

**Mr. MacEachen:** The minister was kind enough to hand them to me a few moments ago, and I am even more impressed than I was before receiving them by the activities taking place in his department.

**Mr. Barnett:** Would the minister allow a question? Does the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources send these releases to the Prime Minister (Mr. Pearson), because yesterday he did not seem to know anything about them?

**Mr. MacEachen:** The Prime Minister has never posed as an authority on this subject like my hon. friend—

**Mr. Knowles:** He ought to be.

**Mr. MacEachen:** —and maybe he can be excused, but my hon. friend cannot be excused in this field. There is considerable activity taking place. As recorded in *Hansard* of April 3, 1967, the minister gave a very extensive answer to a question on this subject, and much detail respecting the whole field of water resources is to be found in an appendix to that issue *Hansard* which extends to quite a number of pages. My hon. friend would have greatly benefited by examining it.

The hon. member talked about the policy proposals that emerged from the conference of resource ministers which considered the question of pollution control and asked, what is the attitude of the government in this respect? According to one of the releases which I have in my hand, in May of this year the minister called for the establishment of a national advisory council on water pollution on which there would be representatives of the federal and provincial governments, and pointed out that such a body had been proposed by experts attending last fall's national conference in Montreal. That proposal has received the endorsement of the minister, as have a number of other proposals arising from that conference.

The minister has also indicated that a new water act will be introduced. It is currently under preparation in his department, and maybe hon. gentlemen opposite will have more control over the speed with which this measure can be dealt with in parliament than the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. It is admitted that the present Canadian water assistance act is inadequate. The new act will cover a number of important items that have been raised in this debate and will provide for much better co-ordination of federal activities in the field of

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control over water pollution. It will create a vehicle for federal interministerial co-operation. Hopefully it will create a federal advisory board for the minister. It will create a national committee on water pollution. It will work toward a pollution abatement code. This is one of the items my hon. friend who just took his seat urged the government to consider. I should like to assure him that his good advice is currently being considered in the department and likely will be reflected in a measure to be placed before the House of Commons.

● (4:00 p.m.)

In addition to this machinery which will provide for better co-ordination and better advice in the field of water pollution control, it is also proposed that the relationship between the federal and provincial governments will be maintained and improved. Already the considerations involved in this particular proposal have been studied by the council of resource ministers. The resource ministers have been told what the thinking of the federal government is in this field. It is hoped that at the next meeting of the ministers a further discussion will be held and that there will be a further exchange of views on the items I have mentioned as the essential parts of a new water measure.

Depending upon the work we are able to do in dealing with other legislative items which now are on the order paper and which have already been announced for action, this bill will be introduced early in 1968. Therefore I believe the federal government is giving very strong and definite leadership in the field of water pollution. The impression should not remain unanswered that there is a drifting away, a chaos or a lack of planning in this particular field. I regret that the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources did not have an opportunity to speak at greater length on this subject.

I should like to say by way of supplementation to the comments made about the activity of the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources that the Department of National Health and Welfare has for many years been closely associated with the work of the International Joint Commission as it relates to the matter of pollution of boundary waters which endangers health and property on either side of the boundary. For example, active participation in co-operation with other federal, state and provincial agencies is being maintained by the Department of National Health and Welfare in the current International Joint Commission reference