

many experts. The conclusion to which we came was that this was one of the most momentous questions that could come before a commission of this kind. One most important point which struck us was the enormous expense which would be involved in the change of systems in the different cities consequent upon any decisions given by the International Joint Commission. For instance, take such cities on the American side as Buffalo, Detroit, Niagara Falls and Port Huron; and, on the Canadian side, Port Sarnia, Windsor and Toronto, all of which contribute to the pollution of boundary waters. But when you seek a remedy, you are forced to the conclusion that it would cost millions and millions of dollars. In some instances it would almost bankrupt those cities if you imposed upon them stringent measures by which this pollution should be stopped. The commission examined some of the most renowned sanitary experts in the world to find the means by which this pollution could be remedied or altogether eradicated. I believe the commission is just finishing a very important meeting in Toronto, and if my information is correct its report will be brought down in a very short time.

This question was referred to the International Joint Commission by the common consent of the Canadian Government and the United States Government. So far as navigable waters are concerned, the question I put to my hon. friend from Selkirk (Mr. Bradbury) and these hon. gentlemen on the other side who are in a hurry to see legislation passed on the subject is this: Having referred this question to the commission by general consent under the treaty, how can this House proceed to pass in advance of the report, legislation which would affect that question? It seems to me it would be almost a breach of faith. The two governments having referred to the commission this question, which is a most intricate and complicated one, until that report is brought down, so far at any rate as boundary waters are concerned, I do not think this House could pass legislation in face of that report. Therefore, I think the best way would be to refer it to a committee. Nor is this reason I have given the only reason. If hon. gentlemen will study the report of the International Joint Commission they will see that it would be impossible—as it seems to me—for this House to pass legislation which

[Mr. Casgrain.]

would be of value in the premises. You have to hear all the interested parties and see what can be done in the different cities, to learn what would be the cost. Otherwise we should run the risk of passing legislation which, by reason of the great cost it would entail, could not be enforced and would be inoperative.

Mr. BRADBURY: In moving the second reading of this Bill, I was impressed with the importance of the question with which it deals. I have given a great deal of attention to the matter, and believe that it is one of the most important questions that this House can deal with. The fact that so many valuable lives have been sacrificed because of the pollution of our streams, and that so many of our citizens are going through life with impaired health and weakened constitutions on account of the use at some time of polluted water should be sufficient reason for Parliament's taking some action in the matter. However, after listening to the remarks of the right hon. gentleman who leads the Opposition, I realize that there is good reason why this Bill should go back to committee. I had no intention of making the Bill so far-reaching as the right hon. gentleman pointed out it would be; nor had I any intention of making it a hardship on outlying districts. I felt that I had provided for that, however, when I inserted a clause under which the Government had power to withdraw certain districts from the operation of the Act. I am anxious that something should be done; consequently I am willing that the Bill should go back to the committee, with the understanding, I hope, that the Bill will be considered, and that the committee will make its report as soon as possible, and that the House will deal with the matter during the present session.

I realize that the hon. Postmaster General, as a member of the International Joint Commission ought to be well informed, but I am not prepared to agree with him that this House should not take any action until we know what the United States or the International Joint Commission are going to do. I think we ought to take care of our own country; we ought to make it impossible for our people to cause the pollution of our rivers and of the lakes which they are obliged to use for domestic purposes. I think we could appeal to our friends on the other side of the line with more force after taking action on our own part. However, as the hon. gentleman has