

Pollution Research

He said: Mr. Speaker, an hon. member of my party who is to my left said to me, as you were reading the motion, that I could not lose with a motion of this kind. I told him that it is exactly the same kind of motion as I had moved previously, and my previous motion had not been accepted. May I say this now? The growth of our urban regions is being intensified and accelerated to such an extent that by 1980 about 80 per cent of our population will be urban oriented. I, therefore, believe it is necessary for me to continue to bring this matter before the House. I shall do that. I made a speech on this subject on February 2, 1970. May I refer hon. members to my remarks made between pages 3094 and 3103 inclusive. There I discussed the technical background of the problem involving the disposal of solid waste. This problem has grown much worse since that time. We shall continue producing waste in ever greater abundance. Citizens of urban areas are now producing one ton of solid waste per person per year. This fact must be considered. Because of the magnitude and importance of the matter, I submit that the House ought to be prepared to agree to a motion such as is before it now.

We now face a double problem, Mr. Speaker. We must adopt measures to take care of the accumulation of the neglect of past years and establish, as well, effective measures to clear up current problems. The seriousness of the problem is and was accepted on both sides of the House. I should like to emphasize and underline that statement. As I say, both sides of the House accept the seriousness of the problem. May I say that being against pollution is probably politically safer than being for motherhood these days. The question that is still asked is, what do we intend to do about pollution?

After my speech of February 2, I was pleased to see that the forty-fifth annual report of the United Church of Canada Board of Evangelism and Social Services, published in 1970 and entitled, "It's a big responsibility" upheld my views. I was glad to learn that that organization considered the problem I had placed before the House and the Canadian people as one which is important, which calls for an immediate answer and which calls for the involvement of the federal government.

My present proposal, Mr. Speaker, would, if accepted, encourage the government first to support research and training programs and, second, to make grants for demonstration projects in the area of the control of solid wastes, thus encouraging the implementation of existing technology to remedy current practices. I cannot understand how we can approach the problem of air pollution and water pollution to the exclusion of problems involving solid wastes. At page 3095 of *Hansard* for February 2, 1970 I am reported as saying:

Although it seems possible, it really is not practical to separate problems involving solid-waste disposal from those involving water and air pollution. For example, air pollution can be aggravated by the burning of solid wastes. Household grinding of garbage eliminates solid waste but increases liquid waste. Solid-waste disposal by means of land fill can produce problems relating to ground water supplies.

Therefore, any over-all policy involving the disposal of solid wastes must be developed in association with any policy relating to liquid waste and atmospheric conditions. Accordingly, it

is necessary for the federal government to adopt some unified standard.

• (5:10 p.m.)

The research aspect of the proposal would emphasize recycling rather than dumping as the preferable method of disposal. Recycling includes all methods of disposal which have as a definite end the return of the materials to use. Where dumping is the only feasible alternative, the research would concentrate on those methods by which disposal is carried out without creating health hazards or further environmental pollution.

The financial aspect of my proposal is equally important to the research aspect. As the hon. member for Esquimalt-Saanich (Mr. Anderson) pointed out in the debate last year, in many cases we already have the scientific knowledge to deal with certain aspects of this problem. All that remains is the need for funds to apply this knowledge.

There is a need for federal action. We all realize that the federal government cannot be expected to solve the problem by itself. Nor will it be solved by attacking a particular industry or level of government. As the comic strip character Pogo so aptly described the problem of pollution, "We have met the enemy and he is us". However, our experience has demonstrated the cities and provinces, unaided, will not be able to invest the funds urgently needed to meet the rising cost of solid-waste disposal and will lack the means to take advantage of improved methods now available and being perfected. Furthermore, there will be nothing gained in the long run if one city or province merely hurls the refuse into someone else's backyard.

I received a communiqué, probably from someone in the Ottawa office of the United States information services. It is dated March 24, 1970. It indicates that three departments of the United States government, the Department of Agriculture, the Department of the Interior and the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare have announced a project to reconvert solid waste. I quote from the communiqué:

The Departments of Agriculture, Interior and Health, Education, and Welfare today announced the establishment of a joint research and development pilot project aimed at helping the nation's cities reconvert solid wastes into useable materials.

The project is being conducted at Madison, Wisconsin, to develop the technology needed to transform discarded cans, bottles, plastics, paper and other solid trash into materials that can be re-used in the economy.

Later on, the Departments hope to build a full-scale demonstration facility capable of demonstrating to cities and towns across the country one way to handle their solid waste production. The design of this facility will begin this year.

The disposal of solid wastes is one of the nation's most pressing environmental pollution problems. Last year, municipalities across the United States spent about \$4.5 billion to collect and dispose of nearly 350 million tons of solid wastes, much of which went to open land dumps, creating new health and pollution problems. By the early 1980's solid discards are expected to exceed one half billion tons annually.

The United States is apprised of the situation to such an extent that it is prepared to have two departments face this problem and to accept what I have indicated in my motion, research and financial assistance. It is beyond