

When I first came to the Department of Forests and Waters as Secretary in 1955, everybody was discussing the effects of these problems on the State's economy with apprehension and dismay. The stock opinion was that they were too massive to be solved, and hence, we might as well accept them as necessary evils which would always be with us.

It is true that, back in the WPA days, some work was done on the sealing of abandoned mines. This program met with varying degrees of success, but was not followed up. It is also true that chemical reactions causing the formation of acid were understood at an early date, and hence, certain possible methods of abating acid pollution were known. In addition, it was evident that there was no single "cure-all", and that each individual situation would probably call for a different combination of techniques and methods.

In short, the fact that there was no single or simple solutions fostered the opinion that these inherited problems were, from both the economic and technical standpoint, too insurmountable to be tackled.

Now, gentlemen, I have never believed these criers-of-doom for an instant, and quite frankly, I got awfully sick of listening to them!

When I was a boy in New England and was faced with a problem for which I could see no ready solution, my grandpappy would invariably quote two common axioms—one of these was "Can't, never tried" and the other was "Where there's a will, there's a way!"

I won't say that his advice necessarily lessened my frustration at the moment, but I have never forgotten it, and I feel that it is just as true today as it was then.

Now, I would be quite remiss if I did not point out that great progress has been made in the Commonwealth since 1945 in the control and abatement of pollution from active mining operations and in the reclamation of surface areas affected thereby. For example, of the over 300,000 acres disturbed by coal mining operations, approximately 93,000 acres have been completely reclaimed and part of the remainder has been partially reclaimed.

Progressively since that date, through the process of passing new legislation and amending old laws, our General Assembly, prompted by the very evident desire and intent of Pennsylvania's citizens that stream pollution and surface disturbances caused by mining operations be controlled and eliminated, has given us the most effective legislative tools in the country with which to do the job.

For example, the 1965 amendments to our Clean Streams Law completely removed exemptions previously granted for certain mine drainage conditions and placed all mine drainage in the same category for regulation and control as industrial wastes. No mining will be permitted if discharges from mine areas will be, or will become, injurious to the public health, animal, or aquatic life; or prevent the use of waters for domestic, industrial consumption or recreational purposes.

Under the Clean Streams Law and other pertinent mining legislation, responsibility for administration, regulation, and enforcement are shared by the Sanitary Water Board of the Department of Health and the Pennsylvania Department of Mines and Mineral Industries.

I believe that I can safely say, gentlemen, that with effective implementation and administration of these laws, the adverse conditions