

Criminal Code

than a community of 25,000 people. My authority for that statement is a United Nations publication, "Water and The World Today".

In asking industry to cease polluting our rivers and lakes we are not asking too much. The cost of treating raw sewage and waste is not high when it is compared with the money that industry is prepared to invest in the construction of plants and the purchase of expensive machinery. I think these few remarks will indicate to hon. members the reason why I consider the necessity of legislation as a matter of extreme urgency.

I have said too that as a medical man I view the introduction of this measure with relief, for inherent in any water pollution is the danger of epidemics. Let me give the house some of the facts. In India, for instance, again according to United Nations publications, 4,000 people die every day from water-borne disease. From 1940 to 1945 water-borne diseases were the leading causes of deaths in Venezuela. In the years following world war II 25,000 Europeans died each year from diseases originating in impure water.

Filtration plants combined with the use of chemicals are far from adequate protection. For instance, in 1937 Croydon, a suburb of the great city of London, England, had a breakdown in its water purification system. The breakdown was momentary but that momentary breakdown let loose an epidemic of typhoid fever that brought many deaths and much illness. It was estimated by the United States federal department of health in 1949 that it had cost over \$80 million for the treatment of diseases caused by water pollution.

The same danger exists in any municipality in Canada that depends for its water supply on polluted water made usable by a process of filtration and chemical treatment. Make no mistake about that. There are many Canadian communities in exactly that position today, many Canadian communities in which the tragedy of Croydon, England could be repeated. There are many areas such as the cities bordering the great lakes in that great country to the south of us where the dumping of raw sewage and waste is done without pre-treatment. It is true that some of these cities have sewage disposal plants but some have none and most of the effluent goes into the great lakes and so through to our lakes and rivers.

For instance, along the Ottawa river—we have heard about this before today—most of the sewage is discharged directly into the river without treatment. One of the largest septic tanks in Canada is located in southern Ontario. At times the water spills over

polluting nearby bathing beaches and adjacent waters. There is a great need for more purification plants all over Canada. It is because of the danger inherent in polluted water that as a medical man I welcome this proposal, striking as it does at the source of pollution.

I could use many minutes of the time of the house in emphasizing the importance of water to mankind today. I could talk about the terrible effect of dehydration on the body if we did not have available to us the means to replace immediately the constant escape of moisture from the body. I could tell you how in the process of living we burn up oxygen so fast that we could almost be likened to moving flames. If we are to stay alive the body must be cooled by a quick and unhindered evaporation from the skin. In fact, our margin of safety is so small that a failure of a few hours only in our natural water cooling system could raise the body temperature those few degrees that mean the difference between life and death.

I could spend a great deal of time also on the importance of water to our economy but that too can be summed up in one sentence. Without an adequate supply of pure, uncontaminated water our economy will be like our bodies—it will dehydrate and die.

We can talk about our wealth of natural resources. We can talk about our forest. We can talk about our minerals. We can talk about our wheat, our oil and our coal. But I say to the house in all sincerity that without water these other things are completely meaningless. Without water we would have no hydro energy. Without water we would not be able to go deep into the earth to mine our gold, our silver, our nickel and our copper. Without water our lush farm lands would become barren desert.

Let me touch for just one minute on a phase of our economy in which an adequate supply of pure water is vital. I represent the riding of Simcoe East and in my riding are some of the finest lakes, rivers and streams to be found anywhere in Canada. Because of this I am perhaps more conscious of the importance of the tourist industry to our prosperity than some hon. members whose ridings perhaps are not so fortunate in this regard. Every holiday week end our roads are jammed with holidaymakers. They are on their way to our beaches, to our fishing camps, to some quiet spot beside a lake where they can relax and have fun. But kill the fish through water pollution, make the lakes and rivers unsafe for swimming and boating and the tourist industry in Canada dies.