

*The Budget—Mr. Penner*

policies designed to prevent or reduce the pollution of Canadian waters and air. There is a new brand of politics taking shape within our nation, and it is also evident outside our country as well. This new brand of politics has sometimes been described as the politics of ecology, and it is being given urgency by a growing public alarm over all varieties of pollution and environmental spoilage.

War protest is yielding to demonstrations against the rape of the environment. Many young people are turning away from political and economic theorists and instead are flocking to ecologists. The message is ecocide—the environment being murdered by mankind. Yesterday was designated as “E” day, “Earth Day”—history’s first mass observance of the world’s environmental problems. The attention and energy of millions of North Americans were focussed on fear for the well being of our planet.

One of the most significant features of the past decade in this country has been the increasing public debate about the management and use of Canada’s water resources. The awakening of public concern about water problems in Canada is partly due to the increasing number and complexity of conflicts in water use. As population has grown, as industry has expanded, and as urbanization has proceeded, competition for the use of particular water supplies has intensified and has sometimes resulted in severe conflicts of interest among water users. A well known example concerns the water resources in the United States. There, Stuart Udall has pointed out that there is really no shortage of water; the problem is one of improper use, creating an apparent shortage.

Another reason for public concern about water is rooted in the increasing demand for a higher quality environment. Canadians are no longer satisfied with merely increasing their incomes; they also wish to improve the environment in which they live, work, and enjoy recreation. Increasing affluence has led to an increase in leisure time, and this in turn has given rise to growing demands for outdoor recreation. More and more pressure is being placed on governments to deal with pollution problems and to increase opportunities for outdoor recreation.

Donald Waterfield, in a recent book entitled “Continental Water Boy: The Columbia River Controversy”, makes an articulate plea for balanced development of the entire culture of a river basin. This point of view will appeal to the growing number of ecologists who are

warning an increasingly worried world that its very survival may depend on just such an approach. Ecological awareness on such a wide scale is a very recent development. Ten years ago the most effective criticism of such a treaty as, for example, the Columbia River Treaty was based mainly on economic and political aspects, such as the value of power and water and who would control these resources. The intangible effects on wildlife, recreation, ecology and the people directly affected were largely ignored. In today’s climate, such an approach is unacceptable. Now, power authorities must go to unprecedented expense to develop integrated plans for a whole area, rather than just build a dam.

The social and ecological impact of water developments are almost impossible to predict with available current knowledge. A great deal of intensive research is required, and Canada is giving considerable leadership in this regard. Concern for the preservation of social values and natural ecological conditions has resulted in the cancellation of several major reservoir programs in the United States. Naturalists and farmers with a love for some particular valley are understandably concerned with the effects of a reservoir on vegetation, wildlife, the way of life of local residents, and the aesthetic values of their valley. The people of northwestern Ontario, surrounded by an abundance of fresh water, share these concerns, and hence we ask hard questions when engineers and hydrologists do their studies in our region. We want the assurance that other studies, sociological and ecological, are also being undertaken. The Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Greene) recently gave the assurance in this House that the current Northern Ontario Water Survey would be expanded to include these vital considerations.

The growing public concern about cleaning up the “human nest” is to be welcomed and encouraged. What is most needed today are new realizations about man’s place in the universe, a new sense of life, a new pride in the importance of being human, and a new determination to keep this planet from becoming uninhabitable. It has been said that man, for all his brilliance, has thrown himself all the way back to his primitive condition in which his dominant problem on earth was coping with his environment. The difference between the situation today and his tribal beginnings is that the environmental threats today are of his own making. “We have met the enemy