

I have mentioned only some of what I consider to be important aspects of the war against pollution of our greatest single natural resource. There are others, of course, covered by the numerous bills now before this committee. I trust to the good judgment of the Committee to approve legislation which will continue unabated the battle which is so vital to the safety and welfare of our Nation.

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STATEMENT BY THE HONORABLE ODIN LANGEN OF MINNESOTA

Mr. Chairman, I am most pleased that the Committee on Public Works is directing attention to the growing threat to one of this nation's greatest natural resources, our lakes. We in Minnesota are particularly aware of the benefits derived from attractive and clean lakes, since we have so many of them.

The scenic surrounding and satisfying recreational and relaxing activities associated with lakes will be in ever greater demand as our population continues to grow. It is quite a sight to see the cars stream out of our cities at the end of the week, all carrying families to a favorite lake-shore spot that promises fresh, clean air, and pure water for swimming, boating, fishing and the many other activities connected with our lakes.

Unfortunately, the presence of man in ever-increasing numbers has aggravated a problem that threatens the future of these great resources. This is why many of us introduced legislation to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to authorize a comprehensive planning program in lake pollution prevention and control. There are many complexities related to this problem which make it necessary that we approach it on a pilot program basis. In this manner we could determine the extent to which proper control and abatement of water pollution can be accomplished through local, State and Federal cooperation.

The man-made pollution of our lakes is accelerating the normal aging process of such bodies of water. Lake Erie is a conspicuous example, but our smaller lakes, some in Minnesota, also are deteriorating at a rapid pace. Rank vegetation chokes much of the lake beginning in July, and restricts fishing, boating, swimming and other recreational activities. Subsequently the mass of vegetation begins to rot, creating very bad odor problems, and lowering the oxygen level so that fish frequently die. There is nothing so depressing as to see a lake in late July and August, choked with weeds and a green slime floating on the surface of the water.

These conditions might have developed anyway, but would have taken thousands of years under the natural aging process. But man has accelerated this aging through pollution. It comes from many sources, such as septic tanks of the shoreline cottages, sewage from cities and towns situated on the watershed, pollution from livestock on farms, and draining from fertilized farm lands. Siltation from erosion within the drainage area further complicates the problem. Unfortunately, a lake has relatively little flushing action, and has much less capacity to dilute introduced wastes than does a flowing stream.

Greatly expanded Federal, State and local research and demonstration programs are needed to develop practical and effective methods for improving the quality of lake waters. The problem must be attacked on two fronts simultaneously. First, we must find ways to remove or dissipate the existing nutrients. And then we must reduce the nutrients entering the lake.

The pilot program suggested in my bill and others will provide the basis for solving the over-all pollution problem that is threatening the usefulness of the thousands of lakes in America. I respectfully urge the Committee to report favorably on a bill to control lake pollution. Not only would it be an investment in preserving these important facilities for future generations, but would protect the future economic well-being of countless communities throughout the Nation where they depend on these lakes for a living.

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STATEMENT OF HON. CLAUDE PEPPER, A MEMBER OF CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF FLORIDA

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, like most other Americans, I am deeply concerned about our water resources. In many parts of the United States, the grim problem of water pollution and shortages is becoming one of our most critical political issues.