

Criminal Code

all other areas coming under the jurisdiction of the federal government. Third, there should be planning and implementation of control measures. Fourth, there should be stimulation and co-ordination of research. Fifth, there should be dissemination of information to the public in general.

In my opinion an agency with these functions could furnish a positive approach to the federal and provincial fields to the problem of water pollution control. In consequence, many broad but tangible benefits could be derived and very soon, indeed. I might say, this is a problem that does not require, as I see it, the expenditure of vast sums of money such as do hydro-electric installations and the installations of other great institutions and things of that sort. This simply means the co-ordination of the federal and provincial governments and a united function behind an understood and agreed policy. With the establishment of the federal and provincial agencies I have indicated it really means the co-ordination of our present resources with very little further expenditures. The approach of industry would be greatly simplified and problems created by present neglect would not arise. Government, group and individual interests could be integrated. Government departments now concerned with pollution would profit by technical assistance and administrative co-operation and planning. Enforcement of control measures would be efficiently conducted for the benefit of the provinces concerned and for the benefit of the federal government where its authority existed. I might say with respect to that aspect of my suggestions that in my opinion the international aspects of fresh water pollution would be clarified by the existence of a federal control agency working in co-operation with provincial agencies.

I have just outlined briefly some of our views with respect to this very important problem but before concluding I would reiterate our belief in the importance of the establishment of federal and provincial pollution control agencies. In order to discharge their potential functions, to provide effective control, I know it will require some reorganization and transfers of delegation of authority from one department to another, both on the federal and provincial level. But this is a serious problem and is not one of those problems where the matter is delayed because of the requirement of large expenditures of money. It is simply one that requires the attention of this government in co-operation with the provincial governments. In brief, it wants some of the planning that

[Mr. Herridge.]

this group has advocated over many years. As we view the problem, the following steps are required:

1. Dominion-provincial co-operation for the establishment of a national policy on pollution of waters as a segment of a national policy on the conservation of renewable natural resources.

2. Amendment to the law, both federal and provincial.

3. Establishment of national and provincial water pollution agencies designed particularly for that purpose which I mentioned previously.

4. A co-ordinated research program which I think would mean a saving rather than the expenditure of further moneys.

5. Education of the public on the importance of the problem and its urgency, on the law, on government policy, on the administration of that policy, and on the co-operation from the public, industry and all other segments of our economy required to make effective our efforts to prevent water pollution in Canada.

Mr. Richard A. Bell (Carleton): Mr. Speaker, no issue more basic and fundamental to the health and welfare of Canadians everywhere will likely be debated at this session than that which has been so ably presented this afternoon by the hon. member for Selkirk (Mr. Stefanson). To the hon. gentleman for his fine contribution to the debate I should like to extend my personal congratulations. Of the great heritage of our natural resources none is more essential, none more indispensable, none more significant than our magnificent lakes, rivers and streams. The safeguarding of the purity of these fresh waters, I submit to the house, is a national as well as provincial responsibility and I have no hesitation whatever in supporting the resolution which seeks to make it an offence under the Criminal Code wantonly and wilfully to pollute or contaminate these great resources.

I share the view recently expressed by the hon. member for Kootenay West (Mr. Herridge) that amendment of the Criminal Code in itself does not constitute the answer. As far as the resolution is concerned, there are some shortcomings, but it constitutes an important start and I hope that as I progress this afternoon in what I have to say I may be able to submit to the house some of the other actions which are necessary to accomplish what must be done to solve this major problem.

Actually this issue of water pollution is a segment of a greater problem, a problem perhaps the most significant in ultimate