

MEMORANDUM TO OTTY LAKE PROPERTY OWNERS

SUBJECT: POLLUTION CONTROL

During the summer of 1970, a number of cottagers, concerned about pollution, took water samples from various sections of the lake which revealed that, although we do not have serious pollution, there are indications that the water is becoming contaminated with human waste.

This was discussed at the annual meeting of the Otty Lake Protective and Conservation Association held in August, and it was unanimously agreed that pollution should be stopped before serious water contamination occurs, and control becomes complicated and expensive, if not impossible. A Pollution Control Committee was appointed to follow up.

Preliminary enquiries revealed that the Ontario Water Resources Commission, in co-operation with the Ontario Department of Health, has instituted an experimental pollution control programme on a selected group of lakes and rivers in 1970. It is comprised of two parts. A team of experts from the Department of Health examines all cottages and farms adjacent to the shore lines to determine the effectiveness of dry wells, septic tanks, outhouses and other sewage disposal systems. A water quality team from the Ontario Water Resources Commission conducts shore line water quality analyses. The combined results of such surveys has provided valuable information which has helped to pinpoint problem areas. The conclusions have been turned over to the local Medical Officers of Health who were able to assist cottagers and others with remedial action.

This is an excellent programme and it is encouraging to know that practical steps are being taken to bring this matter under control. However, it is just beginning and can only be instituted in a few areas. The immediate targets are the seriously contaminated lakes and rivers, and Otty Lake certainly does not fit into this category. At the same time, your Committee is of the opinion that this is the time for action, not after water conditions have deteriorated.

During October, the Chairman of The Pollution Control Committee met The Honourable George Kerr, the Ontario Minister of Energy and Resources, and presented the Committee's recommendation that Otty Lake form part of the 1971 pollution control programme. The Minister was extremely helpful and, though he was not in a position to have The Lake included in the 1971 programme at that time, he indicated that he would present our request to their Selection Committee later in the winter. He was offered our complete co-operation, and it was suggested that the Lake be used as a test area for determining the effectiveness of current pollution control measures in lakes which are relatively free of pollution and with growing cottage populations.

I am sure that all cottage owners will agree with this approach, but there may be some apprehension about the costs of renovating sewage disposal systems and so on. This is a very practical consideration and one that cannot be overlooked, but the first step is to find out where we stand. We are all in this together and when we obtain more knowledge we must then decide, in co-operation with the appropriate provincial authorities, on the best methods for adjusting unsatisfactory situations.

Everyone can help. If you have views, pro or con, write to the Secretary of The Otty Lake Pollution Control Committee, Mrs. John Burns, 764 Lonsdale Road, Ottawa 7, Ontario. Next summer we may require volunteers for various projects. If you want to play a more positive role let Mrs. Burns have your name.

The costs of the initial work will be small as all of the Committee members are working on a voluntary basis, but some money is needed for postage and similar expenses. Be sure that your 1970-71 membership in The Otty Lake Protective and Conservation Association has been paid. The annual dues are \$2.00 and should be submitted to The Secretary-Treasurer, Glen Girdwood, Perth, Ontario.

Otty Lake has been good to all of us and we have an obligation to pass it on to future generations the way we found it. Get behind your Committee. Now is the time for action.

J. K. Abbott,
Chairman,

Otty Lake Pollution Control Committee.

Nov. 13, 1970