

WARNS OF OVERLOADING HOUSE FUSES:

"Warning that the use of "jacked" or "bridged" fuse plugs so altered that they would carry heavy overloads of current without fusing brought almost certain danger of fire, was sounded in police court Saturday. Richard Tardiff, Russell Road, was charged with causing a fire on May 11 by negligence through the use of such plugs and paid a nominal fine of \$25 and costs. Tardiff's use of bridged plugs to operate welding equipment in a shed, with electricity brought from an adjoining apartment house where he lived, brought about a fire which caused more than \$6000 damage and left several families homeless. Inspector Norman Green of the Fire Prevention Bureau told the court. The accused was defended by George Blakeney, who urged that there was definitely no intention by the accused to cause a fire since his own home was among those burned. Ignorance of the operation of electricity was probably responsible, Mr. Blakeney said, and urged that more educational programs should be undertaken to familiarize the public with the operation of electric circuits. S. Rupert Broadfoot, K.C., who appeared as special prosecutor for the Ontario Fire Marshal's Department, pointed out that jacked fuses carried a definite menace and almost sure promise of fire. He asked only a nominal fine of \$25 on behalf of the department, but pointed out that widespread public warning should be given to the grave danger of tampering with fuse units, the safety valve on an electrical circuit.

"The case was the first of its kind to appear before the local courts but officials warned that unless similar practices ceased there would have to be many more such prosecutions in the interests of the public protection. "It was only due to the time factor that loss of life did not occur in this fire" Mr. Broadfoot warned. "Had the fire smouldered until later in the night loss of life might well have occurred. We must take every precaution to stop this tampering with electrical equipment by unauthorized and uninformed persons". Ottawa Citizen, June 12, 1950.

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