that conference? I direct my remarks to the minister's parliamentary secretary. Why should we wait until next year before establishing at least our own dialogue and our own standards concerning what we as a nation will do with regard to the waters surrounding our coast?

We are doing tremendous work in identifying the causes of and remedies for pollution in our fresh waters. We are doing this at centres such as Burlington, Ontario. Just this morning the Minister of Fisheries and Forestry (Mr. Davis) announced the establishment of a \$7.5 million institute on the University of Manitoba campus to deal, among other things, with our fresh water lakes and the fish that are in them as well as the marine life on which these fish depend. We have gone far; indeed we have gone to the point where two or three weeks ago we were told that at the Inland Centre for fresh water studies at Burlington they have advanced to the point where we can save Lake Erie and Lake Ontario from a fate I guess worse than death; that is, our tremendous bodies of water can be saved from becoming almost totally unusable by the people who live adjacent to them. If we are able to do this—and we are making tremendous strides—I ask why the government cannot move in this direction so far as our Atlantic and Pacific waters are concerned. We have at Bedford or at Burnside in the city of Dartmouth, one of the world's renowned centres for oceanographic studies, a centre for which the government had tremendous plans when it was initially established.

● (8:40 p.m.)

Somehow these plans have been badly sidetracked. There is a basic, trained school of individuals supported by the academic institutions at Dalhousie. They, in turn, are supported by a very viable fleet of scientifically equipped ships with laboratories and technicians. In short, we have all the ingredients to launch into an investigative program in respect of our salt water. So far we have not done so, and this is regrettable. The problem

Alleged Lack of Action to Combat Pollution is worldwide and is international in scope. Again, I leave with the minister the thought that while there is an international meeting called for 1970, and out of this probably will come at least a first step in the establishment of international standards regarding the use and abuses of oceans and surrounding air, it is time the government pursued this matter. We must establish a dialogue in this country in respect of our own standards in relation to international standards.

I should like to ask the minister why there has been a delay and why there has been nothing done in this field? Why is it that it is always weeks after a problem develops in our inland bays and waterways that we try to settle down and do something about it? Why have we not established a dialogue in respect of doing something about pollution of our Oceans?

Mr. Gaston Isabelle (Hull): I am happy today to act on behalf of the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Munro), in joining with his colleague from Saskatoon-Humboldt (Mr. Lang) in asserting that our government has been far from asleep in the control of the quality of the Canadian environment. I do not seek to deny that there is a problem. That would be like some hon. gentlemen from a former administration who used to seem to think that there was no such thing as galloping unemployment in Canada—that was just a nasty rumour started by a lot of people out of work.

We admit there is a problem. Mankind has been taking the marvellous technical advances of this century and using them indiscriminately to foul, to both greater and lesser extents, the air he breathes, the water he utilizes for drinking, bathing and processing, and the soil from which his very food supply must come. We know that action is needed, and needed to an ever increasing degree, if man is to avoid transforming his own planet into an unlivable wasteland.

But we have been moving. The minister has explained what his department has been doing to ensure that our waters remain a usable resource for Canadians. Towards this objective, I know that the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Davis) has been exerting his best efforts as well, and I am pleased to say that the Department of National Health and Welfare has been able to assist in the battle. Because of its effect on health and on the use of recreational facilities, water pollution has long been a matter of concern to the Department of National Health and Welfare. The