

*Borrowing Authority*

The Government has given an ultimatum to Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd. It must either pay its way or it will get no money in the interim. The Government has already implemented cut-backs, has taken money out of the reserve fund of AECL and states that AECL must pay the Government back for the money it loaned.

More than energy is involved in this matter. There are two subsidiaries of Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd. One is Nordion International Incorporated. It is a radio chemical isotope plant. Canada produces 60 per cent of the world's supply of radio medical isotopes, and this is a very profitable organization.

Let me tell the Minister of State for Privatization and Regulatory Affairs (Mr. McDermid) that I wrote a letter to the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) and the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Epp) some time ago, suggesting that the Government should retain these two subsidiaries which are making money and put the profits into the parent company for research and development. In that way the whole organization will be regenerating its research funds.

Instead, the Government has already taken steps to sell Nordion International Incorporated. The other company, Theratronics International Ltd., has not been as successful as the other Crown corporation but produces a tremendous product which can be very successful. For example, it manufactures the cobalt therapy units for the treatment of cancer. The units built as a result of this high-class medical discovery are produced by Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd.

There are many wonderful things that AECL does in the medical world but which are unknown to the average individual because of the difficulty in giving that message out. As soon as one mentions atomic energy or nuclear power, many people hide because they are afraid of those terms. We have a serious educational problem in this respect.

Let me quote from the Congressional record in the United States, when a member of the U.S. Congress said: "—a new source of power, beginning a new era in the history of civilization. Never in history has a society been confronted with a power so full of potential danger and at the same time so full of promise for the future of man and for the peace of the world". That person was talking about the invention of gasoline. That speech was delivered in the Congress of the United States in 1875.

More than 100 years later we have a facility that produces CANDU reactors and medical radio isotopes, and produces the cobalt therapy unit for the treatment of cancer. Yet people only consider the horrendous possibilities. There is an anti-nuclear community which gets much coverage in the media. I ask the media to give some balance to this question.

Even when Christopher Columbus left to find the New World, people were worried that he might fall off the end of the earth. We must open our minds and have some vision for the future of this country. The only way to have vision for the future is to open up the minds of those sitting opposite so they may proceed with research and development and assist our scientists and leading organizations in this country. We have world-class laboratories and world-class facilities. There should be encouragement to find new ways of manufacturing new products and to work for industry. That can be done by a Crown corporation that is owned by a Government. If it is privatized it will only work for private industry, keeping secrets to itself.

Organizations like Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd. and the National Research Council should be open to everyone so that the results of their good work can be spread to industry and the public, like the medical world. That is the way to build Canada. We should not hide that information from anyone.

I implore the Government to reconsider what it is doing. Making the nuclear option available to all Canadians requires continuing federal leadership in nuclear technology. I ask the Government to provide that leadership. Everything costs money at one stage or another, but the returns will come in and the Government will be glad it had invested. It will be able to say it did something useful.

**An Hon. Member:** Borrow more.

**Mr. Hopkins:** I gave the option of putting research and development funds back in from the subsidiary corporations and to use the reserve funds for themselves rather than for Government purposes. If the Government followed that course, there would be less investment necessary.

Canada is the world supplier of radio isotopes for use in nuclear medicine. Quebec Members should note that CANDU reactors in Quebec and Ontario produce 85 per cent of the world's supply of Cobalt-60 used in cancer treatment. Surely no one is against programs like that.