

Water Resources

It would seem that while a substantive amendment to the preamble cannot be proposed even in committee, a modification proposed for purposes of clarification or uniformity would not come under the prescription stated by May.

I would therefore suggest that the amendment, if any is required, should be proposed at the committee stage.

[Translation]

I hope that the hon. member for Lotbinière will accept what I am suggesting to him, namely that the very valid question which he raised last Friday could be considered in a more logical, more practical and more efficient way when the bill is studied by the committee.

[English]

Mr. J. M. Forrestall (Dartmouth-Halifax East): Mr. Speaker, in order to place in some context the remarks I want to make this afternoon I should like with your permission to remind hon. members briefly of the inseparability of water as a resource not only for this generation of Canadians but for many future generations.

The measure now before us has been dealt with fully and the lack of what we would expect as being a meaningful suggestion regarding methods of controlling the pollution of waters in Canada has been pointed out. Most glaring of all is the fact that there has been no comment by a spokesman from the government side or from anybody else in the House during this debate or on previous occasions when water has been discussed, regarding the thousands and thousands of miles of contiguous and still fresh, pure water on both coasts and off the Arctic shelf. I have not been able to find any such reference. It is the lack of any such reference in the Bill before us that prompts me at this time to take part in the debate which will result in deciding whether or not the bill should be referred to the committee.

It seems to me, as I am sure it must seem to thousands of Canadians, that water whether it be salt or fresh is a priceless human resource. Four of the many things that live in water can be found in the waters contiguous to our country. This fact alone brings me to my feet in dismay over the failure of the government and the minister, even in terms of fresh water pollution, to establish guidelines and to bring forward a policy for a country which has one of the largest coastal lines in the world. Senator Claiborne Pell,

reporting in *Saturday Review* of October 11, 1969 under the title of "The Oceans, Man's Last Great Resource" had this to say:

After millenniums of exploiting and often destroying the riches of the land, man is now hovering acquisitively over the wealth of the oceans that cover three-quarters of the earth. In the no man's land of the seabed, a scramble for minerals and oil, for new underwater empires secured by advancing armies of technology—

He points out that people are concerned with and are desirous of tapping this wealth and establishing what he goes on to describe as moral commitments.

I suggest that the failure of the minister and his departmental officials in drafting this bill to establish the first national guidelines in recent times on the question of pollution of our waters is not acceptable to myself and certainly is not acceptable to thousands upon thousands of fishermen upon both our coasts. It cannot be acceptable to the thousands of people who during the summer must look out daily, for example, on the waters off Vancouver and off the beautiful city of Victoria and physically smell and see the pollution which is there. I cannot understand, in these first guidelines, why there was no reference to the contiguous salt waters of Canada, let alone waters such as the Gulf of St. Lawrence, our great national harbours, the Arctic, Hudson Bay and many others. I cannot understand this and I am sure the constituents in our maritime provinces, as well as the citizens of Canada, cannot understand it either.

In his remarks in this debate the hon. member for South Western Nova (Mr. Comeau) lamented the failure of the government to move effectively in respect of a national standard concerning water pollution and water control. I believe he was correct in making that observation. I think the hon. member for Parry Sound-Muskoka (Mr. Aiken), when he replied to the minister, was right when he commented on the failure of the proposals in this bill to meaningfully attack or even approach the great problem involved in this question of pollution. One of the problems which perhaps the minister faced, and one that I can understand although I do not accept it and do not believe anyone accepts it, was the failure of the government and the draftsmen to make provision for minimum standards of water quality.

The hon. member for St. John's West (Mr. Carter) spoke of the pollution of one of the great fishing areas of his native province of Newfoundland. He spoke about the failure of