

Policy Statement on National Resources

study covering lake Erie, lake Ontario and the international section of the St. Lawrence river.

Laboratories have been established at Kingston and Brockville to carry out the required chemical and bacteriological analyses. Additional laboratory facilities have been provided on board research vessels operated by the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources for deep water surveys throughout these waters. Technical assistance has been rendered to the Atlantic provinces in determining the extent of the pollution in a number of major watercourses. This, of course, has greatly aided the water authorities within these provinces in the implementation of remedial measures in respect of abating pollution. Technical services also are being provided to the Atlantic Development Board in its efforts to assist industries in those provinces with regard to the installation of necessary pollution abatement facilities.

My department, the Department of National Health and Welfare, also has been responsible for organizing, planning and co-ordinating the necessary field surveys required to evaluate the industrial waste discharged into fresh waters in the Atlantic provinces. During the past year alone 30 industries have been surveyed for this purpose. This provides the data which is necessary to determine the amount of financial assistance, based on the actual extent of pollution, which can be made available to the board through federal funds. Over the years engineering advice has been made available by the department on the required basis to other federal departments in respect of the control and abatement of pollution.

Mr. Lewis: Mr. Speaker, would the minister permit a question? Do I understand from his remarks that the only policy the government visualizes is to give financial assistance to industry, or does the government also envisage requiring industry to spend some money itself to abate pollution? I am wondering whether the taxpayer will constantly have to pay for this.

Mr. MacEachen: No. I do not think that would be the policy of the government. I do not believe that is the policy which has been followed in respect of certain industries, at least in Canada, which have attempted to instal pollution control devices.

I was referring, Mr. Speaker, to the activities of the Department of National Health and Welfare with regard to the control of

[Mr. MacEachen.]

pollution in connection with federal properties. In February of this year this particular responsibility was officially assigned to the Department of National Health and Welfare.

At the present time we are endeavouring to determine very specific objectives to protect the water bodies which are receiving wastes from federal facilities. We wish to be in a position to ensure that the proper objectives are submitted at the planning stages and at the time of approval of the final plans. In addition to attempting to secure the proper measures at the planning stage, evaluation or assessment studies will be taken at the required intervals to analyse the efficiency of federal pollution control plans and the quality of the water. Engineering resources are being directed to these programs. This includes the development of additional mobile and regional laboratory facilities as necessary to carry out this responsibility across Canada. Under this program close co-operation will be maintained with the provinces to ensure that the degree of treatment meets the provincial standards.

Mr. Lewis: Mr. Speaker, I apologize for interrupting the minister again. Could he tell us how much money has been assigned for this engineering and research work as well as for the experts who have been assigned to make these investigations and so on?

Mr. MacEachen: I am sorry, Mr. Speaker, I do not have the figures but I will be glad to get them as quickly as possible for my hon. friend. I think the point of my statement is that the federal government is very conscious of its own role in the field of pollution control and is taking all possible steps to see that federal facilities are properly regulated to avoid any pollution. This is a special responsibility which has been assigned to my department by the government as a whole. We are trying to carry it out in the manner I have indicated.

The hon. member for Burnaby-Coquitlam and his colleague, the hon. member for Comox-Alberni, referred to the unfortunate impression created by one or two questions which I answered on television on Sunday night. The indication was that I had portrayed a negative and indifferent attitude toward the problem of water and air pollution in Canada. If that impression was created I can only say there are certain risks attendant upon television appearances, especially when long interviews are later excised according to the requirements of the producer. It may be that the producer and the