

Humorist Mark Twain once said, "Water, if taken in moderation, will not hurt anyone." But if Mark Twain were here today I doubt that he would find anything humorous in the water problems we face—and neither do I. That is one of the reasons that on March 25, 1968 I introduced H.R. 16163 to improve pollution legislation.

Of all the resources known to man, it seems to me that the most abused is water. So long as our rivers, lakes, streams, beaches, estuaries and waterfronts could cope with the ever-increasing loads of pollution, chemicals, waste, and oil, we were content to let them struggle along. But now suddenly, the load is too much. We can see, and often smell, the evidence all around us.

At times the evidence is shocking. For example, the break-up of the tanker *Ocean Eagle* in the bay at San Juan on March 3rd dramatically focused attention on the widespread damage that an oil slick can cause to the beaches in a resort area. But more important, this costly disaster in Puerto Rico still stands as a grim reminder to Congress that we have before us an urgent item of unfinished business. We must up-date our out-moded pollution laws, and we must do it now.

It is for this reason that I urge support for my bill to amend the Federal Pollution Control Act so as to enable our authorities to more effectively cope with this serious source of pollution.

According to an article in the March 10 issue of the *New York Times*:

... More than 700 million tons of petroleum and petroleum products move by sea each year. About 420 million tons of this total is crude oil, which is the greatest single source of marine pollution, because refined petroleum products are volatile enough to disappear from the seas in a relatively short time.

The demand for oil will continue to grow and the economics of the industry are producing mammoth 306,000-deadweight-ton tankers that will dwarf the 200,000-ton supertankers now plying the oil routes.

Industry spokesmen, who feel that occasional tanker disasters are as inevitable as aircraft disasters, are concentrating on the problem of preventing spillages and dumpings into the water. A discharge of only 15 tons of oil can cover an area of eight square miles in less than a week.

I think this quote shows how the oil pollution menace will continue to grow as more and larger tankers are built.

The damage caused by oil pollution from the *Ocean Eagle* was not nearly so extensive as that caused about one year ago when the *Torrey Canyon* went down off the coast of England. Great Britain and France claim that damages resulting from the 117,000 tons of crude oil that seeped from the crippled tanker came to more than \$16.2 million. The 2½ million gallons of detergent dumped into the sea and on the beaches to help clear away the crude oil were more harmful to marine life than the oil itself. In the aftermath, 50,000 sea birds died from the effects of the oil and the detergents.

The damage from such disasters is not limited to the beaches, resorts, and tourist trade. The pollution also affects marine life, waterfowl, shellfish, and many other living creatures. Once this living resource is destroyed, it may be indeed difficult to restore it.

H.R. 16163 would help fix pollution responsibility, set penalties, provide for inspections, clarify legal tangles, provide for removal of oil pollutants, and include other much needed improvements in the present Federal Water Pollution Control Act. The President, in his recent conservation message to the Congress, strongly urged the passage of effective legislation to deal with the serious problem.

Pollution control is not a local problem; it is worldwide. Health authorities estimate that more than 100 million persons die every year because of water-borne diseases. Think of it—10 million deaths a year from water pollution. If we do not act soon, water pollution may also become a matter of life and death right here in America. In New York City, for example, an epidemic of hepatitis broke out in 1961; it was traced to contaminated shellfish taken from the polluted Raritan Bay.

The costs of water pollution to the Nation are enormous. No accurate tabulation of costs is available, but one recent estimate put the figure at \$12 billion annually. And as population and pollution loads increase, these costs are sure to rise.