

# House of Commons Debates

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## SPEECH

OF

GEO. H. BRADBURY, M.P.

ON

# THE POLLUTION OF NAVIGABLE WATERS

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OTTAWA, FRIDAY, APRIL 25, 1913.

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Mr. G. H. BRADBURY (Selkirk): The Bill that is now before the House is to my mind one of the most important measures that will come before the House this year. In face of the many important measures that are pending consideration, this is perhaps saying a great deal for the Bill, but I submit that anything that affects the health and happiness and the lives of the mass of the people of this country, as this Bill does, must, from its very nature, be of paramount importance to a body constituted as this House of Commons is. Sir, we represent here all classes and shades of people in this great Dominion. Then, what more important duty could devolve upon a chamber of this kind than that of legislating, as far as possible, to protect the health and the lives of our people? I am afraid that this has been sadly neglected in years gone by, and before I resume my seat, I think I shall be able to demonstrate to the House that the health of our people has been injured and impaired, and that the lives of thousands of our people have been sacrificed as the result of our neglect to pass legislation, which should have been passed years ago, to guard against the pollution of our great bodies of fresh water.

During the past forty-five years or more, this Chamber has from time to time voted large sums of money for the purpose of developing this great country. We have

built great transcontinental railways across the continent, binding the Atlantic and the Pacific provinces together at an enormous cost to the people of the country. We have built a network of railroads in every province to link up with those great trunk lines. We have spent nearly \$100,000,000 for the purpose of improving our great waterways to facilitate trade between the East and the West. We have spent large sums of money in inducing settlers to come to our country, and in developing our foreign and interprovincial trade. In a word, we have devoted all our time to the building up of the commercial side of a great nation, and in doing this I feel that we have neglected one other great essential; we have overlooked the fact that the greatness of a nation does not consist alone in great railway systems and monetary institutions, or in a great foreign or interprovincial trade. I submit, Sir, that the greatness of a nation consists largely in the vigour, health, happiness and virility of the people who reside within its bounds; and that we have neglected the protection of the health and lives of our people, is, I think, an established fact. The result of our efforts in nation building is something to be proud of, but the country realizes that we have neglected legislation to promote the health and happiness of the people. Providence