

*Alleged Lack of Action to Combat Pollution*

But before moving to establish international controls our government must do something to clean up our own legislative pollution. In recent weeks we have seen a startling example of what can happen when harmful industrial waste is emptied into bays and harbours. We can now be reasonably certain that the red herring plague in Placentia Bay was the direct result of the dumping of waste and by-product material from an electrical reduction plant. I understand that only swift action in closing the plant has saved the local fishermen from a worse disaster than the inconvenience of losing part of one year's earnings.

But how many other plants use the oceans and take advantage of the absence of clear and meaningful regulations to dump untreated or improperly treated waste? We do not know, for example, what type of waste is being dumped by other plants. We do not know in what quantities it is being dumped and we do not know how lethal this is to the inshore river and marine life. With the enforceable laws, regulations and statutes I suggest there is very little incentive to investigate these questions as they relate to the international situation. I suggest that unless investigative work is started now in concert with parallel effective remedial action—and I do not fear to make this statement because it is becoming increasingly obvious to those people who are expert and knowledgeable in this field—we will soon face a type of problem in respect of our coastal waters similar to that which we now face in respect of our inland streams and rivers.

● (8:30 p.m.)

A further indicator of our lack of concern about what we are doing to the oceans surrounding us comes from a report that the United States government or the United States army, whichever it is, is giving consideration to the dumping of world war II poisonous gas in the depths of the Atlantic ocean as a primary means of disposal of this now obsolete instrument of war. As I understand it, their present plan is to move the gas from its location in the heartland of the United States out to the Atlantic coast where it will be loaded on old ships and transported to the deep trench in the mid-Atlantic where the ships will be scuttled. Presumably the United States government authorities or the army people believe they will protect forever and a day the gases that are included in these disposal units. I wonder, however, whether or

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not even the depths of the Atlantic ocean will be sufficient to contain this poisonous gas. I think any of us who live on the Atlantic coast are well aware of the effect of corrosion, particularly in salt water. Any motion caused by the water, current or tide creates a very rapid deteriorating situation in the form of oxidation of the containers.

Surely if we are to protect the waters that surround us, and the fish that are in these waters, we have no moral right to take a calculated risk of this type. I think we owe a greater debt to the generations that will follow us and to the millions of people who are starving or undernourished because of a lack of a sufficient amount of protein than to even consider endangering the protein that is available in the sea. Just in the last few days we had a report from Halifax which came over the national broadcasting system concerning man's ability to convert the protein in fish into very tasty and edible cookies. We also know that some of the finest butter in the world can be made from the protein in fish. A complete meal can be made from the protein that is derived from the waste products of fish. It is not necessary to use the whole fish.

When we know that we have the technical capability to do this with the products from the sea it is inconceivable that we would even remotely consider using the sea as a dumping ground for lethal poisonous gas. I am afraid as time goes on consideration might well be given by the United States and other countries to even using the ocean as a disposal bed for the waste from fissionable material. If this is even being considered, then I must react with almost horror. It is regrettable if accidentally we create a situation where we pollute something to the point where it is no longer usable in its fullest sense or to a point where society can no longer take full advantage of the resource. But if it is accidental and from the accident we learn something, then it is understandable. But it is totally beyond my understanding that we would even consider using the Atlantic, the Pacific, The arctic, the Antarctic, the Indian or any of the oceans of the world as a dumping ground for potentially lethal waste products.

It is not our place to be critical of the United States. I believe, however, as a nation with a tremendous coast line we have a responsibility in this regard and that the government should speak out loudly and clearly. I think we have a responsibility ourselves to stop using the ocean as a dumping ground for