

## HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, September 27, 1949

The house met at three o'clock.

### NAVIGABLE WATERS PROTECTION ACT

POLLUTION—CONTROL OF INDUSTRIAL PLANTS  
AND OIL REFINERIES

**Mr. Rodney Adamson (York West)** moved for leave to introduce Bill No. 6, to amend the Navigable Waters Protection Act.

He said: The purpose of this bill is to amend and enlarge sections 19, 26 and 28 of the Navigable Waters Protection Act. When the act was originally passed it prohibited the pollution of navigable waters by saw mills. Section 19 of the original act prohibited the discharging of sawdust or other waste wood products into navigable waters or waters running into them. The proposed amendment enlarges the list of materials which may not be thrown or discharged into navigable waters, so that it will include oil or oil sludge, chemical wastes or other noxious substances likely to pollute the waters and adjacent shore line.

The second clause of this section deals with the discharging of raw sewage into navigable waters. It prohibits any municipality with a population greater than 3,000 from discharging such material.

Section 26 is amended to provide that the Minister of Transport may, if he deems it advisable, appoint inspectors at any plant situated on or near navigable waters, and these inspectors shall have the power to regulate the operation of the plant in this regard, the cost of such inspection to be borne by the plant in question.

The reasons for the amendments to this act are that during the summer of 1949 pollution by oil and the formation of oil slicks created such a hazard to the residents along the shore of lake Ontario that the medical officers of health in Toronto and many other municipalities had to ban the use of the beaches. Thus, in the Toronto area alone, a million people were denied the use of lake Ontario beaches because of the existence of industrial pollution. Whether this was caused by carelessness or otherwise is not important now; the fact remains that large sections of the shore of lake Ontario were made completely unusable. The loss to wild life was considerable, and the damage to shallow-draft and other shipping was extensive. Furthermore the fire danger, particularly in the

congested Toronto harbour area, was increased. Three of the beaches in my own riding of York West were put out of commission for considerable periods, including the beach at New Toronto, where the world champion swimmer, Cliff Lumsden, who subsequently won the marathon swim at the Toronto exhibition, had trained. This destruction of swimming and recreational facilities, particularly, as in this case, during one of the worst heat waves in our history, cannot be tolerated.

I believe it is within the competence of parliament to enact legislation which will safeguard the rights of people who wish to use the waters of our great lakes. The provisions of the bill are directed toward that end.

Motion agreed to and bill read the first time.

### RAILWAY ACT AMENDMENT

CONTROL OF SMOKE AND SOOT FROM  
ROUNDHOUSES

**Mr. Rodney Adamson (York West)** moved for leave to introduce Bill No. 7, to amend the Railway Act.

**Mr. Chevrier:** I think the hon. member should explain the bill.

**Mr. Adamson:** The purpose of the bill is similar to that of the bill I introduced at the last session of parliament. It differs, however, in this way from the previous one: it requires permanent installations of the railway companies to comply with the smoke by-laws of the municipalities in which they are situated. The residual power is still vested in the board of transport commissioners, thus preventing any discrimination against railway companies. It is felt that where a municipality has enacted and enforced an anti-smoke bylaw in order to safeguard the well-being of the people within its boundaries, the railway companies, as well as other industrial plants, should comply with the local regulations. The present act, and the regulations, which were drafted in 1908, allow the emission of smoke and soot into the atmosphere in quantities which are certainly prejudicial to the neighbourhood in which any roundhouse is situated.

Evidence is being collected in York township and the adjacent area of the city of Toronto, and I hope that when the bill comes