

*Water Resources*

been education that has drawn the minds of the people; and in the seventies it will be questions of environment and pollution control.

Control of pollution in the waters, both international and national, of the air, and of the soil, were determined at the Niagara conference of the Progressive Conservative Party very recently to be one of the highest priorities of our party, and to be urgent in the maintenance of the quality of our life. Federal involvement in matters of pollution control has been spotty and uncertain in the past. The first positive steps were taken in 1960 by the former Progressive Conservative government when grants and loans to municipalities for installation of sewage disposal facilities were authorized by legislation. There has been a tremendous advance in municipal treatment and disposal facilities since that legislation was introduced. I was pleased to hear the minister say today that this assistance will be continued and enlarged, so that the municipalities may carry on this very urgent work.

During the past few years there has been an increasing demand for the federal government to involve itself in pollution control as a national priority. There has been insistence that the federal government should take firm action toward co-ordination of its efforts to end the jurisdictional maze in which half a dozen federal departments pass the problems back and forth, and that there should be one agency with which provincial and international bodies can deal. Numerous concrete suggestions have been made, beginning with the establishment of the Council of Resource Ministers in the early 1960's and the Resource Ministers Conference on Pollution in 1966, for the exercise of the federal authority, particularly in areas of national standards, co-ordination of efforts among the provinces, research, monitoring standards, enforcement, and the provision of funds as a national priority. Whenever the subject of pollution control has been raised during the past two years, the shortly-to-appear water act has been quoted as the answer to the problem.

As against this background of desirable objectives which I have just given and which the minister himself has so ably stated today, I would like to look at the shortcomings of this bill, as I see them. While it may seem trite to mention it, the bill deals only with water and does not touch on any of the other problems of pollution which many feel are so

[Mr. Aiken.]

inter-related that they cannot be dealt with separately. Even as it concerns water, the bill does nothing to improve the great problems of the Canadian constitution, particularly within the federal area, the jurisdictional maze among the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, the Department of Fisheries, the Department of Agriculture, the Department of National Health and Welfare, the Department of External Affairs, the Department of Transport and the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation. All these branches of the government have pollution control sections, in many cases working independently of and separately from, the other departments and without knowledge of the exact work that the other departments are doing.

The bill does not make provision for the establishment of national standards for water quality, equipment or monitoring. It does, in fact, still leave it for one province or one area of the country to encourage industry because of lower standards of pollution control. In his opening statement the minister stated that there was no provision for the national elimination of detergents, for example, and this, I feel, is one of the obvious shortcomings in the bill.

● (4:50 p.m.)

Neither the papers presented this summer on the Canada water bill nor the bill itself indicate that the federal government is going to put up any money for pollution control projects. This impression was greatly confirmed by the minister's answer to my question. I venture to say that what the provinces want, as a quid pro quo for the entry of the federal government into the pollution field, is money. They and the municipalities feel that they are presently overburdened and that they have a need for a broader tax base which will encourage them to say, "Yes, the federal government should be involved."

This may be a very crass statement, it may be very financially oriented, but I believe it to be a fact. I think that the provincial authorities, in some cases if not in all, will be very difficult to deal with unless they find some financial resource is being made available to them. The financial clauses of the bill, clauses 31 and 32, are vague in the extreme. They are meaningless in the absence of a firm commitment of funds by the federal government.

The general problems of water quality control throughout Canada are not covered by this bill. The scope of the bill is limited to