

Staff Meetings on Environmental Quality

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 1968

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND ASTRONAUTICS,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON SCIENCE, RESEARCH, AND DEVELOPMENT,
Washington, D.C.

Mr. Joseph M. Felton, counsel for the committee, and Mr. Richard Carpenter, Legislative Reference Service, Library of Congress, met with Mr. Joe G. Moore, Jr., Commissioner, Federal Water Pollution Control Administration, and other officials of the Department of the Interior, in room 4421, Main Interior Building, Washington, D.C., at 1 p.m. Accompanying Mr. Moore were Mr. John T. Barnhill, Deputy Commissioner, Dr. Leon W. Weinberger, Assistant Commissioner, Research and Development, and Dr. Allan Hirsch, Assistant Commissioner, Program Plans and Development.

Mr. FELTON. Gentlemen, we do thank you for meeting with us. As we mentioned earlier, Mr. Daddario suggested that it might expedite matters if we meet informally and discussed these questions rather than submit formal questions for the record.

Dick, would you like to start right in with the questions?

Mr. CARPENTER. Yes. As you recall, Mr. Ryan was very interested in the problem on the Hudson River and the approval of the percentage of treatment as contrasted with some statements which had been made on the normal degree of treatment which the FWPCA would expect.

Question No. 1 suggests that the New York City sewage treatment plant is reported to remove 70 percent of the organic waste. How is this figure justified? What is the relationship to the quality of the Hudson River water? What difference in water quality would have resulted from 90 percent removal? Or 60 percent?

A similar situation has been reported to us in the Raritan Bay, where they have a 70-percent treatment, and if they could extend their outfall further in the estuary, further out, they have calculated that this would be equivalent to 90-percent treatment as far as their receiving water is concerned.

There was some question as to whether they should raise this issue of the alternative of increasing their treatment or moving the outfall because it might mean that Federal funds would be withheld unless they went to the higher treatment.

So my question concerns the way in which you make these judgments of the percent removal as how they are related to the actual use of the receiving waters.

Mr. MOORE. Yes. Let me make a general comment. Others here may want to speak to it. But let me make a general comment about the one on the Hudson River. I am not acquainted with the Raritan River case. But in the case of the design of this Hudson River plant,