

circumstances that are socially or economically desirable. For example, a high-quality water in an undeveloped area or a high-quality water in an area that is economically depressed—and there are some of these in the Nation.

Well, here it seems that you would weigh the degree of degradation that might occur from this waste. You understand I said might, because you always have a technology involved. You weigh the amount of degradation that might occur in terms of the social or economic benefit that would accrue from allowing this discharge.

Mr. CARPENTER. So this is no more of an extension of your common-sense approach to the establishment of present standards?

Mr. MOORE. That is what I would regard it. You can I think see the potential, however, for some rather strong positions or disagreements as to whether it will or will not meet the conditions that are outlined in the Secretary's statement.

Mr. CARPENTER. These are choices ultimately that would have to be made by society?

Mr. MOORE. Yes.

Mr. CARPENTER. Weighing the facts that you can provide for them?

Mr. MOORE. And in this instance ultimately it would have to be weighed by the States and the Department of the Interior in terms of the quality of water.

There undoubtedly will be those cases in which there may be a serious question about whether you should permit any discharge at all. I think we would have to admit the existence of some areas in the country in which it may be desirable to have no discharges. However, there are areas in which there are high-quality waters that are subject to economic and social development that can't otherwise occur, and it seems to me in these instances is where you will be faced, the States and the Department of the Interior will be faced with making a decision.

Mr. CARPENTER. I would like next to discuss eutrophication. The information which you have given us on eutrophication answers a number of these questions. We will consider putting that in the record.

One question remains. From the standpoint of making realistic forecasts of the future status of lakes and estuaries which now contain a substantial nutrient content, could you tell us what happens in a closed body of water or an estuary with little change in water if new additions of nutrients are slowed or halted but the present nutrient content is not removed by any actual treatment of the lake itself? What can we expect in terms of improvement of that water through natural processes and what time would be required before that water would show any improvement if indeed it ever will?

Dr. WEINBERGER. The current approach to the control of the undesirable effects of accelerated eutrophication, normally considered to be excessive algae growths or algae blooms, is to reduce the nutrient levels in the body of water. And what is necessary using this method, is to reduce any one of the elements below a concentration which is needed for the life of those organisms.

Therefore, in order to stop the bloom or the algae growth, we have to reduce the concentration of a nutrient.

We must keep out or reduce the amount of nutrients going into the lake. There is a very simple material balance. If it comes into the lake,