

Criminal Code

after all, is there that sense of urgency that is necessary under the circumstances that have been disclosed?

One would think to listen to the Minister of Justice that this was a trivial matter. After all, the people of northern Saskatchewan and northern Manitoba may wait and hope that some day the facts will be ascertained. What I am asking for and what they are asking for is some power to act when they are established. My hon. friend says that under legislation the province of Alberta provides controls that may be exercised. True enough; but are the people of Alberta affected by this? Not at all, not one of them. They have the large industries, but we in Saskatchewan and the people in Manitoba receive the water after it has been polluted.

No one in Alberta is affected by this. The first pollution is below the city of Edmonton. There is no sense of urgency there, however desirable the government is of action being taken. As far as Manitoba is concerned, the Minister of Justice says that there are laws there. They too are in the same position; they can do nothing. What can they do by legislative action in Manitoba to protect their people against the pollution of the streams that bring water to them in the ordinary course of nature?

There is only one thing that can meet the situation, and that is federal action in co-operation, if you will, with the provinces. There is only one means of federal action as I see it outside of the Fisheries Act, which is not too applicable to the situation here, and that is through the medium of criminal law which would make it a public nuisance when the comfort, health and welfare of the people in general are interfered with and disturbed as a result of the conduct of any group of individuals, a corporation or anyone else.

What I was asking for was simply evidence of some change being made in the criminal law to cover a situation such as this. My hon. friend surprisingly enough says that I speak for political purposes. Let me tell him—

An hon. Member: Oh, no.

An hon. Member: Never.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I wish the people in northern Saskatchewan could hear my hon. friends opposite jeering on a matter that affects every one of them. Jeering is their answer to the cry of the people in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Chevrier: There is no jeering.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Quite apart—

[Mr. Diefenbaker.]

An hon. Member: We are protesting against you—

Mr. Diefenbaker: I say this—

Mr. Martin: I am sure the hon. gentleman, who is very fair in this matter, would not want to give the impression that hon. members of this house, from members of the government down, do not share with him and others their concern over this situation. I am sure he would want to state that unequivocally.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I will state immediately that my hon. friend is in the position in which he has just placed himself as a result of his statement, but there were others behind him who jeered at this situation.

Mr. Garson: On a question of privilege—

Mr. Diefenbaker: I wanted—

Mr. Garson: On a question of privilege, there was no jeering on this side of the house.

Mr. Diefenbaker: What was it?

Mr. Garson: Any person who states there was jeering is not being accurate in his statement. There was some explanation—

Mr. Diefenbaker: That is not privilege.

Mr. Garson: There was—

The Deputy Chairman: Will the Minister of Justice please state his question of privilege, after which the hon. member for Prince Albert will have an opportunity to reply.

Mr. Fulton: There is no question of privilege; he is just using—

Some hon. Members: Order.

Mr. Fulton: I submit to you, sir, it is quite obvious that the minister is seeking to use a question of privilege to raise—

Some hon. Members: Order.

Mr. Fulton: —something which is not a question of privilege at all.

The Deputy Chairman: It is quite impossible for the chairman to decide whether or not it is a question of privilege before he hears it. I would ask the Minister of Justice to state his question of privilege.

Mr. Fulton: He has already said something that—

Some hon. Members: Order.

Mr. Garson: The hon. member for Prince Albert was pointing his outstretched arm at the members on this side of the chamber and accusing them of jeering at him. I say