

*Government Organization Act, 1970*

This massive clean up, of course, will cost money, a good deal of money. It will cost the pulp and paper industry, and consumers, several million dollars for every \$100 million dollars of new pulp and paper mill construction. It will cost roughly half as much as the industry's annual wage increase settlement with labour. It will be barely offset by one year's increase in productivity. I do not want to make light of these increased costs. Our forest based industries have been going through a difficult time. Prices are only a little higher than they were in the mid 1950s. Wage rates have been going up by leaps and bounds. The Canadian dollar has been revalued and Canada's pulp and paper industry still faces a battery of income and income related taxes which, in total, are among the highest in the world.

Still, pollution abatement must be given top priority. New mills must not be built unless they contain the necessary in-plant facilities, catchment basins and biological treatment ponds. They must pass muster with government inspectors and engineers. Sound operating procedures must be followed to the letter. Nothing which is toxic to fish must get out of the systems of these plants. Nothing must be allowed to escape from these plants which is deleterious to aquatic life of any kind.

Old mills, understandably, are in a different category. Each one tends to be a special case, each one calls for special treatment. Some are already obsolete, others do not have enough space in which to instal the necessary facilities. So conversion presents a problem. This is why our new department of the environment has to look at each plant in turn, and this is why we cannot expect many of these older mills to be cleaned up overnight.

The technique is to schedule a series of changes, each with its own particular deadline. The sequence of adjustments leads up to a final deadline. Failure to comply with the schedule can result in a series of fines. The longer the lag, the bigger the bill. Running at \$5,000 a day, it can add up to a lot of money, to more than \$1 million a year if the company is unlucky enough to be found breaking the law for that length of time.

Some hon. members have asked when our new regulations dealing with the pulp and paper industry will be published in full. My answer is, in a few weeks time. We still have to hear from some of the provincial pollution control boards. We still have to have a final meeting with the pulp and paper industry itself. But no one with any competence will be able to say they were not consulted first and consulted thoroughly.

We have leaned over backwards to make sure we were reasonable. In so doing, we have created a precedent. For the first time in Canada, and perhaps in the world, the best brains in industry, in government and in our universities have sat down together to tackle pollution in an entire sector of our national economy. They are pooling their knowledge and revealing their plans with a view to giving Canada the best treatment facilities and the best treatment procedures so far known to mankind. One of

[Mr. Davis.]

our problem areas is the Ottawa River from the national capital downstream to Montreal. Half a dozen pulp mills have been using it for decades as a big industrial sewer. Once our federal Fisheries Act regulations are in place, these mills will have to sit up and take notice.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Davis:** They will have to do this because we will have a single standard to which they must conform on both sides of the Ottawa River, and from its headwaters to the sea.

Ontario administers the federal Fisheries Act in Ontario. Quebec administers the federal Fisheries Act in Quebec. Relying on the same Act and enforcing the same regulations, we should be well on our way toward solving a problem which has been baffling both levels of government for years.

Using our federal Fisheries Act, we will be able to stop the polluters. We will be able to stop these local pulp and paper mills from treating the lower Ottawa River like an industrial sewer. Facing a common set of regulations and enforcement procedures, they will have no choice. With Quebec, Ontario and Canada breathing down their necks, they will have to make the Ottawa River a fit place for fish to live.

Before I leave water and begin to talk about air I should, perhaps, say a word about mercury. Canada is far ahead of the United States in this connection, and well ahead of most countries in western Europe. Unlike Japan, and to a lesser extent Sweden, we have caught our mercury pollution problem in the nick of time. We are well on our way to solving it, without having to face a human health problem in this country.

The main offender has been the chlor-alkali industry. It used to dump thousands of pounds of mercury each year into our rivers and streams. As soon as we began to detect high levels of mercury in wild birds and fish, we called in the companies. They were told to stop polluting and to recycle their effluent. They were instructed to keep their mercury bearing wastes inside their factory fence. The companies moved quickly to put things right. They built settling ponds and began pumping surplus fluids back into their plants. This recycling process has been highly successful. It has already cut the amount of mercury getting into our rivers by more than 90 per cent.

The record, on a plant by plant basis, makes interesting reading. It is documented in a table which I have here, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if I could have the permission of hon. members to have it included in today's *Hansard*.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Is this agreed?

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

[*Editor's Note: The table referred to follows*]