

ventures through the promulgation of water-quality standards. The States are given the initiative. However, it remains to be seen if the proceedings so carefully spelled out for this purpose will be executed in accord with their intent. Here again the act specifies that a conference be conducted among State and Federal agencies as a first step in the resolution of differences. And only after this step is it ordained that a public hearing be undertaken.

Apparently sensitive to the dissatisfaction previously registered with the Congress by the States because of violation of the style and substance of so-called conferences, Congressman John A. Blatnik, one of the authors of the amendments, carefully stressed that the first step to be taken by the Secretary of HEW in a matter under dispute, was the conduct of "an informal conference with all parties concerned." Unfortunately the bill itself does not contain the word "informal."

With respect to that section of the act calling for encouragement of the formation of compacts among States for the control of interstate pollution there has been no apparent diligence displayed by the Federal administrators in furthering this. At the present time eight interstate agencies are recognized by the Public Health Service as eligible for Federal aid because of this probable identification with some aspect of water pollution control. All of them owe their existence solely to the initiative of the States involved; and the four that are concerned exclusively with pollution abatement came into existence prior to enactment of the Federal act in 1948. If the Federal authorities have sought to encourage compacts, the results have not yet manifested themselves.

## (2) *Fiscal issues*

The once-traditional notion that installation of municipal sewage-treatment facilities is solely a local responsibility to be paid for with community funds no longer is valid. Beginning in 1956 the Congress established the pattern of appropriating annual sums to furnish Federal financial assistance to communities for this purpose. For the first 5 years the annual total was \$50 million; but this has been gradually increased and for fiscal 1966 the amount is \$91 million. Originally intended to stimulate sewage-treatment undertakings in the smaller, financially distressed communities, a grant of Federal funds is now regarded as a prerequisite by virtually all communities before such projects are initiated. Originally the size of a project grant was limited to 30 percent of the cost, but in no case to exceed \$600,000; the latter limit has now been raised to \$1,200,000 for a single project. Multicommunity projects are eligible for as much as \$4,800,000 or double the amount previously authorized.

A few States also provide limited financial assistance. In Pennsylvania a unique plan was inaugurated in 1956. It provides that every community upon completion of sewage treatment is eligible for an annual State subsidy of up to 2 percent of the cost of the project. The amounts made available for distribution each year is dependent upon legislative appropriations. In November 1965 the New York State electorate supported overwhelmingly a bond issue of \$1 billion. The proceeds will permit the State to allot to a community a 30-percent share of the construction cost and prefinance a 30-percent Federal share, later reimbursable to the State by the Federal Government.