

signatories to the dumping of no oils within fifty miles of any coast. Ten nations signed; three—Germany, Italy and Japan—did not. The result was an ineffective and comparatively unobserved pact.

So far as inland waters are concerned legislation of varying efficacy has been locally enacted to check the oil pollution nuisance. In some instances these laws appear to have accomplished their purpose, have been enforced and have brought about a diminution of the pollution. In other cases there are reports of increasing menace from oil waste, with laws entirely inadequate to meet conditions and with a resultant menace both to public safety and to aquatic life. In certain instances, where serious attempts have been made to correct the situation, it has been found that the laws are difficult or impossible of enforcement.

These are not, however, insuperable problems. Co-operation with and between the States, and between the States and a progressive attitude on the part of the Federal Government, can and should bring about a solution. Water is a vital part of our biologic and economic structure. When there is too much of it there is flood and destruction; when there is too little there is drought and destruction; when water is poisoned there is death and destruction. Industry or special interests have no vested right to bring about any of these conditions.

Perhaps most important, and certainly most difficult of regulation, is the problem of oil on coastal waters. Here it becomes an international question. It is an issue that should be above politics and the selfish concerns of vested interests. It is also a problem of economic significance since it involves both waste of mineral oils and wild life.

Some steamship companies have faced the issue and have commanded strict observance of rules against dumping oily bilge, or have installed oil separators on their vessels. These items of equipment reclaim the oil from the bilge water with a resultant saving in fuel costs. Majority opinion appears to be that separators are worth the investment, but it is safe to say that the large majority of oil-burning vessels are not so equipped. And it is equally safe to observe that the majority of these oil-burners pump their oily bilge overboard when and as they wish.

It is thus we find the situation. On the one hand we have the Nature lover and the sportsman seeking the conservation of bird life; we have the important consideration of wise and efficient use of our supply of fuel oils; we have the question of preserving from contamination certain sources of food supply inherent in the sea; we have the bather who prefers to dive through surf that is not slimy with oil. Against these we have