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Pollution of River Closes Espanola Plant

From the North Bay Nugget.

THE seriousness with which Canada's highest court of law views the pollution of this country's lakes and streams has never been more vividly demonstrated than in recent days.

A huge industry, the KVP Company, at Espanola, has practically been told it cannot continue to operate because it is "polluting" the Spanish river. Property holders along this stream have been fighting the company in court for more than a year, and have finally won an injunction against the firm.

The immensity of the matter is borne out by the fact that unless some method is devised whereby the company can continue to operate, 1,500 men will lose their jobs at Espanola and an investment of \$13,000,000 will be virtually wasted.

Pollution of the rivers and lakes of this country quite apparently constitutes a major offence.

The company claims it has spent sizable sums on anti-pollution devices and material. The company has pointed out that it is the only industry in Espanola, and that the entire community's economic existence depends on its continued operation.

On the other hand, land owners along the Spanish point out that "it is a case of a big company trying to override small operators who depend on fishing, farming and tourists for their living. The tourist business brings more money into Canada than any other single industry, and the Spanish river enjoys a world-wide reputation as a fishing ground".

Some indication that the company may be willing to recompense the tourist operators is found in the statement of KVP president Ralph Hayward, who said: "We have never said we would not pay damages actually suffered by the operators of tourist camps downstream."

The question is, would this become a yearly payment, depending on the extent of the pollution, or would the operators accept a mass settlement and allow the company to go on polluting?

From the Sudbury Star.

THE fear that Espanola will again become a "ghost town" haunts the minds of the town's 5,000 residents today, following the decision of the judicial committee of the Privy Council which rejected a petition by the KVP Company, of Espanola, for special leave to appeal against injunctions restraining it from "polluting" the Spanish river.

In the interpretation of the law there is no room left for dispute and the decision of the Privy Council committee is final. It is now incumbent upon the Ontario Legislature to take whatever steps are necessary to protect this industry.

The rights of the individual must also be fully observed, as recognized by the Privy Council committee, and if continuing damages are to ensue, then provision must be made in any legislation to see that the rights of the individual are protected and respected.

The history of Espanola, following the failure of the Abitibi Power and Paper Company, is still fresh in the minds of people in the Sudbury district. It is not necessary to review the transformation of a busy industrial town into a "ghost town", and the use of valuable company property during the war years as an internment camp for prisoners of

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The first ray of sunshine to penetrate the gloom was the announcement that the KVP Company would start operations at Espanola. The company has now invested some \$13,000,000 in the project, turning the profits back into the business to expand employment and put Espanola back on the map.

It is inconceivable that it is the intent of the law to close down an industry and throw hundreds of people out of work.

The governments make the laws and the courts enforce them and there would seem to be little reason why the Ontario government could not introduce enabling legislation to insure against the loss of an industry, which not only means much to the province, but also has Federal significance in the expenditure in Canada of much-needed United States dollars.