

measure of success will be based not only on effective removal of substances, but on whether the cost is worth the benefits. For every situation this determination will be unique, depending on the character of the wastes to be treated, on geographical and logistical factors and on the intensity of water reuse that is desired.

Science and technology are not static in water pollution control. Processes and equipment are being made available effectively with current problems and for those that are foreseeable in the near future.

RESULTING KEY ISSUES

Water pollution

Emerging from the current review are several key issues relevant to national policy. For purposes of discussion they may be classified into four categories—legislative, fiscal, institutional, and technological.

(1) Legislative issues

Neither the original Federal legislation on control of water pollution nor its newly amended version can be regarded as explicit with respect to the national goal. Nowhere is pollution defined.

The preamble of original legislation concerned itself primarily with the exercise of jurisdiction declaring it “* * * to be the policy of the Congress to recognize, preserve, and protect the primary responsibilities and rights of the States in preventing and controlling water pollution * * *”

Amended legislation signed by the President on October 3, 1965, presumably attempts to clarify matters by inserting an introductory sentence to the existing preamble that says: “The purpose of this act is to enhance the quality and value of our water resources and to establish a national policy for the prevention, control, and abatement of water pollution.” But, again what is meant by the term “pollution”?

Defining pollution.—For the execution of a program of control—for giving meaningful direction to the attainment of a national goal—there is need to reach understanding as to what constitutes pollution.

Is it the discharge of anything in our waterways? Or is it the discharge of “too much” of something? If so, how much is too much? Is pristine purity the goal we are seeking? Or do we settle for something less, such as maintenance of quality conditions that avoid a nuisance—that satisfy water supply needs—that are hospitable to fish life—that are suitable for recreational purposes? Should the objective be an efficient adjustment to the attainment of water quality that will take into account the benefits and costs of alternative accommodations? Should the objective be the same throughout the Nation? In fact, is it practicable or even possible for the objective to be universally the same?

Until agreement is reached on what we are aiming for, the administration of pollution control will continue to be—as it is now—enveloped in confusion with respect to ultimate objective.

It serves no useful purpose to asseverate, as has one of our highest officials in the Federal service, the following viewpoint on the objective:

There are still some who hold to the belief that the utilization of a stream as a receptacle of waste is a legitimate use of water, consistent with water pollution control policy. * * * Whatever may have been acceptable or unavoidable in