

Water Resources

Waterloo, Guelph, Galt, the down-river industrial community of Brantford, plus a very rich agricultural area.

The Canada Water Conservation Assistance Act has been extremely important to us in the past. We in the area had hoped that this could continue to be a medium for the conservation and preservation of our inland water resource, the Grand River. The Grand River Conservation Commission was incorporated under provincial charter in 1935, well in advance of the provincial conservation act and the establishment of other provincial conservation authorities. Over the years three important dams have been constructed on the river, the Shand, the Luther, and the Conestoga. The main purpose of these dams was flood control, but other important ancillary benefits were also derived. A total of over \$8 million had been invested, in capital and operating costs, up to the beginning of 1966. Five and a quarter million dollars in capital costs was provided by the two higher levels of government; over \$3 million was raised by eight area municipalities for capital and operating costs. Since these dams were initially constructed and the capital funds supplied up to the end of 1965, not one cent had been provided or asked for with respect to operating costs from the two higher levels of government.

Under the existing legislation, the Canada Water Conservation Assistance Act, work had been in progress for an extended program to provide additional dams on the river. While this program had been approved by the government of the province of Ontario in January, 1967, one of the designated participants under the act, and the submission had been subsequently forwarded to the federal government, neither I nor any of my colleagues representing constituencies on the river have had any success in persuading the ministers responsible, or the government, that federal participation should be approved.

One of the problems of which I have been very much aware in regard to the existing statute and others involving shared programs is a complete lack of awareness or consultation among the three levels of government in the early stages of planning. If Bill C-144 provides for nothing more—and I am sure it will provide for a good deal more—than consultation, co-operation, research and planning at all levels of government and industry, including research establishments, the universities and the private sector, as indicated, in my opinion a great deal will have been accomplished.

[Mr. Hymmen.]

The introduction of Bill C-144 and the indicated repeal of the existing statute is not merely a summary abrogation of federal financial responsibility. It indicates a change in thinking which, perhaps, after all may be in the right direction. If the federal government through the new legislation accepts full responsibility, as indicated, for international, interprovincial or boundary waters with or without the co-operation of the provinces—which in itself is a large and expensive undertaking—perhaps the provinces will agree to retain their already accepted responsibility for purely provincial and inland waters.

All is yet not lost in regard to the Grand River valley. The Grand River Conservation Commission has been dissolved and has been replaced by a larger body representing, I believe, some 70 urban and rural municipalities, the Grand River Conservation Authority. The government of the province of Ontario has already offered to increase its share of the proposed program from 37½ per cent to 60 per cent, and I believe is presently considering the possibility of filling in the 37½ per cent gap of permissive funds by the federal government under the existing statute.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, like the other hon. members who sat on the Standing Committee on National Resources and Public Works, I am looking forward to the second reading of this bill and to its reference to the committee.

• (9:50 p.m.)

[English]

Mr. Aiken: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I might rise on a point of order at this time. It is nearly ten o'clock and I understand the government house leader has an announcement on the business for next week. I wonder if it might be called ten o'clock at this time.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member. I think it was agreed among representatives of the parties that this debate would continue on another day; therefore, I concur in the hope that it might be called ten o'clock.

With regard to the business for the coming week, the first item to be called on Monday will be the Expo Winding-up Act which was reported back to the House today. This will