

These examples simply illustrate a range of institutional devices that may be judged applicable to the purposes of engendering effective action on the local and regional levels of government.

In California, a study is being initiated to provide the legislature of that State with a review of possibilities for implementing a region-wide waste-water collection and disposal system and other means for maintaining water quality levels in the San Francisco Bay-Delta area. What is significant about this study is that it is specifically aimed toward analyzing the potentialities of a regional institution that will have the authority and capability to integrate the financing, construction, and operation of a complete physical system. The study is designed also to illuminate procedures to be employed for optimizing water-quality control measures and the methods for allocating costs to beneficiaries.

State responsibilities

State regulation of pollution control has never been favored with budgetary resources commensurate with the responsibilities that it has involved. Furthermore, the effectiveness of State regulation has been in large measure contingent upon persuasiveness in generating response from local entities. After all, it is the municipalities and industries who must actually finance the construction of control facilities and their operation.

This important detail may not be fully appreciated by those who have presumed that Federal fiat has a special kind of magic. Federal fiat lacks vitality without substantial infusions of Federal subsidy. The American Municipal Association made this quite plain in 1956 in testimony before the Congress some 8 years after the first Federal Water Pollution Control Act was passed and dissatisfaction had mounted with respect to lack of accomplishment.

Association spokesmen representing millions of citizens in thousands of local communities in effect said this: "If you expect municipalities to comply with Federal edicts to build sewage-treatment plants, then the Congress has the obligation to provide Federal funds for their construction."

These things are mentioned simply to place in perspective the nature of the problem with which State agencies have been confronted and thus provide a basis for assessing their role in the advancement of pollution control objectives.

It is doubtful that the States can make available sufficient financial resources to satisfy with any promptness the demands resulting from social pressures and the expressions of Federal concern for stream cleanup. In fact, it must be acknowledged that State budgets have long been less than adequate to cope with urgent current necessities to say nothing of laying the groundwork for more sophisticated endeavors.

It would appear, therefore, that the discharge of State responsibilities in pollution control should be concentrated on improving capability in the conduct of routine, but vital, day-by-day operations associated with securing compliance with existing regulations. Promoting the installation of control facilities is basic to this end. But there is something more than this involved.

Perhaps the greatest deficiency in administration of pollution control to which the public can be exposed is failure to deal with the obvious.