

Criminal Code

been considerable discussion and debate in respect of this subject, while the electoral officer's responsibilities and estimates were before the committee.

I should also like to make reference to one or two other points regarding the chief electoral officer. I should like to ask the minister whether he is provided, by the chief electoral officer, with estimates in this regard, based on increased population estimates, provided by the dominion bureau of statistics? Does the chief electoral officer supply the minister with such estimates which are, in essence, estimates in regard to redistribution in terms of population changes?

May I call it five o'clock?

Mr. Dorion: Mr. Chairman, perhaps I can be allowed to answer at this time. The chief electoral officer does not make any official estimates in that regard.

Mr. Fisher: He does not make official estimates?

Mr. Dorion: That is right.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Chown): It being five o'clock, in order to permit the house to deal with public and private bills, pursuant to standing order 15 (3), it is my duty to report progress and request leave to sit again later this day, or next sitting of the house, as the case may be.

Resolutions adopted in committee of supply this day reported and concurred in.

Mr. Speaker: It being five o'clock, the house will now proceed to the consideration of public and private bills, the former having precedence.

CRIMINAL CODE

AMENDMENT WITH RESPECT TO WATER POLLUTION

Mr. H. W. Herridge (Kootenay West) moved the second reading of Bill No. C-32, to amend the Criminal Code (Nuisance).

He said: Mr. Speaker, I rise with very high hopes of success in speaking to this bill this afternoon because I am following in the Prime Minister's footsteps. Quite recently we were all advised to "Follow John", and in this respect I am following John.

An hon. Member: You will not go far.

Mr. Herridge: In explaining the purpose of this bill I cannot do better than read the illuminating words used by the Prime Minister when he introduced and spoke to an identical bill in this house on February 28, 1955. I quote what the Prime Minister said on that day:

Mr. Speaker, as provincial legislation has proven ineffective to control the wanton pollution by

municipalities and industrial concerns of inter-provincial rivers, the purpose of this bill is to amend the Criminal Code to provide punishment for the offence of water pollution.

This amendment is demanded by tens of thousands of people, literally hundreds of thousands in this country, who are asking for some action on the part of the federal government to protect them from the cupidity of those who, because of their power, believe they can with impunity deny the use of these waters to present and future generations.

I wholeheartedly support the words used by the Prime Minister in introducing his bill on that occasion and I think they are still very appropriate. This has been a long time problem facing the Canadian people, and owing to the intensification of our processes of industrialization it is becoming more acute from day to day. This is not just my opinion but it is recognized across this country by people who give some consideration to these problems and reflect public opinion.

I might say that the bill I am introducing is not a cure-all; it is simply a first step in the legislative field in which the federal government has some authority, as mentioned by the Prime Minister when he was in opposition. I might say it is an example in a limited field; it is a remedy, as a matter of fact, in one sector of this problem.

What are people saying about this problem of pollution? I wish to quote from a few editorials and other documents to indicate the widespread interest and not just indicate my own opinion. I quote from an editorial in the *Family Herald* of May 28, 1959. This is what the editor has to say about this problem. He writes very well on the problems affecting the farmers of this country and he is writing from an agriculturalist's point of view:

Water That Carries Death.

Civilization, advancing into the wilderness of North America, has carried with it its own peculiar paradox. Wherever it has gone, it has dumped into the streams, rivers and lakes of the continent a continually increasing load of pollution. It is well past being high time that something was done about it.

Canada is fast approaching a situation—if we have not, in fact, already arrived at it—where there is no open water near any major inland community which is safe for either drinking or swimming. Wild life, particularly fish, are suffering seriously, and in some cases disastrously.

The situation is serious enough in practical terms, but what shames us is to think that white men took over this continent without any sort of invitation and, having done so, have failed to assume full responsibility for the guardianship of the land and all it contained. In some respects they have done well, but not in all, and the condition of our inland water bodies and waterways is one adequate and rather revolting proof of this fact. Of course, the country looked inexhaustibly big to our forefathers and we have not outgrown that impression. We have been a long time realizing that enough people and industry is all that is required to foul up even the gigantic network of streams and rivers and lakes that mark